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THE VALUE OF THE SCHOOL RESEARCH
EXPERIENCE TO THE STUDENT
OF SOCIAL WORK

by

Jeanine Marie Deka

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Social Work
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Social Work

January

1954

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: Some type of research experience is required by all graduate schools of social work. It is thought that the professional school of social work should have a twofold purpose: (1) to produce capable skilled workers, and (2) to develop the field of professional work through scholarly research and publication.¹ In 1947 the Western Reserve University held a Workshop on Research in Social Work. Among other things discussed, there was some thinking on the establishment of a separate research department for each school of social work because students do not have either time or ability to produce an effective piece of research. Through research, however, their critical faculties should be sharpened; they should learn something about the determination of validity and reliability; they should develop an appreciation of good research; and become critical consumers of this type. One of the resolutions adopted by the Workshop was as follows:

That schools of social work recognize research as one of their major functions and that in the appointment of faculty and the distribution of work loads they give due regard to the proper place of research in the school program and in the contribution of the schools to social work,

¹ James H. Tufts, Education and Training for Social Work, New York, 1923, 102.

and to the need for advanced training of specialists for research in social work.²

The school of social work should require that all students take courses in social research. These courses fulfill a threefold purpose: (1) they offer general or introductory training to those who would specialize in social research, (2) they offer to all social workers a means of analytical approach to the puzzling problems they are bound to encounter, and (3) they serve to equip future social executives with a working knowledge of the functions of research.³ It was also stated that the student in addition to his attendance at these courses, should put this knowledge into practice by becoming involved in a research project.

Since the schools of social work require a research experience of their students for various reasons, this presents an obligation for the latter. The student may consider this obligation a valuable experience or he may regard it as a burden. Therefore, this study was made to obtain the attitudes of graduate students regarding: (1) their school research experience, (2) the correlation of this to any further research done in their later positions, (3) the contribution of the school research experience to the social worker's

2 Research in Social Work, A Report of the Workshop on Research in Social Work sponsored by the School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University, June 16-20, 1947, American Association of Social Workers and School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University, January, 1948, 4.

3 James Edward Hagerty, The Training of Social Workers, New York and London, 1931, 117.

total formation, and (4) the future picture of school research.

Scope: The group which participated in this study is composed of 140 men and women from all sections of the United States who were graduates of non-sectarian accredited schools of social work between the years 1942 and 1947.

The first 202 people who were graduated from non-sectarian accredited schools of social work between 1942 and 1947 were chosen alphabetically from the American Association of Social Workers Directory.

The graduates of the years 1942 to 1947 were chosen because it was thought that these people would have been out of school long enough to have obtained a position wherein they may have been involved with further research.

Only those from non-sectarian schools were selected because graduates of Catholic schools had already been chosen this year as a participating group in another thesis being written by a Loyola student. It was thought unwise to burden this same group with another questionnaire because it may have lessened their responses. Furthermore, the religious qualifications of the group would have no bearing on their opinions concerning the research experience.

No presently employed teachers were included in the selected number, because their opinions on the subject of research would be considered biased.

The schedule was tested on the first fifty of the 202 chosen names. Two weeks' time was allowed for receipt of their answers. Within this period, approximately 80 per cent of the group responded. Only one change was made in the schedule at this point. Added space was allowed for comments following the last question because a great number had offered comments even though it

was not requested after this question. Three weeks' time was permitted for returns from the remainder of the group. This latter response covered 75 per cent of the total number. The study was based on the responses of 140 people. From the extensive reply, it would seem that the subject of research is one of great interest to graduate students. This interest was also manifested in the large number of comments offered by the respondents not only on the questionnaires, but in the personal notes and letters which they attached to the questionnaires. Because the quantity of comments was so great it was impossible to incorporate them all into the text, therefore, a representative sample was used. In some instances the comments may show duplication, but only because the respondents were inclined to give similar statements for totally different questions.

Method: A questionnaire and an explanatory letter were sent to each member of the group. (See Appendices I and II)

Method of Presentation: In Chapter II is found certain identifying information about the group which participated in this study. Chapter III is devoted to a discussion of the following: (1) the type of research work with which these people were involved while in school, (2) whether or not they were full-time students while doing the research, (3) when they finished the research, (4) the length of time which they devoted to the work, and (5) whether or not the time given to the research affected their class or field work. The opinions of those who have done further research since graduation are covered in Chapter IV. These opinions are concerned with the possible contribution of the school research experience to any further studies which they have undertaken. The attitudes of those who have, as well as those who have not done

any further research since graduation are discussed in Chapter V. These attitudes are directed towards the affect which the school research experience may have had on their total formation as social workers. Chapter VI covers the group's opinions on whether or not the research requirement for a master's degree should be continued and if an individual thesis or a group project is more beneficial. In Chapter VII are found certain opinions of those respondents who were involved with an individual thesis correlated with the opinions of those who worked on a group project while in school. In addition, there are also correlations of those respondents who have and have not engaged in post-graduate research studies. A summary of the findings and concluding thoughts are contained in Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER II

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

In this chapter certain identifying facts are presented concerning the group which participated in this study. These facts give the reader knowledge of the geographic location, age, sex, present position, amount of social work experience before graduate training, field of specialization in school, and year of graduation from a social work school for each member of the group.

For purposes of presentation a breakdown of the United States into geographic areas was used. They are six: (1) Midwestern, which includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin; (2) Eastern Seaboard, including the states of Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, and New Jersey; (3) Near Western, composed of North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Wyoming, New Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska, and Oklahoma; (4) Far Western, which includes Oregon, Washington, California, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, Utah, and Idaho; (5) Southern and Gulf, including Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida, Texas, Louisiana, and Kentucky; and (6) Northeastern Seaboard, comprising Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Each of the states in the six geographic areas is not represented by the number of respondents in the following table,

but rather the area as a whole.

TABLE I
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

<u>Geographic areas</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Near Western	7
Far Western	16
Midwestern	33
Southern and Gulf	12
Eastern Seaboard	31
Northeastern Seaboard	19
Unknown	22
Total	140

The majority of the respondents, thirty-three people, are from the Midwestern area. This may be compared with that of the Great Lakes area which claimed the majority in a 1950 survey. The Great Lakes area was composed of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.⁴ The geographic location of twenty-two respondents is not known because when the study was first begun this point of information was not thought to be valuable. As the study progressed, it was seen that this point would produce a typical group, because it would show that the respondents were representatives of all the geographic areas.

⁴ Social Workers in 1950, A Report on the Study of Salaries and Working Conditions in Social Work, U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Wages and Industrial Relations, American Association of Social Workers, New York, 1952, Table 3, 6.

TABLE II

AGE

<u>Ages in years</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
25 - 29	4
30 - 34	14
35 - 39	32
40 - 44	43
45 - 49	25
50 - 54	12
55 - 59	7
60 - 64	3
Total	140

The ages of the group range from twenty-five to sixty-three years. Of the entire group, the majority, forty-three persons, are between forty and forty-four years of age. The average age according to the forementioned 1950 survey was forty years.⁵ It is thought that since this is a mature age group their opinions would contribute a certain amount of validity to this study.

Both sexes are represented by the total group. The majority number of 103 are female and the male respondents number thirty-six. One respondent neglected to answer this question. The large number of women in comparison to the men would account for the established fact that women outnumber men in the field of social work.⁶

⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁶ Ibid., Table D-2, 38.

TABLE III
PRESENT POSITION

<u>Types of positions</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Consultant	8
Supervisor	30
Caseworker	42
Group Worker	1
Director	32
Assistant Director	13
Others	13
No position	1
Total	140

The present positions of the respondents are quite varied. The majority, forty-two, are employed as caseworkers. There are thirteen people whose miscellaneous positions are listed as Others. In this group are found the housewives, campaign managers, foreign affairs officers, board members, and sales engineers. One respondent is not employed at present.

The group was asked to state the amount of their social work experience before entrance into graduate school. Three respondents commented that they were employed and attended graduate classes simultaneously, thereby acquiring both education and experience. Six respondents mentioned that their two years of graduate training were not consecutive, but rather were broken by a number of years ranging from three to seventeen. Qualified Responses have reference to those people who gave no definite amount of experience, but rather offered only comments.

TABLE IV

AMOUNT OF SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE
BEFORE TRAINING IN SCHOOL

<u>Number of years</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
No experience	42
Less than one year	5
1 - 4	41
5 - 8	26
9 - 12	12
13 - 16	4
17 - 20	3
21 - 24	1
25 - 28	1
Qualified response	3
No response	2
Total	140

The years of social work experience which the respondents had before entering schools of social work range in quantity from none to twenty-five years of experience. The majority number of forty-two are those who had no previous experience. In a recent survey, it was shown that the case and group workers had the least amount of social work experience.⁷ However, no statement was made as to the precedence of this experience to graduate training.

⁷ Ibid., Table 7, 11.

TABLE V

FIELD OF SPECIALIZATION IN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

<u>Types of specialization</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Casework	115
Group work	9
Community organization	6
Others	9
No response	1
Total	140

Of the total group, 115 specialized in the field of casework while in school. Nine respondents specialized in a variety of fields designated by Others. These fields include combinations of casework and administration; group work and administration; casework and community organization; public welfare; and administration.

TABLE VI

YEAR OF GRADUATION FROM
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
1942	26
1943	18
1944	22
1945	14
1946	25
1947	32
No response	3
Total	140

All the respondents were graduates of their respective schools of social work between the years 1942 and 1947. The year 1947 claims the majority of thirty-two, which would seem to show an increase of graduate workers in the field. However, according to a survey made in 1950, two out of every 5 respondents had some graduate education in schools of social work, but only one in every 5 had earned a graduate degree in social work.⁸

From the foregoing facts, it can be seen that the group is representative of all the geographic areas of the United States with the majority located in the Midwestern area. Many age groups are accounted for, the largest number being between forty and forty-four years of age. The number of women outnumber the men in the total group. The present positions of the respondents are varied with the caseworker heading the list. Those who have had no previous social work experience before their entrance into graduate training are in the majority. Casework is the most popular field of specialization for the group while they were in school. The year 1947 claims the greatest number of graduates from the group.

⁸ Ibid., 8.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Information concerning the past school research activities of the respondents are contained in this chapter. Facts regarding the type of research, term of school attendance, opinions on the amount of time consumed by the research, and the affect of this time on class and field work are discussed here.

Two types of school research, namely, the individual thesis and the group project were engaged in by the respondents. The greater part of the group, 122, had been concerned with the writing of an individual thesis. Thirteen were involved in group projects. Five respondents failed to offer this information.

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IN FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE WHILE DOING SCHOOL RESEARCH

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Yes	92
No	43
Qualified response	2
No response	3
Total	140

Of the entire group, ninety-two people were in full-time school attendance while doing their research. Full-time Attendance signifies a schedule consisting of a complete course load and field work. Two respondents gave no definite answer, instead one commented that the research was begun while in full-time attendance, but completed later; another worked on a project during the summer having no class or field work at that time.

There were various remarks from those who answered Yes to this question. Two people said theirs was a block plan schedule whereby they were involved only with field work. During this time they concentrated on the research preparation, and later wrote the thesis while taking courses. Another commented that no field work was required during the fourth semester, while one remarked that the schedule included full-time field work and a thesis seminar.

Two respondents who said they were not in full-time attendance offered further information. The schedule of one included a full-time position, field work, and two courses. Another completed all but one course before the last half of the second year, then became involved with the research and continued the full-time field work.

TABLE VIII

LENGTH OF TIME FOR COMPLETION
OF SCHOOL RESEARCH

<u>Time periods</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Within the second year	76
After this period	13
Qualified response	2
No response	1
Total	92

The foregoing table has reference only to that portion of the total group which was in full-time attendance while doing the research. The majority of this group, seventy-six, completed their research during the second year of training. Only two comments came from this group explaining that "time was allotted by the school during the last three months"; and the research was completed "at the end of a sixteen-month period with an accelerated program."

Those who finished the research after the second year of training offered various comments. Five respondents said they had begun the research work during the second year, but did not complete it until after they were away from school. These five gave no definite completion time for the research, whereas two other respondents said they completed the work approximately two months after the second year of training.

TABLE IX

AMOUNT OF TIME GIVEN TO THE
SCHOOL RESEARCH STUDY

<u>Amount of time</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Very little	7
Reasonable amount	102
Too much	22
Qualified response	9
Total	140

The opinions of those who thought they gave a Reasonable Amount of Time to the research study were in the majority, 102 people. Approximately one-half of this group offered comments. Since it would prove too lengthy to list all of them, the comments are divided into four groups: (1) opinions on the

positive value of research, (2) opinions on the negative value of research, (3) remarks on the combination of research work with other activities, and (4) remarks on time schedules for the research.

Positive Value of Research

Helpful in learning the application of statistical tools.

An invaluable opportunity to crystallize thinking and to gain professional confidence and self-discipline.

I got my material from my field work agency—found that this served two purposes—a knowledge of agency—a learning experience in case study. Also used other reference material—I enjoyed it even though tedious at times.

Negative Value of Research

Badly supervised, I went through the motions to satisfy requirements. Its value was negligible.

Should have had a better foundation in methods of research before starting the thesis and better control in the research aspects.

I was fed up with it and nearly dropped it!

Combination of Research Work with Other Activities

I spent about six months—while on the job—doing some work on it but the actual writing took me three months—while I was on maternity leave.

Had a fellowship so worked and went to school part-time.

I was working part-time in an agency carrying two courses and the thesis.

Started thesis while in school but obtained full-time job and completed this after hours.

It probably would have been easier had the thesis been a requirement of the second year. It was completed the year following school attendance.

Time Schedules for Research

Our work was done in a scheduled six hours a week—no outside work.

One-half day per week was allowed for research and thesis work.

Time was assigned by school for thesis project during field work placement, one-half day in second year was ample.

Approximately one day a week for three months.

I spent about eight hours, five-day week for one semester.

The group of respondents who felt that they gave Too Much Time to their research made various statements in explanation of their feelings:

Too much in terms of neglecting other class and field work. Most of this was spent in rather unproductive stewing and working over data.

Scoped study too extensive yet anything briefer would have lacked real significance.

A research experience is of definite value—but a research thesis requires entirely too much time if the candidate for master's degree is principally interested in other specializations—as casework.

Too much, comparatively speaking, in relation to values received.

Started after completion of courses and field work—on campus full-time—much time wasted—should have been part-time over period of two to three quarters.

My first thesis written during second year in school was rejected. After completing training I wrote a second thesis during first year of work.

Second thesis was accepted.

Several comments were made by those who said they devoted Very Little

Time to their research:

Little emphasis on research; therefore, little time was required to meet requirements.

I did it nights and weekends while filling a full-time job.

Not interested in research and had started working full-time.

Whole project something to get done and out of way—boring.

Some of the respondents gave no definite answers, but rather offered

only comments. These are to be found as Qualified Responses in the table:

More, no doubt, than I could have done while attending regular classes, doing field work, but not I think too much [time] for a valid piece of research.

Many papers written for classes required some research—I don't remember any special research project done.

Considering its value to me any amount [time] would be too much. Was fortunate in choice of subject—got off easy.

Re: individual thesis, a great deal [time] but it was worth it.

From the above comments concerning amounts of time given to the research, it can be seen that the word 'time' connotes various meanings to the respondents. Their remarks were based on: (1) the amount of preparation they received before beginning the research, (2) the circumstances within which they found themselves while engaged in research, and (3) their own personal interest in doing the research. Research was considered valuable by some of them because they felt that it had increased their professional skill; others con-

sidered it a worthless task. Another group of respondents expressed no difficulty in doing the research while engaged in other activities such as employment. Some respondents found that either they themselves or the schools organized the time which was to be devoted to the research; others were unable to give as much time to the research as it required.

TABLE X

AFFECT OF TIME GIVEN TO SCHOOL
RESEARCH ON CLASS AND
FIELD WORK

<u>Affect of time</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Helped	37
Hindered	9
No affect	66
Qualified response	15
No response	13
Total	140

The majority of the group, sixty-six respondents, felt that the time given to the research had No Affect on their class and field work. There were various comments from this portion of the group depending upon: (1) their ability to arrange sufficient time for the research while in school, (2) their inability to accomplish this arrangement, and (3) their ability to devote their time to the research without any involvement in class and field work.

Sufficient Time

I would imagine that to one who is interested in research and a capable student he would arrange his time to permit the research to be done. I worked it in—carrying a lighter load the last quarter. A full quarter was given to review for comprehensive exam and research in completing the thesis.

Insufficient Time

It didn't affect class and field work from standpoint of neglect, rather research was extended because I couldn't complete it and carry the other satisfactorily.

Many, many hours spent on abstracting records did not contribute to my functioning as a caseworker.

This project of mine didn't help, but the course I took in research did help my thinking about social and economic data.

Loss of sleep and recreation time!

No Class and Field Work

I wasn't actually in school at the time and since I took a thesis subject related to my work--my agency assisted me a great deal.

Since I was in full-time employment, however, it was a strain accomplishing the end results at nights and on weekends.

In this third category were found those who concentrated only on the research without any involvement with class and field work. Some found this concentration difficult; others did not.

A portion of the total group felt that the research Helped their class and field work because it was directly related to the latter:

Since it was community study it related closely to class and field work. Research done in agency where I did field work. Research was an integral part of my learning in the agency.

Made it much more meaningful as my thesis material was drawn from my research in field placement.

Others who did not state this relation as such commented:

Helped me to draw together and crystallize my thoughts. Gave me a respect for the need to know facts.

Gave a broader, more objective viewpoint and a greater realization that study and research were needed to test and improve practice.

I think it helped me to analyze records more meaningfully.

The main help came from the stimulation provided by compiling original data for the thesis. As a result I developed a greater interest in learning per se and came to appreciate the satisfaction of this kind of experience.

Various remarks were offered by those who thought the research

Hindered their class and field work:

The time required to complete a research thesis necessitated a crowding of reading which was my chief interest. I felt my time could have been used to better advantage had my research experience been more limited. Some of the time could have been more profitably spent in further class work. I feel there is real value in research training, but this should be more integrated into total program over longer period.

Fifteen respondents gave no definite answer on the general question of affect, but rather offered only comments. A few of these stated that:

The time could have been better spent in either field work or a good course in research which was not available.

The subject was not related to school assignment. Actually added to fund of information as well as technique.

Difficulty in carrying regular class and field work assignment. Longer hours--exhausting.

Took very little class work while working on thesis. Would have hindered if I had.

Just as the word 'time' meant various things to the respondents, so too did the phrase 'affect of time'. It seems that their comments were determined by: (1) their own ability to schedule sufficient time for the research, (2) their realization of a positive relationship between their research and field work, and (3) their feeling that the time given to research could better have been devoted to further class and field work.

In order to gather together the various points discussed in this chapter, it is noted that the greater number of the total group had been involved with the individual type of school research rather than the group project. Those who carried complete schedules of class, field, and research work were in the majority, although the few who offered comments were not actually in full-time attendance while doing the research. The majority of full-time students completed the research work within the second year of graduate training. The largest number of the respondents felt that they had given neither very little nor too much time to their school research, but rather a reasonable

amount. The majority of the group thought that there was no affect on the class and field work because of the time given to the school research. The different types of comments, however, showed that this affect of time held various meanings for the group.

CHAPTER IV

THE POST-GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDY

Even though research work is required of all graduate work students, one would question as to whether or not this is a continued requirement in the various social work positions chosen by the respondents after graduation. This point is discussed here in addition to the number and type of post-graduate research studies made by the respondents. The remaining portion of the chapter is devoted to the opinions of the respondents regarding the positive or negative value of the school research experience in relation to further research studies.

TABLE XI

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE DONE RESEARCH SINCE GRADUATION

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Yes	81
No	56
Qualified response	3
Total	140

According to the above table, approximately 58 per cent of the entire group have engaged in research studies since graduation. Various comments were offered by this group:

As a staff member of a community organization agency, we do make various studies.

Mainly limited surveys on job.

Many agency and community studies; part of the regular agency program.

Mainly in relation to my job—preparing material for presentation to board.

The agency of which I am director is a council and part of regular job is making surveys and studies.

Research necessary in agency practice.

These [studies] have ranged from minor ones on my own caseload to agency wide research.

In our agency at times we have been engaged in studying various aspects of the total job. This has required a certain amount of knowledge of research.

An analysis of the case statistics and the worker's activity in our office over a period of three months—the results used to point up the need for an additional part-time worker.

Reports for board meetings when in an executive capacity and for reports requested by my national agency.

Those who have done no further research since graduation submitted several remarks:

Lack of sufficient time has prevented it.

No, but in my department we are gathering material for research on foster home program in part of our treatment plan for children.

Not interested in active participation but of results and findings of studies.

I have not engaged in a true research study but have done studies on certain types of services that required sampling and some knowledge of research methods.

I am interested in research but it seems difficult to get into any project. Expect to do some agency projects during the coming year.

Three respondents gave neither a positive nor a negative reply but only comments, shown in the table as Qualified Responses:

Only on a superficial basis, nothing as extensive as the thesis.

Only very brief screening intake study on job.

Small projects on a committee basis.

In view of the comments presented, research studies are shown to be an integral part of agency programs. It would seem that even though some respondents had not engaged in further research studies themselves, some type of research has been in process in their agencies. Actually, the three people who gave Qualified Responses have done some type of research work even though

it has only been on a small scale.

TABLE XII
NUMBER OF RESEARCH STUDIES
ENGAGED IN SINCE
GRADUATION

<u>Number of studies</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
0 - 1	9
2 - 3	15
4 - 5	6
6 - 7	1
8 - 9	1
Vague response	11
No response	38
Total	81

This table applies only to the eighty-one respondents who have engaged in further research since graduation. These people were asked for the number of further studies with which they were involved. Fifteen respondents had completed between two and three studies, the average number of the group. Even though thirty-seven gave no response, eleven people offered somewhat indefinite comments regarding the number of studies. The latter are found under Vague Responses in the table. These included remarks explaining that they had done several studies, but were unable to state the exact number.

It was thought that the types of studies which the people had engaged in would prove to be an interesting point of information. Therefore, this same group of eighty-one respondents were asked to give the types of their studies.

TABLE XIII

TYPE OF RESEARCH STUDY
ENGAGED IN SINCE
GRADUATION

Type	Agency requested	Personally initiated	Both	Qualified response	No response	Total
Individual	3	6			1	10
Group	16	1	4		4	25
Both	2	2	7		1	12
Qualified response				1		1
No response	20	2	9		2	33
Total	41	11	20	1	8	81

Of the two types, namely Agency Requested and Personally Initiated, it was seen that Agency Requested was the most prevalent with twenty of the respondents having been engaged in this type of study. The Group study exceeded the Individual, and the Agency Requested Group type was in advance of the Personally Initiated Group study. This is in direct contrast to the school research experience where the majority had been concerned with the individual thesis.

Another question was presented to this group of eighty-one respondents concerning their opinions on whether or not the school research experience was an asset to them in their further research studies.

TABLE XIV

CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
TO RESEARCH DONE SINCE
GRADUATION

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Yes	63
No	11
Qualified response	2
No response	5
Total	81

Seventy-eight per cent of the total number answered Yes to this question. Their comments were divided, however, into two groups of thought depending upon: (1) a definite affirmative reply, or (2) an indefinite affirmative reply. Some of the respondents commented with reference to the further studies which they made.

Definite Affirmative Reply

Thesis was helpful in knowing what materials might be useful and how to secure these.

The council is constantly making studies. This training [school research] was invaluable.

Some aspects of previous experience [thesis helpful in some respect to further studies].

Indefinite Affirmative Reply

Much more needs to be done along these lines, in my opinion.

With a psychologist well-trained in experiential techniques; he made me realize how silly was my school of social work experience in research.

This [further research study] was a major project which has since been fulfilled and I found myself very handicapped by my lack of experience in research method.

Two respondents answered neither Yes nor No, but offered only comments. These are listed as Qualified Responses in the table:

My work in statistics at the school helped. The courses on research helped. Considering the thesis as a part of the research courses—yes it helped. There is some question as to the thesis project alone contributing much.

The various comments regarding the relationship of the school research experience to further studies indicate that the former was helpful in some instances, but it could have been a much better preparation for later studies. It was thought that not only was the research project helpful in further studies, but so were the research courses.

According to the replies of the group, eighty-one respondents out of the total number, 140, have done further research work since graduation. They have been engaged in from one to nine studies each, and the majority have done either two or three. These studies have been of four different types namely; individual, group, agency requested, and personally initiated. The group and agency requested exceeded the other two types. A little over three-fourths of the 81 respondents felt that the school research experience had been a help to them in the further studies which they made. The few who commented on this, however, were somewhat undecided as to whether or not the school research experience proved to be as much assistance as it should have been.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SCHOOL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE TO THE SOCIAL WORKER'S TOTAL FORMATION

It has been seen that the school research experience according to the majority of the respondents was a valuable asset to further research. In this chapter are found the opinions of the respondents concerning the contribution of the school research experience to the total formation of a social worker. In addition to this, there is also a discussion covering some of the contributing factors.

The group was asked whether or not they felt that the school research experience had contributed to their total formation as social workers.

TABLE IV

CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE TO TOTAL FORMATION OF SOCIAL WORKER

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Yes	75
No	15
Qualified response	7
No response	43
Total	140

Sevênty-five of the 140 respondents were of the opinion that the school research experience had made some contribution to their total formation as social workers. A large number of No Responses may be found in Tables XV and XVI. Actually, the general question of the relationship between the school research and the social worker's total formation was intended only for those people who had not engaged in any further research since graduation. This explains why a great number had offered No Response in Tables XV and XVI. Eighty-one of these respondents were those who had been involved in further research as noted in Table XI. However, a large portion of this group of eighty-one not only responded, but also offered almost as many comments as those to whom the question was originally presented. Thirty-four members of this group gave a positive reply; four, a negative reply. Six people offered neither, but rather made only comments. The remainder of the group, thirty-seven, gave neither a response nor a comment.

The respondents were asked to state the ways in which they thought the school research experience had contributed to their total formation as social workers. Some possible contributing factors were presented to them for their approval or disapproval. These factors used for presentation were chosen primarily to stimulate the thinking of the respondents on the subject and not because they were considered to be the foremost factors. The respondents were also requested to list any other factors which they felt may have been beneficial to the social worker's total formation.

TABLE XVI

HOW THE SCHOOL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
CONTRIBUTED TO TOTAL FORMATION
OF SOCIAL WORKER

Factors	Responses			Total
	Yes	No	No response	
Increased my ability to be objective in attitude	51	6	83	140
Developed my reasoning power	36	10	94	140
Increased my ability to think with originality	48	7	85	140
Developed my power of accuracy	53	8	79	140
No benefit	3	12	125	140

It was noted that the largest number of respondents were in agreement with the first four factors presented. In addition to their positive or negative statements regarding these contributing factors, the respondents made various comments as follows:

I felt that the research helped me to synthesise material—gain objectivity and perception in terms of learning to sort out data—think through purpose. Stimulating and creative. My ability to achieve objectivity I feel was developed in field work with a "professional person," my reasoning power developed by total studies, accuracy, I feel, doesn't "need developing." It influenced my objectivity by helping to develop a critical attitude toward research conclusions and pointed out the aspects of research to check, to test validity, and reliability of conclusions.

Of magnificent value to me is the requirement in research that conclusions be based on fact. Methodology in social research develops clearer thinking and less false general assumptions—one so rare and the other so prevalent today.

Other contributing factors from the school research experience which were expressed by the respondents may be classified as: (1) awareness of community planning, (2) research as self-discipline, (3) benefit from research and/or classwork, (4) knowledge of research techniques, (5) knowledge of agency function, and (6) miscellaneous.

Awareness of Community Planning

[Methods used in school research are an aid] when thinking of social planning. Broadened my experience as a caseworker and made me aware of community needs.

Research as Self-Discipline

I considered the research a good discipline.

In addition to the above, [four factors presented] the research and writing of thesis were a discipline and also improved my writing techniques.

Such a task as preparing a thesis certainly develops self-discipline which adds that much to a professional social worker's qualifications.

The self-discipline required to complete a study certainly is one of the by-products.

Benefit from Research and/or Classwork

Other courses, statistics and social investigation as well as research project have been valuable in my work.

This experience also deepened my awareness of and appreciation for the value of statistics in relation to Social Work interpretation.

My thesis was a history of a local private institution and I felt it was a good substitute for a course in Community Organization which I did not have. I think the above items [four factors presented] were more influenced by a good course in Social Statistics I had as an undergraduate. It also supplemented a course in administration.

Undergraduate research project extremely helpful in the above area [four factors presented].

Knowledge of Research Techniques

My project was unpretentious. I enjoyed writing it, I utilized very little technical research as that embodied in a research course I took. The most valuable experience was attempting to figure out what the correlation or lack of it meant.

Learned techniques of research.

Gave me a better understanding of what is involved, and convinced me that no study should be made that is not going to be used.

Increased my ability to use a technique I disliked in a disciplined, construc-

tive way.

Enables me to read charts and studies with more knowledge.

Increased my skill in reading case records and analyzing them.

The reference broadened my knowledge in the field. The reviewing of case records helped as I compiled my records; also learning methods of gathering material has been helpful. Should I be requested to make a study I would know procedure.

Knowledge of Agency Function

Largely in terms of evaluating agency performance, using simple statistical formulations in organizing material and using it for interpretation of function.

This project helped me to work out certain basic concepts about administrative supervision which have since been very helpful to me in carrying on my work.

It contributed mostly in a practical and business way rather than formation.

It gave me knowledge of institutional program and operation.

Increased knowledge of casework and understanding of behavior. Provided a better understanding of services of a family agency.

Miscellaneous

[Helped me] to make constructive and more positive use of social work literature and readings in allied fields.

Helped in developing concrete material pertinent to the problem I was exploring.

Even though the respondents were in agreement with the four factors presented in Table XVI, some of them commented as follows on the non-beneficial aspect of the school research experience:

I considered research a necessary evil and at times was not sure how necessary.

I do think now that more research is needed in social work.

I knew I was not interested in being a research worker. I feel that my study helped the agency for whom I made it but I felt too much emphasis was placed on small details of form by the school. Had I expected to go into research I think attention to small details would have been appropriate.

While a thesis project certainly helped in developing skills I feel that just as much benefit could have been derived from putting forth additional effort on community organization and in casework.

The research experience gave me a tool to use, and helped me to understand the use and value of research—but the time and extent the research thesis required appeared to me to be out of proportion to the values received.

Some slight benefit. I wouldn't give the project much credit for achieving the above [four factors presented]. For me it was a necessary process to go through to achieve my objective. It gave me a slight if brief acquaintance with the research procedures.

In Table XVI, it was seen that fifteen respondents were of the opinion that the school research experience had not contributed to their total formation as social workers. Some of the comments offered in explanation of their opinions were:

I did a library study which helped only in gaining information re: the historical development of the legislation involved.

Needless to say, my thesis I felt was not outstanding in its field and I was dissatisfied with my final version, yet very thankful when it was out of the way.

Seemed to serve mainly as a test of perseverance in dealing with obstacles of completion. Screened the flippant students as well as those who ran out of money trying to stick it out.

Mechanics of collecting data seemed totally unrelated to anything I was interested in—conclusions from thesis so inconclusive that I question value of thesis, except as a self-disciplinary kind of experience.

It made a nervous wreck of me, but I had to write it in order to get my degree. [No contribution] except to create some awareness of the importance to the field.

The examination of the school of social work research requirement for a degree is a shibboleth whose reexamination is long overdue.

The final "grade" was "A"—it was fun doing initial planning and interviewing. Writing it and rewriting endlessly was a traumatic deal!

According to Table XVI, a small number of the respondents gave neither a positive nor a negative reply, but instead offered only comments on the contribution of the school research project to the total formation of a social worker. Some of these thoughts were:

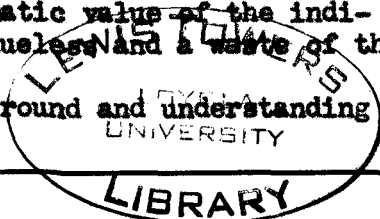
I was extremely interested in research projects other students were carrying on, and distressed because so many of them contributed little or nothing to the students' understanding, except of method, or to the understanding of the agencies furnishing the data.

Too busy trying to produce thesis which left insufficient time for development of skill and attitudes which should be the purpose and result.

Thought group project would be more plausible and beneficial. More time should be given to methods of research than to writing thesis.

With each student being required to seek some undeveloped field I think the schools of social work should evaluate the pragmatic value of the individual thesis—too many are written that are valueless and a waste of the student's time.

Subject helped develop feeling for "historical" background and understanding of a problem.



I happen to be one of those peculiar people who likes statistics. I think the study of Statistics and research has been most helpful not only in research projects but in the organization of a department.

In view of the above comments, it is seen that not only did the school research experience give the respondents an awareness of research methods, but it also added to their professional skills and broadened their knowledge of the field. On the other hand, the minority of comments dealt with the excess of time and effort required by the school research in comparison to the benefits received. It was felt that this time and effort could have been used more advantageously by taking additional courses in school.

The majority of the respondents felt that the school research experience had contributed in some respect to their total formation as social workers. The majority also agreed to the four contributing factors which were presented in order to obtain their reactions. In addition to their responses to the latter, they also offered numerous comments regarding the affect of the school research experience on their total formation as social workers.

CHAPTER VI

THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE TRENDS OF THE SCHOOL RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

It was supposed that the respondents might have some suggestions as to the possible future plans regarding the school research requirement. Therefore, they were asked if they thought the schools of social work should continue to require a research experience for a master's degree and whether an individual thesis or a group project would be more beneficial. Their opinions on these two subjects are contained in this chapter.

TABLE XVII

OPINIONS ON THE CONTINUATION OF RESEARCH EXPERIENCE FOR MASTER'S DEGREE

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Yes	114
No	16
Qualified response	4
No response	6
Total	140

As noted in the above table, the majority of the respondents felt that the schools of social work should continue to require a research experience for a master's degree. This group offered the following comments:

But not as the thesis which completes the degree. This might better be in the field of the student's practice.

[Either continue requirement] or [do] something requiring similar skills. Even though I hated every bit of it, I'm glad I was made to do it. I definitely believe something is wrong with the way it is set up as I knew it and understand it now. Too much time. It could be done simpler, I'm sure. But perhaps more emphasis on statistics as undergraduate. [Continue requirement] but [require] one where main emphasis is on developing skills and attitudes rather than on individual production.

The small amount of respondents who were of the opinion that this requirement should be discontinued expressed their feelings in comments such as:

Many students will never be able to do much in the way of research. There should be an alternate plan for such students but not one which would make it easier to obtain a graduate degree.

A qualified "no" above since I do believe that a more limited type of research experience in connection with an advanced research class would be valuable—certainly more so than the individual thesis as I experienced it with a maximum in effort producing practically nothing of value.

Not if sound courses in statistics and research are carried out. These could include small projects. I think help in the knowledge of oral interpretation would be just as valuable and used far more. Often you are called on to give speeches more than making a research project unless that is your specialty.

Four of the total number gave no definite answer, instead offered only comments. These are listed as Qualified Responses and they read as follows:

Only if applicable to case work skills, techniques, educational or administrative process.

My feeling is that a research project should be related in content to field work.

Everyone is not adapted to research, but something is needed to help. I believe it should be an alternative to additional field work.

The theme which appears throughout all the above comments places emphasis on the type of research experience which would not necessarily be a thesis but rather a modification which would aid the student in the development of his skills. On the other hand, this research experience would not be

necessary if adequate courses in research and statistics are given to the student.

TABLE XVIII-A

OPINIONS ON THE MORE BENEFICIAL
TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Individual thesis	44
Group project	42
Qualified response	43
No response	11
Total	140

Those who chose the individual thesis as the more beneficial type of school research were the majority number. Choice of the individual thesis held the lead, but surpassed the preferences for the group project by only two responses. The comments offered by those who selected the individual type of school research could be divided into three categories: (1) individual before group research, (2) adaptation of research to the student, and (3) disadvantages of group research.

Individual Before Group Research

Undergraduate group work skills, subjects, and social science subjects plus experience in Girl Scouts, settlement house clubs, helped me far more than the ivory-towered research. My preference happens to be working directly with people. There are many social workers who prefer other fields.

People work at such different levels that a group project isn't as helpful as individual work where you do every step yourself.

I am thinking of an individual project that might be written up; this was discussed among students when I was beginning my study; also last year in another school setting the individual project was preferable.

If you do a thesis alone, you can work later on a project with a group, but if you can work only with a group you may be handicapped in trying one by yourself. The more valuable ones are usually the fruit of group effort.

[Individual thesis] to gain overall perspective instead of seeing one phase of a larger project. Schools should emphasize research much more!

More individual help in writing, choice of words, selection of facts. The experience in accurate thinking and writing is valuable. Some theses, such as those reviewing the work of an agency, have real value to the agency and to other students.

I believe working out a project for one's self is in some ways more rewarding, but also see benefits in being a part of a group project.

I believe the student will get better professional discipline from doing an individual thesis to begin with. For inexperienced workers, the research team offers a fine experience. Possibly a group project can be sufficiently well planned and supervised to give the student the training he needs. I have never seen it done, however.

Research Adapted to the Student

In the area of one's practice, rather than research per se.

I think group research has values as well as individual research project. It would depend on the area to be studied, the individual and his situation.

This should be guided by the situation--individual preference of student, the competency of school staff in guiding individual or group research, philosophy of staff regarding the value of research--research should not be undertaken only for the sake of meeting a requirement for graduation which would be of little value to student or profession; I cannot think of a social work position where a research approach to a situation or problem cannot contribute something constructive.

Disadvantages of Group Research

Group projects which I have been associated with have demanded little of the individual other than an academic exercise in which quality was not stressed.

Any group project always leaves one or two holding the bag--this is more likely true on the student level. On professional level responsibility is divided and one person has overall responsibility defined. If a thesis is to help a student develop an attack of a problem it should be an individual thing because different students develop at different paces and accept or reject "thesis project." Group project violates principle of growth of student.

Group project has merit but some individuals get more out of it than others.

A group project would have the advantage of working with others in a different manner than working with clients or patients.

This I can only judge from my own experience but cannot see how the group project would be as beneficial as the individual thesis.

The foregoing comments on the individual thesis stress the fact that the latter is more beneficial than a group project because the student learns

how to do the research alone and this by far results in a more thorough knowledge of the procedure. Even though the individual thesis was preferred, it was thought that it should be chosen so as to blend in with the student's program and not just for the purpose of meeting a requirement.

The forty-three people who felt that the group project was more beneficial than the individual type of research contributed many comments concerning: (1) the more advantageous planning of time consumed by research, (2) the establishment of some goal in the research study, (3) personal stimulation from group research, and (4) ideal preparation through group research.

More Advantageous Planning of Research Time

Because I believe the group project takes less of the student's time, but still teaches the same principles of research.

I think a good research experience could be planned to be much less time-consuming than most theses have been.

I consider the advent of group project a step in direction of acquainting student with research method without burdening him too much. Some students, however, make an original contribution in a master's thesis and a few, if they are capable of individual study could use this experience to real benefit for themselves.

A less extensive group project would have given me the same sort of learning experience without the sacrifice of time.

I feel the group project is better as writing an individual thesis is most strenuous and I have often wondered if such an effort was justified by a study of results obtained.

With my limited interest in research, I would emphasize other areas of work. We need research, but it should be left to those interested and should not be used as a device to limit or hinder good workers.

Learning and applying research techniques is valuable, but I feel this could be accomplished in less time than was required. This time could then be applied more advantageously to advanced casework courses. Those students entering the research field could take advanced courses in research.

Goals in Research Studies

Studies done by students should be basic and simple and have a real purpose.

It seems to me that individual theses only become research material for writers of other theses except in a few instances. We have a whole stack that are only put to this use.

I think the small, isolated project is often valueless except for the one doing

it. If we are going to do research, let us think of tying it up with something that can be really useful.

I have had no group project experience so cannot say with connection. I believe social workers should learn research method with the goal of trying to verify more of our concepts scientifically.

Personal Stimulation from Group Research

I do feel it is important to have an opportunity in a research project preferably a group project for participation.

Testing and sharing ideas and cooperative planning of how to present them might be as valuable a technique in teaching.

It would depend on the nature of the research project—not all lend themselves to group treatment—but it has the advantage of inter-personal stimulation, motivation, and check on findings.

Probably a group project because of the stimulation of others' ideas, broadening one's own perspective.

With a research expert as an active member of the group.

Ideal Preparation—Group Research

Research experience should prepare worker for research necessary in field and agency, and not be an end in itself.

Think group research has more possibilities re: growth through dynamic experience of the whole concept of the democratic process.

A group project with people working cooperatively at set time and within a time limit I think has more value to the individuals and produces a product more usable. Since working with agencies and individuals is so important to the social worker such an experience lends training in this area.

Depends on future plans of individual, but ordinarily, work experience is with others and therefore group projects should be more beneficial.

The group project is more stimulating and more nearly typical of the research methods developed in the professional field.

Either is good, but group projects develop a person's ability to work in a group toward a common good. Might help later on committees state or national; a social worker evaluate the results of her casework or group work. We need to know where we are going and how effective our methods are.

Group projects are on the whole more practical and of more benefit to the greatest number of people but I think the individual thesis may be more suitable for certain subjects and material to be studied.

For the general values accruing to students out of theses, they might as well be written by the faculty and submitted to the student for approval. A group project has real value in teaching team work and division of labor. I seriously question the place of individual theses as a part of school curriculum.

A portion of the total group, comparative in number to those who gave

either a positive or negative reply concerning the group project, submitted only comments. These comments were of great quantity and revealed the thoughts of the respondents regarding: (1) the freedom of choice in student research, (2) their undecisive answers due to experience only with the individual thesis, (3) better planning of research time, (4) lack of value in research, and (5) the correlation of research with the student's needs and interests.

Freedom of Choice

Comments made with reservation since research is important and essential in social work. It might be more effective if kept on an elective basis, both positive and negative factors should be taken into consideration. I feel that insofar as possible the individual should have the right of choice here. Any professional person needs research experience in his own field to understand and appreciate research as an integral part of the content of a profession; whether or not he ever engages in such activity again. I believe a student should be able to choose that type of research activity as part of his graduate training which best meets his own interests and developmental needs.

Undecisive Responses

I'm not sure having had no experience with a group project, but one thing I am very sure about is the need for a student to have experience with research method before graduation, through work on a project which involves the research method.

My attitude about a research study is all on the plus side. I believe this is because my project supervisor helped me to enjoy the study and the process that I went thru to complete it. So my answer to this question can be neither one nor the other nor can it be for or against because my experience bears out that I needed this training. I only wish students could have the understanding supervision of a professor who likes people, who likes research and who likes to take advantage of every experience in the study process to teach.

Not having participated in group project cannot evaluate but would think group thinking would be helpful in analysis.

Better Planning of Research Time

If they just must have one—then a group project done in school is best—but don't let them leave school to do it later when they get on a job.

Like both, if meaningful [group and individual]. Feel too much time and energy are spent on research.

Both are beneficial and experience as an individual and with a group should be

had in schools.

Depends upon subject. Perhaps the research experience could be integrated more effectively, so that it is not a chore to be done at the end of the sequence. Some schools have attempted this more successfully than others.

Lack of Value in Research

Can't answer since I have only had personal and supervisory experience with individual. Group sounds as if it would be more stimulating. The main lack as I look back on my project was the research course which seemed to stress statistical charts and was not at all inspiring towards developing any idea of the purpose of research or methods.

Total waste of time for me—probably needed better supervisory help and guidance.

The purpose of the schools should be to give sufficient understanding of research to enable practitioners in any field to participate in research and to understand reports but not to make research technicians—except for those entering this particular field.

I have yet to hear of any real value in thesis writing except to those liking and majoring in Research.

The thesis uses more time and effort than its value normally—such time could be better used in learning more about research and method.

I think our ability to be objective, develop reasoning power, think with originality, and to develop the power of accuracy are not dependent upon doing a research project but can be developed otherwise and some flexibility of assignment should be made.

With regard to the Correlation of Research with Needs and Interests,

various comments were offered explaining that both the individual theses and group projects were beneficial depending upon: (1) the student's interest, (2) the student's needs, (3) the setting for the research, and (4) supervision.

Others commented further on this:

The value could be more in one than the other depending on subject chosen and possible ties for research. I don't think a thesis is necessarily a means of developing a caseworker as a professional person, but some type of project does teach one how to gather facts, weigh the evidence and draw conclusions, which is of value in logical thinking and planning.

Important thing is not whether it is individual or group but rather what the student learns of methods of research.

According to the opinions expressed above, a group project is more beneficial than the individual thesis because it takes less time and offers the

student equivalent knowledge of research methods. It was felt that the group project is a more realistic preparation for research, because most agency work is done by the group rather than the individual worker. Some respondents were of the opinion that the student should be permitted to choose his type of research. Others thought that one type of research would not necessarily have to be compared with another, but rather research should be undertaken for some purpose and not just for reasons of learning.

Since the number of people who gave Qualified Responses was so great and because their comments gave indication of some preference, the latter were reviewed and a revised table was made.

TABLE XVIII-B

OPINIONS ON THE MORE BENEFICIAL
TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Individual thesis	44
Group project	46
Either	21
Qualified response	18
No response	11
Total	140

Comparing the above table with Table XVIII-A, it was seen that four of the Qualified Responses were in favor of the Group Project; twenty-one preferred Either type of research; the remaining eighteen gave no indication of any choice.

Regarding the opinions on the future trends of the school research

requirement, the majority of the respondents, one hundred and fourteen of the total number 140, felt that the schools of social work should continue to require a research experience for the attainment of a master's degree. They were of the opinion that the individual thesis would be more beneficial to the student than the group project, but their choice exceeded the preferences for the group project by only two responses.

CHAPTER VII

CORRELATION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter certain opinions of those respondents who were involved with an individual thesis are correlated with the opinions of those who worked on a group project while in school. These opinions were in response to the following: (1) whether or not they were in full-time attendance while doing the research, (2) if full-time students, the length of time for completion of the research, (3) the amount of time given to the research, (4) whether or not they were engaged in research studies after graduation, (5) whether or not the schools should continue the research requirement, and (6) if they should, whether the individual thesis or the group project would be more beneficial.

In addition to the above, the opinions of those who have engaged in post-graduate research studies are also correlated with those who have not done so. These opinions were based on the last two points presented in the foregoing paragraph, namely, whether or not the schools should continue the research requirement; and if they should, whether the individual thesis or the group project would be more beneficial.

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a summarization of the various correlations which have been mentioned.

TABLE XIX

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

School research	School attendance				Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Qualified response	No response	
Individual	79	42	1		122
Group	11	1	1		13
No response	2			3	5
Total	92	43	2	3	140

As previously stated in another chapter, the majority, 122, of the respondents had been involved with the individual thesis while in school. It is noted in the above table that approximately 65 per cent of this group were in full-time attendance when the research was being done. Even though a group project was carried by the minority, the greater part of these respondents was also in full-time attendance while involved with the research. Those respondents who have done both individual and group research while in full-time attendance are 66 per cent of the total number.

The Qualified and No Responses listed in all the tables throughout this chapter will not be explained because they have been previously discussed in other chapters.

TABLE XX

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH ITS COMPLETION TIME

School research	Periods of time				Total
	Within the second year	After this period	Qualified response	No response	
Individual	77	21	1	23	122
Group	10	2		1	13
No response			1	4	5
Total	87	23	2	28	140

In the above table, it is seen that 63 per cent of the total number of respondents whose school research studies were individual theses completed the latter within their second year of graduate training. The greater portion of those who were concerned with group projects also found the second year adequate for completion of their research studies. The combined number of respondents who have completed both individual and group research during their second year of training covers 62 per cent of the total number.

Those who completed individual theses after their second year of training preceded the respondents who were completing group project research at that time. The respondents who finished both individual and group research after their second year of training amounts to 17 per cent of the total number.

TABLE XXI

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH AMOUNT OF TIME
GIVEN TO RESEARCH

School research	Amounts of time				Total
	Very little	Reasonable amount	Too much	Qualified response	
Individual	4	91	22	5	122
Group	2	9		2	13
No response	1	2		2	5
Total	7	102	22	9	140

Ninety-one of the 122 people who were involved with the individual thesis were of the opinion that they had given a reasonable amount of time to their research. The minority, nine respondents, who did group projects also stated that the required time was a reasonable amount. These two groups are 72 per cent of the total number of respondents.

Twenty-two respondents, all of whom had individual theses, considered the required research time as being too great. This group covers 15 per cent of the total number.

Seven respondents felt that they had given very little time to their research projects. Among these seven, those who had done individual research held the majority.

TABLE XXII

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH AFFECT OF REQUIRED TIME
ON CLASS AND FIELD WORK

School research	Affect					Total
	Helped	Hindered	No affect	Qualified response	No response	
Individual	36	9	55	12	10	122
Group	1		10	1	1	13
No response			1	2	2	5
Total	37	9	66	15	13	140

A little less than one-half, 45 per cent, of the group which worked on individual theses in school felt that the time given to the latter did not affect their class and field work. Another 30 per cent stated that the individual theses had actually helped in this respect. Nine respondents felt that the time required by the individual type of research hindered their class and field work.

Seventy-seven per cent of the group project category considered the school research time as having been of no affect on their class and field work.

Forty-seven per cent of the total number felt that the required time had no affect on their class and field work. Within this group were people who had done both individual and group research. A group of this same composition also considered the research time as being a help to any class and field

work. This latter group is 19 per cent of the total number of respondents.

TABLE XXIII

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
ENGAGED IN POST-GRADUATE
RESEARCH

School research	Number of respondents			Total
	Further research	No further research	Qualified response	
Individual	75	44	3	122
Group	3	10		13
No response	3	2		5
Total	81	56	3	140

Sixty-one per cent of the total number who carried individual theses while in school were engaged in further research studies after graduation. This fact did not hold true, however, for the respondents who were working on group projects in school. Ten of these 13 respondents had no occasion to do any research after graduation.

Considering the total number of respondents who had done both individual and group research in school, 58 per cent had engaged in further research; 40 per cent had not. Therefore, it is seen that research is quite prevalent in the social work positions chosen after graduation.

TABLE XXIV

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH OPINIONS ON CONTINUATION
OF RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

School research	Opinions				Total
	Continue requirement	Discontinue requirement	Qualified response	No response	
Individual	98	16	4	4	122
Group	13				13
No response	3			2	5
Total	114	16	4	6	140

It is noted in the above table that eighty-nine per cent of the 122 respondents who were involved with the individual type of school research were of the opinion that the schools of social work should retain the research requirement as part of their curriculum. Thirteen per cent of this group thought that the requirement should be discontinued. The total number of respondents who had done group projects were in accordance with the opinions expressed by the majority.

Eighty-one per cent of all the respondents felt that the research requirement should be continued by the schools of social work; 11 per cent were not in favor of this.

TABLE XXV

TYPE OF SCHOOL RESEARCH CORRELATED
WITH OPINIONS ON MORE BENEFICIAL
TYPE OF RESEARCH

School research	Opinions					Total
	Individual thesis	Group project	Either	Qualified response	No response	
Individual	42	39	19	12	10	122
Group	2	6	2	3		13
No response		1		3	1	5
Total	44	46	21	18	11	140

Those who had been involved with individual theses while in school considered the latter as the more beneficial type of research. Thirty-four per cent were of this opinion, while another 32 per cent believed the group project to be more beneficial. Sixteen per cent felt that either type was valuable. The majority choice made by those who handled group projects in school was the group project. Their second preference was the individual thesis.

Forty-six respondents, a combination of those who had done both types of school research, considered the group project to be more beneficial. Forty-four respondents of the same combination felt that the individual thesis proved to be more beneficial.

Thus it is seen that the group project was the choice of the largest number of respondents even though they had engaged in individual research while

in school.

Opinions on the continuation of the school research requirement were sought from those respondents who had done research after graduation.

TABLE XXVI

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS ENGAGED IN POST-GRADUATE
RESEARCH CORRELATED WITH OPINIONS
ON CONTINUATION OF RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Responses	Opinions				Total
	Continue requirement	Discontinue requirement	Qualified response	No response	
Further research	69	8	2	2	81
No further research	43	7	2	4	56
Qualified response	2	1			3
Total	114	16	4	6	140

As previously mentioned in another chapter, eighty-one respondents of the total number, 140, had been engaged in further research since graduation. Eighty-five per cent of this group felt that the research requirement should be continued by the schools of social work. This same opinion was also expressed by 77 per cent of those who had done no post-graduate research.

Taking the total number of respondents into consideration, 81 per cent believed the research requirement should be continued; 11 per cent did not

favor this.

Those respondents who had engaged in research studies since graduation were asked to state their opinions regarding the more beneficial type of research.

TABLE XXVII

**NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS ENGAGED IN POST-GRADUATE
RESEARCH CORRELATED WITH OPINIONS ON
MORE BENEFICIAL TYPE OF RESEARCH**

Responses	Opinions					Total
	Individual thesis	Group project	Either	Qualified response	No response	
Further research	32	24	11	11	3	81
No further research	12	21	9	6	8	56
Qualified response		1	1	1		3
Total	44	46	21	18	11	140

It was also thought by 40 per cent of the group who had engaged in further research since graduation that the individual thesis was the more beneficial type of research. Thirty per cent of these people considered the group project to be more profitable. Only 14 per cent felt that either type could prove to be of benefit. The majority, 38 per cent, of those who had done no further research chose the group project, whereas 21 per cent were in favor of the individual thesis and 16 per cent considered both to be of benefit to the

student depending upon various factors which were previously stated.

In review of the correlations presented in this chapter, it was seen that whether the respondents worked on an individual thesis or a group project in school, the majority were in full-time attendance during that period. Also, these respondents found that they were able to complete either type of research during their second year of graduate training while in full-time attendance. The majority number of either group felt that the time required by the individual thesis or the group project was a reasonable amount. A little less than one-half of the group concerned with the individual thesis in school thought that the time required by the research had no affect on their class and field work. A little more than three-fourths of those who were involved with a group project in school were of the same opinion. The majority of the individual thesis group had been engaged in further research after graduation, but not so for those who had indulged in group projects. Both types of school research groups were in favor of continuing the research requirement by the schools of social work. The group which had carried individual theses was somewhat divided as to the benefits of one type of research in contrast to the other, although the individual thesis was most preferred. A few people considered either type as beneficial. Those having done a group project thought the group type of research to be the better. Actually the combined number of respondents who had done both types of school research were most in favor of the group project.

The majority of both those who had and had not engaged in further research felt that the school research requirement should be continued. Those who had engaged in further research considered the individual thesis to be more

beneficial; next, the group project; and finally, either type of research. The respondents who had not engaged in research studies since graduation thought the group project should take the lead; then, the individual thesis; and lastly, either type. However, when the responses of those who had done group research in school were totaled with those who had done individual theses, the group project was preferred by the majority.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In order to obtain an over-all view of the entire study, this chapter presents in summary form the obtained information, the opinions of the respondents regarding this material, and concluding thoughts on the subject.

The various characteristics of the respondents revealed that the majority, thirty-three people, were from the Midwestern area covering the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All other geographic areas were well represented. The forty-three respondents between the ages of forty and forty-four years were the greatest portion of the total number. Both men and women took part in the study, with women outnumbering men approximately three to one. Most of the respondents held the position of caseworker. Those who had no previous social work experience before entering a school of social work were in the majority. While in school, one hundred and fifteen respondents out of the total number of 140 specialized in the field of casework. Among the graduates of the years 1942 to 1947 chosen for the study, the year 1947 claimed the majority of thirty-two. Considering these various characteristics, therefore, the chosen group is seen to be a representative sample of the total population of social workers who have completed their professional training.

For purposes of clarification, the responses obtained through the study are divided into four categories: (1) past experiences with school research, (2) present involvement with research studies, (3) contribution of school research experience to the total formation of the social worker, and (4) opinions on the future outlook for the continued requirement of school research.

Past Experiences with School Research—According to the responses the following facts were obtained:

(1) One hundred and twenty-two people, 87 per cent of the total number of respondents, had done individual theses rather than group project work during their graduate training.

(2) The majority, 66 per cent of the group, were able to complete their research within the second year of training while carrying full-time schedules.

(3) Seventy-three per cent of the respondents felt that they had given neither too much nor too little, but rather a reasonable amount of time to the research. Various comments were offered depending upon the quantity of time required by the research.

(4) Forty-eight per cent of the respondents thought that the time which they devoted to the school research in no way affected their class and field work. Their comments, however, expressed thoughts not only of their ability to handle the research while in or out of school, but also the difficulties encountered because more time was required to complete the research.

Present Involvement with Research Studies—Within this category are found the responses offered by those who are not only involved with research studies at present, but also those who have done research studies since

graduation. Their responses revealed the following:

(1) Fifty-eight per cent of the total number had engaged in research studies since graduation, some of which were in relation to their respective positions.

(2) The average number of studies done by each of these people was between two and three.

(3) These studies were mainly the group type and agency requested rather than the personally initiated individual study.

(4) Fifty-three per cent of the respondents felt that the previous school research experience had prepared them for further studies made. Some of the comments offered expressed the feeling that the preparation could have been more complete.

Contribution of School Research Experience to the Total Formation of the Social Worker—In answer to this question, the majority, 53 per cent of the group, considered the school research experience as having contributed in some way to their total formation as social workers. They agreed upon the four contributing factors which were presented to them, namely: (a) increased my ability to be objective in attitude, (b) developed my reasoning power, (c) increased my ability to think with originality, and (d) developed my power of accuracy. Other contributing factors were also commented upon such as, the self-discipline required by research; the knowledge of research techniques; and additional knowledge of agency function.

Opinions on the Future Outlook for the Continued Requirement of School Research—The responses on this topic produced the following points of

information: -

(1) Eighty-one per cent of the group thought it advisable for the schools of social work to continue this requirement. Their comments, however, conveyed the opinion that the research should be a lesser project, and one which would aid the student in his practice.

(2) The individual thesis was chosen as being more beneficial than the group project by 32 per cent of the respondents; 24 per cent favored the group project; and the remainder considered both to be beneficial. Those who chose the individual thesis commented that it gave the student both working knowledge of the complete research method and freedom of personal expression in composition which are only partially fulfilled in the group project. Comments by those who chose the latter conveyed the thought that the group project required less of the student's time, but offered him sufficient knowledge of the research method.

It would seem, therefore, from the facts and opinions obtained that the school research experience with all its joys and sorrows is not something to be considered as an unimportant part of the social worker's training.

There is one bitter note which has sounded repeatedly in the various comments offered and that has to do with the excess amount of time required by the school research. Suggestions for the solution of this problem were offered by the respondents. They felt that the research could be substituted by taking additional hours of class or field work, or through better scheduling of time without making a substitution. If the problem could not be solved in this manner, perhaps the research experience could be modified to some extent whereby the student would still be taught the fundamentals of research.

The social worker will in all likelihood be asked to do a research study in relation to his agency setting. It was shown that the group project was most frequently used in agency studies in contrast to the prevalence of the individual type of school research done by the majority. In addition to this, both the respondents who had engaged in further research after graduation and those who had not done so chose the group project as being the more beneficial type of research. Therefore, it would appear that the schools of social work would be training their students more efficiently if they were to acquaint them with group project research rather than the individual thesis. There were various comments made, however, wherein the respondents expressed their thoughts on the benefits of the individual thesis.

Many of the responses advocated the necessity of choosing research topics which are relative to the student's program. Thereby, the student would not only be taught the fundamentals of research, but would also acquire additional knowledge of his chosen field.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN THE STUDY

1. Age _____ Sex M _____ F _____
2. Your position now _____
3. No. of years experience in Social Work before training in school _____
4. Year of graduation from School of Social Work _____
5. Field of specialization while in school
(e.g., casework, group work, etc.) _____
6. What kind of a research experience did you have in school?
Individual thesis _____ Group project _____
7. Were you in full-time attendance (full course load and field work) while doing the research? Yes _____ No _____
8. If you were, when did you finish the research?
Within the second year _____ After this period _____
9. How much time did you give to the research study?
Very little _____ Reasonable amount _____ Too much _____
- Comments: _____
10. How do you think the time spent on the research affected your class and field work?
Helped _____ Hindered _____ No affect _____
- Comments: _____
11. Since graduation, have you engaged in a research study of any kind?
Yes _____ How many? _____ No _____
- Comments: _____
12. If you have, what type was it? (Check more than one) Individual _____
Group _____ Agency requested _____ Personally initiated _____
13. In your opinion, did the school research experience help you in these studies?
Yes _____ No _____
14. If you have not done any further studies, do you think the research experience in school contributed to your total formation as a social worker?
Yes _____ No _____
- How?
- | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|----------|
| Increased my ability to be objective in attitude | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Developed my reasoning power | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Increased my ability to think with originality | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Developed my power of accuracy | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| No benefit | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Other | ----- | Yes _____ | No _____ |
- Comments: _____
15. Do you think the schools of social work should continue to require a research experience for a Master's degree? Yes _____ No _____
16. If so, which do you think would be more beneficial? Individual thesis _____
Group project _____
- Comments: _____

APPENDIX II

LETTER WHICH ACCOMPANIED
EACH QUESTIONNAIRE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Lewis Towers, 820 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago 11, Illinois

April 7, 1953

M E M O

To: Graduates of Schools of Social Work
From: Miss Jeanine Deka
Student, School of Social Work
Loyola University, Chicago
Subject: Questionnaire Regarding Your Opinions on Research

The enclosed questionnaire, which is being sent to a selected number of graduates listed in the AASW Directory, is an attempt to get an answer to the following question:

"How Do Graduate Social Workers Look Back Upon the Research
Requirement For a Master's Degree in Social Work?"

A word about me. I am a second-year student at the School of Social Work at Loyola University in Chicago. This study is my thesis. I understand that all Schools of Social Work are interested in re-evaluating their research programs. My study may contribute a mite toward this.

Would you be willing to help me in this pilot study? Your responses will be kept confidential of course; you will notice that no identifying information is contained in the questionnaire. Time is one of the important elements for the completion of this study, so could I have your answers to the above question immediately?

Sincerely yours,