Social Work Supervision Practice in Australia: Does the Rhetoric Match the Practice?

Veronica (Ronnie) Egan
Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
August 2012
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
Melbourne School of Health Sciences
Department of Social Work
University of Melbourne
Abstract

This research explores the practice of social work supervision in Australia. The thesis uses a mixed method design to collect data about current supervision practice. Quantitative data was collected through an online survey with 675 respondents completing the survey. The preliminary data from the survey was then used to conduct semi structured focus groups, separated for supervisees and supervisors, from the statutory, non-government and health/counselling sectors. Using Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and field, this research challenges how social work supervision is practised, spoken about and used in the current neoliberal environment. The thesis is that social work supervision in Australia has become a mechanism by which the ethical mandate of social work practice is compromised under neoliberalism. The research showed that a quantitative mapping of supervision in the field provides a picture consistent with traditional or orthodox modes of supervision as detailed in the literature. However, the qualitative research provided contrasting information that suggested that the orthodox picture is not complete. Beneath the surface it was seen that supervision was posing challenges to social work practice not only in its modes and methods, but also by its omissions, where professional focused supervision is not provided or reduced, challenging the support practitioners need to act in a manner consistent with social work’s ethical mandate.
Declaration

Doctor of Philosophy Declaration

This is to certify that:

- the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD
- due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used
- the thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signature:                      Date:

Produced on archival quality paper
Acknowledgements

I acknowledge and thank all social workers who participated in this study. Without you the richness of the supervision story would have remained untold. The volume and sincerity of survey responses and the level of commitment social workers demonstrated was extraordinary. I thank the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) for allowing me to advertise the survey on their website and suggest that the time is right to revisit the Standards of Practice for Supervision.

I acknowledge Victoria University and the access to Special Studies Programme in the analysis of data in 2007 which enabled me to analyse the data. The University of Melbourne statistical centre provided final support in the presentation of the quantitative findings.

Throughout the research I was supported by my thesis supervisors, Drs Jane Maidment, Russell Wright, Carolyn Noble and Marie Connolly. Russell and Carolyn shared principal supervisor roles in the early years of my candidature, Marie became principal supervisor at the University of Melbourne and Jane was there for the full journey. Professor Marie Connolly offered a clarity and direction to the thesis that enabled me to complete it. To Jane in particular, who offered much more than academic support, she willed me on, provided witness in hard times and solace when everything seemed too hard. Thank you.

Many people have provided advice on the thesis, reading over drafts, assisting with proofreading, including Jane Wexler and Dr Diane Brown. I particularly thank them for their support in ensuring that the thesis has met all expectations of the relevant standards. I thank Dr Chris Brew for her statistical advice, intellect, and support. She urged me into the quantitative analysis and I trusted her to jump and this transformed the research outcomes. Advice as to the appropriate statistical analyses was sought from the University of Melbourne’s Statistical Consulting Centre.

To my family Tom, Georgia and Will who were always there to bring me back to earth, so when things were tough they provided a much needed external distraction and more importantly love and support. Georgia and Will grew up over the duration of my thesis to the point where Georgia provided an eagle eye in spotting data disparities. To Tom, the fountain of all good things support, food, washing, who dreamed about my completion more than I and the time is now here.

My sisters, Marg and Sue, who have been on the sidelines barracking in a very Egan way.

My colleagues at VU and beyond, past and present: Doris Testa, Amanda Rea, Adrian Fisher, Jenny Sharples, Jo Georgakakis, Melinda Spiteri, Lesley Hoatson, Angelika Papadopoulos, Jane Wexler, Alison Lewis-Nicholson and Lis Starbuck. In different ways all of you provided support and friendship. My friends Ang, Hammy, Sue and Kev, Al and Al, Wen and Sheree were always available and are wonderful friends.

I also acknowledge those colleagues, both supervisors and supervisees who inspired me to undertake the research from the beginning. The list is too long.
# Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................. ii
Declaration .............................................................................................................. iii
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................... iv
List of tables .......................................................................................................... ix
List of figures ........................................................................................................ x

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The beginning of a journey .................................................................................... 1
Location of the researcher and public commentary ............................................. 2
Research aims and questions ................................................................................ 4
Neoliberalism and the value of Bourdieusian concepts ......................................... 5
   *Language, discourse and definitions* ................................................................ 6
Structure of the thesis ............................................................................................. 10

## CHAPTER TWO: FRAMING THE RESEARCH

Social constructionism ............................................................................................ 14
Discourses in social work supervision .................................................................... 16
Bourdieu and reflexive sociology ............................................................................ 18

## CHAPTER THREE: THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR SUPERVISION

The professionalisation of supervision ................................................................... 23
Origins of social work supervision .......................................................................... 23
   *Training and education* .................................................................................. 25
   *Knowledge building* ...................................................................................... 26
Types of supervision ............................................................................................... 29
   *Internal supervision* ...................................................................................... 29
   *External supervision* ...................................................................................... 31
Supervision structures within organisations ......................................................... 34
   *Supervision policies* ....................................................................................... 34
   *Supervision contracts* .................................................................................... 35
   *Supervision in job descriptions* ...................................................................... 37
   *Performance reviews and supervision* .......................................................... 37
Different approaches to supervision ...................................................................... 38
   *The functional approach* .............................................................................. 39
   *Developmental approaches* .......................................................................... 42
   *Practice and organisational approaches* ......................................................... 44
   *Feminist approaches* ..................................................................................... 45
   *Cultural supervision* ..................................................................................... 46
   *Critical reflection as an approach* .................................................................. 47
Training and qualification for supervision ............................................................... 48
Managerial discourses in supervision .................................................................... 50
Managerial discourses enter social work ............................................................... 51
Managerial discourses and social work supervision .............................................. 53
   *Managerial discourses within the North American context* ......................... 54
   *Managerial discourses within the British context* .......................................... 55
   *Managerial discourses within the New Zealand context* .............................. 56
   *Managerial discourses with in the Australian context* ................................... 57
The regulation of social work supervision ............................................................. 59
   *International responses to social work regulation* ......................................... 59
   *Australia and regulation* .............................................................................. 60
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY ........................................................................... 74
Mixed methods research ................................................................................. 75
Overview of the research design ...................................................................... 77
Stage 1: Development and piloting of online survey instrument ................. 77
   Rationale for the online survey instrument .............................................. 77
   Online survey design .............................................................................. 79
Participants ..................................................................................................... 81
Online survey content ..................................................................................... 81
Section 1: Supervisee questions ...................................................................... 82
   Demographic characteristics of participants .......................................... 82
   Structure of supervision ........................................................................... 82
   Content of supervision sessions ............................................................. 83
   Philosophy/values informing supervision .............................................. 83
   Models adopted in supervision .............................................................. 85
   The relationship between supervisor and supervisee ......................... 86
   Effectiveness of supervision .................................................................. 86
   Reliability of online survey .................................................................... 88
Section 2: Supervisor questions ...................................................................... 88
Stage 2: Online survey data collection ......................................................... 88
Stage 3: Quantitative online survey data analysis ....................................... 89
   Stage 3a: Preliminary online survey data analysis ................................. 89
   Stage 3b: Quantitative data analysis for closed online survey questions 90
   Stage 3c: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) ......................................... 90
   Stage 3d: Intercorrelations between factors ........................................... 92
   Stage 3e: Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) ...................... 92
   Stage 3f: Analysis of online survey textual data .................................... 93
Stage 4: Qualitative data collection ............................................................... 94
   Focus group participants ....................................................................... 95
   Demographic profile of focus group participants .................................. 96
   Qualitative focus group data analysis ................................................... 99
   Ethical considerations .......................................................................... 100
   Strengths and weaknesses of the research design ................................ 102
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS – THE QUANTITATIVE SURVEY ................................. 104
Preliminary online survey data analysis ....................................................... 104
Quantitative data analysis ........................................................................... 105
   Demographic profile of survey respondents ....................................... 105
   Ethnic origin ......................................................................................... 105
   Qualifications of supervisees ............................................................. 106
   Employment ......................................................................................... 106
   Time elapsed since graduation and employment status .................... 108
   Structure of supervision ..................................................................... 109
   Types of supervision .......................................................................... 109

The AASW National Practice Standards for supervision ................................... 62
The relational aspects of supervision ........................................................... 65
The primary supervisory relationship .......................................................... 66
   The development of trust in the supervisory relationship .................. 66
   Power and authority in the supervisory relationship ......................... 68
   Organisations as stakeholders ............................................................. 69
Service users as stakeholders ..................................................................... 71
Conclusion .................................................................................................... 72
CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

Usefulness of alternative supervision .................................................. 111
Functions of supervision ...................................................................... 112
Demographic profile of respondent’s supervisors ............................... 113
Organisational policy on supervision .................................................. 114
Provision of supervision in respondent’s job description ....................... 114
Difficulty in accessing supervision ....................................................... 115
Principal supervisor’s organisational position ..................................... 116
Frequency and length of supervision sessions ..................................... 117
Supervision contracts .......................................................................... 118
Performance appraisal and links to supervision ................................... 119
Trust in supervisory relationship and quality of relationship ................. 120
Effectiveness of supervision.................................................................. 120
Analysis of demographic structure and quality aspects of supervisor data 121
Exploratory factor analysis .................................................................. 123
EFA and internal reliability ................................................................... 128
Factor intercorrelation .......................................................................... 134
Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) ..................................... 136
The factors and line management .......................................................... 136
The factors and sector of supervisee ...................................................... 137
The factors and gender .......................................................................... 137
The factors and choice of supervisor .................................................... 138
The factors and age ................................................................................ 139
The factors and trust in the supervisory relationship .............................. 140
Conclusion ............................................................................................. 141

CHAPTER SIX: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS ........................................ 148
Supervision relationships ........................................................................ 148
Trust in the supervision relationship ...................................................... 149
Challenge in the supervisory relationship .............................................. 153
Internal and external supervision relationships ..................................... 155
Managerial discourses informing supervision ........................................ 160
Purpose of accountability in supervision .............................................. 160
Impact of line management on supervision .......................................... 163
Access to resources in the organisational hierarchy ............................... 167
Exercise of power and control in supervision ........................................ 171
Professionalisation of supervision .......................................................... 173
Tensions between professional requirements and organisational demands 174
Time constraints ..................................................................................... 175
Use and production of knowledge .......................................................... 176
Conclusion ............................................................................................. 180

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION ................................................................. 181
The supervisory relationship and issues of surveillance and monitoring 182
Trust in the supervisory relationship ...................................................... 183
Monitoring, performance appraisals and the supervisory relationship .... 185
The role of professional and managerial discourses informing supervision practice 187
Separating managerial and professional functions ............................... 190
Coexisting discourses within supervision .............................................. 191
Supervision as a key site for reflective and reflexive practice ............... 193
Critical reflection in practice ................................................................. 195
Supervision’s knowledge-building potential ........................................ 195
Training and professional development ................................................ 197
List of tables

Table 1  Five Stages of Research .................................................................................. 78
Table 2  Evaluation study of large scale surveys ......................................................... 79
Table 3  Demographic profile of supervisees in focus groups from statutory, non statutory and health/counselling organisations ................................................. 97
Table 4  Demographic profile of supervisors in focus groups from statutory, non statutory and health/counselling organisations ................................................. 98
Table 5  Survey Demographic .................................................................................... 105
Table 6  Qualifications and Employment Status ....................................................... 108
Table 7  Demographic of Supervisors ........................................................................ 113
Table 8  Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ........................................................................................................... 123
Table 9  Parallel Analysis ........................................................................................... 123
Table 10 Pattern matrix factor loadings using maximum likelihood extraction method with Oblimin rotation for 61 items ................................................................. 126
Table 11 Item-total statistics for Factor One .............................................................. 129
Table 12 Reliability statistics for Factor One ............................................................ 129
Table 13 Item-total statistics for Factor Two ............................................................ 130
Table 14 Reliability statistics for Factor Two ............................................................ 130
Table 15 Item-total statistics for Factor Three ........................................................ 132
Table 16 Reliability statistics for Factor Three ........................................................ 133
Table 17 Total statistics for Factor Four ..................................................................... 133
Table 18 Reliability statistics for Factor Four ............................................................ 133
Table 19 Descriptive statistics ................................................................................. 134
Table 20 Intercorrelation between factors ............................................................... 136
Table 21 Factor scores (M,S.E) depending on whether or not line manager is supervisor ..................................................................................................................... 137
Table 22 Factor scores (M,S.E) depending on gender .............................................. 138
Table 23 Factor scores (M,S.E) depending on whether principal supervisor was chose or not .............................................................................................................. 139
Table 24 The factors and age .................................................................................... 139
Table 25 Correlations between trust and factors ..................................................... 141
Table 26 Summary of similarities and differences of the current research with the literature ................................................................................................................. 146
Table 27 Survey research questions ........................................................................ 192
# List of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Supervision content</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Philosophy/Values in supervision</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Supervisory relationship</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Excerpt from original transcripts</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Supervisor qualifications</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Employment sector</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Type of supervision received</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td>Supervision frequency</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td>Scree Plot</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The beginning of a journey

In 2007, 675 social workers across Australia took the time to complete a large online survey about social work supervision practice. Their responses to the closed questions alone produced 180 pages of typed commentary. A further 30 focus group participants then discussed the survey data to produce the results for this thesis. From these contributions new evidence and knowledge about social work supervision in Australia has been created. At the beginning of the research I could not have imagined the level of interest from social workers across Australia in responding to the survey. The participants’ generosity in participating in this research provided a richness and depth to understanding social work supervision practice. They participated from different sectors and age groups, as well as metropolitan, regional and remote parts of Australia. Their commitment to providing the data for this study attested a positive belief in supervision as key to their work. So with this in mind, I set out to illuminate the story of supervision they have provided.

When I began this research I did not anticipate undertaking a large scale quantitative study. Rather, I began with a curiosity about how social work supervision was practised in Australia. I wanted to collect descriptive data about practice in order to have an overall view, but more particularly, I was interested in ascertaining the quality and value of supervision. In confronting the question of how to construct a contemporary picture of supervision practice I was compelled to more fully understand its multiple dimensions. In reviewing the literature, it was clear that the large scale studies undertaken internationally and locally in Victoria provided the most comprehensive pictures of practice (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005; Hair, 2012; Kadushin, 1974, 1976, 1992b, 1992c; Munson, 1979, 1981, 1993; O'Donoghue, Munford, & Trlin, 2005, 2006; Pilcher, 1984; Shulman, 1993). In examining these surveys, with their pre constructed categories about supervision, I could see the value of collecting quantitative Australian data to then enable critically interrogative qualitative analysis. I needed to gain an overall picture of social work supervision practice in order to then understand how it is constructed. Phillipson (2002) argues that there is a ‘huge amount of literature which refines and develops supervision but little that questions it fundamentally’ (p.188). My
approach, apart from satisfying my curiosity, had the potential to contribute for the first time to a critical understanding social work supervision and how it is constructed in Australia.

The chapter begins by locating my interest in undertaking the research alongside the public commentary about supervision. The research aims and questions are outlined and the relevance of utilising Bourdieu’s (1999) critical concepts to underpin the research is introduced. Definitions about social work supervision are reviewed and the structure of the thesis detailed.

**Location of the researcher and public commentary**

Using and providing supervision has been a significant part of my working life as a social worker. My experience as a social work supervisee, supervisor and external supervisor in Victoria over the past three decades has dominated my professional experience. During this period there were significant changes in how human services have been organised, and consequently how supervision was delivered. The key driver for this change has been the broader global shifts in economic and political policy where the delivery of human services has become dominated by neoliberal politics, shifting the context from a welfare state to a post welfare state (Hough, 2003). The neoliberal environment, underpinned by market-based concepts of service rationalities, are in turn driven by notions of efficiency and service delivery. Market rationality has thus influenced much service delivery including funding formulas, resource and management practices and the role of government in service provision. Social work supervision is inextricably linked to the context in which it is practised.

During my time as a supervisor I witnessed changes in relation to the nature of what took place during supervision. The content was more about administrative line management with less and less time spent on the other supervision functions. The reality of this change was influencing the nature of supervision provision and the work experience of social workers. I observed supervisees were spending increasing amounts of supervision time discussing the organisational context, rather than the work supervisees had been trained to do. My experience was not unique, reflecting the experience of colleagues, some of whom were also supervisors. As I increasingly
worked with middle managers, supervision conversations shifted toward defensive surveillance reflecting the supervisor’s need to ‘cover their backs’, creating ‘paper trails’ and ‘managing up’. There was a reluctance to expose mistakes or vulnerability. These conversations were occurring across sectors including child protection, health and mental health, counselling services, non-government organisations and feminist collectives. Progressively I observed staff leaving social work and the field, frustrated by limited or non-existent support within stressful work environments. Many of these practitioners were committed to the values of social work and upon leaving, took with them a vast array of practice knowledge, history and wisdom.

At the same time the role of supervision was becoming the subject of key recommendations in state government initiated inquiries, particularly within the field of child protection. The most recent has been the Victorian Government’s report entitled: ‘Child protection workforce report: The case for change’ (Department of Human Services, 2011) and a Victorian Government investigation into the Department of Human Services Child Protection Program (Brouwer, 2009). Both identified workers feeling ‘overwhelmed and concerned about the lack of supervision’ (Department of Human Services, 2011, p. 11). Compliance rates with respect to supervision had ‘fallen significantly over a five year period from 89% in 2005 to 77% in June 2010 (ibid). Brouwer’s (2009) report noted that ‘many staff indicated that supervision was often sacrificed for the immediate tasks of day-to-day service delivery’ (p. 75). Every year in Australia over 16,000 social workers deliver human services to clients; of these, about 6500 are members of the AASW (Lonne, 2009). Under the AASW Code of Ethics (2010) all social workers are required to access supervision to guide and develop their practice. Yet very little is known about the nature of compliance, nor is it clear how social work supervision is actually delivered across Australia’s states and territories. Despite the rhetoric proclaiming the centrality of supervision in shaping and guiding practice, and the extensive resources dedicated to ensure that social workers undertake this type of professional guidance, we have little systematic evidence illuminating the practice of supervision. I would argue that social work – as a profession – needs to know more about the supervision enterprise in which it dedicates significant professional and financial resources.
Undertaking this research provided an opportunity to examine whether my anecdotal experience matched supervision practice within the Australian context. There is limited Australian evidence about how social work supervision is currently provided, its structure, function, frequency and form. In the absence of rigorous research anecdotal hunches perpetuate misunderstandings about social work supervision knowledge. Hence one of the aims of this research is to provide informed discussion about how supervision is practised in Australia. This research is exploratory in nature and I compare its findings with what has already been written about supervision. In the process an examination of the discourses informing supervision provides a more complex appreciation of contemporary helping to test the rhetoric of supervision against the realities of practice.

**Research aims and questions**

The research has several aims:

1. To quantitatively map how social workers across Australia are being supervised.
2. To explore the similarities and differences between social work supervision practice, as presented from the research data, and the way social work supervision is presented in the professional literature.
3. To use qualitative methods to provide a more in-depth understanding of current Australian social work supervision practice.

The primary objective of the study is to both describe and understand current social work supervision practice in Australia, as well as identify the different discourses used to inform it. In line with this objective, three major research questions have been identified:

1. How is social work supervision currently being practised in Australia?
2. How do the research findings about the experience of supervision compare with the experience of supervision presented in the professional literature?
3. What discourses inform the practice of social work supervision?
Neoliberalism and the value of Bourdieusian concepts

The neoliberal environment has changed the landscape of social work in two key ways. The first is the contemporary preoccupation with systems of accountability and the second is the impact of the ‘risk society’ and the public critique of professional practice (Beddoe, 2010). These influences have impacted social work supervision providing an emphasis on accountability and the interconnection between the supervision process and line management functions. Along with providing professional guidance the supervisor may also undertake performance appraisal, approve leave and allocate work. A power imbalance can develop and become the source of conflict and dissatisfaction with supervision (Beddoe & Egan, 2009). This situation does not mean that internal supervision cannot be effective; however it underlines the importance of the supervision relationship and having a clear contract. The debates about the implications of having this dual relationship and the merits of external supervision will be discussed later in the thesis. In the light of these work practices and supervision arrangements Bourdieu’s critique of neoliberalism is valuable to the focus in this thesis.

Bourdieu, Accardo, Balazas, Beaud, Bourdieu and Wacquant, (2002), writing from a sociological perspective, provides many important insights into the challenges confronting social work as a profession. Writing from outside of the field, Bourdieu enables us to look at something familiar, in this case social work supervision, from different perspectives. His writings challenge understandings of social work, and concomitantly, supervision practice. In reading Bourdieu for the first time, I was struck by the way in which his ideas resonated with my conceptions of supervision, I mistakenly assumed that he was specifically writing about supervisory practices. However, although Bourdieu has written about social work, specific notions relating to supervision practice are absent in his work (Bourdieu, 2002). Nevertheless Bourdieu’s critique of the neoliberal environment that advances the market ahead of its citizens aligns with social work values of human rights and social justice. In many ways his concerns about neoliberalism match similar concerns raised in the literature about the impact this ideology has on social work and the practice of supervision. As such; his concepts of habitus, capital and field also resonate strongly with professional and managerial discourses informing social work supervision and bring both insight and
theoretical strength to key aspects of the supervisory endeavour. The concept of field refers to a ‘space of relations’ (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 232) where different relationships compete with different rules for particular resources. The field of social work has different discourses informing those inside the field. Habitus refers to those internalised aspects of social structure that impact on how we operate in the field. In the field of social work this is most evident in how we connect with service users. Ultimately it is the pursuit of capital that drives the players in the field, vying for the accumulation of different forms of resources such as economic capital but also symbolic capital such as status, where social workers may sit in the organisational hierarchy in human service organisations and cultural capital by the formalised qualifications attached to the profession. These Bourdieusian concepts will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, supervision can be seen as a mechanism by which the social work habitus is constructed and maintained and supervision is also the mechanism by which the field can be defined and redefined. It models, for practitioners, where to draw the line and when to act. If supervision is modelling the completion of tasks and the delivery of outcomes, regardless of the ethical implications of those outcomes, then it is recreating the social work habitus as a function of dominant political discourse. Examined in this light social work is no longer a professional project but rather a key apparatus of implementation of state policy. Where the state is benign this might not be a problem. When the social policy agenda of the state is hostile to the wellbeing of the citizenry, supervision no longer provides the space to challenge and resist such developments and in fact becomes part of the repressive apparatus. Examining how social workers speak about supervision then provides insights into the way in which it is practiced in this context.

**Language, discourse and definitions**

The language used to discuss the practice of supervision provides clues about the meanings attributed to it. Understanding social work supervision practice is enhanced and limited by the language used which may not adequately explain or reflect what actually happens in the supervision process. Fook (2002) reinforces this, noting that the language used in social work supervision reflects different discourses that may strengthen or weaken dominant understandings of its purpose and defining its practice –
potentially concealing particular social interests and power relations. Without power there is no supervision and there is ‘no knowledge outside power’ (Fawcett, Featherstone, Fook, & Rossiter, 2000, p. 18). The notion of ‘discourse’ refers to the way in which power, language and institutional practice combine at particular points over time to produce specific ways of thinking (Fawcett, et al., 2000). Discourse attempts to regulate what is said within a discipline and coherence is maintained by a suppression of difference. In the discipline of social work the traditional professional discourse has a focus on social justice and human rights. In relation to social work supervision in Australia the AASW Practice Standards for supervision are, by default, the professional discourse of supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000).

We believe that the quality of social work supervision is central to the development and maintenance of high standards of social work practice. The primary purpose of professional supervision is to facilitate competent, independent practice and not to perpetuate dependency (p. 3).

Examining the language used in relation to supervision enables us to identify the dominant discourses informing practice, and therefore whether they support the expectations of the AASW practice standards. The Latin derivation of supervise is to oversee, and from this origin supervision denotes a critical watching and directing which grounds any definition (Mish, 1988). Many social work writers have attempted to capture key ideas that reflect the functions and/or aims of supervision. The following examples use language in different ways to represent different emphases in supervision. Some sit easily together while others create tension and challenges to meaning. Fawcett et al. (2000) note ‘Super-vision’ enhancing its visionary potential (p. 27). Similarly Yegdich (2002) cautions about the potential negative connotations of supervision as ‘oversight’ juxtaposed against a more positive view of supervision as ‘higher vision’ (p. 251). The language of ‘Snooper-vision’ emphasises the negative surveillance function of supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002, p. 18). The term ‘Co-vision’ was proposed by Gridley (1999, p. 3) to capture more of a partnership approach to supervision, while ‘Inter-vision’ suggested a reciprocal interaction between those in the supervisory relationship. ‘Collegial introvision’ refers to collegial supervision that optimises clearer knowledge-based responses within the educational function of supervision, thus reducing the impact of the personal (Iwers-Stelljes, 2003, p. 387). Each term reveals something about the function of supervision, the nature of power differentials in the
supervisory relationship and different approaches to supervision as well as highlighting the contradictory aspects of supervision. There is nevertheless an argument for resisting this as it is often the tensions between these contradictory aspects that drive development. Different definitions of social work supervision emphasise different aspects and capture the changing political nature of social work practice. Investigating the literature regarding the definitions of supervision demonstrate the way different discourses have informed our understanding of this process. Munson (2002) stated: ‘Social work practice has traditionally reflected the attitudes and values of society and supervision has been the arena where practical strategies and societal patterns are consolidated and integrated’ (p. 51). The more formal definitions of supervision are outlined next.

Definitions of social work supervision are diverse but have considerable overlap (Bradley & Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001; Bruce & Austin, 2000; Davys, 2007; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Pettes, 1979). Traditionally, professional social work supervision had been part of a longstanding hierarchical guild tradition of clinical practice, provided within the agency where the social worker was employed. Supervision has been defined as the relationship that occurs between a social worker and another service professional, usually someone more senior in position than the supervisee, where the work of the supervisee is discussed and appraised (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Phillipson, 2002; Tsui, 2005a). Of course this definition has assumed dimensions inherent in this interaction, some explicit such as the relationship between social work supervisor and supervisee. Other dimensions may not be explicit such as the power differential and workplace agendas inherent in the supervisory arrangement.

Three different aspects of supervision feature consistently within definitions examined: the function of supervision, the relationship aspects of supervision and context. Social work supervision has been defined as ‘a process that enables, guides and facilitates a social worker towards competent, accountable practice, continuing professional development and provides support’ (Kadushin, 1992b, p. 5) This definition includes the functions and objectives of supervision (Kadushin, 1992). Others focus on the educative function ‘where the inexperienced practitioner grapples with theory and case material to produce a rewarding, skilled, confident practice style’ (Munson, 2002, p. 32).
Regardless of focus, the functional approach to supervision remains the dominant conceptualisation of supervision in the professional discourse. This is reflected in an apparent agreed orthodoxy in the academic and practice literature that social work supervision needs to address a number of functions (Clare, 2001). This position is further reinforced by the AASW Practice Standards for supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000) which specifically identifies the three functions of social work supervision in its introduction to the standards.

The relationship or interactional aspects of supervision between the supervisor and supervisee have been explored within the literature. Munson (2002) describes supervision as an interactional process in which a ‘supervisor has been assigned or designated to assist and direct the practice of supervisees in areas of teaching, administration and helping’ (p. 10). The supervisory relationship is one (where) a more senior social work practitioner ‘enables another social worker practitioner to practice at the best of their ability’ (Pettes, 1979, p. 5). Kadushin and Harkness (2002) highlight the relationship as an ‘elaborate process of professional socialisation during a prolonged program of intensive training which permits the profession to operate autonomously. Supervisors are internalised during transformation from lay person to professional’ (p. 40). The relationship is also understood as being intensive and interpersonal in which one or more persons are designated to facilitate the development of therapeutic competence in the other person (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). Grauel (2002) incorporates the hierarchical aspects of supervision as ‘a continuing, hierarchical relationship in which a supervisor provides responsible oversight’ (p. 12).

Other definitions of supervision focus more on context. For example, Bruce and Austin (2000) state ‘supervision performs a standard set of agency functions when the agency provides a supportive and clearly understood work environment, when the supervisor exercises leadership based on competence and position and when supervisees feel supported by their supervisor’ (p.86). Overall the definitions of supervision while similar, reflect a somewhat different emphasis including function, relationship and context. Davys’ (2007) definition however captures all of these elements comprehensively:
Supervision provides us with the chance to stand back from our work and reflect on what we do, the context of what we do and the impact that this has on ourselves. The opportunity to evaluate our work in terms of positive and negative performance so that we can learn from experience (p. 1).

Even so it is interesting to find the service user absent from these definitions, indicating the lack of research focusing on the impact of supervision for service users. While each of the definitions may have some limitations, the overlap across definitions represents a dominant understanding about social work supervision, as represented in the literature, incorporating the interplay between different functions, relationships and contexts. Throughout this thesis, supervisory functions; relationships; and contexts of social work supervision will be revisited and continually examined.

Supervision is a well-used process across other disciplines including counselling, psychology, nursing, teaching and allied health professions. The development of supervision however remains one of social work’s most important contributions to the helping professions’ knowledge and practice (Robinson, 1949). The process of social work supervision has been the time-honoured and traditional way to socialise new graduates into professional practice and the conduct of social work, providing ongoing means for education, support and work focus within the profession. Across the globe, professional social work codes of ethics and practice principles privilege the place of supervision as the legitimate process for ensuring accountability of practice and professional development (International Association of the Schools of Social Work, 2004). In the AASW Code of Ethics (2010) there is a responsibility that supervisors’ will ‘take all reasonable steps to ensure that social work students and social workers under their supervisor will act in accordance with the principles of this Code’ (p. 35). There has been a collective meaning making of what social work supervision is within the profession with an accompanying language constructing the meaning of supervision and creating a culture of supervisory practice within the profession.

**Structure of the thesis**

The data produced by the research participants is placed within a conceptual framework so that diverse views, contradictions and solutions for understanding the practice of social work supervision in Australia is evident. This data is examined alongside the way the literature reports on supervision history, functions and
current practices. While supervision literature relating to other disciplines and student supervision will be referred to in this thesis, the focus of my work is nevertheless on social work supervision from the perspective of the social work profession. The following provides an outline of the content covered in each of the chapters in this thesis:

Chapter Two provides the epistemology and theoretical underpinning for the research. A social constructionist epistemology enables an analysis of context and the interactions contributing to the construction of meaning-making in supervision. Bourdieu’s reflexive sociology and his development of habitus, capital and field provide a way of analysing and understanding the practice of social work supervision.

Chapter Three critically reviews the literature about the practice, context and relationships in supervision. Parallels are drawn between Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and field. The review begins with tracing the historical development of social work supervision, identifying changes over time, and the place of supervision in the professionalisation of social work. The literature about the structures containing supervision is reviewed. This commentary discusses the various types and functions of supervision, policies and expectations of supervision within organisations, notions of choice of supervisors, the existence and nature of supervisory contracts, different approaches and the training and qualification of both supervisors and supervisees. From this examination a picture of the habitus of social work emerges and the role of supervision within it. The literature about the impact of neoliberalism on social work and more specifically on supervision practice is then considered. International and local perspectives are examined to identify the changes that have occurred and the regulatory responses to this context. The international literature is reviewed to highlight the lessons learned from abroad as Australia begins the campaign for the registration process of social work. Notions of capital are used to better understand the context in which supervision is practised. The final section of this chapter examines the relational aspects of supervision. Gaps in the professional knowledge base are identified and the rationale for the research is outlined.

Chapter Four develops the research questions further and locates these within the broader research process including the epistemological choices made for conducting the
research. The chapter explores underpinning assumptions in the research and the rationale for the method and methodology used. The rationale for these choices evident in the research tools, data collection methods and the research participants are provided. More specifically this chapter will detail both the quantitative and qualitative stages of the research process including data analysis procedures. Ethical considerations and the strengths and limitations of the research process will also be discussed in this chapter.

Chapters Five and Six will provide an analysis of the data collected in the research, and its response to the three research questions outlined in the thesis.

Chapter Five includes the quantitative findings from the research. This chapter will focus on the types of supervision received; the structure of supervision; supervision policy; accessibility and contributing factors (if access is difficult); the position and choice of supervisor within the employing organisation; the frequency and length of supervisory sessions; the nature of the supervisory contract; whose involved in developing the contract and the involvement of the line manager in this process. Further data from supervisors will also be included in Chapter Five about the structure and training undertaken in the role of supervisors. The quantitative data analysis including both exploratory factor analysis and factor validation related to the four central factors included in the thesis is presented. These factors include the support in the supervisory relationship, accountability and monitoring practice, social work values and models of supervision. The significant correlations between the factors and demographics are then detailed.

Chapter Six will present the qualitative data analysis from the online survey textual data retrieved from the online survey as well as the focus group interviews. The findings in this chapter will provide data for answering research question three, what are the discourses informing social work supervision in Australia. This qualitative analysis will build on the quantitative data presented in the earlier chapters.

Finally, Chapter Seven provides a discussion on the implications of the research for social work, human service organisations, the AASW and social work educators. The discussion focuses on the new evidence identified and a way forward to address the challenges exposed with further research suggested.
CHAPTER TWO: FRAMING THE RESEARCH

As discussed in Chapter One, I came to this research because of my interest in understanding the changes occurring to social work supervision as a result of the global shifts to neoliberalism. From the literature I identified conflicting stories about social work supervision representing different discourses informing it and competing interests within. On the one hand, despite the massive changes experienced in social work practice as a result of neoliberalism, the practice of social work supervision remained largely uncontested (Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; O'Donoghue, 2003; Peach & Horner, 2007; Phillipson, 2002). On the other, there is evidence that managerial discourses have focused on aligning supervision practices more closely with market or market like modes of organisation, with a greater focus on compliance and regulation (Beddoe, 2010; Cooper & Anglem, 2003). Both positions illustrate how social work supervision sits within broader contexts that influence and impact on the way it is thought about, practised and experienced. Framing the research therefore needs to account for the context, the competing discourses informing practice and the relational nature of its provision in order to understand its constructed nature.

Social constructionism identifies the integral link between context and social interactions in understanding how knowledge is created. It is for this reason that the research uses a social constructionist epistemology. Accounting for the neoliberal context in which supervision occurs while also ensuring the primary relationship between the supervisor and supervisee and different stakeholders are considered central in this research. The rationale for using social constructionism will be developed first in this chapter. Bourdieu’s reflective sociology provides the theoretical underpinning in this research to explore how social work supervision is practised, how its practise differs from how it is written about and finally to examine the discourses informing supervision. The motivation for using Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and field as the theory in this thesis will then be detailed. The links will be made between Bourdieu’s concepts and
supervision as integral to the social work professionalisation process, the impact of managerialism on supervision and the influences, and access to power by various stakeholders within supervision. Habitus, capital and field will then be used to frame how the literature is reviewed and how the findings are presented in the remainder of the thesis.

**Social constructionism**

Social constructionism is an epistemological view that ‘all knowledge, therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interactions between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context’ (Crotty, 1998, p. 27). The key concept underpinning this approach is that human beings construct the world through dynamic social processes that generate and legitimise knowledge within society. The context cannot be separated from the interactions that occur in the construction of reality. In social work supervision the interactive relationship between the supervisor and supervisee and the shared meaning-making that this creates is central to its success. Social constructionism contrasts with an objectivist epistemology, where truth and meaning are attained through empirical study, rather than constructed by social interactions (Charmaz, 2000; Parton and O’Byrne, 2000a). Using an objectivist epistemology assumes we can discover the objective truth where meaningful reality exists independent of social actors. In contrast to this, social constructionism accounts for changing contexts, rather than having truth and meaning transcending time and place. Social constructionism was derived from the work of Berger and Luckman (1971) who understood knowledge of social matters as formed by social processes which legitimate shared ideas about the world. Social constructionism is concerned with the interactive process, where social meaning is made through ‘social relationships’ in the formation of knowledge. The focus is on an examination of how these relationships contribute to knowledge formation through shared understandings, embedded in a social context and formalised by the establishment and maintenance of social institutions and conventions (Berger & Luckman, 1971). As supervision is essentially an interactive process where meaning is both generated and interpreted, examining the influences on practice provides the opportunity to better understand the practice of supervision. To understand how social work supervision is constructed requires an understanding of how it is practised.
A focus on ‘collective generation and (transmission) of meaning’ emphasises the importance of culture in shaping the way in which we see the world (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Culture is represented by norms, roles, responsibilities, expectations and conventions that are created through people’s shared understandings, with objectivity being attributed to socially shared perceptions that have been internalised and legitimised as an accepted reality in social constructionism (Franklin, 1995). Culture shapes and directs behaviour and promotes the framework from which we understand our experience, which in turn, is shaped by context, the prevailing social and economic arrangements and the history in which they are immersed. As Geertz suggests, culture ‘is a set of control mechanisms—plans, recipes, rules, instructions for the governing of behaviour’ (1973, p. 19). By virtue of participation in culture, meanings are public and shared. Our culturally adapted way of life depends on shared meanings and concepts which generate shared modes of discourse for negotiating differences in meaning and interpretation (Bruner, 1990). The impact of culture on supervision practice ‘legitimises and anticipates the tensions arising from different value bases and perspectives within the work context’ (Davys, 2005, p. 5). Culture thus becomes the overarching environment in which supervision occurs (Beddoe, 2009). Tsui and Ho (1997) challenged dominant Western understandings of supervision, arguing that the influence of culture shaped how supervision was practised and viewed. From a cultural perspective supervision is fashioned by the cultural system in which it occurs. This relates to prevailing socioeconomic conditions; technological influences; broader community concerns; the profession; organisations; the supervisor’s and supervisee’s roles; styles and skills; work histories; training experiences; emotional needs and client groups, all of which are influenced by their cultural context (Autagavaia, 2000; Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1996; Beddoe, 2009; Bradley, Jacob & Bradley, 1999; Crocket, 2000; Tsui, 2005).

Using a social constructionist framework O’Donoghue (2002, 2003) employed the metaphor of voice as a way of examining the authoring, editing and telling of the social story of supervision. The distinction he made was between global and local voices with local voices influenced by global ones. Global voices were identified as economic, technological and political voices; local voices referred to the practitioner, the profession and the organisation. In supervision, the overarching impact of managerialism or global voices has changed how supervision is practised locally. The meaning attributed to this
shift depends on the cultural influences informing practice and the nature of supervisory relationships. Both culture and power are integral to supervisory relationships. Payne (1999) adds a further dimension and asserts that social constructionism sees ‘individuals in dialectical relationships with the legitimated social structure of reality in a society that surrounds them’ (p. 27). It is in the supervisory relationship where power is enacted, and the exercise of power has implications for examining the place of social work supervision in the neoliberal context. Power is woven into the texture of everyday practice and is embedded in the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Professional discourses, often maintained by those in power, assume specialist knowledge and access to resources which often conceal power relations and social interests. This is illustrated in the supervisory relationship where supervisors, as line managers potentially compromise the supervision experience. So rather than power residing in social structure, power is inscribed in discourse (Fawcett et al., 2000). The importance of understanding power relations at a particular historical time and in a particular place provides insight about dominant discourses and how they are used to support or challenge power relations. The following section discusses discourse as a way of capturing the ambiguity and tensions inherent within the contemporary social work practice context.

**Discourses in social work supervision**

The ‘social’ in social constructionism is about the mode of meaning making and how this changes over time. ‘Social’ is understood as an interactive process where individuals contribute, through institutionalisation and legitimisation, to the creation of social meaning within the social structures of society and create conventions by which people behave (Crotty, 1998; O'Donoghue, 2003; Parton and O’Byrne, 2000a). A social constructionist epistemology helps conceptualise how social discourses are authored, shaped and influenced by the conventions of language and other social processes. The discourses informing interactions that occur between people is central to the meaning-making process that is, in turn, integral to social constructionism. Discourse has been defined by Parton in Chambon, Irving & Epstein (1999) ‘as best understood as a system of possibilities for knowledge and for agency’ (p. 106). Discourse has meaning, force and effect within a social context and is constructed from multiple positions while remaining open to how meanings and understandings are produced (Payne, 1997). In
social work supervision these positions include the supervisor, social worker, organisation, service user, professional association and community. How we speak about supervision therefore shapes the meanings attributed to it in particular contexts, times and cultures.

Such attention to language has the potential to expose dominant discourses about what constitutes existing practice. Reality is understood as socially constructed within a particular set of social, economic and political arrangements which favour the dominant discourse and group within society and language is central in constituting reality. An examination of language with its multiple meanings provides a way to examine how dominant structures and cultures are shaped by particular social and political arrangements and the history in which they are immersed. The language used in discussion about social work supervision reinforces it as a defining practice with the potential to conceal particular social interests and power relations (Fook, 2002). Discourses shape the thoughts, actions and identities of those in the social work profession as well as those external to it (Healy, 2005). Unlike social work practice, it has been suggested that although supervision practice is contextually contingent it has not been exposed to the same critical examination (Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; O'Donoghue, 2003; Peach & Horner, 2007; Phillipson, 2002). An approach to supervision at any time is influenced by the same social forces that construct the activity of social work. Ignoring this dynamic potentially marginalises some understandings over others and entrenches particular understandings of supervisory practice (Fook, 2002). As such, exposing the dominant discourses about supervision and attending to alternative ones provides a more complex picture of how supervision is being practised in the neoliberal context. There is a danger that discourses informing supervision remain unexamined and become rhetoric as opposed to reflecting the realities of contemporary practice. Critical insights have the potential to bring marginalised ways of understanding supervision to the cultural fore (White, 1990). Critically interrogating the discourses informing social work supervision highlight the tensions between discourses and how they impact on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee.
The parallels between Bourdieu’s analyses of social systems are evident in the discourses examined in relation to supervision and supervisory relationships. The unique characteristics of social work, differentiating the discipline from other helping professions, constitute the professional discourse. This can be seen as distinctly different from managerial discourses. The managerial discourse alludes to the restructured neoliberal context, where the role of the state is reduced and the economic marketplace and its tools dictate practice (Bourdieu, 2002).

**Bourdieu and reflexive sociology**

Bourdieu’s disdain for the neoliberal context is consistent with similar observations about social work practice which has been reshaped by the imperatives of neoliberalism and, by default, social work supervision (Adams, Dominelli & Payne, 2002; Hough, 2003; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). How social systems reproduce hierarchy and domination underpins Bourdieu’s (1998) reflexive sociology, with the focus on political agency and social change. His conceptual framework of habitus, field and capital provides analytical tools for understanding the neoliberal context and the power dynamics at play in the process (Cronin, 1996). As noted in Chapter one, Bourdieu (2002) has written specifically about the contradictions facing social workers in the neoliberal context. Bourdieu’s work provides a theoretical legitimisation of the will to act and the capacity to engage as central to the politics and purpose of social work. Rather than focusing on what people do with power, who’s exercising it, whose interests are being served and who is defining the interest, he urges social workers to reflect on their own habitus with a ‘critical gaze’ finding opportunities to expose hierarchical relations (Garrett, 2007b, p. 372). This resonates with Fook’s (2000) encouragement of practitioners to challenge the nature of power relationships in supervision. Such a view requires transparency about context and power in conversations between supervisor and supervisee opening up the potential for conversations about change. Bourdieu’s concepts can be employed to aid understanding of social work supervision within the competing discourses of social work. Field provides a way of understanding the different players in social work with supervision providing the structure and strategy of the field. Habitus, interpreted within the context of supervision, provides an opportunity to explore how the socialisation of social workers occurs and the
nature of the professional discourses informing this process. Bourdieu’s notion of capital can be used to understand managerial discourses and the means by which they influence practice and access to resources over time.

Field is defined by Bourdieu (1998) as ‘an arena of social relationships, characterised by power differentials among the stakeholders’ (p. 40). Within this interpretation, supervision can be seen as a key socialising structure. Field is considered a physical and social space characterised as much by physical properties as by field specific social relations (Bourdieu et al., 2002). Bourdieu’s (1998) concept of field provides a way of conceptualising those interactions between stakeholders in social work. Supervision is one of the strategies used in social work practice to maintain and patrol the boundaries of the physical and social spaces of social work practice. Bourdieu was particularly interested in understanding who is represented within a field, what stakes or interests feature, the nature of alliances, the divisions within the field, the contradictions between the various stakeholders and how they manifest. As noted earlier, supervision has played an important part in constituting the field of social work practice as a professional endeavour. In the context of supervision, field is then conceptualised as the relational aspects occurring between stakeholders, mediating discourses within the supervisory relationship and extending beyond the primary supervision relationship to include service users, organisations, professional associations and networks. These relationships are characterised by power differentials among the actors who make them up ‘where interest, power, prestige all operate’ (Houston, 2002, p. 155). Within these relationships there is ambiguity between the legislation, protocols and procedures developed in the neoliberal environment and the profession’s commitment to human rights and social justice. In this research the tensions between managerial and professional discourses are examined and the impact these tensions have on the different relationships struggling over the field of social work.

Bourdieu’s habitus in this research has been used to examine how the professional habit is internalised, paralleling the professional socialisation process in social work. The social work habitus, as representative of professional discourses within supervision, is influenced by the structures which create it (Bourdieu, 2002). To become eligible to join the Australian Association of Social Workers, social workers are required to comply with professional codes of ethics, conduct and practice principles which shape and maintain
the status and identity of the profession. Supervision, initially undertaken when studying for a social work degree, and subsequently on graduation in paid employment, is key to this social work professionalisation process. Given the critical role played by supervision in the development and maintenance of the social work habitus, it follows that changes in the way in which social work is practised can lead to changes in the way social work supervision is practised. Practice that lacks critical appraisal Bourdieu would suggest, risks the replication of biased notions that are then inculcated through professional training, managerial directives or experiences in embattled human service organisations (Houston, 2002).

Capital refers to how resources can be exploited or divested and gives rise to power and authority in any given field. The use of the Bourdieu’s capital implies a thing of value that can be invested in some kind of exchange or set of relationships that are reciprocal. Bourdieu (2002) conceptualised different types of capital including economic, cultural, social and symbolic. Economic capital refers to material and financial resources which can be accumulated through cultural capital in the form of educational credentials; social capital refers to those resources, contacts and networks that people acquire through membership of a particular group; and symbolic capital, refers to status and regulation processes that confer particular status on individuals. Bourdieu’s concern with the neoliberal context has important implications for social work and social work supervision, critically capturing his notion of capital. In the field of social work practice the supervisor is endowed with symbolic and cultural capital – they know the rules of the social work game, and their supervising is intended to inculcate the novice into complying with, and successfully participating in, the game.

Supervision is the arena in which practice is subject to scrutiny and accountability. In the professional construction, the social worker is able to check functioning as a social worker against an authority figure. In supervision, the appropriateness of practice is reviewed, analysed and a social work habitus inculcated and reinforced. Various positions, dispositions and interventions consistent with a commitment to human rights and social justice and using particular practice theories are seen to represent the broader aims of social work. Social work supervision has been, and remains, the legitimate means through which social workers have been professionalised into practice, guided by
an ethical code of conduct (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010; International Association of the Schools of Social Work, 2004). The Social Work Code of Ethics provides the legitimisation for the process and conduct of social work supervision. Further, the professional accreditation process for both undergraduate and postgraduate social work programs cite supervision as the core of field education requirements and eligibility for membership of the professional body. As noted earlier the professional discourse of social work supervision distinguishes itself from other disciplines across human service work through its values of human rights and social justice (AASW, 2000). Such values are represented within professional discourses of both social work and social work supervision.

The neoliberal environment has challenged social work leading to critical understandings of social work which move beyond maintaining the status quo to a reconsideration of those relations which question how knowledge is created, legitimised, privileged and understood. This has been represented in changes to practice, reevaluating commitment to professional principles, identifying the importance of individual agency, highlighting the value of difference in perspectives and the rejection of totalising theories. This is consistent with the way in which some social work academics (Fook, 2002; Ife, 1997) have envisaged supervision as a means of coping with the continuous uncertainty and change evident in the neoliberal context. Both Ife and Fook advocated for social work supervision practice where: both shared and different meanings of practice dilemmas can be explored; different systems of accountability are developed to include service users and the broader community and organisational cultures encourage practitioners to develop practice knowledge. It remains unclear whether Fook and Ife’s imaginings represent current practice in social work supervision. However their discussions, in line with Bourdieu’s view, highlight the potential for challenging traditionally accepted notions about social work supervision.

The literature suggests a simplicity about how social work supervision is understood – an interpretation that struggles to represent the complexity of supervision practice (Clare, 2001). An examination of the supervision literature identify its history, structures, approaches and training requirements that contribute to the development of professional discourse of social work. Alongside this is a set of dispositions, actions and reactions which are consistent with social workers understanding of what it is to be a social
worker. Nevertheless the development of an empirical body of knowledge about supervision has been slow in emerging and has, in the main, been supported by anecdotal accounts (Spence, Wilson, Kavanagh, Strong and Worrall, 2001). Research which provides a picture of current social work supervision practice in Australia provides evidence as to whether the supervision literature matches the realities of practice. Further, it begins to present a picture of the discourses informing practice. Investigating the discourses of social work supervision using a social constructionist epistemology and the Bourdieusian lens provides an opportunity to explore how supervision is socially constructed, politically contested and interpreted (Fawcett et al., 2000). Together they provide a greater depth to understanding the quality and value of social work supervision in social work. Chapter three will review the literature about social work supervision using Bourdieu’s notions of habitus, field and capital.
CHAPTER THREE: THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR SUPERVISION

The literature about social work supervision tends to convey ‘sameness’ across cultures and countries (p. 3). Grauel (2002) argues that this sameness celebrates agendas in the contemporary context at a cost – ‘at the expense of critical analysis’ (p. 3). Mindful of Grauel’s challenge, the use of Bourdieu’s critical lens enables an analysis that acknowledges the context as well as the discourses informing supervision. Habitus provides a way of examining the professionalisation of supervision in social work informing the ways in which culture informs the behaviours, norms and expectations internalised by social workers. Capital has been used to uncover the competing discourses, in particular how managerial discourses have influenced supervision practice. The concept of field has been integrated within the chapter to identify and explore the different players in social work who fundamentally mediate and inform both the practice of supervision.

The professionalisation of supervision

An historical examination of the social work supervision literature locates supervision as a cornerstone of the profession. A close parallel between the history of social work practice and the history of supervision was identified in reviewing material from the Australian, New Zealand, British and North American contexts (Baglow, 2009; Baine, 2009; Bruce & Austin, 2000; Clare, 1991; Grauel, 2002; Tsui, 1997b). The history of supervision provides a way of understanding how professional discourses evolved and were shaped by prevailing social and political trends. The professionalisation of supervision has influenced its structure and approaches.

Origins of social work supervision

Through examining the historical social work literature, it is clear that supervision has been an important instrument for exposing practitioners to dominant discourses of social work and translating professional knowledge into practice. The history of supervision has been steeped in professional discourses. The development from charitable visitor to professional practitioner involved the acquisition of cultural and symbolic capital. Supervision as a structure of the social work field conferred legitimacy on practice
through ensuring consistency of approaches and interventions. Its origins are reported variously as beginning in the late nineteenth century/early twentieth century. Within North America, the development of the Charitable Organisation Movement (COM) and the Settlement House Movement (SHM) (Bernard, 2006; Brashears, 1995; Clare 2001; Grauel, 2002; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 1993; Richmond, 1917; Scott & Farrow, 1993; Trainin Blank, 1998; Tsui, 1997b) saw the emergence of charitable organisations and settlement houses which were established by local district boards in North America and then the UK. These organisations were usually church based and their function was to provide assistance to the poor. Such organisations used mainly wealthy middle and upper class women as ‘unpaid visitors’ primarily to dispense charity. Supervision in this context reflected an apprenticeship approach which paralleled the physician-medical student teaching system in place for training doctors in both America and Europe at the time (Trainin Blank, 1998). Paid agents were employed by the district boards to supervise unpaid visitors. At this point, paid agents were identified in the literature as the first supervisors; their role was to contract the work undertaken between district boards and unpaid visitors, with the paid agents representing the district boards (Brashears, 1995). Supervision in this context had three functions: accountability to ensure efficiencies in the charity system; continuity in allocating workloads; communication between the ‘board’ and ‘unpaid visitors’. ‘Paid agents’ had limited autonomy and focused on improving service user outcomes. At this point, the administrative function of supervision was dominant.

Over time paid agents became known as charity workers and ultimately social workers (Munson, 1993; Trainin Blank, 1998; Tsui, 1997b). Supervision emerged as an integral part of the Charitable Organisation Movement (COM). Over time recruiting and retaining community visitors as the COM developed became increasingly difficult. Mary Richmond (1917) recognised the value of paid agents as integral to supporting visitors and improving retention. Richmond, at this time, developed the early manifestation of the supervisor or paid agent, to ensure the monitoring, support and need for ongoing training/education of visitors (Richmond, 1917). From these early beginnings, the next phase of development, the early 1900s, was characterised by an increased focus on formalised education and specific knowledge development about
social work supervision. This established an important foundation for the development of professionalised social work. The historical documentation at this point used the term ‘supervision’ to institutionalise its practice in social work. Professional training and knowledge building was critical to this professionalisation.

Training and education

Training and education played a key role in the development of professional discourses in social work supervision. Historically the North American need for a training school for social work supervisors was first noted by Dawes at the end of the 19th century (Dawes cited in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Formal systems for training emerged from the development of study groups among unpaid visitors, to share information about successful strategies used in face-to-face work with the poor. It was not until 1911, however, that Richmond initiated the first supervision training courses in North America. From these early training initiatives, national and state conferences on the nature of charitable work emerged. Dawes (ibid) believed that it,

ought to be possible for those who take up this work to find some place for studying it as a profession…students in such a training school could be taught…what is now the alphabet of charitable science, some knowledge of its underlying ideas, it’s tried and trusted methods and some acquaintance with the various devices employed for the up building of the needy so that no philanthropic undertaking… will be altogether strange. (p. 9)

Despite Dawes’ early pretensions of charitable science, social work’s claim to professional status was not based on scientific techniques, but rather a pragmatic appropriation of scientific means in addressing human need (Grauel, 2002; Tsui, 1997b). The first North American course in supervision was offered in 1911 (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). It was considered, at the time, that social workers could only be permitted to operate autonomously through an elaborate process of professional socialisation and a prolonged program of intensive training. The developing professional habitus in social work changed how problems and explanations were posed and constructed as well as shifting the structures already in place to formalise social work practice. Social work supervision became the process through which student social workers and new graduates were socialised and bestowed the authority to practice in the profession. This remains the case today.
Training at this early point was informed by the concept of function as a way of understanding the work of supervision (Dawson, 1926). In 1926 Dawson proposed three supervisory functions including administration, education and support. This functional approach became the basis for what was considered ‘normal’ and by default what was not ‘normal’ in the practice of social work supervision. A key facet of this normalising process was the use of classificatory schemes, in this case, capturing the functions of supervision. The mode of interpretation of supervision was upheld and imposed by those in charge of training as well as the authors of the emerging knowledge base (Dawson, 1926; Richmond, 1917). While an artefact of social work history, the functional approach continues today to dominate understandings of supervision with a profound impact on institutionalising its place historically and contemporaneously.

Although training to become a social worker occurred initially in the charitable organisations, there was a gradual emergence of supervision courses within higher education colleges and ultimately universities. The dominant discourse informing social work during the 1920s and 1930s was professional. At this stage the supervision approach described an educative process using explanations about supervision, derived from social work practice, to provide the beginnings of knowledge building in social work supervision.

**Knowledge building**

The early knowledge building in social work supervision was integral to the professionalisation process within the discipline. The generation of specialist knowledge and the resultant language adopted at this time was the way professional credibility was gained ‘scientifically’ (Parton, 1999). The regulation of society occurred through the establishment of a language of normality (Foucault, 1980; Parton, 1999). In this case, social work supervision was understood as socially constructed within a particular set of professional social work arrangements. The growth of specialised knowledge, professional practices, classifications, indoctrination and institutional relations implicit in supervisory practice, provided the dominant discourse in understanding social work supervision. The focus was on where and how professional education and supervision training would be undertaken, alongside a burgeoning publication of literature and training development (Dawson, 1926; Reynolds, 1936, 1942; Robinson, 1936, 1949).
These early publications became the fledgling, specialised, social work supervision knowledge base, which soon became the exclusive domain of the social work profession, representing the formal and informal professional discourses of the time.

Whilst in recent years disciplines such as nursing, education and allied health have generated their own supervision literature; historically social work was the only profession claiming ownership of specialist knowledge in this area (Barnett-Queen, 2000; Bradshaw, Butterworth & Mairs, 2007; Brown & Bourne, 1996); Ladany, Ellis & Friedlander, 1999; Linley & Joseph, 2007; Rolfe, Freshwater & Jasper, 2001). The seminal social work literature regarding the functional approach of supervision has been used across disciplines, but its social work origins have rarely been acknowledged, despite the functional approach remaining a dominant force in contemporary supervision training and research. Having initially established the professional place of social work supervision, an increased focus on supervision practice approaches emerged from the 1930s onward.

Between the 1930s and 1950s a more ‘scientific’ therapeutic approach to social work supervision also emerged (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). At this time a psychodynamic perspective dominated social work discourses and was reflected also in supervision ones. Essentially, supervision became a therapeutic process (Munson, 1993; Reynolds, 1936, 1942). Supervisees were encouraged, with their supervisor as the more powerful expert, to develop insight about themselves within the supervisory relationship. This period was critical in the conceptualisation of the support function in supervision as it created a never ending supervisory relationship, where by the supervisor remained the expert and the supervisee was interminably dependent as a person requiring support and guidance. A dependency relationship between supervisees and supervisors was thus a hallmark of this period. Bourdieu (1998) claims that such professional dependency created a habitus which routinely reflected the type of practice professionals undertake. From the 1950s, the indeterminate nature of supervision was challenged and once again there was a return to the functional approach.
The functional conceptualisation of social work supervision was defined further in the research and writing of Kadushin (1976), whose influence has largely continued over the past four decades. This early empirical research embedded the functional approach as the dominant way of conceptualising social work supervision (Himle, Jayaratne & Thyness, 1989; Kadushin, 1992a; Poertner & Rapp, 1983; Shulman, 1993). Definitions of social work supervision were tracked for the first time in the *Encyclopaedia of Social Work* during the 1960s and 1970s and provided a way of identifying the dominant function (Tsui, 1997a). In the 1960s the focus was predominantly on educational aspects of supervision whereas in the 1970s and 1980s a more administrative definition emerged. During this period a proliferation of empirical research projects supported the functional approach (Kadushin, 1974, 1976; Patti, 1977; Stevenson & Parsloe, 1978). This research revealed that the functional approach was the most empirically investigated form of supervision practice both internationally and across fields of practice and as such dominated the supervision literature at this time. However, there was a simplicity about the language of functions pervading the literature, that failed to capture the complexity of current supervisory processes (Clare, 2001).

During the 1970s radical social work practice emerged, bringing with it a challenge to traditional methods (Galper, 1975; Trinder, 2000). Using themes from the philosophical foundations of Marxism, Feminism and Humanism, radical social workers questioned the role of social work in furthering the oppression of disadvantaged groups. The movement saw a rejection of the role of the ‘traditional’ social worker in favour of the development of radical social work practice (Moreau, 1977). The focus within this radical paradigm was to work with marginalised groups and challenged the structures that oppressed them (Leonard, 1997; Moreau, 1977, 1989). During this stage of disciplinary development, attention to social work supervision challenged the hierarchical and dependency nature of the relationship. It was at this time that traditional understandings of social work supervision practice and the earlier history of professional training and the production of knowledge which had been inculcated were questioned (Houston, 2002). At this time the oppressive aspects of social work supervision were exposed (Moreau, 1977).
From the 1980s onwards the impact of globalisation, invoked by neoliberal government policy and managerial knowledge-building, dramatically changed the provision of social work, and as a consequence supervision practice. Managerial discourses began to dominate the human service landscape and social work supervision was influenced by this trend. This shift dramatically impacted on the professionalisation process in social work – something we will return to later in this chapter when we discuss the influence of managerial discourses in greater depth.

**Types of supervision**

The context within which social work supervision has been practised impacts on the type of supervision provided. The AASW Practice Standards for supervision specifically state: ‘Supervision should meet the needs of the supervisee within the organisation for administrative, educational and supportive supervision’ (2000, p.4). Ideally then social work supervision should be provided within an organisation, where the supervisee is employed. Alternatively, if this cannot occur internally, the social worker is expected to seek supervision outside the workplace with a qualified social worker, as determined in the AASW Practice Standards for supervision. Both internal and external supervision meets the expectations of the standards. Internal and/or external supervision may be contracted privately or through the social worker’s place of work. Anecdotally the external contracting arrangement has increased, although there is limited research substantiating this (Beddoe, 2010; Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Butler, 1990).

**Internal supervision**

Internal supervision refers to either individual or group supervision provided within the social worker’s place of work. Individual supervision refers to one-on-one supervision between supervisor and supervisee, where the supervisor is a more senior member of staff who may also be a line manager or senior social worker (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). Empirical research undertaken historically, contemporaneously and internationally indicates that internal supervision was and remains the most common form of social work supervision provided, and indeed the most preferred form (Garrett & Barretta-Herman, 1995; Kadushin, 1974, 1992c; Munson, 1979b; O'Donoghue et al, 2005; Pilcher, 1984; Shulman, 1993).
Group supervision, another type of internal supervision, includes: peer or facilitated group supervision (Armstrong, Gordon & Hobbs, 1991; Barretta-Herman, 1993; Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Brown & Bourne, 1996; Hawkins & Shohet, 1989; Lohrbach, 2008; Newgent, Davis & Farley, 2004; Proctor, 2000). Peer group supervision has been defined as a group of workers who facilitate group supervision themselves (Armstrong et al., 1991; Baldwin, Hawken & Patuawai, 2000; Bandoli, 1977; Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Gillig & Barr, 1999; Lloyd, King & Chenoweth, 2002; Newgent, 2004; Rita, 1998; Tiuraniemi, 2008). Facilitated group supervision involves a designated facilitator conducting supervision with a group of professionals in their place of work. The facilitator is typically at a more senior level within the organisation and may be of the same discipline (Armstrong et al., 1991; Bruce & Austin, 2000; Froggett, 2000; Lohrbach, 2008; Newgent, 2004; Proctor, 2000; Sulman, Savage, Vrooman & McGillivray, 2004). Social workers’ experiences of individual or group supervision tends to influence their expectations of different types of supervision. In many ways the study groups of the early twentieth century resemble peer supervision groups today.

In the context of group supervision, both the benefits and costs of the method have been established (Bernard, 2006; Bradley & Ladany, 2001; Gillig & Barr, 1999; Hawkins, 2000). Group supervision has been positively evaluated as a more efficient use of administrative time and effort (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Hawkins, 2000). It provides greater freedom to discuss dissatisfaction with the work and debate professional ideas (Hawkins, 2000; Morrison, 2007). Group supervision has also been identified as generating higher satisfaction through group participation and feedback received from peers who may also have been unhappy with individual supervisor’s feedback (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Christensen & Kline, 2001). Greater creativity in the workplace has also been identified in group supervision (Sulman et al., 2004). It has been acknowledged as useful in preventing and addressing vicarious trauma amongst human service workers (Bell, Kulkarni & Dalton, 2003). Field (2008) has reported that group supervision maximises the collective strength of the staff as a team and enhances cultural practice by exploring cultural experiences from multiple perspectives (Bradley et al., 1999; Hair & O'Donoghue, 2009; Harkness & Mulinski, 1988; O'Donoghue, Baskerville, & Trlin, 2009). Group supervision was described by Proctor (2000) in Britain as a ‘sanctuary of sorts where time is allowed for thinking and working through
complex pathways’ (p.82). Research undertaken with supervisees in Australia (Gibbs, 2001) and North America (Bandoli, 1977; Bell et al., 2003; Lohrbach, 2008; Metz, Collins & Burkhauser, 2008; Newgent, 2004) noted the value of peer group supervision in the statutory sector. Research in a statutory child protection setting in New Zealand (Field, 2008; McNicoll, 2000) recorded the value of group supervision from the supervisee perspective. This approach stretches the boundaries of professional examination beyond administrative notions of supervision, and contributes to improving self-esteem, personal deadlines and resilience among workers. The advantages of group supervision has nevertheless been balanced by disadvantages.

The costs identified in other research suggest that group supervision provides less time for individuals to speak about their specific cases (Munson, 2002). Managing different learning styles in the group presents challenges (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). Greater preparation and organisational time is required for group supervision (Hawkins, 2000). Attending to and managing power dynamics in the group can be difficult (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). There is a danger that group members become quasi-supervisors without a formal supervisory role (Munson, 2002). There may also be difficulties in providing feedback to peers (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002) as well as challenges in developing trust within the group (Ellis, 2001). Practical considerations in undertaking group supervision include accessing suitable, available space; providing clarity of purpose; ensuring leadership; and attention to the planning, content, method and responsibilities (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Hawkins, 2000; Munson, 2002). The evidence about the prevalence of internal individual and group supervision is limited, with large surveys providing time and place specific information (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue et al., 2005; Pilcher, 1984).

**External supervision**

External supervision comprised those individual or group supervision arrangements facilitated by a supervisor from outside the agency and contracted for the sole purpose of providing supervision. The literature suggests different purposes for external supervision depending on the organisational context. And similarly, in relation to the resources provided for payment of external supervisors and the availability of suitable supervisors (Carroll and Holloway, 1999; Proctor, 2000; Tehrani, 1996; Touler, 1999).
In reviewing the literature regarding the use of external supervision, there was both evidence and anecdotal accounts suggesting an increased usage of external supervision in the neoliberal environment (Bell & Thorpe, 2004; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Davys, 2007; Hirst, 2004; Itzhaky, 2001; Morrell, 2001; O'Donoghue, 2003; O'Donoghue et al., 2005; Stanley & Goodard, 2002; Ung, 2002). This increase highlighted a potential shift in professional habitus regarding the expectation of supervision provided within a social worker’s place of employment.

Further research undertaken in Sweden and Britain provide another perspective on external supervision. Comparing supervision in both countries, Bradley and Höjer (2009, p.73) found one of the key differences was Sweden’s use of external supervision, generally undertaken in a group and separated from internal line management. The choice of external supervisors was undertaken by social workers, or in cooperation with their statutory line managers, with many external supervisors being private providers. An earlier Swedish research project identified that ‘92%’ of social workers in child welfare settings received external supervision by externally contracted supervisors (Dellgran and Höjer, 2005, p.45). In many areas, this ‘tradition of supervision from external consultants is combined with an internal, method oriented supervision, from the line manager to the social worker’ (Bradley & Höjer, 2009, p.73). Dellgran and Höjer’s (2005) evaluation of the model suggested that social workers were very content with the supervision arrangement. Bradley and Höjer (2009, p.4) identified that although both countries addressed all functions, each had a different emphasis. England paid more attention to the managerial function while Sweden had greater focus on support.

The review of the literature about external supervision identified both costs and benefits. The latter included: providing the opportunity to explore issues that may not be discussed with ease through a line supervisor (Bell & Thorpe, 2004; Bradley & Höjer, 2009); the ability to provide an outside perspective free from unspoken assumptions within the organisation; the possibility of providing new and different perspectives, while also offering workers the freedom to be honest and expose their practice vulnerabilities (Morrell, 2001; Davys, 2007; Johns, 2001); and adding value as a professional dimension to line management and overcoming perceptions about the supervisor as the ‘agent of control’ (Beddoe, 1997, 2010; Cooper & Anglem 2003;
Jones, 2000, 2004; O’Donoghue, 2000, 2002, 2003; O’Donoghue, Baskerville & Trlin, 1999; Munson, 2002; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). It was also suggested that external supervision counteracts a potential conflict of interest for line managers where they may be responsible for renewing contracts, undertaking performance appraisals as well as ensuring administrative accountability (Evans, 1990; Cooper, 2000; Morrell, 2001; Waters, 1992).

The disadvantages of using external supervision related to the availability of resources to pay external supervisors and the location of the external supervisor, operating outside the workplace of the practitioner. The position of the external supervisor required them to have an understanding of the organisational structure and culture, the mandate, obligations, roles and links to line management (Baglow, 2009; Morrell, 2001).

The support, training and mandates of external supervisors led to the most satisfactory outcome for all participants, if the external supervisor had the necessary understanding of the organisation (Beddoe, 1997; Hirst, 2000). Other considerations proposed in the literature about external supervision related to the negotiation of conditions within the practitioner’s organisation prior to the beginning of an external supervision arrangement. It was argued that these discussions need to include a clarification of the role of external supervisors within the performance appraisal of supervisees (Hirst, 2004; O’Donoghue, 2003) as well as address concerns about boundaries for supervisees when working beyond the competence of the external supervisor (Berger & Mizrahi, 2001; Tsui, 1997). Approaches for addressing these concerns were also evident in the literature (Hawkins, 2000; Hirst, 2000). Hirst (ibid) proposed a configuration of the external supervisory relationship as a triangle with three parts, including the line manager, the supervisee and the supervisor. This arrangement was proposed to avoid collusion between the external supervisor and the supervisee, with this arrangement being negotiated and supported before the external supervision began. There is limited research documenting the prevalence and arrangements of external supervision, generally and specifically, in Australia (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; O’Donoghue et al., 2005; Pilcher, 1984; Ung, 2002). What there is suggests further examination of external supervision arrangements and conditions where they are practised is required (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Dellgrän & Höjer, 2005; Hirst, 2004; Ung, 2002).
Supervision structures within organisations

Supervision structures refer to those instrumental aspects of supervision, policies, contracts, job descriptions and performance reviews, which contain supervision practice. These may form part of the organisational requirements of supervision practice which are undertaken in different ways. Different organisational contexts will use different structures.

Supervision policies

Supervision policies refer to the documentation developed in human service organisations that outline parameters and expectations of supervision provision (Hawkins, 2000; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Scott & Farrow, 1993; Walsh-Tapiata & Webster, 2004). Pilcher’s Victorian social work survey in 1984 demonstrated that there had been an increase in the use of supervision policies, which suggested different types of policies and contracts being used at that time (Pilcher, 1984). Despite the fact that literature about supervision policies was substantial (Hawkins, 2000; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Morrison, 2001, 2008; Munson, 2002) there was limited research about the current prevalence or place of supervision policies in Australia (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; O'Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006).

Discussion in the literature suggested a link between supervision policy, managerial accountability and professional requirements in social work. In a neoliberal environment, policies, standards and protocols have been linked to quality of service provision. What was rendered practical in policy then shapes and potentially limits the parameters for action with the service user, in particular to avoid legal consequences (Dominelli, 2004; Jones, 2004; Reamer, 2003; Webb, 2006; Wright, 2000). The prospect of legal, professional or organisational sanctions, if failing to follow designated steps, has affected how practice is monitored. In an environment where the actions of a worker and any consequences may be decided in court, the provision of supervision plays a key role in determining who carries ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing of a service user or the provision of a service. Organisational practice was identified as ‘not politically neutral’, and supportive of existing social and political structures (Wright, 2000, p.188). The reductionism of competency based policy in agencies risks breaking practice into small constituent parts, which may not represent the nature of the day-to-
day work or be influenced by the service user’s presenting needs (Lewis, 1998). In the North American context, the literature suggested that supervision policies and procedures have eroded practitioner’s autonomy and prerogatives. These policies served organisational economic interests ahead of satisfactory service user outcomes (Berger & Mizrahi, 2001; Egan & Kadushin, 2004; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Falvey, 2002; Munson, 1998b). Within this context, supervisors were caught between regulation policies regarding the day-to-day decisions about resource allocation, whilst exercising professional principles (Berger & Mizrahi, 2001; Brashears, 1995; Havassy, 1990; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). In Britain, Phillipson (2002) noted a similar dynamic where ‘policies and rituals can be designed to contain and shrink the complexities and tensions and maybe mirrors social work with its concern to manage risk’ (p. 194). The development of supervision contracts has thus become the tool where policies are translated into practice.

**Supervision contracts**

While not discussing supervision policy specifically, the AASW Practice Standards for supervision do note the need for a written supervision contract (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). Discussion in the literature about the content of supervision contracts and the process of negotiating the contractual arrangements was largely descriptive. The negotiation of the supervision contract process was considered as important because it was through these initial discussions that trust, within the supervisory relationship, began to develop (Hawkins, 2000; Proctor, 2000).

Examining the literature regarding the content of supervision contracts showed general agreement about the specifications required in the contract (Bond & Holland, 1998; Brown & Bourne, 1996; Davys, 2007; Hawkins, 2000; Hewson, 1999, 1993, 1999; Morrison, 2001). The agreements variously included purpose, goals and objectives of supervision; structure and content of sessions; methods of accountability and confidentiality, evaluation and review procedures; duties and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisee; procedural considerations regarding conflicts and the supervisor’s scope of practice; links to other reporting mechanisms within the organisation and details such as supervision frequency; dealing with interruptions; and record keeping and agenda setting.

The literature regarding the process of developing the supervisory contract was less prescriptive than the literature about supervision policy (Morrison, 2001), and more closely linked to an awareness of the impact of organisational and practice context on supervision (Beddoe, 1997; Davys, 2007). The process aspects of the contract considered the supervisee’s work in terms of service user, self and agency as well as reminding supervisors of their ethical and legal responsibilities to supervisees, service users and the organisation, plus holding the supervisor accountable for their actions. The contract served as a structural feature with ethical implications, neutralising the potential for abuse by supervisors (Gillanders, 2005; Hewson, 1999; Osborne, 1996).

Additionally, the contract provided a key mechanism for negotiating and constructing the supervisory relationship. However, the use of the supervision contract was determined by how the organisation reflected the way management viewed the process of supervision. Without clear definition of the supervisor’s tasks, responsibilities and authority, there was the potential for blurred boundaries between line management and professional responsibility (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Ungar, 2006). Further, supervision contracts were subjected to contract law and potentially enforced through legal action (McDonald, 2000). A lack of clarity between line management and supervision potentially blurs expectations when considering the nature of professional habitus. Although often recommended in policy, the prevalence and content of supervisory contracts in Australian human service organisations was investigated in 1984 (Pilcher, 1984). Research into current contractual arrangements about supervision and the form these arrangements take is available in the New Zealand context (O'Donoghue et al., 2005) but not so in Australia.
Supervision in job descriptions

The AASW Practice Standards for supervision require a written supervision contract, mutually developed and regularly reviewed by supervisor and supervisee (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). An expectation of supervision in job descriptions provides a contractual arrangement by the organisation. An investigation of the literature regarding the expectation of supervision in position descriptions was limited. Reviewing Victorian organisational supervision policies indicated that employee position descriptions across sectors contained references to the provision of supervision (Department of Human Services, 2007; Eastern Metropolitan Region Community Health Services, 2006). However, there was some evidence in the literature that shifts in how staff recruitment was organised in the neoliberal context impacted the inclusion of supervision in position descriptions (Jones & May, 1992; Kadushin, 1992a). Responsibility for recruitment and hiring of new staff in human services was increasingly assigned to organisational human resource departments (Jones & May, 1992). This arrangement often left supervisors, who had most knowledge about the position, excluded from the recruitment process (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Suggestions about the role of work groups in recruitment processes highlight the benefits of worker contributions to the development of job specifications (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). Information about the extent to which supervision was acknowledged as a specific task in social workers’ position descriptions remains limited.

Performance reviews and supervision

Performance reviews in supervision provide an objective appraisal of the worker’s functioning on the job over a specified period and they are mostly required by employing organisations (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). From the literature, performance reviews were often understood as part of the administrative function of supervision. Conflicting views about the role of supervision in the evaluation of worker performance was evident in the literature (Ellis & Ladany, 1997, Harkness & Mulinski, 1988; Harrar et al., 1990; Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001; Morrell, 2001; Morrison, 2001; Neufeldt & Nelson, 1999; O'Donoghue, 2000; O'Donoghue, 2003; Tsui, 1998). The benefits of linking supervision with performance reviews was an acknowledgment of supervisee work success, and therefore reward and access to professional development. Conversely, the costs of undertaking performance reviews, as part of supervision,
related to the potential conflict of interest when standards were unclear and performance in question and/or consequences were not understood (Morrison, 2001). The links between performance reviews and social work supervision requires further examination in order to understand how the context has influenced these links and this will be considered in the current research.

While the volume of literature regarding the types and structures of social work supervision was extant, the literature about different approaches to supervision forms the greatest part of the supervision literature reviewed. It has been argued that the difference between approaches relates to the different ideologies informing them (Bruce & Austin, 2000). For the purpose of this review, approaches were defined as the different ways supervisors undertake supervision including methods, models or frameworks.

**Different approaches to supervision**

Tsui and Ho (1997) argue that ‘approaches in supervision were based on assumptions and principles reflecting an underlying philosophy’ (p.182). Rarely are approaches used exclusively; rather supervisors, supervisees or organisations often draw on a combination of approaches (Bruce and Austin, 2000). What has sometimes been referred to as a new approach may represent an infusion of an ideology, resulting in a transformation of an existing approach, rather than the development of a new approach per se (Bernard, 2006). In an attempt to categorise the volume of literature on supervision approaches, Tsui and Ho (1997) and Bruce and Austin (2000) developed conceptual frameworks to review, order and highlight the diversity of approaches. Because an empirical body of evidence about different supervisory approaches has been slow in emerging, such conceptualisations allow for the identification of conditions that create satisfaction in supervision (Bruce & Austin, 2000). Further, there has been limited research about how the delivery of supervision produces change in the way social workers respond to service users (Harkness & Hensley, 1991; Spence et al, 2001).
Tsui and Ho (1997) distinguished three different approaches to supervision. These were a normative approach, seeking to identify a norm about what supervision should be (Kadushin, 1992b; Munson, 1993); an empirical approach examining the roles and behaviours of supervisors about what supervisors actually do (Erera & Lazar, 1994; Patti, 1977; Pilcher, 1984; Poertner & Rapp, 1983; Shulman, 1993) and a pragmatic approach bridging the gap between what actually happened in supervision and what ideally should happen (Middleman & Rhodes, 1985). Bruce and Austin (2000) used an analysis of supervision practice theory based on seven key authors in social work supervision (Austin, 1981; Bunker & Wijnberg, 1988; Holloway & Brager, 1988; Kadushin, 1976, 1992a; Middleman & Rhodes, 1985; Munson, 1993; Shulman, 1993). Their meta-analysis demonstrated that supervisors performed a standard set of agency functions, offering the greatest satisfaction to supervisees when the agency provided a supportive and clearly understood work environment (Eisikovits, Meier, Guttman, Shurka & Levinstein, 1986; Erera & Lazar, 1994); supervisors exercised leadership and authority, based on competence and position (Himle et al., 1989; Munson, 1993); and workers felt supported by their supervisors (Granvold, 1977; Newsome & Pillari, 1992). The functional approach was the most empirically researched method in supervision, warranting careful examination in this review because of its conceptual impact on supervision practice (Himle et al., 1989; Kadushin, 1992a, 1976, 1974; Patti, 1977; Poertner & Rapp, 1983; Stevenson & Parsloe, 1978; Shulman, 1993). Strengths-based and task-centred supervision were identified more recently as the most frequently used approaches in New Zealand (O'Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006).

The functional approach
The AASW Practice Standards identifies the functional approach to supervision within the Australian context (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). The functional approach describes supervision as addressing a number of functions, typically administrative, supportive and educational. From the literature, it is clear that the language used to describe the supervisory functions has changed over time. For example, Kadushin (1974, 1976) used the language of administration, support and education; Pettes referred to (1979, p.520) administration, teaching and helping; Inskipp and Proctor (1993) identified the tasks as ‘normative, formative and restorative’ (p.6) and Hughes and Pengelly (1997c) mention ‘managing service-delivery’, ‘facilitating practitioner’s professional development’ and ‘focusing on practitioner’s work’ (p.24).
The administrative function of supervision included both professional and organisational aspects. This function focussed on the content of the work regarding assignment, review, planning and coordination, work management, workplace policies and protocols, evaluation and appraisal, occupational health and safety were all administrative aspects. The place of the administrative function of supervision was critically debated in the literature, identifying both the value and potential costs of this function in supervision practice. Several key empirical studies across work settings in both North America and Britain have been undertaken regarding the functions of social work supervision and these studies have identified the administrative function as dominant (Erera & Lazar, 1994; Kadushin, 1992c; Patti, 1977; Poertner & Rapp, 1983; Shulman, 1993).

Two perspectives on the support function emerged from a review of the literature. One related to its value and the other related to how the support function had the potential to compromise the supervisory relationship. Its value related to those aspects in the supervisory relationship which served to understand and empathise with the supervisee about their work experience and was manifest in the progress of the supervisory relationship. The support function was investigated and different aspects identified (Himle et al., 1989; Rauktis & Koeske, 1994; Stevenson & Parsloe, 1978; Tromski-Klingshirm, 2006). The positive aspects of the support function were identified as increased motivation, responding to intrinsic factors such as job commitment, loyalty to workplace and satisfaction with referent power (Rauktis & Koeske, 1994). Further, a supervisor’s focus on understanding, rather than judging, led to positive changes in supervisee’s feelings and a strengthened relationship between supervisor/supervisee (Hawkins, 2000). Ideal supervisor support responses were identified by Smith (2000) and reassurance was seen as important when a supervisee was managing fear, or when the supervisee’s abilities were called into question. However, debate about the support function was evident in the literature. Hughes and Pengelly (1997c) removed the support function from their approach, arguing that support was a means, not an end. Similarly, Davys and Beddoe (2010) identified support as a core condition of supervision, but not necessarily a function. Supportive supervision encouraged the supervisee to express and explore feelings about work, not only to feel better, but also with the view to developing knowledge about practice. In line with the administrative function, the support function could not be separated from the external context.
Creating the conditions for a supportive environment in supervision was a prerequisite for education to occur. The educational function of social work supervision related to skill and professional development opportunities. From the research, the conditions which enhanced the education function included: the power of expertise as the approach for competent practice (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002); participation, co-operation and self disclosure by supervisor and supervisee (Smith, 2000); judicious use of authority by the supervisor and dealing openly with issues of authority (Smith, 2000; Munson, 2002; Crocket, 1999); supporting workers to discuss taboo subjects and openness and receptivity to efforts of learning (Erera and Lazar, 1994); specific work related feedback conveyed (Drake & Washeck, 1998; Ellis, 2001; Morrell, 2001); normalising that ignorance was a necessary prerequisite for learning, discussion of practice mistakes was risky, defensiveness was considered normal and supporting workers to discuss taboo subjects (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; Walsh-Tapiata & Webster, 2004). Without the function of education in supervision, the literature suggested that workers experienced increased stress and burnout, with quality service provision compromised (Falvey, 2002; Reamer, 1995, 1998). Cousins (2004) argued that the capacity of the supervisee to self disclose was affected by the potential for a supervisor to punish the supervisee. This was particularly evident where the role of the supervisor was to manage performance, determine a supervisee’s progress to a more senior position in the organisation, or where supervisors abdicated responsibility for a supervisee’s practice decision, choosing instead to ‘hand up’ the supervisee to a higher level of authority in the organisation (Cousins, 2004; Falvey, 2002).

An acknowledgement of the impact of the external context on the functions of supervision was limited in the review of the literature. The work of Payne (1994), Rich (1993) and Morrison (2001) changed this and departed from earlier conceptualisations of functional approaches. Payne (1994) and Rich (1993) substituted the administrative function with the language of management in response to the changes occurring in the neoliberal context. Mediation has been identified more recently as a fourth function of supervision (Morrison, 2001), to acknowledge the negotiation required in supervision between different and often competing aspects in the neoliberal context. Clearly the functional approach has changed over time. It is also clear that writers have been critical, particularly when functions negatively change the nature of supervision, as discussed in relation to the influence of managerialism. Indeed, functional approaches
can easily become unbalanced, Wonnacott (2012) has suggested that social work needs to move beyond functional supervision to a more integrated model that embraces critically reflective practice, something we will return to later in the chapter. Thought also needs to be given to a potential ‘one-size-fits-all’ functional model, given the range of experiences and expertise that supervisees and supervisors have.

**Developmental approaches**

The AASW Practice Standards recognise that the supervision needs of social workers change as they progress through their careers. Those who have graduated for up to three years require weekly supervision, whilst those qualified for more than three years require less (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000, p.7). There appears to be no empirical evidence however to support these expectations. Stage based approaches of supervision were evident in the literature since the 1950s (Bernard, 2006; Brown & Bourne, 1996; Heid, 1997; Loganbill, Hardy & Delworth, 1982). Generally, three specific stages were identified: beginning, middle and advanced stages of supervision, however additional stages included preparation (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Hawkins, 2000) and transitioning (Kadushin, 1968). These stages were marked by a greater or lesser need by the supervisor to impose structure; the capacity of the supervisee for professional autonomy; the degree of didactic instruction; the nature and type of direct feedback on specific behaviours; the mediation of strengths and weaknesses in supervision process; and the level of supervisory support and training (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Ellis & Ladany, 1997; Neufeldt, Beutler & Banchero, 1997; Stoltenberg, Pierce & McNeill, 1987).

The ‘beginning’ stage of the supervision arrangement was marked by developing an understanding of each other and the initial building of the supervisory relationship. Without an overt acknowledgement of the mandate, the relationship remains contextual and does not set the stage for an effective supervisory arrangement (Bernard, 2006; Clare, 2001; Davys, 2007; Davys & Beddoe, 2010). The literature in general revealed other tasks of this first stage: a focus on the supervisee’s feelings of anxiety (Davys, 2007; Jordan, 2006); the exposure of supervisees and sense of dependence with less willingness to trust (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Lizzio, Wilson & Que, 2009); authority being exercised by the supervisor with the reasons for this approach being shared (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Morrison, 2001); acknowledgement of previous life and
work experiences of both supervisee and supervisor (Jordan, 2006; Van Ooijen, 2003); a degree of impartiality in the relationship (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Heid, 1997); and an expression of care and concern for the supervisee (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Jordan, 2006; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Lizzio et al, 2009). The first six months of supervision was characterised by a task focused, instructive approach by the supervisor, with little learning via reflective practice (Butler, 1996; Lizzio et al, 2009; Yegdich, 2002), but rather a transfer of information occurred from expert to novice with directive and structured approaches to supervision preferred by inexperienced practitioners (Bernard, 2006; Davys, 2010; Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Jordan, 2006; Loganbill et al., 1982; Spence et al., 2001; Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997).

The ‘middle’ or ‘work’ stage of the supervisory relationship signals the emergence of professional autonomy and the beginning of practice consolidation. Learning through professional identification and internalisation takes the place of learning through imitation (Heid, 1997; Lizzio et al, 2009). This stage of the supervisory relationship has been characterised in the literature by a greater demand for performance (Hawkins, 2000); becoming more organised within the supervision encounter; a deepening of trust (Morrison, 2001); more overt managing of boundaries and difficulties (Neufeldt & Nelson, 1999); developing worker competence; addressing gaps between knowledge and performance; managing ambivalence between dependency and autonomy (Brown & Bourne, 1996); and moving from a hierarchical to more egalitarian, collegial and reciprocal supervisory relationship (Ellis & Ladany, 1997; Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997). During this stage, supervisees were more likely to demonstrate a greater acceptance of the complexity, ambiguity and inevitability of failure in achieving definitive understanding in the helping relationship (Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997).

The ‘advanced’ stage of the supervisory relationship was identified as the point at which professional autonomy and identity begin to emerge in the supervisee (Bernard, 2006; Brown & Bourne, 1996; Davys and Beddoe, 2010; Hawkins and Shohet, 2000). From the literature, an evaluation of the supervisory relationship and its outcomes ideally occurs in the final stage. Supervision arrangements are more likely to change either through external or internal factors (Bernard, 2006; Davys and Beddoe, 2010; Hawkins and Shohet, 2000). The disadvantage of longer term supervisory relationships was perceived to be the potential for mutual collusion (Feltham, 2002). In many respects the
developmental frame, from beginning to middle to advanced stages, assumes that supervisees are necessarily novices at the start of the supervisory relationship. Clearly this is not always the case. Some supervisees will be experienced, but perhaps not related to the organisation or field of practice. Using this frame, therefore, requires thought and consideration based on the experience level of the supervisee. As with the functional model, a one-size-fits-all is not necessarily appropriate and discussion between supervisor and supervisee must be a condition of using this approach.

The transitioning stage identified in the literature related to the worker moving from supervisee to supervisory role and from supervisor to supervisee role. From a range of perspectives, the transitioning stage is critical in determining the future of the supervisory relationship (Bernard, 2006; Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Hawkins, 2000; Kadushin, 1968). The literature reviewed highlighted a number of challenges for the new supervisor with potential pitfalls to be expected and normalised: the supervisor’s ease with authority (Bernard, 2006; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002); a tendency to focus on personal aspects of the supervisee’s life over which they have no organisational mandate (Bradley and Ladany, 2001); and micromanagement of the supervisee’s work (Hughes & Pengelly, 1997b; Itzhaky, 2001; Munson, 1981). While the AASW is clear about the developmental needs of social workers in their national standards, it remains unclear from the literature how this is incorporated into supervision.

**Practice and organisational approaches**

Practice approaches apply theories of helping in supervision. Tsui (1997a) argued that practice approaches were well developed because of the lack of formal theory specific to supervision. A range of approaches were identified in the literature as being useful to supervision practice: interactional theory (Shulman, 1993); cognitive behavioural interventions (Azar, 2000); dialogue theory (Itzhaky and Hertzanu-Laty, 1999); and strengths perspectives (Cohen, 1999; Ennis & Brodie, 1999; Rita, 1998). The use of practice approaches allows practitioners to build on what they already know in their work with service users and employ a similar format for supervision. Ultimately authors acknowledged that an independent theory of supervision is required to deal with the inconsistencies social workers identify when translating practice approaches into supervision (O’Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006; Spence et al., 2001; Tsui, 1997a).
Organisational approaches to supervision, perhaps more so than others, place the context at centre stage. Organisational systems and dynamics impact on practice. These are manifest in agency resources, structures and the politics shaping organisational culture and processes (Holloway & Brager, 1988; Lewis, Lewis, Packard & Soufflee, 2001; Munnelly, 2000). When a supervisor undertakes multiple organisational roles, supervision was affected (Hawkins, 2000; Holloway & Brager, 1988). The availability of organisational resources and whether cooperation can genuinely be achieved across different organisational systems, both internally and externally, was also important. The supervision focus is affected by the use and source of power in supervision. Not surprisingly, the nature of the climate in any given workplace has a major influence on the effectiveness of supervision and learning in the organisation. ‘For supervision to work well within an organisation, its culture needs to be favourable. If the culture is unhealthy it is likely that the supervision will be affected accordingly’ (Van Ooijen, 2003, p.221). The impact of organisational culture on supervision relationships will be discussed later in this chapter.

**Feminist approaches**

A feminist based partnership approach to supervision focuses particularly on the supervisory relationship. Rather than understanding the supervisory relationship as one based on an expert/novice arrangement, a feminist approach reconceptualised the supervisor and supervisee relationship as one of partnership, where the course of the supervision would be determined as a collaborative process (Chernesky, 1986; Hipp & Munson, 1995; Gridley, 1999; Munson, 2002). Feminist approaches to supervision were among the first to reconceptualise power within the relationship as a commodity to be shared, rather than used to dominate. These approaches challenged the traditional understanding of supervisor as expert. Critics have noted that equality within the supervisory relationship remains debatable, particularly in the neoliberal environment (Munson, 2002; Rossiter, 2000b; Trinder, 2000). Feminist approaches to supervision, like all approaches, need to consider the impact of different stakeholders including service user needs and organisational constraints and functions. A focus on partnership derived from a feminist philosophy was also central to the ‘culture as context’ approach to supervision (Tsui and Ho 1997).
Cultural supervision

Like feminist approaches, cultural approaches challenged traditional understandings of social work supervision (McNeill, Hom & Perez, 1995; Tsui and Ho, 1997). The prevailing cultural approach required supervisors to examine themselves as cultural beings, recognising actions as affected by cultural identity. The cultural approach to supervision was pioneered in Hong Kong (Tsui, 1997) and New Zealand (Hair & O’Donoghue, 2009; Davys, 2005). Literature reviewed in relation to cultural supervision identified that dominant functions observed in supervision and the supervisory relationship vary cross culturally (Davys, 2005; Doel & Shardlow, 1996; Erera & Lazar, 1993; Hair and O’Donoghue, 2009; Haj-Yahia, 1997; O'Donoghue, 2003; Page, 2003; Tsui, 2006). From this perspective, supervision was fashioned by the sociocultural system in which it occurred. This included: the prevailing socio economic conditions; technological influences; broader community concerns; the service user group; the profession; organisational policy and objectives; and the supervisor’s and supervisee’s roles, styles, skills and working and training experiences (Autagavaia, 2000; Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1996; Bradley et al., 1999; Crocket, 2000; Tsui, 2005). In this approach the influence of culture is relevant to the consideration of agency, purpose and goals, the supervisor’s roles, styles and skills, the supervisee’s working experiences, training and emotional needs including those of the service user (Jones, 2000). A distinction is made in the literature about culture as an essential condition and function of supervision, which is different from the practice of cultural supervision.

Research studies examining cultural supervision across different countries have illuminated practice. In New Zealand, cultural supervision emerged from a mode where practitioners of a certain ethnicity were supported in their practice, grounded in spiritual, traditional and theoretical understandings congruent with their worldview. Arab social workers, trained in Western countries, identified potential sources of conflict, discomfort and undesirable reactions during pre-service education (Haj-Yahia, 1997). Social workers in Hong Kong identified different emphases in understanding the functions of supervision distinguished by Chinese culture (Tsui, 2005). Such considerations remain relatively new in the supervision literature and examining the cultural dimension of supervision remains an under researched area (Bradley et al., 2005).
More broadly, writers have explored the cultural components of supervision when difference and diversity exist within, and external to the supervisory relationship.

The notion of cultural supervision, or indeed responsiveness to culture, is not evident in the AASW Practice Standards for supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). Culture is nevertheless a key dimension of the AASW Code of Ethics (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010). Culturally sensitive practice is therefore regarded as a professional responsibility (p.17). It ‘builds on the general principles and ethical standards of social work. The core of the model is to recognise and respect clients ethnic, cultural and race-based values, characteristics, traditions and behaviour, and to integrate these characteristics successfully into social work practice, their cultural values and perceptions and how these impact upon their work with clients’ (Soydan, 2010 p.144). Further in the code, culture has been defined as: ‘The distinctive ways of life and shared values, beliefs and meanings common to groups of people’ (Quinn, 2009). This lack of Australian attention to culture for social work supervision stands in stark contrast to other countries. In particular, the New Zealand social work bicultural focus is integral to both policies and the knowledge base (Connolly, 2006; Davys, 2005; Driscoll, 2000; Hair & O’Donoghue, 2009).

**Critical reflection as an approach**

In reviewing the social work supervision literature, critical reflection was identified as the key approach used in practice (Bond & Holland, 1998; Carroll, 2005; Davys, 2000, 2007; Davys and Beddoe, 2010; McMahon & Patton, 2002; Proctor, 2000; Scaife, 2001). Kolb’s experiential learning cycle in the practice of supervision was identified as a central resource (Kolb, 1984). Critical reflection in supervision encouraged a practitioner’s understanding of situations from a wider context, looking for underlying principles and meanings in the activities in which they are engaged. Thinking reflectively challenged taken-for-granted roles, expectations, assumptions and habitual ways of acting that were identified as oppressive to some groups in society (Ellis, 2001; Gibbs, 2001).
Bourdieu identified the value of reflexivity for social work as a tool for scrutinising personal and professional habitus. Garrett (2007a) believed a key strength of Bourdieu, for social work, lay in understanding the changed social work context and the impact this had on the habitus of social work. He identified that:

interrogating more closely those destabilised and evolving professional fields, allows the bigger picture to be seen (p.240)

The value of critical reflection in supervision has been noted as providing a forum for reflecting and relating contextual knowledge; gaining new interest in managing supervision; emphasising experiential and tacit knowledge; providing opportunities to learn from this knowledge through reflection; addressing the wellbeing of workers in stressful work environments; using both closed and open expertise; allowing for greater professional autonomy; and providing a forum for knowledge production, learning and development (Beddoe, 2000; Davys and Beddoe, 2000, 2010; Fook, Ryan & Hawkins, 2000; Jones, 2004; Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004). It is in Scandinavian and European countries where the practice of supervision, built on critical reflection, is most developed and researched (Belardi, 2002; Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004). Evidence supporting critical reflection as a key approach in supervision in these countries is strong. I will return to this later in Chapter seven.

**Training and qualification for supervision**

The AASW Practice Standards for supervision are specific about the training requirements for supervisors including ‘basic training in fieldwork supervision and an approved course in social work supervision of a minimum of 30 hours duration’ (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). The training and qualifications for supervision remain an integral part of the ongoing professionalisation process in social work. However, most of the literature and research about access to supervision training has been anecdotal, except in relation to Pilcher’s Australian research, which indicated a lack of supervision training opportunities (Pilcher, 1984). Some university based supervision training options at postgraduate level are available, but none specifically offered by Australian Schools of Social Work at the time of writing this thesis (University of Sydney, 2009; Centre for Remote Health, 2010). A number of private providers nevertheless offer professional development options for supervisors (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2004, 2009, 2011; Bouverie Family
Institute, 2010) A review of Australian supervision training options indicated no specific supervisee courses offered, except as part of the requisite AASW field education preparation programs for membership eligibility. Evidence from New Zealand suggested more university based supervision training opportunities were available in line with professional registration requirements (McNeill, 2001; Morrell, 2005). Anecdotally, the most prevalent training available was for social work supervisors in Australia supervising students as part of university field education programs. At the time of finalising this thesis, collaboration between a number of Australian Schools of Social Work was being piloted, offering postgraduate online training on Social Work Student supervision. The unit would be accredited as contributing to a postgraduate qualification delivered by one of the participating Schools of Social Work in the project.

Despite the apparent lack of training options in supervision, different training requirements for transition from supervisee to supervisor were described and examined in the literature. These transitions took the form of agency promotion or through recognition of prior experience and expertise, resulting in supervisory duties being allocated (Brown & Bourne, 1996; Cousins, 2004; Kaslow, 1977, 1986). Reviewing the literature revealed a uniformity across three levels of training needs: the graduate, senior practitioner and established supervisor. Different countries have made different decisions about whether formal supervision qualifications were required (Beddoe & Davys, 1994; Ennis & Brodie, 1999; Lewis, 1998; Turner, 2000). The British and New Zealand experiences, unlike Australia, produce an established pathway for recognition of supervision expertise through professional registration with training requirements (Beddoe, 1997, 2006; Cutcliffe & Proctor, 1998; O'Donoghue, 2000; Sharples, Galvin, Holloway & Brown, 2003). Satisfying supervisor training needs has liability implications and ethical responsibilities related to the practice of supervisees.

Reviewing the literature relating to professionalisation illustrates how social work habitus is inculcated and reinforced through processes of supervision. The tracing of the history of social work supervision and the review of current literature also builds a picture of the professional discourses informing social work supervision. The gaps in
Australian knowledge about supervision practice relate to the prevalence of different
types of supervision, the structures which scaffold practice and the different approaches
informing it.

**Managerial discourses in supervision**

Bourdieu’s definition of capital, as the resources owned by competing actors in any
given field, provides a way to understand social work supervision in the neoliberal
context (Bourdieu, 1998, 2002). Bourdieu argued that professions, legitimised by the
state, faced an enormous contradiction in leaving many aspects of social and economic
life to market forces (Bourdieu et al, 2002).

Social workers must fight increasingly on two fronts: on the one hand, against those they
want to help and who are often too demoralised to take in hand their own interest, let alone
the interest of the collective; on the other hand, against administrations and bureaucrats
divided and enclosed in separate universes (p. 190).

Capital provides a mechanism for exposing the taken-for-granted ways through which
the different stakeholders pursue their vested interests in social work supervision. He
understood qualifications as a feature of gaining cultural capital, which could then be
used to gain economic capital (Bourdieu, 1998). For this chapter, the focus is on cultural
and symbolic capital. Cultural capital, identified as the possession of recognised
academic qualifications, aligned with the professional discourse. Symbolic capital
related to one’s status, where prestige and influence was evident in both institutional life
and the wider public discourse. How both types of capital are being used and by who in
supervision practice provide a way of examining what drives the process. In social work
supervision, cultural and symbolic capital is evident in the qualification requirements,
the hierarchies apparent in the practice of supervision and the roles associated with
supervision.

The impact of neoliberalism is integral to understanding capital. Social work in North
America, Britain, New Zealand and Australia has been shaped by similar political
discourses, changes in health and human service provision, social work theory and
practice and professionalisation. The key difference between Australia and the other
countries relates to the overall statutory regulation of social work and therefore social
work supervision. In a Bourdieusian sense, social work in a neoliberal environment
needed to gain status and symbolic capital, and the legislated registration process provided both. Professions, more than ever, needed to mark out distinctive territory, and statutory regulation provides the public legitimisation for this process. Unlike the other countries, Australian social work has not undergone statutory regulation to date. The process of regulation elsewhere offers salutary lessons for the AASW, the National Standards of Practice for Supervision and social work supervision practice in Australia.

**Managerial discourses enter social work**

During the 1980s, in line with neoliberal ideology in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and North America, the provision of health and human services was transformed on an unprecedented scale, globally and locally. Until this point, the private sector was ‘not considered appropriate agents for serving the public interest’ (Adams & Hess, 2000, p.53). Different countries used different terminologies to describe the neoliberal tools used in this transformation. Economic rationalism occurred initially in the 1980s in North America under the Reagan administration as New Republicans. In the United Kingdom, the Thatcher government progressed Neoliberalism, while in New Zealand, the Lange government economic reforms were referred to as ‘Rogernomics’. Under the Hawke/Keating government in Australia it was known as Economic Rationalism (Allan, Pease and Briskman, 2009; Baine, 2009; Fraser & Gordon, 1994; Hough, 2003; Jamrozik, 2005; Rose, 1999).

Economic rationalism was understood as a global development in fiscal management, which formed part of a neoliberal political ideology to curtail the role of the state in society in the twenty-first century. This approach was premised on a belief that the provision of state services would be more efficiently delivered by non-statutory providers (Jones & May, 1992). The aim of economic rationalism was to reduce social expenditure and the role of the state in delivering human services. There were several key assumptions underpinning economic rationalism. The overriding one was that good policy was determined by economic measures, that a strong economy would result in social benefit, and that the private sector was perceived to be more efficient at delivering fewer and more efficient state services (Rose, 1999). The neoliberal program drew social influence from the political and economic power of those whose interests it served including stakeholders such as financial operatives, industrialists and
conservative or social democratic politicians. Economic capital became the driver for what had traditionally been provided by the state. The shift from government as ‘rower’ to government as ‘steerer’ led to a retreat from the welfare state in Britain, New Zealand and Australia, with neoliberal governments radically transforming the way human services were provided (Adams et al, 2002; Allan et al, 2009; Dominelli, 2002; Healy, 2000; McDonald and Chenoweth, 2007; Stanford, 2008). At the same time, similar changes were made in North America, with the development of privatised, managed care organisations which overhauled the provision of American health care.

In this climate, human service provision was deregulated, privatised and contracted out to private providers and responsibility for service provision moved away from the state (Hough, 2003; Webster, 1995). This shift meant that government and service providers used a managerial rather than professional discourse to ensure efficiencies in service provision (Ife, 2001). Risk management dominated human services’ policy and practice. This paradigm sat alongside a plethora of competencies, standards, protocols and training developments to regulate practice in order to reduce risk in the management of service provision (Gillingham & Bromfield, 2006; Green, 2007; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997c; Lynch & Versen, 2003; Parton, 1999; Rose, 1999; Webb, 2006). Somewhat cynically, it has been suggested that in the neoliberal state, risk management became the raison d’etre of professionals. The governmentality of risk occurred through a ‘transformation of the priorities, systems and subjectivities of social workers’ (Parton, 1999, p.120). The legal mandate, enforced by risk assessment protocols, provided a managerial mechanism to heighten organisational accountability. Procedures and mechanisms for risk assessment thus changed the role of professionals. The regulation of people was the concern of governmentality and this paralleled social work supervision as the regulator of the profession. Potentially, supervision provided the managerial opportunity to shape practice according to organisational demands (Cornes, Manthorpe, Huxley & Evans, 2007; Lemke, 2000; Orme & Rennie, 2006; Rose, 1999).
Managerial discourses and social work supervision

A key distinction between social work and other helping professions is the explicit disciplinary focus it has on social justice and commitment to human rights. These apply equally to supervisory practice (Cohen, 1987). Such differences were institutionalised within international and national social work codes of ethics enshrining the values and principles for the practice of social work (International Federation of Social Work, 2004). The preface to the Social Work Statement of Principles from the joint International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) and the International Association of the Schools of Social Work (IASSW) encourage social workers worldwide to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas they face in the current context and challenges that are particularly relevant within the neoliberal context. A number of contradictions are explicitly highlighted:

1. The loyalty of social workers is often in the middle of conflicting interests;
2. Social workers function as both helpers and controllers; and
3. Conflicts between the duty of social workers to protect the interests of the people with whom they work and societal demands for efficiency and utility resources in society are limited. (International Association of the Schools of Social Work Preface, 2004)

The professional guidelines, to which social workers collectively subscribe, highlight the contradictions evident in the context in which social work is practised. Almost despite this context, supervision formally remains the site where practitioners make sense of the ethical decisions they face in day-to-day practice. A review of the literature about the impact of neoliberal changes on social work supervision identified the contradiction facing social workers, between professional requirements and the daily organisational demands of the transformed human service environment (Cockburn, 1994; Copeland, 1998; Dominelli, 2002; Havassy, 1990; Hough, 2003; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997a; Jones, 2004; Laragy, 1999; Morrison, 2001). Such contradictions are evident in the professional and managerial discourses competing for the right to determine the way the social work field will be configured. Exposing these
contradictions provides a way to understand the development and progress of the discourses informing social work supervision. It was the transformation of the health system in North America where these contradictions were most evident, and their effect on social work and supervision most stark.

**Managerial discourses within the North American context**

North America was dominated during the 1980s by the emergence and growth of managed cost organisations (MCOs) and the subsequent transformation of health service provision to private control. MCOs were defined as 'any health cost delivery system in which various strategies were employed to optimise the value of provided services by controlling their cost and utilisation, promoting their quality and measuring performance to ensure cost effectiveness (Corcoran & Vandiver, 1996; Fraser & Gordon, 1994; Metz et al, 2008). This shift in health care delivery led to an increase in the privatisation of social work in the health system, which also resulted in changes to the way social work supervision was provided. Bourdieu’s early critique of neoliberalism relates specifically to changes in the American health system (Garrett, 2007b).

Traditionally, in American hospital social work departments, management roles resided with executive and supervisory leadership. The downsizing of workforces in the new context targeted middle management, where supervisory positions were most often categorised. This in turn led to a decrease in the number of practitioners listing supervision as their primary function and reduced numbers of agencies offering student supervision between 1992 and 1996 (Gibelman & Schervish, 1997; Munson, 1998a; Schroffel, 1999). The changes had profound effects on professional autonomy and supervision (Barretta-Herman, 1993; Harrar et al, 1990; Strom-Gottfried, 1999). Supervisors were caught between the need to make day-to-day decisions regarding resource allocation, and exercising professional principles mirroring the tension between professional requirements and managerial demands. Cultural capital associated with social work professionalisation and supervision changed when economic capital became the driver for service provision in this environment. During this period the literature reveals: a decrease in professional standards; limited supervision training; practitioner stress and burnout; greater claims of unethical practice; complex external controls on practice structure; complicated documentation requirements; sophisticated
outcome measures; and new evidence-based practice areas without sufficient support (Havassy, 1990; Munson, 1998a). Anecdotal accounts in the American literature also suggested a shift to peer group supervision in the managerial environment, whereby a decrease in organisational resources for other supervisory activities was experienced (Munson, 2002). Specifically peer group supervision was used as a substitute/supplement to the educational function of supervision, if this was not available on an individual basis (Christensen & Kline, 2001; Gillig & Barr, 1999), with the intention of augmenting worker autonomy (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Such tensions between professional and managerial discourses provided ways of accounting for the neoliberal context and its impact on social work supervision. Similar changes were also identified in the British context.

Managerial discourses within the British context

Under the Thatcher government changes to the welfare state transformed the way welfare services were delivered. These changes reinforced financial accountability including purchaser-provider structures in the National Health Service. Marketisation drove relationships in human service organisations and consequently the delivery of social work supervision. The focus was on quality and efficiency measures, often to the detriment of service provision (Jones & Gallop, 2003; Northcott, 2000; Parton, 2006; Smith, 2004; Turner, 2000; Walby, 1992). The British post-welfare regime promoted the role of social worker as case manager, where engagement in relationship-based social work was largely replaced by the management of care service packages delivered by others (Dominelli, 2004; Preston-Shoot, Braye & Collins, 1999). A further shift related to an upgrading of qualifications for social workers. This change, coupled with the publication of several high-profile child death inquiries, the Beckford Report (London, 1985) and Department of Health and Social Security reviews (Department of Health and Social Security, 1985), led to substantial changes in the qualification, training and requisite supervision in social work. The state took charge in deciding the parameters of training and registration, based on economic considerations, and so set the standards for cultural capital of social work. In line with the North American experience, the shifts in Britain subjected social workers to greater managerial control, loss of professional autonomy and deprofessionalisation of their skills. The situation in New Zealand paralleled these changes in their context.
Managerial discourses within the New Zealand context

Shifts in New Zealand legislation defined clinical governance in their Health and Disability Sector Standards (Cooper and Anglem, 2003). Clinical governance in New Zealand was one of a raft of strategies used for improving the quality of health care, informed by a quality improvement strategy. In line with neoliberal governments in North America and Britain, such legislation in New Zealand ensured the operationalisation of managerial principles in the delivery of health and human services. In line with the British experience, changes to organisational clinical governance in New Zealand’s statutory organisations included the drive for accountability and competition. There was a downgrading of professional status through the use of standardised and predetermined patterns of organisational practice auditing, which shifted the value of social work professionalisation – its cultural capital. Supervision was not included as part of the governance armoury in the New Zealand Health and Disability Standards; and this was significant because the role of the supervisor was integral to how it was envisaged governance would be enforced (Beddoe, 2006; Crocket, 1999; Kane, 2001; O'Donoghue, 2000).

New Zealand faced increased focus on administration and management in supervision, and there was questioning about the future of social work supervision at this time (Beddoe & Davys, 1994, Beddoe, 1997; O'Donoghue et al, 1999). Such a focus produced an environment where supervision was regarded outside core organisational business and not necessarily considered part of contractual specifications in service agreements between government departments and human service organisations (Beddoe, 1997). The provision of supervision was often left to the discretion of the agency to implement as they saw fit, and the cultural capital of supervision in social work changed. Such shifts were evident in research undertaken in a New Zealand regional mental health service after the Health and Disability Sector Standards were developed. The researchers noted: ‘surprisingly clinical supervision is not included as a tool in the Health and Disability Standards despite practitioners taking supervision very seriously’ (Cooper & Anglem, 2003, p.41). At this time in New Zealand, the managerial era was described as ‘the second wave of colonialisation’ (O'Donoghue, 2003, p.57). The emphasis was placed on managerial aspects of supervision rather than professional development. Agency or managerial supervision was considered part of the leadership and control functions of management, and involved the supervisor overseeing
practitioner’s work for the purpose of ensuring compliance with agency policy and maintaining the achievement of the agency’s goals (Beddoe, 1997; Field, 2008). As in North America, economic capital became the driver for practice in Britain.

The constrained environment in New Zealand, as with the other countries mentioned, had limited resource provision and high front line demand. This reduced the availability of supervision, since both practitioners and supervisors had less time and/or psychological space available to make the most of professionally oriented guidance of this nature (Hirst, 2000; O'Donoghue, 2003). The rise of multidisciplinary health teams shifted responsibility for supervision across professional disciplines to ensure consistency of practice in line with managerial agendas. The use of cross disciplinary supervision by non social workers occurred because of the gradual separation of managerial and professional aspects of health care practice. Increasingly supervisees had line managers who were not social workers with growing numbers of social workers receiving professional supervision from non-social work professionals (Beddoe, 2010; Crocket, 1999; O'Donoghue, 2004). In response to these developments, the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) debated and then advocated for the registration of social workers which was achieved in 2003 with the *Social Worker’s Registration Act* (Ministry of Health, 2003).

**Managerial discourses with in the Australian context**

It was under the Hawke/Keating government during the late 1980s and early 1990s that neoliberal ideology and techniques began to take hold in Australia (Hindess, 1998; Hough, 2003; McDonald, 1999, 2000; McDonald & Chenoweth, 2007). The processes developed by neoliberal governments enabled them to translate neoliberal philosophy into practice through the process of governance, paralleling similar developments in Britain and New Zealand (Hindess, 1998; McDonald, 1999). Such processes, by default, impacted the experience of supervision with increased numbers of social workers being supervised by non-social work supervisors, or not at all (Hough, 1999).

The processes of competitive tendering for human service delivery, corporatisation, contracting out and privatisation extended the business market into human services, and shaped and guided the conduct of organisations providing these services and the behaviour of individuals seeking help (Adams et al, 2000; Ernst, 1994; Hough, 2003;
McDonald, 2000). In line with the international literature reviewed, the Australian public service, in most instances, removed itself from direct service provision, with the role of the public service being redefined in terms of regulatory oversight. Competition amongst service providers for contracts fostered an environment where efficiency measures drove economic capital, rather than service user need. Bourdieu’s critique of the American market culture applied equally in the Australian context. Contracted arrangements dominated the management of human service provision (Adams et al, 2000; Crimeen & Wilson, 1997; Ernst, 1994; Fraser & Gordon, 1994b; Laragy, 1999; McDonald, 1999, 2000; McDonald & Chenoweth, 2007; Webster, 1995). A plethora of manuals, protocols and software programs were created to standardise operational procedures, risk assessment tools and controlled interventions to assist in the administration of managerial principles (Baine, 2009; Crimeen & Wilson, 1997; Green, 2007; Healy, 2000; Webster, 1995).

In reviewing the contemporary Australian research regarding the practice of social work supervision from the early 1990s to 2010, sixteen published studies were located. All articles discussed the impact of the neoliberal environment on social work supervision, and noted the contradictions between managerial and professional discourses informing practice. The Australian research acknowledged that the neoliberal environment had shifted the focus in supervision, while also lamenting the loss of its professional aspects. Increasing numbers of commentators have acknowledged the need to further examine social work supervision practice in the neoliberal climate (Hough, 2003; Ife, 1997; Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Phillipson, 2002). However, limited empirical studies made it difficult to have a picture of contemporary social work supervision practice during this period (Spence et al, 2001).

The Australian research, in line with New Zealand, Britain and North America, has called for an increase in its knowledge and evidence concerning the construction and practice of social work supervision. Authors internationally were claiming that the growth of compliance procedures reflected evidence of a greater focus on managerial supervision (Beddoe, 2010; Clare, 2001; Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Phillipson, 2002). However, there remains a key difference between the regulation of social work
in North America, Britain, New Zealand and Australia. The difference relates to Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital in the form of statutory credentialing for the profession.

**The regulation of social work supervision**

Regulation has the dual effect of ensuring accountability and limiting the behaviour of professionals (Reamer, 1995, 1998, 2003). There are different levels of regulation. Registration refers to the process which affirms that the person has completed a specific qualification or achieved competency according to a set of objective criteria. Certification was the process whereby a governing body upon demonstration or assessment of knowledge and skill set issues a certificate (Swain, 2001). Licensing was the highest level of regulation and entailed a governing body issuing a license to practise in a particular field, in recognition of the individual having achieved a high level degree and demonstrated renewable competency, which means that the public interest should be well protected. Unlicensed people were sanctioned by the state if they practised beyond their legislated requirement (Swain, 2001). At the heart of all three regulatory processes for social work is the provision of supervision as integral to the training and ongoing professional development of social workers.

*International responses to social work regulation*

With the advent of managed cost organisations (MCOs) in North America, licensing to practice as a social worker required a minimum of two years of supervision post Masters qualification (Falvey, 2002). Regulation of social work in North America competed with the professional supervision structures, which were aimed at the assertion and maintenance of professional credibility and autonomy (Corey, Schneider Corey & Callanan, 1993; Falvey, 2002; King, 2001). Licensing was the requirement needed to become eligible for health insurance rebates in the MCO environment. Increased regulation of supervisors heightened the significance of social work supervision (Berger & Mizrahi, 2001; Brashears, 1995; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). Licensed mental health professionals and supervisors were more at risk of legal exposure because of inadequate (or lack of) supervision opportunities, despite the existence of guidelines that made the lack of supervision unethical (Reamer, 1989, 1995; Strom-Gottfried, 1999). From the early 1990s in North America social workers
were being advised to focus on potential liability issues within the supervisory relationship, at a time when malpractice suits, against supervisors by individual workers alleging discrimination or wrongdoing had occurred (Reamer, 1995; Reamer, 2003; Reamer, 1998).

During 2004 a legislated system of professional regulation for social work was developed in Britain (Welbourne, Harrison & Ford 2007). The British experience generated similar concerns to those found in North America, regarding access to appropriate social work supervision in the neoliberal environment (Edwards, 2002; Ennis & Brodie, 1999; King, D., 2001; Orme & Rennie, 2006; Orme, MacIntyre, Green Lister, Cavagh, Crisp, Hussein & Stevens 2009; Welbourne et al, 2007). After these changes several commentators, including Peach and Horner (2007 p.229), identified the sole purpose of supervision as ‘surveillance of practitioner’s outcomes’.

The New Zealand government passed the Social Worker’s Registration Act in 2003 and the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act (HPCAA) in 2004 (Ministry of Health, 2003). The aim of the HPCAA was to provide a regulatory framework within which members of the public were protected, by ensuring health professionals were competent and fit to practice. Registration is voluntary; however the New Zealand government supported registration by using its influence as the major funder of statutory and non-statutory human services. This was advocated and supported by the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Work (Beddoe, 1997). Section 5 of the HPCAA provided an interpretation of supervision as: ‘Supervision means the monitoring of, and reporting on, the performance of a health practitioner by a professional peer’ (cited in Cooper and Anglem, 2003, p. 44). The HPCAA provided a universal definition of supervision and potentially went some way in clarifying the question of social workers as cross disciplinary supervisors. However the Act did not incorporate a human rights and social justice perspective which was and remains one of the defining features for social work practice (Beddoe, 2006, 2009; Kane, 2001; O'Donoghue, 2000).

**Australia and regulation**

The AASW views supervision at the core of ethical practice and decision making (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010). The evolution of social work regulation provides the professional discourse as to how supervision is structured and controlled.
This then provides a standard against which supervision practice can be viewed. From the 1980s in Australia, regulation of helping professionals was part of the National Health Practitioners Regulation National Policy Agenda, which led to the registration of psychologists and other allied health professionals (Lonne, 2009). The process provided parameters for those registered professions in terms of professional development and supervision requirements. In many ways this Australian development mirrored the national regulation process in North America, Britain and New Zealand. Such reform increased the symbolic capital of those registered professions. However, social work was not included within this regulatory process as there was not enough evidence that social workers were exposed to significant risk of physical harm (Chenoweth, 2012; Lonne, 2009). Unlike social workers in North America, Britain and New Zealand, Australian social workers had not undergone regulation which set the statutory parameters of competence/qualification for the profession. Debate in the AASW about social workers exclusion from this registration process set the scene for the first opportunity for social workers to be considered in the national health initiative’s Enhanced Primary Care Program (EPCP).

The AASW development of an accreditation process satisfied the requirements for social workers to participate with supervision central to this process. The 2004 move for social workers to be included in the Australian Government implementation of the EPCP was nevertheless a regulatory process of sorts. In 2006 Better Access to Mental Health Care (BAMHC) replaced EPCP. Again, the program enabled general practitioners, paediatricians and private psychiatrists to refer to allied health professionals, namely social workers, psychologists and occupational therapists for the provision of ‘focussed psychological strategies’ (Australian Association of Social Work, 2011). However, in the May 2010 federal budget, social workers were to be removed from the ‘Better Access’ program. An AASW initiated government lobbying and media campaign (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010) led to social work’s reinstatement in the program. The media and lobbying campaign that ensued, was about cultural capital and was probably the biggest ever campaign engaged in by the AASW. After this reprieve, the evaluation of the Better Access program in 2011 (Australian Association of Social Work, 2011) identified that ‘social workers play a crucial and high quality clinical role, in providing mental health services to a wide range of Australians with a range of mental health issues’ (ibid). Further, social work supervisors
were only one of two referee categories required to confirm claims of the applicant (Australian Association of Social Work, 2011). Accreditation of mental health social workers required them to be ongoing members of the AASW (Australian Association of Social Work, 2011). From a Bourdieusian perspective, professional eligibility to participate in EPCP and BAMHC increased the level of cultural capital for mental health social workers, not social workers per se as evident in the other countries discussed. Despite the regulation of mental health social workers in Australia, there remains ongoing debate regarding the overall move to regulation for the profession.

In the absence of statutory regulation, the AASW undertook the role of self-regulation to ensure members offer accountable practice, with supervision providing the forum through which this occurs. The AASW Code of Ethics (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010) details the supervision requirements and responsibilities for ethical practice:

Throughout their professional lifetime, social workers will utilise available supervision as well as other specialist consultation such as mentoring, coaching and cultural supervision, where appropriate, or take active steps to ensure they receive appropriate supervision, as a means of maintaining and extending practice competence (Section 51.5c).

Only members of the AASW can be investigated for alleged breaches of the code of ethics with loss of membership being the most severe penalty imposed. The system does not entail any legal penalty however for non-registered members (Swain, 2001). The association has no jurisdiction over non-members.

The AASW National Practice Standards for supervision
The development of the National Practice Standards for Supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000) provides the parameters for the professional discourse of supervision. The first and only empirical survey about social work supervision practice was undertaken in Victoria in the 1980s (Pilcher, 1984). The results of this study, combined with increasing pressures on service delivery in the neoliberal context, set the agenda for the establishment of the Australian Association of Social Workers Standing Committee on Social Work Supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000; Scott & Farrow, 1993). During 1988 the Standing Committee
originally published ‘Recommended Standards for Social Work Supervision’ as Victorian Standards. These standards were subsequently endorsed by the AASW Board of Directors as National Standards (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). The standards represent ‘a balance between agency resource constraints and ideal professional standards’ and as such acknowledge the ambivalent place of social work supervision in the current managerial context (Scott & Farrow, 1993, p.33). A formal focus on standards provides the taken-for-granted structures which protect social work supervision. An overview of the National Practice Standards for Social Work Supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000) is central to a review of the literature about Australian social work supervision practice, because they signal and document the professional discourse for supervision at this point in time in Australia.

In the introduction to the standards a link is explicitly made between the ‘quality of social work supervision and the development and maintenance of high standards of social work practice’ with the word ‘supervision’ having ‘a specific meaning in the social work profession going far beyond the concept of line management in administration and management’ (2000, p.3). In social work, unlike many other professions, supervision is often a component of a line management relationship. This means that the supervisor may also undertake performance appraisal, approve leave and professional development and allocate work. This creates a power imbalance and can be the source of conflict and dissatisfaction within the supervision relationship. This situation does not mean that internal supervision cannot be effective; rather it underlines the importance of the supervision relationship and a clear contract about this. The profession is explicit about the value it places on supervision as integral to social work practice. As noted earlier in the chapter the functional model of social work supervision informed the AASW standards (2000, p.3) identifying the functions of supervision as:

1. Administration ‘as a management function which includes: the clarification of roles; the planning and assignment of work; the review and assessment of work; and accountability and responsibility for supervisee’s work’.
2. Education as ‘the provision of knowledge and skills, which are the worker’s necessary equipment for effective practice. This type of education includes the development of self-awareness of the social worker in relation to his/her work with educational supervision being a core component in the professional
development of the worker. Supervision can also be seen as a potential vehicle for building the knowledge base of the social work profession, through conceptualising the practice experience of social workers. By reflecting on the similarities and differences in presenting characteristics, the nature of intervention and outcomes, propositions can be generated from “practice wisdom” which may lead to the development of practice theory’.

3. Support as ‘concerned with helping the supervisee deal with job-related stress, and with developing attitudes and feelings conducive to maximum job performance. The notion of support is related to sustaining worker morale, giving the supervisee a sense of professional self-worth, and a feeling of belonging in the agency’ (2000, p.3)

So whilst these functions guide supervision practice in the Australian social work profession, recent research and commentary, both locally and internationally, acknowledge the complexity of balancing the different functions in supervision and the tensions generated when dealing with the managerial role in supervision in the neoliberal environment (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Dill & Bogo, 2009; Froggett, 1998, 2000; Gibbs, 2001; Peach & Horner, 2007). Caution was noted in the literature about oversimplifying the relationship between functions and roles (Hughes & Pengelly, 1997a; Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001). An Australian study undertaken in a statutory government child protection agency concluded that a refocusing of supervision was needed to move beyond ‘inquisitorial or account giving’ to encompass all three functions of supervision, support, education and administration (Gibbs, 2001). Gibbs’ (2001) findings suggest that supervisors affirmed the value of individual workers to the organisation, and concluded that a fundamental shift in organisational priorities and functions of supervision were required to achieve this positive outcome. In a similar vein, Froggett (2000) in Britain proposed that, when confidently and transparently managed, the managerial function of supervision provided containment ‘for quite severe organisational anxieties which enabled supervision to play a vital part in avoiding the consolidation of staff group defences’ (Froggett, 2000, p.27). This process required the supervisor to be responsive to different organisational cultures, in providing containment for their reaction to it, rather than ‘attention diverted from tasks while people covered their back’ (Froggett, 1998, p.35). In line with this, Crocket (1999) argued that an organisation prepared to examine the practice context, rather than just
scrutinise the actions of the supervisee, ameliorated the blame culture of the neoliberal context. The erosion of a worker’s authority occurs when professional discourses remained unexamined and managerial ones prove problematic. This situation occurred when the power relations underpinning the context remained unscrutinised (Crocket, 1999). The AASW standards detail the organisational and supervisor expectations which provide the structures for guiding social work supervision practice within transparent professional parameters. However, the influence of the AASW to monitor the use of these standards remains limited, which ultimately undermines the value of cultural capital for social work supervision.

Contractual policy arrangements, as required by the AASW, provide clear parameters about the practicalities of supervision. In addition, environments with flexible supervision policies, aimed for a ‘fluid transition in and out of difficulties within the supervisory relationship depending on the containing environment in which anxiety can be acknowledged, explored, shared and maintained’ within acceptable boundaries (Froggett, 2000, p.34). However the disadvantages relate to the current managerial context, where supervision policy can potentially be used as a rationale for the ‘surveillance of the worker or as a pretext for an abdication of judgement, discretion or responsibility from an organisational perspective’ (Froggett, 2000, p.33). However, there has been limited Australian research about how supervision has been structured in this country, while increasing numbers of articles have appeared suggesting that the organisational structures supporting supervision are negatively affected by the managerial environment (Lewis, 1998; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Phillipson, 2002).

The importance of the supervision relationship has been touched on throughout this chapter, as it is clearly relevant to the ways in which supervision is both provided and received within the neoliberal context. Given this is the case, it is not surprising that the literature also dedicates significant attention to the relational aspects of supervision.

The relational aspects of supervision

At the heart of social work supervision is the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee and there is consistent evidence that the relationship importantly shapes the experience of supervision. Bernard (2005) summed it up this way: ‘Relationship
stakeholders continue to be where the action is, literally. Everything else revolves around it’ (p.15). Other stakeholders in the supervision process include the organisation with inter and intra organisational relationships, the professional association and service users. Framed within a Bourdieusian framework, each stakeholder or group of stakeholders in supervision represent their own interest or competing interests that can create tensions within the overall field of social work.

**The primary supervisory relationship**

The nature of the primary supervisory relationship was identified in the literature as ‘perhaps one of the most conceptually, ambiguous and challenging topics in the supervision and professional development literature’ (Lizzio, 2009, p.128). Its complexity made it difficult to define, measure and investigate how the relationship specifically affected the supervision process and outcome (Ladany et al, 1999; Mena and Bailey, 2007; Yoo & Brooks, 2005). Despite such difficulty, consistent factors contributing to the success of supervisory relationships have been identified in the literature. These included the reciprocity of the development of trust, the way power and authority were exercised and the tensions generated in the supervisory relationship.

**The development of trust in the supervisory relationship**

Trust in the social work supervision relationship has been identified as a key element to its success. How trust has been represented in the historical literature has varied, depending on the context in which it has been practised. As noted above, the supervisory relationship has been influenced by processes of professionalisation, and the different models that have been popular over time. Over the decades the trusted relationship has been acknowledged, but from different theoretical positions: the first from a professional viewpoint, socialising practitioners into the profession, and the second from a psychodynamic perspective. It was not until the 1980s that research evidence about the development of trust and a sense of rapport between the supervisor and supervisee was linked to positive supervisory relationships and then considered the most significant determinant in the success of the relationship (Himle et al, 1989; Mena and Bailey, 2007; Newsome & Pillari, 1992). Research examining trust in the relationship has been central to understanding the importance of the supervisory relationship.
Both historical and contemporary literature noted that the first contact between supervisor and supervisee was critical in the development of the supervisory relationship. This was evident in their initial sharing of information and negotiation of contractual arrangements, as well as the decisions made by both supervisor and supervisee about how safe, challenging and supportive the supervisory relationship might be (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002; Proctor, 2000). During this initial process the ground for the future success of the relationship was sown through a reciprocal connection between supervisor and supervisee, with responsibility for the outcomes resting with both parties. It was generally the supportive function of supervision which served to understand and empathise with the supervisee in regard to their work experience.

Research undertaken about the bond between supervisor and supervisee identified a range of attributes contributing to a trusting supervision relationship (Hawkins & Shohet, 2000; Loganbill et al, 1982). These included: demonstrating curiosity, interest, empathy, respect, enthusiasm and hope (Cousins, 2004; Fox, 1989; Hawkins & Shohet, 2000; Neufeldt et al, 1997) fostering reflective practice (Bond & Holland, 1998; Carroll, 2005; Davys, 2010; Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004; Morrison, 2001); listening without criticism (Neufeldt et al., 1997; Smith, 2000); acknowledging and recognising the work experience (Smith, 2000); self-disclosure from both supervisees and supervisors (Cousins, 2004; Kadushin, 1992c); developing greater self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses (Cousins, 2004; Itzhaky & Aloni, 1996) enabling expressions of feelings, difficulties, questions and uncertainties (Cousins, 2004; Granvold, 1977) including validation, affirmation and confirmation (Cousins, 2004; Fox, 1989); ensuring availability and accessibility (Kadushin, 1992c); and finally, being affable and able and using supervisory procedures which support workers (Cousins, 2004; Kadushin, 1992c; Smith, 2000). Such attributes make concrete the development or lack of trust within the supervisory relationship. Further to these attributes, developing a ‘good enough’ supervisory relationship required time and space (Falvey, 2002). It was nevertheless unclear from the literature whether sufficient time and resources were available to develop trusted supervisory relationships, or indeed, the degree to which time is necessary to the development of that relationship. How power was used in the relationship impacted on the level of trust experienced by the supervisee.
Power and authority in the supervisory relationship

Authority in the supervision context has been defined as ‘the right that legitimises the use of power’ which has been bestowed upon the supervisor through the organisational structure, the profession and client expectation (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). This definition recognised that both supervisors and supervisees have the capacity to use authority and power within the relationship, but it also acknowledged the power of external players (Reid, Bailey-Dempsey & Viggiani, 1996; Perrault & Coleman, 2006; Kadushin, 1968). A review of the literature indicated that the focus has predominantly been on how the supervisor uses power and, to a lesser extent, power used by the supervisee. The way a supervisor used power determined the degree of safety felt by the supervisee in the relationship and this was a consistent theme (Bond & Holland, 1998; Gillanders, 2005; Gridley, 1999; Gummer, 2001; Tsui, 2005). As the hierarchical nature of the supervision relationship was challenged, so were binary understandings of power (Grauel, 2002; McDonald & Chenoweth, 2007; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). Acknowledgement of the positive dimensions of power, how power imbalances changed over time, and different sorts of authority used in supervision have been examined and their value noted in the literature (Phillipson, 2002).

Supervisees’ perspectives on how they use power in the supervisory relationship related, in the main, to the student supervision experience (Davys, 2000; Perrault & Coleman, 2006; Reid et al., 1996) and to a lesser extent supervisees as workplace employees (Itzhaky, 2000, 2001; Kadushin, 1968; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Morrell, 2005). Kadushin’s research (1968, p.223) captured how supervisees developed considerable power in controlling supervision by appealing to norms of fairness, collegiality and professional practice. Such struggles over the field by supervisees were evident in these power plays where they redefined the supervisory relationship, wanting to be treated as a client rather than a supervisee, or developing a relationship based on friendship, thereby reversing the power dynamic (Kadushin, 1968). Kadushin and Harkness (2002, p.62) recommended that supervisors counter such games by ‘refusing to play; exercising authority, open confrontation or humour’. Other research noted that supervisees’ knowledge of agency protocols and procedures was an effective way to exert influence on the supervisory relationship (Itzhaky, 2001, 2002; Morrell, 2005).
Similarly, in the use of authority in the supervisory relationship, the dynamics occurring between the supervisor and supervisee illuminate the impact of organisational culture and structure. Kadushin’s (1992c) large North American study established that both social work supervisors and supervisees experienced discomfort with the managerial and authority roles of supervision. His study also revealed an antipathy by social work supervisors regarding the ‘bureaucratic requirements of middle management’ which translated into ‘hesitancy and ineptness at using their position to confront supervisee’s inadequacies in performance’ (Kadushin, 1992c, p.16). Erera & Lazar’s (1994) research, in line with Kadushin’s (1992c), identified that because of the potential for role ambiguity, the administrative and managerial functions needed to be separated for better outcomes. Three further empirical studies added to the evidence base regarding role conflict in social work supervision (Burack-Weiss & Rosengarten, 1995; Eisikovits et al., 1986; Kadushin, 1992c). Burack-Weiss & Rosengarten’s (1995, p.205) research identified the ‘administrative juggling act’, mediating and balancing the different stakeholder interests including agency needs, external funding requirements, inter/intra agency relationships and the needs of client’. In a similar way other studies were suggesting compatibility between organisational demands and professional requirements in the supervisory relationship (Dill & Bogo, 2009; Froggett, 1998; Froggett, 2000; Gibbs, 2001; Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009). Further examination of the supervisory relationship is needed to better understand this dynamic.

**Organisations as stakeholders**

Organisational culture has been defined as the whole of traditions, values, attitudes, work practices and policies that constitute an ‘all encompassing context in which the work of the organisations is carried out’ (Hawkins & Shohet, 2000, p. 45). Hawkins & Shohet (2000) provide a typology that delineates the impact of a dysfunctional work culture on the supervisory climate. They described the optimal culture as the ‘learning and development culture’ (p. 137) in which there is a high degree of congruence between organisational policies, staff development goals and the actual day-to-day practices which impact on staff. A learning and developmental culture is then informed by a professional discourse, with an expectation that professionals are constantly adding to their store of knowledge and skills, and are augmented and refined through contact with colleagues, other professionals and service users (Davys & Beddoe, 2010). The culture informing the organisation then informs supervision, its value and location.
Whether the rhetoric matches the practice of the organisational culture remains an important question in the contemporary practice environment. The neoliberal context, manifest in risk adverse policies, competitive processes, generic position descriptions and never ending organisational change and restructure impact on the organisational culture. The previous decade has seen a move towards greater recognition of the importance of work cultures with pragmatic concerns about productivity and competence (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Peach & Horner, 2007; Stanley & Goodard, 2002).

It is clear that the influence of the organisational culture adds an integral layer to the complexity of the supervisory relationship (Crocket, 1999; Davys, 2010; Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997a; Preston-Shoot et al., 1999; Ramos-Sanchez, Esnil, Goodwin, Riggs, Touster, Wright & Rodolfa, 2002). For example, the value and costs of undertaking of performance appraisals by supervisors within supervision, discussed earlier in the chapter, is clearly relevant here. The potential for the supervisor’s abuse of power was most evident within performance appraisals because the reward or punishment consequences were accentuated (Ladany et al., 1999; Osborne, 1996; Strom-Gottfried & Corcoran, 1998). The literature suggested that organisational dynamics driven by the interplay between politics, economics, power, ambition and the primary task of care were reproduced in the supervisory relationship and then mirrored in the relationship, between worker and client (Baine, 2009; Froggett, 2000; Hawkins & Shohet, 2000; Stanley & Goodard, 2002).

The literature about the impact of choice in supervisor, relevant to both the primary relationship and the organisational context, was mixed. Building positive relationships can begin with the choice of supervisor by the supervisee, and with the opportunity to choose a supervisor having a positive impact on the supervisory relationship (Allen, Lambert, Pasupuleti, Cluse-Tolar & Ventura, 2004; Bond & Holland, 1998; Morrell, 2001). Lack of choice had ramifications, not only for rapport building, but also for the supervisee’s involvement in negotiating goals and tasks embedded within the organisational context (Ladany et al., 1999). The choice of supervisor was rarely available in the current managerial environment and the matching of a supervisor to a supervisee became, to a large extent, a function of chance (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Sloan, 1999). It was argued by several authors that a lack of choice in the supervisory
relationship can be further exacerbated when the professional supervisor might also be the supervisee’s line manager (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Davys, 2005b; Johns, 2001; Morrell, 2001). An increasing focus on liability and ethical concerns within supervisory relationships was identified as a further impact on organisational culture in the neoliberal context, and the North American experience provided evidence of liability issues within the supervisory relationship. Research undertaken by Falvey (2002, p.73) revealed that, ‘although seldom addressed in the literature, the reality for many practicing supervisors is that their employers fail to consistently provide the time or resources to conduct competent supervision’.

**Service users as stakeholders**

There were conflicting views in the literature about whether the knowledge used to inform the supervisory relationship was similar to the knowledge used in understanding the client/worker relationship, with limited evidence to substantiate either position. Those arguing in favour of this parallel do so from a psychodynamic perspective (Bettmann, 2006; Ganzer, 2007; Ganzer & Ornstein, 1999; Itzhaky, 2001; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Schamess, 2006; Williams, 1997). Those who challenge the parallel do so with limited research to rationalise their position (Ellis & Ladany, 1997; Ladany et al., 1999). There is agreement in the literature nevertheless that social work supervisors use similar skills to those which social workers use in the helping relationship (Ellis & Ladany, 1997; Feltham, 2002; Ladany et al., 1999; Patton & Kivlighan, 1997; Reamer, 2003; York & Denton, 1990). For example, there was evidence in the literature about the growing emphasis of the impact of an optimistic stance on relationships between social workers and service users (Davys & Beddoe, 2010). Ryan et al. (2004) identified personal qualities of the workers, such as self-belief and self efficacy, rather than technical knowledge and skills carried through into an optimistic approach to new and challenging situations. Such parallels warrant a further exploration of the supervisory relationship, given its integral nature to the overall success of supervision.

Historically, the psychodynamic concept of transference has been linked to the supervisory relationship. Transference is understood as the unconscious replication in the supervisory session, between supervisor and supervisee, which mirrors the difficulties that the supervisee may have with their service users. Research suggested
that supervisors recognising transference enactments better understand the core issues
that interfere with the supervisees’ capacity to relate therapeutically to service users
(Ganzer, 2007; Ganzer & Ornstein, 1999). Accordingly, the supervisory process was
markedly enhanced when supervisors consciously studied manifestations of transference
within the supervisory relationship and responded to them (Ganzer & Ornstein, 1999;
Schamess, 2006; Ellis & Ladany, 1997). Corrective interventions, whether purposeful or
unintentional, expanded supervisees’ relational and self-reflective capacities (Schamess,
2006; Williams, 1997). From a psychodynamic perspective, the supervisors disclosure
of counter transference responses to the supervisee strengthens the supervisory alliance,
enabling the client and supervisee to resolve therapeutic impasses (Bettmann, 2006;
Schamess, 2006). Other studies have illustrated that supervisees learn more about
practice from the way supervisors work with them, than from what’s said about actual
practice (Bettmann, 2006; Ganzer, 2007; Reamer, 2003). This perspective assumes
however that the supervisory relationship is safe enough for such disclosures to occur
and raises three contradictions: the importance of self-disclosure in the supervisory
relationship; the nature of regression; and the ‘teach or treat dilemma’, as discussed in
relation to power games played by both supervisor and supervisee (Ganzer & Ornstein,
1999).

There was limited research identified from the literature about the impact of supervision
on service users and this was predominantly North American. This research suggested
that supervisors asking questions about client problems and staff interventions in the
context of client outcomes, rather than focusing on administration improvement,
improved client satisfaction (Gowdy, Rapp & Poertner, 1993; Harkness & Hensley,
1991). Harkness’s research, in particular, was instructive because it provided support for
the link between functions and client outcomes. In the neoliberal context with an
emphasis on managerial functions, ‘best practice’ and ‘client outcomes’, such evidence
indicating client improvements, warrants further investigation.

**Conclusion**

Social work supervision is central to the historical and contemporary tracking of the
professionalisation process. In reviewing the literature, a disjuncturc can be seen
between how social work supervision should be practised and supervision as a contested
practice in a neoliberal environment. In order to better understand the reality of supervision practice the results of earlier surveys have been most comprehensive in providing an empirical base (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Kadushin, 1974, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c; Munson, 1979; O'Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006; Shulman, 1993). Almost 30 years ago, the only Australian survey about the nature and quality of supervision provided the impetus behind the development of the National Standards for Social Work Supervision (Pilcher, 1984). It is timely, therefore to examine how supervision is being practised within the contemporary Australian context and discover whether the rhetoric accurately reflects the realities.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

In the introduction to the thesis I detailed how I came to this research and my interest in exploring the changes I’d witnessed in social work supervision over three decades of practice experience. The focus was on my experience as a supervisee and supervisor, and the experiences of my peers. These conversations with colleagues produced stories about the discourses informing social work supervision. Epistemologies ask questions about knowledge itself and provide a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible (Crotty, 1998). In this research, a social constructionist epistemology was chosen, because this approach acknowledged the complex and dynamic nature of how the world is constructed and interpreted by people in their interactions with each other and broader social systems (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Meaning is constructed as we engage with the world, generating collective meaning-making, influenced by the conventions of language and other social processes. A social constructionist epistemology provides a way to identify and analyse the influence of different discourses in social work supervision (O'Donoghue, 2003; Hair & O'Donoghue, 2009) as well as providing a framework for analysing social work supervision practice from multiple perspectives. Within this thesis these multiple perspectives and discourses within supervision are explored eclectically using a mix of methods.

As identified in Chapter One, the aim of the study was to understand how social work supervision was practised in Australia in order to better understand the discourses informing supervision over time. The literature review revealed limited data about how social work supervision is being provided in Australia, making it now difficult to understand the nature and current provision of supervision and the perspectives of those involved. A focus on practice and context of social work supervision in Australia provides a basis from which to investigate the rhetoric against the contemporary experience. Descriptive evidence about the presence of supervision, as well as an exploration of the nature and quality of supervision from multiple perspectives,
produces a good source of data to explore the discourses informing social work supervision practice. The objective of this research is therefore to focus on this evidence in order to bridge the gap in social work supervision knowledge within an Australian context and to address the three research questions:

1. How is social work supervision currently being practised in Australia?
2. How do the research findings about the experience of supervision compare with supervision as presented in the professional literature?
3. What discourses inform the practice of social work supervision?

**Mixed methods research**

Mixed methods research refers to the use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in the research design (Burke & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; McMurray, Pace & Scott, 2004; Mertens, 2003; Neuman, 2006). This approach is understood as the third research paradigm, acting as a bridge between quantitative and qualitative research, particularly when the phenomenon of focus is complex and under-explored (Hammersley, 1996; Mertens, 2003). The goal of mixed methods is to use both the strengths of quantitative and qualitative research, and minimise their weaknesses in order to offer the best opportunities for answering the research questions (McMurray et al., 2004; Bryman, 2004). Bourdieu (1999, p.690) argues that the fundamental subject/object dichotomy often creates partial or fractured views of social reality. Such an oppositional position potentially disregards the collection of data which works best for answering the research questions. So Bourdieu (1999) cautions that:

The traditional opposition between so called quantitative methods, such as the questionnaire, and qualitative methods, such as the interview, conceal the fact that they are both based on social interaction which takes place within the constraints of these structures. Defenders of these two methodologies ignore these structures, as do the ethno methodologists, whose subjectivist view of the social world leads them to ignore the effects exerted by objective structures not just on the interactions they record and analyse, but also on their own interaction with those who are subjected to their observation and questioning (p.608).
In this research, a quantitative method was used to gather descriptive and exploratory data about current social work supervision practice. A qualitative method using focus groups was adopted to investigate more fully the discourses informing supervision. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings tell a story about supervision, the way it is perceived and practised.

Three different approaches have been identified in mixed methods research including facilitation, complementarity and triangulation (Bryman, 2004; Hammersley, 1996). Facilitation refers to using the data from one method to help inform the other. Complementarity is used when two research strategies are employed so that different aspects of an investigation can be dovetailed. Triangulation uses either quantitative or qualitative research to corroborate the findings. A triangulation approach to mixed methods was used in this research. Data from the quantitative online survey was used to form the basis for the qualitative data collection. In keeping with Rubbin and Babbie’s (2008) assertion that survey research is suitable for descriptive studies, an online quantitative survey was used to access social workers views across the country about how social work supervision was being practised. The quantitative analysis of this data then formed the basis of discussion in focus groups of supervisors and supervisees.

The critique of mixed methods has focused on an epistemological argument, where different research methods require particular epistemological or ontological commitments. Such a belief in consistency emerged from a view about the incompatibility between epistemology and choice of research methods, or the ‘incompatibility thesis’ (Burke & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.14). This thesis posits that qualitative and quantitative research paradigms cannot, or should not, be mixed (Howe, 1988). Initially I had been drawn toward a qualitative research design in responding to the research questions. The more I investigated the existing social work supervision research however the more I appreciated the limited studies that had actually mapped social work supervision practice in Australia. Importantly, there were inconsistencies in the empirical research that had been undertaken (Spence et al., 2001). It seemed important to broadly understand the experiences of social workers across the country, and then use this to
inform the focus group discussion. An online survey was therefore chosen to gather as much information as possible to better understand the practices of supervision. Focus group discussions were then used to deepen the understanding of participants’ perspectives.

**Overview of the research design**

There were five stages in the research design (Table 1). Stage 1 was the development and piloting of the online survey instrument. Stage 2 involved the collection of the quantitative data using the online survey. Stage 3 was the analysis of the online survey data, involving four types of analysis including: preliminary data analysis; exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to establish how different items were answered and categorised; multivariate analysis to explore patterns across the independent variables; and thematic/NVIVO text analysis of the open-ended questions within the survey. Stage 4 of the research design was the collection of qualitative focus group data and Stage 5 incorporated the analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the survey textual data and the focus group interviews. The following section provides more detailed information about each stage of the research.

**Stage 1: Development and piloting of online survey instrument**

**Rationale for the online survey instrument**

In line with the research questions, the aim of the online survey was to collect descriptive data about social work supervision practice in Australia. Survey research uses a cross sectional research design where data is collected, in this case online, enabling completion by multiple participants at one point in time across Australia. Such an approach aimed at collecting a body of quantitative data using multiple variables which were then examined to detect patterns of association (Bryman, 2004; De Vaus, 2002; McMurray et al., 2004; Monette, Sullivan & DeJong, 1986). A higher level of reliability in the data may be produced when structured methods of enquiry are used to control the degree to which participants may interpret what is meant in the online survey items: A researcher should select methods for data generation that maintains sufficient
intellectual distance so that the research can be conducted in ways that do not set out to prove what the researcher already believes (D'Cruz & Jones, 2004). One of the strengths in online survey research is flexibility in gaining high response rates and thus increasing the justification for making more generalisations about the general population (Monette et al., 1986).

Table 1: Five stages of research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research stage</th>
<th>Purpose of stage</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1</strong> Development and piloting of online survey instrument</td>
<td>To ensure validity in the instrument</td>
<td>Review literature on social work supervision, existing supervision surveys, develop pilot and incorporate feedback into online survey instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2</strong> Online data collection</td>
<td>To collect descriptive data from online survey</td>
<td>Online survey went live and data collected into SPSS 16 by host.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3a</strong> Preliminary analysis of online survey data</td>
<td>To identify the mix of work sectors for qualitative stage of research</td>
<td>To scan the preliminary online data and determine the mix of work sectors represented by respondents to inform focus group participants. Ethics application developed for qualitative stage of research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3b</strong> Quantitative data analysis</td>
<td>To analyse the descriptive data from the online survey</td>
<td>Univariate analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3c</strong> Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)</td>
<td>To conceptualise theoretical factors from the online survey</td>
<td>Use EFA to validate factors of supervision from the online survey data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3d</strong> Factor inter-correlation</td>
<td>To explore the level and direction of linear association between the factors</td>
<td>Determine the Pearson inter-correlation coefficients between pairs of factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3e</strong> Multivariate analysis of quantitative data</td>
<td>To explore patterns and correlations across variables from the online survey</td>
<td>Identify significant correlations between factors and Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3f</strong> Qualitative analysis of online survey text data</td>
<td>To analyse online survey text data and explore emerging themes</td>
<td>Thematic/NVIVO analysis of effectiveness online survey text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 4</strong> Qualitative data collection</td>
<td>To collect qualitative data from six focus groups</td>
<td>Use the outcomes of sectors mix in Stage 3a to recruit, inform and facilitate six focus groups across three sectors: the statutory, the non-government sector and health and counselling. Separate focus groups for supervisors and supervisees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 5</strong> Qualitative data analysis</td>
<td>To examine the qualitative and quantitative data for themes</td>
<td>Undertake a thematic and then NVIVO analysis of qualitative data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online survey design

As discussed initially in Chapter 1 the large scale empirical studies on social work supervision provided the best descriptive picture of how social work supervision was practised at a particular point in time. Earlier large scale surveys were used to inform the design of the online survey in this research (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Kadushin, 1974, 1992b, 1992c; O'Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006; Munson, 1993; Pilcher, 1984). An evaluation of each of these study’s designs, methods, samples and theoretical grounding provided a picture of their strengths and limitations. Table 2 summarises these aspects. All of these surveys used self-reported data which had the problem of subjectivity impacting on both the validity and reliability of these tools. However it was assessed that the strengths of the supervision survey tools evaluated outweighed this limitation. In particular O’Donoghue, Munford and Trlin’s (2005 & 2006) survey tool was adapted because of its consideration of context and culture and its theoretical underpinning. Both of which were in line with the theoretical framework used in this research. An outline of what parts of O'Donoghue, Munford and Trlin’s (2005 & 2006) survey tool was retained and discarded is detailed later in this chapter.

Table 2: Evaluation study of large scale surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Theoretical Grounding</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kadushin, 1974, 1992b and 1992c</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Random stratified sample</td>
<td>Positivist</td>
<td>Sample size and national survey</td>
<td>Response rate and age of the study in terms of neoliberal context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munson, 1979a, 1979b and 1981</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Random stratified sample</td>
<td>Positivist</td>
<td>Sample size and tool development</td>
<td>Response rate and age of the study in terms of neoliberal context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper and Anglem, 2003</td>
<td>Supervision model mapping</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
<td>Random stratified sample</td>
<td>Social Constructionist</td>
<td>Accounting for context and culture</td>
<td>Interprofessional mental health focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Donoghue, Munford &amp; Trlin, 2005 and 2006</td>
<td>Quantitative design informing qualitative</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
<td>Random stratified sample</td>
<td>Pragmatism and Social Constructionist</td>
<td>Accounting for context and culture</td>
<td>Findings were reported perspectives rather than directly observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilcher, 1984</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Random stratified sample</td>
<td>Positivist</td>
<td>First and only Australian statewide social work supervision research</td>
<td>Age of the study in terms of neoliberal context and generalisation of the study results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study adapted O’Donoghue (2005) design used in his national New Zealand supervision survey. When the O’Donoghue et al. (2005) survey was submitted to Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test, it achieved ‘a score of 0.818, which was indicative of internal consistency and reliability’ (p.47). One of the key differences between O’Donoghue’s survey and the current research was its mode of delivery. This research was delivered online and O’Donoghue’s was paper based.

An online survey was chosen to collect quantitative data because pragmatically it involved lower costs, faster response rates, more attractive formats and unrestricted geographical coverage (Bryman, 2004; De Vaus, 2002; McAuliffe, 2005; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). De Vaus (2002) argues specifically that online surveys leave fewer questions unanswered. Given that the proposed research was both descriptive and exploratory, an online survey was the practical choice. The format of the online survey drew specifically on earlier Australian research, which had used an online design and the Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) website as a recruitment point (McAuliffe, 2005). McAuliffe’s study looked at how ethics informed social work practice and was the first Australian study conducted online using the Australian Association of Social Work’s, website. McAuliffe’s research was successful in accessing over 600 research participants and as such represented about 10% of the AASW’s membership, placing it in line with size expectations for online data collection samples (cited in De Vaus, 2002).

Once developed the survey was reviewed for any problems with content and structure. The feedback was discussed and changes made accordingly. The draft online survey was then piloted for face validity and user friendliness (De Vaus, 2002). The pilot group included a mix of academic social workers, human service managers and practitioners who had indicated interest in supervision and in the online survey development. All provided anonymous feedback during the piloting process. The feedback included suggestions about rewriting the introductory text; reducing demographic categories; reordering the initial sequencing of questions for participants not currently being supervised; standardising language used in questions; clarifying ambiguous questions; changing the formatting; adding additional categories to some items; adding more items to the scaled questions; separating out questions which dealt with more than one idea; and changing the format for participants skipping particular questions. After these
changes were made a draft version of the online survey was then trialled, reviewed, checked and edited in response to the feedback from individuals participating in the pilot (Bryman, 2004; De Vaus, 2002). The survey instrument was then finalised.

**Participants**

Three recruitment strategies were employed to access social workers from regions across Australia representing diverse sectors and practice contexts. Survey advertisements were placed on the front page of the AASW website, so that both members and non-members could participate in the research. This also occurred via the internal email systems of Centrelink and the Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS). A copy of the advertisement is included in Appendix 3b. Secondly, advertisements were placed in AASW national and state bulletins, professional newsletters, regional, state and national network newsletters throughout Australia including specialist newsletters directed at mental health social workers and family therapists. The third strategy was informal distribution of the online survey weblink through meetings and organisations including the biannual Australian Heads of Social Work Schools meeting; family violence organisations; hospitals; housing and income support services; community health and mental health teams; women’s services; education services; counselling agencies; rural and remote networks; indigenous networks; immigration and settlement agencies; indigenous organisations; and social work field educators.

**Online survey content**

There were two separate sections in the online survey for supervisees and supervisors respectively. A copy of the final online survey instrument can be found in Appendix 2. Instructions at the beginning of the survey informed participants about its structure and content. On completion participants were asked to confirm their participation in the research. Each section of the online survey will now be discussed in detail.
Section 1: Supervisee questions
There were seven parts to section 1 of the survey:

1. Demographic characteristics of participants
2. Structure of supervision
3. Content of supervision sessions
4. Philosophy/values informing supervision
5. Models of supervision used in supervision
6. Relationship between supervisor and supervisee
7. Effectiveness of supervision

In parts 1 and 2 of the survey, closed responses were provided for participants with an option to incorporate ‘other’ text responses on some items. Parts 3-6 of the survey used Likert frequency scales, with 1 representing Never, 2 Rarely, 3 Occasionally, 4 Often and 5 Frequently. A multiple indicator scale was used to uncover the complexity of each dimension, increase the reliability of the measure and enable greater precision of the measure (De Vaus, 2002). Part 7 of the survey used open-ended questions requiring text responses. Levels of missing data on survey items ranged from 0.7% to 23.6% of respondents.

Demographic characteristics of participants
Demographic questions in the online survey included closed response questions about gender, age, ethnic origin, professional qualification, current employment, specific sector of employment, field of practice, length of time in current employment, nature of employment arrangement, state or territory of employment, geographic area of employment and work activity which takes up dominant time in current employment.

Structure of supervision
Questions about structure of supervision included the primary type of supervision, most useful type, function of supervision, demographics of current supervisor, employer supervision policy, level of difficulty and reasons for difficulty in accessing supervision, position of the supervisor in the organisation, level of choice with respect to a supervisor, frequency of supervision and the nature and parameters of supervision
contracts. These questions were adapted from Pilcher (1984), Munson (1981), O’Donoghue et al. (2005) and Cooper and Anglem (2003). Three additional questions were added to the structure of the survey to gather further data about the context of the current research being conducted. The questions inquired as to whether the respondent’s supervisor was also the respondent’s line manager; how the respondent’s manager received feedback about their supervision; and whether feedback about supervision from the supervisor was required by the participant’s employing organisation.

Content of supervision sessions
There were two groups of items in the content the online survey. The first related to administrative functions of supervision and the second to educational and support functions. The literature reviewed in Chapter three suggested that social work supervision had changed in the neoliberal context, with more focus on administrative functions compared with other functions. The content items in the survey were used to identify what was being discussed in supervision, and provide comparison data if content differed when taking into account other variables, such as demographics and structure of supervision. Figure 1 provides the items included under supervision content.

Philosophy/values informing supervision
The philosophy/values section of the survey related to frequency of discussion about the principles underpinning the social work profession in supervision. These items were adapted from Cooper and Anglem’s (2003) and O’Donoghue et al.’s (2005) survey. Chapter three highlighted concerns that managerial discourses may be privileged over professional ones. Collecting data about the frequency of a particular philosophy and/or values discussions in supervision enables comparisons across different demographic variables. Figure 2 includes the philosophy/values items in the online survey.

Circle the number that best describes the extent to which the following items are discussed in supervision.
1. Never
2. Rarely (every twelve months)
3. Occasionally (every six months)
4. Often (every three months)
5. Frequently (every session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management of your work</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients/ issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social differences, for example: gender, sexuality, age, religion,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with colleagues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My wellbeing and personal development as a worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice standards and ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific skill development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory with practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocols/policies relating to your work environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation relating to your work environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and management of your work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of working with trauma over extended periods</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/ education strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development requirements or opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal issues impacting your work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1: Supervision content**
Circle the number that best describes the extent to which the following items are discussed in supervision.

1. Never
2. Rarely (every twelve months)
3. Occasionally (every six months)
4. Often (every three months)
5. Frequently (every session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people’s rights and interests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tensions between your organisational role and your role as advocate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocation of social resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical moral or civic responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: Philosophy/values in supervision**

**Models adopted in supervision**

The models of supervision used in this part of the online survey included items relating to different supervisory approaches. These items were adapted from Cooper and Anglem’s (2003) and O’Donoghue et al’s (2005) earlier research. Ten items included critical reflection; narrative; feminist; strengths based; managerial; psychodynamic;
systemic; problem solving; task centred; and developmental. The data from this part of the online survey describes the frequency of different models in order to identify the differences between supervision models used and other variables.

The relationship between supervisor and supervisee
This component of the survey explored different aspects of the supervisory relationship. Most of these questions were adapted from Cooper and Anglem’s (2003) and O’Donoghue et al’s (2005) surveys; however additional items were included from Munson’s (1993) Supervision Analysis Questionnaire (SAQ) which explored the power and authority dimension of the supervisory relationship. The data from this part of the online survey describes the frequency of different aspects of supervisory relationships and the differences across variables. Figure 3 includes the supervisory relationship items in the online survey.

Effectiveness of supervision
Chapter three identified that there was limited evidence regarding the effectiveness of supervision. Cooper and Anglem’s (2003) research yielded useful data about the benefits of supervision from multiple perspectives including the supervisee, clients and organisations. The effectiveness questions were included in the survey to provide the opportunity for participants to record their views of the helpfulness of the supervision they received. Six open-ended text questions were included about the participant view on the effectiveness of supervision. The questions included the perceived benefits of supervision for service users, the organisation in which they were employed, and for the respondent. Other questions explored the quality of supervision; the training necessary for supervisory effectiveness, and a final hypothetical question about the impact of not having supervision. Responses to these questions yielded 180 pages of textual data. The methods used to code these responses will be discussed later in the chapter.

Circle the number that best describes the extent to which the following items are discussed in supervision.
1. Never
2. Rarely (every twelve months)
3. Occasionally (every six months)
4. Often (every three months)
5. Frequently (every session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The teaching of new skills for practice</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving and receiving feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving reassurance and support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on the negative aspects of practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my client strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing primarily on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on safe and ethical practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity of work rather than quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional and/or organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing an unsatisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions in my practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling challenged by my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing predominantly on organisational requirements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of my supervisor other than at set meeting times</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling angry with my supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3: Supervisory relationships*
Reliability of online survey

The internal reliability of the factors were tested using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The factors achieved a score ranging from 0.738 to 0.951 and are presented in Table 11, 13, 15 and 17. The scores are indicative of internal consistency and reliability (Pallant, 2007).

Section 2: Supervisor questions

The questions in section 2 of the online survey were for supervisee participants who were also supervisors. There were 239 online survey participants who identified as both supervisees and supervisors and completed this section of the survey. Both open and closed questions were included. The closed questions sought demographic information about the length of time the respondent had been supervising; whether supervision was part of their job description; whether their organisation had a policy on supervision; numbers of supervisees supervised weekly; highest level of training in supervision; and length of time since most recent training. The closed questions asked participants to rank their own perceived effectiveness as a supervisor and then, hypothetically to rank their effectiveness from their supervisee’s perspective. The next section details the collection of data from the online survey.

Stage 2: Online survey data collection

The format for the online survey was configured by an online web survey host: Strategic Data WebSurvey. The role of an online host is to ensure the confidentiality of all participants whilst also retaining survey integrity in the process. The researcher worked with the host to set up the online survey process including developing and formatting the text required in introducing the online survey; its aims, format and instructions for use; developing and formatting online survey questions; and log-on advice for potential participants. The online survey was then configured by the host for piloting to detect problems before going live on the internet. The finalised online survey setup with a tailored URL was placed on the home page of the AASW website by the host. Hard copies of the online survey were provided to the host for distribution, if potential participants did not have access to the internet, or did not want to complete the survey.
online. There were only two hard copies of the completed survey returned to the host. The survey was withdrawn from the AASW website on December 2006 for preliminary analysis and then removed permanently in February 2007.

**Stage 3: Quantitative online survey data analysis**

There were six stages in the online survey data analysis as identified in Table 1.

(a) Preliminary data analysis
(b) Quantitative data analysis
(c) Exploratory factor analysis
(d) Intercorrelations between factors
(e) Multivariate analysis
(f) Online survey text analysis

This analysis of the quantitative data served three functions. The first was to determine who had responded to the online survey in order to replicate this cohort balance in the qualitative focus groups; the second function was to ensure that the instrument was measuring what was intended; and the third was to provide descriptive statistics to answer the first research question about how social workers were being supervised in Australia. Advice as to the appropriate statistical analyses was sought from the University of Melbourne’s Statistical Consulting Centre.

**Stage 3a: Preliminary online survey data analysis**

Stage 3a was the preliminary online survey data analysis which occurred in January 2007 after the online survey had been on the web for three months. The purpose of the preliminary data analysis was to determine the mix of work sectors that participants represented. This was in preparation for the university ethics application to conduct the qualitative focus groups for stage 4 of the research. The mix of participants formed the basis for recruitment of focus group participants (Stage 5).
Stage 3b: Quantitative data analysis for closed online survey questions

The final online survey data analysis occurred in February 2007 after the survey was removed from the AASW website. Six hundred and seventy-five participants completed online surveys prior to its removal. The process of data analysis involved six major activities as outlined by Sarantakos (2005). These included data preparation, counting, grouping, relating, predicting and statistical testing. The data was entered into SPSS 16 for analysis and a cross check was undertaken to ensure accuracy. Once removed, a descriptive analysis of the data for each question was undertaken. For nominal and ordinal variables, this analysis involved frequencies and percentages, whereas for scale data further analysis was undertaken. This was followed by cross tabulations for the independent demographic and structure variables. A statistical analysis followed the descriptive analysis and included the use of Chi-squared and T-tests.

Stage 3c: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The size of the sample (675 respondents) lent itself to exploring the quantitative data in order to detect patterns and interrelationships among a large set of variables in the survey items representing different aspects of the supervisory experience. The four original survey categories included items about the:

1. content of supervision (16 items)
2. philosophy and values informing supervision (14 items)
3. approaches to supervision (11 items)
4. relationship between supervisor and supervisee (24 items)

The purpose of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was to uncover dimensions for a set of items, referred to as latent factors. Burn (2000) explains that, ‘Factor analysis is a very popular and frequently used way of reducing variables to a few factors, by grouping variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other together to form a factor’ (p.272). The items associated with these latent factors are then further conceptualised as theoretical factors based on the wording of the items that measure the greatest variance for the latent factor (i.e. items with the largest correlation coefficients) as well as theoretical interpretability (i.e. item groupings making sense in relation to the current literature). For example, in the survey if you are receiving (or not receiving) reassurance and support, then it is likely (or unlikely) that there is tolerance and
patience in your supervisory relationship, or a focus on strengths of the supervisees. Together these kinds of items are likely to reflect a latent factor associated with the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee. The items associated with each latent factor need to have the highest correlations with each other, compared to items loading on other latent factors, and multiple loading items should be avoided for clarity.

The EFA reduced the data through a matrix of intercorrelations by grouping items that had been answered similarly by respondents and thus established a smaller set of factors relating to supervision. The factors generated were then subjected to an internal reliability analysis and named according to the grouping of items as well as theoretical interpretability. The grouping of items was therefore differently named as factors from the initial categorisation of the survey. The EFA was undertaken to highlight statistical significance and gain insight into differences across the data. There are various types of factor analysis. Thompson and Daniel (1996) suggest that authors ‘explicitly cite the extraction method and offer a rationale for a given selection’ (p.201). For this study, the maximum likelihood estimation procedure was selected as it is recommended for use with ordered categorical data (Conroy, Motl, & Hall, 2000). Direct Oblimin was used as the rotation method as this assumes there will be some relationship between the resultant dimensions: a common outcome in educational or psychological research (Cattell, Khanna & Harman, 1969; Clarkson & Jennrich, 1988; Jennrich & Sampson, 1966).

The suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using a correlation matrix to determine the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequancy (KMO) and Bartlett’s test of Sphericity (Pallant, 2007). Tabaachnick and Fidell (2007) also suggested that it was not the overall sample size that was of concern, with respect to the suitability of data for factor analysis, but rather the ratio of groups to items. This was also assessed before further analysis. The final sample size was 515 in this survey and the ratio of cases (factors) to items (survey items) was approximately 8.2, which makes it suitable for factor analysis.

The scree plot and parallel analysis do not identify which items are associated with particular factors. Further analysis is required using the pattern and structure matrix generated from the Direct Oblimin rotation (Table 1) detailing the pattern matrix. Both
the pattern and structure matrix identified the items associated with the latent factors, but it was the correlation coefficients from the pattern matrix that were used to identify the strength of the relationship between the items and the latent factors. The structure matrix supports the naming of the factor associated with the latent factor. Item reduction from the latent factors was also conducted for correlation coefficients less than 0.30, when items loaded strongly across more than one factor, and when items did not contribute to the internal reliability of any of the factors identified. The latent factors were then named, according to the grouping of items.

**Stage 3d: Intercorrelations between factors**

To explore the linear association between the factors arising from the EFA, Pearson bivariate correlations were calculated using SPSS. Pearson’s coefficient of correlation is the most common measure of correlation and is symbolised by the letter r, and has a value between -1 and +1. The sign of the correlation indicates the direction of association. A positive correlation between two factors means that a high score on one factor tends to be associated with a high score on the other, and vice versa for low scores. A negative correlation between two factors means that a high score on one factor tends to be associated with a low score on the other. A correlation around zero means there is no association between the factors (Pallant, 2007). How to interpret the strength of the association varies among authors though Pallant (2007) provides a guideline based on Cohen (1988). Small association, r=0.10 to 0.29; medium association, r=0.30-0.49 and large association r=0.50-1.0.

**Stage 3e: Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)**

Once the four factors were statistically identified, a MANOVA was used to identify the significant differences between the dependent variable (factors) and independent variables (structure and demographics). A MANOVA was chosen because of the large size of the sample as well as adjusting for increased risk of Type 1 error (Pallant, 2007). The independent demographic and structure variables proved suitable to conduct MANOVA’s. They were conducted across factors.
**Stage 3f: Analysis of online survey textual data**

Analysis of survey textual data related to open ended online survey questions and generated 180 pages. This data was analysed used thematic analysis initially and confirmed by NVIVO 7 to ensure all online survey quotes were included (QSR, 2006). NVIVO 7 is a computer software package used for qualitative data analysis (Bryman, 2004; QSR, 2006). A thematic analysis was undertaken to identify patterns and themes from the text produced by the online survey participants (Bryman, 2004; Neuman, 2006; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). There were several steps to qualitative thematic data analysis including:

- transcription of online survey text;
- checking, editing and reviewing online survey text;
- analysis and further interpretation;
- generalisation; and
- verification of the findings.

After thoroughly reviewing the responses, the online survey questions were categorised according to question content; the data pertaining to the benefits of supervision for service users were coded under one theme, ‘benefits of supervision for service users’ and subsequent questions under separate themes, ‘benefits of supervision for organisation’ and ‘benefits of supervision for the worker’. Comments under the ‘benefits of supervision for service users’ theme included ‘improves quality of service to clients’ and ‘correction of mistakes’. From specific comments, sub themes were identified such as *accountability of practice*. This subtheme included comments such as ‘quality of service’, ‘professional and personal accountability for actions is key’ and ‘a degree of accountability in the service they are receiving’, A further subtheme under ‘benefits of supervision for clients’ was *supervisory relationships* with variations under the subtheme indicating comments regarding both positive and negative relationships, for example: ‘Great if the relationship is good’.
From the thematic analysis a number of categories were identified relating to the questions asked of the supervisee. The data was then entered into NVIVO to recode the initial thematic analysis and to ensure relevant data was not overlooked in the thematic analysis (Ozkan, 2004; QSR, 2006). The initial analysis of text data from the online survey informed the focus group interview schedule.

**Stage 4: Qualitative data collection**

From the preliminary quantitative analysis from the online survey and comparison with national AASW figures, six focus groups were drawn from each of the following sectors and separate groups for supervisors and supervisees:

1. statutory
2. non statutory
3. health/counselling

The factors identified from the EFA formed the basis of discussion for focus groups with supervisors and supervisees. The focus group discussions explored how individual social work supervisors and supervisees responded to the picture presented from the online survey, and compared this data with focus group participants’ experience of supervision. A semi-structured group interview process was used to acknowledge that not all important questions can be known to the researcher prior to collecting the data (Sarantakos, 2005; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). The factors, as developed out of the quantitative data analysis informed the development of the semi-structured interview schedule for focus groups. This schedule can be found in Appendix 9c.

Focus group interviews were used to complement the quantitative online survey providing the opportunity for more in-depth conversation with supervisors and supervisees about aspects covered in the online survey. In the focus group context, participants were able to listen to one another and then, after listening, potentially contribute something further to the discussion, enabling a greater variety of views to be canvassed and debated. Further, the interviews enabled individuals within the group to voice other issues deemed important to the discussion (Creswell, 2009; Rubin & Babbie, 2008; Alston & Bowles, 2002).
Using focus groups in this research enabled a study of the processes, whereby meaning about social work supervision was constructed collectively (Bryman, 2004; Wampold & Holloway, 1997). Another key reason for using the qualitative method was to enable a more finely grained analysis of the language used and the ways in which participants discussed particular issues about social work supervision. This facilitated the detection of nuances and emphases as the discussion took place (Creswell, 2009).

The work categories identified in the preliminary analysis of the online survey data in Stage 3a provided the composition of the focus groups. The groups were made up of participants representing each work sector, from those responding to the online survey in the preliminary analysis of the quantitative data. As such, the combination of participants in the qualitative data collection, were representative of statutory, non-statutory and health/counselling sectors. Two focus groups from each sector were included with separate supervisor and supervisee groups. There were between 4 to 12 members participating in each of these groups.

Previous research suggests different perspectives emerge when supervisors and supervisees respond to questions about supervision (Ellis & Ladany, 1997). Focus group interviews were chosen specifically to encourage discussion and challenge and debate the key factors identified from the quantitative analysis (Bryman, 2004). As such, focus groups offered the opportunity to observe how social workers collectively made sense of the phenomenon of social work supervision. In this way the focus group discussions reflected the processes through which meaning was constructed in everyday life, in line with a social constructionist view of reality. The focus groups therefore generated a more detailed exploration of the content identified from the survey analysis.

**Focus group participants**

Onwuegbuzie and Teddie (2003) discuss pragmatism as a rationale for choice of participants in research. In line with this, I made a pragmatic decision to undertake focus groups in Victoria, with a configuration of sectors that represented the same sectors of survey participants. Approaches were then made to chief executive officers or senior management levels of statutory, non-statutory and health/counselling organisations about participating in research focus groups (Appendix 9). All organisations invited agreed to be involved in the research, with one non-government
organisation withdrawing at a later date because of a potential lack of focus group participants. Another NGO indicated their interest in being a part of the research and replaced the participants who had withdrawn.

Managers across programmes emailed all potential social work participants within their organisation and attached a research information sheet, a copy of the consent to participate form, and advertising about the focus groups. Appendices 9a and 9b include the information sheet and consent forms emailed to all potential participants prior to the focus group interviews. The email noted the voluntary nature of the research and assured potential participants that they could withdraw from the research at any time. Dates and venues were set for the focus groups in convenient organisational spaces. At the focus group meetings participants were provided with a verbal and written overview of the research. Some participants had already completed the written consent and demographic information prior to the meeting and others had not. Participants who had not completed the written documentation did so at the beginning of the focus group discussion. Each focus group ran for between 60 to 90 minutes.

**Demographic profile of focus group participants**

The participants self-selected to join the focus groups. There were six focus groups including one supervisor and one supervisee group from each sector. There were 17 supervisees who participated in the focus groups. Most of the supervisees were women, equally distributed across the decades from ages 20 to 60, identifying themselves as predominantly Australian and with most having completed an undergraduate qualification in social work. In the main, they were individually supervised with female supervisors, and half reported no difficulties accessing supervision with the other half identifying some difficulties. Most were supervised by a social worker and not their line manager. Table 3 provides a summary of the demographics of each focus group participant.
Table 3: Demographic profile of supervisees in focus groups from statutory, non-statutory and health/counselling organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statutory</th>
<th>Non-Statutory</th>
<th>Health/ Counselling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentinian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional qualification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of current employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-24 months</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of supervision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender of supervisor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectation of supervision in job description</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difficulties accessing supervision</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisors position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor also line manager</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency of supervision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Nil/Minimal)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Demographic profile of supervisors in focus groups from statutory, non-statutory and health/counselling organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statutory</th>
<th>Non-Statutory</th>
<th>Health/ Counselling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional qualification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of current employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-24 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of supervision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numbers of staff supervised</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training undertaken as supervisor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short course internally</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short course externally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field education training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject in MSW</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Your supervisor’s position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor also line manager</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency of supervision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

98
There were 13 supervisors who participated in focus groups. Most were women, equally distributed across the age range from 20 to 60 years, identifying themselves as predominantly Australian with most having completed an undergraduate qualification in social work. Most supervisors had been in their current employment for more than two years providing mostly individual supervision. Half supervised between one and five supervisees and all identified their position as managers. Table 4 provides a summary of the demographics of each focus group participant.

**Qualitative focus group data analysis**

The process for thematic analysis of the survey text data was outlined earlier in the chapter. A similar process was undertaken for the analysis of focus group interviews. The focus group data however was entered into NVIVO without the thematic analysis occurring manually. NVIVO makes the coding and retrieval process more efficient, and given the size of the data set from both the focus group and online survey text, this was pertinent. Further, this data entry enhances the transparency of the data analysis and ensures that data is not overlooked in the process.

In reading though hard copies of all focus group interviews tree nodes were developed for each of the four factors; *support in the supervisory relationship*; *accountability and monitoring practice*; *social work values*; and *models of supervision practice*.

The passage below provides an example of how coding was undertaken from the original transcripts. Three groups of tree nodes were identified from this passage (Figure 4):

- *accountability and monitoring practice*
- *models of supervision practice*
- *support in the supervisory relationship*
Supervisor: I have had four supervisors since I started at? The new structure (change) that we have got now, the divisions has meant that supervision has become much more line management and about accountability (line management), it is certainly not clinical where I think in the past I would have been able to have a bit of clinical supervision. So I think the structure has changed, it is certainly supportive (relationship), but it is probably going to become about ticking off have you done those jobs (accountability) you are supposed to have? It is not due to the new system but rather it is the structure (changed structure) we have in the organisation where the structure we have of the senior management team and their relationships with the program managers is such that they are so run off their feet that all they want to know is that we’ve done our job (organisational hierarchy). I don’t think they want to know so much how we have done them just that we have done them (accountability) and I think that is the shift in how the organisation has changed (change). Whereas before there probably would have been much more time for reflective stuff (critical reflection) about what it has been like for me to deal with 10 people who have disclosed they have been sexually abused (debriefing). I think it is the times; we have entered into a different sort of a world (values) here.

Ronnie: Do you think it is a world that represents the work generally or it is organisation specific?

Supervisor: It’s just more managerial (managerial)

Figure 4: Excerpt from original transcripts

Within each group the following codes were used to code the data:

- how line management impacts on supervision
- how the organisational hierarchy impacts on supervision

The remainder of the analysis occurred in this way to capture the content of the focus group interviews.

Ethical considerations

During the recruitment of online survey participants for this research there were several ethical considerations. These included engaging with national and state organisations during the recruitment of online survey participants and focus group participants. The organisations were the AASW, Centrelink and in Victoria, the Department of Human Services (DHS) including child protection, disability services and juvenile justice. As noted earlier, I had wanted to develop a stratified random sampling of potential social workers for the online survey using the AASW
membership as the pool. The selection would have been based on a representative sample mirroring the profile of the AASW membership. This was not possible and so permission was gained from the AASW to use their website as a general point of recruitment.

Ethics approval was granted by the Victoria University Ethics Committee (Appendix 1). In the application, the AASW homepage was identified as the website on which the survey would be lodged and university ethics clearance was given on 19th April, 2007 (HRETH07/85, Appendix 8). Separate ethics approvals was obtained from Centrelink (Appendix 4) and DHS (Appendix 5). A condition of both the Centrelink and DHS ethical clearance was that the identification of the organisation was anonymous in the online survey and that the identifying feature was only the organisation’s statutory nature. These conditions did not compromise the identification of the participants’ workplace data in the research or data analysis.

The researcher approached chief executive officers and senior managers, from representative organisations in the three Victorian sectors, to determine each organisation’s interest in participating in the research focus groups. Once organisations accepted the invitation, organisational ethics applications for participation of their staff in the focus groups was required and completed for two organisations: the statutory and non-statutory organisation (Appendix 4 & 5). The health and counselling organisation did not require an ethics clearance for their staff to participate in the focus groups because the research already had an ethics clearance from Victoria University. One non-statutory organisation was unable to provide the required number of focus participants so another non-statutory organisation was approached. An ethics application (Appendix 6) was then completed and submitted to this non-statutory organisation for approval. Focus group participants from all organisations, volunteered to be interviewed as part of the research.
**Strengths and weaknesses of the research design**

Inevitably there are strengths and weaknesses in any research methodology, often found inherently within the nature of the approach, for example generalisability, or questions relating to meaning. Beyond these general limitations however there were specific limitations identified within the particular context of this study relating to both design and process.

Within the context of the quantitative component of study the development of the online survey presented challenges at different points of the research process. Although the online survey drew from other social work supervision surveys, further changes could have strengthened the instrument. Modifications, for example, could have reduced the choices offered to online survey participants. Limiting the choices to single, rather than multiple options, would have provided for increased comparative analysis. For example, questions that related to work sector, field of practice or work activity, type of supervision and function of supervision, enabled the participants to choose more than one response. Although more accurate, multiple responses made the data analysis in this research more complicated and open to interpretation. Alternatively, future research should also include a question about the level of usefulness of each type of supervision, and the extent to which informal supervision is happening among peers and its level of usefulness.

Initially the researcher approached the AASW with the intention of using a stratified random sampling of members for inclusion in the online survey research. A process was adopted by O’Donoghue et al. (2005, 2006) in New Zealand during 2004 and by Pilcher in 1981 (1984). This did not occur so the online survey was attached to the public home page of the AASW website. This meant that both members and non-members of the AASW could potentially access the online survey without having to be a member to log on to the AASW homepage. The lack of stratified random sampling remains problematic methodologically because the responses may not be representative of Australian social workers. This factor impacts the generalisability of the data.
In the context of the qualitative study, the numbers of workers who agreed to participate in the focus groups differed from the numbers of people who actually turned up on the day of the interviews. Over 10 workers had agreed initially to participate in each of the focus groups. However, a full complement of 10 participants only occurred in two groups, as highlighted in the demographic profile of focus group members.

Finally, the volume of data collected in the study created enormous data analysis challenges. This related predominantly to the length of the online survey instrument. The revamped instrument, produced after the EFA, provides a more valid, reliable and succinct instrument to enable future researchers to easily administer the online survey in a more user friendly way.

The mixed methods approach used in this research has attempted to mediate the limitations of any one methodology. In using both qualitative and quantitative approaches I hoped to capture a range of elements that construct a story of social work supervision and how it is practised across Australia. Bourdieu (1999) argues that both quantitative and qualitative methods are based on social interactions taking place within the bounds of these structures. As such, the value of mixed methods enriches social work research. While bringing methods together can be complex conceptually, in this research mixed methods responded well to the research questions about supervision practice, the discourses informing it, and the comparison between contemporary practice and the ways in which it is presented in the literature. Supervision practice is an aspect of social work practice, much written about, but with limited empirical evidence to theorise. Gathering the practice detail, as collected from the online survey, helps to provide greater depth to our understanding of current supervision practice. The focus groups provide data that help us to explore the perspectives of the people involved. The methods therefore complement and inform each other.
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS – THE QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

The quantitative study has provided a large data set that responds particularly well to the first two research questions:

1. How is social work supervision currently being practised in Australia?
2. How do the research findings about the experience of supervision compare with supervision as presented in the professional literature?

Throughout the presentation of the results, comparisons are made between the findings from the research data and the literature reviewed to identify consistencies and inconsistencies between both. In this chapter some qualitative data from the survey text is included to animate some of the quantitative results. The third research question that relates to the discourses informing the practice of supervision will be responded to in Chapter Six where the focus group data is used to attend to the participants’ use of language and examples about their supervision experiences.

This quantitative analysis of the survey data provides findings from Stages 3a-e of the research including the (a) preliminary data analysis; (b) the quantitative data analysis; (c) the exploratory factor analysis; (d) intercorrelations between factors and (e) multivariate analysis

Preliminary online survey data analysis

The preliminary online survey data analysis was undertaken in January 2007 after the online survey had been on the web for three months. The purpose of the preliminary data analysis was to determine the mix of work sectors that participants represented (Stage 3a). This then formed the basis for recruitment of focus group participants for preparation of the university ethics application to conduct the qualitative focus groups for stage 4 of the research. There were 317 participants at that time. At this preliminary stage the majority of online survey participants were from the statutory and non-statutory sectors and the health and counselling field of practice.
Quantitative data analysis

Demographic profile of survey respondents

The survey questions 1 to 12 relate to the demographics of the survey respondents. There were 675 respondents to the online social work supervision survey. Of those that responded, 239 (29.5%, n=646) identified as both supervisor and supervisee. Survey questions about gender, age, ethnicity, qualification and length of time since graduation were the first information sought from respondents. The majority of respondents (84.5%) were women. Table 5 provides the age profile of participants.

Table 5: Survey demographic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ years</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethnic origin

Just over three quarters (76.2%, n= 489) of survey respondents identified as Australian. The next largest ethnic group were those who identified as broadly European comprising Irish, Scottish, Welsh, North America, Canadian, New Zealand and European (13.1%, n=86). The remaining respondents (8.8%, n=33) were from culturally diverse backgrounds and Indigenous Australian respondents (1.6 %, n= 10).

The ethnic distribution in this survey contrasts with the Aotearoa New Zealand survey respondents (O’Donoghue et al., 2005) where 15% of respondents identified as Maori, Pacific and mixed Maori and Aotearoa New Zealand and European/ Pakeha ethnic origins (ibid). This difference demonstrates the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand human service professionals, and the membership demographics of ANZASW compared to those in the AASW. Given the cultural diversity of human service users in contemporary Australia, the implications of diversity within the human services workforce for social work supervision requires further examination.
**Qualifications of supervisees**

Undergraduate degrees were identified as the highest professional qualification for 56.71% of supervisors, with 41.67% supervisees reporting postgraduate qualifications (Figure 5). This means that 98.38% of respondents currently held a minimum undergraduate qualification for their position. These figures contrast with both the earlier Australian study (Pilcher, 1984) and the Aotearoa New Zealand study (O'Donoghue et al., 2005), both of which obtained lower percentages of respondents having minimum undergraduate qualifications. This reflects different credentialing requirements in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand at the time both samples were sought. Compared with American data, higher postgraduate qualifications are noted because of the NASW requirements for the registration of social workers (Kadushin, 1992b; Munson, 1998c). These differences will be discussed in Chapter seven in relation to the credentialing across both countries for supervision practice.

![Supervisor qualifications](image)

**Figure 5: Supervisor qualifications**

**Employment**

Online survey questions about employment sector, field of practice, length of time in current employment, employment arrangements, state and geographical location and work activities were sought from respondents. Rather than naming their organisation, respondents were asked to name their employment sector and field of practice. Just over 43% percent of respondents identified working in state or local government agencies and 22.8% identified the Commonwealth as their employer. A further 4.8% identified as
working in a private for profit organisation including private practice; 5.8% of respondents identified as working in educational settings; and 23.6% indicated they were working in non-government organisations. The data from the field of practice categories revealed an estimated 30% of respondents worked across multiple fields of practice. Through a conflation of the categories an estimated 48% of respondents identified as working in the health/counselling field; 27% in the violence/justice field; 8.8% income support, 7% in the education field and 7% in other fields. This mix of sectors is somewhat dissimilar to the AASW membership profile. In a report commissioned by the AASW in 2007, 28% of the membership (n=6,222) were employed in health, hospital and aged care; 31% in Commonwealth and local government organisations; 14% employed in private practice and industry; 22% in non-government organisations; and the remainder either in unpaid or other employment (Northside, 2007). This sample therefore tends to have a larger representation of the statutory sector (government) and health and counselling, compared to the sample collected by Northside (2007). Given the large size of the sample and the representation of all sectors, this sample is justified in representing diversity in the general population of social workers in Australia.

![Employment sector diagram]

**Figure 6: Employment sector**
**Time elapsed since graduation and employment status**

There was an even spread across survey respondents regarding length of time since graduation that reflects the broad age categories presented earlier. Nineteen percent had graduated between six months and two years ago, 23.5% had graduated between five to 10 years ago, 23.2% refers to 10 to 20 years post-graduation and 16.6% graduated 20 or more years ago. With respect to time in their current positions, frequent movement between jobs is suggested as 44.3% of respondents had been in their current place of employment for no more than two years. While fluidity of place of employment can be positive, it may mask worker dissatisfaction. A further 24.3% of respondents had been in their current position for between two and five years, followed by 17.7% who had been in their position for five or more years and 14.4% identified other. The majority of survey respondents (78.1%) identified as being employed full time with 19.6% employed part time and the remainder being students or retired. Most of the survey respondents (57.9%) identified as being employed in Victoria with 57.4% identified as being employed in capital cities. Survey respondents from regional centres comprised 31.2% of the survey sample and 11.3% identified as working in rural or remote areas. The Victorian bias in the sample is likely to reflect the fact that I am well known by practitioners and service providers within the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Qualifications and employment status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age / Employment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time since qualification</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time at employment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student or retired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure of supervision

The following section presents the online survey findings regarding how social work supervision practice was structured and as such provides the parameters of practice as outlined in the AASW national standards of social work supervision practice (2000). As noted earlier, habitus provides a way of understanding how professional discourses are translated into boundaries and expectations about social work supervision. While exposing current practice, the data also builds insight about the professional and managerial discourses informing supervision. The results from the online survey were then compared to the literature presented on the structure of social work supervision. Some relevant survey text responses to open-ended questions are also included later in the chapter to provide greater detail about the complexity of the quantitative evidence.

The online survey questions concerning the structure of supervision included questions 14 to 38. These questions canvassed a broad range of issues: the type of supervision survey respondents received, the usefulness of their experience, the gender, age and qualification of their supervisor, the functions of supervision, supervision policy, contract and review including frequency and length of supervision sessions, expectations of supervision in job descriptions, access to and difficulty in accessing supervision, choice of supervisor and links between supervision and their performance appraisal. These aspects relate generally to those covered in the National Standards (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000), and correspond to the balance between organisational resource constraints and ideal professional standards (Scott & Farrow, 1993). As such, they inform the professional discourses of social work supervision practice.

Types of supervision

Respondents were asked to identify whether they had supervision, and if they did, to identify the type of supervision they experienced. As respondents may have more than one type of supervision; they could select more than one from the list. The majority of survey respondents (75.1%, n=507) identified as receiving some kind of supervision.
For those respondents currently receiving supervision, the majority (62.2%) were receiving only one type of supervision. A further 30.9% of respondents received two types of supervision and 5.8% received three or more types of supervision. Individual supervision provided by the organisation was the most common type (71.9%). It was also the most common type of supervision when only one kind of supervision was indicated (49%). By conflating types of supervision according to internal and external supervision, 71.6% of survey respondents received internal supervision only, 12.5% of survey respondents received external supervision only and 15.9% received both. These results about internal individual supervision in Australia were similar to earlier Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand surveys (O'Donoghue et al., 2005; Pilcher, 1984). The analysis of the data suggested there was less number of reports of external supervision compared to the 1984 Australian survey (Pilcher, 1984). In the Aotearoa New Zealand study in 2004, supervisees reported higher participation in internal supervision than those in the dual role of both supervisor and supervisee. Those respondents ‘undertaking a dual role reported a higher participation in external and managerial supervision’ (O'Donoghue et al., 2005, p.50).

![Type of supervision received](image)

**Figure 7: Type of supervision received**

Peer supervision provided within the organisation (17.9%) was the second most common type of supervision (Appendix 10.2) followed by 9% of respondents who paid for individual external supervision (Appendix 10.3). For the others, 6.2% reported receiving individual supervision, external to the organisation and paid for by the organisation (Appendix 10.4); 5.9% received facilitated group supervision provided internally within the organisation (Appendix 10.5); and 4.4% received peer supervision provided externally to the organisation (Appendix 10.6). The least common types of supervision reported were student or fieldwork placements (2.5%) in Appendix 10.7 and
0.7% of respondents had facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which they paid for (Appendix 10.8).

The data from this research provided evidence about the types of supervision currently being undertaken in Australia. Chapter three identified the positive and negative aspects of group/peer supervision, particularly in the current environment, and this will be discussed later in the chapter. Chapter three suggested anecdotally an increased use of external supervision in the neoliberal context and the data from this research does not confirm this trend. This was not the case in the earlier Victorian study (Pilcher 1984) and the New Zealand survey (O’Donoghue et al., 2005). Less use of group supervision was also identified in the current research compared to almost three decades earlier (Pilcher 1984). The new data relating to external supervision in Australia sets the stage for further research into the place of external supervision in social work, with specific investigation into the place, value and concerns regarding this contractual arrangement.

Usefulness of alternative supervision

For those survey respondents receiving more than one type of supervision, 46.5% indicated internal individual supervision was the most useful, leaving over half of the respondents finding alternative supervision types more useful. ‘Peer supervision provided within my organisation’ was considered the most useful alternative process (15.1%) followed by ‘individual external’ (7.6%) and 11% of respondents had external individual supervision which they paid for. An open category was included in this question to allow respondents to identify other types of useful supervision, but respondents chose to write about supervision that was not useful for them. There were 30 survey text responses, many of which were from respondents receiving only internal supervision with all but one indicating that their internal supervision experience was not useful. Rosa, from the private not-for-profit sector, and Christina from an NGO provided typical examples of the kind of text responses received:

‘I don’t find individual supervision provided within your (my) organisation useful, it is focused on reporting, not me’ (Rosa:402)

‘Supervision is not satisfying, rather frustrating and surveillance. Informal contact from colleagues in management roles and with whom I work in a collaborative way’ (Christina:658)
Earlier surveys had not explored the usefulness of different types of supervision. Rather, an overall evaluation of supervision was gained from Pilcher’s (1984) and O’Donoghue et al’s (2005) research, neither specifying the type of supervision. This research presents a mixed picture about respondents’ evaluation of supervision and sheds light on current practice. Pilcher’s study indicated that although 80% of respondents thought supervision had been competently delivered, 62% were very satisfied with their supervisory experience (1984). Similarly, O’Donoghue et al’s (2005) research indicated that most respondents evaluated supervision as very good but in terms of professional accountability this was less than satisfactory (p.57). Such results aligned with the survey text and suggested a more complex picture about the types of supervision respondents found useful. Further examination about the value of different types of supervision in the neoliberal environment of service delivery is warranted.

**Functions of supervision**

Chapter three identified the history and current acceptance of the three functions of supervision: administration, support and education, which underpin most of the literature informing social work supervision practice, both locally and internationally. Survey question 16 in the online survey provided respondents with a list of supervision functions to choose from including clinical, administrative, supportive, professional development, educative, professional registration and interpersonal/team issues which represented different ways of describing these functions. There was also an open option where respondents could choose to identify further functions which were not listed. Respondents could select more than one function. The functions of supervision identified in order of highest to lowest frequency were supportive (64%); clinical (61%); professional development (52%); administrative (50%); interpersonal/team (37%); educative, (34%); and professional registration (3%) (Appendix 10.9). This variation across results indicated multiple functions of supervision with most focus on the functions of support, clinical, professional development and administrative. These findings were consistent with the three main functions of administration, support and education as identified by Kadushin (1992c). Further, these results are consistent with both Pilcher’s (1984) and O’Donoghue et al’s (2005) studies. These functions will be discussed further in the section where the data about content, philosophy and values,
approaches to supervision and the supervisory relationship are presented. That data complements and mines further the online responses about the functions of supervision. The following section provides the demographic profile of the respondents’ supervisors.

**Demographic profile of respondent’s supervisors**

The majority of survey respondents identified their supervisors as women and between 40 and 59 years of age. Specifically 79.4% of respondents were supervised by women (Appendix 10.10); 36.9% of these supervisors were aged between 40 and 49 years; and 31.6% of supervisors were aged between 50 and 59 years. Just under 40% (39.1%) of respondents reported their supervisors had a minimum undergraduate social work qualification; 34.1% reported that their supervisor had a postgraduate qualification; and 18.8% of respondents did not know the qualification of their supervisor. This demographic data about social work supervisors reflected the demographic details of AASW membership (Northside, 2007) and the potential recruitment implications for supervisors in the 50 to 59 age group.

**Table 7: Demographic of supervisors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifications</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section identifies the structures which embed supervision practice within organisations. These include supervision policy, contracts with details about the frequency and length of supervision sessions and reviews of contracts as well as data about the expectation of supervision in job descriptions. These aspects cover the requirements of the AASW Standards for Supervision Practice (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000).
Organisational policy on supervision

Just over three-quarters of respondents (76.7%) identified that their employing organisation had a policy on supervision. For the remaining respondents, 12.7% identified that there was no supervision policy. Based on the findings there was a further 10.6% that did not know (Appendix 10.11). A Chi-square test for independence indicated a statistically significant association (\( \chi^2 = 29.164; \) df=4, p<.001) between organisational supervision policy and the sector (Appendix 10.12). To explain, respondents whose organisations had a supervision policy were more likely to work in statutory organisations. There was also a significant difference between respondents identifying as a supervisor and organisational policy on supervision (Appendix 10.13). This indicated that supervisors were more likely to work in an organisation that had a supervision policy than supervisees (\( \chi^2 = 9.346; \) df=2,p<.009). We might expect this result, given supervisors are responsible for delivering supervision, and may have greater access to organisational policies than supervisees. The data indicated that organisations may have supervision policies but that supervisees do not necessarily know about them. Although it would be hoped that organisations, in orientations with new staff, would inform them, this may not always occur as evidenced in the data from this research.

The results in the current survey indicated that there has been an increase in the use of supervision policy in Australia, compared to three decades earlier, when ‘only two out of five respondents’ agencies had a supervision policy’ (Pilcher, 1984, p.37).

Provision of supervision in respondent’s job description

The AASW standards identify an expectation that social work supervision is an essential part of job descriptions for social workers. The data in this research identified that three quarters (75.5%) of respondents identified that supervision was an expectation included in their current job description. For the others, 18.5% reported that supervision was not and 6% of respondents did not know if supervision was expected (Appendix 10.14). There was a significant association between sector and whether supervision was part of the job description (Appendix 10.15). Commonwealth and state government organisations were more likely to have supervision as part of a job description than participants from non-government organisations (\( \chi^2 = 25.302; \) df=4, p<.001). Hence the
data provided evidence that supervision was certainly identified as part of job
descriptions however, they were more prevalent in some sectors than others. Such
differences require further examination to appreciate their place in the current context of
supervision practice.

**Difficulty in accessing supervision**

Respondents were asked if they had difficulty accessing supervision. Essentially three in
every five respondents (62%) reported no difficulties in accessing supervision leaving
two in every five who reported difficulties (38%). Respondents were asked to identify
from a list of contributing factors. The list included cost, time, inability to access
appropriate expertise, no supervision provided in organisation and supervision not
encouraged or valued in the organisation. For the 223 respondents who reported
difficulties accessing supervision, 22.2% identified time constraints as the main
contributing factor. A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant
association ($\chi^2=11.029; \text{df}=2, p<.004$) between difficulty accessing supervision and
geographical location. This suggested that respondents who had difficulty accessing
supervision were more likely to live in regional areas. Lottie, employed in the statutory
sector located in a regional centre, noted in the survey text:

‘We have evaluated the supervision offered in the agency, which included
access to external supervision, but is little used. Living in a regional centre
limits access to people with suitable expertise’ (Lottie:429)

Initially in this research one focus group was planned to be conducted in regional
Victoria. However, the organisation withdrew because of difficulty in getting
supervisors and supervisees together. Such difficulty demonstrates the organisation’s
dilemma in offering group, peer or other types of supervision for workers across large
geographical distances. The AASW Standards on Supervision Practice (Australian
Association of Social Workers, 2000) identify the centrality of supervision to social
work practice. This research nevertheless provides a different picture regarding access
to supervision with similar access difficulties identified in Cooper and Anglem’s (2003)
research. Further investigation of the nature of barriers in accessing supervision is
required. The impact of time constraints in accessing supervision will be discussed in
greater depth when presenting the data from the focus group interviews. Technological
developments for the provision of online supervision also require further examination, given the survey results. The following section presents the demographic data about who the principal supervisor.

**Principal supervisor’s organisational position**

In this research, data was sought from survey respondents about the position of their supervisor within the organisation. Respondents were asked to identify their supervisor’s role in their employing organisation, and whether it was internal or external to their organisation. Over half of the respondents (62.9%) identified their supervisor as internal to their team, 22.3% as external to their team and 14.9% as external to their organisation. Respondents were asked whether their principal supervisor was also their line manager and 67.4% of respondents indicated they were (Appendix 10.16). For those respondents who received individual internal supervision, 81.2% were supervised by their line manager (Appendix 10.17). A Chi-square test of independence indicated a statistically significant association ($\chi^2=52.587$; df=4, p<.001) between principal supervisor as line manager and employer, indicating that those respondents employed within the Commonwealth had a higher proportion of supervisors as line managers compared to those working in other organisations.

Chapter three reviewed the literature which identified the potential tensions generated when line management was substituted for supervision (Baglow, 2009; Beddoe, 2010; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Jones, 2000, 2004; Morrell, 2001; Ungar, 2006). The data in this research provides some preliminary evidence that most respondents in this sample were being supervised by their line manager and that this was occurring differentially across human service organisations. Survey text data provided more detail by identifying both the limitations and opportunities when the line manager and the supervisor are the same person, which opens the way for the type of political interference experienced in Britain. For example, the limitations were summarised by Libby from the statutory sector:

‘A supervision relationship with a line manager is a different dynamic entirely: if the relationship with the line manager is poor then professional supervision suffers. External professional supervision is a value-added dimension to my supervision, I think. I have also chosen to take up external supervision to ensure
that it happens regularly. Internal supervision is too infrequent, because of the organisational demands on my supervisor essentially; I appreciate the internal supervision but it is not satisfying’ (Libby:421)

This suggests a qualitative difference in Libby’s experience of being supervised by her line manager. Felicity, another respondent from the statutory sector, identified the benefits of having the line manager present in peer supervision:

‘Peer supervision is very important within the organisation, because formal one-to-one supervision with my supervisor/line manager doesn’t occur more than once a year. Having this person also attend peer supervision sessions is a benefit in terms of senior social workers and our line manager being together to resolve any issues that arise, and being able to deal with them’ (Felicity:193)

The literature reviewed in Chapter three suggested that the neoliberal context has seen an increase in line management focus at the cost of other supervisory functions (Baglow, 2009; Beddoe, 2010). Evidence from this literature note the potential for role blurring when the line manager is the supervisor and where the line management focus is the dominant function of supervision. This data provides some evidence to investigate further the cost benefits of line management as supervision.

**Frequency and length of supervision sessions**

Respondents to the survey were asked to identify the frequency and length of supervision sessions. The frequency of supervision was quite varied. A small percentage of respondents received supervision weekly (6.6%) and just over one-quarter received supervision fortnightly (28.2%). About a third (34.1%) of respondents identified that they had supervision once a month and a small percentage received supervision four times a year (4.4%). The remaining respondents (26.7%) indicated that supervision occurred sporadically (Appendix 10.18). In terms of length of supervision sessions considerable difference was also evident. A small percentage (8.9%) indicated their supervision sessions were less than 30 minutes, nearly half (48.4%) identified that their supervision sessions were between 30 and 60 minutes, about one-third (34.7%) indicated length of supervision to be between 60 and 90 minutes and a small percentage (8%) indicated their session went beyond 90 minutes (Appendix 10.19). One might suspect that those who receive longer supervision sessions might have supervision less frequently and those who have briefer sessions had them more often. The correlation was in this direction and significant but not strong (r=.18, p<.010).
Supervision contracts

Chapter three reviewed the literature about supervision contracts and the central place of contracting in the supervisory experience. Supervision contracts serve as a structural feature with powerful ethical implications, potentially neutralising abuse from the supervisor (Gillanders, 2005; Hewson, 1999; Osborne and Davis, 1996). The language of the contract provides firm boundaries around accountability and consequences in supervision. Data from this research detailed that verbal supervision contracts were in place for 42.5% of respondents and written ones were in place for 22.9%. Respondents to the survey were asked who developed their supervision contract. Just over 71.2% reported that their supervision contract was jointly developed between themselves and their supervisor and 14.2% reported that it was developed by the organisation (Appendix 10.20). Referring to the supervisory contract, respondents were asked, if their supervisor was not their line manager, and had the contract been discussed with their line manager. Sixty seven percent (66.7%) of respondents did not know whether their supervision contract had been discussed with their line manager (Appendix 10.21). The survey included a question about how often their supervision contract was reviewed (Appendix 10.22). Forty percent (40.1%) of respondents identified that their supervision contract was never reviewed and 28.2% indicated an annual review. Aspects of contract
content noted in the AASW standards related to the frequency and length of supervision sessions. Wendy, a non-statutory supervisor in the focus group, acknowledged the complexity of supervision contracts:

‘I think the whole sector is under stress and I think we are caught up in it. Maybe we can improve it by, certainly with the contract I would really like to talk about, in our contract it is expected that program managers will work extra hours over and above and then it will be up to line manager to talk about / negotiate time in lieu – doesn’t happen’

(Wendy, non statutory supervisee, page 4).

The Aotearoa New Zealand social work supervision survey indicated that nearly all respondents reported having a supervision contract, with only 1.4% stating that they had not (O'Donoghue et al., 2005). Cooper and Anglem’s (2003) survey in an Aotearoa New Zealand mental health service indicated 4% of the sample had no supervision contract in place. Both the New Zealand surveys reflect the emerging professionalisation of social work and social work supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand, as discussed in Chapter three (Beddoe, 2008; Davys, 2007; O'Donoghue et al., 2005, 2006).

Performance appraisal and links to supervision
Survey respondents were asked whether feedback from their supervisor was linked to their work performance appraisal. Over half of the respondents (50.4%) said feedback from their supervisor was linked, and 28% indicated it was not linked to their performance appraisal. In trying to understand whether there were patterns across the performance appraisal data, the only statistically significant difference was by sector ($\chi^2$=89.59; df=8, $p<.001$) with respondents from the Commonwealth being more likely to indicate feedback was linked to their performance appraisal than others. These results resonate with the literature reviewed about the growth of compliance procedures, in this case, performance appraisals, particularly in statutory organisations (Evans, 1990; Waters, 1992). The literature reviewed in Chapter three suggests that the relationship between supervisor and supervisee will affect the supervisor’s ability to evaluate job performance accurately (Grasso, 1994; Himle et al., 1989). Further, supervisees may compromise their professional future with potential for exploitation of private knowledge divulged to the supervisor in supervision (Neufeldt & Nelson, 1999). Additionally, external pressures, such as organisational policy change, can affect the way performance reviews are conducted and the types of standards used in performance
reviews. The context raises questions about the potential impact of linking performance appraisal to supervision. Twelve survey respondents made additional text comments on this connection in the survey. Giselle, from the statutory sector, represented these views, when speaking about her experience of the coupling of supervision and performance review:

‘A2 – Technically supervision should be 2 x year and it’s not supposed to be linked to performance appraisal formally but it is. The organisation doesn't like critical review and works only to implement government policy. This leads government to be at risk of negative community feedback in other ways. Supervisors discourage negative feedback and deflect it to individual employees through individual negative performance reviews and counsel or coach staff into leaving the organisation.’ (Giselle: 189)

**Trust in supervisory relationship and quality of relationship**

Data was sought regarding whether respondents trusted their supervisor. Most respondents said they usually or always trust their supervisor (71.2%) with 15.5% saying they never do or not usually (Appendix 10.23). The responses about the effectiveness of supervision were that 26.5% of respondents reported that their supervision was not effective or minimally effective. A Pearson bivariate correlation of the two variables identified a significant strong positive relationship between level of trust in the supervisory relationship and perceived effectiveness of supervision $r=0.81$, $p=0.001$. The more trust evident in the supervisory relationship, the higher the reported effectiveness and vice versa; the lower the trust, the lower the perceived effectiveness of the supervisory relationship. This result provides further empirical evidence regarding the importance of trust in the supervisory relationship and its link with the perceived effectiveness of supervision.

**Effectiveness of supervision**

Supervisors were also asked to provide a rating on their effectiveness as a supervisor on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented not effective and five represented highly effective. Only 8% reported they were highly effective with the majority reporting a value of 3, indicative of average effectiveness. A small percentage (4.8%) reported a value of 2, indicative of low effectiveness. Following a similar theme, they were also asked to indicate how their supervisee would rate them on a comparable effectiveness scale. A
comparison of means (paired t-test) found that supervisors believe their supervisees would rate them as more effective ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.79$) compared to self-reporting ($M=3.42$, $SD=0.72$) ($t(223)=4.362$, $p<.001$).

**Analysis of demographic structure and quality aspects of supervisor data**

Section 2 of the survey included questions for those respondents who were also supervisors. As noted earlier, 239 respondents identified as both supervisor and supervisee (Appendix 10.24). The data provides a profile of those 239 supervisors. Approximately one-third (31.8%) of supervisors had been supervising for more than 10 years and 13.4% for less than six months (Appendix 10.25). About three-quarters (74.1%) of supervisors had supervision as part of their job description and also indicated 75.4% had an organisational policy on supervision (Appendices 10.26 and 10.28). About one-third (32%) of these supervisors had only one supervisee while nearly one half (49.1%) were supervising up to five supervisees (Appendix 10.29). There was limited evidence about how the figures from this survey tally with supervisor/supervisee ratios generally. In reviewing some specific organisation supervision policies, the ratio of supervisor to supervisees fluctuated, depending on overall work balance between supervision and other tasks. Other policies do not provide supervisor/supervisee ratios. Further investigation into the fractional make up of supervisors and supervisees and the effectiveness of supervision would contribute to understanding optimum workload requirements for supervision in the current context.

One-third (32.3%) of supervisors indicated that their highest level of supervision training was provided within their organisation (Appendix 10.30). A smaller percentage (5.6%) of supervisors indicated they had accessed supervision training through TAFE or higher education (Appendix 10.30). About a quarter (24.1%) of supervisors had undertaken supervision training within the previous twelve months (Appendix 10.31). These findings are consistent with limited access to supervision specific courses available throughout Australia as suggested in Chapter three. The results contrast with O’Donoghue et al. (2005) research. New Zealand offers specific training at both certificate and diploma levels in supervision courses, of which about half (50.2%) of
New Zealand respondents had undertaken. Pilcher’s (1984) Victorian study identified the need for further supervisory training, which was echoed in both the text and qualitative data in this research.

Caution is advocated in the literature about supervision training, if undertaken through a dominant organisational paradigm, or replicated from personal supervision experience (Bernard, 1998; Hawkins, 2000; Van Ooijen, 2003). There comes a time when a shift in focus from professional to managerial discourses results in a qualitative change that, in essence, takes it further from the aims and ideals of supervision. To keep calling it ‘professional supervision’ is to mask this shift, and create confusion in the field as to what supervision is and represents. Becky, from a non statutory organisation, offers some suggestions about the ways in which supervision training can help supervisors keep their supervisees on track:

‘They (supervisors) need resources to help them keep their supervision style/mode fresh. Training would be around keeping current with different ways to approach supervision: ie: reflection/critical reflection/professional identity building/ a mix of things: so supervision doesn’t just fall into the “another meeting” category’ (Becky:434)

Lou, a statutory supervisee, also spoke about the responsibility on the worker for accessing supervision training:

‘…the social work business line wouldn’t necessarily pay for those (supervision) sessions, depending on where they were and how much they were you’d have to pay for them yourself and that is a bit of a constraint for a lot of social workers in the organisation. So the three to four sessions are offered to everyone yearly. You get a little bit of say in what you want in those sessions but generally the decision is made at a higher level you may not want to attend or may not be interested in those session but they are available. So anything where you want to fuel your own interest you generally have to pay for yourself and that can be quite expensive’ (Lou, statutory supervisee, page 4).

The lack of supervision training available internationally remains a problem here in Australia, as discussed in Chapter three. The British research has demonstrated that political interference in decision making about training and supervision has been aimed at controlling practice (Cornes et al., 2007).
In relation to the function of supervision and how supervisors saw it, one-fifth (21.3%) of supervisors identified the function of support as the most frequently provided (Appendix 10.9). Supervisors were also asked about the type of method they used in supervision to discuss practice. About one-third (32.9%) of supervisors reported that they relied on supervisee case notes; 20.3% used analysis of critical moments; 19.6% used supervisee process recordings with the remainder using other methods. Such results differ from the literature reviewed in Chapter three which indicated that most supervisors use ‘self report’ and ‘general perceptions of the supervisee’ as methods to assess supervisee performance (Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001).

Exploratory factor analysis
The dependent variables were suitable for factor analytic techniques, as the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was significant (p<.001), and Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was above the required value of 0.6 (Table 8) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 8: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s test of Sphericity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</th>
<th>KMO</th>
<th>.964</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett’s test of Sphericity</td>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
<td>21506.607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>1830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Parallel analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Random eigen values</th>
<th>Real eigen values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.653</td>
<td>22.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.617</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.594</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.575</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.562</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.556</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As discussed in the method, to determine the number of latent factors various strategies were employed. First a random data set was generated in order to compare real and random eigen values (Table 9). Comparing these values for factor 4, the random eigen value is 1.58 and the real eigen value is much greater at 2.48, indicating this is a strong factor. When you compare the random and real eigen value for factor 5 the real eigen value is slightly greater than the randomly generated one, suggesting there may be a weaker fifth factor inherent in the data. For factor 6 the randomly generated eigen value exceeds the real eigen value indicating that a sixth factor is certainly not supported, representing only statistical noise. The second strategy employed to ascertain the best factors solution was the Scree Plot. The Scree Plot suggested a four-factor solution where a clear break can be seen between the four real factors and the Scree (Figure 9).

![Scree Plot](image)

**Figure 9: Scree plot**

The third consideration for determining the number of factors was theoretical interpretability. A five-factor solution was examined, and the wording of the items associated with this fifth factor indicated these were concerned with aspects of the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee. This fifth, in part, with splitting the items measuring a relationship factor but it was not a ‘clean’ split as it results in several double loadings across the factors. The fourth factor allowed the items measuring relationship to converge more clearly into one factor, which was more interpretable and consistent with the Scree Plot, and largely with the parallel analysis. Hence the four-factor solution seemed the most acceptable.
From the pattern matrix for the four-factor solution most of the coefficients for factors 1 to 3 were well above the required minimum of 0.3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and on the whole each provide a clear coherent factor. While the coefficients for factor 4 were also <0.3 there were also multiple loadings across the other factors, indicating that the fourth factor is not as distinct as the first three.

The pattern matrix (Table 10) and the structure matrix (Appendix 10.33) identified the items associated with the latent factors; but it was the correlation coefficients from the pattern matrix that were used to identify the strength of the relationship between the items and the latent factors. The structure matrix supports the naming of the factor associated with the latent factor. Item reduction from the latent factors was also conducted for correlation coefficients less than 0.30, when items loaded strongly across more than one factor and when items did not contribute to the internal reliability of the factors based on Cronbach Alpha scores if the item was deleted. The latent factors were then named according to the grouping of items.
Table 10: Pattern matrix factor loadings using maximum likelihood extraction method with Oblimin rotation for 61 items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>.884</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.740</td>
<td>-.262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>.709</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on negative aspects of my practice</td>
<td>.683</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervisor</td>
<td>.669</td>
<td>-.266</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My wellbeing and personal development as a worker</td>
<td>.669</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focusing predominantly on organisational requirements</strong></td>
<td>.594</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions to practice</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal issues impacting your work</strong></td>
<td>.491</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with colleagues</td>
<td>.447</td>
<td>.254</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional development requirements or opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills</strong></td>
<td>.437</td>
<td>-.221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>.422</td>
<td>-.223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving reassurance and support</td>
<td>.422</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with management</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem solving</strong></td>
<td>.390</td>
<td></td>
<td>.216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of your work</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling challenged by my supervisor</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td></td>
<td>.230</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focusing on safe and ethical practice</strong></td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>-.341</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult learning</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>-.252</td>
<td>.226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional/organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>-.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.596</td>
<td>-.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of my supervisor other than at set meeting times</td>
<td>-.512</td>
<td>.585</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>-.236</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiencing an unsatisfactory supervisory relationship</strong></td>
<td>-.497</td>
<td>.545</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>.255</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>-.254</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity rather than quality of work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.452</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on client strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td>.423</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task centred</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation relating to your work environment</td>
<td>.369</td>
<td>- .360</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocations of social resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .920</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .907</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .848</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .726</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .679</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical, moral and civic responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .663</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .620</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .564</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people's rights and interests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .559</td>
<td>.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .556</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/education strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .532</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .516</td>
<td>.432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>- .504</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocols/policies relating to your work environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.348</td>
<td>- .470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice standards and ethics</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .346</td>
<td>.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .337</td>
<td>.323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and management of your work</td>
<td>.290</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.591</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .227</td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .268</td>
<td>.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .239</td>
<td>.410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory and practice</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .235</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of working with trauma over extended periods</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- .329</td>
<td>.347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 15 iterations.
**EFA and internal reliability**

Factor 1, named *support in the supervisory relationship*, included mostly items related to the initial category: relationship between supervisor and supervisee, but also included items from the initial ‘content of supervision’ category (Appendix 10.35). The overlap between items from the relationship and content categories focused more directly on the climate created within the supervisory relationship that promoted the best possibility for affecting a positive outcome in supervision as outlined in the literature. This does not imply that the items included in this first factor were only those items focusing on being positive about aspects of the support in the supervisory relationship; rather it included critical elements too. These referred to items where the supervisee felt able to ‘discuss their practice mistakes’ or ‘debate with their supervisor’ as well as ‘experience tolerance and patience’. The content items integrated into this factor also included those which looked holistically at both personal and future professional plans of the supervisee in the supervisory relationship. For example, items such as ‘career planning’ and ‘personal issues impacting work’ were included in this factor. The first factor with the focus on the supervisory relationship resembles the dimensions of Bourdieu’s concept of field. Factor 1 had 10 items loadings. Table 11 detailed the items measuring this.

The Alpha value of 0.95 indicated excellent internal consistency reliability for the scale with this sample and along with the high Corrected Item-Total Correlation values shown in Table 11 *support in the supervisory relationship* is a psychometrically valid factor.
Table 11: Item-total statistics for factor 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean if item deleted</th>
<th>Variance if item deleted</th>
<th>Corrected item-total correlation</th>
<th>Squared multiple correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha if item deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>37.49</td>
<td>105.374</td>
<td>.857</td>
<td>.760</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>37.51</td>
<td>106.333</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>37.51</td>
<td>106.141</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>37.55</td>
<td>105.849</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>.680</td>
<td>.946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>37.42</td>
<td>108.178</td>
<td>.794</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>.946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>37.42</td>
<td>110.557</td>
<td>.723</td>
<td>.586</td>
<td>.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on negative aspects of my practice</td>
<td>37.58</td>
<td>108.123</td>
<td>.719</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td>.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>37.53</td>
<td>108.015</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>.678</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervisor</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>107.076</td>
<td>.763</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My wellbeing and personal development as a worker</td>
<td>37.53</td>
<td>108.794</td>
<td>.740</td>
<td>.581</td>
<td>.948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions to practice</td>
<td>37.76</td>
<td>107.622</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.623</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Reliability statistics for factor 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items</th>
<th>No of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.951</td>
<td>.951</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second factor: accountability and monitoring practices included items predominantly from the initial ‘relationship between supervisor and supervisee’ category as well as items from the initial ‘models of supervision’ category (Appendix 10.34). Unlike factor 1 where the focus was on items which represented the development of a positive supervisory climate, factor 2 incorporated more negative
items about the supervisory relationship including the ‘managerial’ item from the ‘models of supervision’ initial category. For example, items such as ‘feeling confronted by my supervisor’ and ‘focus on quantity rather than quality of work’ were included in this factor as were ‘task centred’ from the models of supervision category. Factor 2 had eight items loadings. Table 13 detailed the items measuring this factor.

Table 13: Item-Total statistics for factor 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale mean if item deleted</th>
<th>Scale variance if item deleted</th>
<th>Corrected item-total correlation</th>
<th>Squared multiple correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional/organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>19.997</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>18.67</td>
<td>19.410</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>19.93</td>
<td>22.267</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>18.22</td>
<td>21.172</td>
<td>.527</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity rather than quality of work</td>
<td>19.08</td>
<td>21.390</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on client strengths</td>
<td>18.94</td>
<td>22.849</td>
<td>.318</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task centred</td>
<td>18.16</td>
<td>22.182</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.719</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Alpha value was 0.74 and suggested satisfactory internal consistency reliability for the scale (n=505). As all corrected item-total correlations were greater than 0.3, and the scale makes theoretical sense with respect to the wording of the items, accountability and monitoring practice is a reasonable valid construct.

Table 14: Reliability statistics for factor 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items</th>
<th>No of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.738</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

130
The third factor: *social work values* comprised items from both the initial ‘philosophy and values informing supervision’ and ‘content of current supervision’ categories (Appendix 10.35). These items related to the professional social work values enshrined in the AASW principles of practice (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2009) as well as items relating to organisational demands and imperatives. Additionally in factor 3 there were initial ‘content’ item categories about practice strategies used to promote social work practice principles. Items from the initial philosophy category, such as ‘social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice’ and ‘raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice’ were included in factor 3 as were content items such as ‘advocacy/social action strategies’. Ultimately factor 3 had 13 items loadings after items that double loaded were omitted. Table 15 details the items measuring this factor.

The Alpha value was 0.94 which provided excellent internal consistency reliability for the scale along with the high corrected item-total correlation values shown in Table 16 and theoretical sense with respect to the wording of the items *Social work values* constituting a psychometrically valid construct.

The fourth factor: *models of supervision practice*, included items from both the initial set of items from ‘models of supervision practice’ and ‘content of supervision categories’. These items reflected different theoretical models used in supervision as identified in Chapter Three as well as one content item, which was ‘working with clients’. The range of theoretical models discussed in Chapter three reflected the items located in factor 4, which ultimately had seven items after items with double loadings were omitted. Table 17 detailed the items measuring this factor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale mean if item deleted</th>
<th>Scale variance if item deleted</th>
<th>Corrected item-total correlation</th>
<th>Squared multiple correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha if item deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td>36.89</td>
<td>136.446</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>.936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocations of social resources</td>
<td>36.93</td>
<td>138.056</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>.680</td>
<td>.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>36.97</td>
<td>136.459</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>.723</td>
<td>.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>36.76</td>
<td>138.139</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>.678</td>
<td>.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>36.81</td>
<td>138.797</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>36.96</td>
<td>139.343</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>.578</td>
<td>.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical, moral and civic responsibilities</td>
<td>36.64</td>
<td>139.898</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td>.613</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td>36.93</td>
<td>140.786</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td>36.55</td>
<td>141.208</td>
<td>.675</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people's rights and interests</td>
<td>36.29</td>
<td>141.492</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</td>
<td>36.49</td>
<td>141.226</td>
<td>.711</td>
<td>.583</td>
<td>.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/education strategies</td>
<td>37.02</td>
<td>142.406</td>
<td>.644</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>35.88</td>
<td>145.803</td>
<td>.612</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16: Reliability statistics for factor 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items</th>
<th>No of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.944</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Alpha value was 0.86, which provided excellent internal consistency reliability for the scale with this sample (n=500), and with the high corrected item-total correlations and theoretical interpretability of the items, thus *models of supervision practice* is a psychometrically valid factor.

Table 17: Total statistics for factor 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale mean if item deleted</th>
<th>Scale variance if item deleted</th>
<th>Corrected item-total correlation</th>
<th>Squared multiple correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha if item deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td>19.70</td>
<td>36.354</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td>18.46</td>
<td>36.281</td>
<td>.668</td>
<td>.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients</td>
<td>17.89</td>
<td>39.764</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>19.56</td>
<td>36.705</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>18.99</td>
<td>35.704</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>35.428</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory and</td>
<td>19.06</td>
<td>35.826</td>
<td>.644</td>
<td>.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the items that formed the four factors were subsequently subjected to a further factor analysis in SPSS and these four factors with their respective items remained intact and ‘clean’ (Appendix 10.35). The scores for the contributing items to each factor were averaged to create an individual score for each respondent. The highest mean was obtained for factor 1 where the items measured the frequency of perceived supportive relationship between the respondents and their supervisor (Table 19). A mean of 3.7 suggested that on average the respondents were often experiencing positive aspects in
the supervisory relationship. The means for the other three factors: accountability and monitoring practices, social work values and models of supervision practice had comparable means around three, which indicated that the focus on these areas during supervision was on average being occasionally experienced. Table 19 details the four factors with their respective descriptive statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>Support in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>3.7527</td>
<td>.04570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>Accountability and monitoring practices</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>3.1344</td>
<td>.03342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>Social work values</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>3.0586</td>
<td>.04265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td>Models of supervision practice</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>3.1504</td>
<td>.04405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the best solution for the EFA was a four factor solution and following internal reliability analyses and a further confirmatory analysis, the validated four factors were named: support in the supervisory relationship, accountability and monitoring practices, social work values and models of supervision practice from the survey items. The four factors, each comprising less survey items, were included in the initial survey instrument. The EFA enabled the reduction of items to produce a more succinct survey instrument for future use in supervision research. These factors were subject to an intercorrelation analysis as well as a MANOVA, with respect to independent variables, to further understand the variance in the quantitative data.

**Factor intercorrelation**

An intercorrelation analysis of these four factors indicated the following correlations (Table 20). Factor 1 correlated with factors 3 and 4 indicating when support in supervisory relationship items are discussed, respondents were more frequently discussing social work values and models of supervision practice. Of particular note was that factor 1 was not correlated with factor 2, ‘accountability and monitoring practice’.
Further correlations were identified between factors 3 and 4 indicating that a focus on social work values during supervision was associated with discussion of supervision models. A weak correlation was evident between factors 2 and 3 on accountability and monitoring practices during supervision sessions and a focus on social work values. These correlations are consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter three. Support in the supervisory relationship (Factor 1) has been demonstrated as integral to the success of the supervision experience (Froggett, 1998; Fox, 1989; Granvold, 1977; Mena, 2007; Ladany et al., 1999; Yoo & Brooks, 2005). A satisfactory supervisory relationship is able to weather difficult external constraints (Froggett, 1998). The literature reviewed regarding congruence of both managerial and supportive functions in the supervisory relationship was mixed. Some authors maintained both functions are compatible (Kadushin, 1992a) while others maintained that they are not (Erera & Lazar, 1994; Middleman & Rhodes, 1985). Several authors also noted the negative impact of managerialism on the supervisory relationship and the non-judicial use of authority related to a managerial view of supervision (Exworthy & Halford, 1999; Jones, 2004; McNeill, 2001; Phillipson, 2002).

The results from the inter-correlation analysis (Table 20) shows that there were a number of significant, positive, high strength relationships between the factors. Specifically, significant associations were found between the support in supervisory relationship and social work values and models of supervision. There was also a significant, strong positive correlation between social work values and models of supervision. A significant relationship was also found between accountability and monitoring practice and social work values; however, this was deemed a low strength association.
Table 20: Intercorrelations between factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>Accountability and monitoring practices</td>
<td>Social work values</td>
<td>Models of supervision practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.693**</td>
<td>.197**</td>
<td>.629**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

Several MANOVAs were conducted using these four factors. Independent variables that had patterns of influence on these factors included: age and gender of respondents, the sector in which they worked and whether the respondent’s supervisor was their line manager; and whether they had a choice of supervisor. Included in this section is also a correlation analysis between the four factors and level of trust where further significant relationships were obtained and a t-test that indicated level of trust, was dependent on whether the supervisor was the line manager or not.

The factors and line management

The MANOVA analyses (Table 21) indicated significant differences for factors 1, 2 and 4 depending on whether the principal supervisor was the respondent’s line manager or not. When the supervisor was the line manager, there was less focus on the *support in supervisory relationship*, *social work values* and *models of supervision*. Literature reviewed in Chapters three suggests that line management has, in some cases, been substituted for supervision; at the cost of other supervision functions; creating a greater risk of blurred boundaries between management and professional aspects of supervision.
and there was an increased risk of authority being used coercively (Baglow, 2009; Beddoe, 1997; Beddoe & Davys, 1994; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Jones, 2000; Morrell, 2001; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). The research findings confirm this and provide evidence that having a line manager as a supervisor changes what is discussed in supervision. The implications of this will be discussed in Chapter seven.

### Table 21: Factor scores (M, S.E) depending on whether or not line manager is supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Line manager as supervisor</th>
<th>Non-line manager supervisor</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support in supervisory relationship</td>
<td>3.62 0.06</td>
<td>4.00 0.08</td>
<td>14.92</td>
<td>*** 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability &amp; monitoring practice</td>
<td>3.33 0.04</td>
<td>2.76 0.06</td>
<td>72.53</td>
<td>*** 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work values</td>
<td>3.02 0.05</td>
<td>3.13 0.08</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>*** 0.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of supervision practice</td>
<td>3.01 0.05</td>
<td>3.47 0.08</td>
<td>24.008</td>
<td>*** 0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p<0.001$

### The factors and sector of supervisee

With respect to sector differences the means for factor 2, *accountability and monitoring practice*, were significantly different by sector (Appendix 10.35). A conflated sector variable was used for the analysis. The highest mean was obtained for the statutory sectors (M=2.7) and the lowest mean for the conflated, private for profit industry/private practice accounting for 2% of variance. These results echo the findings from other studies which suggest an increased focus on compliance controls, particularly in statutory organisations in the neoliberal context (Evans, 1990; Waters, 1992).

### The factors and gender

A MANOVA analyses indicated significant though small differences for three of the four factors by gender of participants. The means for factor 1, *support in the supervisory relationship*, factor 3, *social work values* and factor 4, *models of supervision practice*, were significantly higher for females compared to males, indicating that females reported greater frequency in supervisory discussions on *support in the supervisory relationship, social work values* and *models of supervision*. No difference by gender was apparent for *accountability and monitoring*. The literature suggests a difference in
male/female supervision (Neufeldt et al., 1997). This research presents new evidence that the experience of supervision is gender related. The results have implications for how to optimise the supervision relationship in relation to gender.

**Table 22: Factor scores (M, S.E) depending on gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Females M</th>
<th>Females S.E</th>
<th>Males M</th>
<th>Males S.E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support in supervisory relationship</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>0.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability &amp; monitoring practice</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work values</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>0.032*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of supervision practice</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>9.92</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ATP: | p<0.05, **p<0.01

**The factors and choice of supervisor**

A MANOVA indicated significant differences for all four factors when respondents could choose their principal supervisor (Table 22). When the respondent had a choice of supervisor; there was more discussion of support in the supervisory relationship, social work values and models of supervision and less focus on accountability and monitoring practice. When the supervisee had a choice of supervisor there was more discussion of professional dimensions of supervision, rather than accountability and monitoring. These results combined with research discussed in the literature review indicated that the capacity of a supervisee to choose their supervisor positively impacted on the supervisory relationship (Allen et al., 2004; Ladany et al., 1999; Morrell, 2001). As noted earlier, the percentage of respondents who reported they had a choice of supervisor were less than the percentage reported in a similar study by Cooper and Anglem (2003) in New Zealand. The implications of these results warrant further investigation of the ways in which supervisees could choose their supervisor within the initial supervision negotiations. This issue is explored further in the qualitative data.
Table 23: Factor scores (M, S.E) depending on whether principal supervisor was chosen or not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Choice in supervisor</th>
<th>No choice in supervisor</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support in supervisory relationship</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>23.71</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability &amp; monitoring practice</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>43.36</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work values</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>0.014**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of supervision practice</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>16.43</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The factors and age

A MANOVA indicated significant differences in the means for three of four factors by the age of the respondent. The highest means were obtained for the youngest and oldest age groups. Table 24 details the tests between subject effects for age.

Table 24: The factors and age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the supervisory</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>4.024</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>3.838 - 4.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>3.725</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>3.550 - 3.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3.687</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>3.507 - 3.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>3.506</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>3.310 - 3.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 + years</td>
<td>3.955</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>3.451 - 4.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and monitoring</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>3.265</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>3.130 - 3.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practices</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>3.178</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>3.051 - 3.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3.101</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>2.970 - 3.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>2.976</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>2.832 - 3.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 + years</td>
<td>3.286</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>2.917 - 3.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3 Social work values</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>3.204</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>3.027 - 3.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>3.018</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>2.851 - 3.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3.016</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>2.845 - 3.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>2.929</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>2.741 - 3.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 + years</td>
<td>3.385</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>2.904 - 3.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4 Models of supervision practice</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>3.392</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>3.213 - 3.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>3.120</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>2.952 - 3.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3.092</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>2.919 - 3.265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>3.012</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>2.823 - 3.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 + years</td>
<td>3.250</td>
<td>.247</td>
<td>2.765 - 3.735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted earlier a correlation was identified between the factors and trust in a supervisor. The following section provides the results of this correlation.

**The factors and trust in the supervisory relationship**

Pearson bivariate correlations showed significant associations between level of trust in the supervisor and all four factors. Level of trust were positively correlated with *support in the supervisory relationship* (\( r=0.74, p=0.001 \)), *social work values* (\( r=0.52**, p=0.001 \)) and *models of supervision practice* (\( r=0.52, p=0.001 \)). Alternatively, level of trust was significantly negatively associated with a focus on *accountability and monitoring practices* (\( r=-0.23, p=0.001 \)), though the relationship here was low. An independent t-test showed that there were significant differences in levels of trust depending on whether the supervisor was line manager (M=3.76, SD=1.41) or not (M=4.38). Respondents reported that supervisors who were line managers were less trusted than those who were not, \( \text{t}(510)=-5.64, df=431.408, p=0.001 \). The more trust in a supervisory relationship the more discussion is occurring about *support in supervisory relationship, social work values* and *models of supervision practice*. These results relate to the centrality of a trusting supervisory relationship. This is consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter Three (Himle et al., 1989; Mena, 2007; Newsome & Pillari, 1992) and adds to the evidence about trust in the supervisory relationship.
Table 25: Correlations between factors and trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor 1 Support in the supervisory relationship</th>
<th>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</th>
<th>Factor 3 Social work values</th>
<th>Factor 4 Models of supervision practice</th>
<th>Do you trust your supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.693**</td>
<td>.684**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.920</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2 and Accountability Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.197**</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.920</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3 Social work values</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.693**</td>
<td>.197**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.629**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4 Models of supervision Practice</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.684**</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.629**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you trust your supervisor</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.763**</td>
<td>-.227**</td>
<td>.517**</td>
<td>.512**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

This chapter responds to the first and second research questions in the thesis, namely:

- How is social work supervision practised in Australia?
- How do the research findings compare with social work supervision as presented in the professional literature?

It can be seen that the majority of respondents were having supervision (83%); with almost two-thirds having only one supervisor (62%) and this was mainly individual supervision provided in the work placewith 12.5% having external supervision. For the most part, supervisors of respondents were women, aged between 40 and 60, with almost two-thirds of respondents having either an undergraduate or postgraduate
qualification. Three-quarters indicated having an organisational policy on supervision at work and an expectation of supervision in their job description, with respondents from state and Commonwealth organisations more likely than others to have supervision formalised in both policy and job descriptions. Over 223 respondents (38%) identified having difficulty accessing supervision with this being significantly linked to geographical location. The greatest number of respondents had their line manager as supervisor (67%), with respondents from Commonwealth organisations being more likely than others to have this supervisory arrangement.

Almost three-quarters (71%) of respondents indicated that they always, or usually, trusted their supervisor. A trusting relationship was associated with effective supervision. Over 80% had no choice of supervisor, with those practitioners from Commonwealth organisations less likely than those from others to have a choice of supervisor. Frequency of supervision was varied, as was the length of the supervision session, but the most common arrangement was monthly supervision for between 30 and 60 minutes. The data presented a mixed picture of how social workers were being supervised across Australia. While it was encouraging that over four-fifths of respondent social workers are being supervised, of concern is that 27% only reported sporadic supervision (less than four times a year), with the majority of these receiving supervision at work and with supervision structures in place within their organisation. Three-quarters had either verbal or written supervision contracts in place. For those respondents identified as having external supervision, 50% did not know whether feedback was sought from their external supervisor by their employing organisation. There was differential use of supervision structures across sectors with statutory organisations having more supervision structures in place. Forty percent (40%) of remaining respondents who had difficulty accessing supervision and about two-thirds were supervised by their line manager. Further, the majority of respondents had no choice of supervisor. These results will be explored more deeply in the qualitative data. Respondents who reported trusting their supervisor were more likely to experience effective supervision. Further, if the supervisor was their line manager, they reported that they were less likely to trust them.
Data relating specifically to the 239 supervisors indicated an even spread across length of time they had been supervising (between six months to more than 10 years). About one-third of these supervisors had undertaken ‘in house’ supervision training and one-quarter had undertaken training in the last six months. The qualitative data will provide some more in-depth evidence regarding how this is viewed by research participants.

As identified throughout the chapter there were both similarities and differences from the current study with other evidence from the literature. There is a similarity in the demographics of participants between the earlier Victorian study (Pilcher 1984) and New Zealand (O'Donoghue, et al. 2005, 2006). This demonstrates the potential between the current Australian study and the New Zealand to develop some further comparative mapping across the Tasman.

The minimum qualifications in the current study were higher in the Australian context compared to New Zealand and the earlier Victorian study. The difference in the New Zealand context possibly reflects pre-registration conditions with fewer university based social work courses at the time of the survey. The difference between the earlier Victorian studies may indicate the introduction of postgraduate qualifying social work degrees in Australia.

The literature identifies that internal supervision is the most common type and this remains the same in the current research (Garrett & Barretta-Herman, 1995; Kadushin, 1974, 1992c; Munson, 1979; O'Donoghue et al., 2005; Pilcher, 1984; Shulman, 1993). The difference with the current research is that there were larger numbers of participants received more than one type of supervision, which is new information about changes to how social workers are choosing to be supervised. Further, new data was gained about external supervision. The use of external supervision in Australia was less prevalent compared to the earlier Victorian study (Pilcher 1984) and the New Zealand studies (O'Donoghue et al., 2005).

The importance of trust in the supervisory relationship was affirmed in this study in line with the literature (Himle et al., 1989; Mena, 2007; Newsome & Pillari, 1992). There is new data from this research which indicates that the level of trust was associated when the supervisor was also the line manager.
The three main functions of supervision identified in the current research were also consistent with the literature (Erera & Lazar, 1994; Kadushin, 1992c; Patti, 1977; Poertner & Rapp, 1983; Shulman, 1993). However, the current research identified evidence of different discourses informing practice.

The use of a range of organisational structures were highlighted including policies, contracts, performance appraisals and job descriptions, which parallels the types of structures evident in the literature. However, this research provides new information about the prevalence and usage of these structures. Supervision policies for example have doubled since the 1980s in Australia (Pilcher 1984) but they remain lower than in New Zealand (Cooper & Anglem 2003; O'Donoghue et al., 2005). Similarly, this is the case with supervision contracts. Concerns about the suitability of supervision for undertaking performance appraisals are identified in the literature with an increase of their use under managerialism (Ladany et al., 1999; Osborne, 1996; Strom-Gottfried & Corcoran, 1998). The research certainly identified that performance appraisals are being undertaken as part of supervision.

The British literature identified that the impact of neoliberalism had affected access to supervision (Edwards, 2002; Ennis & Brodie, 1999; Orme & Rennie, 2006; Orme et al., 2009; Welbourne, 2007). This research also identified difficulties with accessing supervision, but it relates to geography, which certainly remains an overall Australian issue.

Whilst an expectation of training is affirmed in the literature (Beddoe & Davys, 1994; Ennis & Brodie, 1999; Lewis, 1998; Turner, 2000) accessing it for supervisors was difficult, both currently and in the earlier Australian study (Pilcher 1984). There were more training opportunities in New Zealand (Cooper & Anglem 2003; O'Donoghue et al., 2005).
In the literature supervisors used supervisee self-report to review their practice in supervision (Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001; Pilcher, 1984). This was different in the current research, with supervisors identifying that they used multiple methods using supervisee case notes and observations. Table 26 provides an overview of the similarities and differences of the current research with the literature.

The data collected in this research enabled statistical analysis to provide evidence about the content of supervision discussions. A focus on support in the supervisory relationship was associated with more frequent discussions about social work values and models of supervision practice. More frequent discussions about support in the supervisory relationship did not correlate with accountability and monitoring practice.

Gender, age, level of trust, sector, supervisor as line manager and choice of supervisor all influenced the content of supervision discussions to varying degrees. The percentage of variance accounted for broadly by these independent variables for the four factors was highest for choice in supervisor (or not) and whether the supervisor was the line manager. Gender, age and sector only accounted for between 1 to 2% of the variance.
Table 26: Summary of similarities and differences of the current research with the literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities with literature</th>
<th>Differences with literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The demographics of the respondents is similar to the New Zealand and Australian study</td>
<td>However minimum qualifications was higher in the current study compared to New Zealand and earlier studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion receiving internal supervision</td>
<td>Less use of external supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of trust in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>Level of trust was less when supervisor is your line manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three main functions of supervision consistent with the literature</td>
<td>Evidence about discourses used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The value of supervision structures</td>
<td>Having supervision policy was twice as likely compared to the frequency reported in the 1980s in Australia and still lower than New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties accessing supervision also evident in the literature and in this study</td>
<td>Geographical access in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance of training for supervisors but access difficulties evident</td>
<td>Greater training opportunities in New Zealand compared to Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision linked to performance appraisal, consistent with literature re the rise of this phenomenon</td>
<td>Type of method for ‘appraisal’ Evidence used by supervisors to work with supervisees notes a difference about case notes, observations versus self report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-correlation patterns for the four factors is consistent with the literature about increase in managerialism has generated less focus on professional aspects of supervision and increased focus on compliance.</td>
<td>Evidence about correlations in variables of supervisor as line manager, choice, sector, gender and age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of trust and links with effective supervision</td>
<td>Evidence about differential impacts of sector on trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a choice of supervisor has a positive impact on supervision</td>
<td>Choice of supervisor in this study was less than in the comparable earlier New Zealand study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Females reported more frequent discussion in supervision on support in the supervisory relationship, social work values and models of supervision compared to males. Supervisees under 30 and those over 60 reported more frequent discussions about support in the supervisory relationship, accountability and monitoring and supervision models in their supervision sessions. The results for the younger age group were consistent with the literature. The implications of the data for the older age group remains unclear and the qualitative data may provide some clarity regarding this quantitative result. Supervisees from statutory organisations reported more frequent discussion on accountability and monitoring. The results enhanced to earlier evidence from the literature regarding an increased use of compliance measures in statutory
organisations and the negative impact this was having on supervisees. Further supervisees, with line managers as supervisors, were having more frequent discussions on *accountability and monitoring* and less frequent ones about *support in the supervisory relationship* and *supervision models*. These results were congruent with the literature suggesting that line management negatively impacted the practice of supervision. Respondents who trusted their supervisor were having more frequent discussions on *support in the supervisory relationship*, *social justice values* and *models of supervision practice*. Supervisees with a choice of supervisor reported more frequent discussions about *support in the supervisory relationship* and *social work values* and *models of supervision* and less frequent discussion on *accountability and monitoring*. The results provide evidence about an increased use of compliance measures in statutory organisations and the negative impact this has on their supervisory relationship, which is in line with the literature. This is also the case findings about line management negatively impacting the practice of supervision.

The empirical evidence presented in this chapter answered the first two research questions and provide a clear picture of how social work supervision was conducted in Australia in 2007. It also responds to the second research question, by comparing the data produced to the literature, identifying where there is congruence. The following chapter will complement these findings by presenting the qualitative evidence from focus groups, survey text data and identifying the similarities between the data and the literature as reviewed. Chapter Six will provide examines the discourses informing social work practice across Australia.
CHAPTER SIX: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The language used by research participants provides a way of examining the discourses informing supervision practice. Perhaps not surprisingly the similarities and differences evident in these responses deepen the insights gained from the quantitative data and indeed the literature. This chapter reports on the qualitative findings of the research. It brings together the two sets of qualitative data: the open text questions within the survey and the focus group data. The open textual data has a pseudonym, identification number and sector while the focus group participants have pseudonyms, sector and whether they are a supervisee or supervisor. Both sets of data were combined to make one data set and analysed using NVIVO 7. In the analysis of the data three key themes were identified: the significance of the supervision relationship; the managerial discourses informing supervision in the contemporary context and the professionalisation of supervision practice.

Supervision relationships

Bourdieu (1999) identified that any field included arenas of social relationships characterised by power differentials, enhancing or jeopardising other relationships. Social work supervision can be understood as one such field, incorporating the primary supervisory relationship within a complex network of influence that impacts on supervision in practice. Within this research it was clear that the primary supervisory relationship was affected by the other stakeholders across the system, including organisational influences and the impact the professional association. Service users were also identified as key stakeholders in the experience of social work practice. From the literature reviewed in Chapter three it was also clear there was a professional expectation that social workers form a primary relationship with their supervisor to strengthen frontline practice and to provide the conditions that would enable practitioners to practise well. The supervision relationship would provide the conditions through which other the functions of supervision could be effected: support, administration and education. The professional criteria outlined in the National Practice Standards for Social Work Supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000) confirm this expectation creating the relationship parameters informing social work supervision. The supervisory relationship is identified in the literature as key to
Within this research participants spoke about the importance of the primary relationship and the dynamics that impact upon it. Three themes were identified about the relationship:

1. Trust in the supervision relationship
2. Challenge in the supervision relationship
3. Internal and external supervision relationships.

**Trust in the supervision relationship**

The literature noted the central place of trust in the supervisory relationship (Himle et al., 1989; Mena, 2007; Newsome & Pillari, 1992). The quantitative data confirmed this in detailing that 71.2% (n=516) of the survey respondents identified that they usually or always trusted their supervisor, leaving 29% either not trusting their supervisor or only sometimes trusting their supervisor. In the same way, the participants in the focus groups and survey text noted how trust was demonstrated, how a safe supervisory environment was created and how these dynamics formed the basis for satisfying supervision. Without trust, participants acknowledged there was potential for the misuse of power and authority in the relationship. In response to the survey question: What factors do you think contribute to the overall quality of supervision 125 respondents noted trust in their supervisor. Rina, a statutory supervisee in the focus group identified the importance of trust in the supervisory relationship, and what happened for her when trust was absent:

‘If I can’t trust somebody I’ll say what needs to be said, I won’t go any further or deeper than that and personally that doesn’t work for me. I don’t want supervision to be supervising somebody else I want me to be supervised – it is all about me. We give a lot to people day in and day out, it’d be nice to be given back some.’ (Rina: statutory supervisee, page 14)

Positive supervisory relationships were linked to the supportive function of supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). The link between the support function and the trusting relationship between supervisor and supervisee was articulated by survey respondents (n=63). Sasha, a supervisee from the statutory sector, captured the tone of the responses:
‘Trust and the ability to make mistakes in supervision is important so that you learn added skills in a safe and supportive environment.’ (Sasha: 36)

Respondents noted other characteristics linked to trust as a part of the supervisory relationship. Colleen, again from the statutory sector:

‘A good relationship with the supervisor is about honesty, trust, integrity, knowledge, risk taking.’ (Colleen: 28)

The social work supervision literature identified trust as essential in creating a ‘safe enough’ environment for learning in the supervisory relationship to occur (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Munson, 2002). Such an environment was considered a professional requirement in social work. The participants articulated the benefits of a trusting supervisory relationship as: a ‘safe and validated space to discuss work’, ‘the opportunity to learn how to survive in the work and get the job done’, ‘access to a more experienced worker’s trust’, and, ultimately ‘enjoying work and being productive’. These insights were consistent with the literature that established the value of trust and the judicial use of authority which created safe supervisory relationships (Cousins, 2004; Fox, 1989; Kadushin, 1992c; Neufeldt et al., 1997; Smith, 2000).

On the other hand, ‘unsafe supervisory relationships’ were also identified by participants. The language used about unsafe relationships suggested different discourses informing their comments. They spoke about the difficulty in discussing practice mistakes openly in an environment where the primary focus was on: ‘quality control mechanisms’, ‘quality control strategies’, ‘risk management policies’ and ‘surveillance and compliance processes’. The focus here is on organisational requirements using managerial discourses to inform the supervisory relationship. Such a shift does not consider the impact on the primary relationship if the level of trust in the supervisory relationship decreases. Participants spoke about their experiences of not trusting supervisors and the impact this subsequently had on future supervisory relationships. Joanie from the statutory sector highlighted this:

‘I have refused to accept the supervisor the agency says I should have. I see her as a bully. I then had a brief subsequent experience with someone else I had no trust in …although she "felt" helpful at the time. The "help" turned into a realisation that there was much talk at the time which was never followed up with any action. Now when I
ask for it I receive informal advice given to me, on the run, by a Departmental director over difficult cases. I ask for it over "system" issues and conflicts in the main.’ (Joanie: 124)

The importance of feeling safe in the supervisory relationship was noted by 76 survey respondents. The comments provided information about relationships which were trusting and those which were not. They impacted on the level of safety felt in supervisory relationships. The AASW Code of Ethics (2010) identifies confidentiality as part of the responsibilities for ethical practice as does the National Standards for Social Work Supervision (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). As such, the AASW, as another stakeholder in the supervisory relationship, provide the professional parameters regarding confidentiality. The use of confidentiality was another demonstration of safety in the supervisory relationship that over 49 participants identified. Bonnie, from the statutory sector, spoke about confidentiality as a condition of safe supervisory relationships:

‘Great if the relationship is good – needs to be built on trust and safety, confidentiality and non-directive… not micro management.’ (Bonnie: 817)

Sarah, a supervisee in a health and counselling organisation, reflected on her experience of confidentiality in a supervisory relationship and the way this impacted the content she raised in supervision:

‘Confidentiality in supervision is limited. I make a judgement about what I disclose and definitely issues about other staff wouldn’t be discussed I don’t have a problem discussing casework if I stuffed up but I’m more sensitive about domestic and political issues.’ (Sarah, Health/counselling supervisee focus group, page 1).

Mary, a supervisee from a statutory organisation, described the impact when confidentiality was breached in a supervisory relationship, and spoke of the consequent unsafe supervisory space:

‘I have had some very bad experience with supervisors, the confidentiality. You may realise later that your manager knows about your personal issues. And you didn’t know they were talking about it and it was something discussed in confidence in supervision and that is a big thing’ (Mary: statutory supervisee, page 9).

These experiences were supported in the literature, which has suggested that unsafe supervisory relationships produce unsatisfactory supervision experiences (Gummer, 2001; Ramos-Sanchez et al., 2002; Rosenblatt & Mayer, 1975).
The impact of a safe and trusting supervisory relationship on service users was also identified by research participants. Although historically there has been limited evidence about the impact of supervision on client outcomes (Gowdy et al., 1993; Harkness & Hensley, 1991), data from this research suggests the potential for positive impacts on service users when the supervisory relationship was trusting. Greta, from the statutory sector, who paid for external supervision saw it like this:

‘A well-supported worker is able to work much more effectively to continually improve the level of quality. A critically reflective worker who has the opportunity to explore their practice in a trusting environment is likely to feel far more supported and secure in their place of work and willing to go the extra mile for the client and the organisation.’

(Greta: 72)

Such evidence highlights the complexity of different relationships on the supervision experience. The focus groups and textual data suggested that past experiences of negative supervisory relationships were linked to a ‘tick the box’ approach to supervision where trust was not evident. Research participants made the distinction between perfunctory supervision and that which was underpinned by professional principles. The literature in Chapter three identified this distinction as between managerial and professional discourses informing social work supervision (Feltham, 2002; Smith, 2000). Lou, a supervisee from a statutory agency, expressed the distinction in this way:

‘So there has to be that mutual respect and trust…I think there has to be a mutual respect as a very minimum. Our practice is underpinned by our ethics and philosophies…but when it comes to supervision I think all of that goes out of the window… Without those two things supervision is not going to go anywhere. It will just be a formality rather than experiential learning and personal growth necessary to inform the work we do with our clients. I’d like to think it informs our practice and adds to the knowledge base we already have. But unfortunately it doesn’t quite work that way. In theory it is great but in practice in the day to day it doesn’t happen.’ (Lou, Statutory supervisee, page 9)

Discussions in supervisor focus groups addressed the dilemma of trying to develop trusting relationships with their supervisees on the one hand, and responding to organisational demands on the other. These conversations highlighted the tensions identified by Bourdieu et al (2002) in the field, where relationships were characterised by competing interests. For example:

‘It’s hard sometimes trying to be straight with them (supervisees) when you know you have to meet the requirements from your manager’ (Lucy: 95)
‘I’m fed up with being the bad arse supervisor because I’m doing my job for …’
(Maeve: 191)

All participants noted the importance of a trusting relationship between supervisor and supervisee. They acknowledged the positive and negative impacts of the organisation, the professional association and service users on the development of a safe primary supervisory relationship. Participants highlighted that trust was demonstrated by a safe environment, usually in the employing organisation, where the nature of the relationship and confidentiality was transparent. Both supervisors and supervisees identified competing interests between developing the trusting supervisory relationship, while at the same time addressing organisational expectations and demands. Such competition provided insights about how professional and managerial discourses informed social work supervision practice.

**Challenge in the supervisory relationship**

The capacity for challenge was identified by participants as demonstrating the degree of safety they felt in the supervisory relationship. How participants discussed the opportunity for challenge within supervision provided insights about the discourses informing practice. The literature identified that challenge in social work supervision was demonstrated by openly discussing practice mistakes without fear of reprisal from the supervisor, noting this was a characteristic of satisfactory supervisory relationships (Davys, 2007; Kadushin, 1968; Morrell, 2000; Munson, 2002). Traditionally, challenge was conceptualised and engaged within the support function where social work supervision assisted supervisees to manage their emotions and uncertainty. It was seen as a positive and expected part of the professional social work supervision, both relished and feared in the supervisory relationship. Challenging ideas and actions provided the opportunity to improve practice while at the same time allowing practice knowledge to grow (York & Denton, 1990).

The need for challenge in the supervisory relationship was noted by over 120 respondents in the open survey questions. The data demonstrated a willingness by supervisors and supervisees to be challenged, even if this process was difficult. This was particularly the case when supervisees believed an error in judgement had been made about the work. This type of challenge was seen as developing and enhancing
practice skills and knowledge in order to improve client outcomes. It was seen as being informed by professional discourse. So, for Jackie, from the non statutory sector, the safety of the supervisory relationship determined when challenge could occur:

‘challenging element occurs when a supervisor knows how to challenge staff in an appropriate and safe way.’ (Jackie: 553)

Positive challenge was identified in the research as going beyond a cursory question, to less comfortable areas of discussion. Jacinta, from the statutory sector, described challenge as:

‘The ability to be open and explore issues, even if they are not easy.’ (Jacinta: 110)

The place of conflict in the supervisory relationship was also evident. It was normalised, as a positive aspect of challenge in the supervisory relationship, where there was:

‘Preparedness to air ideas and maybe have a bit of conflict in order to make things better.’ (Simone, statutory sector, supervised by line manager, p.8)

Alice, a respondent from the non statutory sector who received self-funded external supervision, teased out those aspects in the supervisory relationship, which created an environment where challenge could occur:

‘The relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee, the amount of contact that they have needs to be two way, the willingness to listen and be challenging and respect for each other, the expertise and the ability to question in the supervisor.’ (Alice: 339)

The participants identified the reciprocal benefits of challenge in the supervisory relationship. Anita, a supervisee in the statutory sector, spoke about the importance of challenge in the supervisory relationship for service users:

‘It improves my practice as a social worker – it challenges me to try different ways of doing things and is an effective tool for reflection. This is turn allows me to work with service users better as my practice will always be improving and challenged to get the best results for them.’ (Anita, statutory sector supervisee, page 10).
The literature identified that a potential consequence of challenge was vulnerability, and this factor was considered a necessary part of the development of trusting and positive supervisory relationships (Ganzer & Ornstein, 1999). Those aspects of vulnerability noted in the literature included: self-disclosure about difficult situations faced; awareness of limitations in practice; expressions of questions and uncertainties and value clashes (Cousins, 2004; Granvold, 1977; Itzhaky, 1999; Kadushin, 1992c). There were 76 survey respondents in the open questions who detailed the value and costs of being vulnerable in the supervisory relationship. The exposure of emotional aspects of practice in supervision, for example, was discussed by Tom, a respondent from the statutory sector. He made the link between self-disclosure and ongoing employment:

‘I felt able to express areas of stress and frustration without feeling employment may be jeopardised and to work on the issues causing these feelings.’ (Tom: 370)

Participants wanted and valued challenge in the supervisory relationship because it promoted professional growth and positive client outcomes. Whether this could occur depended on how safe they felt in the supervisory relationship. This appeared to be the case for both internal or external supervisory relationships.

**Internal and external supervision relationships**

External supervision was identified as the provision of supervision occurring outside the organisation in which the employee was working. The data indicated that the type of supervision impacted on the nature of the supervisory relationship. The quantitative data identified that 71.6% (n=173) of respondents found individual supervision provided in their place of work the most useful, and 27.9% identified external supervision as most useful. The figures indicated that there was less external supervision compared to earlier Australian data collected (Pilcher, 1984). Although the majority of respondents found internal supervision most useful, the qualitative data provides a different picture, for an important minority of the participants. For these respondents the type of supervision available depended on the different stakeholders, and negotiating different types of supervision did not automatically rest with the supervisor. One hundred and twelve respondents in the open survey questions referred to the different types of supervision they accessed and how this impacted the supervisory relationship.
The majority of these comments focused on the value of external supervision. Maggie from the statutory sector, provides a professional rationale for seeking external supervision:

‘I have sought out external supervision, which benefits me as well as my organisation by providing a worker that is intellectually challenged, emotionally grounded and focused on the core values of Social Work i.e: social justice, promoting resilience and challenging systems.’ (Maggie: 242)

Maggie’s comments illustrate the value of professional discourses for her within a supervision context that focuses on supportive and educative functions. Her experience captures the importance of supervision that reflects both professional and organisational imperatives in supervision. The quote was indicative of others and in line with the literature suggesting that external supervision was being used more in the absence of professionally informed internal supervision (Bell & Thorpe, 2004; Cooper, 2006; Morrell, 2001; Ung, 2002). Other respondents acknowledged that some supervision content was better explored externally. Ellen, a survey respondent from the statutory sector, received external supervision as well as peer supervision with her line manager:

‘I value more the individual external supervision which is not my principal supervision… I access this a few times each year and it allows me to speak freely away from the workplace and to explore issues that are impacting on me, rather than needing to be a bit careful about other colleagues actions and having to acknowledge there is a formal appraisal relationship.’ (Ellen: 108)

Ricky, from the health and counselling sector, also spoke about the value of external supervision because it enabled more frank conversation in a safe supervisory relationship:

‘My external supervision gives me a chance to reflect on my practice, discuss organisational politics in a safe and contained environment, and plan my career path.’ (Ricky: 465)

The suitability of external supervision for different employment sectors was debated in focus group interviews. A number of focus group participants from the statutory sector made cursory references to external supervision as part of a ‘wish list’ for how supervision could be improved. Statutory participants expressed negative views about internal supervision relationships suggesting they were ‘unsafe’ or ‘risky’. Whereas
others spoke positively about external relationships, identifying them as ‘equal’, ‘mutual respect’ and ‘trust’. The distinction in language highlights the discourses informing different types of supervision.

The benefits of external supervision identified by participants were consistent with the literature reviewed including: seeking an external perspective; adding to the line management perspective, and overcoming control of the worker in the supervisory relationship (Bell & Thorpe, 2004; Davys, 2007; Morrell, 2001; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). The benefits of external supervision for the organisation and client group were also noted by respondents. Zunni, from the non statutory sector, speaks pragmatically about this:

‘By accessing supervision externally, I solved the problem of there being no-one within the organisation able to provide professional supervision for me, as distinct from line management. So the organisation benefits from my professional development, which has contributed to a more stable work team – and doesn't have to pay for it!’ (Zunni: 224)

Terri, again from the non statutory sector, teased out the positive benefits of the external supervision sought separately from her organisation and negative benefits of internal supervision:

‘ The supervision within my organisation is of little benefit. It does not achieve usual goals of supervision which include ensuring a high standard of service is offered to clients, that practice is safe and ethical... I find the individual supervision I arrange externally from time to time is effective… it makes sure the outcome (policy and procedure development) is appropriate and consistent with other organisational elements.’ (Terri: 438)

Alima, from the statutory sector, accessed both internal and external supervision, and spoke about the negative impact if she was unable to experience external supervision:

‘If I wasn't able to access the wonderful external supervision that I get and just had the occasional internal supervision I would have burnt out very early, perhaps needed stress leave or taken work cover.' (Alima: 146)

In resource depleted sectors Zunni, Terri and Alima identified the organisational benefits of external supervision as greater stability for the team, congruence between policy and procedures and financial. Their negative experience of internal supervision and their more positive experience of external supervision reflected the views of other participants who were less satisfied with internal supervision.
The limitations of external supervision were also noted in the qualitative data. These limitations included the external supervisor not understanding the work and being constrained in providing feedback about external supervision to the employing organisation. These findings were consistent with those identified in the literature review (Beddoe, 1997; Hirst, 2000; O'Donoghue, 2003). Elisha, in the statutory sector, articulates both the importance of internal supervision and the unworkability of external supervision for her:

I need supervision to be from within because I work in a tertiary service looking at health promotion. My work is primarily about organisational development and workplace development and I need an advocate and someone who at the upper echelon will tie it all together. I also need someone who can make those links and communicate them up and down the system. An external supervisor wouldn't work. (Elisha: 28)

The qualitative data provided a more complex picture regarding the types of supervision and how they impacted other stakeholders including the profession, service users and organisations.

The literature identified that choice of supervisor impacted on the supervisory relationship and the type of supervision available (Allen et al., 2004; Morrell, 2001). Choice of supervisor was therefore another dimension in the relationship provided by the research participants. Respondents were asked to identify, in the survey, whether they had a choice about their principal supervisor. About 80% indicated they did not choose their principal supervisor (Appendix 10.32). Given that individual internal supervision was the dominant type, it is not surprising that in large organisations supervisees would not have a choice of supervisor. However, the quantitative data identified a significant association between sector and choice of supervisor ($\chi^2=74.76; \text{df}=7; \text{p}<.001$). This data indicated that participants from the statutory sector had less choice of supervisor compared to other sectors, whereas the majority of those employed in private employment had more choice. The significant sector differential highlighted that the employment sector impacted on the type of supervision accessed. This was best summed up by respondents’ comments in the survey text data, indicating a link between choice of supervisor and relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Sue, from the statutory sector, spoke about the lack of choice in the following way:
‘How do you get decent supervision when your organisation has a structure in place already, but the person who is supposed to supervise you doesn't quite cut the mustard? Some might say, you lucky thing, I can't get supervision at all, but in a way it's harder.’ (Sue: 151)

Chris, a supervisor from the non statutory sector, highlighted the impact of not having a choice in supervisor:

‘I don't have any other supervisor choice as there is no support offered to me. I believe my work suffers as a result as I often have to make decisions on my own that I question are actually in the best interests of my clients but’ (Chris; 549).

Participants suggested that choice was an important element in establishing a quality supervision relationship. Georgia, from the statutory sector, recognised this:

‘The importance of external supervision and the opportunity to select my own supervisor because it is the quality of the relationship for me. That has the most impact on the benefits of supervision.’ (Georgia: 230)

Claudia, also from the statutory sector, identified the consequences of refusing supervision where there was no choice in supervisor:

‘It (supervision) virtually is not available to me now because of my refusal to have someone as my designated supervisor. She sent one colleague into a serious nervous breakdown and another into resigning, but...is someone her own superior has great faith in. I have learned to be self-directed, value my "strokes" from clients, nurses and doctors, other colleagues and trust my own judgement about whether I have done a good or a bad job. All this is much easier for an older social worker like me however and it has been hard won as well. Sometimes (I) feel burned out and would love someone to unload to about a difficult client I feel stuck with. Good peers of my age in my team are a help when we are not all being moved around into other teams.’ (Claudia: 124).

The qualitative data added depth to the quantitative evidence about the place of external supervision in the neoliberal environment. Further research could examine the links between type of supervision accessed, with client and worker outcomes and this will be discussed further in chapter seven.

The significance of the trusting supervisory relationship was informed by professional social work discourses, where power was acknowledged, and challenges were able to be discussed. Attention to type of supervision improved outcomes for social workers, service users and organisations. In summary, the themes identified for the supervisory relationship suggested that:
• trust and respect between supervisor and supervisee was critical if supervision was to be satisfying;
• being challenged was more likely to occur in supervision when the relationship between supervisor and supervisee was based on trust and respect;
• the value of external supervision was affirmed; and
• competing professional and managerial discourses impacted the supervisory relationship.

Managerial discourses informing supervision

The notion of capital was used to explore the data on accountability. The possession or absence of capital was apparent in the way individual respondents and focus group participants spoke about the benefits and compromises in accountability mechanisms within social work supervision. Capital provides a way of exposing the exercise of power and access to resources through supervision. Capital in this instance refers to cultural capital in the form of professional qualification and is of particular relevance in the context of this research. The literature suggested that there is an increased focus on accountability and monitoring in supervision within the current neoliberal context of human service delivery (Beddoe, 2010; Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; O'Donoghue, 2003). The participants tended to confirm this trend. From within the qualitative data four themes were identified:

1. purpose of accountability
2. impact of line management
3. access to resources in the organisational hierarchy
4. exercise of power and control.

Purpose of accountability in supervision

The qualitative data in this research on accountability in supervision identified both positive and negative aspects. The positive comments identified the value of accountability in supervision as understood in the administrative function (Kadushin, 1992). The negative comments incorporated remarks about ‘monitoring’, ‘reviewing’, ‘checking’ and ‘surveillance’. Vicki, from the statutory sector, highlighted the importance of accountability from an organisational perspective:
‘(Supervision) provides a line of accountability for the organisation ... and line of authority for the management of social work resources and services at the local level.’
(Vicki:108)

Vicki was one of many respondents who identified the positive aspects of accountability and monitoring in supervision for the organisation. Survey respondents also noted the link between supervision and operationalising organisational policy and change. They identified the pragmatic accountability and legal requirements of supervision, and supervision was positively identified as the conduit through which the organisational hierarchy implements administrative change. The language used by survey respondents about accountability demonstrated a familiarity with the instrumental aspects of supervision. The participants used a similar language to illustrate the links between policy and practice and the ways in which supervision helped strengthen decision making. I have used quotes without pseudonyms to illustrate the overall tone of the following textual responses:

‘My ability to discuss the impact of government policy helps me to make fair decisions according to policy and legislation.’ (ID 426)

‘Supervision provides clarity of decision making and adherence to policy and procedures.’ (ID 153)

‘Organisational policy is paramount – we must do what is correct by our government employer.’ (ID 289).

‘Ensure everyone practices in relation to government policy.’ (ID 211)

‘Making sure one is on track with one's way of working in terms of company policy, social work ethics, legislation etcetera.’ (ID 185)

‘That they know I'm doing my job properly.’ (ID 35)

‘Compliance controls and policy changes communicated.’ (ID 333)

The organisational benefits of supervision were also noted by a number of participants:

‘It helps to retain competent and experienced staff in the organisation and avoids situations where poor standards of practice may lead to complaints or litigation.’ (ID 219)

‘Supervision provides retention, effective and efficient service delivery.’ (ID 82).

Marie, from the non statutory sector linked supervision to quality control in social work practice and for the retention of good staff:
‘Regular and structured supervision is necessary to ensure quality of work and growth. It provides... the opportunity for clinical group supervision with an external provider to add another level of understanding, knowledge, reflection, team cohesion to practice and opportunity to explore issues separate to line manager. Supporting the workers is imperative to creating quality workers and outcomes for clients and opportunities to support the impact of practice on workers... not just the clients issues but also for longevity in this “field” of work.’ (Marie:14)

However, participants also spoke about the potential for accountability processes to negatively impact on supervision. The negative language used by participants suggested that managerial discourses informed accountability practices and that accountability had more to do with compliance than the support of quality practice. This illustrated the compliance requirements within organisations reflecting the neoliberal environment (Hough, 2003; Ife, 1997). The organisational motivation for accountability and monitoring in the practice of supervision was evident in the language of the ‘tick and flick’ requirement in supervision. Reinforcing what was considered to be dominant managerial aspects of accountability. Eloise, from the statutory sector remarked:

‘They can tick the box to say they offer it.’ (Eloise: 25)

Hugh, from the statutory sector, suggested ulterior motives:

‘Keeps the Accreditation looking good.’ (Hugh: 207).

An NGO respondent, Larry, thought it was for the supervisor:

‘Satisfies part of supervisors own job requirements, i.e. to supervise, makes it therefore more comfortable for supervisor.’ (Larry: 368)

Some respondents nevertheless indicated that both managerial and professional discourses could exist when exploring issues of accountability. John, from the statutory sector, distinguished both purposes for accountability in supervision:

‘A holistic approach to supervision… entails not just a performance or administration focus but also wellbeing, professional development, etc.’ (John:111)

Extensive debate about the purpose of accountability and monitoring in supervision occurred in all focus groups. Supervisors articulated feelings of compromise professionally in supervision, acknowledging the difference between ‘offering genuine support and critical reflection’, while also ‘ensuring that organisational requirements
were met’. The literature also noted these differences impacting on discourses informing social work supervision (Beddoe, 2010; Jones & Gallop, 2003; Peach & Horner, 2007). Mai, a supervisee from a statutory organisation, expressed the inevitability of these dynamics in supervision:

‘We become institutionalised ourselves – this is policy this is what we have to do. That is what (statutory) social workers are, we are bureaucrats and follow procedures... we are known as being quite vocal in changing, promoting social work. But that is not the focus, the focus is how do we get the task done.’ (Mai, statutory supervisee, page 10)

Other survey respondents identified how the purpose of accountability within supervision was often misconstrued, questioning the conflict between accountability and other supervisory functions. Jai, from the statutory sector, rhetorically questions the absence of conflict of interest in the managerial environment:

‘...No conflict of interest between managerial and supervisory functions in increasingly corporatized workplaces where managers manage above themselves rather than below?’ (Jai:124).

In this section both positive and negative examples of supervision practice were provided, illustrating the different ways in which accountability was experienced. Bourdieu’s notion of ‘capital’ was useful in understanding how supervisors and supervisees pursued their interests in supervision. The data suggested that when the purpose of accountability focused on managerial aspects (symbolic capital within the organisation) in supervision at the expense of professional factors (cultural capital within the organisation) stress was experienced in supervision.

**Impact of line management on supervision**

The quantitative data indicated that 67.4% (n=580) of respondents had their principal supervisor as their line manager and this arrangement was more likely to be the case in statutory organisations. Further, the MANOVA results reported in Chapter five suggested that when the supervisor and line manager was the same person, there was more discussion about accountability and monitoring practice during supervision sessions. The link between line management and accountability in supervision was noted in the literature, but there has been limited evidence to substantiate this trend (Beddoe, 1997; Davys, 2007; Lewis, 1998; Wright, 2000). It was suggested that the rise of the neoliberal state was identified as the point at which an increase in line management at the cost of other supervisory functions had occurred (Beddoe, 1997;
Beddoe & Davys, 1994; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Jones, 2000, 2004; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2000, 2002, 2003; O'Donoghue et al., 2005). From the literature there was a differentiation in the language of line management, informed by managerial discourses, and supervision as informed by professional norms (O'Donoghue, 2003). The qualitative data allowed for closer examination of the link between line management and supervision and how this arrangement influenced accountability. There were 171 comments made by respondents in the open survey question about line management and accountability. The majority of those who chose to comment were negative about the line management process. However, Felicity, from the health and counselling sector, was an exception, identifying the value of line management in supervision:

‘Peer supervision is very important within the organisation, because formal one-to-one supervision with my supervisor/line manager doesn't occur more than once a year. Having this person also attend peer supervision sessions is a benefit in terms of senior social workers and our line manager being together to resolve any issues that arise, and being able to deal with them.’ (Felicity: 193)

Participants spoke specifically about the strain faced in supervision when the supervisor was also the line manager and identified the limitations of the experience. Libby, from the statutory sector:

‘A supervision relationship with a line manager is a different dynamic entirely. If the relationship with the line manager is poor then professional supervision suffers. External professional supervision is a value-added dimension to my supervision, I think. I have also chosen to take up external supervision to ensure that it happens regularly. Internal supervision is too infrequent, because of the organisational demands on my supervisor essentially; I appreciate the internal supervision but it is not satisfying.’ (Libby: 421)

Sasha, from the statutory sector, was clear about the distinction between line management and supervision:

‘I feel that line management is not supervision and therefore I do not have an avenue to discuss the impacts of the work on myself personally, or the ability to feel able to discuss areas where I don’t feel as skilled or confident because this may be seen as a weakness by the organisation.’ (Sasha: 36).

Other respondents suggested that line management should be ‘separated’ from supervision. For example Hetty, a survey respondent from the statutory sector, used caps lock to convey the gravity with which she viewed this issue. It is worth noting that she did not use caps lock in any of the other responses she made in the survey:
‘I feel that supervision should be separated from line management and if this was the case then supervision could be very worthwhile’. (Hetty: 323)

Sunny, from the non statutory sector, also suggested separating the role of workload planning as a useful way to describe the tasks of line management:

‘Supervision should not be about workload planning – this should be a separate meeting which would then take away some of the issues in relation to tensions that arise with having a line manager as a supervisor.’ (Sunny: 251)

Recommendations to separate line management from supervision were evident in the literature reviewed in chapter three. Alternatives to using line managers as supervisors were advocated due to the resultant impact on the supervisory relationship (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Davys, 2007; Itzhaky, 2001; Morrell, 2001; O’Donoghue, 2003; O’Donoghue et al., 2005; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). Participants within this research used different ways of referring to line management aspects of supervision. Frances, a survey respondent from the education sector, spoke about the need to explore the difference between ‘clinical’ and ‘organisational’ supervision:

‘I’m not sure whether the difference between a clinically focused supervision (which is highly desirable/necessary) and organisational/line management (the benefit of which presumes the propriety/progressiveness of the organisations social role – a highly questionable assumption) is sufficiently acknowledged or explored.’ (Frances: 106)

In the focus group discussions there were different responses from supervisor and supervisee groups about line management. Supervisors, in particular, discussed the tension experienced in their role as line manager alongside their professional duty of care to supervisees. Julie, a supervisor from a non-statutory agency, noted that, as a middle manager seeking supervision, accountability was the main focus:

‘I use supervision to ensure the line manager is aware of problems within the area – that there are no surprises. In some ways it is protection for me and also asking for opportunity to have someone else look at how I am managing that and give me feedback. My experience of supervision here is that when there is a problem and when I am confronted with a difficult meeting or have been confronted with managing staffing issues, that I am supported. Often I have been supported after the event, in saying you have done that well rather than assistance before the issues become problematic.’ (Julie: Non statutory supervisor, page 1).
Julie provided a picture about her managerial approach to supervision with her line manager, being very clear about its accountability function. In the focus groups there were many negative references about accountability with line managers. For example, several participants spoke about ‘cover your bum’ supervision, perhaps an Australian version of Hawkins and Shohet’s (2000, p.134) claim that when attention was diverted from task, people ‘watched their back’.

Performance appraisal, undertaken by line supervisors, as part of supervision, was another example of accountability and monitoring discussed in the focus groups. The quantitative data demonstrated that feedback for the purpose of performance appraisals was sought from supervisors and that this regularly occurred. The literature cautioned using supervisors to undertake performance appraisals because there was a risk that they could be used to punish or withhold resources (Evans, 1990; Waters, 1992). The qualitative data in this research raised similar concerns. The experience of Hasena, a supervisee in the statutory sector, captured the negative impact there may be of having the supervisor undertake supervision, line management and performance reviews:

‘performance appraisal is used by supervisors to punish supervisees...that’s why I’m careful about what I disclose in ANY supervision session because it will be used against you.’ (Hasena: 231).

Similarly for Mesa, from the health and counselling sector:

‘I have seen people miss out on promotion because they (the supervisor and supervisee) don’t get on and it’s all happened in the annual review’ (Mesa: 431)

Such comments, whilst disturbing, serve to capture the implications of using supervisors to undertake performance appraisals when managerial discourses are dominant within the process. It is important to note that the majority of participants in this research indicate trust in their supervisor with most having their line manager as supervisor. The qualitative component of the study nevertheless indicates that for some the tension and difficulty reconciling these roles impacts on both the experience of supervision, and the potential to support effective supervision, that requires further research investigation. At a minimum the findings suggest there is a need for supervisors, in this dual role, to have
carefully considered how to line manage alongside other professional aspects of supervision. Discussion in the focus group also identified the need for training about how to balance the demands of line management and professional supervision. Abdi recognised this:

‘If a supervisor is also an internal line manager they ought to be trained specifically on managing this dual role and have their own supervision around this.’ (Abdi: Statutory supervisee, page 3).

This call for training is complicated nevertheless by the qualitative finding that supervision training is as limited now as it was reported in the earlier Australian (Pilcher 1984) and North American surveys (Kadushin 1992a). In line with the literature (Cousins, 2004; Gillanders, 2005; Gummer, 2001; Gridley, 1999; Kadushin, 1968) the research participants demonstrated the importance of understanding the contradictory roles of line management and supervision. For some this contradiction was irreconcilable, for others there were suggestions about ways in which it could be managed. In any event the research findings illustrated the dual role of line manager and supervisor and the inevitable link with the organisational hierarchy. Within this dual type of supervision arrangement capital, in the form of power and authority, was exchanged.

**Access to resources in the organisational hierarchy**

Bourdieu’s (1999) notion of capital provides a lens for understanding how supervision can be seen as the site for translating accountability into action. For the majority of participants in this research line management represented the hierarchy of the organisation. As noted earlier the language used by participants when describing line management indicated the dominance of a managerial discourse influencing their experience of supervision. Organisational hierarchy ascribes status (symbolic capital) to line managers, which serves as the accountability and monitoring mechanism. How capital was divested or exploited in the accountability process took many forms. From the perspective of supervisees, for some supervisors the higher status reward in the organisational hierarchy proved too seductive. In some instances this resulted in the supervisor colluding with the hierarchy against the supervisee. How capital was divested or exploited in the accountability process took many forms. Comments about how the organisational hierarchy enhanced or hindered the accountability process were
noted by 104 participants. The majority of these comments related to how the organisational hierarchy often stalled the supervision process by withholding resources, for example, Sue, a survey respondent from the non statutory sector, provided insights into how the hierarchy operated:

‘My immediate supervisor will often advocate for me, trouble is that the line management is so hierarchical, that ideas are diluted/rejected by the time they get to the top.’ (Sue: 151)

Most supervisors in the focus groups indicated that navigating the organisational hierarchy was problematic for their role. This navigation was especially fraught in relation to accessing resources. Supervisors acknowledged that being more senior in the organisational hierarchy did not automatically mean resources were more available. So even though supervisees may have perceived supervisors as more powerful, the supervisors suggested that this was not necessarily the case. There were ways, nevertheless, of negotiating access to resources when a supervisor was familiar with, and able to use, the system. Sally, a statutory supervisor, spoke about this, while at the same time highlighting the systemic difficulties that make negotiation in the organisational hierarchy complex:

Our line managers may not have immediate resources but if you can identify the right person … different structures need to be navigated across … the letter of the law was more taken into account in some locations and not in others…” (Sally, statutory supervisor, page 2).

Understanding how ‘capital’ was used in the organisation opens up different ways of investigating the complexity across organisational systems to access resources (Bourdieu, 1998; Parton, 1999). Sally’s comments acknowledged how managerial discourses influence practice. Carolyn, a supervisor in the health and counselling focus group, articulated the challenges faced by supervisors without conferred authority within the organisational hierarchy:

‘One of the biggest challenges I find is… that line management stuff… in supervision you are bringing up casework and debriefs and the administrative side of it but … we (the supervisors) don’t actually have any authority… so I think sometimes with supervisees it can be a little confusing whether they go to their supervisor or the site manager. ’ (Carolyn, health and counseling supervisor, page 4)
Other supervisors discussed similar systemic difficulties they faced. Being transparent with supervisees about the limitations of their influence within the organisational hierarchy was a strategy used in supervision. Angelika, a supervisor from the health and counselling sector, spoke about how she managed this:

‘I was going to mention … the mediation role … being up front about the hierarchy and bureaucratic environment that we work in … everyone knows it’s there, yes naming it and talking about the processes, trying to get a bit of mediation if that’s what’s needed… talking on behalf of supervisees, if they don’t feel they can.’ (Angelika: health and counselling supervisor, p 5).

While the transparency was generally supported and was considered part of the challenge of supervision, managing the consequential conflict was sometimes difficult. Laura, a supervisor from a statutory organisation, suggested that supervisors were the ones that had to manage these dynamics in the end:

‘When someone gives you feedback about your supervisee … the organisation does not deal with how, as supervisors, we resolve conflict.’ (Laura: statutory supervisors, page 5.)

Supervisors were also able to identify opportunities to influence the organisational culture and potentially access resources, even though sometimes this can present challenges within complex organisations. Fatma, a supervisor in the health and counselling focus group, noted:

‘Sometimes the roles can be a bit blurred, not knowing where your role starts and where it ends… sharing the information gathered, needing to be prepared to see your supervisor, who may not necessarily have that information there. So it is my responsibility to seek it and find… the person above you who has responsibility to ask for it. That’s sometimes a challenge…’ (Fatma: Health and counselling supervisor, page 14).

The literature in Chapter Three suggested that organisational hierarchy can create expectations that often conspire against more collaborative approaches to supervision (Fook, 2002; Ife, 1997). Participants found that their ability to collaborate with other social workers across different levels was constrained by the inflexibility of the hierarchical system. Managing up, whilst remaining trustworthy as a supervisor- being’ the meat in the sandwich’- was a problem encountered by a number of supervisors. Jenna, a statutory supervisor, spoke of the complex dynamics of retaining confidentiality with her supervisee while also being within a supervisory relationship with her own supervisor:
‘My role is to retain confidentiality with eight people, all with different personalities and working within a team. There are very strong personalities which often puts me in difficult position as the supervisor. Then I need to decide whether I might have to discuss with my supervisor whilst also feeling comfortable enough to raise certain issues and trying to create sense of trust.’ (Jenna, statutory supervisor, page 4)

Such dilemmas challenged professional discourses of supervision. Supervisors in the focus group from non-statutory organisations identified themselves in the focus groups as ‘middle management’ within the organisational hierarchy, primarily concerned with the supervision of front line workers. They differentiated themselves from senior management, who technically supervise them. Such insights again made transparent the powerlessness supervisors felt in the supervision process. Myra, a supervisor from a statutory agency, spoke about this differentiation:

‘I think that has happened here because the senior management team gets more retreat and reflecting (time) but I think we have been a bit neglected in the last few years about what it means to be in middle management… because we are I think the level that has to give so much to everyone under us… and I think there is an expectation when you get to this level that you are experienced and are able to cope. But I’m of the belief that the majority of people, given the skills, can cope, but it doesn’t mean that people cope all the time.’ (Myra, non-statutory supervisor, page 3)

This raises important questions about who is supervising the supervisors. While organisational charts make it easy to see how supervisors as middle managers fit within a hierarchical system, the nature of the roles and expectations of different levels is inevitably more complex. Supervisors, specifically from statutory organisations, spoke about the organisational hierarchy which left them (supervisors) out of recruitment and resource allocation decision making, something that gave them less authority, and therefore less power. This has an impact of this on their perceived authority as a supervisor and makes transparent the powerlessness supervisor felt in their role:

‘It can be difficult at times because you don’t have input into staffing. You are powerless regarding staffing selections, people get moved into different teams, they may become parttime, change locations, moved because of staffing conflict… Informally we hear but that’s it.’ (Anna, statutory supervisor, page 5.)

Ambiguities in supervisor expectations contributed to confusion about accessing resources and made issues of authority more complicated. People at different levels of the hierarchy had disparate access to ‘capital’. Navigating the hierarchy presented key challenges particularly but not exclusively for supervisors, and potentially worked against forging collaborative partnerships in supervision.
**Exercise of power and control in supervision**

While power and authority is exercised across the organisational hierarchy, perhaps inevitability is also a dynamic that features within the primary supervisory relationship. Within this context power and control becomes part of the accountability and monitoring process in social work supervision. Bourdieu’s notion of ‘capital’ provides a way of identifying how different actors pursued their interests using different strategies. Resources were accessed through the exercising of power and control and this was discussed by participants. Both positive and negative examples of the power exchange were raised, drawing upon different discourses. There were 67 survey respondents commenting about the mandated or non-mandated exercise of power in supervision. Most supervisees in the focus groups acknowledged the impact of power on the supervisory relationship as limiting what they were prepared to disclose. Ang, a supervisee in a health and counselling agency, provided an example of how the power dynamics limited what she was prepared to discuss within the supervisory relationship:

‘Always it’s about accountability and she has more power and influence so supervision isn’t as free as it could be. I’m always conscious of this tension.’ (Ang, health and counselling supervisee, page 6)

Ang was not complaining about the power differential, but rather identifying it as a consideration in her experience. She spoke about tempering what she would say because the supervisor had more power than her. The use of positional power within supervision can illustrate the difference between a managerial approach to supervision and one that is informed by professional values. Patrizia, a survey respondent juxtaposed two experiences of supervision in a statutory organisation, one positive and one negative. Both illustrate the use of power and authority:

‘My current experience of supervision in this Department is better than most. My past supervisors used supervision for surveillance and policing of workers and to count workloads and hand out more work – very negative. My current supervisor is excellent and promotes the values of the Department and teaches survival skills within it to support the worker, Therefore HAPPIER STAFF, BETTER ENVIRONMENT’[Participant emphasis] (Patrizia: 153).

The language in this quote indicated a negative dimension to the supervisory relationship with her previous supervisor and a more positive one with her current supervisor. The contrast in language here between ‘surveillance and policing of workers’ and ‘survival skills to support the worker’ demonstrated the difference in how power
can be used managerially as opposed to professionally. Doris, a supervisor, in a health and counselling organisation, noted the inevitable power imbalance within the supervisory relationship and the importance of this dynamic being transparent:

‘I think that’s really important in providing the sort of environment with supervision ...to take the time to be honest and trust each other, that really takes a lot of work, time and patience, but if that’s not there, it becomes a very superficial process and it doesn’t really move forward and it’s not really benefiting the supervisee or supervisor. It just becomes this elastic thing that’s not really working, so part of it is about setting up some of those expectations of each other initially, to say that this is going to be something that’s quite open and you have to name the hierarchy of course. The power imbalance is there so that’s the tension...because it depends on the supervisee / supervisor how successful that is. So it is a hard one but I also try to have that at the forefront because if we don’t try and be as honest as we can it’s just ticking the box.’ (Doris, health and counselling supervisor, page 5)

Doris captured the power imbalance but identified that this did not automatically lead to ‘tick the box’ supervision. Survey respondents and focus group participants noted surveillance dimensions of accountability, suggesting how power and control were operationalised in supervision. As such the qualitative data was replete with reference to the exercise of supervisory power:

‘[Supervision is about] compliance controls and policy changes communicated and used as a tool to discipline staff and gain information.’ (Haley: 333)

‘Really don't know [what supervision is about] apart from wanting to be in control of staff.’ (Sabra: 88)

Maddy, from the statutory sector, identified how power and control was operationalised:

‘Ahh ... this organisation would have to be the most hierarchical I have ever worked in ... this allows for people of certain personality types to feel powerful and controlling over others, and this filters from the top echelons down to the bottom of the food chain ... each layer of the hierarchy supervises the one beneath.’ (Maddy: 381)

The qualitative data in this section illustrated how the exercise of power and control was used as ‘capital’ in the accountability and monitoring processes of supervision. Four themes relating to the accountability process in supervision are identified:
1. the purpose of accountability in supervision was noted as quality control for service provision, meeting contractual obligations of organisations with funders, and ensuring the day to day operation of the organisation.

2. line management was understood as a key function of supervision, potentially compromising the relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

3. lack of clarity was evident within the organisational hierarchy about the limits of authority for supervisors.

4. use of power and control in supervision was reflected in the nature of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

**Professionalisation of supervision**

In the presentation of the data to date the professional discourses informing social work supervision have been noted. The language used to describe professional discourses differed but the intent was clear. Habitus provides a way to understand how social workers internalised their professional identity through an acceptance of the values and philosophies informing practice, the language used to discuss professional work, the processes undertaken, and the requisite training and ongoing professional development. As such these aspects relate to the professional standards for supervision expected in the AASW National Standards (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). The knowledge used to frame the learning occurring within the social work supervision process is central to this process of socialisation, and included the traditional educative and supportive functions of supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Participants discussed a variety of examples providing insights about the conditions which allow or inhibit workers from practicing in a professional way. Details about the day-to-day struggles facing social workers in managing the competing demands of practice provided a way of examining these different discourses. Three themes related to ‘habitus’ were identified from the analysis of the data:
1. tension between professional requirements and organisational demands
2. time constraints
3. use and production of knowledge.

**Tensions between professional requirements and organisational demands**

The literature review illuminated the conflicts in supervision between the professional values and organisational demands (Clare, 2001; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Hughes & Pengelly, 1997; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2003; Tsui, 1997). Over 100 participants spoke about the tension faced in reconciling these elements. Interestingly the comments highlighted positive and negative dimensions to this tension. The examples used by participants included references to organisational change, ethical dilemmas and the health and wellbeing of workers. In each focus group these tensions were discussed. Some focus group participants found the tension between the business of the organisation and social work values easier to reconcile than others. This was particularly evident within the supervisor focus groups. However Mary, a supervisee from a statutory agency, questioned how both professional and organisational aspects of supervision could coexist, given the tension this dynamic created:

‘One of the things I have always wanted to raise in supervision is how we reconcile those differences [when] working in a government body. Sometimes it feels like you can’t talk much about- not so much the personal- but your professional opinions because you work for government [within] a political climate …I always thought supervision would be that forum where you could…challenge and think critically about our practice. Day-to-day tasks, everything is so policy focused and legislatively based …but do we ever really take time to think about how that is impacting on our interaction with people we work with some of the most marginalised, disadvantaged people. Do we have freedom to live up to these philosophies and ethics that underpin social work given the context in which we work?’ (Mary, statutory focus group supervises, page 10)

Mary described how context had the effect of skewing the focus in supervision. Her experience illustrates the ways in which the professional aspects can be overlooked in favour of the day-to-day demands of organisational practice. Supervisors may be interested in professional discourses but get caught up in organisational concerns. Such examples are in line with earlier discussions in field and capital about the impact of the
neoliberal environment, shifting the focus of supervision from a professional to managerial discourse (Beddoe, 2010; Jones, 2004; Wright, 2000). Lily, a supervisor from a non-government organisation, also acknowledged the managerial focus in her organisation:

‘So their supervision approach is more managerial and task focused and depending on what flavour of month is in policy, the push is now supervision but whether there is integrity there is questionable.’ (Lily, statutory, supervisee, page 12).

The tension between organisational demands and professional requirements was an important element influencing the nature and experience of supervision. However from the perspective of the focus groups participants, the issue of time, or more specifically having enough time was critical if discussion of professional issues in supervision is to occur.

**Time constraints**

The quantitative data demonstrated that 22.2% (n=223) of respondents identified that lack of time was the reason they had difficulty in accessing supervision. The qualitative data provided more information about how a lack of time impacted supervision. Participants identified time constraints as a key reason for being unable to move beyond organisational requirements in supervision. Having enough time to pursue effective professional supervision was a recurring theme in the qualitative data. The lack of time for supervision was echoed by participants in the Victorian study (Pilcher, 1984) almost three decades earlier. Bourdieu identified that the neoliberal context encouraged ‘fast thinking and tangible outcomes’ with social workers increasingly subjected to a new ‘time discipline’ (Garrett, 2007b, p.371). Time constraints impacting on supervision was noted by 122 references made to time in the survey text. These respondents identified ‘workers being busy’, ‘prioritising organisational demands ahead of professional principles’ and the ‘lack of time’ and ‘service demand’. The following quotes provide examples of what respondents considered necessary to effective supervision:

‘Sufficient time to tackle administrative, educative and supportive functions.’ (Mandy, 418)

‘Enough time and space given for effective supervision to occur on a regular and consistent basis.’ (Gill, 64)

‘Uninterrupted time available in the workload of all involved.’ (Gerta:283)
The opportunity for quality supervision relied on having enough time to attend to the professional aspects of practice and service delivery. Focus group participants articulated how ‘busyness’ resulted in supervision frequently being cancelled. Other participants acknowledged that the notion of time was the symptom, rather than the problem, discussing how organisational policies or lack of resources led to supervision not being prioritised. There is a sense in which the availability of time for supervision was seen as a demonstration of the value placed on supervision by the organisation and an acknowledgement that it is an integral part of the work. The data on time in this research also highlighted some solutions to this problem:

‘Rather than wasting time on organisational hype we could meet in a peer group to discuss practice’ (Helena, 612)

‘Using somebody from outside the organisation to focus specifically on practice would save time in the end’ (Tim, 433)

‘Our time would be better spent focusing on clients’ (Kelly, 231)

The final theme identified under professional discourses related to the importance of time for reflection on social work knowledge as well as the potential for using the supervisory space to produce practice knowledge. This space for learning was identified by supervisees as part of a ‘wish list’ for supervision.

Use and production of knowledge

Participants identified that the educative function was central for professional social work supervision and included the linking of theory and practice, the development of practice knowledge and the role of professional development in strengthening knowledge and practice. Although not evident in the quantitative data, the importance of social work knowledge in supervision was noted by over 213 survey text responses. Almost 80% of these responses referred to using critical reflection as the preferred model for supervision. These comments were indicative of professional discourses used to discuss approaches to supervision. The benefits of linking practice with theory was noted, mostly in response to the survey question about the positive outcomes of supervision for service users. This imperative was reflected by Moonya, a survey respondent from the private sector:
‘Supervision challenges us to develop evidence based practice, opportunity to link theory and practice and so provide a better service to users.’ (Moonya: 47)

The importance of current evidence based practice was viewed positively for the delivery of social work services. Survey respondents also saw links between professional confidence and current knowledge. Alima note the value of maintaining currency with the knowledge base and the ways in which it enables:

‘Continuous development of my professional confidence and competence as an effective and ethical practitioner, maintenance of wellbeing for the work and enable my effective supervision of others who provide a direct service to clients as well as the direct service I provide – keeping updated with models of intervention, critical reflection on practice and taking service user perspectives, guards against institutionalisation.’ (Alima: 146)

The unprompted references to ‘critical reflection’ in the survey text reflected the literature advocating this model’s value appropriateness in the practice of supervision within the neoliberal context (Beddoe, 2009; Blake-Palmer & Connolly, 1989; Fook, 2002; Jones, 2004; Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004). The examination of context within the critical reflection model was key to helping supervisees negotiate the complexity of social work practice in line with Bourdieu’s notion of ‘habitus’.

Dunya, from the non statutory sector, sums up the value of critical reflection from her perspective:

‘Out of what I have seen over the years, critical reflection seems to be the best of the models challenging a supervisor's values and/or level of critical awareness of self.’

(Dunya: 5)

The survey text demonstrated the different dimensions of critical reflection including knowledge acquisition, personal reflection on practice mistakes and examination of social work values. Mary-Anne, a survey respondent working in private practice, explored the dimensions of what critical reflection can offer:

‘a good mix of knowledge and theory required in the work, clearly challenging and supportive mix- bigger picture and clinical detail, knowledge of strengths and weaknesses… supporting the development and capacity- humour and positive regard.’

(Mary-Anne: 363)

For some survey respondents, critical reflection as a model of supervision practice, was particularly effective when linked to a supportive supervisory relationship. Anita, a
survey respondent from the statutory sector, also highlighted the benefits and noted how, as a process, critical reflection actually created the space for improved practice:

‘It (critical reflection) improves my practice as a social worker – it challenges me to try different ways of doing things and is an effective tool for reflection. This in turn allows me to work with service users better as my practice will always be improving and challenged to get the best results for them. Supervision also allows me to discuss cases with my supervisor and debrief incidents that may otherwise stay with me and hamper the way in which I then practice with service users.’ (Anita: 31)

Critical reflection in supervision, as noted by survey respondents, provided opportunities to reflect on practice and discuss its impact including: learning from practice mistakes; exploring social work values and resultant tensions; creating an opportunity to access to current knowledge and discussing new knowledge; improving practice skills; linking theory with practice to enhance the quality of the service provided; and to provide a space for challenge and debate in the supervisory relationship. All survey text responses linked the benefits of critical reflection to better quality service provision, and further identified key ingredients for social work supervision including both professional and managerial aspects of practice. The following survey text responses provide examples of how respondents spoke about the perceived benefits of critical reflection:

‘Critical reflection allows for the integration of new meaning to the work… enhances my role in assisting individuals and families.’ (Colleen: 28)

‘Better standard of care as a result of critical reflection and ongoing sharing of ideas.’ (Mark: 56)

‘Reflective practice, re-alignment with the professional discipline, and social work specific discussions.’ (Marie: 14)

‘strengthening supervisor's clinical competence and skills in supervision, including the capacity to link theory and practice.’ (Poppy: 371)

The data that focuses on critical reflection, as a supervision model for practice, provided clarity about the professional aspects of supervision and what focus group participants wanted from supervision to have a greater professional educational focus. Ingrid, a survey respondent from the statutory sector, recommends:

‘Supervision should be about professional development, validation, learnings / ideas about working within rigid social policy contexts which challenges social work framework.’ (Ingrid: 35)
These comments offered important insights regarding the potential for supervision to continue as a site for practice reflection, change and development. This resonates Fook’s (2002) vision for supervision from a critical perspective, as discussed in chapter 3. Focus group participants and survey respondents made suggestions about how supervision could be used as a key site for challenging and developing social work practice knowledge. Sally, a survey respondent from the statutory sector, provided this vision:

‘It (supervision) should promote a united social work front for the organisational team which promotes social justice and service to all clients by offering current dynamic interventions for mental illness.’ (Sally: 289)

These solutions were taken further by Lai, a survey respondent from the non-statutory sector, who provided her thoughts about how supervision potentially allowed space for using knowledge, gained through supervision discussions, to advocate for organisational and/or systemic change at a broader level:

‘Information fed to supervisor about practice experiences go into the organisational info. bank: for example: new and emerging issues or trends we need to respond to structural barriers identified, service gaps, community misinformation about processes. I trust that these issues go somewhere following supervision. This helps to support the agency to better respond to issues presented to us by service user that we are providing the most effective service we can to meet their needs.’ (Lai: 263)

Opening up supervision as a space for debate about practice and new knowledge was discussed in the literature as an ideal (Beddoe, 1997; Jones, 2004; Noble & Irwin, 2009; Peach & Horner, 2007; Williams & Irvine, 2009). The qualitative data from this research gives support to the place of supervision in discussing and creating new knowledge. It also highlighted the significance of professional discourses informing supervision practice. Examples were provided by respondents as to the benefit of professionally focussed supervision for workers, clients and the organisations. However, the costs to the supervisory relationship were also evident when organisational demands swamped discussions about professional aspects of practice in supervision. The participants in this research provided practical insights as to the conditions which led to these tensions.
In summary, three themes were identified:

1. the tensions between organisational demands and professional requirements were identified, noting examples about the benefit to workers, clients and organisations
2. the significance of time in shaping what is discussed in supervision and, therefore, the quality of the supervision experience
3. the value of critical reflection as an educative model for supervision and its importance to the development of practice knowledge.

**Conclusion**

The qualitative data adds depth to the quantitative results providing insights about the discourses informing practice, whilst also noting the impact of the neoliberal context on supervision. The quantitative findings reported in Chapter five indicate that the majority of participants see internal supervision from within the organisation as most valuable, and findings suggest that the majority experience trust within their supervisory relationship, even when this is within the context of line management. It is clear nevertheless, that this is not the case for an important minority of participants. The qualitative findings reflect the concerns of these participants, providing a more in-depth picture of what happens when things do not go well in supervision, or where supervisee needs are not fully met. The qualitative study also reveals the very real tensions that supervisors confront in providing supervision in the neo-liberal environment. Within this environment stakeholders influence shifts the dynamic of the relationship from a more professionally focused function to a managerial one. The differences in the language used to discuss the different discourses informing supervision illustrate these shifts. It is clear that participants sought alternative types of supervisory relationships in order to maintain the balance between professional and managerial discourses informing supervision, noting the benefit of this balance for all stakeholders in supervision.
CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

This study is the first of its kind in Australia, providing rich baseline information and evidence that supports and challenges established ideas about social work supervision. Nearly 700 social workers responded to the online survey suggesting supervision is a subject of high interest in the current environment. The diverse sectors, fields of practices, geographical zones, ages and qualification profiles of the participants mean that the results reflect the experience of a broad cross section of social workers from across Australia. This level of interest was also evident from the 30 focus group participants who passionately debated the topic of supervision with their colleagues, many coming prepared with notes for the discussion. The quantitative mapping of supervision processes provides a picture consistent with professional modes of social work supervision as detailed in the literature and research from elsewhere (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Kadushin et al, 2002; Munson, 2002). The qualitative data yielded, at times, contrasting information suggesting a far more nuanced and multi-dimensional interpretation of the supervision experience is necessary to gain an authentic understanding of its provision at this time. Supervision is posing challenges to social work practice not only in its modes and methods, but also by its omissions. Where supervision was not provided, or delivered in an unsupportive fashion, these practices highlighted significant inconsistencies with social work’s ethical mandate. Even so, it is clear that supervision continues as an important component of social work practice.

The positive and enduring aspects of social work supervision are evident in this study. Other findings point to substantial or subtle shifts in supervision discourses and practices which strongly reflect the neoliberal context in which it is carried out. The quantitative data provides new evidence about social work supervision practice. The qualitative data gathered from the online survey and focus groups offers a more in-depth understanding of the contemporary supervision experience. In many ways the study illuminates supervision practices that look similar to those described in the literature but with key differences. In particular, these differences relate to: access to professional quality supervision; the management of contradictions between managerial and professional discourses informing supervision; how participants pursue social work values of human rights and social justice; how supervision provides a rationale for
achieving risk management, productivity and best practice outcomes in the workplace; and how supervision supplies the best forum for the development of new practice knowledge. The practice and policy implications of these differences are identified across five key themes:

1. The supervisory relationship and issues of surveillance and monitoring
2. The role of professional and managerial discourses informing supervision
3. Supervision as a key site for reflective and reflexive practice
4. Training and development
5. Organisational issues and concerns

Each of these areas will now be explored in the context of their implications both with respect to the practicing of supervision, and the continued development of supervision within the organisational context.

**The supervisory relationship and issues of surveillance and monitoring**

Having a trusted supervisor makes work in general less stressful and makes me more confident. (Amanda: 583).

The importance of a supervisory relationship based on trust was a common theme to emerge from both the quantitative and qualitative data sets within this study. Despite the fact that the majority of the participants indicated that they had little choice in who supervised them, and that most were indeed supervised by the line manager, the majority experienced a trusting supervisory relationship. This reinforcement of the importance of the supervisory relationship is in line with historical and contemporary literature about social work supervision. The more trust that existed between supervisee and supervisor, the more effective the supervision process (Himle et al., 1989; Newsome & Pillari, 1992). Such a picture might be interpreted as the happy coexistence of both professional and managerial expectations within the supervisory relationship, something we will return to later in the chapter when discussing the discourses that influence supervision. However, a more complex picture emerged regarding the significance of the supervisory relationship from the research findings, particularly when considering the qualitative findings. While the majority of the respondents
indicated they experienced trusting supervisory relationships, this is clearly not the case for everyone. Two aspects were highlighted in particular: the impact of trust in the supervisory relationship; and the ways in which supervisory relationships are represented within formal organisational structures.

**Trust in the supervisory relationship**

The research celebrates the importance of the supervisory relationship as long as there is trust between the supervisor and supervisee. Participants identified that where they experienced trust, they were able to better discuss their supervision needs, they could balance support with discussion of practice mistakes without fear of retribution, and they tended to have more creative discussions about social work values and models of practice. Within a trusted supervisory relationship different social work approaches are debated and a judicious use of power and authority is experienced. The capacity to challenge, by either the supervisor or supervisee, is relished, with both parties acknowledging difficult conversations in supervision are a necessary part of professional supervision and development. Greater accountability is of course not necessarily problematic in and of itself, but when coupled with fear of reprisal for mistakes in practice there is potential for tension in the supervisee-supervisor relationship that can unwittingly foster unsafe practice. The place of challenge is nevertheless conditional on a safe supervisory relationship. Where this safe space for discussion was not evident, challenge may be the first casualty in undermining trust in the supervisory relationship.

The extent to which power is exercised within supervision impacts on the supervision relationship, and influences the supervisee’s feelings of safety. How judiciously the supervisor used power and the degree of safety supervisees felt was discussed in Chapter Three (Bond & McKnight, 1998; Gillanders, 2005; Gridley, 1999; Gummer, 2001; Tsui, 2005). These issues and tensions are also evident in the findings of this study. The conceptualisation of different sources of authority in the supervisory relationship are now well established in the literature (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Reward authority derived from the supervisor’s ability to reward the supervisee. Coercive authority derived from the supervisor’s capacity to be in command of and discipline the supervisee, for example through poor performance appraisals or access to professional development opportunities (O’Byrne & Rosenberg,
Positional authority reflected the organisationally sanctioned role of the supervisor (Carroll and Holloway, 1999; Hawkins and Shohet, 2000). Referent authority emerged out of the supervisee’s attraction to the work of the supervisor and their potential desire to emulate the supervisor. Expert authority derived from the knowledge and skills of the supervisor. Referent and expert authority gave the supervisory relationship a leadership orientation while the use of rewards and coercion tended to achieve compliance only (Crocket, 1999; Sharples et al., 2003). Using these ideas to examine how supervisors use authority in the supervisory relationship, particularly in line management arrangements, is important if we are to better understand the impact of power on supervisory relationships. When exploring the dimensions of power within supervisory relationships participants acknowledged the culture of the organisational hierarchy mirroring the nature of the supervisory relationship. This was particularly evident within statutory organisations. Organisational culture is a site where vested interests are played out and material and symbolic structures operate to marginalise those with fewer resources at their disposal (Garrett, 2007a). Organisations and the AASW must understand the symbolic capital available to the supervisor in their use of power and authority. Failure to grasp the competing forces that coincide with notions of hierarchical status endangers the relationship important to the safe delivery of supervision and the corresponding positive impact it can have on good client outcomes.

Participants’ concerns regarding the use or misuse of power in a line management supervisory relationship led to discussions in the focus groups about access to external supervision. It is nevertheless unclear from the research whether the provision of external supervision would necessarily solve the line management arrangement. Rather what is important is that relationships of power are understood and challenged within supervision. Different approaches to supervision have different understandings of power in the supervision relationship. Feminist, cultural and critically reflective approaches interrogate uses of power and the ways in which it is reflected within the supervisory relationship. Such approaches provide the opportunity to make the use of power in the supervisory relationship transparent and enable the working through of issues as they arise in supervision.

It is clear from the research that whether or not the supervisee has any choice in their supervisor impacted on the supervisory relationship as well as the content of supervision conversations. Supervisees, with a choice of supervisor reported more frequent
discussion about support in supervisory relationships, social work values and supervision models and less frequent discussion on accountability and monitoring. Participants’ comments from the qualitative data referred to the value of having choice of supervisor and the disadvantage of no choice. These comments mainly came from statutory sector participants who identified access to resources as the principle reason for being unable to choose their supervisor. The findings add to the empirical research about choice in the supervisory relationship in two ways. The first is there is less choice of supervisor in a managerial climate (Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Sloan, 1999) and second, that not having a choice of supervisor impacts on rapport building within the supervisory relationship (Ladany et al., 1999). This research identifies that lack of resources are key in accessing choice but it is unclear what further resources are needed or whether it is possible to develop greater flexibility about different supervision arrangements. Alternative supervision arrangements are discussed later in this chapter when we examine organisational responses.

**Monitoring, performance appraisals and the supervisory relationship**

Findings suggest that the support role of supervision is strongly competing with accountability and monitoring functions, a situation that appears more prevalent where the supervisor is also the supervisee’s line manager. Participants identified how performance appraisals occurring under the auspices of professional supervision were illustrative of the interconnectedness of the supervision relationship in terms of meeting organisational objectives, while at the same time potentially undermining both the supervisory relationship and the safe supervisory environment.

The process of performance appraisal contains the contradictory elements of supervision emerging between the different stakeholders in supervision. Performance appraisals are a requirement of organisations, rather than an objective of the parties within the supervisory relationship. Participants identified that when supervisors undertook performance reviews, there was potential for exploitation of private knowledge divulged to the supervisor during supervision. These findings were in line with the literature suggesting that the relationship between supervisor and supervisee affected the supervisor’s ability to evaluate job performance accurately (Grasso, 1994; Himle et al., 1989; Neufeldt & Nelson, 1999). Such relationships demonstrate the dialectical impact of supervisory structures. There was potential for negative outcomes in the performance
management process if the line manager was the supervisor, and there was a supervisee grievance with that line manager. This data supports the findings of other research suggesting that social work supervisors do not always manage the competing demands of organisations and the expectations of social work values. Such evidence highlights the need for organisations to consider whether the role of line manager and supervisor can be managed by the one person for performance reviews. Role conflict is the term used in chapter 3 to describe this antipathy (Ereka & Lazar, 1993; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Hughes and Pengally (1997a) identified that often supervisors see themselves as ‘piggy in the middle’ between management and frontline staff (p.5). Morrison (2001) highlighted the discomfort supervisors identified in dealing with power often failing to exercise authority.

The literature review and the research findings offer evidence that supervision which entails discipline monitoring, shaping and controlling the behaviour of individuals, compromises the supervision relationship. When the monitoring function of supervision becomes primarily a lens of surveillance, professional supervision can be co-opted as a managerial tool. Supervision as scrutiny is particularly relevant in the context of statutory practice where risk aversion can influence the monitoring of practice.

The quantitative findings in this research, in line with the literature, present an understanding of the supervision relationship that reproduces the professional picture presented in the AASW Practice Standards for Social Workers for Supervision (2000). In general, such a perspective reflects the dominant way of understanding how the supervisory relationship should ideally be (Dill & Bogo, 2009; Egan & Kadushin, 2004; Grasso, 1994; Harrington et al., 2001). The qualitative findings however, present a somewhat different picture reflecting the changed social work context that masks discrepancies in practice and separates relationships from context. Unintentionally a distortion occurs between the ideal supervisory relationship and the experiences of many participants within the study. Participants identified the distinction between an expectation of a trusting relationship alongside the reality of an unsafe one. As such this challenges organisations to both understand the ways in which supervision relationships are enacted in practice, and the nature of the organisational culture that powerfully shapes the discourses that influence its practice. Strong supervisory relationships can develop in safe environments. Organisations’ recognition of the value and commitment
to developing supportive practice systems that can meaningfully provide the context within which they can occur is one in which practice mistakes can be explored safely and tolerance and patience is experienced. Equally, it is important that the professional body set expectations of such supervisory relationships, and supportive contexts within which they can flourish. The findings of this study indicate that the supportive function in supervision together with its corresponding relationship context influences the extent to which joint problem solving is occurring, innovative and creative solutions are being encouraged, and frank discussions are taking place.

The role of professional and managerial discourses informing supervision practice

The supervisor must, where they have line management and professional supervision responsibility for a social worker, consider how to manage these responsibilities effectively. (Luke: Statutory supervisee, page 2).

The qualitative findings within this study highlight the importance of relationship in the provision of quality supervision. Managerial and professional discourses importantly influence the ways in which supervision relationships are experienced. Discussion about line management in this research has strongly represented a managerial discourse raising implications regarding the role of professional and managerial discourses as a result.

The competing discourses in supervision have been noted by the AASW, and the negative contextual impact neoliberalism has on the practice environment has been acknowledged (Australian Association of Social Work, 2010; International Association of the Schools of Social Work, 2004). This research provides evidence about the contradiction between the context and professional requirements. The statistically significant findings associated with the factors identified from the Exploratory Factor Analysis, alert us to patterns of influence that shape supervision conversations in both positive and negative ways. Such findings offer ways of incorporating these considerations into supervision practice.
The quantitative findings from this research illustrated that both professional and managerial discourses could coexist within the context of supervisory practice. Over 60% of survey respondents had a line manager as their supervisor, with a significantly greater proportion of supervisees in the statutory sector having this arrangement. When supervisors are able to appropriately manage the contradictions and balance the discourses it is clear that trusting relationships can indeed be developed with supervisees making supervision a more rewarding experience. The quantitative findings were not definitive, however, about which discourse was dominant in the context of current practice, a point we will return to later in the chapter.

The qualitative findings illuminate the negative impact managerial discourses can have on the supervision relationship and the supervisee’s experience of receiving supervision. Where supervisors are unable to manage the contradictions that exist within line management arrangements and struggle to balance the discourses, participants reported that their supervisory relationship and the quality of supervision can be compromised.

The language used provides insights into participants’ construction of social work supervision in Australia. The two identified discourses were spoken of differently. The professional discourse was clearly informed by social work values. The use of a professional discourse indicated a positive experience of supervision when the relationship between supervisor and supervisee was trusted and where all functions were valued. The need for accountability was understood as a necessary and essential part of the supervision process. When participants spoke about the values underpinning the social work profession, a professional discourse was evident in the way they spoke about the values-driven discipline of social work. The professional values promoting principles of social justice and human rights were identified as integral to social work service delivery.

In contrast the managerial discourses were informed by technical accountability and monitoring requirements, spoken about by research participants as the ‘gateway through which managerialism was incorporated into practice’. It was the language the participants used to describe line management that most clearly separated the two discourses. Conversations relating to line management focused negatively on accountability and monitoring. Such contrast with the values-driven professional
conversations indicated a difference in participants’ understanding and appreciation of the complexities faced in supervision practice. While earlier research has suggested that supervision can only be offered by a line manager accountable for the subordinate’s practice (Clare, 1991; Scott & Farrow, 1993), this research raises questions about what can be done when a dominance of managerial discourses impact negatively on supervision in the context of line management arrangements. While the roles of line manager and supervisor are clearly not always in conflict, organisational interests differ from worker interests. Indeed the worker interest, like that of the supervisor, is split and the relationship between both is not fixed. Organisations need to acknowledge the tensions and contradictions evident in this line manager/supervisor split and then provide the basis for managing it. From an organisational perspective transparency about the inherent tensions is important, and training in its management would do much to help clarify the concerns raised both in the literature and in the findings of this research. Indeed, a number of participants in this study suggested that supervisors undertaking both roles would benefit from training in how to manage the dual role.

This study identifies that line management has, in some cases, been substituted for professional supervision, which confirm what commentators in the literature have been suggesting for some time (Beddoe, 1994 & 1997; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Jones, 2000 & 2004; Munson, 2002; O'Donoghue, 1998, 2000, 2002 & 2003). As noted throughout the thesis, the AASW practice standards nevertheless regard supervision in the profession as ‘more than line management’. Despite this the evidence suggests blurred boundaries between managerial and professional aspects of supervision, and an increased risk of authority being used coercively. While the quantitative evidence demonstrates that the majority of supervisees have trust in their supervisors and report that supervision is meeting their needs, this data also indicates that supervision in the context of line management arrangements involves more frequent discussions relating to accountability and monitoring and less frequent discussions about support in the supervisory relationship and supervision models. These concerns have clearly been raised previously in the literature (Baglow, 2009; Beddoe, 1994 & 1997; Cooper & Anglem, 2003; Johns, 2001; Jones, 2000; Morrell, 2001; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). The evidence from this research raises questions about the nature and experience of professional supervision and the extent to which it occurs in practice across Australia. It is clear that the rhetoric of the ideal in supervision, outlined in the AASW Standards, is
not matched by the reality of all supervisees in practice. A review of the AASW standards, in the light of this research, would better contextualise the experience of supervision. Acknowledging the tensions between managerial and professional discourses and offering alternative ways of managing both roles would strengthen the standards and prepare new graduates for the realities of current practice.

In terms of the future development of supervision practice in Australia, two possibilities were highlighted as ways of managing competing discourses in supervision practice: separating line management from professional supervision or retaining line management and managing the competing discourses.

**Separating managerial and professional functions**

Given the neoliberal environment is likely to continue with its focus on quality assurance, staff appraisal, and managerial functions, a case could be made to separate the managerial components of supervision from the supportive functions. This idea is not new as there have been similar calls in earlier literature (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Brown & Bourne, 1996; Hughes, 1997a; Jones, 2004; Syrett, 1996). Scandinavian and European models of supervision do just this, separating line management from professional supervision with positive evaluations from social workers about its value (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005). It is clear that retaining the two functions within a line management arrangement can lead to mistrust and suspicion of the supervisor making it difficult to truly fulfil the professional role. Separating the functions has the potential to enable better integration of the personal and professional dimensions of complex practice. Within this research participants identified the benefits of this separation including: opening up more flexible supervision options for them to pursue; creating a more intensive focus on skill and professional development; providing more opportunity to utilise and create practice knowledge; and better clarification about line management to ensure that it is not mistaken as professional supervision. There is an argument to suggest that separation leaves no confusion about the different aspects and functions of supervision.

A shift toward separating managerial and professional functions is, however, not necessarily without its problems. The European experience suggests that the widespread development of external supervision options has effectively resulted in its privatisation.
(Busse, 2009). There is a danger with this approach in that shifting supervision to external organisations diminishes professional efficacy in exerting pressure for organisation change (Bradley & Höjer, 2009). As Morrison (2001) suggests such a division has the potential to compromise the supervisor's ability to mediate between social workers on the frontline and managers. Such a consequence could be seen as a reflection of the market economy where supervision effectively becomes capital.

**Coexisting discourses within supervision**

The quantitative findings suggest that the majority of Australian social workers are managing line management and professional supervision within the one role. This indicates that it is also possible to retain and strengthen line management arrangements so they more effectively manage the competing tensions inherent in the role. The qualitative findings highlight that the experience of many of the research participants is negatively affected by the dominance of managerial discourses. It is also clear from the research that participants can articulate the benefits of the professional discourse in supervision for themselves, their clients and their organisations. In line with Baine’s research (2009) the participants demonstrated a commitment to social justice, while at the same time lamented the loss of social and professional vision.

The research provides clarity regarding the components of supervision, specifically as they relate to its professional and managerial dimensions and the ways in which they can coexist. These components, identified through the survey’s research questions, relate to: support in the supervisory relationship; accountability and monitoring; social work values; and models of supervision practice. The titles and items in Table 27 are those statistically identified from the research which provide evidence about the content of supervision discussion. The tool is validated and through further development could be used to better understand the nature and content of the supervision conversations. This in turn provides a picture about the dominant discourse informing supervision within any given context.
Table 27: Survey research questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support in the supervisory relationship</th>
<th>Accountability and monitoring</th>
<th>Social work values</th>
<th>Models of supervision practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>Focusing on professional/organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities</td>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocation of social resources</td>
<td>Client strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>Working with clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>Focusing on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>Pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>Focusing on quantity rather than quality of work</td>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>Task centred</td>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The development of such a tool offers the potential to anonymously audit experiences of supervision in organisations, and provide a feedback mechanism for supervisors and organisations to review and, if necessary, shift supervision practice to rebalance professional and managerial dimensions. Such a tool would then enable organisations to address risk adverse practices when they are found to limit the realisation of good supervision outcomes.

Whether or not a separation of line management from professional supervision is warranted is an issue best debated within the context of the AASW through consultation about a review of the national supervision standards. Such a debate would allow a fuller consideration of the benefits and costs of separating supervision functions. The impending professional registration of Australian social work presents an ideal opportunity to revisit the AASW National Standards of Supervision.
Supervision as a key site for reflective and reflexive practice

We all need the reciprocity of the mirror’. Self-reflection is difficult without the rigour of passionate discussion (Trish: 572).

The value of critical reflection and its use as a supervision approach was identified as most often used by participants within this research. The findings provide examples of the ways in which supervision facilitates a space for practitioner discussions on social work values as well as organisational and systemic change. Such debate can be seen as contributing to the development of new practice knowledge. Participants were clear about the significance of critical reflection in supervision but the extent to which their identification of it as a model as opposed to reflecting current practice is less clear. There were two results which lend themselves to reflexive and reflective practice. They were the impact of gender and culture in the supervision experience.

Women remain dominant in the profession as evidenced in the demographics of the AASW (Northside, 2007) and this trend was reproduced in the profile of the research participants. It is clear from the findings that the content of supervision discussions was gender related. Women participants reported more frequent discussion in supervision about the variables of support in the supervisory relationship, social work values and supervision models. Previous research examining the relationship between gender and supervision has also found differences (Gridley, 1999; Neufeldt et al., 1997). While these findings add some new information about how men and women may experience supervision differently, creating a reflective practice supervision context provides the opportunity to explore these differences further. In this way conversations about diversity and difference have the potential to enrich the ways in which supervision is both thought about and practiced. A further dimension of critical reflection therefore is the opportunity it affords to extending cultural considerations in supervision.

Despite the strong emphasis on cross-cultural issues in social work, and in social work supervision, it is interesting to find that this research was almost silent on issues related to culture. Participants discussed the impact of the organisational culture on the supervisory relationship which overshadowed notions of ethnic difference and diversity within the research. While around 9% (n= 33) of participants identified as culturally and
linguistically diverse and 1.6% (n=10) identifying themselves as Indigenous Australians, the composition of the focus groups was largely Australian from Anglo background. Cultural factors, including notions of diversity, were not mentioned in the survey text or focus group interviews. This stands in stark contrast to the New Zealand study on supervision where a bicultural focus embeds cultural considerations as integral to any discussion of supervision (Connolly et al., 2008; Davys, 2005; Hair & O’Donoghue, 2009; O’Donoghue, 1998).

Promoting and supporting racial and ethnic diversity within the Australian social work profession remains a challenge, and the cultural silence within this research confirms this in the context of supervision. The current AASW Code of Ethics (2010) specifically identifies: ‘The provision of professional supervision, including cultural supervision where appropriate’ (p.33). Given Australian’s rich multicultural environment and the professions’ history with Indigenous Australians, emphasis that has been placed on the importance of culture in practice, some reference to culture and diversity might have been expected within this study. Its absence, however, provides incentive to explore the cultural components of supervision practice through a lens of critical reflection. Supervision can initiate these conversations and create opportunities for the development of both insight and action.

How social workers, organisations and the AASW translate the notion of cultural supervision into practice remains an critical question. Again the forums being conducted by the AASW for registration provide a space to begin discussion about cultural supervision in Australian social work. At an organisational level the numbers of Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse social workers employed within agencies would provide a beginning point for exploration of the cultural landscape in the human service environment (Hosken, 2011). Ascertaining the perspective of Indigenous service users and clients from diverse cultural backgrounds would also be essential in understanding ways in which the cultural components of supervision might impact on client outcomes. How this information is then incorporated into supervision practice and policy would begin to reinforce the seriousness with which culture is included as a dimension in organisational life.
Critical reflection in practice

Participants provided a clear vision about the place of critical reflection in social work supervision within the neoliberal environment. They specifically explore ways in which managerial and professional discourses could be interrogated to be used to change practice in the current context. While participants clearly articulated the potential value of critical reflection as an important approach in supervision, it was nevertheless unclear from the research whether or how these aspects were actually discussed in supervision.

Maïdment and Cooper’s (2002) research about critical dialogue in the context of student supervision reveals salient findings. They noted that social work students on their placement indicated a reluctance to discuss ‘inequity, power, oppression or anti-oppressive aspects of practice’ (p.406) despite exposure to these concepts in theory. Perhaps more concerning was the lack of critical attention to these aspects within the student’s own experience of supervision. Despite the supervisors being experienced in their role and cognizant of the significance of power dynamics in practice, the ideals of critically reflective supervision failed to match the reality for this particular group of research participants. These findings raise important insights in terms of the integration of theoretical ideals and practice realities. Examining the process and content of supervision sessions would provide a more transparent picture about how critical reflection is used and whether the content matches the supervision experienced by practitioners.

Supervision’s knowledge-building potential

In the neoliberal environment there has been a shift from the acquisition and transmission of knowledge to innovative knowledge production and constructive expertise in order to cope with the ever-changing complexity of the social work context (Beddoe, 2010). Such an approach resists attempts to micromanage the profession’s knowledge base through managerial expectations. This context creates a renewed opportunity to use supervision as the site for knowledge creation. While the main emphasis in supervision may be on an individual level of coping and support, participants within the research noted that there were also structures and mechanisms for supporting reflexivity, learning, and innovative knowledge generation. Effective strategies for capturing and validating practice knowledge were explored which had the potential to change their practices. Such transformative learning provides an antidote
when supervision is compromised and where line management supervision is focused on monitoring and accountability creating a sense of mistrust and even fear. Within this context the only knowledge created, in the words of a number of participants, was ‘watch your back’. This situation speaks to the reality that a climate of mistrust in supervision stifles any potential for professional creativity and knowledge development. Transformative learning is central to any theory of supervision supporting a social work knowledge base that is infused with practice wisdom and creating potential for growth. The generation of meaning, its application in practice, and the changes resulting from these insights, guide action in reconstructing supervisory roles and theoretical understandings. This process represents an important generation of practice knowledge. ‘Knowledge in Society’ has become a consumer object in global markets, with social work supervision becoming a site of knowing ‘generating new knowledge and overcoming old solutions’ (Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004, p. 37). Swedish and European use of critical reflection in supervision in the development of practice knowledge has a longer and more systematically investigated history than in Australia (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Dellgran & Höjer, 2005). Learning from these experiences would provide ways of understanding the conditions for creating and possibly extending this professional learning space within current workplace supervision arrangements.

The role of supervision as a site for knowledge-building is particularly important in the context of statutory practice. The quantitative data suggested that the content of supervision conversations differed across sectors. Statutory participants in supervision spoke more frequently about organisational systems and culture, while participants from other sectors spent more time discussing professional values and had a broader vision of supervision. In the context of statutory practice the issues relating to power and control, along with the increasingly negative impact of managerialism has the potential to distort the perception of reality in supervision practice. Creating more reflexive and reflective practice while considering how knowledge can better inform the development of statutory practice could potentially strengthen supervision and frontline practice more generally.

Chapter three noted that the literature from other disciplines has largely ignored the historical contribution social work has made in the development of supervision practice knowledge. Yet the practice skills and supervision knowledge base that has been
developed within the discipline of social work is arguably the most significant contribution social work can make in terms of professionalisation. Reclaiming supervision in the social work habitus and promoting its knowledge capital makes sense in the neoliberal environment. To do this, rigor in the production and dissemination of knowledge needs to occur in the light of this and other research findings. This particular research reinforces the enduring value and development of supervision practice knowledge. Understanding and articulating new knowledge and innovative developments in social work supervision practice will not only demonstrate leadership, but will also provide important insights in terms of the development of supervision across disciplines. At the same time, distinguishing the social work knowledge base from other helping disciplines and promoting the ‘distinctive moral, relational, practical and political nature of social work’ (Healy, 2004, p.112) positions the profession to become future practice leaders in the neoliberal human service environment.

**Training and professional development**

‘What training options, there are no training options for supervision. Even if there were resources.’(Grady:211)

The findings of this research suggests the need to better understand performance within the practice and supervision sphere, and create ways in which workers can be acknowledged to develop their skills in a supportive organisational environment. The method supervisors use to discuss practice with supervisees provides evidence about the rigor used to extend practice skills and knowledge in supervision. The current research identifies that about one third of supervisor participants rely on supervisee case notes, one fifth on analysis of critical moments and another fifth on supervisee process recordings. These figures add to our knowledge about the methods used to scrutinise social work practice in supervision (Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001; Pilcher, 1984). The results about analysis of critical moments and the use of process recordings are important in the light of supervision being a potential site for critical reflection. Process recordings provide of way of examining how practitioners may recognise the ways in which taken for granted assumptions and unjust treatment is embedded in everyday situations and practices. Using process recordings require social workers to genuinely reflect on the influence of culture and ideology in practice. Brookfield (2009) describes
practice as ‘a whirlpool of contradictions, a zone of ambiguity, the contrast between the neatness of professional training and the apparent chaos of clinical experience’ (p.293-294). His description captures what the participants in this research have expressed about the critical need for supervision in this environment.

The greater use of case notes within this study may reflect a stronger focus on organisational auditing requirements to ensure quality standards are met. The literature in Chapter Three suggests that supervisors rely mostly on supervisee self report in supervision (Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001). In this research, whilst supervisors identified greater use of casenotes and process recordings than self report, they still rely on self report. The dominance of self reporting as a means of understanding performance has been raised as a concern in previous research (Ladany & Muse-Burke, 2001) and this study adds further to this concern in the context of Australian social work. While mechanisms of self report will always be an aspect of supervision, there is nevertheless a need to increase the rigor of supervision beyond the accounts of the practitioner.

**Strengthening the rigor of supervision**

Throughout the processes of social work education and training social work students become accustomed to having their practice observed by more senior educators in the classroom and in their social work placements. Watching skilled practitioners in action, having the opportunity to practice skills, and demonstrating skill development through recordings is common practice in schools of social work. Yet once training is complete, practice tends to shift into the private domain of practitioner and client. The worker then becomes the key reporter of what took place in the practice encounter, and how well the practitioner supported positive practice outcomes.

There are a number of opportunities that have the potential to increase the rigor of performance monitoring in supervision. Supervisors are clearly able to attend interviews with clients creating the potential for both modelling of skills by the supervisor, and observing the practitioners practice skills in action. In this situation the supervisor would particularly focus on practitioner skill acquisition facilitating post-interview discussion and feedback. This could be mirrored by similar processes of observed supervision practice where a senior practitioner observes and provides feedback to
supervisors on their supervision skill development (Connolly & Morris 2012). There are, of course, other ways of creating observed practice opportunities through the occasional recording of practice interviews from time to time for later examination and reflection.

An important source of information to better understand practitioner skill development, helpfulness, and general quality of practice is service-user feedback. Asking service users about worker performance has been variously picked up by agencies over the years, particularly in the context of medical social work where service-user surveys are common practice. However, such opinions tend to provide feedback on broader service satisfaction rather than commenting on factors that would help to understand practitioner performance. More in depth analysis of practitioner performance through the application of a specifically designed survey, or occasional post-service interview, could assist in providing the kind of feedback that would be meaningful in terms of worker skill development.

**Utilizing resources and extending the frame of supervision**

The evidence from this research is in line with the literature discussed in chapter three where newer graduates, in the first six months of supervision, need to build an understanding of each other within the supervisory relationship. At the beginning of this relationship, the role of the supervisor is inclined to be more task-focused and instructive, didactic in style rather than reinforcing reflective practice. A transfer of information occurs from expert to novice with directive and structured approaches to supervision preferred by inexperienced clinicians (Bernard, 2006; Davys and Beddoe, 2010; Hawkins, 2000; Jordan, 2006; Loganbill et al., 1982; Spence et al., 2001; Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997). The differing learning needs of novice and experienced supervisees raises important questions regarding the traditional expectations of supervision. This includes interrogating whether supervision, as it is currently conceptualised, is appropriate for the more seasoned practitioners.

Supervisees in this research identified the difference between novice (structure didactic) and elder (collaborative and partnership) experiences of supervision. Supervisee participants spoke about older supervisees as key resources and mentors for less experienced staff within organisations across the sectors. More experienced supervisees
provided mentorship, increased support, coaching and debriefing for new career practitioners. This finding suggests that a rich experiential resource exists within agencies that have the potential to strengthen the support and supervision of staff. Despite this, findings from the focus groups suggested that these resources are underutilised. Indeed some of the more experienced supervisees in the study suggested that their input was not necessarily wanted or appreciated. Given the increasingly pressured practice environments there may be benefit in widening the frame of supervisory opportunities to better utilise the experience of senior practitioners. Harnessing the skill and expertise of these senior employees could then augment the support and developmental functions of supervision that are sometimes compromised within line management arrangements. Rethinking ways in which supervision can be provided has the potential to create opportunities for strengthening the professional discourses within agencies. This rethinking could incorporate established supervisory opportunities including peer supervision groups or cross team and disciplinary supervision groups as discussed in chapter three. These possibilities were supported by participants within this research.

Supervision training
Cultural capital is bestowed on social work supervisors to practice and is manifest in the training required and the role of supervisors within the organisation. The structure and training requirements for providing supervision are integral to the professionalisation process of social workers. It is clear from this research that the lack of supervision training resources and programs remains a problem for Australian social workers. Historically supervision training has featured as a requirement for practising social work. As such it is an integral part of regulation requirements in the neoliberal context. British legislation ties supervision training to ongoing registration requirements for social workers (Cutcliffe & Proctor, 1998; Sharples et al., 2003; Welbourne et al, 2007). Similarly in North America (Reamer, 1989 & 1995; Strom-Gottfried, 1999) social workers require training for ongoing licensing as does the registration of New Zealand social workers (Beddoe, 1997 & 2007; O’Donoghue, 2000). The AASW National Standards on Supervision provide clear requirements about the level and frequency of training required to supervise but unlike the other countries does not have registration to ensure compliance (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2000). Regardless, findings from this research attest to extremely low levels of engagement by social
workers with supervision training and education opportunities, with current standards not being met by supervisors in the field. Without regulation Australian social workers do not have the statutory framework to mandate the requirement for ongoing professional development in this area. The results from this study are disappointing as they reflect earlier Australian research (Pilcher, 1984). Pilcher noted the lack of supervision training nearly three decades ago and it would seem that little has changed since that time. The current Australian results stand in contrast to the results generated by New Zealand research (O’Donoghue et al, 2005) where the vast majority of participants had undergone supervision training. Ironically during the data collection phase of this research the health and counselling focus groups identified that for the first time they were to have access to supervision training later that year provided by a New Zealand social worker. The organisation made this arrangement because of the lack of available trainers in Australia.

Such results not only have implications for the AASW, but also for organisations, academic institutions and individual professionals. To comply with the AASW Standards for Supervision, access to training is required and yet there is major problem with availability. Such a gap needs to be urgently addressed and options considered to deal with the lack of training opportunities. The current research is timely with the imminent registration of social work in Australia. Supervision is a key plank in the professionalisation process for the discipline of social work, and in the experience of other countries training becomes an important component of registration compliance. Access to training for supervision needs to be embedded in the reviewed National Standards along with strategies to ensure that training occurs. It could be argued that the lack of University training courses for supervision presents difficulties in Australia. A collaboration between the AASW and University Schools of Social Work would help to position supervision training and research strategically and place it on an agenda for change within the discipline.

While the availability of supervision training is clearly important, the translation of training knowledge into practice is of equal importance. Accessing training does not necessarily result in positive practice change. Without a mechanism through which training insights and new ideas can be engaged meaningfully in day-to-day practice, the full benefit of investment in training is unlikely to be realised. It could be argued that
developing opportunities that integrate knowledge acquisition and practice application is likely to be more successful in strengthening practice over time. This inevitably requires organisational commitment to creating learning environments that extend beyond the approval of course attendance alone. Whether access to supervision training remains a priority for organisations is unclear from the research findings of this study. Participants, however, certainly identified that organisations have a role to play in ensuring their supervisors are well prepared and fit to supervise.

Creative uses of technology

Within the research there was limited attention to the use of technology to enhance supervision, although some participants accessed technology options to further support what was already used in supervision. Participants did suggest the use of Skype in the context of peer group supervision, not necessarily with the involvement of the formal supervisor. However, given the degree to which technological advancements have opened up communication possibilities in many areas of human engagement, the use of technology solutions in supervision would seem to have much to offer, particularly in the context of practice in regional and remote communities. Technological developments for the provision of online supervision were evident in the literature however in the light of these data, research specifically about the supervision needs of Australian social workers from regional and remote locations needs to be a priority. Of course the use of technology in supervision need not be limited to remote practice contexts. Technology solutions can be used when supervision is not available in particular organisations, or to gather together workers across different organisational contexts within the one organisation across different offices, across fields of practice, or working on joint projects. Access to external trainers for specific professional topics can also be made easier via the use of technology. Further exploratory work in this area is likely to enrich opportunities to better support supervision training and development.
Organisational issues and concerns

We have had nervous breakdowns, resignations and compensation claims here but nothing ever changes. (Simone: 451)

Simone identified the negative consequences that she experienced when safe supervision was not available in her organisation. Such an extreme quote alerts us to the reasons for investing in supervision from an organisational perspective. Effective supervision has the potential to create a more positive environment for staff, and enhance the quality of practice interventions

Quality service provision

Participants in this research clearly identified the benefits of professional supervision. From an organisational perspective in a neoliberal environment where ‘best practice outcomes’ are required for funding agreements, the potential for professional supervision to assist in the management of competing workplace demands is significant.

The value of professional supervision for social workers was evident in the data for maintaining and updating their skill base, ensuring knowledge of accountability processes are adequate, practising in line with the AASW code of ethics and generating practice knowledge about the nature of the work undertaken. Participants in this research identified many discipline specific ways that supervision was essential for their practice including ‘keeping me updated with social work theory’, ‘improves my social work practice’, ‘focus on social justice’ and ‘need to consider my professional ethics’.

At a time when registration of social work is imminent in Australia, the integral nature of supervision for promoting a strong profession with a clear strategic direction is particularly relevant. In 1993 Scott and Farrow (1993) investigated the extent to which reported supervisory practices conformed to the AASW recommended standards in a statutory and hospital setting. They found that the standards were upheld with little difference between both settings suggesting that the findings ‘provide a baseline for evaluating changes in supervisory practices within and between different fields of practice’ (p.39). The data from this research presents a less clear picture about the degree to which the current AASW National Standards for supervision (2000) are upheld, something that would benefit from further examination.
Related to practice quality, this research found an increase in supervision infrastructure including policies, contracts, performance reviews and job descriptions. This provides new evidence about the increase in compliance measures from earlier research (Pilcher, 1984). Nearly three quarters of participants belonged to organisations with supervision policies. Those from statutory organisations were more likely, than other sectors, to have supervision policies. Evidence in the research suggested a standardisation of content in supervision policies and documentation, regardless of the nature of supervision relationships across different sectors and organisations. The data did not, however, shed light on whether the development of these more regulated expectations, or indeed the increase in compliance more generally, was resulting in more effective supervision practice. Critics in the literature warn against assuming that organisations with formal supervision policies automatically translate into more satisfying or productive supervision experiences (Cousins, 2004; Scott & Farrow, 1993). The advent of managerialism has seen a greater focus on organisational monitoring in supervision with less emphasis on the support and educational imperatives (Beddoe, 2010; Davys, 2007; Jones, 2004; Johns, 2001; Morrison, 2001). This trend was also clearly indicated in the findings of this research. It is nevertheless the support and educational dimensions of supervision that have potential to facilitate the kind of reflective practice opportunities that can impact positively on practice interventions, and therefore client outcomes. Such data provides the impetus for organisations to explore ways of balancing compliance and monitoring expectations with a stronger emphasis on the professional dimensions of supervision.

**Industrial benefits of strengthening a professional supervision culture**

The findings from this research suggest that investment in supervision has strategic value when incorporated within an organisational industrial framework. Although supervision has been seen as important to individual practitioners, and to the development of safe practice, its industrial benefits have had limited exploration. Three connected areas are identified where supervision has potential to make a positive contribution: worker health and safety; mediating liability; and in the recruitment and retention of staff.
The neoliberal context in North America has led to increased practitioner stress and burnout, increased incidents of violence against social workers and greater claims of unethical practice (Havassy, 1990; Munson, 1998a). Munson (1998b) argues that increased violent incidents against social workers have resulted from more stringent service eligibility criteria. An increase in violent incidents against social workers has also been identified in the Australian context (Koritsas, Coles & Boyle, 2010; Stanley & Goodard, 2002). Supervision provides the space for debriefing and support after such experiences (Stanley & Goodard, 2002). Participants in the research identified the importance of a supportive supervisory relationship to deal with the stressful nature of social work. Access to supervision assists staff to deal with the emotional impact of the work, and creates the organisational framework within which staff can be supported. From an organisational point of view the provision of professional supervision has the potential to reduce sick leave, and in the words of some respondents organisations would have ‘less work cover claims and greater retention of staff’. Effective supervision, therefore, becomes an antidote to the effects of stressful work environments creating access to a clear pathway of support.

From the early 1990s in North America social workers were being advised to focus on potential liability issues within the supervisory relationship at a time when malpractice suits, against supervisors by individual workers, alleging discrimination or wrongdoing had occurred (Reamer, 1995, 1998 & 2003). Licensed mental health professionals and supervisors were more at risk of legal exposure because of inadequate or lack of supervision opportunities, despite the existence of guidelines that made the lack of supervision unethical (Reamer, 1989 & 1995; Strom-Gottfried, 1999). Participants in this study identified that they were more readily blamed for negative practice outcomes within the workplace. Within this context supervision plays an integral role in shaping industrial relations within the workplace specifically in relation to legal problems and working conditions. Participants acknowledged that their working environment was increasingly influenced by risk management, a ‘shame and blame organisational culture’ which had ‘disastrous effects on front line staff and service users’. Where there was a problem with service delivery, there was a problem for them as practitioners. The increased sense of surveillance supervision and corresponding lack of a supportive workplace culture raised questions for participants in terms of the sustainability of current employment conditions. Henry, from the statutory sector, summed it up:
When supervision is not available there is significant impact on worker burn out and stress. It also places sole responsibility for decision making for families on workers shoulders and when things go wrong, management then blames staff.

Chapter three detailed the rise of litigation against supervisors in the North American neoliberal environment of human services. Alongside this is the Australian social work registration debate and increasing public scrutiny of statutory practice. Such shifts place the process of supervision at the nexus between worker performance and public accountability. Within this context it would seem to be in the legal interests of organisations to consider the benefits of supervision in creating a healthy workplace culture. Though not necessarily the best driver for change, liability can have an impact where other imperatives struggle to gain traction.

Issues that impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of workers are important to the recruitment and retention of staff. Agencies that demonstrate their commitment to staff support through an investment in supervision have the potential to create the kind of supportive organisational conditions that will both attract and retain good professional staff. However the provision of supervision alone is not necessarily enough to create a supportive organisational culture. As discussed earlier in this chapter the discourses informing supervision can have a powerful influence on the way it is received by the supervisee. In this regard the balancing of managerial and professional discourse becomes important. As noted earlier the potentially ageist practice evident in the qualitative data about input from experienced practitioners has workforce implications for older workers. Rather than excluding the older more experienced demographic of practitioners, utilising their expertise may provide alternative supervision options in a context where managerial discourses are evident. Such an approach addresses the contradiction between the ageism experienced by older practitioners in a discipline infused with human rights and social justice.

Historically in social work the conflict between the recognition of social worker’s industrial rights and the expectation of worker’s vocational commitment to service delivery has often weakened the working conditions for social workers (Healy, 2004). Participants in this research identified that they were ‘clearly not in social work for the money’ but were in social work for the satisfaction they gained from the work. Many believed, without professional supervision, this satisfaction was compromised. The
notion of poor wages and a willingness to exploit the ‘potential for cost savings afforded by the poorer working conditions in the non-government sector’ (Healy, 2004, p.108) places social workers in a vulnerable industrial position. In 2010 when the Federal Government failed to resource a pay increase in the Australian Services Union test case, the AASW lobbied government about a sector dedicated to delivering vital services, noting low wages and poor conditions as not helping to attract and retain high quality staff. The government’s announcement calls into question their commitment to properly resourcing services to the most vulnerable and needy in the community (Lonne, 2010). More recent success in the Federal Government workforce strategy for the community service sector has delivered some gains but employment conditions in the sector continue to make staff recruitment and retention an ongoing issue (Brouwer, 2009). Supervision is central in promoting the health and safety of workers and is evident in the obligations of being a good employer.

The changing context of human service provision, including a rise in the ‘for profit’ sector, was identified in chapter three and this has also shifted the workforce landscape impacting on the work conditions, arrangements and accountabilities of that sector and the growth of private practitioners which has occurred alongside that development. In this research private practitioners had greater access to supervisor choice reflecting the changing work context beyond traditional human service settings. The status of mental health social workers and their eligibility for Medicare rebate continues to influence the privatisation of social work and in turn the supervision arrangements for private practitioners. The implications of an increasing privatisation of social work changes how supervision is provided (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Butler, 1990). It was however, beyond the scope of this research to investigate how external supervision is provided by private practitioners and the arrangements negotiated, scrutinised and maintained. More systematic examination of this is required. To date this type of supervision practice has been somewhat ‘invisible’, under researched and lacking critique in the Australian context.
Utilising alternative models of supervision

Perhaps inevitably, the increased pressure upon services in response to contemporary demands has an impact upon workers providing frontline services and their supervisors. The findings of this research suggest that external supervision could play a valuable role in augmenting line management arrangements. For example, external supervision can provide specialised expertise when needed. Closer examination of the use, value and place of different types of supervision, including external supervision, with specific investigation into the contractual arrangements could assist organisations in meeting their expectations regarding the engagement and support of staff. Within the research, participants were not advocating the case for exclusively adopting external supervision models. Rather they explored different ways of structuring limited supervision resources through the use of peer supervision groups, better utilization of experienced mentors, cross organisational and inter disciplinary alternatives as well as online supervisory arrangements.

It is clear from the quantitative findings that impact on the delivery and experience of supervision is influenced by sector. Perhaps not surprisingly, the statutory sector in particular has been found to be most challenging. Reviewing how supervision is provided within statutory services would expose where different types of supervision arrangements are working well, whilst also highlighting where supervision is not meeting the needs of staff. Such reviews would ultimately enhance future service provision.

The decrease in external supervisory relationships identified in the current research has occurred in an environment where there has also been an increase in private sector social workers providing external supervision (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Dellgran and Hojer, 2010). The Swedish and European experience of using external supervisors to separate line management from other professional aspects of supervision, enables more, trusting supervisory relationships for more effective supervision (Bradley & Höjer, 2009; Dellgran & Höjer, 2005).
Conclusions

In many ways the issues identified as important to address in this chapter are the key areas for future social work development and research in Australia. This research has provided the first comprehensive analysis of social work supervision in Australia, raising areas for further investigation and debate. In closing some key areas are now reinforced.

This chapter has supported the strategic value of supervision for staff, and the agencies within which they work. A case has been made for investing in supervision to support both the professional and managerial environment of human service delivery. From an organisational perspective, supervision can contribute positively to an industrial framework, having the potential to ensure quality service provision, satisfy organisational targets and maintain professional standards, and support of staff.

The research suggests, however, that social work supervision practice in Australia has a long way to go before it reflects either the rhetoric within the literature, or in terms of meeting the AASW National Standards of Practice for supervision. This is particularly so in relation to the provision of cultural supervision. Investigating ways in which culture mediates and influences processes of support and accountability in supervision would be essential in any review of supervision practice standards and policies that guide the delivery of supervision within the agency context.

The conditions supporting the coexistence of professional and managerial discourses in supervision are important to address if the discipline is to resist the current and ongoing impact of mangerialism. Interrogating the overlap between line management and professional supervision in this research has been central in understanding the discourses that inform supervision. Gaining better understanding of how line management influences the nature of supervision practice would enhance the existing professional knowledge base. The knowledge would also inform decision making in
terms of the benefits and costs of separating line management from professional aspects of practice, or augmenting current supervision arrangements with the range of options that are now available. Such an analysis would include better utilisation of current resources within organisations.

Many participants spoke about the value of critical reflection in supervision, and this has clearly been a strong influence in the practice of supervision across Australia. Given the challenges in contemporary practice a critically reflective approach would seem to be an important addition to supervision training and development. This approach has the potential to identify when there is an imbalance in managerial and professional emphasis, and is an important site for the development and integration of new knowledge.

The lack of training opportunities in supervision remains a problem for social work in Australia. Investment in sector-wide training processes, including a greater involvement by universities, would strengthen the research/practice nexus, identifying and promoting supervision as a site for knowledge creation. As noted earlier in the chapter, however, caution needs to be exercised in assuming that training will necessarily be enough to influence the application of supervision in day-to-day practice. This is where the need for an integrated program of both training and development becomes important, creating opportunities for mentoring, feedback and critical reflection. A number of times within this thesis reference has been made to the review of the AASW National Standards of Supervision. The current standards fail to reflect current supervision practice in the field. They tend to rely on orthodoxy rather than being evidence based. The findings of this thesis suggest that these standards fail to represent the challenges faced by social workers within the current environment. Reviewing the standards will not only strengthen social work supervision practice but will also progress the social work knowledge base more broadly. The upcoming Australian process for the professional registration of social work is an ideal time for a review of AASW National Standards of Supervision. A closer examination of the place of external supervision and other models of practice, and how they may support the professional aspects of the supervisory role would also be appropriate in any such review. Participants in this research offered diverse perspectives, solutions, rationales, analyses and signposts for future supervision practice development. They noted the importance of speaking with supervisors and
supervisees about their supervision experience, being transparent about the supervision arrangements, challenging the language of supervision, and opening up supervision as an important site for generating new knowledge and transformational change. The language of supervision highlights its hierarchical relationship focus and reflects the contradictions of the era as well as the social work values enshrined in the formal process of the profession. Some participants in this research identified that the word ‘supervision’ does not necessarily reflect the collaborative relationships needed for effective practice, and suggested changing the name to reflect a partnership. Such calls for a name change attempt to reconstruct the balance of forces in the relationship that can easily be misinterpreted as a dominant/subordinate relationship. They also highlight the challenge in having a one-size-fits-all approach to the provision of supervision regardless of the experience level of the practitioner. These are questions that need to be considered if supervision is to meet the needs of the broad range of practitioners within the human services sector. There were also calls from participants for the profession ‘to get back in the drivers seat’ and so the thesis ends with hope. Social workers, organisations and the AASW have the opportunity to seize the current impetus behind the case for registration of Australian social workers to reclaim and reconceptualise supervision thus acknowledging its changed context and practice.

In 1936, Reynolds posed a question that seems as relevant today as it was then:

If all supervisors were abolished tomorrow, would someone be doing their work because it’s indispensible or would their function be missed? (Reynolds, 1936, p104 in Gardiner, 1989).

Support for supervision as an indispensible function is evident in the voices of the research participants in this study. Respondents clearly articulated their passion about the place and value of social work supervision and the positive contribution it makes to their profession. This research journey began with inquisitiveness about the practice of social work supervision in the Australian contemporary context, and questions about how it was contributing to social work, and what was influencing its practice and development. Supervision has been described as a force for change (Bradley, Engelbrecht & Höjer, 2010) that should be at the forefront of ideas in terms of its contribution to professional social work practice. Whilst the views of the research participants provide rich insights into supervision practice, its changes over time and
strategic directions, this research does not position social work supervision as that guiding force. Greater attention to the supervision research/practice nexus, however, will nevertheless position the discipline of social work more strongly in the future.

Supervision has been a longstanding feature of social work with a rich legacy of practice development. Yet the burgeoning supervision literature being developed by disciplines outside social work can be seen to be claiming the space – and the creative development of supervision with little reference to social work and the profession’s important historical legacy. This research argues the need for social work to reclaim supervision through a revitalized commitment to research and research-based policies and practices that will truly position supervision as a force for change.


Baine, D. (2009). If we don’t get back to where we were before: working in the restructured non-profit social services. *British Journal of Social Work* (Advanced access), 1-18.


Eastern Metropolitan Region Community Health Services (2006). Guidelines for supervision in community health counselling. from Eastern Metropolitan Region


Ellis, G. (1998). Through the looking glass: Supervisors perceptions of their role and needs for support and training. An unpublished Master of social work (Master of Social Work), Massey University, Palmerston North.


Johns, C., Depending on the intent and emphasis of the supervisor, clinical supervision can be a different experience. *Journal of Nursing Management, 9*(3),139-145.


Munson, C. E. Knowledge survey for the NASW code of ethics (p. 446-455).


Schonlau, M., Fricker, R., & Elliott, M. (2002). *Conducting research surveys via e-mail and the web*. Santa Monica, California: Rand Corp.


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Victoria University Ethics Application for stage 1 of the research

Victoria University of Technology
Human Research Ethics Committee

Application for Approval of Project Involving Human Subjects in Victoria University of Technology

Introduction:
This form is available in electronic format (either via the Office for Research home page at address http://research.vu.edu.au or your disk).
Contact ph. 9688-4710 for further details.

Notes to assist in completing the application are appended to the form.

This application form is included in the Human Research Register. If your project includes any information of a commercial or patentable nature, this information should be sent separately and marked confidential.

If an institution other than Victoria University of Technology is to be involved in the project, please provide with this application, evidence of ethics approval from the other institution.

If insufficient space is available on the form for your answer, please attach an additional page/s.

Applications to be typewritten and all questions answered.

[The Office is located at 6 Geelong Road Footscray]

I attach a proposal for a project involving human subjects for the purposes specified on the attached sheets.

Data collection for this project is planned to commence on 3 / 3 / 2006

and to conclude on 3 / 3 / 2007 (insert day/month/year).

Note: The Human Research Ethics Committee normally grants approval for periods of up to two years, subject to annual review. Consideration will be given to granting approval for a longer period in certain circumstances. Applications for extension of approval should be lodged prior to expiry of existing approval.

PROJECT TITLE:
Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context
**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/S:**  
(Project to be undertaken by students should list the Supervisor as the Principal Investigator)

Professor Carolyn Noble

**DEPARTMENT/S: AND CAMPUS**
Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences, St Albans Campus

---

**Office Use Only**

Received by Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee - Date:

**REGISTER NUMBER:** HRETH

**Period of approval:**

**Comments:**

*If project provisionally approved by the Executive, acting on behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee:*

The Secretary has noted that provisional approval has been extended by the Executive:

**Date:** ......................... Secretary: ....................................

Endorsed by the Human Research Ethics Committee,  
Meeting No. / , held on

Principal Investigator notified: / /

246
### Intrusiveness of Project:

1. Uses physically intrusive techniques  
   - Yes [ ]  Yes [X]  No [ ]

2. Causes discomfort in participants beyond normal levels of inconvenience  
   - Yes [ ]  No [X]

3. Examines potentially sensitive or contentious areas  
   - Yes [ ]  No [X]

4. Uses therapeutic techniques  
   - Yes [ ]  No [X]

5. Seeks disclosure of information which may be prejudicial to participants  
   - Yes [ ]  No [X]

---

1. **Title of Project**  
   *Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context*

2. **Principal Investigator/s:**  
   *(Projects to be undertaken by students should list the Supervisor as the Principal Investigator)*
   
   Professor Carolyn Noble

3. **Department/s:**  
   *Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences, St Albans Campus*

4. (a) **Associate Investigator/s and/or Co-Investigator/s:**  
   *Dr Jane Maidment*

   (b) **Student/s:**  
   *Ronnie Egan*

5. **Type of Project:**  
   *(please answer Yes or No to the following questions)*

   (a) *Is application for a higher degree program?*  
   - **Yes**

   (b) *Is application for a pilot program of a higher degree?*  
   - **No**

   *[If yes, please note that a second application will be required for the full program]*

   (c) *Is application for an honours program of an undergraduate degree?*  
   - **No**

   *[If yes, please indicate semester dates:]*

   (d) *Is application for a funded research program?*  
   - **No**
If yes, please indicate source of funding: __________________________________________

Do you require ethical approval prior to funding being granted?  Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, attach any necessary form to be completed by the Ethics Committee
and indicate grant closing date.  Date:______________

6.  Aim of project:

This aim of this research is to undertake a mapping study of social work supervision across Australia using an online survey method. The online survey will be linked to the Australian Association of Social Work website. It will include questions for the participants about demographic details, the structure and content of supervision they receive, the philosophical approach to supervision used by their supervisor, the models of supervision used in their supervision, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. There will also be specific questions for those participants who also identify as supervisors. This mapping survey will generate a series of constructs across key dimensions of the supervision process.

7.  Plain language statement of project:

(It is recognised that in some areas of research, it may be appropriate that this statement is repeated elsewhere in this application form, and that it may comprise part of your response to questions 6, 8, 15, 16 and 17.) This section is to be stated in simple language and any terms or jargon must be accompanied by explanation.

This research will provide a picture of how Australian social workers are currently being supervised. Supervision is traditionally the process, between a social worker and someone more senior, either inside or outside their place of work. This process either assists and/or directs the practice of the social worker in areas of education, administration and support. Social work supervision has functioned as an opportunity to monitor how the aims of the profession are translated into practice and has been the site for training and transmission of professional culture.
This project will use an online survey to quantitatively collect data on the different constructs of social work supervision practice as perceived by the social worker receiving or providing supervision. These will include:

- Demographic details about the participant
- The structure and content of supervision
- The philosophical approach informing their experience of supervision
- The models/approaches informing the experience of supervision
- The perceptions of the effectiveness of supervision
- The relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee.

The survey will also include questions, which focus on these constructs across the different dimensions of supervision: the personal, professional, organisational and political. The survey will produce the first national empirical study on Australian Social Work supervision.

8(a) Nature of research, including methodology and a list of all procedures to be used on human subjects. Please include a statistical power analysis statement if applicable.

This study will use a quantitative survey method to map current social work supervision practice across Australia. I have attached the draft survey which details the format and questions (Refer Appendix 2). The cover page (Refer Appendix 1) of the survey details the project, the objectives of the survey, details about who can complete the survey, a privacy and confidentiality statement, the research questions, accessing the survey, the length of time it will take to complete the survey and a statement of ethical clearance will be administered online through The Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) website. Permission has been granted by the AASW to link the survey to this website (Refer appendix 3). The AASW will send out invitations to participate with appropriate password access to the survey instrument and an identification of the respondent so that they can complete the survey via a website address provided in the email. cSurvey.com will host the survey for its duration. This ensures that the researcher has no record of the participant’s identity or email addresses. This will be ensure
confidential and anonymous data collection through automated collation of responses and then download to both SPSS and AMOS statistical analysis for the researcher. If respondents are unable to access email, they can complete the survey in hard copy, a reply envelope will be provided that does not have identifying information and eSurvey will process this also.

8(b) Description of those techniques which are considered by the profession to be established and accepted. Please give details of support for their application:
(If, in the course of your research, procedures are significantly varied from those stated here, the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed.)

Surveys of social work supervision by Kadushin (1992, 2002) and Munson (1993 and 1998) in America have collected quantitative data for understanding the different elements of supervision in social work, which promote effective practice. Both have provided an overview of the social work supervision process and in particular the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Cooper and Aglem (2003) completed a supervision survey in mental health services in New Zealand in 2003. O’Donoghue (1999, 2003) completed a national supervisory survey in New Zealand in late 2004 and is currently collating the material from this survey. The data from this survey is currently unavailable. I will draw upon these other international designs to inform the development of my data collection instrument for use in the Australian context. This instrument will include both quantitative and qualitative questions (Refer Appendix 1).

The AASW in 2004 has had prior experience in using their website for the purpose of online survey research. Dr Donna McAullife from the University of Queensland successfully used the AASW website to conduct an online survey into the ethics practice of Australian social workers. Both parties found it a successful research partnership. The AASW, as noted in Appendix 2, welcome and value their participation in my research.

**Bibliography**


9. **Date of commencement of project:**

March 2006

10. **Expected duration of project:**

12 months

11. **Number, type and age range of subjects:**

In the previous on line survey conducted on the AASW website (McAullife, 2004), 600 social workers participated in this research. The participants were aged between 20-65.

It is expected that this research will also access similar numbers, types and age range.

12. **Source of subjects, and means by which subjects are to be recruited:**

This study will be conducted using an on-line survey disseminated through the National and Branch offices of the Australian Association of Social Workers. Approximately 80% of AASW members have provided email contact details, and the survey will be sent to all members on a specified date using their provided email addresses. Participation in the survey is voluntary. For those AASW members who do not have internet access, or who have not provided email addresses, the survey will be available on request in hard copy. The study will be advertised in the National AASW National Bulletin, Branch newsletters, and information will be available on the AASW National web site. The survey will include a coversheet outlining the aims of the study, and providing a clear statement of privacy and confidentiality.
13. **Is there any payment of subjects proposed:**
Yes □ No X
If yes, how much?

Any further comments:

14. **Premises on which project is to be conducted:**
*If using an institution/s other than Victoria University of Technology, attach a copy of documents giving approval to use subjects or premises in the relevant institution/s.*

The survey will be undertaken on line.

15. **Dealing with potential risks:**

(a) *Indicate any physical risks connected with the proposed procedures*

There are no physical risks to the participants

(b) *Indicate any psychological risks connected with the proposed procedures*

Some participants may find it distressing to reflect on experiences of social work supervision. Potentially this could lead to feelings of discomfort.

(c) *Indicate any social risks connected with the proposed procedures*

There are no social risks to participants

(d) *Indicate any legal risks connected with the proposed procedures*

There are no legal risks to participants

(e) *Indicate if there are any other risks connected with the proposed procedures*

The primary risk relates to ethical consideration relates to confidentiality and anonymity of participants. The AASW will send out invitations to all AASW members about this survey. Members will receive password access to the survey instrument and an identification of the participant so that they can complete the survey via a website address provided in the email. An independent company eSurvey.com.au will host the survey for its duration. This means that the researcher has no record of the participant’s identity or email addresses. This will ensure confidential and anonymous data collection through automated collation of responses and then download to both SPSS and AMOS statistical analysis.
Social Workers, who are not members of the AASW will also be able to access the survey from the front page of the AASW website.

If potential participants are unable to access email, they can complete the survey in hard copy, a reply envelope will be provided by the AASW that does not have identifying information and eSurvey will process this.

The first pages of the survey (Appendix 1) detail the process of consent to potential participants. At the end of the survey participants will be asked to confirm (by checking a box) their consent to participate in the study and authorize the researcher to use the responses supplied as part of the research data. If the participant ticks this consent box the data cannot be withdrawn because there is no way that the participant can be identified.

(f) Management of potential risks - indicate how each of these potential risks will be minimised and/or managed if they occur.

The risk relates to ensuring that the identity of the participants remains anonymous. The use of an external host will achieve this.

The psychological risk identified in question 15b will be managed by giving participants the option to withdraw from the survey by not ticking the consent box at the end of the survey before submitting it electronically.

(i) how risks are to be minimised:

It is anticipated that there is minimal risk to prospective participants as the Survey requests anonymous information about supervision patterns.

(ii) how adverse events would be managed if they were to occur:

Participants will be advised in information about the study that they can discontinue participation at any time during actual completion of the survey.

(g) If you consider there to be no potential risks, explain fully why no potential risks have been identified.

N/A
16. If you consider the subjects to be ‘at risk’, give your assessment of how the potential benefits to the subjects or contributions to the general body of knowledge would outweigh the risks.

Participants are not likely to experience significant discomfort or distress as a direct result of their participation in the study. The potential risks of anonymity outweigh the participation in this study because this research has the potential to contribute to more effective supervision policy, planning and training in the human service sector.

17. Informed Consent:

(a) As part of the informed consent process, it is necessary to provide information to subjects prior to obtaining consent. Please attach an ‘Information to Participants’ form with information about your research that you intend to give to potential subjects. This needs to:

- state briefly the aims, procedures involved and the nature of the project, as well as a clear indication of any potential risks associated with this project;
- if you consider subjects to be ‘at risk’ (see Question 16), state exactly what you tell him or her in lay language to obtain informed consent to each procedure whereby he or she is ‘at risk’. This must be in a written format that is given to the subject particularly for this purpose; and
- be written in language which may readily be understood by members of the general public, with explanation of any technical terms.

Participants will be advised in the information preceding the survey that responses are anonymous and the completion of the survey is taken as an indication of informed consent. Please see appendix 1, information to participants.

(b) Please attach a copy of your consent form [See Attachment A for a sample consent form.]

Please see Appendix 1

(c) State the process you will use to obtain documentation of informed consent hereunder...

At the end of the survey participants will be asked to confirm (by checking a box) their consent to participate in the study and authorise the researcher to use the responses supplied as part of the research data. This is the process for informed consent. This process is outlined in the information sheet at the beginning of the survey (Refer Appendix 1).
18. Confidentiality:

(a) Describe the procedures you will adopt to ensure confidentiality.

eSurvey.com.au will be the host organisation to ensure confidentiality of all data collected from the participants.

(b) Indicate who will be responsible for the security of confidential data, including consent forms, collected in the course of the research.

eSurvey.com.au will host the collection of all data. The data collection will be automated and the researcher will receive the data for downloading to both SPSS and AMOS statistical analysis programs. The researcher, in collaboration with the Principal Investigator at Victoria University, will ensure security and storage of data collected in electronic format. The eSurvey programme and the data stored within it will be stored on the researcher’s computer system within the Social Work Unit and is available only to the researcher.

(c) Indicate the period for which the data will be held. (Data must be held for at least 5 years post-publication. Please refer to section 3.2 of the University’s Code of Conduct for Research, 1995).

The survey data will be held for the five-year period following completion of the research.

(d) Name all people who will be granted access to the data and the reason for the access. People identified are required to maintain all aspects of confidentiality.

19. Privacy:

(a) Does this project involve the use of personal information obtained from a Commonwealth department or agency?

Yes □ No X

If YES you may need to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988.

Under the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 disclosure of personal information by Commonwealth agencies is not permitted except in a number of circumstances specified in Information Privacy Principle (IPP) II. These include consent by the individual concerned. Where consent has not been given, and where none of the other circumstances specified in IPP II apply, additional guidelines for consideration of the project application and for conduct of research apply. Note that the Act does not apply to publicly available material (such as electoral rolls).
If a Commonwealth agency (for instance, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Commonwealth Government departments, Australian Electoral Commission, most Repatriation Hospitals) is involved in the collection, storage, security, access, amendment, use or disclosure of personal information for a research project investigators must ensure that the project complies with the requirements of the Act.

20. Any other relevant comments:

Declaration

I, the undersigned, have read the current NH&MRC Statement on Human Experimentation and the relevant Supplementary Notes to this Statement, or Code of Ethics for the Australian Psychological Society, (or *) and accept responsibility for the conduct of the experimental and research procedures detailed above in accordance with the principles contained in the Statement and any other condition laid down by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

Principal Investigator ___________________________ Date ________________

Principal Investigator ___________________________ Date ________________

Associate Investigator** ___________________________ Date ________________

If the project is to be undertaken by a student, student's signature: ___________________________ Date ________________

Co-Investigator ___________________________ Date ________________

Co-Investigator ___________________________ Date ________________

I, the undersigned, understand that the above person/s have read the current NH&MRC Statement on Human Experimentation and the relevant Supplementary Notes to this
Statement, or Code of Ethics for the Australian Psychological Society, (or *) and that responsibility is accepted by the above person(s) and by this Department for the conduct of the experimental and research procedures detailed above in accordance with the principles contained in the Statement and any other condition laid down by the University Human Research Ethics Committee and fully support the project undertaken within the Department and Faculty.

_________________________________  __________________
Head of Department  Date

* The Faculty Ethics Committee:  
☐ forwards this application directly to the University Human Research Ethics Committee for consideration; or
☐ has considered this application and forwards it to the University Human Research Ethics Committee for consideration; or
☐ has approved this application.

______________________________  __________________
Chair of Faculty Ethics Committee  Date

* If NHMRC Statement or APS Code are not appropriate to your project, please identify your professional code of ethics under which this project would operate.
** The Associate Investigator will assume responsibility for the project in the absence of the Principal Investigator
Notes to applicants:

All questions in the application form must be completed. In general, the most important issues which each application must answer for a University Human Research Ethics Committee to give its approval relate to:

- what evidence is presented to demonstrate that the researcher has fully considered the effects of participation in the research upon the participant/s?

- what risk and inconvenience is posed to participants in this research? [Risks may involve physical, psychological, social or legal aspects. Most proposals need to consider the risk of loss of confidentiality of information provided by participants.]

- how are risks and inconvenience to be minimised? The Committee is likely to require further information if there is no clear argument made regarding what degree of risk is constituted by the proposed project and as to how that risk can be managed.

- how are the participants’ privacy and confidentiality to be protected? what provision is there for safe storage of data for 5 years after completion?

- will participants be fully aware of what participation involves before they agree to take part in the research? [Generally, consent forms are required to document that informed consent has been received from participants. The consent form needs to indicate in plain language the nature of the participants’ involvement, the nature of the project and its aims, and to give contact details to enable participants to reach the researcher. The researcher and the participant each require a copy of the consent form.]

- will participants be clear that their involvement is entirely voluntary, so that they are able to withdraw at any stage of the research?

- bearing in mind that there may be risks, is the research worth doing?

- have all investigators, the Head of Department and Dean of Faculty read and signed the form?

It is the principal investigator’s responsibility to ensure that these questions have been answered fully in the application form. Argument and evidence will always assist an applicant’s case.

If you require additional information or assistance in completing any aspect of the application, please direct your queries to the Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, ph. 9688-4710; fax 9687-2089.

Special Groups:

- If you are seeking to involve participants whose language is other than English, appropriate arrangements for accurate translations of information to participants (e.g.
approved by a NAATI-accredited person or by a native speaker of the language) need to be made and the Committee advised.

- If you are seeking to involve government school students, the State Department of Education advises us that separate additional approval needs to be sought from the Directorate of School Education.

- Parental consent also needs to be sought for any participant aged under 18. [The Ethics Secretary, Office for Research, has further details.]

- Applications seeking to involve Victoria University students must develop procedures to ensure voluntary and preferably anonymous involvement of students, in such a manner that students can be assured that their non-participation will not occasion them any disadvantage.

- Applications seeking to involve hospital staff or patients must also obtain approval from the corresponding ethics committee of the institution concerned.

New Procedures:

In the next few months, Faculties are to establish their own Human Research Ethics Committees; however, until these Committees are convened, all research applications may be lodged with the Secretary to the University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University - Footscray campus. [Departments will be advised as to how to lodge applications when Faculty committees are fully operational.]

Which projects require approval by a university Human Research Ethics Committee?

Victoria University of Technology’s Code of Conduct of Research, Section 3.1 notes:

All research is to be conducted in a manner that preserves the rights and liberties of others, and pays particular attention to the safety, rights and dignity of the subjects of research.

In particular, Section 3.1.b notes:

Where research could expose subjects to procedures which could infringe the safety, rights or dignity of those subjects it must be submitted for the prior approval of the University Human Research Ethics Committee.

The University Human Research Ethics Committee is constituted in conformance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s Statement on Human Experimentation.

Anyone studying or working at Victoria University and engaged in research involving human subjects must apply for approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) before they approach human subjects.
For the purposes of Human Research Ethics Committee approval, an application for approval to conduct a research project should:

- demonstrate knowledge of the relevant literature and builds on prior research to contribute to the field of knowledge;

- plan to involve human subjects in providing information which is not already made public (i.e. not a literature review, which is information already in the public domain); and

- be conducted by one or more members of Victoria University staff or by postgraduate students under their supervision, or by external researchers seeking to make use of Victoria University students or other University resources.
SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION: A NATIONAL MAPPING SURVEY OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

You are invited to participate in a research study about supervision in social work practice. The study is being conducted by Ronnie Egan, a social work practitioner and academic who currently works in the Social Work Unit in the School of Social Sciences, Victoria University. This study is part of a doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble, Victoria University and Dr Jane Maidment, Deakin University.

Survey Objectives
The purpose of the survey is twofold
1. To map how social workers are being supervised across Australia
2. To determine how social workers understand their supervisory experiences

Who can complete the Survey?
The completion of the survey is voluntary and you must be
1. At least 18 years or older
2. Be eligible for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers

The survey has been ratified by the Victorian University Human Research Ethics Committee in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9688 4710).

Privacy and Confidentiality
Your answers to the survey are completely anonymous and you are not asked for any information that will identify you. An independent service, eSurveys, will host the data collection. This means that the researcher will not have access to any identifying information of those social workers agreeing to participate in the survey. At the end of the survey participants will be asked to confirm (by checking a box) their consent to participate in the study and authorise the researcher to use the responses supplied as part of the research data. Once you have submitted your response to the survey, the data cannot be withdrawn as there is now way that you can be identified.

How You Can Access the Survey
You can access the survey from the AASW Website (http://www.aasw.asn.au).

Go to the Member Login section (you will need your login number), click on the link to the survey and complete on line. It is important to note that your membership number is not linked in any way to your survey responses; all responses to the survey are anonymous.

You can also access the survey online without being a member of the AASW by choosing to download it, print it out, complete it and return to the esurveys. You can also request a hard copy of the survey from the AASW, 1800 and return it in the stamp addressed envelope to esurveys. Social workers in rural or remote areas who may not have reliable internet access are also encouraged to use a hard copy and return to esurveys.

How long will it take to complete the Survey?
The survey should take about 40 minutes to complete, longer if you decide to provide comments on any of the questions.

Any questions about this survey or the research generally can be directed to Ronnie Egan
Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au
03 99192280
Dear Ronnie,

You may have heard from our Acting President Cecile Roberts in response to your request for AASW assistance and support for your research. Please accept my apologies if you are about to hear from us twice. Just in case I am letting you know that the AASW board agreed to support your research proposal. The board recognised the research will be extremely valuable and timely. Please be aware however the approval from the board was not an ethics approval process - you will need to go through ethics approval procedures at your place of study.

As you noted in your letter we supported Donna McAuliffe in the past, and we'd do the same for you. This will include;

1) assistance from our IT officer Shane Wall to put your survey on the AASW web
2) distribution of your survey via email. At present many of the branches communicate with their members via email. You may like to email me the survey so I can send it to the branches via the directors and they can then forward on to members via email. This will however not net all members as the majority have chosen not to receive AASW newsletters etc via email at this stage
3) as an enclosure in National publications. Our next Bulletin is timed for October 9th. I'm aware there are some costs involved with this so will so will forward on this email to people in national office to advise you further. Will also cc Shane for IT purposes.

best wishes

Sue

Sue Maywald
AASW National Vice President - Education and Publications
Field Education Co-ordinator
Social Administration and Social Work
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100  Adelaide 5001

ph 61 8 8201 3559
mob 0421140991
Appendix 2: Online Social Work Supervision survey including information to participants

You are invited to participate in a research study about supervision in social work practice. The study is being conducted by Ronnie Egan, a social work practitioner and academic who currently works in the Social Work Unit in the School of Social Sciences, Victoria University. This study is part of a doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble, Victoria University and Dr Jane Maidment, Deakin University.

Survey Objectives
The purpose of the survey is twofold
1. To map how social workers are being supervised across Australia
2. To determine how social workers understand their supervisory experiences

Who can complete the Survey?
The completion of the survey is voluntary and you must be
1. At least 18 years or older
2. Eligible for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers

The survey has been approved by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9919 4710).

Privacy and Confidentiality
Your answers to the survey are completely anonymous and you are not asked for any information that will identify you. An independent service, eSurveys, will host the data collection. This means that the researcher will not have access to any identifying information from social workers agreeing to participate in the survey. At the end of the survey participants will be asked to confirm (by checking a box) their consent to participate in the study and authorise the researcher to use the responses supplied as part of the research data. Once you have submitted your response to the survey, the data cannot be withdrawn as there is no way that you can be identified.

How You Can Access the Survey
You can access the survey in two ways:
1. You can access the survey from the AASW Website (http://www.aasw.asn.au) Click on the link to the survey supersurvey.websurvey.net.au and complete on line.

2. Social workers in rural or remote areas who may not have reliable internet access can request a paper copy by leaving a message on s 03 99192913 and a survey and prepaid envelope will be sent to you

How long will it take to complete the Survey?
The survey should take about 40 minutes to complete, longer if you decide to provide comments on any of the questions.

Any questions about this survey or the research generally can be directed to Ronnie Egan
Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au
03 99192280
Thankyou for your contribution.

Supervision has many functions including educational, administrative, support and professional development.

This survey has two sections.

Section 1 (pages 4-14) has questions for the supervisee.
Section 2 (pages 15-17) has questions for the supervisor.
You may choose to complete both sections if you are a supervisee as well as a supervisor.

This survey is designed to be answered as if you have a current supervisor. For some this may not be the case, so please answer the questions relating to your most recent/significant supervisor.

For any question you can choose more than one response.

Completing the survey should take approximately 40 minutes, more if you respond to those questions requiring additional written responses.

**Section 1**

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. Gender
   - [ ] Female
   - [ ] Male

2. Age
   - [ ] 20-29 years
   - [ ] 30-39 years
   - [ ] 40-49 years
   - [ ] 50-59 years
   - [ ] 60+ years

3. Ethnic Origin
   - [ ] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
   - [ ] African
   - [ ] Australian
   - [ ] North Asian
   - [ ] South Asian
   - [ ] East Asian
   - [ ] West Asian
   - [ ] Canadian
   - [ ] European
   - [ ] Irish
   - [ ] Maori
## Demographics

- Middle Eastern
- North American
- New Zealander (including Maori)
- Scottish
- South American
- South Pacific Islander (excluding NZ)
- Welsh
- Other, please specify

### 4a What is your highest professional qualification?
- TAFE qualification
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate diploma
- Masters
- Doctorate

### 4b What is your highest professional qualification?
- Other, please specify

### 4c How long since you graduated?
- 6-12 months
- 12-24 months
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- 20-30 years
- 30+ years

**5 Are you currently employed?**
- Yes
- No

*If you answered No to question 4, please continue with the survey using your most recent employment experience*

### 6a Which best describes the sector in which you work? You can choose more than one sector
- Commonwealth Government Agency
- State Government Agency
- Local Government Agency
- Non-Government Agency
- Private For-Profit Industry
- Private Not-For-Profit industry
- Private Practice
- Educational Institution: University/TAFE/Secondary/Primary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6b</th>
<th>Which best describes the sector in which you work? You can choose more than one sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other, please specify.................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7a</th>
<th>What field of practice are you currently working in? You can choose more than one field of practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adolescent/Youth services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy/community development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy/consumer services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Care for older people/aged Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income support/Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child protection/alternate care/adoption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultancy/Private Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disability services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic/family violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Institution: University/Tafe/Secondary/Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generic social work/counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legal issues/family court/mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management and administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Migration/settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Development/Training/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training/Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervision/Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport Accident Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trauma and Torture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victims of Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable: not currently working as a social worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7b</th>
<th>What field of practice are you currently working in? You can choose more than one field of practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (please specify) .............................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. How long have you been in your current employment?
- 3 months
- 6 months
- 12 months
- 18 months
- 18 months – 2 years
- 2 years – 5 years
- More than five years

9. What best describes your current employment arrangement?
- Full Time
- Part Time
- Student
- Retired

10. Which state or territory do you primarily work in?
- ACT
- QLD
- NSW
- VIC
- NT
- TAS
- SA
- WA

11. Which best describes the geographic area in which you currently work?
- Capital City
- Regional Centre
- Rural Community
- Remote/Isolated

12. Which work activity takes up the highest percentage of your time in a typical working week? You can choose more than one.
- Individuals
- Families/Households
- Groups
- Communities
- International Development
- Social Policy
- Research or Evaluation
- Management
- Administration
- Education or Training

12b. Which work activity takes up the highest percentage of your time in a typical working week? You can choose more than one.
- Other, please specify.............
13 Do you currently have supervision?
- Yes
- No

If you answered No to question 13, please continue with the survey using your most recent supervision experience

14a What type of supervision do you currently have? You can choose more than one type of supervision.
- Individual supervision provided within my organisation
- Individual supervision provided by a supervisor external to my organisation which my organisation pays for
- Individual external, which I pay for
- Peer supervision provided within my organisation
- Facilitated group supervision provided internally within my organisation
- Facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which my organisation pays for
- Facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which I pay for
- Student or Fieldwork placement supervision
- I have no supervision

14b What type of supervision do you currently have? You can choose more than one type of supervision.
- Other, please specify……………………..

15a Of the supervision you receive which is the most useful to you?
- Individual supervision provided within your organisation
- Individual supervision provided by a supervisor external to my organisation which my organisation pays for
- Individual external, which I pay for
- Peer supervision provided within my organisation
- Facilitated group supervision provided internally within my organisation
- Facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which my organisation pays for
- Facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which I pay for
- Student or Fieldwork placement supervision

15b Of the supervision you receive which is the most useful to you?
- Other, please specify……………..
16. What is the function of your supervision? You can choose more than one.

- Clinical (Discussing individual, family or group work)
- Administrative
- Supportive
- Professional Development
- Educative
- Professional registration (eg Family Therapy, PACFA)
- Interpersonal/Team issues
- Not applicable
- Other, please specify…………………………

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR**

17. Gender of your supervisor

- Female
- Male

18. Age of your supervisor

- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60+ years
- Unknown

19a. If your supervisor is social work qualified what is the highest qualification of your supervisor?

- TAFE diploma/certificate
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate diploma
- Masters
- Doctorate
- Unknown

19b. If your supervisor is social work qualified what is the highest qualification of your supervisor?

- Other, please specify……………………………

20a. If your supervisor is not social work qualified what is the highest qualification of your supervisor?

- TAFE diploma/certificate
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate diploma
- Masters
- Doctorate
- Unknown
If your supervisor is not social work qualified what is the highest qualification of your supervisor?

☐ Other, please specify………………………

**STRUCTURE OF SUPERVISION**

21 Does your employing organization have a policy on supervision?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

22 Does your job description include an expectation that you will be provided with supervision?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don’t know

23 Do you have difficulties in accessing supervision?

☐ Yes (Go to 24)
☐ No

24 What are the contributing factors ?

☐ Cost
☐ Time
☐ Unable to access appropriate expertise
☐ Organisation does not provide supervision
☐ Organisation does not encourage supervision
☐ Organisation does not value supervision

25a What is your principal supervisor’s position?

☐ Internal to your team
☐ External to the team but in your organisation
☐ External to your organisation

25b What is your principal supervisor’s position?

☐ Other, please specify………………………

26a Is your principal supervisor your line manager?

☐ Yes
☐ No (Go to 26b)

26b Is your principal supervisor your line manager?

If No, what is their position? …………………
27a  Did you choose your supervisor?
- Yes
- No

27b  Did you choose your supervisor?

If No, who did? ………………………

28  How often do you have supervision?
- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Sporadically

29  How long is your average supervision session when available?
- 0 – 30 minutes
- 30-60 minutes
- 60-90 minutes
- Greater than 90 minutes

30  What kind of supervision contract do you have with your supervisor(s)?
- Written
- Verbal
- None. If none go to question 32?

31a  Who developed your supervision contract? You can choose more than one person
- You
- Supervisor
- Joint
- Organisational

31b  Who developed your supervision contract?
- Other (please specify) …………………………….

32  If your supervisor is not your line manager, was the contract discussed with your line manager?
- Yes
- No
- Unknown
### 33a. What issues are covered in your supervision contract? You can choose more than one issue

- [ ] Purpose of supervision
- [ ] Frequency of supervision
- [ ] Recording of supervision sessions
- [ ] Setting the agenda for supervision
- [ ] Preparation for supervision
- [ ] Interruptions and cancellations
- [ ] Confidentiality
- [ ] Safety of practice issues
- [ ] Cultural issues
- [ ] Accountability for client work
- [ ] Relationships with other staff
- [ ] Management of personal issues
- [ ] Grievance issues
- [ ] Feedback to your manager
- [ ] Resolution of conflict with supervisor
- [ ] Review of contract
- [ ] Boundary issues between supervision and other meetings
- [ ] Group norms for group supervision

### 33b. What issues are covered in your supervision contract?

- [ ] Other? (Please specify)  ...........................................

### 34. How often do you and your supervisor review your supervision contract?

- [ ] Once every month
- [ ] Once every 3 months
- [ ] Once every 6 months
- [ ] Once every 12 months
- [ ] More than 12 months
- [ ] Never

### 35a. Under what circumstances would your supervisor discuss you or your work without your permission or knowledge?

- [ ] Risk of harm to others
- [ ] Risk of harm to other workers
- [ ] Risk of harm to yourself
- [ ] Practice concerns
- [ ] Boundary and ethical issues
- [ ] Don't know

### 35b. Under what circumstances would your supervisor discuss you or your work without your permission or knowledge?

- [ ] Other, please specify.................................
36  How does your manager get feedback about your supervision?
- Feedback from yourself
- Feedback from your supervisor
- A joint meeting between yourself, supervisor and manager
- A report
- Does not occur
- Don’t know

37  Is feedback from your supervisor required by your employing organisation?
- Yes
- No
- Unknown

38  Is feedback from your supervisor linked to your performance appraisal?
- Yes
- No
- Unknown

**THE CONTENT OF SUPERVISION**

39a  Circle the number that best describes the extent to which the following items are discussed in supervision.

1. Never
2. Rarely (every twelve months)
3. Occasionally (every six months)
4. Often (every three months)
5. Frequently (every session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management of your work</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients/ issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with colleagues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My wellbeing and personal development as a worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice standards and ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory with practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocols/policies relating to your work environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation relating to your work environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and management of your work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of working with trauma over extended periods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/ education strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development requirements or opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal issues impacting on your work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39b Other content items

☐ Other, please specify……………………

PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES OF SUPERVISION PRACTICE

40a Circle the number that best describes the extent to which the following items are discussed in supervision.

1. Never
2. Rarely (every twelve months)
3. Occasionally (every six months)
4. Often (every three months)
5. Frequently (every session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people's rights and interests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tensions between your organisational role and your role as advocate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocation of social resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical moral or civic responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40b Other philosophical/value items

☐ Other, please specify……………………
MODELS OF SUPERVISION

In supervision there are a number of models that supervisors may use. Often these are consistent with practice models. Circle the number that best describes the use of ideas from each of the following supervision models:

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Often
5. Frequently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Model</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Centred</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths based</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41b Other model items

☐ Other, please specify…………………………
### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISOR

#### 42a Circle the number that best describes how often you experience the following in your relationship between you and your supervisor

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Often
5. Frequently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teaching of new skills for practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving and receiving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving reassurance and support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on the negative aspects of practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my client strengths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing primarily on goals and outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on safe and ethical practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity of work rather than quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional and/or organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing an unsatisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions in my practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling challenged by my supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing predominantly on organisational requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of my supervisor other than at set meeting times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling angry with my supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 42b Other relationship items

☐ Other, please specify…………………………

#### 43 Do you trust your supervisor?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

277
44. How would you rate the quality of the relationship with your supervisor?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not effective</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>effective</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>very effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPERVISION**

45. What are the benefits of supervision for your clients?

46. What are the benefits of supervision for your organisation?

47. What are the benefits of supervision for you?

48. What factors do you think contribute to the overall quality of supervision?
49  What training do you think, if any, supervisors need to be effective?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

50  If supervision wasn't available what impact would this have on you and your practice?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Is there anything else you might want to add that hasn't been covered in this survey?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

51  Are you also a supervisor?
☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes proceed to Section 2

SECTION 2 CONTAINS QUESTIONS FOR THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE SUPERVISORS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH
## Section 2

**THE NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS ARE SPECIFICALLY FOR SUPERVISORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How many years have you been supervising human service workers?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>less than 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 months to 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 – 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 -10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 + years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Is supervision part of your job description?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Does your organization have a policy on supervision?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (please attach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How many people do you currently supervise per week?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 – 5 individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more than 5 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What is your highest level of training in supervision?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Education training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAFE/Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AASW professional supervision training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In service training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What is your highest level of training in supervision?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How long ago did you do your most recent training?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between 12 and 24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between 2 to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7a | What informal training have you completed in supervision?  
---|---  
- Self directed learning  
- Continuing professional education  
- Workshops, conferences  
- Research  

7b | What informal training have you completed in supervision?  
---|---  
- Other  

8a | Did your supervision training include any of the following?  
---|---  
- Understanding teaching and learning  
- Purpose of supervision  
- Theories of Supervision  
- Working with conflict  
- Relationship building  
- Assessment  
- Critical Reflection  
- Counselling skills  
- Appraisal  
- Giving feedback  
- Career/Vocational/Professional development advice  
- Interpersonal skills  
- Learning organisation theory  
- Ethics of supervision  
- Professional standards  
- Cultural issues  
- Working with difference  

8b | Did your supervision training include any of the following?  
---|---  
- Other  

9a | What is the main purpose of the supervision you provide?  
---|---  
- Clinical  
- Administrative  
- Supportive  
- Professional development  
- Role development  
- Educatve  

9b | What is the main purpose of the supervision you provide?  
---|---  
- Other (please specify)
10a. What method of supervision do you use?

- Supervisee’s case files
- Process recordings
- Self report
- Analysis of critical incidents
- Audio/video tapes
- Live observation supervision
- Case presentations

10b. What method of supervision do you use?

- Other (Please specify)

11. How would you rate your effectiveness as a supervisor?

1
2
3
4
5
not effective
highly effective

12. If you asked your supervisee how effective you were as a supervisor, how would you rate their response to this question?

1
2
3
4
5
not effective
highly effective

Is there anything else you might want to add that hasn’t been covered in this survey?

____________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH
Appendix 3: Request to National President (2005) AASW to use AASW website to link online Social Work Supervision Survey

17 August 2005

Sue Maywald
National President
Australian Association of Social Workers
PO Box 4956
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Dear Sue

Re: Social Work Supervision: A national mapping study of Social Work Supervision Practice

I write to request the assistance of the AASW in conducting a research study to nationally map social work supervision practices.

This research is part of my doctoral thesis being supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble at Victoria University and Associate Professor Jane Maidment from the University of Central Queensland. The survey will draw on a national New Zealand supervision study conducted by Kieran O’Donoghue in 2004. It will also use a survey developed by Lesley Cooper from Flinders University and Jim Anglem from the University of Canterbury who conducted a supervision survey within mental health services in New Zealand in 2003.

It is anticipated that an Australian study will provide a picture of current social work supervision practice nationally and across fields of practice. It will consider the practice, process and relationships in supervision. I would also be prepared to include questions in this survey that could be of use to the AASW’s continuing professional development programme.

When I was initially conceptualizing this research at the end of 2004 I spoke with Denise Scott, AASW Manager Policy and Professional Programs about the possibility of accessing AASW membership. She felt confident this would be possible because the AASW was in the process of running another e-survey with Dr Donna McAullife from the University of Queensland, which had been a successful collaboration. I would like to conduct this survey using on-line technology. This would mean establishing a site from which the survey could be disseminated (which I will set up from my end) and requesting the AASW

I set up from my end, and requesting the AASW to email the survey information to all members who have active email addresses.
AASW to email the survey information to all members who have active email addresses. I would also make the survey available on request to social workers that do not have email access, and it could then be completed on hard copy. This would involve advertising the study in the National Bulletin or through Newsletters of each respective branch.

As I need to apply for ethical clearance for this study through Victoria University, I require a `gatekeeper letter’ from the AASW to say that assistance with the research will be forthcoming. The study does not require any financial commitment from the AASW, and I will contribute to any advertising costs for inclusion of information about the study in AASW mail outs. I am currently developing the survey instrument and design and am hopeful that these would be ready for data collection in the second half of 2005.

I am happy to provide further details of the research if required and can be contacted on (03) 9919 2280 or Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au. I look forward to hearing back from you in anticipation of receiving a letter confirming that the AASW is supportive of this study and will assist in disseminating information to members.

Yours sincerely

Ronnie Egan
Social Work Unit
Victoria University

Victoria
School of Social Sciences
Victoria University
Appendix 3a: Response from National President (2005) AASW to use AASW website to post online Social Work Supervision Survey

17 August 2005

The Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development Ethics Committee
Victoria University
PO Box 14428
Melbourne VIC, 8001

Re: Social Work Supervision: A national mapping study of Social Work Supervision Practice

The AASW has considered Ronnie Egan’s research study to nationally map Social Work supervision practices and support the proposal to use the AASW website as the host for this survey.

This research is part of her doctoral thesis being supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble at Victoria University and Associate Professor Jane Maidment from the University of Central Queensland. The survey will draw on a national New Zealand supervision study conducted by Kieran O’Donoghue in 2004. It will also use a survey developed by Lesley Cooper from Flinders University and Jim Anglem from the University of Canterbury who conducted a supervision survey within mental health services in New Zealand in 2003.

It is anticipated that this Australian study will provide a picture of current social work supervision practice nationally and across fields of practice. It will consider the practice, process and relationships in supervision. It is a much needed study. The AASW has previously been involved with a national ethics on line survey undertaken by Dr Donna McAullife from the University of Queensland, which had been a successful collaboration. We support Ronnie’s request to conduct this survey from the AASW website and she will negotiate with appropriate AASW staff to email the survey information to all members who have active email addresses. We understand that Ronnie will contribute to any advertising costs for inclusion of information about the study in the AASW National Bulletin or through Newsletters of each respective branch.

The AASW is supportive of this study and wish Ronnie well in this research.

Yours sincerely

Acting President AASW
Appendix 3b: Advertisement about online survey in AASW National and state bulletins

NATIONAL SUPERVISION SURVEY

What’s your experience of supervision?  
Surveillance or support?

PLEASE PARTICIPATE

Ronnie Egan is conducting a national on line survey from the AASW website as part of her doctoral research on the provision of social work supervision across Australia. She is a social work practitioner, supervisor and academic who currently works in the Social Work Unit in the School of Social Sciences, Victoria University in Melbourne.

Survey Objectives
The purpose of the survey is twofold
3. To map how social workers are being supervised across Australia
4. To determine how social workers understand their supervisory experiences

Who can complete the Survey?
The completion of the survey is voluntary and you must be
3. At least 18 years or older
4. Be eligible for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers

The survey has been ratified by the Victorian University Human Research Ethics Committee in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9919 4710).

Privacy and Confidentiality
Your answers to the survey are completely anonymous and you are not asked for any information that will identify you. An independent service, websurvey, will host the data collection. This means that the researcher will not have access to any identifying information from social workers agreeing to participate in the survey. At the end of the survey participants will be asked to confirm (by checking a box) their consent to participate in the study and authorise the researcher to use the responses supplied as part of the research data. Once you have submitted your response to the survey, the data cannot be withdrawn as there is no way that you can be identified.

How You Can Access the Survey
You can access the survey in two ways:
1. Click on the link http://supersurvey.websurvey.net.au to the survey and complete on line.
2. Social workers in rural or remote areas who may not have reliable internet access can request a paper copy by leaving a message on s 03 9919 2913 and a survey and prepaid envelope will be sent to you
Appendix 4: Centrelink Research proposal request for permission to promote the online Social Work Supervision Survey on Centrelink global email list

**CENTRELINK - RESEARCH PROPOSAL REQUEST (Information to be supplied with Research Proposal)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENTRELINK REFERENCE NUMBER (supplied by Centrelink after the Research Proposal has been registered)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL DETAILS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronnie Egan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences, Victoria University, Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO Box 14428, Melbourne City, Victoria, 8001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact details *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 99192280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH DETAILS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic/title *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of research *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This aim of this research is to undertake a mapping study of social work supervision across Australia using an on line survey method. The online survey will be linked to the Australian Association of Social Work website. It will include questions for the participants about demographic details, the structure and content of supervision they receive, the philosophical approach to supervision used by their supervisor, the models of supervision used in their supervision, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. There will also be specific questions for those participants who also identify as supervisors. This mapping survey will generate a series of constructs across key dimensions of the supervision process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeframe of research (duration)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection is currently in progress and began in September 2006, data collection will continue until June 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is it that your proposal from Centrelink? *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This project is seeking access to Centrelink global email to post all social workers a on line survey to quantitatively collect data on the different constructs of social work supervision practice as perceived by the social worker receiving or providing supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation * (University eg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation supervisor/sponsor *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research is part of a doctoral thesis being undertaken by Ronnie Egan and supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble from Victoria University and Dr Jane Maidment from Deakin University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile: Professor Carolyn Noble 0422196461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: Carolyn Noble; 9919 2917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1. fields marked with asterisk ( *) are **MANDATORY** for submission

**Mailing Address:** GOVERNANCE SECTION – CENTRELINK PO BOX 7788 CANBERRA BC ACT 2610
(Attention: Fiona Bowring-Greer) **Email:** Governance.Section@Centrelink.gov.au

287
Methodology to be used in research *

This study will use a quantitative survey method to map current social work supervision practice across Australia. The url for the National social work supervision survey is supersurvey.websurvey.com.au which details the format and questions. Permission has been granted by the AASW to link the survey to this website http://www.aasw.asn.au. Websurvey is the host company collecting survey data. This will be ensure confidential and anonymous data collection through automated collation of responses and then download to SPSS for statistical analysis by the researcher. Data collection is currently in progress and began in September 2006, data collection will continue until June 2007.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Description</th>
<th>Attached Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copy of ALL questions to be used in interviews* (if applicable)</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Vitae of lead researcher(s) *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References for any related publications by the researcher *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal for research sent to University’s Ethics Committee *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Consent Form’ (to be used if research involves interviews) *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process for ‘Complaint Resolution’ *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation – Adherence to Privacy Principles *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Committee’s response *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned publication of results *</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any additional information you consider appropriate to support your research request</td>
<td>ATTACHED APPENDIX 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1: Social Work Supervision: A national Online mapping survey of social work supervision practice
Appendix 2: Researcher CV
Appendix 3: Researcher Publications
Appendix 4: Victoria University Ethics application HRETH.05/125:R.EGAN
Appendix 5: Privacy and confidentiality statements
Appendix 6: Victoria University Ethics clearance HRETH.05/125:R.EGAN
Appendix 7: Planned publication of research results
Appendix 5: Department of Human Services, Victoria Ethics Application for permission to promote the online Social Work Supervision Survey on DHS global email list

Office for Children Research Coordinating Committee (RCC)

Application Form

Instructions to Applicants
- This application form is for researchers wishing to obtain support for a research project involving Office For Children staff, clients, services or information.
- Please complete ALL questions. You may use the spaces provided and/or attach additional pages as necessary.
- Please place an X in the relevant box where necessary.

Title of project:

Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

Contact Details

1. Details of Principal Applicant (and principal contact person for the RCC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Ms</th>
<th>Name: Ronnie Egan</th>
<th>Qualifications: BBSc, BSW, MA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences</td>
<td>Organisation: Victoria University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal address:</td>
<td>PO Box 14428, Melbourne City MC, Victoria, 8001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
<td>99192280</td>
<td>Mobile:0427250693</td>
<td>Fax: 9919 2966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au">Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Details of Associate Applicant

*Note, if student research please include supervisor as associate applicant
** Note, if more than two researchers, please include details of additional researchers as an attachment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Name: Carolyn Noble</th>
<th>Qualifications: Phd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Department: Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences</td>
<td>Organisation: Victoria University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal address:</td>
<td>PO Box 14428, Melbourne City MC, Victoria, 8001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
<td>99192917</td>
<td>Mobile:0422196461</td>
<td>Fax: 9919 2966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Carolyn <a href="mailto:Noble@vu.edu.au">Noble@vu.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Please provide the details of anyone within DHS with whom you have previously discussed your proposal.

Anna Ahton, Beth Parker, Tony Diss

Project Details

4. Type of application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Non-Government</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>If Other please specify:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Centre</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>If Student please specify degree:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Please provide background and rationale for the project

*Include either in the text box below or as a ONE PAGE attachment.*

This research will provide a picture of how Australian social workers are currently being supervised. Supervision is traditionally the process, between a social worker and someone more senior, either inside or outside their place of work. This process either assists and/or directs the practice of the social worker in areas of education, administration and support. Social work supervision has functioned as an opportunity to monitor how the aims of the profession are translated into practice and has been the site for training and transmission of professional culture.

This project will use an on line survey to quantitatively collect data on the different constructs of social work supervision practice as perceived by the social worker receiving or providing supervision.

6. Please state the aims AND research questions (or hypotheses) of the research:

This aim of this research is to undertake a mapping study of social work supervision across Australia using an on line survey method. The online survey will be linked to the Australian Association of Social Work website. It will include questions for the participants about demographic details, the structure and content of supervision they receive, the philosophical approach to supervision used by their supervisor, the models of supervision used in their supervision, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. There will also be specific questions for those participants who also identify as supervisors. This mapping survey will generate a series of constructs across key dimensions of the supervision process.
7. Please provide a detailed description of the proposed methodology for the research
*Include details of sampling strategies, recruitment process, instruments for data collection (including any materials or assessment tools and the nature of questions to be asked in interviews or focus groups), procedures for data collection and techniques for data analysis
*Include either in the text box below or as an attachment
This study will use a quantitative survey method to map current social work supervision practice across Australia. The url for the National social work supervision survey is supersurvey.websurvey.com.au which details the format and questions. Permission has been granted by the AASW to link the survey to this website http://www.aasw.asn.au. Websurvey is the host company collecting survey data. This will be ensure confidential and anonymous data collection through automated collation of responses and then download to SPSS for statistical analysis by the researcher. If respondents are unable to access email, they can complete the survey in hard copy, a reply envelope will be provided that does not have identifying information and webSurvey will process this also.

8. Estimated timeline for the project
*Please provide commencement and completion dates for data collection, analysis and reporting
Data collection is currently in progress and will continue until November 2006. It is envisaged that data analysis will occur by end 2006.

9. Estimated budget and funding arrangements for the project.
*Please provide details of budget breakdown for project components and information about funding sources
Budget costs include $2500 for the funding of the e survey company who act as the independent host for the collection of the data.

10. Does the research need to be approved by any other organisation (including Human Research Ethics Committees)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If YES, Name of Organisation</th>
<th>Approval Granted</th>
<th>Approval Pending</th>
<th>Application yet to be submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University, Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development ethics committee</td>
<td>16 December 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please note, you will also need to seek approval from the DHS Human Research Ethics Committee after consideration by the RCC. Details regarding the application process for the Human Research Ethics Committee are available at: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ethics/index.htm

11. What is the relevance of the project to the Office for Children programs?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Interest</th>
<th>General Interest</th>
<th>Potential Interest</th>
<th>Little Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Please explain your rationale

I have trained within Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Professional Development Unit with Beth Parker as part of the Combined Schools of Social Work group. The DHS supervision policy was released at the same time that I was developing the social work survey. There was specific interest from the training branch in the results of the survey for those participants identifying as child protection staff. This could be used both specifically for the implications of these results for supervision practice within Child protection and generally in terms of informing professional development.

12. What is the extent and scope of the proposed Office for Children involvement in the project and the form this would take?
   * for example, direct funding or costs, time required for staff, access to records, download of data etc.

To gain permission to circulate the survey link across both child protection and juvenile justice social workers. This could occur through the global DHS email facility.

Type of Research Access

13. Does this research include:

| Office for Children clients (complete Section A) |  |
| Office for Children staff members (complete Section A) | x |
| Office for Children staff and clients (complete Section A) |  |
| Information/data held by the Office for Children (complete Section B) |  |
| Services delivered or funded fully or in part by the Office for Children (complete Section A & B) |  |

Section A Accessing Clients or Staff

14. Please describe the participants [in groups] involved in the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>How many people</th>
<th>Groups of people involved</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Contact Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>There is no limit to the numbers responding to the survey</td>
<td>Social Work staff employed in Child Protection and Juvenile Justice</td>
<td>18+</td>
<td>Global DHS email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please provide information under ‘contact mode’ for each group. For example, interview, focus group, survey etc

15. Will all participants provide voluntary and informed consent?

| Yes | x | No |

If no, please provide the reasons why consent will not be obtained.
Section B: Accessing Information

16. Specify in detail, the format and type of information that will be accessed, collected, used or disclosed.
* e.g. date of birth, medical history, number of convictions, aggregate or individual data

17. Does the project involve the collection of (mark as many as applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifiable information</th>
<th>Potentially identifiable information</th>
<th>De-identified information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. If accessing identifiable or potentially identifiable information, please explain why this will not be in de-identified form

Outcomes of Project

19. Please describe the benefits you anticipate the project outcomes will have for the clients of the Office for Children?

Professional supervision is an integral part of professional practice as indicated in the DHS supervision policy with benefit to both clients and staff (Kadushin, 2003. Morrison, 2001 and Munson, 1999). It provides staff with the opportunity for feedback about their practice to enhance client outcomes. Participation in this project will result in empirical data for use in refining and enhancing professional training.

20. What are the intended dissemination outcomes of the project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Media publicity</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>If Other please specify:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Journal Article</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Conference /seminar presentation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How will the privacy of individuals be respected in any publication arising from this project?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information de-identified</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>No name or identifying details</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>If Other please specify:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Declaration

I/We, the researcher(s) agree to:

- only commence this research after obtaining approval from the Office for Children Research Coordinating Committee;
- only commence this research after obtaining approval from the DHS Human Research Ethics Committee (if applicable);
- provide additional information as requested to the RCC during the review process;
- provide progress reports to the RCC as specified in the approval letter;
- provide the RCC with a copy of the final report;
- provide the RCC with a one page summary of the outcomes of the research and how it relates to the Office for Children;
- provide the RCC with an opportunity to comment on any formal publication arising from the research prior to publication and where the RCC has alternative views on the outcomes of the research, this will be acknowledged in any publications, presentations and public forums;
- acknowledge the support of the Office for Children in any publications arising from the research;
- provide a presentation to the Office for Children of the outcomes of the research (by negotiation with the RCC);
- maintain the confidentiality of all data collection from or about project participants; and
- notify the RCC in writing immediately if any change to the project is proposed and await approval before processing with the proposed change.

Name of principal applicant …………Ronnie Egan…………………………………………

Signature Date: 18/10/06

Name of associate applicant…Carolyn Noble………………………………………………….

Signature Date 18/10/06

* Please note: if submitting this application electronically, please type name and date in the sections above. The electronic submission of the application will be taken as an agreement to the ‘Declaration’ items above.

Submission Details

Please submit your completed form by email or post to:

Office for Children Research Coordinating Committee
C/o Secretariat
Department of Human Services
27/50 Lonsdale Street,
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Email: RCC@dhs.vic.gov.au

For further information please contact Gina Smith of Department of Human Services on 9096-7480

294
Appendix 6: Department of Human Services, Victoria Ethics Approval for permission to promote the online Social Work Supervision Survey on DHS global email list

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

118/06

Ethics Committee Secretariat
Telephone: (03) 9096 5239 Fax: (03) 9096 9176
50 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE 3000
Email: genevieve.nolan@dhs.vic.gov.au

15 December 2006

Ms Ronnie Egan
Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences
Victoria University
PO Box 14428
MELBOURNE CITY 8001

Dear Ms Egan

Re: 118/06 - Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

The Department of Human Services Human Research Ethics Committee (DHS HREC), at its meeting of 6 December 2006, considered the above project and has granted full approval.

Approval is given for the period between the anticipated commencement and completion dates. If the study has not been completed by the nominated completion date, an extension will be required, together with a progress report.

Researchers must obtain the approval of the institution at which the research will be conducted or the institution which is responsible for the care or management of the participants.

To enable the Committee to fulfil its obligations in relation to monitoring the program, you are asked to provide a report within 12 months or on completion of your project, whichever is earlier. Additionally the Committee requests a summary of the research findings of less than half a page, including when the study was completed.

You must ensure that the Department of Human Services Human Research Ethics Committee is notified immediately of any matter that arises that may affect the conduct of the approved program.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the DHS HREC Executive Officer on 9096 5239 or via email at research.ethics@dhs.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely

DR DIANE SISELY
CHAIR
Appendix 7: First and second level thematic analysis of survey text

**First Level responses to questions 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50**

45  **What are the benefits of supervision for your clients?**
- Challenges from the client for the worker
- Dimensions of feeling safe in practice for client, worker and in supervision
- Value of peer and group supervision
- Negative and positive aspects of accountability to client, worker and organisation
- Line management
- Positive and negative aspects of the organisational hierarchy
- Control in the supervisory relationship
- Professional obligations under AASW
- Tension between professional obligations and organisational demands
- Managing time in busy schedule
- Prioritising work demands
- Value of critical reflection for managing boundaries
- Value of debriefing
- Linking theory with practice
- Different learning and teaching styles

46  **What are the benefits of supervision for your organisation?**
- Dealing with challenges from the organisation
- Being secure in decision making for clients and practice
- Value of external, peer and internal supervision
- Accountability and monitoring for organisation, practice and client
- Positive and negative aspects of line management within organisational hierarchy of seniors and managers
- Control aspects for organisation
- Organisational requirements versus professional principles/ethics
- Time pressures
- Value of professional development and critical reflection

47  **What are the benefits of supervision for you?**
- Challenging my practice and others in organisation
- Making mistakes and feeling safe
- Value and costs of external, group and individual supervision
- A trusting supervisory relationship
- Value and costs of accountability and review of practice
- Line management requirements
- Tension resulting from organisational demands and professional requirements
- Value of professional development, reflection, debriefing and current social work knowledge
48 What factors do you think contribute to the overall quality of supervision?
Consistent accountability practices
Feeling safe enough to make mistakes
Value of external and group supervision and having a choice of supervisor
The value of a trusting relationship with supervisor
Professional line management
Considered use of power
Professional aspects of supervision
Prioritising competing demands
Supervisor having social work knowledge and sharing it
Critical reflection

49 What training do you think, if any, supervisors need to be effective?
Value of peer learning
Parameters of accountability
Boundaries about line management and supervision
The use and abuse of power
Professional knowledge
Managing busyness
Learning styles
Professional social work, organisational and practice
Critical reflection

50 If supervision wasn’t available what impact would this have on you and your practice?
Critical reflection
Professional knowledge
Time pressures
Professional and organisational isolation
Accountability processes
External supervision
Personal and professional challenge
Second level themes

Supervisory relationship
Trust between supervisor and supervisee
Being secure in decision making for clients and practice
A trusting supervisory relationship

Challenge and vulnerability
Challenges from the client for the worker
Dimensions of feeling safe in practice for client, worker and in supervision
Value of debriefing
Dealing with challenges from the organisation
Challenging my practice and others in organisation
Making mistakes and feeling safe
Feeling safe enough to make mistakes
Personal and professional challenge

Types of supervision
Value of peer and group supervision
Value of external, peer and internal supervision
Value and costs of external, group and individual supervision
Value of peer learning

Accountability and monitoring and accountability
Purpose of accountability
Negative and positive aspects of accountability to client, worker and organisation
Accountability and monitoring for organisation, practice and client
Value and costs of accountability and review of practice
Parameters of accountability

Line management
Line management
Line management requirements
Professional line management
Boundaries about line management and supervision

Organisational hierarchy
Positive and negative aspects of the organisational hierarchy
Positive and negative aspects of line management within organisational hierarchy of seniors and managers
Consistent accountability practices

Power and control
Control in the supervisory relationship
Control aspects for organisation
Challenges from the client for the worker
Considered use of power
The use and abuse of power
Social work values

Tension between professional requirements and organisational demands
Professional obligations under AASW
Tension between professional obligations and organisational demands
Organisational requirements versus professional principles/ethics
Tension resulting from organisational demands and professional requirements
Professional aspects of supervision
Professional social work, organisational and practice
Professional and organisational isolation

Time constraints in conducting practice
Managing time in busy schedule
Prioritising work demands
Time pressures
Prioritising competing demands
Managing busyness
Time pressures

Models of supervision
Social work knowledge
Value of critical reflection for managing boundaries
Linking theory with practice
Different learning and teaching styles
Value of professional development and critical reflection
Value of professional development, reflection, debriefing and current social work knowledge
Supervisor having social work knowledge and sharing it
Professional knowledge
Learning styles
Appendix 8: Victoria University Ethics Application for stage 2 of the research

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Application for Approval of Project Involving Human Participants in Victoria University

REGISTER NUMBER (office use only) : HRETH _________

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

1. Applicants are advised to follow the Guidelines for Applications prior to submitting Application for Approval. Applicants are to forward a) Ten (10) hard copy applications (including one original copy)* with any accompanying documentation to your Faculty Ethics Officer and b) an electronic application to your Faculty Ethics Officer and copy to VUHREC Secretary (researchethics@vu.edu.au) Note: Non Minimum Risk applications may be forwarded directly to the Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee.

2. A Consent Form for Participants Involved in Research template is also available on-line.

3. The above documents are located at: http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php

* Applications to be considered at the Faculty of Business & Law need submit one original hard copy application

YOU ARE REMINDED THAT THIS PROJECT MUST NOT COMMENCE WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE APPROPRIATE HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE.

Please Note:

▪ Ethics approval will not be finalised until electronic & hard copy applications and copies of all necessary materials have been received by the Secretary of the relevant Human Research Ethics Committee.

▪ This application form is included in the Human Research Register. If your project includes information of a commercial or patentable nature, this information should be sent separately and marked as confidential.

▪ If an institution other than Victoria University is to be involved in the project, please provide this information and evidence of ethics approval from the other institution with this application.

▪ If sufficient space is not available on the form for your answer/s, please attach additional page/s.

▪ Ensure all questions are appropriately answered and the hardcopy application is authorised by appropriate staff (Applications will not be processed without the appropriate authorisation).

▪ To avoid unnecessary delays, please ensure your full application is submitted prior to relevant Human Research Ethics Committee submission date. Refer to University/Faculty Committee Meeting Dates at http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php
University & Faculty Forwarding Details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victoria University Human Research Ethics</th>
<th>Faculty Human Research Ethics Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Send electronic applications to:</td>
<td>Send electronic applications to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address: <a href="mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au">researchethics@vu.edu.au</a></td>
<td>For details of your Faculty’s Ethics Officer refer to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send 10 hard copy applications to:</td>
<td>Send hard copy applications to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Secretary,</td>
<td>For details of your Faculty’s Ethics Officer refer to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee</td>
<td><a href="http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php">http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office for Industry &amp; Research</td>
<td>Note: a copy of all applications must be e-mailed to the Ethics Secretary, VUHREC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au">researchethics@vu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO Box 14428,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne VIC 8001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Or</strong> deliver in person to the Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>or</strong> deliver in person to the Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>for Industry &amp; Research</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>located at 6 Geelong Road, Footscray.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Further Information:

Web: http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php

Telephone: 9919 4148 or your Faculty Ethics Officer

I attach a proposal for a project involving human participants for the purposes specified on the attached sheets.

Data collection for this project is planned to commence on 01 / 05 / 07 and to conclude on 30 / 06 / 07.

Note: The Human Research Ethics Committee normally grants approval for periods of up to two years, subject to annual review. Consideration will be given to granting approval for a longer period in certain circumstances. Applications for extension of approval should be lodged prior to expiry of existing approval.

1. Project Title:

Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

2. Principal Investigator/s:

(Projects to be undertaken by students should list the Supervisor as the Principal Investigator)

Name: Professor Carolyn Noble

School/Centre: Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences, St Albans Campus

Telephone Number: 99192917

Mobile Number: 0422196461

E-Mail Address: Carolyn.Noble@vu.edu.au
3. **Associate Investigator/s and/or Co-Investigator/s:**

(Please insert additional lines & information if there is more than one)

Name: Dr Jane Maidment

School/Centre: Deakin University, School of Health & Social Development
Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing & Behavioural Sciences

Telephone Number: 52278473

Mobile Number:

E-Mail Address: jane.maidment@deakin.edu.au

4. **Student Project**

(Please insert additional lines & information if required)

4.1. Is the application part of a student project? Yes X No □

4.2. If YES, select the appropriate tick box:

- PhD X
- Masters by Research □
- Honours □
- Postgraduate Coursework □
- Undergraduate (not honours) □

Name of Student: Ronnie Egan

Student Number: 3676692

School/Centre: Social Work Unit, School of Social Sciences, St Albans Campus

Telephone Number: 99192280

Mobile Number: 0427250693

E-Mail Address: Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au

Is the student currently enrolled at Victoria University? Yes X No □
5. **Type of Project:**
   *(please select Yes or No to the following questions)*

5.1. **Type of Program**
   (a) **Is application for a higher degree program?**
       - Yes ☒
       - No ☐

   (b) **Is this application for a pilot program of a higher degree?**
       - Yes ☐
       - No ☒

       *[If yes, please note that a second application will be required for the full program]*

   (b) **Is application for an honours program of an undergraduate degree?**
       - Yes ☐
       - No ☒

       *If yes, please indicate semester dates: ________________________________*

5.2. **Funded Program**

   (a) **Is application for a funded research program?**
       - Yes ☐
       - No ☒

       *If yes, please indicate source of funding: ________________________________*

   (c) **Do you require ethical approval prior to funding being granted?**
       - Yes ☐
       - No ☒

       *If yes, attach any necessary forms to be completed by the Ethics Committee and indicate grant closing date.*

       Date: ______________

5.3. **Intrusiveness of Project**
   *(please select Yes or No to the following questions)*

- Uses physically intrusive techniques
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

- Causes discomfort in participants beyond normal levels of inconvenience
  - Yes ❌
  - No ☒

- Examines potentially sensitive or contentious areas
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

- Uses therapeutic techniques
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

- Seeks disclosure of information which may be prejudicial to participants
  - Yes ❌
  - No ☒

- Uses personal information obtained from a Commonwealth department or agency
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

- Uses ionising radiation
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

- Clinical trial
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☒

 *(A clinical trial is a study involving humans to find out whether an intervention, including treatments or diagnostic procedures, which it is believed may improve a*
person's health, actually does so. A clinical trial can involve testing a drug, a surgical or other therapeutic or preventive procedure, or a therapeutic, preventive or diagnostic device or service. Any intervention, including so-called "natural" therapies and other forms of complementary medicine, can be tested in this way).

- Involves Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples  Yes ☐ No X
- Involves potentially vulnerable groups (eg Children)  Yes ☐ No X

If YES, please provide additional detail:

- Involves deception or covert observation  Yes ☐ No X

If YES, please provide additional rationale:

6. **Aim of project:**

This is stage two of my PHD candidature. Stage one was a national mapping study of the practice of social work supervision across Australia using an online survey method. From preliminary analysis of the 364 surveys received to date the aim of stage two data collection has emerged. The aim of stage two is to collect qualitative data about supervisor’s and supervisee’s perceptions about the structure and content of supervision provided, the philosophical approach in supervision, the models of supervision used in supervision, the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Data for this stage will be collected using focus groups with social work supervisors and supervisees from three different sectors of human service practice, the statutory sector, the non-government sector and the health and counselling sector.

7. **Plain language statement of project:**

(It is recognised that in some areas of research, it may be appropriate that this statement is repeated elsewhere in this application form, and that it may comprise part of your response to questions 6, 8, 15, 16 and 17.) This section is to be stated in simple language and any terms or jargon must be accompanied by explanation.

This qualitative stage of the research will use focus groups to collect data on the different constructs of social work supervision practice as perceived by the social worker supervisors and supervisees. These will include:

- Demographic details about the participant
- Structure and content of supervision
- Philosophical approach informing the experience of supervision
- Models/approaches informing the experience of supervision
- Perceptions of the effectiveness of supervision
- Relationships between the supervisor and the supervisee.
This stage of the research will provide a more in depth qualitative understanding of how supervisors and supervisees from three different human service sectors understand their supervisory practice.

8. (a) Nature of research, including methodology and a list of all procedures to be used on human participants. Please include a statistical power analysis statement if applicable.

This research is grounded in critical social research. The key aim of the study is to contribute further understanding of how social work supervision is being provided across different sectors of the human service sector and the change implications of this for the provision of social work supervision.

Data collection will be conducted using a qualitative method. Tsui (1997a) argues qualitative methods should be included in future studies of supervision and build on quantitative survey research. Three individual focus groups will be held with social work supervisors and supervisees across three different sectors of the human service industry in Victoria, the statutory, non government and the health/counselling sectors. These sectors have been included because they represent broadly the sectors identified in the survey material. The use of focus groups has been selected to illustrate more fully the descriptions achieved through the survey research.

The Student Investigator will be responsible for collecting the data, under the supervision of the Principle Investigator, Professor Carolyn Noble and Associate investigator, Dr Jane Maidment. Analysis of the data will occur at the conclusion of data gathering stage. Once again the Student Investigator will be primarily responsible for analysing the data, under the supervision of the Principle and the associate Investigators.

(b) Description of those techniques which are considered by the profession to be established and accepted. Please give details of support for their application:

(If, in the course of your research, procedures are significantly varied from those stated here, the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed.)

The research will be conducted using focus groups. Both supervisor and supervisee participants representing the three practice sectors will be asked to participate in a semi structured focus group interview which will last approximately one to two hours. There will be six focus groups with the following combination of participants:

1. Supervisors from statutory sector
2. Supervisees from statutory sector
3. Supervisors from non government sector
4. Supervisees from non government sector
5. Supervisors from health/counselling sector
6. Supervisees from health/counselling sector

The focus group will be audiotaped and participant demographic material will be collected from each participant in the focus group. The participants will be advised that the research is focussed on supervision and will be asked questions concerning:
The structure and parameters of their supervision experience
- The philosophy used in their supervision experience
- The approaches used in their supervision experience
- The effectiveness of their relationships with their supervisor /supervisee

Participants will be advised that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time and that they are entitled to refuse to answer any particular question at any time.

9. **Date of commencement of project:** 01/05/2007

(Note: for new applications, the commencement date cannot be prior to approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee. Please insert an anticipate commencement date).

10. **Expected duration of project:**
- Two months

Proposed End Date
- 30/06/2007

11. **Number, type and age range of participants:**

There are two categories of participants from the statutory, non government and the health/counselling sectors in human services to participate in focus groups. These are:

1. Social Work supervisors
2. Social Work supervisees

Up to ten social work supervisor participants will be sought and up to ten social work supervisees from each of three sectors. The participants will be aged 21+ and have graduated with a BSW degree. The supervisors will have had at least two post graduation work experience.

12. **Source of participants, and means by which participants are to be recruited:**

Participants will be recruited through written contact with managers across organisations from the three sectors (Refer Appendix One). Those statutory organisations may include social workers from Centrelink or The Department of Human Services: Child Protection Branch. The non government sector may include social workers from St Lukes Family Service or McKillop Family Services. The health/counselling sector may include social workers from public hospitals or Community Health Services. The research will be promoted to both supervisors and supervisees across such organisations. Potential social workers interested in participating will be provided with an information sheet (Refer Appendix 2) and if they agree to take part their written consent (Refer Appendix 3) will be obtained prior to the commencement of the focus group.
In the event that expressions of interest are received from more than ten supervisors and supervisees from each sector, final selection will be made according to non-probability sampling. More specifically, purposive sampling will be used to include participants from a diverse range of backgrounds, including variables such as age, gender, location, ethnicity and the type of employment.

13. **Is there any payment of participants proposed:** Yes ☐ No X

   - If yes, State the amount:

   - Provide rational for payment and the amount:

14. **Premises on which project is to be conducted:**

   *If using an institution/s other than Victoria University, attach a copy of documents giving approval to use participants or premises in the relevant institution/s.*

The focus groups will be held in the offices of participants or if required at Victoria University.

15. **Dealing with potential risks:**

   (a) *Indicate any physical risks connected with the proposed procedures*

   There are no physical risks associated with the proposed procedures.

   (b) *Indicate any psychological risks connected with the proposed procedures*

   The participants in this research are professionally trained Social Workers. It is assumed that their participation in this research would generate minimal risk. However, some participants, either supervisors or supervisees, could find it distressing to reflect on supervision experiences in their social work career. Potentially this could lead to feelings of failure and discomfort.

   (c) *Indicate any social risks connected with the proposed procedures*

   The lack of anonymity because of the participating in a focus group may pose social risks. These may be related to potentially knowing other professional colleagues in the group and disclosing sensitive data.

   (d) *Indicate any legal risks connected with the proposed procedures*

   There are no legal risks associated with the proposed procedures.

   (e) *Indicate if there are any other risks connected with the proposed procedures*

   (f) *Management of potential risks - indicate how each of these potential risks will be minimised and/or managed if they occur.*
Psychological risks
The risk of psychological distress will be minimised by preparing participants prior to the focus group and the degree of control afforded to the participant in determining the content of the interview. The researcher will outline the participants’ voluntary involvement in the project and note that they can withdraw from the research at any stage.

Social Risks
The social risks will be minimised by preparing participants prior to the focus groups and the degree of control afforded to the participant in determining the content of the interview. The researcher will outline the participant’s undertaking to maintain complete confidentiality regarding personal information that may be disclosed by fellow participants in the focus groups.

(i) how risks are to be minimised:

Psychological risks
Preliminary discussions between participant and the researcher prior to the focus group will include possible psychological risks. Printed information will also outline potential risks and strategies for minimising these (Refer Appendix Two).

Social Risks
The social risks will be minimised by the researcher asking all participants to sign a declaration within the informed consent appendix to maintain complete confidentiality regarding personal information that may be disclosed to fellow participants in the focus group.

(ii) how adverse events would be managed if they were to occur:

If participants during the course of the focus groups become upset or to display any other signs of psychological distress, they would immediately be given the option to withdraw from the group if required. Participants will be provided with the names and contact details of potential counselling/external supervisory services and advised if they have any possible concerns, potential issues or problems before, during or after the research procedures which affect them negatively, they can contact these services for support. These will differ depending on the location and requirements of each participant.

(g) If you consider there to be no potential risks, explain fully why no potential risks have been identified.

16. If you consider the participants to be ‘at risk’, give your assessment of how the potential benefits to the participants or contributions to the general body of knowledge would outweigh the risks.

The level of risk associated with the project is relatively low. Participants are not likely to experience significant discomfort or distress as a direct result of their participation in the study.
Given that the risk to participants is small, it is probable that the likely benefit of the research will outweigh the potential risks. Indeed this research has the potential to make a significant contribution to the ongoing practice and theory building of social work supervision.

17. Informed Consent:

(a) As part of the informed consent process, it is necessary to provide information to participants prior to obtaining consent. Please attach an ‘Information to Participants’ form with information about your research that you intend to give to potential participants. This needs to:

• state briefly the aims, procedures involved and the nature of the project, as well as a clear indication of any potential risks associated with this project;
• if you consider participants to be ‘at risk’ (see Question 16), state exactly what you tell him or her in lay language to obtain informed consent to each procedure whereby he or she is ‘at risk’. This must be in a written format that is given to the participant particularly for this purpose; and
• be written in language which may readily be understood by members of the general public, with explanation of any technical terms.

(b) Please attach a copy of your consent form [See http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php for a sample consent form.]

Refer Appendix Three

(c) State the process you will use to obtain documentation of informed consent hereunder…

As soon as a potential participant contacts the Student Investigator to express interest in the study, they will be forwarded a copy of the information sheet as outlined in Appendix Two. Upon receipt of the said information, the Student Investigator will again contact the person to answer any follow-up questions and to confirm their willingness to participate in the focus group. At this time the participant will be asked to sign a copy of the consent form as outlined in Appendix Three. This form will include a declaration from participants, stating that they agree to maintain complete confidentiality regarding personal information that may be disclosed by fellow-participants.

18. Confidentiality:

(a) Describe the procedures you will adopt to ensure confidentiality.

Prior to commencing the focus group each member will be asked to complete a consent form (Refer Appendix Three) which includes a statement of confidentiality and respect the privacy of all other participants. With regards to the reporting of research findings, all identifying details will be changed to protect the identity of the participants and their respective agencies.
(b) Indicate who will be responsible for the security of confidential data, including consent forms, collected in the course of the research.

The Student Investigator will be responsible for the security of confidential data, under the supervision of the Principle Investigator, Professor Carolyn Noble.

(c) Indicate the period for which the data will be held. (Data must be held for at least 5 years post-publication. Please refer to section 3.2 of the University’s Code of Conduct for Research, 1995).

Data will be held in a locked filing cabinet at Victoria University. Data will be held until 2012, five years from the date of completion.

(d) Name all people who will be granted access to the data and the reason for the access. People identified are required to maintain all aspects of confidentiality.

Principle Investigator: Professor Carolyn Noble
Co Investigator: Dr Jane Maidment
Student Investigator: Ronnie Egan

19. Privacy:
(a) Does this project involve the use of personal information obtained from a Commonwealth department or agency?

Yes □ No X

If YES you may need to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988.

Under the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 disclosure of personal information by Commonwealth agencies is not permitted except in a number of circumstances specified in Information Privacy Principle (IPP) II. These include consent by the individual concerned. Where consent has not been given, and where none of the other circumstances specified in IPP II apply, additional guidelines for consideration of the project application and for conduct of research apply. Note that the Act does not apply to publicly available material (such as electoral rolls).

If a Commonwealth agency (for instance, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Commonwealth Government departments, Australian Electoral Commission, most Repatriation Hospitals) is involved in the collection, storage, security, access, amendment, use or disclosure of personal information for a research project investigators must ensure that the project complies with the requirements of the Act.

20. Any other relevant comments:
Declaration

I, the undersigned, have read the current NH&MRC Statement on Human Experimentation and the relevant Supplementary Notes to this Statement, or Code of Ethics for the Australian Psychological Society, (or *) and accept responsibility for the conduct of the experimental and research procedures detailed above in accordance with the principles contained in the Statement and any other condition laid down by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

Principal Investigator (1)  Name: Professor Carolyn Noble

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

Principal Investigator (2)  Name: Dr Jane Maidment

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

Associate Investigator **  Name: ______________________________

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

Student/s Details (If the project is to be undertaken by a student, please provide details):

Name: __Ronnie Egan____________________

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

Co-Investigator  Name: ______________________________

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

Co-Investigator  Name: ______________________________

Signature _______________________________  Date __________________

I, the undersigned, understand that the above person/s have read the current NH&MRC Statement on Human Experimentation and the relevant Supplementary Notes to this Statement, or Code of Ethics for the Australian Psychological Society, (or *) and that responsibility is accepted by the above person(s) and by this Department for the conduct of the experimental and research procedures detailed above in accordance with the principles contained in the Statement and any other condition laid down by the University Human Research Ethics Committee and fully support the project undertaken within the Department and Faculty.

_____________________________       ______________________
Head of Department               Date
The Faculty Ethics Committee:
☐ forwards this application directly to the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee for consideration; or
☐ has considered this application and forwards it to the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee for consideration; or
☐ has approved this application.

________________________________________________________
Chair of Faculty Ethics Committee  Date

* If NHMRC Statement or APS Code are not appropriate to your project, please identify your professional code of ethics under which this project would operate.
** The Associate Investigator will assume responsibility for the project in the absence of the Principal Investigator.

Office Use Only

Received by Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee - Date:

REGISTER NUMBER: HRETH ______

Period of approval:

Comments:

If project provisionally approved by the Executive, acting on behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee:

The Secretary has noted that provisional approval has been extended by the Executive:

Date: ............................................. Secretary: ....................................

Endorsed by the Human Research Ethics Committee,
Meeting No. / , held on
Principal Investigator notified: / /
Appendix 9: Letters of invitation to participate in qualitative research

Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

Dear Manager/Team leader

I am seeking your assistance to inform your social work staff about my research. The research is about the provision of supervision in social work practice from both a supervisor and supervisee perspective. This study is part of my doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble from the Social Work Unit in the School of Social Sciences, Victoria University and Dr Jane Maidment, Deakin University. I am seeking your assistance in informing your staff

Stage one of this research was a national mapping study of the practice of social work supervision across Australia using an on line survey method. From preliminary analysis of the 364 surveys received to date the aim of stage two data collection has emerged. The aim of stage two is to collect qualitative data about supervisor’s and supervisee’s perceptions about the structure and content of supervision provided, the philosophical approach in supervision, the models of supervision used in supervision, the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. It will provide an in depth picture of how Australian social worker supervisors and supervisees understand how supervision is provided across three different sectors of the human service industry in Victoria.

In order to participate, the staff member will be either a supervisor, of two years experience post graduation, or a supervisee from one of the following sectors: the statutory, non government or health/counselling field of practice. There will be six focus groups:

1 Social work supervisors employed in the statutory sector
2 Social work supervisees employed in the statutory sector
3 Social work supervisors employed in the non government sector
4 Social work supervisees employed in the non government sector
5 Social work supervisors employed in the health/counselling sector
6 Social work supervisees employed in the health/counselling sector
Approximately 10 supervisors and supervisees from each of these sectors of practice are required. Participation is completely voluntary. You also have the right to withdraw your participation at any time. Participants will be required to attend one of the focus groups according to the above eligibility criteria. Date, times and locations of these focus groups will be negotiated once participants are selected. All participants in the focus group will be asked to treat the session as confidential and to respect the privacy of others.

Could you advertise this research and provide the attached information sheet to potential participants. If you have any question please contact me either on 99192280 or Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au.

Thanks for your time
Yours Sincerely

Ronnie Egan
Appendix 9a: Information Sheet for potential focus group participants

Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

You are invited to participate in stage two of a research study about supervision in social work practice. The study is being conducted by Ronnie Egan, a social work practitioner and academic who currently works in the Social Work Unit in the School of Social Sciences, Victoria University. This study is part of a doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Carolyn Noble, Victoria University and Dr Jane Maidment, Deakin University.

What is the study about?
Stage one was a national mapping study of the practice of social work supervision across Australia using an on line survey method. From preliminary analysis of the 364 surveys received to date the aim of stage two data collection has emerged. The aim of stage two is to collect qualitative data about supervisor’s and supervisee’s perceptions about the structure and content of supervision provided, the philosophical approach in supervision, the models of supervision used in supervision, the effectiveness of the supervisory experience and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. It will provide an in depth picture of how Australian social worker supervisors and supervisees understand how supervision is provided across three different sectors of the human service industry in Victoria. Supervision is traditionally the process, between a social worker and someone more senior, either inside or outside their place of work. This process either assists and/or directs the practice of the social worker in areas of education, administration and support. Social work supervision has functioned as an opportunity to monitor how the aims of the profession are translated into practice and has been the site for training and transmission of professional culture.

How do I know if I am eligible to participate?
In order to participate, you must be either a supervisor, of two years experience post graduation, or a supervisee in the statutory, non government or health/counselling field of practice. There will be six focus groups:

1. Social work supervisors employed in the statutory sector
2. Social work supervisees employed in the statutory sector
3. Social work supervisors employed in the non government sector
4. Social work supervisees employed in the non government sector
5. Social work supervisors employed in the health/counselling sector
6. Social work supervisees employed in the health/counselling sector

Approximately 10 supervisors and supervisees from each of these sectors of practice are required.

Do I have to be involved?
No. Participation is completely voluntary. You also have the right to withdraw your participation at any time.
What is required of participants?
Participants will be required to attend one of the focus groups according to the above eligibility criteria. Date, times and locations of these focus groups will be negotiated once.

Will anyone else know that I am participating?
If you decide to participate in the focus group, your identity will become known to other participants within the study. However as a participant in the focus group, you retain the right to disclose as much or as little information as you wish. All participants in the focus group will be asked to treat the session as confidential and to respect the privacy of others.

Are there any risks associated with the study?
There are very few risks associated with the study. However some participants may find it distressing to discuss difficult supervision experiences. In order to minimise this risk, the student investigator will discuss with participants potential issues or problems. If during the study participants identified difficulties, the student investigator could refer the participant to possible external supervisors.

What are my rights and responsibilities?
You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

You have the right to lodge a complaint if you feel that you have been treated in an unfair or unethical manner by the investigator(s). Complaints can be made to the Secretary, Office of Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001, Phone: 03 99194710.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in the above-mentioned research.

Ronnie Egan
Student Investigator
Phone: 99192280
Email: Ronnie.Egan@vu.edu.au
Appendix 9b: Consent form for focus group participants
Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

I acknowledge that I have received an information sheet regarding the proposed research. I understand that:

- I can participate freely in the study, and have the option to withdraw at any time.
- I will receive no payment for my participation in the research.
- I understand that I will be invited to attend a focus group for participants which will be audio taped.
- In the event that I experience any discomfort or distress as a result of my participation in the study,
- I understand that an appropriate source of support will be made available to me via the student investigator.
- I understand that my identity and that of my agency will not be revealed when information about the study is published or presented in public.
- I agree to maintain complete confidentiality regarding personal information that may be disclosed by fellow participants

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, .........................................................

of .........................................................
certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study entitled: Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context being conducted at Victoria University by:

Principle Investigator: Professor Carolyn Noble
Student Investigator: Ronnie Egan

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by:
Ronnie Egan

and that I freely consent to participate in the focus group.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way. I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: .............................

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher (Ronnie Egan on ph. 99192280). If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, Office of Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001, Phone 03 99194710.
Appendix 9c: Demographic questionnaire for focus group participants

Social work supervision in the current Australian human service context

SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS: SUPERVISEES

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender

2. Age

3. Ethnic Origin

4. What is your highest professional qualification?

5. How long have you been in your current employment?

6. What type of supervision do you currently have?

7. Gender of your supervisor

8. Does your job description include an expectation that you will be provided with supervision?

9. Do you have difficulties in accessing supervision?

10. What is your supervisor's position?

11. Is your principal supervisor your line manager?

12. How often do you have supervision?
### Appendix 10: Results Appendices

#### Appendix 10.1: Fields of practice of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Practice</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Health/Counseling</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Violence/Justice</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Income Support</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Education</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>603</strong></td>
<td><strong>89.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Appendix 10.2: Survey respondents having peer supervision provided within their organisation of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Provided</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Appendix 10.3: Survey respondents having external individual supervision which they pay for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Paid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.4: Survey respondents having individual supervision provided by a supervisor external to organisation of employment which organisation pays for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.5: Survey respondents having facilitated group supervision provided internally in their organisation of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.6: Survey respondents having peer supervision provided externally to their organisation of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.7: Survey respondents having student/fieldwork supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.8: Survey respondents having facilitated group supervision provided by a supervisor external to the organisation which the respondent pays for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.9: Survey respondents and functions of supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of Supervision</th>
<th>Overall Frequency (%)</th>
<th>If interpersonal/team issues listed as a function</th>
<th>If supportive issues listed as a function</th>
<th>If administrative is listed as a function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>362 (61%)</td>
<td>147 (66.8%)</td>
<td>239 (63.2%)</td>
<td>170 (57.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>296 (50%)</td>
<td>131 (59.5%)</td>
<td>199 (52.6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>378 (64%)</td>
<td>172 (78.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>199 (67.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>306 (52%)</td>
<td>157 (71%)</td>
<td>240 (63.5%)</td>
<td>162 (54.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educative</td>
<td>198 (34%)</td>
<td>104 (47.3%)</td>
<td>171 (45.2%)</td>
<td>116 (39.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal/team</td>
<td>220 (37%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>172 (45.5%)</td>
<td>131 (44.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional registration</td>
<td>18 (3%)</td>
<td>11 (5.0%)</td>
<td>11 (2.9%)</td>
<td>10 (3.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.10: Survey respondents by gender of principle supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Female</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>582</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 10.11: Survey respondents by supervision policy in organisation of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Policy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>584</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 10.12: Chi-Square for Appendix 10.11

Chi-Square Tests (associated with above table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>29.164b</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>27.794</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Assoc</td>
<td>6.305</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>531</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.47.

Appendix 10.13: Chi-Square tests for organisational supervision policy and identification as supervisor

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>9.346b</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Assoc</td>
<td>7.406</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>584</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 25.16.
Appendix 10.14: Survey respondents by expectation of supervision in job description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 10.15: Chi-Squared for survey respondents who have supervision in job description and sector (Conflated private with private for profit sectors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>25.302*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>30.315</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>9.884</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>530</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.34

Appendix 10.16: Survey respondents where principal supervisor is line manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.17: Survey respondents where principal supervisor is line manager and internal supervision is only type of supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.18: Survey respondents and frequency of supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Weekly</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporadically</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.19: Survey respondents and length of supervision sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid 0-30 minutes</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-60 minutes</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-90 minutes</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 90 minutes</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 10.20: Survey respondents and who developed supervision contract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (self)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix 10.21: Survey respondents where supervisor is not line manager and contract discussed with your line manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix 10.22: Survey respondents and frequency of contract review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biannually</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than annually</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.23: Trust in the supervisory relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (never)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not usually</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (always)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.24: Survey respondents who identified as both supervisors and supervisees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified as supervisor</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes Valid Yes</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Valid Yes</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>83.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.25: Supervisor survey respondents and length of time supervising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.26: Supervisor survey respondents where supervision is part of their job description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 10.27: Supervisor survey respondents where organisation has a policy on supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Yes</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 10.29: Supervisor survey respondents and the number of people they supervise weekly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid 1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 10.30: Supervisor survey respondents and highest level of training in supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Field education</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE/Higher Education</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AASW Professional Supervision training</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In service supervision training</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 10.31: Supervisor survey respondents and length of time since last training on supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over the last 12 months</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 12-24 months</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 2-5 years</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 years</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>228</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing System</strong></td>
<td><strong>447</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 10.32: Survey respondents with choice of supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>581</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing System</strong></td>
<td><strong>94</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.9</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>675</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 10.33: Structure matrix loadings for 61 items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>.867</td>
<td>-.528</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>-.543</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>-.568</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>-.561</td>
<td>.409</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>.804</td>
<td>-.534</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My wellbeing and personal development as a worker</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>-.534</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions to practice</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>-.581</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>-.488</td>
<td>.401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td>-.504</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervisor</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>-.200</td>
<td>-.529</td>
<td>.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on negative aspects of my practice</td>
<td>.711</td>
<td>-.468</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development requirements or opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills</td>
<td>.652</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>-.576</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on safe and ethical practice</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td>-.636</td>
<td>.465</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing predominantly on organisational requirements</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>-.414</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>.580</td>
<td>-.518</td>
<td>.255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>.578</td>
<td>-.483</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal issues impacting on your work</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>-.413</td>
<td>.345</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult learning</td>
<td>.574</td>
<td>-.536</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing an unsatisfactory supervisory relationship</td>
<td>-.550</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with colleagues</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>-.437</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving reassurance and support</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>-.321</td>
<td>.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling challenged by my supervisor</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>-.382</td>
<td>.390</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with management</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>-.420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of your work</td>
<td>.437</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td>-.358</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional/organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td>.656</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>.610</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.566</td>
<td>-.357</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>.560</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of my supervisor other than at set meeting times</td>
<td>-.513</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity rather than quality of work</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task centred</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>.423</td>
<td>-.279</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on client strengths</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td>0.540</td>
<td>-0.876</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>-0.849</td>
<td>0.306</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocations of social resources</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td>-0.828</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>-0.799</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical, moral and civic responsibilities</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td>-0.761</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>-0.742</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</td>
<td>0.597</td>
<td>-0.717</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people's rights and interests</td>
<td>0.583</td>
<td>-0.716</td>
<td>0.444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td>0.496</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.677</td>
<td>0.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/education strategies</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td>0.323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>0.301</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice standards and ethics</td>
<td>0.577</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.604</td>
<td>0.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocols/policies relating to your work environment</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.575</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic</td>
<td>0.508</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and management of your work</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>0.494</td>
<td>0.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td>0.430</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation relating to your work environment</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td>0.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.323</td>
<td>0.648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.430</td>
<td>0.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory and practice</td>
<td>0.577</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.538</td>
<td>0.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients</td>
<td>0.342</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of working with trauma over extended periods</td>
<td>0.523</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td>0.527</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization
## Appendix 10.34: Confirmatory factor analysis

### Pattern Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of flexibility in supervision sessions</td>
<td>.923</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on my strengths</td>
<td>.844</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint problem solving</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing practice with my supervisor, more experienced than me</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a satisfying supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.747</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing my practice mistakes</td>
<td>.737</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on negative aspects of my practice</td>
<td>.731</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing tolerance and patience in the supervisory relationship</td>
<td>.727</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to debate with my supervisor</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My well being and personal development as a worker</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to try innovative and creative solutions to practice</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of structural inequalities in practice</td>
<td>.923</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting policies and practices that achieve a fairer allocations of social resources</td>
<td>.913</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social change to reduce social barriers, inequity and injustice</td>
<td>.905</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pursuit and achievement of equitable access to social, economic and political resources</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards structural change</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>.666</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical, moral and civic responsibilities</td>
<td>.645</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/social action strategies</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensions between organisational and professional goals</td>
<td>.578</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader structural issues affecting your practice</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.557</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding people's rights and interests</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development/education strategies</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational challenges and work towards structural change</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on professional/organisational rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on goals and outcomes</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td>-.236</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.613</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on quantity rather than quality of work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.463</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task centred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>Sector (conflated)</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>95% Confidence Interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling confronted by my supervisor</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.681</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>3.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.883</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>3.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>3.713</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>3.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.982</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>3.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on client strengths</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.194</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>3.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.040</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>2.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>2.714</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>2.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.067</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>2.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with clients</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.024</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>2.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.139</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>2.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>2.773</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>2.331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.200</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>2.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client strengths</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.123</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>3.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.227</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>3.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>3.541</td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>3.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.076</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>2.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.877</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>3.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.640</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>3.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>3.582</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>3.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.381</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>3.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>4.605</td>
<td>.238</td>
<td>4.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>4.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>4.564</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>4.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4.756</td>
<td>.277</td>
<td>4.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.275</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>2.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.024</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>2.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>3.598</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td>3.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.341</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>2.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of theory and practice</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.209</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>2.650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>2.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>3.564</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td>3.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.341</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>2.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
<td>3.988</td>
<td>.302</td>
<td>3.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Statutory</td>
<td>3.756</td>
<td>.387</td>
<td>3.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private for profit/private Practice</td>
<td>4.327</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>3.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.988</td>
<td>.302</td>
<td>3.392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 10.35: The constructs and sector of supervisee

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations
## Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>5.190&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>1.632</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>5.634&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.878</td>
<td>3.330</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>3.259&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.086</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>3.915&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.305</td>
<td>1.333</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>2380.022</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2380.022</td>
<td>2245.587</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>1475.630</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1475.630</td>
<td>2617.056</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>1505.545</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1505.545</td>
<td>1561.169</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>1719.062</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1719.062</td>
<td>1755.461</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector 3</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>5.190</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>1.632</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>5.634</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.878</td>
<td>3.330</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>3.259</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.086</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>3.915</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.305</td>
<td>1.333</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>511.915</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>1.060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>272.340</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>465.791</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>.964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>472.985</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>.979</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>7358.215</td>
<td>487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>5052.490</td>
<td>487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>Type III Sum of Squares</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Mean Square</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>Partial Eta Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>5004.272</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>5343.102</td>
<td>487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 1 Support in the Supervisory Relationship</td>
<td>517.105</td>
<td>486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 2 Accountability and Monitoring Practices</td>
<td>277.974</td>
<td>486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 3 Social Work Values</td>
<td>469.050</td>
<td>486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>Factor 4 Models of Supervision Practice</td>
<td>476.900</td>
<td>486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. R Squared = .010 (Adjusted R Squared = .004)
b. R Squared = .020 (Adjusted R Squared = .014)
c. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .001)
d. R Squared = .008 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)
Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:
Egan, Veronica

Title:
Social work supervision practice in Australia: does the rhetoric match the practice?

Date:
2012

Citation:
Egan, V. (2012). Social work supervision practice in Australia: does the rhetoric match the practice? PhD thesis, Department of Social Work, Melbourne School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, The University of Melbourne.

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/37891

File Description:
Social work supervision practice in Australia: does the rhetoric match the practice?

Terms and Conditions:
Terms and Conditions: Copyright in works deposited in Minerva Access is retained by the copyright owner. The work may not be altered without permission from the copyright owner. Readers may only download, print and save electronic copies of whole works for their own personal non-commercial use. Any use that exceeds these limits requires permission from the copyright owner. Attribution is essential when quoting or paraphrasing from these works.