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ABSTRACT

The Field Instructor Supervision Scale (FISS) measures field instructor supervision behaviors and can be completed by undergraduate and graduate students in diverse practicum settings. The FISS was validated over 4 years with 684 undergraduate and graduate social work students. The final FISS included 18-items and had two subscales: task support and developmental support. Construct validity was established through exploratory factor analysis; Cronbach's alpha was excellent. The FISS was associated with students' self-reported satisfaction, instructor effectiveness, preparedness for practice, learning, and self-efficacy, providing evidence for criterion-related validity. The FISS can be used by field education programs to evaluate students' perception of field instructors' task and developmental support and by researchers to examine the relation between support and student outcomes.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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The quality of services that we provide clients rests on the quality of our workforce, and workforce quality depends on the preparation and well-being of social work students. Arguably, the relationship with field instructors is the most important relationship most social work students develop during their degree program. High-quality field instruction is believed to provide a strong foundation for early career development and is likely to influence the quality of field instruction provided to future students over the span of their careers.

Although researchers have investigated the nature of the social work student and field instructor relationship and developed several instruments to evaluate field instruction since the 1970s, to our knowledge, researchers have not tested whether field instruction is multidimensional. A validated multidimensional scale that measures students' perceptions of field instructor behaviors may benefit the field in two ways. First, it could be used by researchers to understand the relation among different dimensions of field instruction and a host of student outcomes, including students' preparedness for professional social work practice. Second, it could be used by field education programs in tandem with other measures to evaluate the instruction students receive in their field experience and to strengthen supports for field instructors.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to develop a multidimensional scale based on the theoretical literature and test its reliability and validity. Specifically, we examined the content validity, construct validity (factor structure), internal consistency reliability, and criterion-related concurrent validity of a new scale, the Field Instructor Supervision Scale (FISS). Content validity demonstrates the extent to which a scale reflects a specific domain of content; construct validity demonstrates the extent to which a scale measures what it was designed to measure. In this study, the construct was field instructor behaviors. Facilitative field instructor behaviors were defined as actions that are intended to support students' learning. Criterion validity is the extent to which a measure is related to a criterion (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). Criterion validity may be either concurrent or predictive. In this study, we test concurrent validity, that is, the relation among the construct, field instructor behaviors, and one or more criteria, which are assessed at the same time.

Literature

Dimensions of field instructor behaviors

Several researchers have described field instructor behaviors by asking students to describe desirable, good, ideal, positive, preferred, or favorable characteristics or behaviors of field instructors. These studies identified many field instructor behaviors. For example, Gandolfo and Brown (1987, p. 15) found “ideal” field instructors were collaborative, warm, interactive, open, and direct with evaluative feedback. Lazar and Eisikovits (1997, p. 25) found students “preferred” field instructors who were responsive and supportive, accessible and available for supervision, and treated students fairly and objectively. For their studies, Thyer et al. (Thyer, Sowers-Hoag, & Love, 1986; Thyer, Williams, Love, & Sowers-Hoag, 1989) developed, but did not validate, a questionnaire to evaluate the “quality” (p. 249) of field instruction that included items such as offered feedback, was available, listened, and provided assistance with learning skills and techniques. In these and similar studies, researchers identified numerous field instructor behaviors. However, these studies do not tell us whether these behaviors measure a single dimension or multiple dimensions of field supervision.

Several writers have proposed that supervisor behaviors are related and have proposed typologies of supervision that have either two or three dimensions. These theoretical articles and studies are important to deductive scale development, which uses a “classification schema or typology prior to data collection” (Hinkin, 1995, p. 965). Kadushin’s classification scheme is probably the most well-known typology of supervision in the social work field (Kadushin, 1976; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014). It was based on Towles’ (1963) assertion that supervision of social workers included three functions: an administrative function, a teaching function, and a helping function. Kadushin renamed these supervision functions administrative, educational, and supportive, which were adopted by the National Association of Social Workers and the Association of Social Work Boards (2013). Kadushin defined the administrative function of supervision as the “correct, effective and appropriate implementation of governing policies, procedures, statutes and laws” (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014, p. 19). The educational function of supervision addresses social work supervisees’ need to develop the knowledge, skill, and ability to serve clients. The third function of supervision is support, which “recognizes social workers have job-related stressors,” and they need support “to improve and sustain morale and job satisfaction” (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014, p. 19). Erera and Lazar (1994) tested Kadushin’s (1976) typology of supervision behaviors. Using a sample of social workers, not students, the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) extracted seven, not three, factors.

Researchers have also identified dimensions of field instruction using samples of social work students. In Choy, Leung, Tarn and Chu’s (1998) study, students listed “tasks” of the field instructor. Using content analysis, the researchers classified tasks into three categories: “managing,” “educating” and “facilitating” “roles,” which are consistent with Kadushin’s typology (Kadushin, 1976; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014, p. 123). However, unlike Kadushin’s scheme, the behaviors listed under the managing role involved preparing the student for the placement, planning and monitoring the student’s work, and ensuring a good fit between the student and the agency. The educator role included teaching the student how to apply theory and practice skills. The facilitator role included tasks related to supporting the student and encouraging the student’s self-reflection.

Barretti (2009) adapted a scale from the nursing profession that measured three field instructor roles: The social work role includes behaviors related to intervening directly with or on behalf of clients, the teacher role includes behaviors related to providing field supervision, and the person role includes behaviors related to interpersonal qualities such as empathy, kindness, and honesty. Most items did not measure interactions between the field instructor and the student, however. Instead, they measured behaviors the field instructors demonstrated when they interacted with others (i.e., clients) and personal traits of the field instructor.

Fortune and Abramson (1993) developed a survey to assess students' field experience, not just field instructor behaviors. The EFA extracted four factors, one of which was named the Quality of Field Instruction Scale (e.g., whether the field instructor was available, trustworthy, a good role model). Thus, their scale is unidimensional. The other factors included items related to the field liaison, agency desirability and inclusion, and student performance.

Two studies, using qualitative analysis, described two dimensions of field instruction. Ellison (1994) asked students to identify a critical incident and describe what the field instructor did that was helpful or effective. From the analysis, Ellison concluded field instructor supervision consisted of "task behaviors" and "expressive behaviors" (p. 15). Ellison defined task behaviors as educational and administrative functions, such as providing direction, instruction and information, and expressive behaviors as interpersonal or supportive functions, which included recognizing students' concerns and allowing them to vent. Hutt, Scott, and King (1983) conducted a phenomenological study and asked students to contrast positive and negative supervisory experiences. They too identified two dimensions of supervision: "task-oriented" and "person-oriented" (p. 118) behaviors. It is important to note, Hutt et al. (1983) observed that in a positive experience, supervisors balanced relational aspects of student-supervisory interactions, such as warmth, acceptance, and trust, with the task-oriented aspects of training.

The relation between field instructor and student behaviors

Most of what is known about the relation between field instructor behaviors and student learning and competence is the result of a series of studies conducted by Knight (1996, 2000, 2001), who revised Shulman, Robinson and Luckyj's (1981) scale to apply to field instruction and found some evidence for test-retest reliability, internal consistency reliability, and concurrent validity. Shulman et al. did not test the factor structure of the scale. In her 1996 study, Knight found all field instructor behaviors and availability were related to how much students learned and how prepared students felt. In Knight (2000) additional field instructor behaviors were added. Several behaviors, such as making expectations clear, reviewing cases, and helping students integrate theory with practice were related to learning and to preparedness for practice. In a third study, Knight's (2001) regression analysis showed that learning toward the end of practicum was affected by open discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, individualized learning, encouragement of autonomy and the use of a variety of "assignments" (p. 363). Open discussion, encouragement of self-criticism, and integration of theory and practice affected students' self-report preparedness toward the end of the practicum.

Another important behavior in field education is students' self-efficacy and related concepts, such as their perceived confidence and competence. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as the belief that one can control or influence the events in one's life. In doing so, the person believes they can achieve desired outcomes and avoid negative ones. Self-efficacy in the work context is the students' self-assessment of their capacity to perform a practice behavior well. It is essential for students to believe they can apply newly acquired skills, and field instructors likely play an important role in this process. The relation between field educator behaviors and students' perceived self-efficacy, however, has received virtually no attention in social work research. We identified one study that examined the relation between field instructor behaviors and students' self-confidence. Abbott and Lyter (1999) found that criticism that was timely, constructive, and specific and when provided in the context of a trusting relationship was related to the "development of self," (p. 49) which included personal growth, insight, self-awareness, character development, and self-confidence.

There is also evidence that field instructors' behaviors are related to students' satisfaction. In the literature on satisfaction, researchers have examined overall or global satisfaction with the field experience, satisfaction with the field instructor, or both. Alperin (1998) found that field instructor behaviors predicted students' overall satisfaction, along with whether students received their first choice of placement, whether they had a preplacement interview, and the nature of their learning

assignment opportunities. Similarly, Fernandez (1998) and Fortune and Abramson (1993) found a strong relationship between field instructor characteristics and general satisfaction with the placement. Kanno and Koeske (2010), using path analysis, found supervision was related to overall satisfaction directly and indirectly through its influence on self-efficacy in the field.

Three studies (Knight, 1996, 2000; Sinicrope & Cournoyer, 1990) measured students' satisfaction with their field instructor, specifically using items from Shulman et al.'s (1981) scale. Sinicrope and Cournoyer (1990) found field instructor behaviors or personal traits were correlated with students' satisfaction with their "working relationship" with their field instructor. The strongest relationships with satisfaction included field instructor is helpful, understands student's feelings, develops a supportive atmosphere, clarifies roles, senses student's feelings, and gives suggestions. In separate studies, Knight (1996, 2000, 2001) found field instructor behaviors were related to satisfaction with their own field instructor. Fortune et al. (1985) examined the relation between a two-item supervision scale ("My field instructor enjoys his/her role as teacher," and "I am encouraged to express new ideas in my field experience") (p. 95) and satisfaction. Although the supervision was related to satisfaction with students' field agency, their learning, and their field instructor, supervision was most strongly related to satisfaction with students' field instructor.

Summary

In summary, several researchers have adopted or developed instruments to evaluate field instruction or supervision (Alperin, 1998; Fernandez, 1998; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Fortune et al., 1985; Kanno & Koeske, 2010; Knight, 1996, 2000, 2001; Sinicrope & Cournoyer, 1990; Thyer et al., 1986). These scales were developed to reflect a single dimension, such as field instruction, supervision, or supervisor activities. Yet several theorists describe at least two critical dimensions of field instruction, one related to helping students learn how to complete tasks and one related to providing students with emotional or expressive support. Based on their descriptions, we explored whether field instruction has two dimensions: one related to task support and one related to emotional support. Clarifying whether a scale has more than one dimension is important because when two dimensions are proposed (as indicated from the literature), without testing the factor structure, we do not know whether one or both dimensions are related to the criteria of interest. Presently we don't know whether task support, emotional support, or both facilitate students' development, including student learning, preparedness for practice, self-efficacy, and satisfaction with field instruction. In addition to examining the multidimensionality of a new scale using factor analysis, we examine the relation between field instructor behaviors and all of these areas of student development. To ensure our scale can be used in diverse settings with undergraduate and graduate students, we used several methods to generate, evaluate, and test items that could be used in clinical, administrative, and policy settings.

Methods

Sample

The validation of the FISS was part of a larger study evaluating the quality of a field education program at a midwestern school of social work. The school has four campuses located in the southeast, east central, central, and northwest regions of the state. We surveyed all undergraduate and graduate students completing their field experience in spring and summer semesters during four consecutive years: 2014–2017. Data from 2014 ($n=168$ students) was used for Phase 1 (construct validity of the FISS 1.0). Data from 2015 ($n=173$) was used for Phase 2 (construct validity of the FISS 2.0). Data from 2015, 2016 ($n=183$), and 2017 ($n=160$) was used for Phase 3 (criterion validity of the FISS 2.0). At the time of the survey, undergraduate and graduate foundation students had been in their placement for one semester; graduate advanced students had been in their placement for two semesters.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics.

Characteristic	Year			
	2014 <i>n</i> =168	2015 <i>n</i> =173	2016 <i>n</i> =183	2017 ^a <i>n</i> =160
Gender (%)				
Men	17.5	12.8	14.7	–
Women	82.5	87.2	85.3	–
Age (<i>M</i>)	30.3	29.9	28.0	–
Less than 30 years old (%)	60.7	62.0	71.9	–
Years of Full-Time Social Work Experience (<i>M</i>)	3.39	3.21	3.20	–
No prior social work experience (%)	42.3	38.6	43.6	–
Undergraduate grade point average (<i>M</i>)	3.47	3.44	3.46	–
Program and practicum level (%)				
Undergraduate: Field	33.3	31.2	38.3	32.5
Graduate: Foundation	17.9	32.4	24.6	30.4
Graduate: Advanced	48.7	36.4	37.2	37.1

^aData were not collected on gender, age, experience, and grade point average for 2017.

The total sample included 684 students. Table 1 describes students' demographic characteristics, which were similar across cohorts. For the total sample, undergraduates represented 33.8% of the sample (foundation graduate students, 27.3%; advanced graduate students, 38.9%). We used an open-ended question for gender. Most participants identified as women (85.1%); 14.9% identified as men. Students ranged from age 20 to 61 ($M=29.3$, $SD=8.28$); 65.1% of the students were under age 30. Students averaged 3.10 years of full-time professional social work experience prior to enrolling in the program ($SD=5.02$, range=0 to 25 years), although a substantial proportion (41.5%) of students had no prior social work experience. Because of the small number of racially and ethnically diverse students in our program, we did not ask students to identify their race or ethnicity.

Data collection procedures

Students completed the field assessment survey in their last field seminar, which coincided with the end of their field experience. Although students were not asked to include their name, they were asked to report the name of their agency and their field instructor. Students were told their specific responses to items in the survey would not be shared with their agency or field instructor. After the instructor left the seminar, the survey was distributed to students by a staff member or research assistant in 2014 and 2015. In 2016 and 2017, the survey was administered by the seminar instructor. The survey took about 10 minutes to complete and included the FISS, questions to measure student behaviors, open-ended questions, and demographic questions. For the open-ended questions, students were asked, "What did your instructor do that facilitated your learning?" and "What did your instructor do that got in the way of your learning?"

Measures

Field Instructor Supervision Scale 1.0

We generated items deductively from the empirical and theoretical literatures and, to evaluate content validity, inductively from items (a) provided by nine schools of social work that shared their field assessment surveys and (b) generated from a panel of experts. The pool of items generated from the literature and field assessment surveys was reviewed by nine social work faculty members, or experts, who had substantial experience coordinating or supervising students' field experience for at least 5 years. They assessed whether the items included all facets or dimensions of the concept facilitative field instructor behaviors. In addition, we solicited feedback from experts on whether the items were clearly written. Based on their feedback, we revised items and deleted ambiguous and redundant items from the item pool, resulting in a scale with 19 items (FISS 1.0).

Student behaviors

To test criterion validity, we used five items and two validated self-efficacy scales. The five items included satisfaction with field experience (“Overall I was satisfied with my field experience.”), satisfaction with field instructor (“I was satisfied with my field instructor.”), perceived effectiveness of field instructor (“My field instructor was an effective instructor.”), preparedness for professional practice (“My field instructor prepared me for professional social work practice.”) and learning (“My field instructor contributed to my learning.”). The responses ranged from 1=*strongly disagree* to 6=*strongly agree*.

The Self-Efficacy Regarding Social Work Competencies Scale (SERSWCS) included the 41 Council on Social Work Education (2013) practice behaviors and was developed by Holden, Barker, Kuppens, and Rosenberg (2015), using Bandura’s (2006) self-efficacy scale development guide. We selected the SERSWCS because it is the only validated scale measuring students’ self-report on their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS; Council on Social Work Education, 2013) competencies. Students were asked to indicate how confident they were in their ability to successfully perform each practice behavior. Responses ranged from 0 to 100 (0=*cannot do at all* to 100=*certain can do*). The SERSWCS is a measure of task-specific self-efficacy (i.e., context dependent, where social work practice is the context). Holden reports the scale is unidimensional, with loadings ranging from .43 to .85, has high internal consistency (.97 to .98), and has convergent validity with the Social Work Empowerment Scale, $r=$.46, .47, .58, .70 (Holden, Anastas, & Meenaghan, 2003, 2005; Holden et al., 2015).

The Work Self-Efficacy Inventory (WS-Ei) is a 30-item scale developed by Raelin (2010) to measure work self-efficacy. It is a measure of general self-efficacy that predicts ability to adjust to a new work context (context independent, where social work practice is not the context). We selected the WS-Ei because it was the only scale that included items that seemed appropriate for field education. In addition, the items were consistent with CSWE (2015) EPAS practice behaviors. The WS-Ei has seven dimensions (learning, problem solving, pressure, role expectations, teamwork, sensitivity, work politics and overall work self-efficacy). We modified items slightly so the items would apply to students in practicum. The responses ranged from 0 to 100 (0=*cannot do at all* to 100=*certain can do*). Raelin reported internal consistency reliability for the nine dimensions (.69–.87). The reliability for the total scale score was .94. Confirmatory factor analyses fit five of the original nine subscales. The WS-Ei has good predictive validity for the criterion job performance.

Data analysis procedures

The analysis proceeded in three phases.

Phase 1: Construct validity: Field Instructor Supervision Scale 1.0

For Phase 1, we used EFA to examine the factor structure of the FISS 1.0 and thematic analysis to identify items to add to the FISS 2.0, with the goal of further increasing the construct validity of the FISS. EFA is used to assess the underlying factor structure and refine the item pool. EFA identifies clusters of interrelated items. The extent to which each item is correlated with each factor is represented as a loading. The higher the loading, the more the item contributes to a factor. Next, we calculated internal consistency reliability for the FISS 1.0 using Cronbach’s alpha, which assesses the degree of interitem correlation; a value larger than 0.70 is generally considered acceptable (>.80=good; >.90=excellent). The reliability for the total scale and each dimension of support was computed.

The thematic analysis showed that support was the core construct. We divided field instructor behaviors into two categories: developmental support and task support. Developmental support included five behaviors: available and open, provided emotional support, provided feedback, challenged students, and encouraged autonomy. The most frequently occurring themes, classified as developmental support, were available and open and provided emotional support. Task support included four behaviors: provided learning experiences, provided instruction, provided materials, and planned tasks. The most frequently occurring themes, classified as task support, were provided

learning experiences and provided instruction. For more details about this analysis and the results, see Coohy, French, and Dickinson (2017).

Phase 2: Construct validity: Field Instructor Supervision Scale 2.0

The results from the EFA and thematic analysis were used to revise the FISS 1.0 during Phase 2. After conducting an EFA of the FISS 2.0, internal consistency reliability for the FISS 2.0 was calculated.

Phase 3: Criterion validity: Field Instructor Supervision Scale 2.0

During Phase 3, we tested the correlation between the FISS 2.0 (task support, developmental support, and total support) and the student behaviors (criteria). All variables were negatively skewed; therefore, we transformed variables using a log function. After transformation, seven of nine variables were normally distributed. Two variables had skew values greater than 1.0 (developmental support, 1.34; satisfied with field instructor, 1.31).

Results

Phase 1: Construct validity: Field Instructor Supervision Scale 1.0

Exploratory factor analysis

EFA was used to identify the factor structure of the FISS 1.0 (see Table 2), which included 19 items. To determine the appropriateness of factor analysis, we examined the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO; 1974) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's (1950) test of sphericity. These statistics are used to test the suitability of a sample for structure detection. The KMO test measures the proportion of variance that might be explained by the underlying factors (or dimensions). According to Tabachnick and Fidel (2001), the KMO should be 0.60 or higher. High values indicate that the sample is likely to be adequate. The KMO was .94 ($df=171$) for our sample and therefore adequate to

Table 2. Factor loadings for exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation of Field Instructor Supervision Scale 1.0.

Item	Component	
	1	2
Developmental Support (Cronbach's alpha=.97)		
My field instructor ...		
1. listened and was open to my questions or feedback that challenged practice in the organization	.871	.379
2. created an environment in which I could openly and safely discuss all aspects of my experience	.861	.263
3. honored my role as a student	.800	.478
4. was encouraging and supportive	.764	.477
5. taught me how to think critically	.755	.465
6. provided me with opportunities for independent practice	.723	.298
7. challenged me to grow professionally	.722	.524
8. actively listened to me	.716	.557
9. provided feedback on areas of improvement in a supportive manner	.666	.559
10. provided learning experiences which allowed me to practice and apply concepts, principles and techniques learned in the classroom	.640	.628
Task Support (Cronbach's alpha=.94)		
My field instructor		
11. provided substantial input into the development of my learning contract	.310	.861
12. seemed to think my learning contract was important	.374	.808
13. was organized	.242	.752
14. asked me about my learning style	.453	.731
15. clearly stated what was expected of me	.546	.698
16. provided me with enough direction to complete a task adequately	.556	.687
17. provided regularly scheduled supervision	.504	.624
18. made sure I spent most of time doing professional social work activities	.535	.600
19. provided me with a manageable workload	.446	.573

test the structure of the FISS. Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, indicating the scale items are related and therefore suitable for structure detection. Small probability values ($<.05$) indicate factor analysis is appropriate for a sample. Bartlett's test was significant using our sample data, $\chi^2=3,339.3$, $p<.001$.

The EFA analyzed the items using the maximum likelihood method with varimax rotation. To select the number of factors, we used the criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and Cattell's (1966) scree test. The scree plot is a line graph that shows the proportion of variance explained by each eigenvalue and confirms the choice of the number of factors. Only two factors were extracted, and both factors had eigenvalues greater than one. The scree plot confirmed the selection of two factors. The two factors explained 75.51% of variance and were labeled developmental support and task support. Developmental support accounted for 70.2%, and task support accounted for 5.28% of the total variance.

Internal consistency reliability

We calculated Cronbach's alpha for the FISS 1.0: .97 (developmental support, .96; task support, .94).

Summary

In Phase 1 we identified two factors through an EFA that were consistent with our thematic analysis and with the extant literature, which suggested two dimensions of field instruction. We named the first factor task support. In the EFA task support included behaviors that reflected field instructors' sensitivity toward students' need for planning, structure, clear expectations, and direction to complete tasks. We named the second factor developmental support because it was broader than emotional support and expressive behaviors. Developmental support included providing emotional support (e.g., listening, creating safety, and providing encouragement) but also providing feedback, challenging students to think critically, and encouraging autonomy.

Phase 2: Construct validity: Field Instructor Supervision Scale 2.0

EFA

We used the themes that emerged in the thematic analysis and the factors identified in the EFA of the FISS 1.0 to retain, revise, add, and drop items. Based on the thematic analysis, we added three new items that we did not believe were adequately captured in the FISS 1.0 but emerged as important behaviors in the thematic analysis. They included "Encouraged me to complete a task or activity without direct supervision," "Showed me or explained how to do things," and "Was readily available to process my experiences."

We used a conservative standard to retain items from the FISS 1.0 (loadings $>.60$), with one exception, "Provided me with a manageable workload," because it had a loading close to $.60$ ($.57$). We deleted one item ("provided learning experiences which allowed me to practice and apply") because it had loadings of similar size on factors and lower loadings. We deleted "was organized" because it reflected a trait of a person rather than a field instructor behavior as a behavior was defined as an action that was intended to support a student's development. We dropped "asked me about my learning style" because we did not agree it measured task support. We also dropped "honored my role" because it was similar to "Made sure I spent most of my time doing professional social work activities." We revised the wording of two items that measured feedback and critical thinking (e.g., "helped" me think critically, instead of "taught" me).

Table 3 provides the results for the EFA for the 18 items included in the FISS 2.0. The KMO (1974) was greater than 0.60 (KMO=0.95), and the chi-square value of Bartlett's (1950) test was significant ($df=153$, $\chi^2=2,989.5$, $p<.001$). The maximum likelihood method with varimax rotation was used to analyze the items. To select the number of factors, we used the criterion of an eigenvalue greater than 1 and plotted these data using the Cattell's (1966) scree test. Only two factors were extracted, and both factors had eigenvalues greater than 1. The scree test confirmed this result. Items with loadings greater than $.60$ were retained. The two dimensions explained 73.25% of variance; they

Table 3. Factor loadings for exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation of Field Instructor Supervision Scale 2.0.

Item	Component	
	1	2
Developmental Support (Cronbach's alpha=.94)		
My field instructor		
1. encouraged me to complete a task or activity without direct supervision	.241	.832
2. provided me with opportunities for independent practice	.116	.790
3. was open to my questions and feedback	.531	.716
4. challenged me to grow professionally	.545	.667
5. actively listened to me	.617	.666
6. created an environment in which I could openly and safely discuss all aspects of my experience	.627	.653
7. was encouraging and supportive	.630	.650
8. provided me with a manageable workload	.508	.617
9. helped me think critically	.566	.614
Task Support (Cronbach's alpha=.94)		
My field instructor		
10. provided substantial input into the development of my learning contract	.852	.158
11. provided feedback on areas of improvement in a supportive manner	.777	.374
12. clearly stated what was expected of me	.777	.379
13. seemed to think my learning contract was important	.755	.247
14. provided regularly scheduled supervision	.752	.355
15. provided me with enough direction to complete a task adequately	.751	.467
16. made sure I spent most of my time doing professional social work activities	.745	.325
17. showed me or explained how to do some things	.706	.465
18. was readily available to process my experiences	.677	.533

were labeled developmental support and task support. Task support accounted for 67.0%, and developmental support accounted for 6.28% of the total variance.

Internal consistency reliability

Cronbach's alpha for the FISS 2.0 was .97 (developmental support, .94; task support, .94).

Summary

In Phase 2, to strengthen the construct validity of the FISS, we retained, revised, added, and dropped items from the FISS 1.0. The FISS 2.0 included 14 of the 19 original items included in the FISS 1.0. Two of the 14 items in the FISS 1.0 were revised. These 14 items loaded on the same two factors with two exceptions. "Provided me with a manageable workload" switched from task support to developmental support. This change was probably because of similar factor loadings on both dimensions (.508, .617). "Provided feedback on areas of improvement in a supportive manner" switched from developmental support to task support. This change was more difficult to interpret but may be because the item included words that reflect developmental ("supportive") and task ("provided feedback" on how they were performing tasks) behaviors.

Phase 3: Criterion validity: FISS 2.0

To test criterion validity, we correlated the FISS 2.0 field instructor behaviors (developmental support subscale mean, task support subscale mean, total support scale mean) with the two self-efficacy scales (mean) and several single-item variables that measured students' perception of their field instructors' effectiveness, their learning, their preparedness for practice, and how satisfied they were with their field experience and field instructor. Table 4 shows that the correlation between field instructor behaviors (subscales and total scale) and the two self-efficacy scales were small to medium. The correlation between the field instructor behaviors and global satisfaction and satisfaction with

Table 4. Criterion validity: Correlation between Field Instructor Supervision Scale and criteria.

Outcome	Field Instructor Supervision Scale		
	Developmental support	Task support	Total scale
Student self-report:			
Self-efficacy			
WS-Ei (Raelin, 2010)	.34*	.39*	.39*
SERSWCS (Holden, 2015)	.25*	.30*	.31*
Satisfaction			
"Overall I was satisfied with my field experience."	.65*	.61*	.65*
"I was satisfied with my field instructor."	.82*	.79*	.84*
Effectiveness			
"My field instructor was an effective instructor."	.83*	.81*	.86*
Preparedness			
"My field instructor prepared me for professional social work practice."	.82*	.79*	.84*
Learning			
"My field instructor contributed to my learning."	.82*	.76*	.82*

* $p < .0001$.

field instructor were large. Similarly, the correlation between students' perception of field instructor behaviors and effective instruction, learning, and preparedness were all large.

Discussion

Social work field instructors have the potential to create learning environments that allow students to develop the strongest set of professional skills attainable prior to entering the profession. To measure facilitative field instructor behaviors and to evaluate whether field instructor behaviors are related to student behaviors, we need validated scales. Our results provide preliminary evidence for the content, construct and criterion validity, and the internal consistency reliability of a multidimensional scale, the FISS.

The results indicate that the FISS appears to measure the domain facilitative field instructor behaviors. EFA shows that the FISS has a relatively stable factor structure with two robust dimensions, developmental support and task support. Reliability coefficients demonstrate that the FISS subscales of task support and developmental support are internally consistent.

We found the FISS has two dimensions rather than one or three. However, we did not include items to measure Kadushin's (1976) administrative function because we thought this dimension was more applicable to supervision in the workplace than field education. Choy et al. (1998) proposed an administrative ("managing"; p. 116) role in field education that included behaviors such as preparing the student for the placement, planning and monitoring the student's work, and ensuring a good fit between the student and the agency. We included items related to developing the learning contract, which are consistent with Choy et al.'s conceptualization of the "managing role" (p. 116). These items were strongly intercorrelated with items in the task support dimension, leading us to conclude that in field supervision, the managing role may overlap with task support (or in Choy's nomenclature, the "educating role" (p. 116)).

We also found evidence for criterion-related concurrent validity. The FISS (field instructor behaviors) was related to several student behaviors. We found significant strong relationships between field instructor behaviors (task support subscale, developmental support subscale, total scale) and students' self-reported effective instruction, learning, and preparedness for social work practice. These results are consistent with Hutt et al.'s (1983) model of student learning and their phenomenological findings that show how student learning results from the integration of task and development support and the deepening of the supervisor-student relationship. Our results are also consistent with Knight's (1996, 2000, 2001) studies demonstrating that supervision contributes to students' learning and preparedness for practice. We found significant associations among field

instructor behaviors (task support, developmental support, total scale) and context independent and dependent self-efficacy, although the strength of these associations was small to medium. Our results are consistent with Abbot and Lyter's (1999) finding of a relationship between field instructor behaviors and students' self-confidence.

Finally, our results regarding global and field instructor satisfaction are consistent with Tyler's (1950) theory of learning and satisfaction and with previous research on satisfaction in field placement. Tyler asserts satisfaction is a necessary condition for learning and that the quality of the relationship between field supervisor and student in practicum is related to student satisfaction. In this study, we measured satisfaction with the field instructor and overall satisfaction with the placement. The results show field instructor behaviors (task support, developmental support, total scale) were strongly and significantly related to both measures of satisfaction. The magnitude of these relationships was greater for satisfaction with the field instructor than for global satisfaction. Our results are consistent with other studies that found supervision related to student satisfaction (Fortune et al., 1985; Knight, 1996, 2000, 2001; Sinicrope & Cournoyer, 1990).

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, data are based exclusively on student self-report, and students may have responded in socially desirable ways. We did not analyze the perceptions of field instructors, and therefore we do not know whether field instructors would agree that students are prepared for social work practice. There is some evidence that field instructor and student perceptions align. For instance, Fortune, McCarthy, and Abramson (2001) found that students' rating of quality of field instruction and satisfaction were related to field instructors' rating of their performance. Our criteria, such as students' self-reported self-efficacy, are intermediate criteria, not ultimate criteria that provide a higher standard to judge student behavior (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). The CSWE (2008) EPAS is clear that student self-reports are not the highest standard. Accordingly, to provide additional evidence for the validity of the FISS, behaviors such as students' performance of practice behaviors using field instructors' rating or other ultimate criteria should be tested.

Second, other types of reliability and validity testing of the FISS are warranted. For instance, we did not assess test-retest reliability of the FISS; students completed it only once. We also did not assess predictive validity, that is, how strongly the FISS correlates with a behavior that occurs in the future. As a cross-sectional study, data were collected from each student at a single point in time. Predictive validity could be tested by measuring future job performance; however, this was beyond the scope of the present study. Moreover, future validation testing should attend to convergent validity, which requires a second scale that measures developmental and task support.

Third, the results from this study have limited generalizability. This scale essentially was developed with data from a sample of mostly White women living in one midwestern state. Because of population homogeneity, we were not able to assess whether field instructor behaviors differ across subpopulations or whether the relation between field instructor behaviors and student behaviors differ by race, ethnicity, or gender.

Finally, the supervision subscales and student behaviors were skewed. Students tended to rate their field instructors and their own self-efficacy favorably. Therefore, future researchers might consider revising items to avoid a ceiling effect. Revision may also be important to more accurately identify field instructors who are not providing adequate task and developmental support.

Implications

A validated scale that measures the multidimensionality of field instructor behaviors benefits the field in two ways. First, researchers can use it to understand the relation between dimensions of field instruction and student behaviors. Second, field programs can use it to evaluate and modify their practice. Over 4 years, we used data from this study to make improvements to our undergraduate and graduate field education programs. These

improvements included developing continuing education training opportunities for field instructors; strengthening how we oriented students, liaisons, and field instructors to field experience; and when indicated, making changes in field instructors. We established a system to administer the scale at all our centers and then provided the results to practicum administrators, field liaisons, field instructors, and seminar instructors, in aggregate, for ongoing discussion and program improvement. We discussed results with these constituent groups across centers and then used these data to prepare the self-study report for reaccreditation in 2018.

Our work in developing and testing the FISS identifies new directions for theory-driven research on the relationship between field instructor and student behaviors. Our plans include using structural equation modeling to simultaneously estimate the measurement model (confirming the factor structure of FISS using a new sample) and a structural model to examine the mechanisms of supervision that affect student behavior. For example, using this approach, we can empirically test the model of student learning articulated by Hutt et al. (1983), examining mechanisms of task support and developmental support, which may lead to improved student learning, confidence, and competence. Using structural equation modeling, we will be able to estimate the degree to which task support and developmental support affect students' perceived preparedness for practice directly or indirectly through perceptions of instructor effectiveness, students' learning, and students' satisfaction. This analysis may also inform whether the two dimensions of support, task and developmental, affect students' perceived preparedness differently.

Field education is the largest single component of social work education programs and perhaps the most important for preparing the emergent workforce. Developing and implementing valid scales in field education are critical to developing and sustaining excellent field education programs. The FISS may be one useful tool to evaluate students' perception of their field experience that could contribute to a comprehensive evaluation of field program quality.

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