CONTINUING EDUCATION BY SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK:

LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT AND FUTURE FOCUS

by

JANICE TUCK CALLAWAY

(Under the Direction of Kevin DeWeaver)

ABSTRACT

This study began the empirical examination of factors influencing the level of involvement in continuing professional education provided by schools of social work. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship exists between certain attributes of a SSW and the school's level of involvement in CPE. A secondary purpose was to determine whether these attributes additionally contributed to a school's perceived future focus for CPE activities. A school's level of involvement was classified into five possible categories ranging from none to premier according to the conceptual description given in the study as presence of structure, provision, leadership, and research. A school's future focus for continuing professional education was classified into three possible categories (decreasing focus, maintaining focus, and increasing focus) based on areas of programming, evaluation, and economics. Chi-square analyses were performed to determine the presence or absence of a relationship; Cramer's V was used to measure the strength of association of the relationship. 129 schools of social work responded to the mailed questionnaire (90% response rate). Eighty percent of schools indicated that they provided continuing professional education. It was found that statistically significant relationships existed between a school's level of involvement and the attributes of degree

program levels, fee-based funding for programs, strategic plans, organizational charts, budget ranges, tenure-track positions, and Carnegie Foundation Research classification. For future focus, statistically significant relationships existed with the strategic plan, organizational chart, and tenure-track position. These results may be used by administrators and directors of continuing education programs at schools of social work to assist their decision-making, planning, evaluation, and modifications of existing programs.

INDEX WORDS: Social work, Schools of social work, Continuing professional education, Empirical study

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DEDICATION

For my children

Jim, Ben, Elizabeth, and Stephen

We have all come to the right place.
We all sit in God's classroom.

Now,
The only thing left for us to do, my dear,

Is to stop
Throwing spitballs for a while.

I Heard God Laughing: Renderings of Hafiz
Daniel Ladinsky

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INTRODUCTION

<u>Statement of the Problem</u>

Continuing professional education (CPE) is an avenue that provides for the ongoing

formation and maintenance of professional identity and competence for social workers. As such,

it has become a focus of social work education during the past three decades. The profession of

social work has intentionally addressed the issue of continuing education for its members since

the 1970s, partially as a result of the legislation of mandatory continuing education requirements

in many states for various levels of practitioners. In order to help meet these requirements

continuing education offerings have been provided by schools of social work (SsSW).

Unfortunately, coherent efforts to plan, finance, implement, and examine the effectiveness of

continuing professional education activities by SsSW appear to be haphazard at best and chaotic

at worst. It is not known what factors may influence a school of social work's current level of

involvement in continuing education as well as its focus for future continuing education

activities.

There have been calls for change in social work CPE over the past twenty years. These

calls for change have included many topics, ranging from refinement of definitions for what

constitutes CPE in social work to evaluation of efforts for assuring the quality and effectiveness

of individual programs and offerings. In the middle 1980s, Davenport (1986) suggested a

change in direction for social work CPE, describing a movement from a prescriptive focus to an

empirical focus. Funding and economic survival (Boston University, 1992) and innovative

methods of offering CPE (Strom & Green, 1995) are other concerns expressed by social work educators and administrators more recently.

The state of social work CPE has been examined over the past several decades, although sporadically. The last published national survey was Loavenbruck's 1981 Council on Social Work Education document serving as a state-of-the-art description for continuing education programs in schools of social work in 1978. There have been other national surveys investigating schools that have not been published (e.g., Boston University, 1992; Callaway, 1995) as well as informal compilations by persons with a special interest in social work continuing education (e.g., Matz, 1997). These efforts continue to point toward concerns regarding the status of CPE provision by SsSW. The fact that these reports have remained unpublished may even reflect varied attitudes and barriers toward CPE provision either by the schools themselves, contextual forces (e.g., other organizational entities) influencing the schools, and a lack of journals including routine articles dedicated to CPE.

Economic realities, including budgeting and financing issues, present a driving concern for administrators and planners. Considering that continuing education budgets can be multi-million dollar ventures, questions regarding available resources for CPE programs become apparent. Can the CPE program be fiscally self-sufficient? Is the program fee-based, fee-based with subsidy, or funded by multiple sources? Are the programs provided by the school alone, or by collaboration between the university and the school? Have schools decided to relinquish CPE provision to outside providers (e.g., individual providers; local, state, and national social work organizations; other social service, mental health, or health professions; for-profit educational organizations)? If provision is relinquished to outsider sources, what might the "cost" be—in

effectiveness (gained or lost), in dollars (increased or decreased), in relevance, or lack thereof, for the profession? Many questions exist, yet few have been examined to determine the answers.

Maintaining professional competence is influenced by the quality of continuing education programs. Evaluations of CPE programs or individual offerings have not been approached systematically by SsSW. In many instances evaluation has been simply an inclusion of a participant satisfaction survey about the individual program or offering. Generally, demonstration of any change in knowledge or behavior by the individual participant has not been assessed. The need for explicit, measurable objectives for changes in skills, attitudes, and knowledge has been included in the calls for change in social work continuing education (Davenport, 1989). This echoes Iwanchuk 's (1987) concern regarding issues of training and knowledge. Additionally, relationship between the acquisition of knowledge and skills may or may not improve performance skills. In the economic climate of cost-effectiveness and efficacy, evaluation efforts would include such activities as screening CPE providers (through credentialing) and curricular content (for empirical effectiveness or theoretical soundness). More sophisticated evaluation would incorporate outcome measures for determining behavioral and knowledge change in participants and its resultant effect on work performance.

The researcher holds a value perspective that social work education includes the instruction of undergraduate and graduate students as well as the continuing professional education of social work practitioners. With this in mind, it is held that SsSW are charged with the responsibility of safe-guarding the public and providing cost-effective efficient interventions through its education of students and social work practitioners.

A method for describing and quantifying levels of involvement of CPE in SsSW is needed. Since SsSW are predominant providers of CPE for social workers, this categorization

would provide valuable information to administrators involved in strategic planning. There may be an association between the existing economic and structural realities for SsSW and their level of involvement. Additionally, there may be an association between these realities and future CPE emphases. Finally, there may be a relationship between a school's level of involvement in CPE and its future CPE emphases. An understanding of these relationships, if they exist, may contribute to a systematic approach used to determine the allocation of resources for CPE. It is the intent of this study to focus on these possibilities and explore them empirically where possible.

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to determine whether a relationship exists between certain attributes of a SSW and the school's level of involvement in CPE. A secondary purpose was to determine whether a relationship exists between certain attributes of a SSW and the school's focus for future CPE efforts. It is believed that certain attributes of an individual SSW may be associated with or relate to its level of involvement in CPE as well as its perceived future focus. If such a relationship exists, there may be recommendations that can be provided to SsSW determining whether or not to initiate, modify, or continue particular CPE activities at its current level of involvement. This may contribute information toward a school's decision making process and needs assessment for future CPE offerings.

Research Questions

There are two major research questions (questions 1 and 2) and two minor research questions (questions 3 and 4) addressed in this study.

1.   What is a SSW's level of involvement in CPE?

2. Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics (attributes) of a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE?

3. Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics of a SSW and its future focus in CPE?

4. Does a relationship exist between level of involvement in CPE and future focus in CPE?

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

This study is primarily descriptive and uses a correlational design. This particular examination of current state-of-the art or statuses for CPE by SsSW reports findings intended to result in providing a way for schools to take a pro-active (prospective) stance in planning for CPE. This is not to belie the continued need for empirical study of causal issues addressing what components of CPE work best in certain situations, which is a current interest by continuing education researchers. In order to guide expediently and adjust research efforts as well as the selection, provision, and evaluation of CPE programs at practitioner and administrator levels, a systematic approach for examining involvement by SsSW and their projected CPE emphases would be helpful.

This study contributes descriptive, empirical, and prescriptive information to the literature base on CPE provided by SsSW. Various organizational entities (e.g., National Association of Social Workers [NASW], state licensing agencies) have recently suggested guidelines or mandated requirements for CPE in social work (NASW, 1998). SsSW, a major provider of CPE, however, appear to have done little to address the various issues and concerns, particularly those involving evaluation and assessment of CPE activities. This study begins to fill this gap.

Future Chapters

The following sections examine continuing education in general, continuing education as it has evolved within social work education, and current issues influencing continuing education in social work education (Chapter Two—Literature Review).   The research model and theoretical base guiding this inquiry is discussed in Chapter Three—Theoretical Framework and Concepts. Chapter Four—Methodology outlines a description of the methodological processes followed in the design, collection, and analysis of the data. Chapter Five—Findings provides an examination of the data. The final chapter, Chapter Six—Discussion, summarizes the overall findings, examines the limitations of the findings, and considers implications for further research study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Given that CPE has become an integral component of social work education, it is surprising that SsSW have directed limited efforts toward empirical examination of factors influencing provision of CPE. The empirical studies that have been undertaken have predominantly been exploratory and descriptive in nature, resulting in prescriptive discussion of either the status of CPE provided by SsSW or the status of CPE within the profession as a whole. Evidence that social work educators and researchers have considered and acted upon the recommendations outlined in these studies is lacking.

In order to situate important issues related to this study of CPE provided by SsSW, a discussion of CPE's evolutionary process will be undertaken. Examination of the historical background for continuing education overall and continuing education in the professions in particular will help establish the current position of SsSW providing CPE. This review provides the information for a rationale supporting the empirical study of certain factors possibly influencing CPE efforts by SsSW. It includes examination and discussion regarding the concept of continuing education (definition), providers of CE, and management functions (programming, financing, and evaluation).

<u>Continuing Education</u>

Descriptions of continuing education and statements regarding its purpose are as varied as the numbers of individuals who might be asked to define it. Indeed, the boundaries between formal and informal learning can been seen as obscured when considering the numerous types of educational and social activities that are subsumed under the heading "continuing education."

Terminology attempting to capture the essence of this activity has included such terms as adult education, adult learning, andragogy, community education, community development, continuing education, independent learning, and lifelong learning (Courtney, 1989).

As early as the 1920s, systematic efforts were made to coin an inclusive definition for adult or continuing education. Beginning with a generic description for a group of unrelated activities cited in the work of Ozanne (1934), the definition of continuing or adult education has evolved into increasingly sophisticated descriptions (Boyd, Apps, & Associates, 1980; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982; Liveright & Haygood, 1969). Historically, continuing or adult education has been considered ideologically from five perspectives (Courtney, 1989): as the work of institutions, as a kind of relationship (i.e., adult education versus education of adults), as a profession or discipline itself, as a social movement, and as a response to certain functions and goals. With this said, a definition of continuing education can be considered a complex product of various personal, historical, social, political, and philosophical contexts. The definition accepted by many within the field of adult and continuing education is

> a process whereby persons who no longer attend school on a regular full-time
>
> basis…undertake sequential and organized activities with the conscious intention of
>
> bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding, or skill, appreciation
>
> and attitudes; or for the purpose of identifying or solving personal or community
>
> problems (Liveright & Haygood, 1969, p. 8).

Classification of the providers of adult and continuing education has experienced almost the same complexity as determining a working definition for continuing education. Even earlier than the 1920s, references can be found regarding the various venues for provision of forms of adult education (Apps, 1989). Forums of public lectures, women's clubs, and correspondence

schools are early examples. Descriptions of adult education providers since the 1930s have

included types of agencies (Bryson, 1936) and organization around interest areas and

institutional resources (Ely, 1948; Knowles, 1960). It was not until the 1970s that an attempt at

categorization or classification of the various providers of adult and continuing education was

made (Schroeder, 1970; Smith, Aker, & Kidd, 1970). Nine categories of providers of instruction

were included in a recent U.S. Department of Education (1986) compilation. These included

four-year colleges and universities, two-year colleges and technical schools, vocational and trade

schools, primary and secondary schools, other schools, private community organizations,

governmental agencies, labor organizations or professional associations, and tutors, private

instructors, or others. Besides these providers, advances have been made in providing instruction

through information technology and publishing houses as independent, for-profit ventures.

The process of systematically planning programs for adult learners began to take shape in

the late 1940s and early 1950s (Knowles, 1950; Tyler, 1949). Determining the ends as well as

the means for achieving these ends in program planning for continuing education has been the

subject of more description rather than analysis of the processes undertaken or factors

influencing these processes (Sork & Caffarella, 1989). Systematic planning processes for

designing appropriate CE programs overcomes inherent weaknesses found in a purely needs-

driven approach to planning. Educational design and planning are complex (Houle, 1972) and

incorporate many interacting elements. Internal (i.e., historical context, organizational structure,

mission, available resources, philosophical restraints) and external (i.e., competitive or

cooperative relationships, attitudes toward the provider) factors are taken into account as

planning unfolds. Analysis of the consumer, needs, program objectives, instructional plans,

administrative plans including financing, and evaluation within the contexts the individual

provider finds itself provides critical information for the modification of existing and future programming.

Financing adult and continuing education involves the securing of funds from private or public sources. Public policy that provides funding for continuing education is dependent upon governmental priorities and support at state or national levels (Griffith & Fujita-Stark, 1989). Non-governmental resources dedicated to continuing education (i.e., foundations, business, and industry) are also dependent on underlying priorities and support. In both instances, public or private, priority and support manifest as attention toward prevailing societal issues (e.g., continuing education and awareness efforts for the public and health care providers in the area of acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

Evaluation of adult and continuing education programs attempts to determine usefulness (Steele, 1989). That is, does the program attain its objectives? Since continuing education involves administrators, instructors, and participants, there are multiple perspectives that emerge regarding evaluation. Areas of accountability (i.e., use of resources, meeting of objectives, participant satisfaction) have historically been included in program evaluation efforts. Creation of evaluative frameworks examining expected outcomes has occurred in response to a need for understanding results and subsequent relationships regarding those results. Overall, evaluation of continuing education is evolving to include such aspects as definitions of successful programming, attainment of objectives, use of multiple methods for evaluation, and consideration of multiple perspectives of reality.

<div style="text-align:center">

Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

</div>

"The special place of the professions in society results as much from their symbolic leadership as from the application of their technical knowledge and skills" (Cervero, 1989, p.

513). This leadership is reflected in the value that the professions have placed on CPE. Embracing the concept that learning occurs throughout life, the professions have intentionally created formal continuing education programs in tandem with existing informal avenues of learning. CPE has become a given for most professions, including architecture, dentistry, engineering, law, library science, medicine, the military, nursing, nursing home administration, optometry, pharmacy, social work, and veterinary medicine as well as others. Its importance to the professions is further demonstrated by the existence of accrediting bodies for CPE providers and state licensing requirements. Ronald Cervero, a prominent educator and researcher in adult and continuing education, has provided considered reflection and direction for evaluating components and aspects of CPE that can be applied across professional disciplines, including social work. Cervero's conceptualization for, description of, and research efforts within continuing professional education provides a model for critical examination from both etic and emic viewpoint positions, one outside the individual professions, yet within the larger perspective of continuing education for the professions.

CPE focuses upon the competency of a profession's members, including one's staying abreast of current innovations (knowledge) and techniques (skills). Each profession considers itself as a keeper of specialized knowledge with a specific role and function in society. With this orientation, CPE is directed predominantly by members of its own profession. There is a movement, however, to consider how the professions' CPE efforts are similar regarding goals, educational techniques and thought processes (Cervero, 1988; Houle, 1980; Nowlen, 1988). This suggests a role for educators specializing in the provision of CPE. The advent of a specialized body of knowledge addressing adult and continuing education as well as training of individuals for that role and function supports this view. This may contribute to the increase in collaborative

efforts between professional disciplines under the auspices of a university-wide continuing education unit.

Currently, CPE is provided by four prominent groups (Cervero, 1989). Employing agencies, independent providers, professional associations, and universities and professional schools offer diverse methods of CPE delivery, depending on their mission, purpose for providing CPE, and size and structure of staff. As an example, the profession of pharmacy has a sophisticated network of CPE providers in each category that must be approved by either an accrediting body (such as the American Council of Pharmaceutical Association) or an individual state's licensing board. Methods of CPE delivery for pharmacists have taken such instructional forms as live seminars and workshops, independent study methods (e.g., journal publications and interactive information technology), and teleconferencing depending on the resources available to each provider.

Programming issues for CPE can be thought to relate to the three purposes of CPE (Cervero, 1989): functionalist, conflict, and critical. This classification of purposes reflects the multiple perspectives present for viewing a particular issue. Needs of the professional as well as the professional's perceived need of his client (be it a patient, student, consumer, or client) can be considered from each of the three viewpoints. These three purposes of CPE (functionalist, conflict, and critical according to the Cervero conceptualization) can be viewed through the lens of social work practice and education. The functionalist perspective parallels the "expert" position for professionals. It is characterized by improving a professional's knowledge, competence or performance by being informed of the current innovations in their disciplines. This is the predominant viewpoint held by those providing CPE. In the case of SsSW, major providers of CPE for the social work profession, schools are charged with providing relevant and

correct information to providers of social work services. The conflict viewpoint parallels a "power" position for professionals. Since professionals define clients' problems, a power differential is created. The issue here is not the competence or expertise of the professional that must be addressed but rather the creation of an equal, or at least cooperative, relationship between the professional and the client to solve the problem (e.g., health, social, economic). For SsSW this purpose of CPE can be viewed to reflect the tensions between the various social work theory and practice models. Assessment and intervention within the various micro- and macro-system levels of social work practice address the contextual interrelationships found while working with clients. This would certainly include the interrelationships of power, gender, socioeconomic structures, and social institutions, among others. Finally, the critical viewpoint posits that there are ethical, political, and technical dimensions of a professional's work. This suggests a dialectic position for the professional. Each problem must be situated within a context that acknowledges uniqueness, uncertainty, and value conflicts. This requires a professional to use judgement--to be aware of the various choices available as well as their implications. The critical viewpoint for CPE by SsSW, and the social work profession itself, supports the current programming and licensure requirements for ethical issues and decision-making found in many states. Each of these perspectives—functionalist, conflict, and critical—points to possible CPE emphases that a program or offering might reflect, including those in social work.

CPE programs are financed through public and private sources. Professional schools, as the main providers of CPE for their graduates and others, receive funding from public sources (e.g., federal and state grants) and through sponsorship with and grants from professional organizations, foundations, and industry. For example, a pharmacy school may receive funding from a state or federal agency to provide CPE to members of its profession regarding a particular

pharmaceutical care issue (e.g., cardiovascular issues and geriatric compliance). In addition, the

pharmacy school might receive funding from a pharmaceutical company for a CPE offering that

directly or indirectly relates to a specific pharmaceutical agent (e.g., cardiac or hypertensive

medication). Private industry, in this case, can be seen possibly as a major provider of CPE, both

to professional schools through its financial support, as well as through its direct provision of

CPE programs that are approved by the applicable state licensing boards. Members of a

profession also pay for CPE. Most programs are supplemented, partially or totally, through

participant fees. In the case of pharmacy, these fees may be offset with the support of the

pharmaceutical industry. Not all professions have, however, this additional level of financial

support by industry. Social work is a case in point.

Assessment of CPE activities and programs take various forms. Evaluation ranges from

simple participant satisfaction surveys to attempts at determining causal connection between

CPE and professional performance. For example, a recent review of impact studies in continuing

education for health professionals (Umble & Cervero, 1996) provides an excellent example of

the comprehensive nature of evaluation research that has been occurring over the past several

decades. Hundreds of single impact studies have been conducted and sixteen research syntheses

have been completed during this time (1977-1994). The sixteen research syntheses were

examined and used to describe the progress of two explanatory tasks during that period, "Is CE

effective, and for what outcomes?" and "What kinds of CE are effective, and why?" The

recommendations and findings of these syntheses point to an increased future research focus

looking at practitioner performance (Davis, Lindsay, & Mazmanian, 1994). Behavior change is

influenced not only by knowledge, attitudes, and skills, but also by social and organizational

factors. Administrative and peer support, adequate supplies and equipment, policy incentives and

disincentives, and protocols all contribute to social and organizational influences. CPE for the health professions has moved far beyond simply determining whether or not a participant is satisfied with an individual CPE program. Effectiveness is now being determined by the transferability of attained participant competence (knowledge and skills) into the work setting (as performance).

Performance change literature suggests that successful CPE programs have several common components (Holt & Courtenay, 1984 cited in Davenport, 1992):

1. A learning transfer or change segment was built into the program. Objectives and articles stressed intended outcomes and expectations for "back home" implementation.

2. A variety of training and instructional methods was used. Trainees responded best to instructional models that are learner-oriented and actively involved the learner.

3. Supervised follow-up instruction and encouragement were provided. Lasting change was more likely to occur when trainees received additional contact after training.

4. Appropriate times frames for covering content were considered. Programs that "crammed" information into trainees were not as successful as those which covered less material but allowed participants time to demonstrate new knowledge and skills.

5. The availability of materials, products, or equipment to implement new skills was assessed. Trainees returning to agencies lacking adequate resources did not tend to implement new knowledge and skills.

6. Continuing educators secured trained observers for follow-up evaluations.

Follow-up studies were sometimes limited by a lack of skilled evaluators who

were able to measure change, especially behavioral change (p. 29)

It is thought that these program components could be considered in CPE programs offered for

social workers by SsSW. This would contribute to a program's overall effectiveness in meeting

its goals and objectives.

<div align="center">CPE in Social Work</div>

As with other disciplines, social work has had to claim the status of a profession and to

defend this position. The early twentieth century heralded the emergence of forerunners in social

work presenting the developing discipline as distinct in its focus on the well being of individuals,

families, groups, organizations, communities, and societies. Social work made the case for

holding a body of knowledge and the skills necessary for meeting particular needs for that well

being and social functioning. The development of schools specifically designated for the

education of social workers could be seen as signaling the emergence of social work's

professional image.

Social work as a profession has supported the concept of CPE since the 1930s. Its

conception of CPE has shown similar complexity with other professions in that a standard,

universal definition of CPE has yet to be accepted by the profession of social work (see

Appendix A for examples of definitions). One only has to look at the existing review articles

and primary studies in CPE in social work to ascertain this complexity. There has, however, been

a response to this complexity.

The NASW, an organization representing thousands of social workers practicing in

numerous settings throughout the United States, has established its view that CPE is a critical

process for ensuring quality social work services by its members. It has outlined standards for CPE in social work (NASW, 1998). Although the association does not speak for all social workers, it does reflect a crucial voice in political arenas. Its definitive guideline statements in 1998 fall short of direct influence for the profession, yet does at least establish a baseline for further examination, discussion, and debate. Standards are included for individual social workers, assessment of providers of CPE, and administrators.

Providers of CPE in social work are as varied as other professions. Universities, professional associations, social service agencies, and individual providers predominate in social work CPE. Approved provider status, in most instances, is determined by a state licensing board for social work, although this function can be relegated to representative agencies (i.e., school of social work). Determining the acceptability of a provider is a designated function or assumed role that includes examining an instructor's credentials as well as the subject content to be presented.

Social work, as other professions, has struggled with determining its "ends" and "means" of providing CPE. An organized educational experience by providers is considered a desired goal involving the following components (NASW, 1998): program development, program content, participants, program format and instructional methodology, qualified instruction, and program evaluation. Interactions between sponsoring administrators, instructors, and social workers would contribute to the development of programs designed to meet learning needs. Program content would reflect the learning needs of the intended participants. Program formats and instructional methods would be appropriate for the anticipated participants and would include diverse teaching techniques. The quality of instruction would be assured by providing instructors competent in their subject content, transmission ability, use of specific skills related

to instruction and content, and capacity for acceptance of feedback and modification of a program for future offering. A program offering would be formally evaluated using specific measures of evaluation assessing content, format, methodology, instruction, and facilities as well as assessing a participant's acquisition and transferability of knowledge and skills. Attention to each step in the program planning, implementation, and evaluation process would contribute to the successful outcomes desired by this organized effort for CPE.

Funding for social work CPE, as with other professions, has derived from public and private sources. The early emergence (1930s-1960s) of continuing education for social service providers was supported through federal support (e.g., various amendments to the Social Security Act, particularly Title XX). Contractual agreements between SsSW and governmental agencies during the 1960s and 1970s provided additional support. Sources of funding for CPE programs in social work during the past three decades have shifted from the federal or contractual support seen earlier, although in-service training at agencies continues. National and state professional organizations, SsSW and independent providers began providing CPE programs in the 1970s that were financed by participant fees in most instances. A common goal has been the self-sufficiency of each CPE offering. In other words, CPE would be provided if there is a break-even or profit possibility for the provider. Otherwise, the professional responsibility (or burden) for CPE might be re-assigned or abandoned. This concern for fiscal stability may contribute to an individual SSW's decision-making process in determining its future CPE focus.

When considering the purposes of CPE (functionalist, conflict, and critical) as suggested by Cervero (1989), the profession of social work emerges with characteristics similar to other professions. There is, however, emphasis that might be seen as "particularly social work" in

nature. A functionalist perspective supports social work's application of a systematic body of

knowledge to the problems encountered in society. The integrative approach of social work

intervention demonstrated by the ecological perspective derived from general systems theory is

an example of a particular body of knowledge that social work embraces. For example, in line

with an "expert" position, the functionalist perspective forwards that social workers must keep

up with up-to-date empirically tested treatments in order to provide quality service to clients.

When considering the conflict perspective, social work would be considered a forerunner in

balancing power between the professional and the client. Continuing education efforts would be

directed toward the identification of oppressive structures that maintain any imbalance of power.

A critical perspective of CPE in social work would consider the dialectical relationship of

practitioners in situations and with problems that are unique, uncertain, and value conflict laden.

There is no absolute and little consensus within the critical viewpoint. CPE for the social worker

within this perspective would help to develop critical thinking skills, considering ethical and

political issues as well as technical issues (knowledge and skills). To date, no attempts have

been reported that consider individual CPE offerings using a categorization of the purposes of

CPE in social work or through other theoretical research or educational frameworks (i.e.,

positivist, post-positivist, critical, or constructivist; Graham, 1997).

Quality of CPE programs in social work has been difficult to quantify. This may reflect

the lack of literature outlining or discussing evaluation outcomes of CPE programs. The recent

effort of the NASW (1998) establishing standards for all providers of CPE provides, however, a

beginning criteria set for consideration. Although debates regarding what constitutes quality will

continue at this point, the fact that attention is being directed toward effectiveness (for both

instruction and inclusion of empirically supported social work interventions) and participant

transferability of knowledge and skill to the work setting signals a critical juncture. The profession of social work has committed to providing and maintaining quality social work services through its support of CPE for its members. It should be mentioned, however, that efforts directed toward quality predominantly encompass the clinical side of the profession. Although clinical social work constitutes a large portion of social work activity, it doesn't reflect the whole. The literature demonstrating the effect or influence of CPE on outcomes in various social service arenas (e.g., educational, structural or financial changes) is non-existent (Seidl, 2000; Thyer, 2000).

<div align="center">CPE Provided by SsSW</div>

Expanding their original focus for graduate education and then undergraduate education to include CPE in the late 1960s, SsSW have become major providers of CPE for social workers (Davenport, 1986 & 1992; Davenport & Wodarski, 1989; Laufer & Sharon, 1993). An espoused commitment to maintaining and enhancing professional competency of workers has resulted in various organized efforts for providing CPE by SsSW. A SSW can demonstrate this commitment by providing CPE, ranging from a single CPE offering in a year without formal direction to a well-planned, developed program of offerings throughout a year directed through an office of CPE.

In an effort to characterize and describe the CPE efforts of SsSW, national surveys of SsSW have been conducted (Loavenbruck, 1981; Boston University, 1991, 1992; Callaway, 1995; Matz, 1997). Each of these has provided a state-of-the-art description of CPE provided by SsSW at those points in time. Various demographic information such as types of program offerings, fee schedules, instructional methods, and evaluation methods have been included. Unfortunately, these surveys were not consistent in the types of information retrieved and only

the one by Loavenbruck (1981) was published. Limitations for a comparative review of these surveys are many, including the presence of different variables, lack of specificity for the variable definitions, variance in response rates, and problems with accessibility secondary to unpublished reports. What is worthy to note, however, is the continued concern for describing and quantifying CPE currently provided by SsSW.

Programming issues for SsSW may be reflective of the purposes for CPE as defined earlier by Cervero (1989). Although not currently done, SsSW could categorize CPE offerings according to an underlying purpose for CPE (e.g., serving a functionalist, conflict, or critical position). Additionally, it is thought that future CPE programs may be determined by considerations such as the perceived need by participants (gathered by needs assessment questions on CPE evaluation forms or surveys), perceived need for participants (determined by the CPE provider), or state-mandated requirements for a particular topical content. Each of these considerations reflects priority and support, either professionally and/or economically. Another view of program planning that could be considered by SsSW includes the concepts of power, interests, negotiation, and responsibility (Wilson & Cervero, 1996). This viewpoint recognizes the complexity of the social interactions accompanying the program planning processes found in organizations. Measurement of these constructs within SsSW has not been attempted, although they point to aspects of program involvement, and subsequently possible success and failure related to the leadership of a CPE program as suggested by Loavenbruck (1981). Categorizations of programs according to any schemata (such as overarching purposes of CPE, participant needs, client needs, or other designations) provides a beginning evaluative summary or inventory of current activities, as well as points to potential future concerns and program offerings.

Federal grants and contracts from local and state social service agencies were primary sources of funding for continuing professional education by SsSW during the 1960s and 1970s. The loss of this funding as well as the prevailing social and economic conditions, however, contributed to the increased focus on funding and financial stability during the early 1980s (Dunn, 1988). This concern for fiscal soundness prompted SsSW to consider and employ various sources for funding. Among some of the more common sources have been: budget allocations for the offering; fees from participants; contracts from social service agencies; subsidies in the form of instructor, secretarial, or technological support for the CPE offering; monetary or in-kind contributions (e.g., use of space or equipment) from external organizations; monetary or in-kind contributions from other departments within the university or a university-wide continuing education unit; and sale of CPE literature (e.g., therapeutic manuals and books). Only recently has any attention been given toward provision and funding of specific CPE offerings via approved -CPE journal articles or Internet courses.

Evaluation efforts in CPE in SsSW are limited. The most common form of evaluating a CPE offering has been through a participant satisfaction survey at the end of the session. Satisfaction at least provides an argument for underlying support by the participant, whether or not the CPE offering was actually appropriate or adequate. It does not assure effectiveness. In states requiring CPE for licensure, SsSW may be designated approved-provider status. Additionally, schools may or may not be given the authority to approve other providers of CPE. Approval of an individual provider does not, however, guarantee that the topical content is appropriate or adequate. A systematic, standard approach for evaluating offerings as well as assuring their quality is lacking for most SsSW. This could be perceived as a major oversight, or

opportunity, for the CSWE, the "primary and comprehensive organization in the United States that promotes education for effective social work practice" (CSWE, 1998, p. 1).

As the national accreditation body for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, CSWE states in its mission that it "ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice that promotes individual, family and community well-being, and social and economic justice" (CSWE, 1998, p.1). However, its most current strategic plan sets forth goals and objectives that do not include a direct statement regarding CPE. A further possible indication of CSWE's hesitancy to consider its possible role in CPE is the absence of support for an authorized CPE section at the Annual Program Meeting (considered the main educational conference for social work). Directors of CPE in SsSW and others have met informally for several years in order to discuss the current status of CPE provided by SsSW. It may be considered a missed opportunity by CSWE for providing leadership in this critical area of postgraduate education. CSWE could position itself, as the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education has, as a major national body functioning to ensure quality CPE and grant approved-provider status that would expand the acceptance of CPE offerings for between-state reciprocity. It is a possibility that may be ahead of its time.

<div align="center">Overview of Empirical Literature of CPE in Social Work</div>

Various literature reviews of CPE in social work have been published. Davenport (1986, 1989, & 1992) has provided the most extensive compilations to date, although these may now be considered somewhat dated. It is important to note, however, that these works comprehensively outline the historical evolution of CPE within the profession as well as make thoughtful suggestions for CPE's future development.

Three basic categories of literature for CPE in social work have been identified: prescriptive, descriptive, and empirical. These categories roughly relate to the time-periods during which they have emerged—pre-1970s (prescriptive), 1970s to mid-1980s (descriptive), and mid-1980s to the present (descriptive-empirical).

The prescriptive articles emphasized what the profession should be doing in CPE. The profession argued that ongoing professional education was important for keeping abreast of new knowledge and adjusting to the contextual changes within society. Additionally, adult learning theory was forwarded as a foundation for instructional methods used in CPE.

After the rationale and justification for continuing education for social workers was completed, articles describing certain aspects of CPE emerged. Local and state efforts describing educational design, organizational structures, and needs assessment were dominant in the literature, although a few national efforts were reported. The national survey of schools of social work conducted by Loavenbruck (1981) was the hallmark example. The Loavenbruck (1981) document, provided under the auspices of the CSWE, was a comprehensive compilation describing the CPE efforts by SsSW in the late 1970s. At that time all CSWE-accredited social work education programs, graduate and undergraduate, were surveyed (N = 334). Less than one-third of the schools (N = 97) reported that they had a CPE program under the leadership of a director or coordinator. Loavenbruck found that a program's success or failure at that time appeared to be determined predominantly by the personality, strength, and style of the CPE director. Organizational structures of the programs varied greatly, as well as the programs' scope in programming and target audiences. The sources of funding for the programs had not changed from those identified by Howery (1974).

Overall, the descriptive literature focused primarily on specific worker populations such as child welfare workers (Gelfand, Starak, & Nevidon, 1970; Rosick, 1979), administration and management (Dane, 1983), and rural workers (Pippard & Bates, 1983). Satisfaction questionnaires completed by participants were used to determine the effectiveness of the CPE programs described during this time.

Matz (1997) reported one of the most recent surveys of CPE provided by SsSW at the CSWE Annual Program Meeting workshop in 1997. Although the information was not published, it did offer another descriptive report of CPE provided by CSWE accredited master's degree programs (N = 116). Fifty-six percent (N = 65) responded. Sixty-nine percent reported that they offered CPE programs. This survey examined number of offerings, types of topics, number of participants, types of instructors, payment amount to the instructor for the program, and types of involvement by faculty members. Licensing, funding, marketing, co-sponsorship, and evaluation issues were also examined. Matz was able to compare these descriptive results to her earlier survey effort in 1992, suggesting several trends. Unfortunately, a determination of possible relationships using correlational methods was not undertaken.

Beginning in the late 1970s the concern for accountability, quality, and evaluation became apparent. Various evaluation methods were outlined, ranging from informal observation to true experimental designs (Lauffer, 1977). Increasing sophistication can be seen in various published evaluation efforts (Weiss, 1980; Zober, Seipel, & Skinner, 1982; Barber, Goldberg, & Savage, 1983; Jones & Biesecker, 1980; Schinke, Smith, Gilchrist, & Wong, 1981). Examination of CPE's effect on the transferability of knowledge and skills into the work setting (performance) was begun but remained limited in scope (Roat, 1988).

Major forums for dissemination of information and research findings in social work are professional journals. Journals considered as appropriate forums for social work CPE have included The Journal of Education for Social Work, The Journal of Teaching in Social Work, The Journal of Social Work Education, and The Journal of Continuing Social Work Education, It is interesting to note that the appearance, disappearance and reappearance of journals dedicated to social work CPE have occurred over the past decades. An example of this is the emergence of the newest publication, Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education, which replaced The Journal of Continuing Social Work Education after a several year slowdown in publication. This flux may reflect the social and economic realities effecting the provision of CPE by SsSW as well. As with all journals, their presence does not guarantee that all research efforts will be published. The factors influencing decisions as to which articles are accepted apply to all social work journals. Perceived priority and support are considered for the dissemination of information as with the provision and funding of CPE.

Overview of Empirical Literature:

The Case for Understanding Involvement and the Determination of Future Trends

When considering the relevant literature for CPE provided by SsSW it is apparent that little has changed in the past thirty years. Few recommendations forwarded by Davenport and others have been addressed (and reported), although advances in certain aspects of CPE provision have occurred. Additionally, it is apparent that efforts to implement these recommendations at SsSW may have been thwarted by unrecognized interrelationships between certain factors and within certain contexts. Review of the published descriptive and empirical literature during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s provides a clue. Organizational and economic

realities may contribute to the limited implementation of the recommendations (Cervero & Wilson, 1996; Dane, 1985; Laufer & Sharon, 1993). It may be an issue of priority and support.

Educators and researchers have suggested that further research building on the existing knowledge base in CPE in social work is needed. Specifically, it has been proposed that there is a need for examining cost-effective instructional methods; methods for ensuring knowledge or skill acquisition by participants; program and organizational designs leading to cost-effective educational outcomes; and transferability of knowledge and skills into work settings (Umble & Cervero, 1996; Davenport, 1989; Matz, 1997; Strom & Green, 1995). These require more advanced evaluation efforts than SsSW may be able or willing to support at this time. Existing financial and structural realities for providing and funding CPE must be identified and addressed before large-scale efforts can be undertaken for determining effectiveness of CPE provided by SsSW.

An examination of the organizational structure and attributes of SsSW, levels of involvement, and projected future trends would contribute to the existing knowledge base in CPE provision by SsSW. By considering the possible relationships that exist between a school's current level of involvement in CPE and certain contextual realities (i.e., regulatory, financial, attitudinal, organizational), it may be found that these relationships further influence a school's projected emphasis for CPE, perhaps without design. To date there are no studies examining these possible relationships. It is recognized that issues involving program planning and implementation are complex, encompassing personal, organizational, and social realities existing among all the players (administrators, directors, instructors, participants, and larger systems). It is the purpose of this study to examine a select number of these factors in order to suggest further direction for SsSW in their efforts to provide appropriate, cost-effective CPE for social workers.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTS

Numerous aspects of CPE could be undertaken for examination, each providing

information in areas that have not been systematically quantified. While reviews of certain CPE

activities and programs have provided descriptions of factors thought to influence the provision

of CPE by SsSW (Dane, 1985; Dunn, 1988; Iwanchuk, 1987; Knox, 1982; Laufer & Sharon,

1993), actual testing of these relationships has not been implemented. This is understandable,

considering the existing complexity that has been described. It is suggested, however, that

testing must start somewhere. A research effort examining the possible relationship of certain

SSW attributes with a school's level of CPE involvement and its future focus would initiate the

process of testing. In order to proceed, however, it is helpful to understand the organizational

context in which a SsSW functions to provide CPE.

The following sections examine the theoretical framework guiding this study. An

explanation of the underlying theory base, the proposed research model, empirical definitions for

the independent and dependent variables, the rationale for the variables' inclusion and the

hypotheses are discussed.

The "Systems" Approach to Organizational Theory

The conceptual foundation supportive of the review, evaluation, and analysis of issues

involved in CPE can be drawn from various theories (e.g., adult learning, conflict, contingency,

decision, ecological perspective, expectancy, functionalism, general systems, organizational, and

social exchange). Although each of these theories, and others, may contribute to particular

aspects of CPE in social work, it has been decided to use organizational theory (using an open

systems approach) as an overarching theory supporting the underlying concepts and variables to be included in this study. Other approaches to organizational theory include behavioral, economic, and cultural perspectives. Human behavior and organizational change theories may also be considered when examining organizations. Although each of these may help understanding certain aspects of organizations, the open systems approach provides a more encompassing underpinning theory base.

SsSW are organizations. Organizations have been defined as "social entities that are goal-oriented, deliberately structured activity systems with an identifiable boundary" (Daft, 1983, p. 8). SsSW are made up of people with roles and responsibilities (e.g., administrators, staff, faculty) existing for the purpose of providing education for its consumers (e.g., students). Organizational tasks within SsSW are subdivided into separate departments and sets of activities (e.g., office of admissions, continuing education, degree programs, development, outreach, research). These tasks relate back to the specified purpose of education of various types. Within a school of social work it is known who is part of the organization and who is not, where resources originate, and what services are provided. Organizations consist of persons, tools, and resources dedicated to accomplish a wide range of goals that may or may not be widely agreed upon (Barker, 1991).

One of the major theories that is used to understand organizations is open systems theory (Holland, 1995). Organizational theory using an open systems approach "construes the organization as a social system with interrelated parts, or subsystems, functioning in interaction and equilibrium with one another. It thinks of the organization as an adaptive whole rather than as a structure that is solely rational-legal" (Holland & Petchers, 1987, p. 207). A school of social work, as an organization, can be viewed from this perspective. As SsSW have grown in

complexity, there has been a resultant specialization in various activity functions in some schools (e.g., the development of an office of CPE). Interactions of the various subsystems within the school and the interface of the school or office of CPE with larger systems environments (e.g., university, community, state, or national organizations) exist. These are established through the organizational structure, policy and procedures, and resource allocation decisions in place. The constant assessments and adjustments resulting from these interactions and transactions demonstrate organizational theory's (from an open systems perspective) appropriateness as an underpinning theory base for this study. Further associations to organizational theory from an open systems perspective can be made (Appendix B). Additionally, this theoretical perspective provides a broad framework for beginning understanding of the possible relationships that may be found as one considers a SSW's function in providing CPE.

<div align="center">The Research Model</div>

There are three main theoretical concepts to be examined in this study: attributes of a school of social work, a school's level of involvement, and a school's projected future focus for CPE. The research model proposes that attributes of SsSW influence a school's level of involvement in CPE as well as its projected future focus for CPE (Figure 1). It further suggests that a school's level of involvement in CPE may act as a modifying variable on its projected future focus. In other words, a school's level of involvement may possibly influence its focus for future continuing education activities or emphases.

Each of these three concepts (attributes of SsSW, level of involvement, and future focus) is thought to be multi-factorial. Indeed, any number of attributes of a school of social work may influence a school's level of involvement in CPE. Additionally, a school's level of involvement in CPE has not been quantified or defined to date and may incorporate components other than the
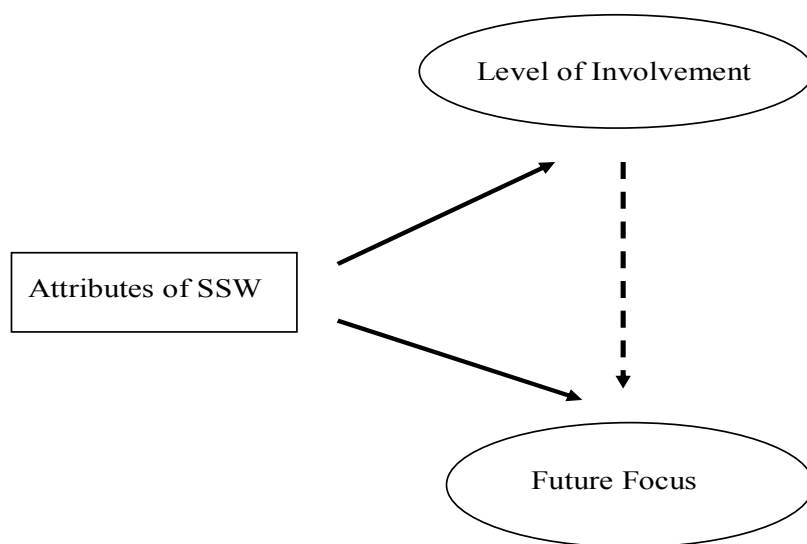
Figure 1. The Research Model

ones to be included for this study. Furthermore, the possibilities for emphasis and future focus of

CPE activities are endless. Each concept has been subdivided into specific components, helping

to form the various levels of operationalization for each concept (Figure 2). For this study, the

components for each concept were selected from the existing prescriptive and descriptive

literature relating to CPE in SsSW.

<div align="center">Definitions of Variables and Rationale for Inclusion</div>

The following definitions are provided for communication and understanding this research effort.

The items making up the variables (Attributes, Appendix C; Level of Involvement, Appendix D;

Future Focus, Appendix E) are key components of the research questions guiding this study as

well as the hypotheses to be tested. A rationale for inclusion is provided for each.

Attributes

Attributes are characteristics possessed by a school of social work. Attributes, for the

purpose of this study, refer to six selected components (location in a mandated CPE state,

funding auspice, CPE funding variability, program level, administrative support, and Carnegie

Foundation classification) thought to influence the provision of CPE in SsSW. The attributes

comprise the independent variables for the study (Appendix C and F).

Location in a mandated CPE state for licensing. This refers to the geographical location

of a SSW within a state requiring CPE for certification or licensing of social workers. It is a

nominal variable that will be measured with a response of yes or no.

Mandatory CPE requirements have been established in states as a mechanism, in part, to

assure professional competency. This mandated requirement may influence the level of

involvement in CPE by SsSW in those states requiring such. It has been suggested that

Independent Variables   **Dependent Variables**

Level of Involvement in CPE

Attributes of SSW

Structure

+

Leadership

+

Provision

+

Research

Location in a State Requiring
CPE for Licensing

Funding Auspice

Degree Program Levels

Funding Sources for Individual
Programs

Administrative Support

Carnegie Foundation Designation

Future Focus

Programming

+

Evaluation

+

Economics

Figure 2. The Expanded Research Model

mandatory CPE has made some difference in the numbers of CPE programs provided by SsSW, the number of CPE offerings, and the number of participants for CPE offerings.

Funding auspice. This refers to the basic, predominant source of funding for the school's day-to-day operations. It is a nominal variable that will categorize funding as being predominantly public, private, or a combination of both.

There may be differences between schools that are funded through predominantly public, private, or combination sources.

Degree program level. This refers to the educational degree programs offered by a school of social work. It includes the possible combinations of a masters degree program with or without a bachelor and/or doctoral degree program at a SSW. It is a nominal variable that will be measured with its designation into one of the four possible responses.

It is thought that the presence of multiple degree programs may influence the level of involvement in CPE as well as influence its future focus.

Funding variability for individual CPE offerings. This refers to various funding methods generally used for CPE offerings. It is a nominal variable that will be measured by summing the number of methods that the SSW uses to fund CPE programs. The combination of methods will range from one to five.

Most CPE offerings are supported through participant fees for individual offerings. Various methods of funding used by SsSW may be related to its level of involvement. These methods are nominal variables that will be measured with by the school designating whether the school uses a particular method or not to fund CPE offerings.

Administrative support. This refers to a CPE director's (or coordinator's) perceived support for CPE by the school's administrative staff. This is an ordinal variable that will be

measured by a Likert response as either no support, little support, moderate support, or major support (1 to 4) to a question regarding administrative support. Other variables can also be considered for administrative support (e.g., presence of a school's strategic plan with a CPE item, presence of CPE within the organizational chart, yearly budget range, and presence of a tenure track position for CPE director or coordinator, if present). These are nominal variables that will be measured with yes or no responses.

Support can be demonstrated or perceived in many manners. A director's perception of administrative support will, however, be a primary variable examined in this study. The use of monetary resources for CPE is perhaps the most critical. Dedicated monies suggest support, for programs and personnel. Formal recognition through organizational chart inclusion and yearly strategic planning at the upper administrative levels are other indicators of support. Although it could be argued that a tenure track position for the CPE director demonstrates administrative support, the current trend at SsSW may be the classification of a director as an academic professional (without the tenure-track expectations). Another consideration for a tenure track position is its possible relationship to demonstrated research activities in the area of CPE by a SSW.

Carnegie Foundation designation as Research—Extensive. This refers to a designation of a university that has research as its primary focus, as opposed to teaching or service. Universities with this classification have larger numbers overall of doctoral degrees awarded. It is a nominal variable that will be measured with a response of yes or no.

Rewards and incentives for faculty may be influenced by the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation Research—Extensive institution. It is thought that this designation may influence the level of involvement for CPE. Universities with a focus on research may be

less involved in providing CPE, yet may on the other hand demonstrate activity in research on aspects of CPE.

Level of involvement in CPE

Level of invovlement refers to the complexity of the CPE at a SSW. Level of involvement, for the purposes of this study, will consider certain structural, leadership, provision, and research issues. It considers the designation of resources as a means (organized CPE) to a particular end (effectiveness in maintaining and furthering the knowledge and skill base of social workers). As such,

level of involvement = structure + leadership + provision + research.

Level of involvement forms the first dependent variable to be examined. It is a nominal variable. A school's level of involvement in CPE will be characterized as none, minor, moderate, major, or premier. This categorization will be made using an index that rates a school's involvement based on structure, leadership, provision, and research (see Appendices D and F for the classification matrix and further explication). The complexities of providing CPE can be demonstrated in the proposed index. The construction of this concept considers that a school's increasing involvement in CPE will be reflected in the presence of four components. These include the need for an office of CPE (structure), the presence of a director or coordinator to supervise CPE activities (leadership), attention given to activities related to curricular programming (provision), and demonstrated attempts for expanding the knowledge base in social work regarding aspects of CPE (research). Each of these components included in level of involvement are not equal or ordered in a particular manner. It may be determined that in ordering or weighting of these factors may emerge.

Structure. Structure refers to the presence of an office or department of continuing professional education in the SSW. It is a nominal variable that will be measured with a yes or no response.

Although university-wide CPE units exist, most CPE programs are directed by its specific professional discipline. It has been suggested that CPE may be best coordinated by educators specializing in continuing education versus each professional discipline within the university doing so, thus negating the need for a separate office of continuing education within a school of social work. Currently, however, CPE in most universities is provided by each professional discipline, owing to the fact that it is the individual professional school that has been accredited or certified by state or national bodies supervising CPE activities.

Leadership. This refers to the presence a director or coordinator of CPE in a SSW. It is a nominal variable that will be measured by a yes or no response (Appendix F).

Leadership, in the form of dedicated resources for and presence of a director or coordinator of CPE, demonstrates both support and increasing expertise. Someone knowledgeable in the professional discipline must be accountable for the planning and implementing of programs and the budgets that may involve hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Provision. Provision refers to a range of CPE activities in which a SSW may be engaged to provide adequate curricular programming. For the purposes of this study, provision will include a school's provision of individual CPE offerings, the credentialing of providers, the collaboration or co-sponsorship with another CPE entity, or any combination of these three. It will be recorded as a nominal level variable for a presence/absence response.

Although seemingly disjointed, these three components of provision reflect common functions involved in CPE provided by SsSW.

Research. Research refers to demonstrated activity in the form of published journal articles relating to social work's examination of aspects of CPE that are intended to extend the knowledge base for processes or outcomes within CPE. Prescriptive and descriptive articles will be excluded. Articles must have been published within the past three years; qualifying articles currently submitted for review are acceptable.

Research activity examining CPE by a SSW will be a determining factor for a school's designation as having premier involvement. SsSW may have sophisticated and successful programs in CPE yet not have publications relating to specific processes or outcomes for CPE. A premier designation for a school acknowledges that there is a commitment to extension of the knowledge base in social work education, specifically social work CPE.

Future Focus

Future focus is the CPE director's or questionnaire respondent's opinion of their school's projected CPE emphases for the next three years. It includes three components: programming, evaluation (assessment), and economics (Appendices E and F). Future focus refers to a school's projected emphasis as decreasing, maintaining the same, or increasing focus or level of activity in each of the three components. Future focus forms the second dependent variable to be included in this study. These areas (programming, evaluation, and economics) reflect the dialogue generated by practitioners, educators, administrators, and researchers regarding the challenges and future directions for CPE provided by SsSW. Future focus can be considered as a school's decision to decrease, maintain, or increase CPE emphasis in programming, evaluation, and economics areas. That is to say,

$$\text{future focus } = \text{programming } + \text{ evaluation } + \text{ economics}.$$

An index will be assessed for each of the three components to determine whether the projected

future focus or level of activity is being decreased, maintained, or increased in those areas.

These indexes will be summed together to provide an overall index that reflects a school's

overall future focus for CPE activity as decreasing, maintaining, or increasing (Appendix G).

Programming. The programming component of future focus refers to the amount of

particular curricular programming issues for CPE. It will include three categories: an emphasis

on the number of CPE offerings, the diversity of knowledge and skills training content, and the

use of multiple instructional methods (Appendices E and F). The programming component is a

nominal variable determined by indexing each category and determining whether a school will

decrease, maintain, or increase focus for programming (Appendix G).

These categories reflect issues related to professional needs assessments and educational

theory. Increasing numbers of programs may relate to states' requirements for mandated CPE for

practitioners. Most CPE programs appear to have a clinical focus (which may reflect the

licensing requirements for clinical social workers), yet exposure to other topics are also needed

for professional development. The use of multiple instructional methods for programs recognizes

that certain content within programs is better suited to a particular instructional method. It also

recognizes that participants acquire knowledge in various manners (e.g., visually, experientially,

modeling).

Evaluation. The evaluation component of future focus refers to aspects of program

assessment that is directed toward educational outcomes of an individual CPE offering. It

includes three categories: participant learning as determined by pre/post-test or post-test only at

the end of the CPE session, instructor self-evaluation of their presentation, and participant

follow-up for content knowledge in the practice setting (Appendices E and F). The evaluation

component is a nominal variable determined by indexing each category and determining whether a school will decrease, maintain, or increase focus for evaluation (Appendix G).

Each of these categories reflects the dialogue among educators and researchers that multiple assessment methods for effectiveness of CPE should be used for participants, instructors, and programs. They contribute to increased quality and accountability. Since most, if not all, CPE offerings include a participant satisfaction survey at the end of the session, this component is not included. Additionally, inclusion of a sponsor's program evaluation is not included at this time. Examination of participant outcomes is considered a higher-level evaluation method than participant satisfaction reports. The completion of an instructor self-evaluation component begins the process of continuous quality improvement for modification of future programs in the same topical area. Transferability of skills into the practice setting, considered the highest level of evaluation, will not be examined; however, follow-up testing of the participant for content in the practice setting will be included as a step toward greater sophistication in evaluation.

Economics. The economics component of future focus refers factors contributing to the fiscal stability of CPE programs. It includes three categories: methods of cost effective delivery, methods of funding, and marketing (Appendices E and F). The economics component is a nominal variable determined by indexing each category and determining whether a school will decrease, maintain, or increase focus for economics (Appendix G).

If funding issues have been instrumental in determining whether or not CPE is provided at a SsSW, then efforts for cost-effectiveness are imperative as well. Cost-effective methods of delivery consider geographic distance between the school and the CPE participant that can effect monetary and manpower resources. Using multiple funding methods supports fiscal stability.

Marketing of CPE activities provides greater exposure, resulting in potentially increased attendance and revenues.

<div align="center">Hypotheses</div>

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship exists between the certain attributes of a school of social work and its level of involvement in CPE. A secondary purpose was to determine whether a relationship exists between certain attributes of a SSW and its future focus for CPE. Additionally, it may be found that the level of involvement in CPE acts as a modifying variable on the future focus for CPE. After determining the level of involvement in CPE for a SSW (i.e., research question 1), the following hypotheses were examined to determine whether these relationships exist (i.e., research questions 2, 3, and 4). The major hypotheses to be examined were H1 - H6; the minor hypotheses were H7 - H13.

Research Question 2: Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics of a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE?

H1: A relationship exists between a SSW's location in a mandated CPE state and its level of involvement in CPE.

H2: A relationship exists between the financial auspice of a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE.

H3: A relationship exists between the program levels at SSW and its level of involvement in CPE.

H4: A relationship exists between the types of funding of CPE programs and its level of involvement in CPE.

H5: A relationship exists between perceived administrative support at a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE.

H6: A relationship exists between the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation Classification—Research Extensive institution and its level of involvement in CPE.

Research Question 3: Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics of a SSW and its future focus in CPE?

H7: A relationship exists between a SSW's location in a mandated CPE state and it's projected future focus for CPE.

H8: A relationship exists between the financial auspice of a SSW and its projected future focus for CPE.

H9: A relationship exists between the program levels at SSW and its projected future focus for CPE.

H10: A relationship exists between the types of funding of CPE programs and its projected future focus in CPE.

H11: A relationship exists between perceived administrative support at a SSW and its projected future focus in CPE.

H12: A relationship exists between the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation Classification—Research Extensive institution and its projected future focus in CPE.

Research Question 4: Does a relationship exist between level of involvement in CPE and future focus in CPE?

H13: A relationship exists between a SSW's level of involvement in CPE and its projected future focus for CPE.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study was partially based on a pilot study conducted during 1995-1996 that surveyed schools of social work for their current involvement in continuing education activities. This earlier descriptive, exploratory study examined information provided by schools of social work obtained from a mailed survey format. The wide range of responses intimated that there might be a way to categorize a school's relative level of involvement in CPE. For this study, attributes of SsSW, level of involvement in CPE, and future focus were derived from a review of the literature addressing various areas of continued concern as expressed by educators and researchers of CPE in social work (Davenport, 1992; Matz, 1997; Strom & Green, 1995). The data for these variables were collected via a mailed survey questionnaire (Appendix H) and measured following the research strategy as outlined in Table 1.

Theoretical Underpinning for Research Method Choice

The approach of this study followed components of the total design method (TDM) for mail and telephone surveys as described by Dillman (1978). This process organized the survey efforts so as to maximize the quality and quantity of responses. Based on social exchange theory, the TDM suggests that three conditions must exist for maximization of responses: minimizing the costs of responding, maximizing the rewards for responding, and establishing trust that the rewards will be given either immediately or forth-coming.

Maximizing the rewards for a respondent would increase a survey's response rate (Dillman, 1978). The rewards that can be given are mostly intangible. Expression of positive

Table 1

Research Strategy for Variables, Data Collection, and Statistical Method

Variables	Data Collection	Statistical Method

Attributes
    SSW in state with mandated CPE
    Funding auspice
    Degree program levels
    Administrative support
    Carnegie Foundation designation
	Questionnaire	Frequencies

Involvement in CPE
    Structure
    Leadership
    Provision
    Research
    Overall Level of Involvement
	Questionnaire	Frequencies

Future Focus
    Programming
    Evaluation
    Economics
    Overall Programming
    Overall Evaluation
    Overall Economics
    Overall Future Focus
	Questionnaire	Frequencies

regard (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and appreciation is an acceptable reward for the respondent's time-consuming service and was included within a mail survey cover letter (Appendix I). Supporting the respondent's value for continuing education was considered as another reward. Since respondents are those identified as contact persons for continuing education it is assumed that a shared value for the "social usefulness" (Slocum, Empey, & Swanson, 1956) of continuing

education exists. The topic also holds interest for those closely involved with continuing education efforts at their respective schools.

The reduction of costs to the respondent involves time, effort, power, and direct monetary costs (Dillman, 1978). The major cost experienced by a respondent is usually considered to be the time taken to complete the survey. A statement within the cover letter regarding the amount of estimated time to complete the survey was included. One area that may be over-looked as a cost is the effort (physical or mental) required for completing the survey (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Limiting the complexity of the survey, providing understandable directions, and limiting personal and demographic information questions were used to lessen the physical or mental effort for the respondent. A power differential is created when a respondent decides to participate in a survey. Power, in this sense, is an outcome of an exchange process in which an individual needs a service from another, but has nothing of equal value with which to reciprocate (Blau, 1964). Information (completed survey) is being given to the surveyor without guarantee of a reciprocal reward for the respondent. In this study, a "favor" was requested from the respondent, therefore attempting to shift implied power to the respondent. Direct monetary cost to the respondent was circumvented with the use of return-postage for the completed survey.

Establishment of trust in mail surveys must also be attempted via the cover letter. This may or may not be created with a statement regarding intended dissemination of findings to the respondents. Explanation of the study's usefulness and importance, establishing legitimacy, as well as appealing to the respondent's concern and helpfulness can help initiate trust. Identifying with a known organization (i.e., the researcher's university via official letterhead stationary) also establishes legitimacy and trust.

The decision to use a mail survey method was supported by its general performance characteristics in the following areas: obtaining a representative sample, questionnaire construction and question design, obtaining accurate answers, and administrative requirements (Dillman, 1978). It has a high known opportunity for all members of a completely listed population to be included in the sample (i.e., schools of social work that are currently providing continuing education offerings). There is a high likelihood that selected respondents will be located. It has a high response rate for homogeneous, specialized samples. It has a high likelihood that unknown bias from refusals will be avoided. In comparison, a telephone survey has a lower allowable length of questionnaire than face-to-face interviews, yet it does have high success with open-ended questions, screening questions, controlling the sequence and avoiding item non-response. With mail surveys there is a higher likelihood that social desirability bias can be avoided as well as avoidance of interviewer distortion and subversion. A likelihood that contamination by others can be avoided also exists, although the respondent may seek out information not known from others. The likelihood that personnel requirements can be met is high, as well as its potential speed of implementation. Its overall potential for low per interview costs and sensitivity of costs to increasing geographical dispersion is greater than telephone surveys and face-to-face interviews.

There were three mailings of the survey over a six month period. A telephone contact was attempted with schools not responding to the first two mailings.

Research Design

This quantitative study was descriptive, exploratory, and correlational in nature. A correlational design was used with this survey research with the intent to describe whether possible relationships between the stated variables existed. It may be classified as a quantitative-

descriptive, subtype c (population description) in that it describes a quantitative relationship among variables and begins hypothesis testing (which is subtype d) (Tripodi, Fellin, & Meyer, 1983). It provides a beginning description of quantitative characteristics of the unit of analysis, school of social work, regarding its level of involvement in continuing education and its future focus for continuing education efforts. The research strategy for analysis is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

Research Strategy for Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Independent Variable		Dependent Variable		Statistical Testing
		Level of Measurement		Level of Measurement	
H1-H6	Attributes		Level of Involvement		Nonparametric
H1		Nominal		Nominal	
H2		Nominal		Nominal	
H3		Nominal		Nominal	
H4		Nominal		Nominal	
H5		Nominal/Ordinal		Nominal	
H6		Nominal		Nominal	
H7-H12	Attributes		Future Focus		Nonparametric
H7		Nominal		Nominal	
H8		Nominal		Nominal	
H9		Nominal		Nominal	
H10		Nominal		Nominal	
H11		Nominal/Ordinal		Nominal	
H12		Nominal		Nominal	
H13	Level of Involvement		Future Focus		Nonparametric
		Nominal		Nominal	

Sample and Data Collection

A purposive population of established masters level social work programs was the intended target for this study. The unit of analysis was a fully accredited school (or other unit such as department or college) of social work with a masters degree program in the United States. Therefore, the total number of accredited schools of social work as of the date of mailing the survey questionnaire was the target population. These social work programs were determined by the most current CSWE listing of accredited masters level programs in the United States for the year 2001. Schools in candidacy and other accreditation stages were not considered for this study since they were not fully accredited. This provided information regarding schools along a continuum from those that are not providing CPE to those that are currently involved in the provision of continuing professional education at various levels of involvement.

Data collection proceeded by obtaining information about the qualifying school of social work from persons identified as contacts in the area of continuing education (i.e., coordinators and directors). The contact person was identified through any of three methods. SSW webpages were reviewed for a stated continuing education contact person (for those schools with webpages). A telephone call was made to a school of social work (without a webpage) to determine a contact person. Additionally, the current-to-date CSWE listing of coordinators or deans of accredited masters programs was used. This identified contact person for each SSW, or their designated referral, was to complete and return the mailed questionnaire. Identification of the researcher, the research question, the significance of the study, estimated time for completion, and statements regarding the use of aggregated findings to insure confidentiality was included in the cover letter for the survey. An offer to mail the survey findings to respondents was made on both the cover letter as well as the questionnaire itself. Data collection was

initiated after approval of the study, including the cover letter and questionnaire, by the university institutional review board (IRB).

Data was coded and entered into a statistical package (SPSS, 1997) for inspection and analysis. Data entry was double-checked for accuracy.

<u>Data Analysis and Interpretation</u>

Three variable categories were examined in this study: attributes of schools of social work, level of involvement in continuing professional education, and future focus. Variables are further described and operationalized in Appendices C, D, E, F, G and H. Data was analyzed using the statistical program SPSS 7.5 for Windows (SPSS, 1997). Univariate and bivariate analyses were used for descriptive and comparative information. The descriptive statistics to be used for all three types of variables included frequency distributions. Inferential statistics were used to examine the possibility of a relationship between or among variables. Statistical significance was determined using non-parametric tests, since the variables to be examined are nominal- and ordinal-level data that are not distributed normally. The data analysis for each of the three types of variable categories is discussed separately.

<u>Attributes of a School of Social Work</u>

Frequency distributions were used to characterize the schools of social work in the sample using the six categories described fully in Appendix C. These categories included location in a mandated state for CPE, funding auspice, degree programs, funding sources for CPE programs, administrative support, and Carnegie Foundation designation.

<u>Levels of Involvement in Continuing Professional Education</u>

Frequency distributions were determined after categorizing a school of social work as having none, minor, moderate, major or premier involvement for the four categories (structure, leadership, provision, and research) comprising the construct of level of involvement.

Future Focus

Frequency distributions were used to quantify the three components (programming, evaluation, and economics) composing this construct. Overall frequencies were given for the summed variables of each category as well as for the individual variables within each category. An overall index was assigned for future focus, therefore allowing the designation of a school as decreasing, maintaining, or increasing its future focus for continuing professional education.

In addition to descriptive statistics, non-parametric statistics were employed to determine whether or not a relationship exists between the independent and dependent variables. Additionally, a determination was made as to whether the level of involvement acts as a modifying variable on future focus.

Non-parametric tests of statistical significance are used in survey research with nominal- and ordinal-level data. The chi square test of significance of differences was used to compare attributes with levels of involvement, attributes with future focus, and levels of involvement with future focus. The .05 level of significance was used for this study (Olenjik, 1984). The strength of association was determined by use of Cramer's V.

Limitations of the Method and Design

There are performance characteristics for mail surveys that demonstrate its inferiority to both face-to-face interviews and telephone surveys. A mail survey does not generally allow for high complexity or depth in construction of its questions. Additionally, there is a low likelihood that consultation will be obtained from the surveyor when clarification is needed. Clear

instructions and descriptions of survey items offset this limitation. A contact telephone number was provided for the respondent if he or she had any questions or concerns. Response rates are generally lower with mailed surveys. This limitation was offset with additional mailings, as well as a telephone contact to the non-responding school.

Although tests of association are able to determine if variables are related, they can not be used to determine causality. If no relationships exist between the studied variables, then it could appear that the research efforts show negative results. To counter this statement, however, is the fact that determination of a non-relationship would guide future research efforts in other directions.

Since the conceptualizations of levels of involvement in continuing education and future focus are new constructs, there remains the question of validity of the components selected for inclusion within each construct. However, this beginning attempt will hopefully engage others in dialogue and exploration in an area that has experienced lack of cohesiveness and thoughtful planning.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

Description of Respondents

Schools of social work with accredited masters level degree programs were the units of analysis

in this study. There was a response rate of 89.6% (129/144) to the survey questionnaire. There were 14

non-respondent schools. Thirteen of these were located in states mandating CPE for licensure or re-

certification. Ten non-respondent schools were state-funded; four schools were private institutions. Six

non-respondent schools offered education at the doctoral level. Of the 129 respondent schools, 103

(79.9%) reported that they provided continuing professional education programs. Fifty-five percent (71)

of schools were designated as a Carnegie Foundation Research-Extensive institution.

There were 108 schools (83.7%) located in states mandating continuing professional education

for license or certification renewal. 102 (79.1%) schools received all or some public funding (Table 3).

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Funding Origination (N = 129)

Funding Origination	Frequency	Percentage %
Public	64	49.6
Private	27	20.9
Combination	38	29.5

Sixty-three (48.9%) reporting schools offered doctoral degrees in addition to the masters degree (Table 4).

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Degree Programs Offered (N=129)

Degree Programs	Frequency	Percentage %
Masters	6	4.7
Masters, Bachelors	60	46.5
Masters, Doctoral	33	25.6
Masters, Bachelors, Doctoral	30	23.3

The sources used by SSWs for funding continuing education are displayed in Table 5. Ninety-six (93.2%) schools used program fees as a primary funding source for their CPE offerings. Forty-one percent reported using fees as their only funding source. Twenty-five schools (24.3%) reported receiving some financial support for their CPE programs through grants and contracts; 27 schools reported co-sponsorship with other disciplines or agencies as a funding source. Approximately 72% of schools used either one or two sources for their funding support. Twenty-seven schools reported greater than two funding sources.

Various aspects of administrative support are presented in Tables 6 and 7. Approximately 80% of schools reported a perception of moderate to major support by administration. The presence of CPE on a SSW's strategic plan was reported in 67 schools (65%). CPE was on a school's organizational chart for 50 respondents (48.5%). Approximately 47% of schools reported CPE budgets less than $10,000. An additional 18% reported budgets up to $50,000 for CPE. Twelve of the responding schools with CE directors or coordinators (12%) reported that this position was a tenure-track faculty position.

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages of Sources used by SSW for Funding Continuing Education

Source	Frequency	Percentage %
Fees only	42	40.8
SSW subsidy only/No charge	1	1
Fees plus SSW subsidy	54	52.4
Grants and Contracts	25	24.3
Co-sponsorship with other disciplines or agencies	27	26.2
University-wide CE unit monetary or in-kind support	15	14.6
No response	1	1
Number of sources used		
One	36	34.9
Two	39	37.9
Three	14	13.6
Four	9	8.7
Five	4	3.9
Unable to Score	1	1

Note: N = 103, frequencies will not add up to 103 due to multiple responses to item.

Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages of Perceived Support by SSW Administration (N = 103)

Perceived Support	Frequency	Percentage %
None	4	3.1
Little	17	13.2
Moderate	46	44.7
Major	36	35.0

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of Additional Administrative Support Variables (N=103)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Presence of CPE on SSW Strategic Plan		
Yes	67	65.0
No	32	31.1
Unknown/No response	4	3.9
CPE on the SSW Organizational Chart	50	48.5
Yes	45	43.7
No	8	7.8
Unknown/No response		
Budget Ranges for CPE		
No budget designated	2	1.9
<$10,000	48	46.6
$10,000 to $50,000	19	18.4
$50,001 to $100,000	13	12.6
$100,001 to 250,000	8	7.8
$>250,000	6	5.8
Unknown/No response	7	6.8

Tenure Track Position (Director/Coordinator)		
Yes		
No	12	11.7
Not Applicable/No director/No	51	49.5
response	40	38.8

Table 8 displays the frequency data for the four components included in level of involvement. For the component of structure, forty-four schools (42.7%) reported that there was an office of CPE within their SSW. However, almost 70% of schools stated that there was a director or coordinator of CPE (leadership component). Within the provision component, ninety-five (92.2%) schools provided CPE directly; 88 (85.4%) schools reported co-sponsoring programs with other entities or disciplines. Forty-eight (46.6%) schools approved other providers of CPE for their state licensing boards. Research activities related to the expansion of the CPE knowledge base were reported by only 6 schools.

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of Components of Involvement (N=103)

Component	Frequency	Percentage %
Structure		
Has Office of CPE within SSW		
Yes	44	42.7
No	57	55.3
No Response	2	1.9
Leadership		
Has Director/Coordinator of CPE	71	68.9
Yes	30	29.1
No	2	1.9
No Response		
Provision Activities		
Co-sponsors programs with other entities		
Yes	88	85.4
No	11	10.7

No Response	4	3.9
Provides CPE directly by school		
Yes	95	92.2
No	7	6.8
No Response	1	1.0
Approves providers of CPE for state licensing board		
Yes	48	46.6
No	48	46.6
No response	7	6.8
Number of Activities		
One	12	11.7
Two	53	51.5
Three	38	35.9
Research		
Activities demonstrating dissemination of information related to expansion of CPE knowledge base	6	5.8
Yes	97	94.2
No		

Using the proposed theoretical model (level of involvement = structure + leadership + provision + research), a determination was made for each school's level of involvement (Table 9). Two schools were classified as premier schools for CPE; that is, having all four components included for level of involvement. Forty-two (33%) schools were classified as major schools for CPE. Moderate involvement in CPE was evident in 28 schools (22%). Thirty-one schools (24%) were classified with a minor level of involvement in CPE.

Table 9

Frequencies and Percentages for Level of Involvement Classification (N = 129)

Level of Involvement	Frequency	Percentage %
None	26	20.2
Minor	31	24.0

Moderate	28	21.7
Major	42	32.6
Premier	2	1.6

Almost three-fourths of schools (73.8%) providing CPE projected that they would increase their focus in the area of programming for continuing professional education over the next three years (Table 10). This component included the provision of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including issues related to instructional methods. Fifty-eight percent projected increases in the number of CPE programs offered. Fifty-three percent projected that they would expand the diversity of CPE topics offered by their programs. Fifty-one percent of schools stated they would maintain the same approaches to instruction.

Table 10

Frequencies and Percentages for Provision Component of Future Focus (N=103)

Programming	Frequency	Percentage %
Number of CPE programs offered		
Decrease	7	6.8
Maintain	32	31.1
Increase	60	58.3
No response	4	3.9
Diversity of Programs		
Decrease	2	1.9
Maintain	31	39.8
Increase	55	53.4
No response	5	4.9
Use of Multi-method approaches to instruction		
Decrease	0	0
Maintain	52	50.5
Increase	46	44.7
No response	5	4.9
Overall Future Focus for Provision		

Decrease	6	5.8
Maintain	17	16.5
Increase	76	73.8
No response	4	3.9

Future activities addressing CPE evaluation are presented in Table 11. The evaluation component included analyzing outcomes of CPE, including transferability of content knowledge and skills. For each of the three activities included in the evaluation component, a majority of respondents stated that activity would be continued at the same level. Sixty-eight percent (or two-thirds) of respondents stated they would maintain their activity level for use of post-test or pre/post testing of program content; 78% percent (three-fourths) of respondents stated they would maintain their same activity level for self-evaluation of the presenter for the program. Fifty-four percent stated they would continue their same activity level for follow-up testing of content in the practice setting. Overall, two-thirds of respondents stated they would not change their level of activity in the area of evaluation.

Table 11

Frequencies and Percentages for Evaluation Component of Future Focus (N=103)

Evaluation	Frequency	Percentage %
Post-test or pre/post test of program content		
Decrease	3	2.9
Maintain	70	68.0
Increase	17	16.5
No response	13	12.6
Self-evaluation of the presenter of the program		
Decrease	2	1.9
Maintain	80	77.7
Increase	12	11.7
No response	9	8.7
Follow-up testing of content in the practice setting		

Decrease	5	4.9
Maintain	56	54.4
Increase	18	17.5
No response	24	23.3
Overall Future Focus for Evaluation		
Decrease	6	5.8
Maintain	68	66.0
Increase	24	23.3
No response	5	4.9

The economics component of future focus included cost-effective means of CPE delivery, funding methods or stability issues within funding. Table 12 presents the schools' projection regarding the economics-related issues. Almost 75% of respondents projected they would increase their focus for this area overall. Fifty-three percent of respondents projected they would expand their methods of delivery of CPE, such as distance learning or interactive learning processes. Additionally, fifty-three percent stated they projected an expansion in their methods of funding CPE. Sixty-seven percent of respondents projected that they would increase their marketing activities for CPE.

Table 12

Frequencies and Percentages for Economics Component of Future Focus (N=103)

Economics	Frequency	Percentage %
Methods of Delivery		
Decrease	0	0.0
Maintain	41	39.8
Increase	55	53.4
No response	7	6.8
Methods of Funding		
Decrease	0	0.0
Maintain	42	40.8
Increase	55	53.4
No response	6	5.8

Marketing Focus

Decrease	1	1.0
Maintain	29	28.2
Increase	69	67.0
No response	4	3.9

Overall Future Focus for Economics

Decrease	0	0.0
Maintain	23	22.3
Increase	76	73.3
No response	4	3.9

Overall, 81% of schools projected an increase in focus and activity in CPE over the next three years (Table 13).

Table 13

Frequencies and Percentages for Overall Future Focus Emphasis or Activity (N = 103)

Emphasis or Activity	Frequency	Percentage %
Decrease	1	1.0
Maintain	15	14.6
Increase	83	80.6
No response	4	3.9

Research Question 1: What is the Level of Involvement in CPE for a SSW?

A major purpose of this study was to determine the level of involvement in CPE for a SSW. As observed in Table 9, almost one-third of respondent schools were classified as schools providing major involvement in CPE. Twenty percent of schools (n = 26) reported no involvement in CPE. Two schools were classified as the highest level of involvement (premier), with activity in all four component areas of involvement as defined for this study.

Research Question 2: Does a Relationship Exist Between Certain Characteristics of a SSW and its Level

of Involvement in CPE?

The second major purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of certain characteristics

of a SSW with its level of involvement in CPE. Six categories were included in this category of

examination. The results for H1 – H6 are presented.

H1: A relationship exists between a SSW's location in a mandated CPE state and its level of

involvement in CPE.

There was no statistical relationship between the location of a SSW in a state requiring CPE for

re-licensure or re-certification and its level of involvement (Table 14).

Table 14

Relationship between Location in State requiring CPE for Certification or Licensure and

Level of Involvement

			Level of Involvement			
	None	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Location in a state requiring CPE for Certification for Licensure						
Yes	19	27	24	36	2	108
No	7	4	4	6	0	21
Total	26	31	28	42	2	129

X^2 (4, n = 129) = 3.014, p = .556

H2: A relationship exists between the financial auspice of a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE.

A school's level of involvement was not statistically related to the funding origination for the school (Table 15).

Table 15

Relationship between Funding Auspice and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement					
	None	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Funding Origination						
Public	16	17	15	15	1	64
Private	4	7	5	11	0	27
Combination	6	71	8	16	1	28
Total	26	31	28	42	2	129

X^2 (8, n = 129) = 6.377, p = .605

H3: A relationship exists between the program levels at SSW and its level of involvement in CPE

There was a statistical relationship (Table 16) between the program levels at a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE, X^2 (12, n = 129) = 35.141, p = .000. The strength of association is given by Cramer's V = .301.

Table 16

Relationship between Degree Programs and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement					
	None	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Degree Programs						
Masters	1	2	3	0	0	6
Masters, Bachelors	16	20	13	11	0	60
Masters, Doctoral	6	6	2	19	0	33
Masters, Bachelors, Doctoral	3	3	10	12	2	30
Total	26	31	28	42	2	129

X^2 (12, n = 129) = 35.141, p = .000
Cramer's V = .301

H4: A relationship exists between the types of funding of CPE programs and its level of involvement in CPE.

When examining whether a particular type of funding for individual programs was related to a school's level of involvement in CPE, it was found that schools using fee-based only funding for programs showed a statistical relationship with a school's level of involvement, X^2 (6, n = 103) = 15.714, p = .015 and Cramer's V = .276 (Tables 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23). The presence of other funding sources did not show a relationship, as well as the overall number of funding sources reported by schools.

Table 17

Relationship between Number of Funding Sources for CPE and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Number of Funding Sources					
One	10	11	15	0	36
Two	11	8	19	1	39
Three	5	5	4	0	14
Four	2	3	3	1	9
Five	3	0	1	0	4
Unable to score	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (15, n = 103) = 14.659, p = .474

Table 18

Relationship between Fee-based Funding as only Source and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Fee-based Only					
Yes	6	17	19	0	42
No	25	10	23	2	60
No Response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 15.714, p = .015
Cramer's V = .276

Table 19

Relationship between SSW Subsidy only Funding Source and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
SSW Subsidy only/no charge					
Yes	1	0	0	0	1
No	30	27	42	2	101
No Response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 5.031, p = .540

Table 20

Relationship between Fee-based plus SSW Subsidy Funding Source and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Fee-based plus SSW subsidy					
Yes	19	13	20	2	54
No	12	14	22	0	48
No response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 6.101, p = .412

Table 21

Relationship between Grant and Contract Funding Sources and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Grants and Contracts					
Yes	10	3	11	1	25
No	21	24	31	1	77
No Response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 7.045, p = .317

Table 22

Relationship between Co-sponsorship and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Co-sponsorship					
Yes	11	7	8	1	27
No	20	20	34	1	75
No Response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 5.791, p = .447

Table 23

Relationship between University-wide Continuing Education Unit and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
University-wide Continuing Education Unit monetary or in-kind Support					
Yes	6	5	3	0	14
No	25	22	39	2	88
No Response	0	1	0	0	1
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 5.926, p = .432

H5: A relationship exists between perceived administrative support at a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE.

There was no statistical relationship between perceived administrative support at a SSW providing and its level of involvement in CPE (Table 24).

There were, however, relationships found with other components examined under administrative support. The presence of CPE in a school's strategic plan was statistically related to a school's level of involvement, X^2 (6, n = 103) = 12.744, p = .047. The strength of this relationship was given by Cramer's V = .249 (Table 25).

The presence of CPE on a school's organizational chart additionally showed a statistical relationship, X^2 (6, n = 103) = 25.224, p = .000. Again, strength was shown by Cramer's V = .350 (Table 26).

Table 24

Relationship between Perceived Administrative Support and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Perceived Administrative Support					
None	2	1	1	0	4
Minor	6	6	5	0	17
Moderate	15	15	15	1	46
Major	8	6	21	1	36
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (9, n = 103) = 8.705, p = .465

Table 25

Relationship between Strategic Plan and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Strategic Plan					
Yes	14	17	34	2	67
No	16	9	7	0	32
No Response	1	2	1	0	4
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 12.744, p = .047
Cramer's V = .249

Table 26

Relationship between Presence of CPE on Organizational Chart and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Organizational Chart					
Yes	6	12	30	2	50
No	23	14	8	0	45
No Response	2	2	4	0	8
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 25.224, p = .000
Cramer's V = .350

The level of involvement in CPE was statistically related to a school's budget range for CPE, X^2 (18, n = 103) = 81.322, p = .000. The strength of association was shown by Cramer's V = .513 (Table 27).

Finally, a statistical relationship was found between the director or coordinator of the CPE program at a school holding a tenure-track position at the school and its level of involvement, X^2 (6, n = 103) = 50.501, p = .000. The strength of the relationship was determined by Cramer's V = .495 (Table 28).

Table 27

Relationship between Budget Range and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Budget Range					
<10,000	24	18	6	0	48
10,001 to 50,000	3	5	11	0	19
50,001 to 100,000	0	1	12	0	13
100,001 to 250,000	2	0	6	0	8
>250,000	0	1	3	2	6
No Budget	2	0	0	0	2
No Response	0	3	4	0	7
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (18, n = 103) = 81.322, p = .000
Cramer's V = .513

Table 28

Relationship of Tenure-Track Position for CE Coordinator and Level of Involvement

	Level of Involvement				
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Tenure –Track Position					
Yes	1	4	7	0	12
No	3	14	32	2	51
No Response	27	10	3	0	40
Total	31	28	42	2	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 50.501, p = .000
Cramer's V = .495

H6: A relationship exists between the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation Classification—Research Extensive institution and its level of involvement in CPE.

A statistical relationship was found between the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation Classification—Research Extensive institution and its level of involvement, X^2 (4, n = 129) = 16.566, p = .002 plus Cramer's V = .358 (Table 29).

Table 29

Relationship between Carnegie Foundation Designation and Level of Involvement

Carnigie Research Class Extensive	Level of Involvement					
	None	Minor	Moderate	Major	Premier	Total
Yes	11	13	12	44	2	71
No	15	18	16	9	0	58
Total	26	31	28	42	2	129

X^2 (4, n = 129) = 16.566, p = .002
Cramer's V = .358

Research Question 3: Does a Relationship Exist Between Certain Characteristics of a SSW and its Future Focus in CPE?

As one of the minor research questions, determining whether a relationship existed between specified characteristics of a SSW and its projected future focus was examined. The findings for this question are presented in hypotheses H7 - H12.

H7: A relationship exists between a SSW's location in a mandated CPE state and its projected future focus for CPE.

There was no statistical relationship found between a school's location in a mandated

CPE state and its projected future focus for CPE (Table 30).

Table 30

Relationship between Location in State Requiring CPE for Certification or Licensure and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Location in Mandated CPE State					
Yes	1	15	69	4	89
No	0	0	14	0	14
Total	1	15	83	4	103

$X^2 (3, n = 103) = 3.904, p = .272$

H8: A relationship exists between the financial auspice of a SSW and its projected future focus

for CPE.

No statistical relationship was found between the funding origination for a SSW and its

projected future focus for CPE (Table 31).

H9: A relationship exists between the program levels at SSW and it's projected future focus for

CPE.

There was no statistical relationship between the programs levels at a SSW and its

projected future focus for CPE (Table 32).

Table 31

Relationship between Funding Origination and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Funding Origination					
Public	0	10	36	2	48
Private	0	2	19	2	23
Combination	1	3	28	0	32
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 7.661, p = .264

Table 32

Relationship between Degree Programs and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Degree Program					
Masters	0	0	4	1	5
Masters, Bachelors	1	12	30	1	44
Masters, Doctoral	0	2	24	1	27
Masters, Bachelors, Doctoral	0	1	25	1	27
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (9, n = 103) = 15.282, p = .083

H10: A relationship exists between the types of funding of CPE programs and its projected future focus in CPE.

No statistical relationship was found between the types of funding for individual CPE programs and a school's projected future focus (Tables 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, and 39).

Table 33

Relationship between Number of Funding Sources for CPE and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Number of Funding Sources					
One	0	6	30	0	36
Two	0	6	31	2	39
Three	1	1	11	1	14
Four	0	1	7	1	9
Five	0	1	3	0	4
Six	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

$X^2 (15, n = 103) = 10.991, p = .753$

Table 34

Relationship between Fee-based Funding as only Source and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Fee-based Only					
Yes	0	7	34	1	42
No	1	8	48	3	60
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 1.578, p = .954

Table 35

Relationship between SSW Subsidy as only Funding Source and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
SSW Subsidy Only					
Yes	0	0	1	0	1
No	1	15	81	4	101
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = .491, p = .998

Table 36

Relationship between Fee-based plus SSW Subsidy Funding Source and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Fee-based plus SSW subsidy					
Yes	1	6	43	4	54
No	0	9	39	0	48
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 5.758, p = .451

Table 37

Relationship between Grants and Contracts as Funding Source and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Grants and Contracts					
Yes	1	4	19	1	25
No	0	11	63	3	77
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 3.471, p = .748

Table 38

Relationship between Co-sponsorship as Funding Source and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Co-sponsorship					
Yes	0	5	21	1	27
No	1	10	61	3	75
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 1.009, p = .985

Table 39

Relationship between University-wide CE Unit Support and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
University-wide CE Unit Support					
Yes	0	2	12	0	14
No	1	13	70	4	88
No Response	0	0	1	0	1
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 1.106, p = .981

H11: A relationship exists between perceived administrative support at a SSW and its projected future focus in CPE.

There was no statistical relationship between perceived administrative support at a SSW and its projected future focus in CPE (Table 40).

Table 40

Relationship between Perceived Administrative Support and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Perceived Administrative Support					
None	0	1	2	1	4
Minor	0	5	12	0	17
Moderate	1	5	38	2	46
Major	0	4	31	1	36
Total	1	15	83	4	103

$X^2 (9, n = 103) = 11.064, p = .271$

Other areas of administrative support showed a statistical relationship. There was a statistical relationship (Table 41) with a school's projected future focus for CPE when CPE was found in a school's strategic plan, $X^2 (6, n = 103) = 13.159, p = . 041$ (Cramer's V = .253). Additionally, when CPE was found on a school's organizational chart (Table 42), there was a statistical relationship with its projected future focus for CPE, $X^2 (6, n = 103) = 17.228, p = .008$ (Cramer's V = .289).

Table 41

Relationship between Strategic Plan and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Strategic Plan					
Yes	0	5	60	2	67
No	1	8	21	2	32
No Response	0	2	2	0	4
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 13.159, p = .041
Cramer's V = .253

Table 42

Relationship between CPE on Organizational Chart and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
CPE on Organizational Chart					
Yes	0	5	45	0	50
No	1	10	32	2	45
No Response	0	0	6	2	8
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 17.228, p = .008
Cramer's V = .289

There was no statistical relationship, however, between a school's budget range for CPE activities and its projected future focus (Table 43).

Finally, there was a statistical relationship between the director or coordinator of a CPE program as a tenure-track position and its projected future focus, X^2 (6, n = 103) = 13.288, p = .039 with Cramer's V = .254 (Table 44).

Table 43

Relationship between Budget Range and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Budget Range					
<10,000	0	11	33	4	48
10,001 to 50,000	1	1	17	0	19
50,001 to 100,000	0	1	12	0	13
100,001 to 250,000	0	0	8	0	8
>250,000	0	0	6	0	6
No Budget	0	1	1	0	2
No Response	0	1	6	0	7
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (18, n = 103) = 18.770, p = .406

Table 44

Relationship between Tenure-track Position for CE Coordinator and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Tenure-track position					
Yes	0	2	10	0	12
No	0	4	47	0	51
No Response, Not Applicable	1	9	26	4	40
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (6, n = 103) = 13. 288, p = .039
Cramer's V = .254

H12: A relationship exists between the designation of a university as a Carnegie Foundation

Classification—Research Extensive institution and its projected future focus in CPE.

There was no statistical relationship existing between the designation of a university as a

Carnegie Foundation Classification—Research Extensive institution and its projected future

focus (Table 45).

Research Question 4: Does a Relationship Exist Between Level of Involvement in CPE and

Future Focus in CPE?

The final question that was examined in this study was the relationship of a school's level

of involvement in CPE and its projected future focus. The finding is presented in conjunction

with hypothesis 13.

H13: A relationship exists between a SSW's level of involvement in CPE and its projected

future focus for CPE.

A statistical relationship existed between a SSW's level of involvement in CPE and its projected future focus for CPE (Table 46), X^2 (9, n = 103) = 19.535, p = .021 (Cramer's V = .250).

Table 45

Relationship between Carnegie Foundation Classification and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Carnegie Classification Research: Extensive					
Yes	0	8	50	2	60
No	1	7	33	2	43
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (3, n = 103) = 1.792, p = .617

<u>Summary</u>

Table 47 summarizes the above findings for each of the hypotheses (H1 – H13) examined for Research Questions 2, 3, and 4. Overall, there were eleven statistical relationships found.

Table 46

Relationship between Level of Involvement and Future Focus

	Future Focus				
	Decrease	Maintain	Increase	Other	Total
Level of Involvement					
Minor	1	8	18	3	31
Moderate	0	5	22	1	28
Major	0	1	41	0	42
Premier	0	0	2	0	2
Total	1	15	83	4	103

X^2 (9, n = 103) = 19.525, p = .021
Cramer's V = .250

Table 47

Summary of Findings for Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Attribute	Involvement	Statistical Relationship
H1	Location in Mandated State		No
H2	Financial Auspice		No
H3	Program Levels		Yes
H4	Funding Sources		
	Number of Funding Sources		No
	Fee-based		Yes
	Other Categories of Funding		No
H5	Administrative Support		
	Perceived Support		No
	Strategic Plan		Yes
	Organizational Chart		Yes
	Budget Range		Yes

	Tenure-Track Position		Yes
H6	Carnegie Foundation Designation		Yes

Hypothesis	Attribute	Future Focus	Relationship
H7	Location in Mandated State		No
H8	Financial Auspice		No
H9	Program Levels		No
H10	Funding Sources		
	Number of Funding Sources		No
	Fee-based		No
	Other Categories of Funding		No
H11	Administrative Support		
	Perceived Support		No
	Strategic Plan		Yes
	Organizational Chart		Yes
	Budget Range		No
	Tenure-Track Position		Yes
H12	Carnegie Foundation Designation		No

Hypothesis	Level of Involvement	Future Focus	Relationship
H13			Yes

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Continuing professional education (CPE) is an avenue that provides for the ongoing

formation and maintenance of professional identity and competence for social workers. Schools

of social work (SsSW) have contributed to CPE activities for the past 30 years, ranging from

providing CPE offerings through school sponsorship to participating in larger co-partnerships

with local, state, and national social work organizations or other disciplines. The empirical

literature examining SsSW involvement in CPE over the past years has been limited

predominantly to exploratory, descriptive studies. It was not known what factors may influence

a SSW's current level of involvement in CPE as well as its focus for future functioning.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship exists between certain

attributes of a SSW and the school's level of involvement in CPE. A secondary purpose was to

determine whether these attributes additionally contributed to a school's perceived future focus

for CPE activities. The following sections will examine the empirical findings related to the two

major and two minor research questions addressed in this study, the limitations of the results and

the study itself, the connection to social work theory and practice, and possible directions for

future research in the area of CPE in SsSW.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provided information regarding a SSW's level of involvement

in CPE and certain attributes of SsSW that are related to this involvement. Additionally, findings

concerning whether or not there is a relationship between certain attributes of SsSW and a

school's projected future focus in CPE are presented. Finally, the question of whether a school's

level of involvement is related to its projected future focus will be presented.

Research Question 1: What is a SSW's level of involvement in CPE?

A SSW's level of involvement in CPE was determined for the purposes of this study by

considering a conceptual description given as follows:

level of involvement in CPE = structure + leadership + provision + research.

The conceptual description of level of involvement was created to provide a mechanism for

determining a school's level of involvement since there has been no earlier attempt to

operationalize this theoretical concept. A school could be described on a continuum of no

involvement to premier involvement, depending on the presence or absence of the four

components of structure, leadership, provision, and research as defined for this study.

It was found that 20% of respondent schools were not currently active in CPE activities

while 80% of respondent schools reported that CPE could be classified at one of the levels

ranging from minor to premier. Two schools were classified at the highest level of involvement

(premier). What set these two schools apart was the presence of each of the four components,

including the inclusion of their activity in the area of research on continuing professional

education. Six schools reported research activity, yet four schools did not have all four

components as defined for the premier classification. Fully 33% of schools were considered as

having major involvement. This meant having at least three components. In most instances these

included provision, leadership, and structure. Roughly one-fourth of schools were classified as

having minor involvement. This meant having at least one component for level of involvement,

generally provision. The remaining schools (22%) were placed within the moderate level of

involvement. This meant that schools reported having two components designated for level of

involvement, in most instances provision and leadership. Overall, these findings provide a beginning baseline for comparison of SsSW using a method to categorize schools. Schools examining their position in this schema can make decisions that might move their level of involvement in a direction of more involvement in CPE. A movement to less involvement in CPE may be determined, given possible redistribution of budgets.

The findings from the frequencies and percentages for the components of involvement (Table 8, page 56) suggest a possible hierarchical or weighted relationship of the components contained in the concept of level of involvement. Although there was no intentional decision to create a conceptual description that would include weighted components, inspection of the data suggests this possibility. Using the frequency findings alone, the concept for involvement would be stated or re-arranged in the order of:

level of involvement = provision + leadership + structure + research.

That is to suggest that with the addition of each component (in the order of provision, leadership, structure, and research) there is a possible likelihood that the level of involvement in CPE would increase. Since the possibility exists that a school can provide CPE without a person designated to provide leadership, the addition of that person increases overall organization of CPE activities. It may begin as organizing individual CPE offerings, then adding additional functions to that person's role. As the number of offerings increases and the role of the director or coordinator expands to include more provision activities, then the expansion of the CPE activities may now include the reality that additional support persons and designated space for the design and implementation of the CPE activities is needed. At this level of differentiation, a movement toward increasingly complex activities, such as program evaluation and research, may be supported more readily.

Provision. All the schools reporting CPE activities provided at least one category of provision. The following was found for this study: the number of those providing CPE directly by the school > the number of schools co-sponsoring programs with other entities > the number of schools approving other providers of CPE for their state licensing boards. Additionally, fully 88% of schools reported providing two or more of the provision activities. This strongly places provision as the first component of the level of involvement equation.

Leadership. Leadership, the next component suggested in sequence for the conceptual description, was considered as the presence or absence of a director or coordinator for CPE activities. Almost 70% of schools reported that a director or coordinator was present. A question arises about how schools were able to provide continuing education activities without a director or coordinator. This was not asked within the study. There may have been a person designated to function as a coordinator of CPE without the title of such. This may occur more readily in schools participating in a university-wide CPE unit. Additionally, the position for coordinator or director might have existed for the school, yet the position was not currently filled. It is difficult to consider a school functioning successfully at the higher levels of involvement without the leadership component present.

Another point arises with the terminology selected for the leadership component of involvement. The manner in which this component was defined for this study may describe more definitively the concept of coordination or management, rather than leadership. McNamara (2003) in his differentiation between leadership and management examined "the structures that each fosters, rather than the particular activities they promote" (p. 1). In his consideration of the two, McNamara contended that "the traditional activity of management, i.e., planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, is essentially the management of balancing structures"

(p. 1). Leadership suggests higher level functions than simply directing or coordinating activities or a program; "leadership, i.e., challenge the process, inspire shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart represents the enabling of reinforcing structures" (McNamara, 2003, p. 1). Management is considered an "activity of migration" with McNamara's description, the endeavors to "induce resources to migrate to something from a current state to a desired state. This could include development of a new program [in the case of CPE], the resolution of a problem, the alteration of a process, or anything with a defined objective different from the initial state when the effort was started" (p. 1). McNamara was concerned with the leaders' involvement in the design and implementation of the structure, not managing the activity in the structure. He further stated that "leadership promotes the development of reinforcing structures rather than balancing structures" (p. 1). With reinforcing structures, as those promoted by leadership, "the results that are produced by an activity promote more of the same activity that produced the initial results. The focus of the activity is driven by the results which simply produces more results" (p. 1). There is a dynamic feedback and change process occurring.

The term management or coordination may be more appropriate for the research model, particularly if one considers the use of organizational charts by SsSW to diagram visually their programs and lines of communication and supervision. The term leadership may become more important when considering how leadership might influence the concept of future focus and a school's direction for CPE as reflected within its strategic plan (Rank, 2000). In the study conducted by Rank (2000), five common elements were found to define leadership within the social work profession: proaction, values and ethics, empowerment, vision, and communication. In this case, proaction (planning and acting for future concerns or problems) and vision (encompassing visualizing goals for the future) support a leadership view with the strategic plan.

Consideration and clear delineation of each term, management and leadership, could be included in future examination of CPE provision in SsSW.

Structure. A surprising finding was the fact that structure, the presence of an office of CPE, did not parallel the leadership component. Although not examined, it is thought that the presence of a person coordinating the CPE activities would need and use support personnel, and committed monetary and facility space, as part of an organized effort in CPE. This could lead to the presence of a designated department or program of a SSW. This influences, directly and indirectly, the provision of CPE. The earlier pilot study (Callaway, 1995) found that many schools had part-time and full-time support personnel (secretarial and information technology) dedicated for continuing education efforts. The same was found in the study by Matz (1997).

Research. In determining the components for level of involvement, it was initially thought that the presence of research would set a school apart from the others in the area of CPE. Six schools reported activity in this area; however, only two schools provided documentation for the actual research articles as requested. The condition of presence of all four components (provision, leadership, structure, and research with documentation) was the qualifying factor to be designated as a premier school. Three of the other schools did report activity in the areas of provision, leadership, and structure. One school did not report activity in the area of leadership and structure. This point suggests that research on CPE can emerge from a SSW without having the other three components (provision, leadership, and structure).

General Observations. Since all schools did not participate in the study, although there was a respectable response rate of approximately 90%, there can be no definitive statements made. However, there are several observations that can be examined against the earlier findings by Matz (1997) examining CPE provision by SsSW. In this study examining provision of CPE

by SsSW with masters level programs accredited by CSWE, with a 56% response rate, 69% (45 schools) of respondents reported they had CPE programs, up from 63% (59 schools), reported in an earlier study with a 93% response rate by Matz (1992, cited in Matz, 1997). In the current study, 80% (103) of respondents reported that their schools provided CPE. This overall increase in the percentage of schools providing CPE over the past decade suggests that SsSW continue to embrace a role in the provision of CPE for practitioners, even with the budgetary restraints currently faced by many academic institutions.

States with continuing education requirements for licensure numbered 36 in Matz's study. Currently, four states and Puerto Rico are the remaining states not requiring CPE for licensure or recertification. Funding for CPE in SsSW relied heavily upon participant fees in Matz's study; a similar finding was found in this study, with 96 schools stating this was a dominant source of funding. Twelve schools in the Matz study stated they received grant money for CPE and eleven schools contracted with other agencies and organizations to provide CPE. Although not comparable, since this study combined grants and contracts within one category, 25 schools in this study received this type of financial support for their programs. One large difference found in the Matz study from this study was in the area of offering CPE program in conjunction with other organizations. Seventy-three percent of respondent schools in the Matz (1997) study reported co-sponsorship with other entities; in this study, only 27% of respondent schools reported they co-sponsored or collaborated with other disciplines on CPE programs. It is not clear whether this is related possibly to monetary issues or not. This is a point for further consideration, since collaborative models are considered a future issue that must be examined by SsSW providing CPE.

Research Question 2: Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics of a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE?

After determining the level of involvement in CPE for a SSW (Research Question 1), the presence or absence of a relationship between selected characteristics of a SSW and its level of involvement was examined (Research Question 2). The findings of the hypotheses for this research question provided information for determining attributes of a SSW that may influence a school's level of involvement in CPE. These findings contribute to further refinement of the research model for this study.

Although many states require CPE for licensure or re-certification purposes (hypothesis 1), this was not a factor contributing to a school's level of involvement. Currently, all but five social work boards have continuing education requirements (NASW, 2004). This number has increased over the past seven years, when it was 36 (Matz, 1997). Mandatory continuing education is routinely reported by practitioners of various health professions, including social work, as a reason for participation in CPE activities (Edwards & Greene, 1983). Required continuing education for practitioner licensure or certification renewal may not be the only reason for provision of or activity in CPE by SsSW. Indeed, 73% of respondent schools in the Matz (1997) study indicated that their CPE program was initiated "because it was seen to be a part of the mission of the SSW" (p. 9). Others stated that having funding available from additional sources other than the SSW and being asked at the request of community agencies and individual social workers to provide CPE were factors. A specific review of schools in those states not requiring CPE for licensure (Colorado, Hawaii, Michigan, New York, and Puerto Rico) could provide additional subset information for consideration. There are schools in several of these states that do offer CPE without a state requirement of CPE for licensure.

The overall funding auspice (hypothesis 2) for a SSW did not play a factor in a school's level of involvement. The literature that considers public and private funding for universities and schools suggested that the higher the amount of funding there might be more resources that could be dedicated to activities such as continuing education (Karger & Stoesz, 2003).

For SsSW the relationship between the program levels at a SSW (hypothesis 3) and its level of involvement did show a statistically significant relationship of moderate strength. This could be expected, given that schools with increased resources, and multiple program levels, may be able to provide a variety of supplemental or ancillary services that would complement a school's primary mission to produce social workers for a role in society. This finding echoes that of a school's designation as a Carnegie Foundation classification as a Research—Extensive institution as examined for hypothesis 6.

It takes money and other resources to fund a CPE program (hypothesis 4). The only statistical relationship that was found for selected types of funding was for fee-based only programs. The number of funding sources that a school could draw upon did not show a relationship. The most common funding sources were fee-based only and fee-based with SSW subsidy. This corroborates the information found by Matz (1997) as stated earlier. Increasingly, literature points to collaboration between agencies and universities, as well as interdisciplinary involvement, as an avenue for sustaining professional school and CPE efforts (Allen-Meares, 1998; Berg-Weger & Schneider, 1998; Cervero, 2000; Craven & DuHamel, 2000). With only 26% of schools reporting that they co-sponsored with other disciplines or agencies, it is understandable that programs might cease to exist or fail to get established at worst, or maintain their present level of activity at best.

Although no relationship was found between the perceived administrative support at a SSW and its level of involvement in CPE, other factors that can be considered markers of administrative support did show relationships (hypothesis 5). The position and worth (assigned value) of a CPE program at a SSW may be reflected with these factors. Eighty percent of school respondents reported a perceived support at a moderate or major level from administration; however, a relationship of this perceived support and the level of involvement was not supported. Individual perceptions of support, however, can be biased dependent upon such issues as interpersonal conflict and social desirability. The personality of the individual responding to the questionnaire brings a history to the data. Exploring this history and bias in more detail may provide additional information. The interest in CPE and power held by the individual respondents may be reflected in the answers.

Support for CPE was demonstrated in various manners. Statistically significant relationships with strategic plans, organizational charts, budgets, and support through a tenure-track faculty position were demonstrated. The presence of CPE on a school's strategic plan demonstrates a commitment at some level to this educational activity. Strategic planning can demonstrate current and future focus to an issue considered worthy of attention and resource allocation. Almost two-thirds of schools reported including CPE within their strategic plans in this study. Clearly there is a show of support by social work administration for CPE when considering this indicator. Mudrick, Steiner, and Pollard (1992) have succinctly argued for the use of strategic planning for SsSW. They outlined the content and process of the activities composing strategic planning as they considered it for SsSW as including:

1. Examine and affirm or reaffirm the school's basic mission, goals, and objectives.

2.   Assess the internal and external opportunities and constraints.

3.   Compile and assess data on the school's internal conditions.

4.   Identify the major strengths and weaknesses of the school.

5.   Formulate assumptions about the environment relevant to the school's future.

6.   Develop a set of strategic issues and goals.

7.   Adopt a written statement of the school's strategic plan. (p. 281)

When applied to CPE, these tasks provide an objective method to "assess the current status of the [CPE program], develop consensus on the assessment of status and future goals, and enunciate a framework to guide future decisions and actions" (Mudrick, Steiner, & Pollard, 1992, p. 281). Consideration of the future (referred to as forecasting by Mudrick) is included as an important component, although not always considered in the literature about strategic planning. For CPE, this would take several forms. Since there is literature addressing past and future trends and issues for CPE, this would be examined against the current realities present for an individual school's program. How is the CPE program situated for the future? What are the "anticipated demographic, economic, and sociopolitical forces at the local, state, and national levels"? What types of continuing education needs and topics require the most attention within the next years? What may affect CPE delivery methods or structures over the next years? A strategic plan including CPE can demonstrate administrative support through consensus building with the major stakeholders for CPE as well provide a "road map for the future" that will help a CPE program navigate the unexpected, when and if it occurs.

Placement of CPE on the organizational chart for a school was found in approximately 50% of schools. This might be related to a held understanding of the flow of communication and influence between administration and those responsible for CPE activities. Its absence could be

construed as giving less importance to this activity by the SSW. "Structure determines how well the activities will be sustained over the long term," and "practice activities are in some ways inherently different from traditional academic activities" (Potter & Eggleston, 2003, p. 166). It is thought that the "relative quality and vigor depend on the level of institutional resources" (p. 166). Potter and Eggleston further suggested that this quality and vigor will depend on "how well they fit into the prevailing institutional structure and cultural norms" (p. 166) of a discipline. When CPE is placed within the organizational chart of a SSW, there is a legitimacy that is established for its presence. Additionally, there is built-in accountability for issues related to CPE program evaluation at various levels. This is a point for further study.

Influence can be brokered through resources. In many instances this is reflected in the budgets committed to an activity. There was a statistical relationship of the budget ranges to the level of involvement. The direction of the relationship was not examined; visual inspection of the data from the frequency data suggests that almost two-thirds of schools had budgets less than $50,000. Both schools with premier designations reported budget ranges for CPE greater than $250,000.

A strong statistical relationship was found between a school's Carnegie Foundation Classification as a Research Extensive institution and its level of involvement in CPE (hypothesis 6). Of the 71 school designated as Carnegie Foundation Research Extensive institutions, forty-six schools were classified as having major or premier levels of involvement in CPE. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (Carnegie Foundation, 2003) provided a method for characterizing similarities and differences between institutions of higher education. The Carnegie Classification of Research—Extensive is the highest level for doctorate-granting institutions. Besides offering a wide range of undergraduate degree programs,

these institutions are committed to graduate education through the doctorate degree. They award the highest number of doctorates (50 or more) across the at least 15 disciplines (Carnegie Foundation, 2003). It would be expected that schools operating at the highest level of involvement would be classified as Research—Extensive institutions. Both schools with premier involvement in CPE were Research—Extensive institutions. One might expect that there would have been more research activity in the area of CPE generated in other SsSW classified as Research—Extensive. This was not the case.

Modified research model. The findings from the hypotheses for Research Question 2 with further consideration from the literature suggest a possible modification for the part of the expanded research model (Figure 2, page 33) that involves both attributes and level of involvement. These modifications, reflecting the presence of a statistical relationship, are displayed in Figure 3.

Research Question 3: Does a relationship exist between certain characteristics of a SSW and its projected future focus for CPE?

The findings for this research question provide an intimation of the future for CPE in SsSW. Although considered a minor research question, the findings could, in fact, point to future directions that CPE programs might consider in their own program planning as well as their school's overall strategic planning for CPE. A limited number of statistical relationships were found between the selected attributes of SsSW and projected future focus. This might be expected, considering that respondents were asked to make a projection as to the direction their schools would take over the next three years. These responses might not necessarily reflect a school's current strategic plan. The responses could also be reflective of the individual respondent's desire to see a particular emphasis or focus occur at their school. In order to anchor

Attributes		Level of Involvement

Program Levels

Fee-based Funding

Administrative Support

• Strategic Plan

• Organizational Chart

• Budget Range

• Tenure Track

Carnegie Foundation

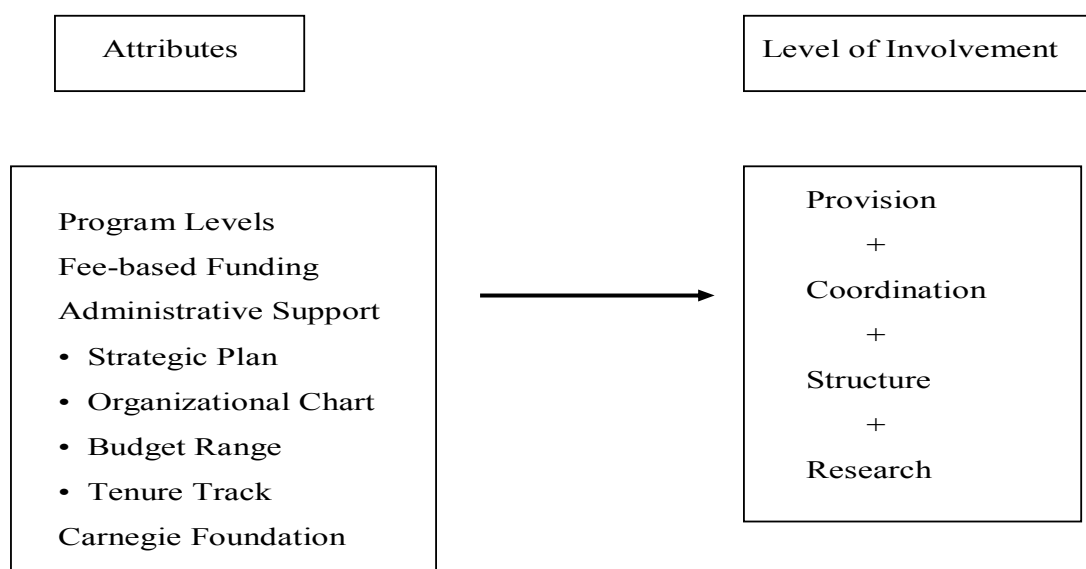Provision

+

Coordination

+

Structure

+

Research

Figure 3. Modified Research Model for Attributes and Level of Involvement.

.further the findings for the hypotheses within Research Question 3, consideration of the frequency data responses for future focus is first presented

Projected future focus was divided into three components for examination (programming, evaluation, and economics). Each of these components was subdivided into three additional categories. Although these subcategories may be considered somewhat arbitrary considering the many possible items that could have been included, each contributed to a larger perspective from which to view these components of future focus.

Programming. The programming component included the number of CPE programs being offered by a SSW, the diversity of the types of programs being offered, and the use of multi-method approaches to instruction. Earlier descriptions of CPE programs (Callaway, 1995; Matz, 1997) have provided point-in-time information regarding actual number and types of programs provided. Almost sixty percent of respondents in this study projected that their number of CPE offerings would increase. Thirty-one percent stated they would maintain their current level of CPE offerings. This relates back to the provision component in level of involvement in which 92% of schools currently were providing actual CPE offerings. SsSW see themselves as continuing to provide CPE offerings in the future. Respondents were more or less split when projecting whether the diversity of their CPE programs was going to expand. Since there is a focus for licensure of clinical social workers, it is realistic to believe that continued programming emphasis in CPE might be channeled to historically-considered clinical social work topics. This would limit the exposure of practitioners, however, to additional topics that are integral to the profession itself such as administration, social justice, social welfare, minimum distributive justice, human diversity, and reflective practice (Mohan, 2002). Additionally, demographic (i.e., aging of the baby boom cohort) and cultural (i.e., shifting of minority statuses within the next

twenty years) changes would be examples of issues that must be considered in present and future planning.

Additionally, respondents had a tendency to project that they would maintain and use their current types of instruction. This suggests that SsSW may not have the resources, knowledge, or interest for expanding in this area. An appreciation for various learning styles for participants might support the expansion of multiple instructional methods. Other professions have continued to be innovative in their instructional methods for CPE (Manning and DeBakey, 2001; Stancic, Mullen, Prokhorov, et al, 2003), moving beyond the traditional lecture series format.

Evaluation. The evaluation component for projected future focus is a quality indicator. This study provided information regarding a respondent's perception of what avenues of evaluation might be taken within the next three years. The three subcategories designating this component were self-evaluation through posttest or pre/post testing of the program content, self-evaluation of the presenter of the program, and follow-up testing in the practice arena. There were multiple subcategories that could have been included within the evaluation component. However, inclusion of the evaluation component was to begin the process of introducing respondents to current trends in CPE evaluation going beyond the simple participant satisfaction evaluation so often used for many CPE programs (Callaway, 1995; Matz, 1997; Ottoson, 2000; Roat, 1988). In each of the three sub-categories for evaluation, a majority of respondents reported that emphasis or activity would be maintained. This suggests that evaluation of programs or participant performance is not being considered as a topic of focus for the future. This is disappointing. In an economic and political climate that is demanding effectiveness outcome data, CPE programs provided by SsSW are missing an opportunity to justify additional

resources dedicated to continuing education and support the image of the social work profession itself. Quality programs support quality outcomes. It may be, however, that CPE programs within SsSW are not equipped with a knowledge base that can examine the intricacies of program evaluation directed toward this activity. It was unfortunate that a description of what is actually being done in the area of evaluation was not addressed. This might have provided information to address with the schools in their attempts to examine themselves from the perspective of continuous quality improvement. SsSW can be considered in the infancy stage compared with other disciplines attempting to move forward in this area (Robertson, Umble, & Cervero, 2003).

Economics. Three sub-categories (methods of cost effective delivery, methods of funding, and marketing) were included in the economic component of projected future focus. It is this component that could prompt a respondent to consider ways to increase the viability and fiscal stability of their CPE programs. Having programs available through multiple means of delivery, capitalizing on collaboration and other avenues of partnership with other agencies or disciplines, and generally increasing the amount and scope of marketing can stabilize a program that is experiencing financial difficulty or expand the overall program to make it more viable as an entity within the SSW itself or within the state. SsSW appeared to recognize this component as an area needing continued focus in the future. A majority (73%) projected they would increase activities related to the economic component.

Visual inspection of the frequencies for the components of future focus provided information that might shift the future focus conceptual description used for this study. There was no intended ordering for this equation. It was found, however, that the respondents reported their projected emphasis in the order of programming > economics > evaluation. This finding

contributed further to defining portion of the modified research model related to attributes and projected future focus. One might argue, however, that it is the reverse order of evaluation, economics, and programming is how SsSW might focus their attention for the viability of professional status. Economically, it makes sense, though, to use the first ordering (programming, economics, and evaluation) to support and secure the financial survival of CPE within a SSW.

There was no statistical relationship between the attributes of location in a mandated state for continuing education (hypothesis 7), financial auspice of the school or university (hypothesis 8), program levels (hypothesis 9), funding sources (hypothesis 10), or Carnegie Foundation designation (hypothesis 12) and a school's projected future focus. Additionally, there was no statistical relationship between the administrative support categories of perceived support or budget range and perceived future focus. As stated earlier, these findings can be understood within the context of this variable being dependent upon the individual respondent for each school. Bias can be introduced within the data when there is no guiding plan or document outlining future projections for activity or designation of resources for a program, or this plan does not consider forecasting as a component within the strategic planning process.

Aspects of administrative support were examined in hypothesis 11. The subcategories of perceived support and budget range did not show a statistical relationship. Perceived support is an attitudinal variable that can vary with the individual respondent. A school's budget range did not show a statistical relationship with projected future focus. A respondent can continue to project his/her ideas for future focus, regardless of a designated budget. The ability to carry these ideas out, however, will be dependent upon the budget. There were three subcategories of

administrative support, however, that did show a statistical relationship: strategic plan, organizational chart, and tenure-track position.

The very presence of CPE in the strategic plan demonstrates a possible forward looking stance by administration. An area of future study would be to examine the actual plans for CPE that a school has considered important in its overall future attention. Additionally, presence on the organizational chart demonstrates the possibility of provision, leadership, and structure for CPE activities. This can be related to a vision for the future. When there are structures in place, the possibility of implementing and completing a task is increased. Finally, although there is a relationship between a tenure-track position for the director or coordinator and a school's projected future focus, it is unclear as to the nature of this relationship. In argument for the tenure-track position, a director with this designation is working to solidify his or her long-term position on the faculty. This may lead to planning ahead to activities that support this tenure, including research activity. Planning and research in the areas of program and practice evaluation would be topics that would be complementary for a projected future focus. It is interesting to note, however, that both premier classified schools did not have tenure-track positions for their directors of CPE. In contrast to a tenure-track position, a director designated as an administrative professional may work to expand the CPE program for other goals. The expansion of CPE programs to include varied funding sources and expanded marketing avenues may be part of this goal-orientation. However, a director of CPE who has specialized training in adult education and continuing professional education may incorporate an intensified effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the CPE program. Additionally, these are components for projected future focus that could have been included when considering relationships.

Modified research model. The findings from the hypotheses for Research Question 3 point to a modification for the part of the expanded research model that refers to the relationship between attributes of a SSW and its projected future focus (Figure 2, page 33). These modifications, reflecting the presence of a relationship, are displayed in Figure 4.

Research Question 4: Does a relationship exist between level of involvement in CPE and future focus in CPE?

The second minor research question examined a possible relationship between a SSW's level of involvement and its projected future focus for CPE. There was a relationship demonstrated. Since there were modifications in the both portions of the research model (relationship between attributes and level of involvement, Figure 3; relationship of attributes and future focus, Figure 4), interpretation of this finding is compromised. The attributes with a relationship to level of involvement were not, in total, the attributes having a relationship with future focus.

<div align="center">Limitations of Findings</div>

This study has several limitations. These include limitations of the research processes within construct development, data collection, and statistical analysis, as well as the interpretability of the findings themselves.

Construct Development

Level of involvement in CPE. As discussed earlier, a school's level of involvement in CPE has not been qualified or defined to date. Based on available literature, the components of structure, leadership, provision, and research were chosen to determine the construct of level of involvement to be used for this study. A school could be classified on a continuum as having no level of involvement to premier involvement dependent upon the presence or absence of each of

Attributes		Future Focus

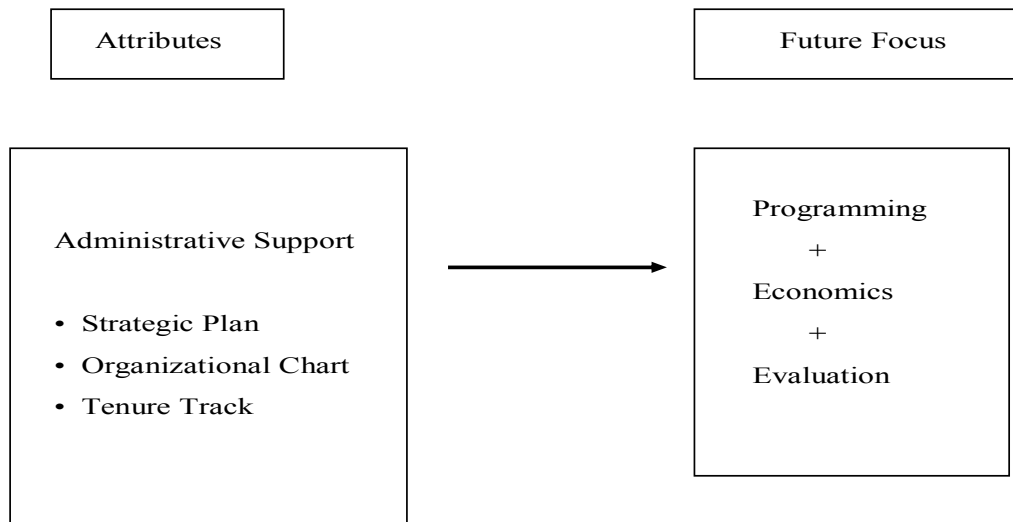| Administrative Support		Programming
		+
• Strategic Plan	→	Economics
• Organizational Chart		+
• Tenure Track		Evaluation

Figure 4. Modified Research Model for Attributes and Projected Future Focus

these components. Further delineation of the components within the construct of level of involvement will be necessary. The construct did, however, provide a useful beginning point for examination.

Projected future focus for CPE. A decision was made to limit the components included for the construct of projected future focus used in this study. Of the many aspects of CPE that could be considered for inclusion, these were limited to the categories of programming, evaluation, and economics. Each of these categories were further delineated to include three activities considered to be appropriate areas of strategic planning for a SSW or program planning for an existing continuing education program. As with the construct of level of involvement in CPE, the construct of future focus did provide a beginning point for examination.

Data Collection

There were several issues that arose during the data collection processes for this study. These included limitations associated with the targeted population, data collections attempts, the survey questionnaire itself, and the questionnaire responses.

The population of interest to be studied was the total number of SsSW with accredited masters degree programs. The data collection attempt, however, resulted in a final response of 129 out of 144 total schools. This would slightly limit statements that might be indicative for the entire population of SsSW. The response rate of approximately 90%, however, is a strong result for a mailed survey.

The data collection process occurred over a 6 month period (June 2002 to November 2002). There were three mailings of the questionnaire. The turnaround time for each mailing was approximately 6 weeks. What must be considered with three mailings over this time period

is the possibility of changes in the contact person and program direction related to an upcoming fiscal year focus by the school. A telephone call to the contact person for those schools not replying to the mailings was attempted with additional results in several instances. Multiple telephone contacts were not done secondary to the right of a possible respondent to participate or not participate in a research project. One of the concerns for the non-respondent schools is that they could be systematically different than those who did respond.

Efforts were made to provide clear guidance to what was needed from the respondent in the form of directions, definitions, and offer of contact to the surveyor for remaining questions by the respondent. The questionnaire did generate several questions by respondents, predominantly for the projected future focus section. In most instances, the questions demonstrated a possible lack of knowledge by the respondent of current trends emerging in CPE, particularly in the area of program evaluation.

There was a bias possibility of social desirability existing for this study. A respondent may have desired to present a higher level of involvement for their school since the data were confidential, yet not anonymous. Additionally, social desirability may be a factor in the responses for the projected future focus, as well as personal bias for CPE direction.

Several limitations were found in the questionnaire itself. Additional information by schools not providing CPE may have been helpful. The question of "What is your projected future focus for CPE at your school?" could have been included for this subset. This could have contributed as a prompt to determine what components those schools would need to establish their own programs as well as situate the schools in the position of a future vision for CPE provided by their schools, as appropriate.

Another limitation of the questionnaire was a lack of clarity within the projected future focus section regarding the term "maintain." The intention of this category selection was to signal a school's remaining at their same level of activity. Directions were not clear enough as evidenced by some respondents deciding to make their own category of "don't do" for a response. These responses were added to the "maintain" category for scoring purposes.

Statistical Analysis

The choice of non-parametric methods for statistical evaluation was determined by several factors. The level of measurement for variables was nominal or ordinal. Random sampling was not attempted or appropriate, since the entire population of accredited masters level social work programs (N = 144) was the intended group for study. The analyses of the study findings were accomplished using the chi-square statistic. As such, the chi-square provided a statement regarding relationship, yet did not address the direction of the relationship. The strength of the relationship was determined by use of Cramer's V, a measure for strength of association between two nominal variables.

Generalizability of the Findings

The findings of this study can be used to provide information regarding a school's level of involvement at a particular point in time. The four categories of provision, leadership, structure, and research can be quantified in a reasonably achievable manner. What would move many of the schools from the category of major involvement to premier involvement would be the addition of research activity directed toward CPE. For those directors or coordinators that are holding tenure-track positions, CPE would be a reasonable topic for their exploration.

Additionally, these findings can be used by social work administrators in their strategic planning to situate their schools at a higher level of involvement. Justifications can be made for

each of the four components included in level of involvement. An administrator using the formula for level of involvement can consider each component separately to determine how his or her school is meeting a particular area. It could help an administrator to focus resources and support for the particular area requiring attention. Additionally, the CPE director or coordinator could use these finding to assist with program planning decisions.

Since all schools did not participate in this study, although there was a respectable response rate of 90%, the findings cannot be generalized to the entire population of schools with accredited masters level social work programs.

<center>Connection to Theory and Practice</center>

The theoretical underpinning for this study was a systems approach to organizational theory. Examining a SSW's level of involvement in CPE from this perspective provided a beginning basis for understanding the interactions, transactions, processes, and outcomes between various components considered important for that involvement. This is translated into frequency data (outcomes) and the presence or absence of relationships between variables (interactions, transactions, and processes) at a beginning level.

What could argue against organizational systems theory is the fact that that SsSW can and do exist without involvement in CPE. Approximately 20% of respondents to this study reported that they did not currently provide CPE. If a system is, in fact, a collection of parts integrated in such as manner as to accomplish an overall goal, then the absence of involvement in CPE could point to an inadequate functioning for a SSW per se. This is not the case. The provision of CPE is not a requirement for accreditation of masters level programs of SsSW (CSWE, 2003). In other words, a SSW is not like a car that must have certain parts to maintain

its ability as a functioning vehicle. Each school has its own boundaries of what is included and what is excluded in its sphere of influence; this may or may not include CPE.

However, systems thinking is appropriate for considering the activity of CPE provided by SsSW. A system cannot be fully understood by examining one part, in this case CPE in a school of social work. When a decision is made to incorporate this educational function within the school, it becomes integral to the whole. In other words, attempts to "fix" CPE (as part of the whole SsSW system) may or may not fix the system (CPE in SW). This does not mean that attempts to focus energy and innovation on CPE provided by SsSW should be abandoned. It is suggested, however, that a fuller ramification of systems thinking be put in action when considering the changes that may be needed to support the viability of CPE provision by SsSW. This points once more to CPE in SsSW situated in a larger system that considers CPE (Figure 5).

Bierema (2003) in her examination of systems thinking and learning organizations focused on considering how "organizations behave based on how they are designed" (p. S27). She reintroduced systems thinking for use with an organization using the works of Argyris (1991) and Senge (1990) to anchor her position. Although her comments and work were directed toward medical education (particularly practice-based learning) and the shifts in moving from a mechanistic position to systems position, her points can be applied to CPE provided by SsSW.

Moving from "single-loop learning" (Argyris, 1991) as evidenced through problem-solving to "double-loop learning" as evidenced by reflecting on how one's behaviors and assumptions impact a particular situation is a key issue. Applying systems thinking to social work CPE using this observation, the movement of trying to problem solve by blaming external organizational forces would shift to considering how the organization, from within, examines the

interrelationships and patterns in the circumstance being faced. A CPE director or coordinator acting from a systems perspective would work toward understanding the whole (SSW and larger systems) and focus on the interrelationships and patterns. This would include considering their program's position with state licensing boards, outside agencies, other professional disciplines, and national professional associations. This act of considering positions SsSW directly with the larger system stakeholders. Directors and coordinators would be non-linear in their thinking, considering aspects of the complexity that is inherence within the organizational system itself and its situation in the larger systems. When working from a systems perspective, directors and coordinators would focus on patterns and multiple causes for problems, not simply considering problem solving a particular circumstance. By working from a systems perspective, the director would help to create an environment for short-term and long-term change. A problem would be prevented, hopefully, in the future. The use of periodic needs assessments for the practitioner-level stakeholders is an example of program planning and feedback at a beginning level. This can be added to a CPE program evaluation in the form of a question, "What topics would you like to see included in future programming?", to surveys at state and national levels (such as what occurs periodically with CPE surveys from NASW).

Working from a systems perspective would also support recognition of the role of feedback. Feedback may be instantaneous or not. A true system designs quality into the system (Bierema, 2003; Ottoson, 2000), catching mistakes instead of just preventing them. The results from this study point to the fact that feedback may not be fully operational in CPE provided by SsSW. Two areas, strategic planning and projected future focus, provide examples.

A strategic plan is a management tool that guides an organization in its activities over a designated future period. For a strategic plan to be most comprehensive it would include issues and concerns from various stakeholders in social work education. A school of social work
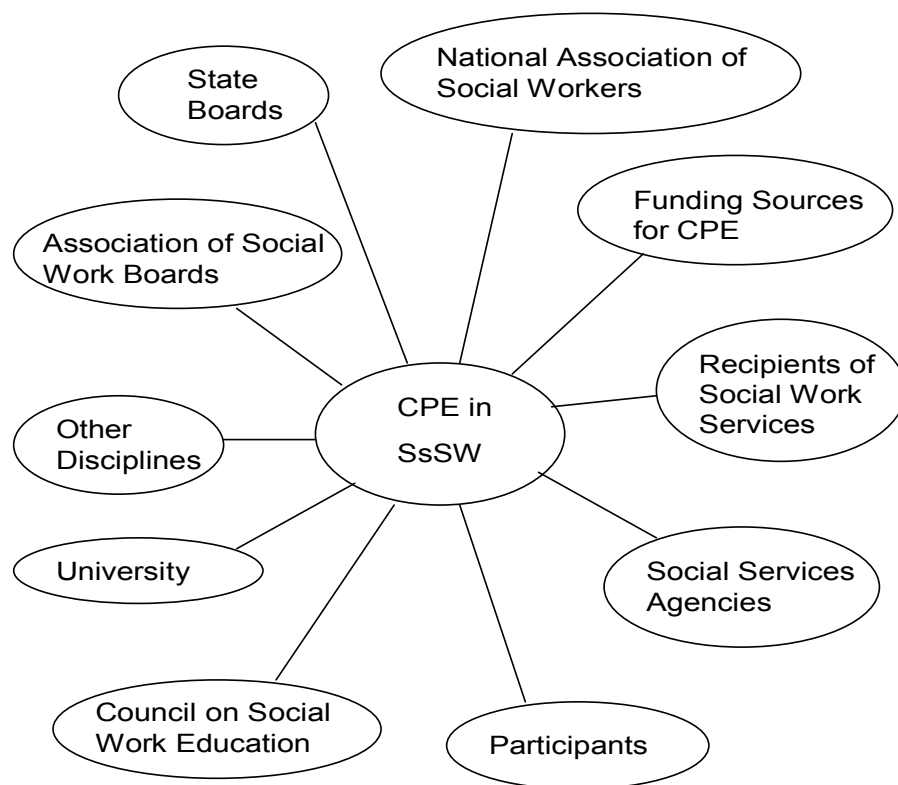
Figure 5. Stakeholders for CPE in Larger Systems Context

providing CPE would most certainly have ideas about how they would consider CPE over the next several years: its budgeting, its programming, its structure and leadership, and its situation among the larger system. This tool provides a statement of the issue, what is to be done, who has responsibility for guiding or accomplishing the task, and the timeline for the task. It is then reviewed periodically to see what progress has been made, and what modifications might be necessary to help accomplish the goal. An outcome is established for the strategic plan. Were the goals of the plan met or not? And at a more complex level, did the results of the activities contribute to the ongoing support for continuous activity in CPE?

Another example of feedback provision is the area of CPE program evaluation. What did the program accomplish? Was attendance at the program the goal? Did the participants gain new knowledge and skills? Did the presenter of the CPE program evaluate themselves in their role as an instructor? Was there any way that the knowledge and skills gained could be evaluated within the work setting? And again, did the results of the activities contribute to the ongoing support for continuous activity in CPE? This feedback guides statements of outcome effectiveness for the intentions of CPE. Again, a quality program produces quality outcomes. It is suggested that the concept "level of involvement" could be expanded to include an evaluation (or feedback) component. This would move SsSW in line with current writings and trends of CPE in other disciplines. The conceptual description would now be expressed, with all the earlier suggested changes, as:

level of involvement = provision + coordination + structure + evaluation + research.
The component of evaluation incorporates program evaluation at departmental, CPE offering, presenter, and participant levels. It is related to continuous quality improvement in that evaluation considers the examination of a participant's own performance against an expected

benchmark. There is a feedback component factored in this process. This differs from the research component as described in the context of this conceptual description. Research refers to the efforts of expanding the social work knowledge base with dissemination of the findings through publication for scrutiny. Positioning of the evaluation component is thought to precede research activity, although this would have to be tested.

Social work practice is what social workers do. As such, when a social worker is charged with the responsibility of directing or coordinating CPE activities for their colleagues, social work is being done. The social work profession is unique in its application of the ecological perspective to social justice and the well-being of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, communities, and larger systems. Developing and providing educational curricula that supports social work practice in these specific areas is the task of SsSW and the organizations representing social work at state and national levels.

Directors and coordinators of CPE in SsSW may want to consider the overall trends and issues in CPE that emerged during the 1990s as outlined by Cervero (2000). The trends include the following:

1. The amount of continuing education offered at the workplace dwarfs that offered by any other type of provider, and surpasses that of all other providers combined.

2. Universities and professional associations are active and important providers, with an increasing number of programs being offered in distance education formats.

3. There are an increasing number of collaborative arrangements among providers, especially between universities and workplaces.

4. Continuing education is being used more frequently to regulate professionals' practice. (pp. 5-8).

Each of these trends offers insight into the interrelationship between SsSW provision of CPE and the larger systems.

Businesses and corporations are, indeed, the main providers of continuing education throughout the various disciplines. In the case of social work, social service agencies, hospitals, and professional organizations are leaders in continuing education. General approval of providers of CPE for state boards, however, is limited to SsSW and national organizations (such as NASW). SsSW continue to be instrumental in provision of CPE offerings and being designated an approving agency of other CPE providers for state social work boards. In this study one-half of schools providing CPE reported that they approve other providers for their state licensing board. Schools can expand their influence in the area of CPE by gaining support from their state boards as being an authorized agency to approve CPE by other providers.

Distance-learning avenues for CPE have become common place in many professional arenas. Many SsSW already use distance-learning, either through video conferencing or teleconferencing, for their undergraduate and graduate programs, particularly in schools with satellite offices throughout their states. It is cost-effective and participants are becoming more accustomed to this delivery format. Schools routinely using this format for its undergraduate and graduate education would do well to consider expanding this avenue for practitioners in the field. In this study, fifty percent of respondents to the future focus section stated they projected they would increase their methods of delivery of CPE. Additionally, as on-line learning becomes more popular, it is expected that this will become a major teaching tool for CPE in social work. Currently, NASW and ABSW grant provide approval for on-line CPE coursework. This is a successful format for obtaining CPE units for study that can be completed at the time discretion of the participant. It is also a format of instruction appropriate for social work faculty

contribution, particularly for disseminating information on evidence-based practice. The "live" component will be lost, however, unless an on-line interactive forum is created for meeting this criterion. Disciplines requiring a certain amount of "live" CPE for re-licensure or re-certification, such as pharmacy, will be examining this component more closely.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has a comprehensive CPE website that provides information on live and distance learning opportunities. They have a method of approving CPE programs (NASW, 2002). It is obvious that they hold a dominant leadership position in the area of CPE, particularly at the national level. Additionally, the Association of Social Work Boards provides a listing of approved CE providers that are accepted through reciprocity at the state board level (ASWB, 2002-2003). Live and distance learning venues are approved by the ASWB.

Collaboration between SsSW and workplace settings is an area that deserves further attention and examination. Currently, a SSW may approve the workplace setting as a CPE provider for a particular program. Additionally, there are evidences of collaboration and partnership with other social service agencies, and other disciplines as well. This follows the call for collaborative partnerships at undergraduate and graduate levels of education as well (Allen-Meares, 1998; Berg-Weger & Schneider, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). In this present study, eighty-five percent of respondent schools providing CPE reported that they co-sponsored programs with other entities. In the area of funding the CPE programs, however, only 26% reported that this was a funding source for their offerings. A future look at this relationship may provide information regarding the use and success of collaborative partnerships within the discipline of social work itself and with other disciplines.

Regulation of a professional's practice takes various forms. On the professional level, the use of CPE as a condition for licensure or certification renewal is a requirement for many states. The number of states requiring CPE for social work licensure has increased over the past decades. Four states and Puerto Rico do not have this requirement for state licensure. Workplace settings are beginning to use performance improvement standards (continuous quality improvement) as part of their personnel and program management. This is an additional area that deserves attention for CPE provided by SsSW. It must be remembered, however, that administrative and management topics for licensed clinical social workers has not been an area of great interest overall. Evaluation of CPE that is intended to improve direct practitioner skills must evaluate those skills in some manner. Transferability of skills to the workplace continues to be an area of little attention by SsSW, although it may be an intended outcome for a CPE program. How this would be evaluated in a practical manner remains to be determined.

If continuing professional education is to remain viable over the next decades, the following issues were considered by Cervero (2000) as needing to be addressed:

1. Continuing education for what? The struggle between updating professionals' knowledge versus improving professional practice.

2. Who benefits from continuing education? The struggle between the learning agenda and the political and economic agendas of continuing education.

3. Who will provide continuing education? The struggle for turf versus collaborative relationships. (pp. 8-10)

The viability that Cervero suggested is crucial for SsSW to consider. A school's level of involvement in CPE (and its focus for the future) may be determinant factors for the status of an individual school as well as for SsSW in general.

Traditionally, in the health professions, there has been a focus on updating a professional's knowledge base. This was secondary to the large amount of new information emerging from the areas of technology, pharmacology, and genetics. Social workers might argue that little has changed in its field. Certainly the fact that evidenced-based practice in social work continues to struggle for acceptance is a case in point. However, social work did receive official status as a health profession in 1992 (Allen-Meares, 1998) under the reauthorization of Title VII of the Public Health Act. As a profession that can act as a bridge between health disciplines, social work is uniquely positioned. Social work is now recognized as a necessary stakeholder in health care decision-making, ranging from discharge and treatment planning to medical ethics. Licensed social workers are presenting themselves as having a body of unique knowledge that is applied throughout society. It is important to keep abreast of new developments. However, obtaining new knowledge and not transferring that knowledge to the workplace is occurring. Simply going to a CPE program and returning to the work setting is not enough. The current study results suggested that CPE provided by SsSW was not being evaluated or it was not included in a school's projected future focus. This, again, is a critical feedback component for SsSW that is not being adequately addressed.

Continuing professional education is not just about learning. It must contend with financial realities and power relationships. The personal is political as well as the political is personal. As considered by Umble and Cervero (1996), continuing education can and often does improve professionals' knowledge and positively impacts organizations. Yet it is also about negotiating power and interests (MacLean, 1996; Wilson & Cervero, 1996). Financially, when CPE is provided by SsSW, the optimal circumstance would be to have the overall program functioning with a balanced budget. After these conditions are met, the surplus revenue would be

designated as determined by the CPE director and the SSW administration. Any surplus revenue could be designated as desired, such as to fund (or supplement) salaries and non-revenue producing CPE activities. Yet producing surplus revenues may not be forthcoming. An additional question gets posited. What exactly is the mission and vision of a SSW for CPE? How would this be negotiated, given increasing budgetary restraints faced by schools? Each of these questions reflects back to the interactions, transactions, and process components within systems thinking. They are related to the financial realities at hand. Are there funds available for the provision of CPE activities? CPE programs are at risk of being eliminated or tailored-back in times of financial strain, even when CPE is included as part of the mission and vision of a SSW. Decisions made at the SSW administrative level to modify or eliminate CPE activities must consider all CPE stakeholders throughout the larger system. This certainly points toward collaboration as a method for survival.

The organizational structure for CPE must provide a boundary that is permeable to new information and input from the larger system, be it university or larger community. This point was made almost twenty years ago by Dane (1985). Her use of the concepts of tight and loose coupling suggests open and closed systems within the organizational structure. This is related to McNamara's comments regarding balancing structures and reinforcing structures. The presence of feedback will be apparent more readily in organizational systems that are loosely coupled, allowing interactions and transactions from the environment (in the case of social work CPE, the larger systems stakeholders).

"Most continuing education is provided through some sort of collaboration between two or more institutions" (Cervero, 2000, p. 10). The findings of this study support this statement in

that 85% of schools providing CPE responded that they collaborated or co-sponsored with other entities.

Since the predominant mission of SsSW is the undergraduate and graduate education of social workers, a "turf-fight" does not appear, at first consideration, to be evident in the area of continuing professional education. SsSW are not directly competing with each other for CPE participants, as it may appear for social work students. Schools do compete with other entities in CPE, such as agencies developed only for provision of CPE and with free-lance individuals who both have seen the potential for financial gain. Since the CSWE has not provided leadership or guidance to either its member schools or to other entities providing CPE, it has lost a potential opportunity for providing a beginning basis for collaboration between entities at all levels throughout the larger system. CSWE lost an opportunity for further situating social work's legitimacy among the professions.

With the impressive presence of the NASW's continuing education efforts and the increasing development of the ASWB's approved continuing education listing, it is important that the efforts of SsSW not be overlooked in the overall continuum of CPE provision in social work. These efforts of SsSW relate back again to CSWE. Where is the leadership of CSWE for SsSW in this area? How is quality education to be determined? The NASW's subtitle for its CPE approval program states, "The Profession's Stamp of Approval for Quality Continuing Education" (NASW, 2002, p. 1). It is notable that not all state boards recognize NASW-approved programs. If this is the case, has CSWE relinquished influence and power in a critical educational component for social work practitioners, the graduates of its own accredited programs? The question is powerful. The findings of this study demonstrate that SsSW are intimately concerned with CPE. The designation of a SSW's level of involvement in CPE

provides support for CSWE actively considering attention to this area of educational activity within its next strategic plan. CSWE would be the appropriate entity to determine the quality of social work education, including continuing professional education.

There may be arguments against a recommendation for CSWE to take an overt leadership position in CPE. Collaboration between entities suggests equality or a balance of power and influence. For one entity to assert itself as the final authority for quality in CPE could be divisive. If SsSW are to maintain their vitality as providers of continuing professional education, collaboration with other entities will be necessary. A standard of quality that encompasses each entity would be helpful. This suggests the need for dialogue between all the stakeholders of the larger system for CPE. What might be established from this dialogue is a coordinated system (or clearinghouse) for approving and evaluating the quality and outcomes for the various CPE programs and offerings. State boards would easily recognize if a program is approved by this clearinghouse; there would be an increased possibility for reciprocity (portability of continuing education units) between state boards for continuing education offerings if the quality indicators are standardized. SsSW would remain major players for CPE provision. CSWE could embrace the opportunity to provide leadership to its schools and the profession itself. This option remains to be realized.

<div align="center">Considerations and Directions for Future Research</div>

When examining the social work literature over the past three years (2000-2003) it was disheartening to discover little indication that continuing professional education was considered as an area for expanding the social work knowledge base. The interest that was fueled during the 1970s, 1980s, and even the 1990s has seemingly dissipated, along with federal grant monies.

This is in contrast to efforts of other professional disciplines as well as the specialty discipline of continuing professional education itself.

This study established a SSW's level of involvement in CPE. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship existed between select attributes of a SSW and its level of involvement. A secondary purpose was to examine whether a relationship existed between these attributes and a school's projected future focus for CPE. The findings of this study began to answer these questions.

These findings are intended to create a dialogue between SsSW and between the administrators of schools and their directors or coordinators of CPE. Since SsSW are among main providers of CPE for social work practitioners, it is critical that commitment to this area of education continues, alongside a school's mission to provide education for the formation of new social workers. Indeed, when studies (Dattalo, 1994; Hardcastle & Brownstein, 1989) report that certain practitioners stated that their continuing education rated better than their masters level education, it behooves an administrator to take notice.

Although there are many directions that research could take in the area of continuing education, two areas of focus became apparent from the findings of this study. Exploring the relationships found between the attributes of SsSW and level of involvement is the first; examining the larger issue of the interconnections between the various stakeholders in social work CPE is the other. Although research's function is to generate answers to questions, it is obvious that more questions are generated than answers. Research in CPE in social work is no different.

Directly emerging from the findings of this study are the following questions and issues that can be examined through research activity by quantitative or qualitative methods. After the

results are disseminated to the SsSW, did these results contribute to any changes in a school's level of involvement in CPE? Were changes to a school's strategic plan or organizational chart made? What is the exact nature of the relationships found in this study? Do the proposed changes in the equation for level of involvement hold up under reexamination?

Additionally, does a school's strategic plan directly reflect future focus in the areas of programming, economics, and evaluation activities for CPE? Considering the past and future trends and issues for CPE as outlined by Cervero (2000), how are SsSW addressing these in order to position themselves with other disciplines? What collaborative partnerships have been established by SsSW with other disciplines, agencies, and organizations? How might a SSW use the provision of CPE to attract and recruit students at the masters and doctoral level? How might SsSW expand their beginning interdisciplinary collaboration at the undergraduate and graduate levels to include continuing professional education at the post-graduate and practitioner levels?

The concept of evaluation was suggested as an appropriate component for addition to the construct of level of involvement. Examining SsSW against the new conceptual definition for level of involvement could position the schools differently. Attention to evaluation (a quality indicator) could support a stronger social work image within the professions. Social work's attention to quality outcomes would be respected by other disciplines and could lead to increased interdisciplinary support and activities.

Continuing professional education provided by SsSW demonstrates a school's commitment to life-long professional development (Knox, 2000; Ottoson, 2000). Stakeholders for CPE in social work include participants in the CPE programs, a school's CPE program itself, the social work school, the state licensing board, the social service agencies and other workplace settings, state and national professional associations, and increasingly other professional

disciplines. Examination of relationships with each of these stakeholders could contribute to the empirical knowledge base of CPE in SsSW and within the profession overall. Since it could be argued that the profession of social work is committed to life-long professional development, then the stakeholders are poised to gain from this examination of the "whole".

Although provision of CPE is not a requirement for accreditation of SsSW, it is admirable that schools have had the vision to incorporate this educational service for its stakeholders. It is notable that many schools are situated in the major and premier level of involvement categories without support or direct guidance by CSWE. Continuing professional education might be considered an innovative program under the CSWE accreditation standards (Markward & Drolen, 1999). CSWE could take a major role to monitor the quality of CPE programs provided by SsSW nationwide. This would, of course, expand the focus and mission of CSWE. SsSW along with other major providers of continuing education (such as National Association of Social Workers, Association of Social Work Boards, and state licensing boards) have been the gatekeepers for quality in social work CPE. It is obvious that the national accrediting body of social work education (CSWE) has limited its focus to undergraduate and graduate educational activities of SsSW. CSWE could be considered to be uniquely positioned to assume a greater gatekeeper role for quality CPE activities nationwide for schools as well as for the profession as a whole. There are, however, arguments that could be made in favor and against CSWE's assumption of a leadership role in this area.

What facilitating and constraining factors exist that must be considered when regarding this potential gate-keeping leadership role for CSWE? In favor of this position is the fact that CSWE is the only organization recognized by the Council on Higher Education for accrediting schools of social work. Accreditation for a SSW demonstrates to the public that certain

standards applied universally for bachelors and masters level programs have been met. Extrapolated to a school's CPE program efforts, or even other providers of CPE, the accreditation or approval would grant a recognizable status to that program. There may be strong opposition to this reasoning, however. As with all accrediting bodies for universities, professions, or organizations, there are fees that are levied for the accrediting process. This can and has led to the view that the accrediting body is only interested in the generation of fees. Additionally, it could be argued that CSWE has not even accredited the social work doctoral programs. The lack of attention and consistency for all social work education is demonstrated at the highest academic level for social workers. Furthermore, concerns point to an issue of "What has CSWE actually given back to SsSW" in the form of solid recommendations, guidance, support and acceptance of leading-edge initiatives. If the concept of "leadership" is applied at this point, then perhaps CSWE would not be a "good fit" for this role. It may not have the vision needed to provide that leadership to the schools or to the profession as a whole. This should not limit, however, CSWE's needed involvement and participation in other efforts to create the standardization so essential for CPE throughout the nation.

If collaboration and partnership between agencies, other disciplines and organizations have been proposed for the provision and economic survival of CPE at the local and state levels, it seems plausible that collaboration between the largest organizational stakeholders of social work CPE would be appropriate to consider for standardization of quality and reciprocity issues on a national level. In other words, bring all the "big players" to the same table, preferably a round one to symbolically position all with similar influence and power. SsSW would be present and represented at this table (Figure 6).

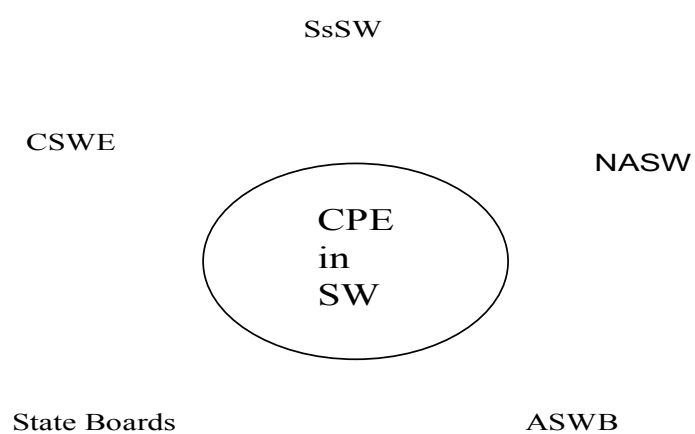SsSW

CSWE

NASW

CPE
in
SW

State Boards

ASWB

Figure 6. Stakeholders in CPE at National Level

This effort would set up a possibility that concerns could be heard and competition could be examined. This might lead to a new entity that is specifically designed to act as a universally-recognized social work CPE clearinghouse. It would set the standard for what is expected from providers of CPE as well as create a database for universal program numbers for CPE offerings. Further research opportunities in the area of CPE are unlimited. Few researchers have given attention to this area of social work education and its impact on social work practice. Given that professional development of social workers is a life-long process, it is important that the quality and effectiveness of that development is determined and disseminated to others. Exploration of how these findings on social work CPE are disseminated may provide clues into how the profession of social work views CPE. Two journals have attempted to provide an avenue for practitioners, administrators, educators, and researchers to publish in the area of social work CPE. The Journal of Continuing Education existed between 1981 and 1995. It was published quarterly and produced 6 volumes during its 14 years of existence. Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education began in 1998. It is published three times a year and has produced 6 volumes in its six years of existence to date. Close examination of the history and contexts for these two publications could provide needed information regarding the factors influencing the ability to maintain a viable source for distribution of findings. What contributed to the halt of publication for The Journal of Continuing Education? Was its presence driven by personal interest in CPE? Was it a business proposition for the sponsoring school? Did readership and subscriptions slow in relationship to the overall trend in the educational arena to seemingly de-emphasize CPE as an area of scholarly interest? What prompted the creation of Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education? Again, was its creation driven by personal interest in CPE?

Did it open its focus to a larger reader audience in order to generate more dialogue and interest in CPE? Was it purely an economic move attempting to fill the void by the halt of publication of the other dedicated publication to social work CPE? These questions, and others, are examples of areas for further evaluation. To be classified at the premier level of involvement, SsSW must have avenues for publication of their research findings. The limited options available to researchers are notable. Social work researchers can choose to disseminate their findings in journals that are friendly to CPE that are not necessarily social work focused. Although this points to the collaborative efforts between professions working in their own areas of CPE, the profession of social work limits its opportunity to recognize its own work in a unique area for research focus.

This study began the empirical examination of factors influencing the level of involvement in CPE provided by SsSW. Certain attributes for SsSW were found to have a relationship with a school's level of involvement; additionally, certain attributes were found to have a relationship to a school's projected future focus for CPE. The exact nature of these relationships continues to need exploration. What can be said, however, is that the findings of this study continue to situate social work among the professions as one which is serious about "data-driven, critical assessment of social work education" (Karger & Stoesz, 2003, p. 285) in all its forms.

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APPENDIX A

SELECTED DEFINITIONS OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL

EDUCATION FOUND IN SOCIAL WORK

Selected Definitions of Continuing Professional Education Found in Social Work

A. Instructional-learning activities that follow completion of a formal course of study
(Davenport, 1986; Davenport & Wodarski, 1989)

B. Training taken by social workers…who have already completed formal education
requirements to enter their field (Barker, 1991, p. 49)

C. A range of educational approaches occurring outside the traditional baccalaureate and
master's degree programs (Strom & Green, 1995, p. 622)

D. Any planned, educationally sound experience that encompasses, but is not limited to, post
university courses, staff development service training, self study, and peer consultation and
supervision (Roat, 1988)

E. Externally directed educational programming for human service workers who are not in
full-time residence in a regular university program (Gullerud & Itzin, 1979)

APPENDIX B

OPEN SYSTEMS THEORY TERMINOLOGY AND

RELATIONSHIP TO COMPONENTS OF THIS STUDY

Open Systems Theory Terminology and Relationship to Components of This Study

System: a set of orderly and interrelated elements that form a functional whole

  Example: school of social work

Boundaries: the repeatedly occurring patterns that characterize the relationships within a system and give that system a particular identity

  Example: school of social work and the university

Subsystem: a smaller system within a larger system

  Example: office of continuing education within the school of social work

Homeostasis: the tendency for a system to maintain a relatively stable, constant state of balance; maintaining the status quo

  Example: no change in a strategic plan or level of activity for a certain function

Role: a culturally determined pattern of behavior for a person occupying a certain status

  Example: role of coordinator or director of CPE; secretarial staff member

Relationship: dynamic interaction between two or more persons or systems

  Example: administrator and director of CPE; school of social work and agency

Input: energy, information, or communication received from other systems

  Example: Funding; allocation of resources for projects

Output: what happens to input after it's gone through and been processed by some system

  Example: The use of evaluation or assessment to make changes in programs or provide new offerings

Feedback: system receiving information about system's own performance

Example: Evaluation or assessment process for CPE program

<u>Interface</u>: point of contact or communication between different systems

Example: Organizational chart; strategic planning

<u>Differentiation</u>: a system's tendency to move from a more simple to more complex existence

Example: Developmental process of a program to provide more services

<u>Entropy</u>: tendency of a system to progress towards disorganization, depletion, and death

Example: Change in CPE provision from SSW to private providers

<u>Negative entropy</u>: progress of system towards growth and development

Example: The creation of an office of continuing education in a SSW

<u>Equifinality</u>: there are many different means to the same end

Example: There can be multiple providers of CPE, not just SSW

APPENDIX C

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes

Location of SSW in state mandating CPE for certification or licensing

Funding Auspice (predominant)

    A. Public

    B. Private

    C. Combination

Program Levels at SSW

    A. Masters only

    B. Masters, Bachelors

    C. Masters, Doctoral

    D. Masters, Bachelors, Doctoral

Fiscal Variability of Individual Program Offerings

    A. Fee-based only

    B. SSW subsidy only

    C. Fee-based with SSW subsidy (staff, direct funding of program)

    D. Grants or contracts

    E. Co-sponsorship with other disciplines or agencies

    F. University-wide CE unit monetary or in-kind support

    G. Number of sources

Administrative Support

    A. Perceptions of CPE directors as to support by SSW administration

(Likert scaling 1-4)

       Example: I would say that my SSW Administration provides

(No support, Little support, Moderate support, Major support) to

CPE at our SSW.

B. Strategic Plan for SSW includes CPE

D. SSW CPE found on the organizational chart of the school

E. Yearly SSW budget for CPE program and offerings

1. Less than $10,000

2. $10,000-50,000

3. $50,001-100,000

4. $100,001-250,000

5. Greater than $250,000

F. Tenure track position for director of CPE

Carnegie Foundation Classification as Research—Extensive

APPENDIX D

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN CPE = STRUCTURE + LEADERSHIP

+ PROVISION + RESEARCH

Level of Involvement in CPE = Structure + Leadership + Provision + Research

Conceptual Component	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Measurement
Structure	Office of Continuing Education within SSW; the organizational component within a SSW dedicated to CPE	Presence or absence of separate office within the SSW	Response to questionnaire
Leadership	Director or Coordinator of CPE; person (with or without title) given the power and responsibility to administer the activities relating to CPE	Presence or absence of person	Response to questionnaire
Provision	Activities related to curricular programming: co-sponsoring CPE programs with other entities, providing CPE programs directly, or approving other providers of CPE for state licensing board	Presence or absence of current activities	Response to questionnaire
Research	Activities demonstrating the dissemination of information related to expansion of the knowledge base in CPE	Presence or absence of published journal articles within the past three years examining processes or outcomes of CPE in SSW, excluding prescriptive and descriptive studies	Response to questionnaire

Note. The presence or absence of any or all of the four conceptual components (structure, leadership, provision, and research) determines the level of involvement in CPE for a SSW. SsSW are classified according to the following schema: none (presence in none of the above areas; minor (presence in one of the above areas); moderate (presence in two of the above areas; major (presence in three of the above areas; and premier (presence in all of the above areas.)

APPENDIX E

FUTURE FOCUS = PROGRAMMING + EVALUATION + ECONOMICS

Future Focus = Programming + Evaluation + Economics

Conceptual Component	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Measurement
Programming	Provision of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including issues related to instruction	Decrease, maintain, or increase activity or emphasis in each of the following: number of program offerings, diversity of CPE topics, and use of multiple instructional methods	Response to questionnaire
Evaluation	Analyzing outcomes of CPE, including transferability of content knowledge	Decrease, maintain, or increase activity or emphasis in each of the following: assessment of participant learning (posttest only or pretest and posttest at conclusion of session), self-evaluation by presenter, and assessment of participant learning (follow-up testing of content knowledge after return to practice setting)	Response to questionnaire
Economics	Cost-effectiveness, including means of delivery of CPE (e.g., distance education, interactive learning processes), funding methods or stability issues within funding (e.g., budgeting, marketing)	Decrease, maintain, or increase activity or emphasis in each of the following areas: use of cost-effective means of delivery, use of multiple methods of funding, and practices and scope of marketing.	Response to questionnaire

APPENDIX F

VARIABLE CATEGORIES, LEVEL OF MEASUREMENT,

AND RECORDING SCHEMA

Variable Categories, Level of Measurement, and Recording Schema

Table F1

   Attributes of SSW

Attributes	Category	Level of Measurement	Recording
Location	Location of SSW in state with mandated CPE for licensure	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Funding	Funding auspice	Nominal	1=public 2=private 3=combination
Degree Programs	Degree program levels at SSW	Nominal	1=masters only 2=masters, bachelors 3=masters, doctoral 4=masters, bachelors, doctoral
Methods of funding for CPE offerings	Fiscal variability of individual program offerings	Nominal	Choose as many as apply: 1=fee-based only 2=SSW subsidy only (staff and/or direct funding of programs) 3=fee-based with SSW subsidy 4=local, state, or federal grants or contracts 5=co-sponsorship with other disciplines or agencies 6=university-wide CE monetary or in-kind support
Methods of funding for CPE offerings	Number of funding methods used to provide CPE to consumers	Nominal	Sum number of methods used

Administrative Support	Perception of administrative support	Ordinal	1=none 2=little 3=moderate 4=major
Administrative Support	Current strategic plan for SSW includes includes statement for CPE	Nominal	1=yes 2=yes
Administrative Support	CPE found on current organizational chart for the school	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Administrative Support	Yearly budget range	Nominal	1=<$10,000 2=$10,000-50,000 3=$50,001-100,000 4=$100,001-250,000 5=>$250,000 6=No budget 7=Unknown or no response
Administrative Support	Director or coordinator of CPE holds tenure track position	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Carnegie Foundation Classification	Carnegie Foundation designation as Research-Extensive university	Nominal	1=yes 2=no

Table F2

Level of Involvement in CPE

Components	Description	Level of Measurement	Recording
Structure	Presence of Office of CPE in SSW	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Leadership	Presence of director or Coordinator of CPE in SSW	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Provision	Presence of programming activities related to CPE by the SSW	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Provision	Programming activities listing for SsSW as provision directly by SSW, collaboration with other entities, and/or credentialing other CPE providers	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Research	Presence of published journal articles regarding CPE within the past three Years	Nominal	1=yes 2=no
Overall Level of Involvement	Schools are classified after determining presence/absence score for the categories of structure, leadership, provision, and research	Nominal	1=none 2=minor (index 1) 3=moderate (index 2) 4=major (index 3) 5=premeir (index 4)

Table F3

Future Focus

Components	Category	Level of Measurement	Recording
Programming	Number of individual offerings	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Programming	Diversity of programs	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Programming	Use of multi-method approaches	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Evaluation	Participant: Posttest only or pretest and posttest of content at end of session	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Evaluation	Participant: Follow-up testing in practice setting at later date	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Evaluation	Presenter: Self evaluation	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Economics	Use of cost-effective delivery methods such as teleconferencing, individual interactive learning, self-study monographs or articles	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Economics	Use of multiple methods of funding: co-sponsorship with other disciplines, co-sponsorship with social service agency,	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase

	co-sponsorship with commercial vendor		
Economics	Marketing practices and scope	Nominal	1=decrease 2=maintain 3=increase
Overall Focus Programming	Programming Score	Nominal	<0 index as 1=decrease 0 index as 2=maintain >0 index as 3=increase
Overall Focus Evaluation	Evaluation Score	Nominal	<0 index as 1=decrease 0 index as 2=maintain >0 index as 3=increase
Overall Focus Economics	Economics Score	Nominal	<0 index as 1=decrease 0 index as 2=maintain >0 index as 3=increase
Overall Future Focus	Future Focus Score determined as the sum of programming, evaluation, and economics	Nominal	<0 index as 1=decrease 0 index as 2=maintain >0 index as 3=increase

APPENDIX G

FUTURE FOCUS INDEX

Future Focus Index

Directions:

1. Determine each area as –1 for decrease focus, 0 for maintain focus, or +1 for increase focus.

2. Add each column to provide index for each area, then sum across overall row for totals.

Total Programming Index: <0 = decrease focus, 0 = maintain, >0 = increase

Total Evaluation Index: <0 = decrease focus, 0 = maintain, >0 = increase

Total Economics Index: <0 = decrease focus, 0 = maintain, >0 = increase

3. Sum Overall Total Index for Programming, Evaluation, and Economics for the

Overall Future Focus Index: <0 = decrease focus, 0 = maintain, >0 = increase

Note. Maintaining focus refers to the existing focus, activity or emphasis in an area, or the current lack of activity for this area. No response or unknown will be noted as such. Index will be determined with available responses.

		Decrease focus	Maintain focus	Increase focus	
Programming	# of programs				
	Diversity of programs (i.e., clinical, administrative, policy, research, technology				
	Use of multi-method approaches to instruction (e.g., lecture, discussion, experiential, skills training)				
Overall Programming		Total	Total	Total	Overall Total

Evaluation	Participant: Post-test of content, pre-test/post-test of content				
	Presenter: Self-evaluation of presentation				
	Participant: Follow-up testing of content in practice setting				
Overall Evaluation		Total	Total	Total	Overall Total
Economics	Methods of delivery: Distance learning, teleconferencing, individual interactive learning, self-study monographs and articles				
	Methods of funding: Co-sponsorship with other SSW, co-sponsorship with other disciplines, co-sponsorship with social service agency, co-sponsorship with commercial vendor				
	Marketing: Practices and scope				
Overall Economics		Total	Total	Total	Overall Total
Overall Future Focus					Overall Future Focus Total

APPENDIX H

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK

Continuing Professional Education in Schools of Social Work

Questionnaire
Part I

Please <u>check</u> the single most accurate answer as it applies to your institution

1.	Is your school of social work located in a state that requires
	continuing professional education for certification or licensing?
	_____Yes
	_____No

2.	Where does the majority of your university or college funding for operations originate?
	_____Public sources_____Private sources_____Combination of public and private sources

3.	What social work degree programs does your school offer?
	_____Masters only
	_____Masters and Bachelors
	_____Masters and Doctoral
	_____Masters, Bachelors, Doctoral

4.	Does your school/program provide continuing professional
	education offerings?			_____Yes		_____No

IF you answer **NO** to item 4, please go to page 4 to complete demographic information for
contact purposes and special questions, then return the questionnaire.

5.	What is/are the predominant source of funding for individual CPE offerings at your school?
	(Check as many as necessary)
	_____Fee-based only
	_____Fee-based with SSW subsidy (staff, direct funding or program)
	_____Multiple funding sources: grants and contracts
	_____Multiple funding sources: co-sponsorship with other disciplines or agencies
	_____Multiple funding sources: university-wide CE unit monetary or in-kind
	support

6.	Check the <u>one</u> answer that best fits your perception/knowledge of the following question:

	I would say that my SSW administration provides_____to CPE at our SSW.
	_____No support
	_____Little support
	_____Moderate support
	_____Major support

7. The school's current strategic plan for this fiscal year includes specific items relating to CPE. ____Yes ____No

8. CPE is found on the organizational chart of the school
    ____Yes ____No

9. The yearly budget for our CPE program, offerings, and staff is
    ____Less than $10,000 ____$10,000 – 50,000
    ____$50,001 – 100,000 ____$100,001 – 250,000
    ____Greater than $250,000

10. If there is a director of CPE, it is a _____position.
    ____Tenure track
    ____Administrative professional

Part II

Please indicate whether or not the following exists for your CPE program.

11. Office of Continuing Education within the SSW

    (or department; the organizational component within a SSW
    dedicated to CPE)
    ____Yes____No

12. Director or Coordinator of CPE

    (person-with or without title—given the power and
    responsibility to administer the activities relating to CPE)
    ____Yes____No

13. Activities related to curricular programming

    Co-sponsoring CPE programs with other entities
    (agencies or disciplines)
    ____Yes____No

    Providing CPE programs directly by the school
    ____Yes____No

Approving other providers of CPE for state licensing board,
besides social work faculty members
                                            ____Yes____No

14. Activities demonstrating the dissemination of information
        related to expansion of the knowledge base in CPE

        (defined as presence of published journal articles within the past three
         years examining processes or outcomes of CPE in SSW, excluding
         prescriptive and descriptive articles of your
         individual programs).
                                            ____Yes____No

        Please list articles:

Part III

Please indicate your school's projected future focus in the nine selected areas of CPE during the next three (3) years.

Check only one response for each item as either decrease, maintain, or increase focus

	Decrease focus or activity level	**Maintain** same focus or activity level	**Increase** focus or activity level
1. Number of CPE programs offered			
2. Diversity of programs (e.g., clinical, administrative, policy, research, technology)			
3. Use of multi-method approaches to instruction (e.g., lecture, discussion, experiential, skills training)			
4. Post-test or pre/post test of program content for the participants at a CPE program			
5. Self-evaluation of the presenter of the program			
6. Follow-up testing of program content in the practice setting for the participant			
7. Methods of delivery (e.g., distance learning, teleconferencing, individual interactive learning, self-study monographs and articles)			
8. Methods of funding (e.g., co-sponsoring with other SSW, co-sponsoring with other disciplines, co-sponsoring with social service agency, co-sponsorship with commercial vendor)			
9. Marketing: Practices and scope			

Part IV

This information is for coding and contact purposes.
All information will be kept confidential, under double lock for a period of three years, then destroyed according to the IRB procedures at the University of Georgia.

Contact Person_____

Please indicate by which method you'd prefer to be contacted if necessary:
      Telephone number _____
      Email_____

Your title and relationship to CPE at your school_____

School _____

Would you like a copy of these results? If so, please give address.
_____
_____
_____
_____

Comments regarding CPE at your school <u>or</u> on CPE in social work in general?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your assistance in completing this questionnaire. It will help with an empirical measurement of present and future CPE involvement. Please feel free to call for clarification of any items on this survey (706-208-8613 Janice Callaway <jcallawa@arches.uga.edu> or 706-542-5473 Kevin DeWeaver).

Please send the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:

<p style="text-align:center">Janice T. Callaway, MSW
1794-20 S. Lumpkin St.
Athens, Georgia 30606</p>

APPENDIX I

COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Cover Letter for Questionnaire

Date

Dear Colleague,
Your assistance is requested to help complete a national survey of schools of social work regarding their provision of continuing professional education (CPE). You have been identified as a contact person to answer CPE information about your school.

This survey differs from previous surveys in that its purpose is to help establish a beginning empirical definition of levels of involvement in CPE. Additionally, it is hoped to determine if relationships exist between certain characteristics of schools of social work, their levels of involvement, and their projected future focus for CPE. Earlier surveys by our social work colleagues have been instrumental in describing existing CPE activities. The intent of this survey is to continue building the knowledge base for CPE provided by schools of social work.

Please find the enclosed questionnaire which is only four pages. The majority of questions can be answered with a simple check mark or circling and the entire process should take no longer than ten minutes. However, there are several questions that are open ended should you care to elaborate further. Please complete the questionnaire and mail it back to us as soon as possible. A self-addressed postage-paid envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. Identifying data per school will be confidential and the results will be aggregated.

Please accept our appreciation of your consideration of this request and your participation in the advancement of CPE research. A copy of the results will be made available on request.   If you should have any questions regarding this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact us at 706-208-8613 (Callaway) or 706-542-5473 (DeWeaver). Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Janice T. Callaway, MSW
Doctoral Student

Kevin L. DeWeaver, PhD
Professor

Encl: Questionnaire, Return Envelope

Research at the University of Georgia which involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to Ms. Julia Alexander, MA; Institutional Review Board; Office of the Vice President for Research; The University of Georgia; 606A Graduate Studies Research Center; Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514.