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AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT WRITING AS A FUNCTION OF DOCTORAL VERSUS NON-DOCTORAL TRAINING

The Ohio State University

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL
REPORT WRITING AS A FUNCTION OF DOCTORAL
VERSUS NON-DOCTORAL TRAINING

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Nancy Lynne Dare, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1982

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I is a brief discussion of the problem which is the topic of this investigation. Background information will be presented followed by a statement of the problem, the rationale for the study, the significance of the study, and definitions of terms used in the study.

Background

Currently one of the major issues confronting the school psychology profession is the question of the appropriate entry level. The American Psychological Association (APA) maintains that school psychology is simply an area of specialization within the broad context of psychology. Thus, school psychologists are expected to adhere to the standards APA (1977) has established for all professional psychologists. One of the standards states that a doctorate from an appropriately accredited institution is necessary for all professional psychologists. In contrast, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 1978) argues that a school psychologist's competence is not determined by a degree. Furthermore, NASP views school psychology as a separate profession. School psychologists are viewed as professionals who have blended the knowledge and skills of educators and psychologists to create a third, independent profession. Consequently, NASP maintains in its standards and professional literature
that the APA entry requirements are inappropriate for school psychologists and instead supports the sixth year or specialist entry level.

The educational level and working environments of the organizations' membership have influenced their positions. The majority of APA members have earned the doctorate. Gottfredson and Dyer (1978) found that 81% of APA members who provided health care services had earned their doctorate. In contrast, only 13.3% of the 2,067 school psychologists that comprise 84% of NASP's membership had earned their doctorate (NASP, 1980). Thus, the views of these two organizations reflect the skills and concerns of their respective members. Furthermore, most APA members are employed by universities, hospitals, and clinics, and/or are engaged in private practice. Gottfredson and Dyer (1978) noted that 20.7% of the APA doctoral psychologists who provided health care services were engaged in private practice, approximately 40% were employed by universities and colleges, and approximately 20% were employed by hospitals and clinics. Ramage (1979) indicated, however, that 79% of the school psychologists she surveyed were employed by school districts. While the majority of universities, hospitals and clinics require personnel to have earned the doctorate, most school systems do not. Thus, the characteristics and needs of the situations in which there is a demand for the school psychologist's skills and knowledge are also factors which must be considered before the issue is resolved.

The entry level issue is not a recent development. Psychologists in all the specialty areas have been seeking to upgrade their
qualifications for many years to protect consumers and to enhance the psychologists' ability to compete in the legal, medical, and educational arenas. Examples of some of the early APA-sponsored conferences on training and certification include the Boulder Conference in 1949, the Northwestern Conference in 1951, the Thayer Conference in 1954, the Stanford Conference in 1955, the Estes Park Conference in 1958, and the Miami Beach Conference in 1958 (Roe, 1959). One of the goals of each of these conferences was to recommend uniform, upgraded training and certification standards in either specific or general areas of psychology. Thus, the arguments currently posed by APA and NASP were first initiated by sectors of the APA membership during the conference discussions that established the philosophy and policies on which the current APA standards are founded. While APA formally resolved the issue in its 1977 standards, the issue continues to be debated by APA and NASP.

**Problem Statement**

APA has implied that psychologists with doctoral level training provide schools with more satisfactory services. Doctoral training is recommended for entry level into the psychology profession in order to protect the public from poor and ineffective psychological services. Most school psychologists, however, are trained in specialist or master's degree programs. Thus, the question of whether an individual from a non-doctoral program can deliver independent, effective services to the schools is a very practical, basic question.

There is little research which compares the skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists. Gerken and Landau (1979) found that
school psychology supervisors rated the school psychologists from both doctoral and specialist degree programs as being more skilled in the areas of research and information dissemination. Classroom teachers rated the master's level school psychologists higher in the area of overall effectiveness. The extent to which these results can be generalized, however, is limited due to the small number of post-master's level school psychologists who were rated. Furthermore, this study did not separate the skills of individuals with a doctorate from those with a specialist degree.

The study comprising this dissertation is designed to provide an in-depth, comparative analysis of the skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists in one specific skill area—psychological report writing. The investigation will utilize five categories of psychological reports which correspond to five reasons teachers typically give when referring students to school psychologists: possible learning disability, possible mental retardation, reading problem, behavior problem, and possible emotional difficulty.

Rationale for the Study

A review of the literature indicates that school psychologists typically engage in two primary functions, individual child study and consultation, and that these functions are precipitated by referrals. Secondly, studies have shown that most referrals are initiated by teachers, especially elementary teachers. Thirdly, investigators have concluded that teachers refer children to school psychologists due to five primary concerns: learning disabilities, mental retardation, behavior problems, reading problems, and emotional disturbances.
Once a school psychologist assesses a child and/or consults with the teacher, the results and recommendations are typically discussed in a written psychological report. The report communicates information to the teacher, while simultaneously providing a permanent record of events. Existing research reveals that teachers are primarily interested in the recommendations offered by the school psychologist in the report. Recommendations which are clearly stated, practical, and easily implemented are rated most highly. In addition, teachers prefer reports which are well organized, lack technical jargon, and focus on the individual child. Thus, the school psychologist's ability to communicate his/her findings and recommendations influences the teachers' degree of satisfaction with the psychological services being provided.

As a result, this study is designed to compare the report writing skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists in three major areas: language and format, content, and recommendations.

Significance of the Study

The debate over the required level of training for school psychologists has continued for a number of years. The general assumption has been that doctoral level training will increase the school psychologist's ability to provide the school with effective services; however, the assumption is currently theoretical in nature. The research does not exist to refute or support either position. It is crucial, therefore, to engage in research which allows us to determine which factors influence the effectiveness of the school psychologist if school psychology is to continue to grow and develop as a unified, proactive profession.
The results of this and any related research have specific implications for training institutions, state departments of education, the professional organizations, school districts, and individual school psychologists. If the APA standards were solidly supported, the pressure on sixth-year oriented training programs to develop long range plans for creating doctoral programs would be increased. State certification agencies would begin reviewing certification and licensing standards and could subsequently establish the doctoral entry level for all school psychologists. NASP would then be encouraged to alter its official policy, placing more pressure on school psychologists in training to earn the doctorate. Consequently, school districts would be forced to require the school psychologists they hire to possess the doctoral degree and to establish a doctoral index on their current salary schedule. Finally, many current school psychologists would be forced to engage in more intensive re-training or consent to work under the supervision of a doctoral level school psychologist as a psychological examiner. If the APA position is not supported by relevant research it is highly unlikely that its official policy would change. Such research would, however, strengthen the existing system and permit the continuation of the evolutionary process which has already precipitated the gradual improvement of training and credentialing requirements.

Definitions of Terms

**Doctoral School Psychologist** - an individual who has earned a doctoral degree (Ed.D., Ph.D., Psy.D.), has specialized in an area of psychology (e.g., school, clinical, counseling, etc.) or in guidance and counseling, and has had work experience in the schools.
Non-Doctoral School Psychologist - an individual who has earned a master's or a specialist degree and has specialized in school psychology.

Doctoral Degree - a degree which requires between 72 and 96 graduate semester hours to obtain (Brown & Lindstrom, 1978).

Specialist Degree - a non-doctoral degree in school psychology which usually requires 54 to 72 graduate semester hours to obtain (Brown & Lindstrom, 1978).

Master's Degree - a non-doctoral degree which typically requires less than 45 graduate semester hours to obtain (Brown & Lindstrom, 1978).

Elementary Child - a child who is enrolled in kindergarten up through the sixth grade.

Psychological Report Categories - the categories of psychological reports are determined by the teacher's initial reason for referring the child to the school psychologist. Five possible reasons for a referral have been developed according to the following definitions:

Learning Disability Referral - a referral initiated by a teacher primarily to determine if a child qualifies for learning disability services.

Mental Retardation Referral - a referral initiated by a teacher primarily to determine if a child qualifies for a program for the educable mentally retarded, the trainable mentally retarded, or the severely/profoundly retarded.

Reading Problem Referral - a referral initiated by a teacher primarily as a result of the child's inability to progress in reading, language difficulties, general lack of interest in
academics, overall lack of motivation, and/or poor study habits. The teacher does not, however, attribute the difficulties to a possible learning disability or mental retardation.

**Behavior Problem Referral** - a referral initiated by a teacher primarily as a result of the child's lack of discipline, disruptive behavior, inability to attend and/or aggressive behavior in the classroom.

**Emotional Difficulty Referral** - a referral initiated by a teacher primarily as a result of antisocial behavior, withdrawal, lack of self-confidence and self-worth, phobic reactions, mood variations and/or extreme anxiety.

**Organization**

Chapter I included background data, a statement of the problem, the rationale for the study, the significance of the study, and definitions of terms. Chapter II presents a review of the relevant literature. Chapter III delineates the methodology and statistical techniques used. Chapter IV describes and analyzes the results of the study. Chapter V includes the implications of the results, the limitations of these results, and a summary statement.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the literature relevant to this study. The review will focus on studies pertaining to the history of school psychology, the doctoral issue, the role of the school psychologist, referrals received by school psychologists, and psychological report writing.

School Psychology: An Historical Perspective

A school psychologist can best be described as an individual who has knowledge of both psychological principles and the educational environment and, as a result, is in a unique position to apply these principles in the schools. The application of psychology to the educational setting was first advocated by Lightner Witmer in 1896 in an address before the American Psychological Association (Brotemarkle, 1931, p. 346). Witmer insisted that these individuals could serve children and educators by assessing and treating "mentally and morally retarded children" (Brotemarkle, 1931, p. 346). To underscore the importance of these services, Witmer helped establish a clinic at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896 (Cutts, 1955). Children with learning problems were examined by psychologists at the clinic, whereupon teachers were provided with assistance in developing techniques to facilitate the learning of these children.

Public schools also began to provide these services. The first Department of Child Study was established by the Chicago Public Schools
in 1899 (Cutts, 1955). In addition to the provision of direct assistance to teachers, psychologists also identified children to be placed in special classes (Tindall, 1964). Typically, the psychologists screened children in the schools during the week and then worked with the students on Saturday when they were brought to the clinic by their principals (Cutts, 1955). Thus, as early as the 1890s psychologists were trained to apply psychological principles in the school environment for the purpose of identifying children with learning difficulties, providing treatment recommendations to teachers, and, if necessary, placing them in special educational facilities.

While psychologists had been serving schools to some degree for fifteen years, the first person actually hired with the label "school psychologist" was Arnold Gesell (Cutts, 1955). He was hired in 1915 by the state of Connecticut "to make mental examinations of backward and defective children . . . and to devise methods for their better care in the public schools . . ." (Connecticut Special Education Association, 1936, p. v.)

The number of school psychologists expanded fairly rapidly. By 1925, Walter was able to identify 75 school psychologists. In addition, schools were demanding that school psychologists expand their role and function. For example, while acknowledging that school psychologists spent a large portion of their day administering group tests in order to create homogeneous classes, Walter (1925) emphasized that school psychologists should also be allowed to diagnose and provide therapy for children with learning and behavior problems, develop preventative mental hygiene programs, serve as the child's advocate in curriculum
decision-making, and conduct research. Over 15 years later, Symonds (1942) also reiterated the need for psychologists who could apply psychological principles in the schools while engaging in a variety of roles. The establishment of school psychology as a formal division of the American Psychological Association in 1947 clearly illustrates the rapidity with which the demand for school psychologists was established (Herron, Green, Guild, Smith, & Kantor, 1970).

While the demand for school psychologists was expanding rapidly, no training or certification requirements existed to protect the public from unqualified school psychologists. As Walter (1925) notes, school psychologists were trained in numerous other fields including education, medicine, and psychiatry, as well as psychology. As a result of the lack of uniform levels of preparedness and skill, New York became the first state to develop certification requirements in 1935 to reduce the number of inadequately trained school psychologists (Cutts, 1955). By 1946, seven states certified school psychologists (Horrocks, 1946).

The requirements, however, varied extensively. For example, Nebraska and Maine required the school psychologist to be a graduate of a four-year college program with specialization in psychology. Nebraska also demanded that the college be a teacher training institution. In contrast, Ohio had three types of certification patterns ranging from the four-year Provisional Certificate for a Junior School Psychologist to the Permanent Certificate. The former was issued to an individual with a master's degree in psychology from an approved school if he possessed or was eligible to possess a teaching certificate in social studies, had taken at least 20 semester hours in certain psychology courses, and
had completed 300 hours of supervised practical experience (Horrocks, 1946, p. 400). Issuance of the Permanent Certificate was dependent upon forty months of experience under a Provisional Certificate and the holding of a doctorate in psychology from an approved institution (Horrocks, 1946, p. 400). Thus, some states made extensive attempts to regulate the qualifications of individuals hired as school psychologists. In general, however, the inadequate training and certification standards continued into the 1950s.

**The Doctoral Issue: An Historical Perspective**

The chaos and confusion among certification requirements and training standards and the lack of specific school psychology training programs catalyzed the need for definitive action on the part of the American Psychological Association. Even though by 1954 20 states and Washington, D.C., certified school psychologists, only one formal school psychology training program existed and school psychologists were referred to with 75 different titles throughout the United States (Cutts, 1955). As a result, the APA-sponsored Thayer Conference was held to delineate the functions of the school psychologist and to recommend training and certification standards (Cutts, 1955).

The recommendations of the Thayer Conference are the basis for the current debate over whether a doctorate should be required for all school psychologists. These recommendations, however, were founded on the precedents established by clinical psychologists at the Boulder Conference in 1949. Like the Thayer Conference, the Boulder Conference addressed the issues of kinds and levels of training for clinical psychologists. At that time, clinical training programs were few in number,
the content of the programs was varied, and there was a large demand for clinical psychologists who could work with returning veterans in VA hospitals, mental hygiene clinics, and Public Health programs (Raimy, 1950). As a result of this demand, there was a large amount of government funds available to support the development and improvement of training programs and facilities in psychiatry, psychiatric social work, psychiatric nursing, and clinical psychology. Thus, the Boulder Conference was a response to this governmental-medical demand for an increased number of well-trained clinical psychologists.

The Boulder Conference concluded with several recommendations regarding title, certification, and training. First, the conference participants recommended that the title "clinical psychologist" be limited to "persons who have received the doctoral degree based upon graduate education in Clinical Psychology received from a recognized university" (Raimy, 1950, p. 37). The purpose of this decision was to reduce the confusion over the meaning of the term "psychologist" and to protect the public from unqualified individuals. In addition, a third factor influenced this decision. During and after World War II, clinical psychologists frequently worked closely with the medical profession. Consequently, there was a need for psychologists to reflect a level of training in their profession similar to that demanded of the physicians (Raimy, 1950). Secondly, the participants addressed certification and licensing issues. While acknowledging that licensing or certification would become a reality for all applied psychologists in the near future, they concluded that licensing and certification requirements would continue to reflect the policies of the individual states. They did
emphasize, however, that "the minimum standard for certification as a psychologist [must] be the Ph.D. in psychology or its equivalent from an accredited college or university, and one year's pertinent experience" (Raimy, 1950, p. 183). Thus, the outcome of the conference was to equate the title of clinical psychologist and any subsequent certification or licensing with doctoral level training. Sub-doctoral programs were to exist only for the purpose of training psychological technicians to serve under psychologists.

Most participants at the Thayer Conference shared the philosophy and goals of the Boulder participants. In response to the realities of the schools, however, they placed a greater emphasis on the sub-doctoral training programs for psychological examiners. The Thayer conferees rationalized that "[t]he position of school psychologist involves such broad comprehensive preparation at a high level that these responsibilities can be met only with doctoral training or its equivalent" (Cutts, 1955, p. 31). Consequently, it was recommended that this training "consist of four years of graduate study, one of which should be a year of internship" (Cutts, 1955, p. 31). In addition, they considered the training of psychological examiners to be essential. Consequently, they recommended a sub-doctoral training program which would involve "a two-year graduate program of which one-half year should be an internship" (Cutts, 1955, p. 31). "Such training should equip the examiner to perform many psychological services" (Cutts, 1955, p. 31). Participants in favor of the two levels argued that schools could not afford a staff of doctoral level psychologists and that the doctorate is not a pre-requisite for other positions in the schools. Furthermore, they argued
that most psychologists with doctoral training would not willingly devote a large amount of time to testing individual children. Consequently, there was a need for school psychological examiners to meet the needs of the schools. Individuals opposed to two levels argued that if school psychologists were allowed two levels of training most individuals would stay at the lower level, thus decreasing the status of the profession. Furthermore, schools would be attracted to these less costly psychological examiners and, most likely, allow them to work independently. As a result, the schools would be receiving less effective services.

While the final recommendations of the APA-sponsored conference supported the two-level philosophy and the constraints on the title "school psychologist," the fact remained that many individuals continued to be hired as "school psychologists" who had not earned the doctorate.

The issue regarding doctoral level training was also argued in the literature. A variety of arguments was used to support the two positions. O'Shea (1960) recommended doctoral training due to the "gravity of responsibility resting in the school psychologist's hands" (p. 282). Hodges (1963) offered his support for this position for two reasons. First, he felt the school psychologist must possess "a broad theoretical framework from which to draw possible solutions to educational problems" (Hodges, 1963, p. 339). Secondly, "[the school psychologist] must be many things to many people and must be recognized as having a depth of training signified by the degree" (Hodges, 1963, p. 339). Thus, Hodges (1963) concluded "[t]o be equipped to formulate broad
mental health programs in an adequate fashion, . . . it would seem that the psychologist needs to be trained at the doctoral level" (p. 339). The entry level issue was again addressed in a conference entitled "New Directions in School Psychology" in 1964 (Bardon, 1964). Those in favor of only training at the doctoral level focused on the "complexity of the school psychologist's assignment" (Bardon, 1964, p. 9). In contrast, others continued to argue that the needs of the schools demanded a large number of sub-doctoral practitioners. Consequently, while doctoral level psychologists might serve as supervisors and planners, much of the day-to-day activities would be the responsibility of the sub-doctoral practitioners. They argued, therefore, that not only were two levels of training necessary, but the sub-doctoral training programs must be improved, since most of these individuals would have to function independently in the schools. These realities were echoed by Valett (1963) and Ferguson (1963), both of whom suggested that the APA demand for doctoral level school psychologists was premature for the practitioners and the educational system. Furthermore, as Gray (1963) notes, "what in practice happens in most situations is that the non-doctoral person with a two-year training is trained in just about the same fashion as a doctoral person. He merely gets less of it than the doctoral person does. The possible exceptions are generally that the doctoral individual may have more training in psychotherapy and probably research" (p. 287).

In summary, the need for doctoral level training has been argued since the early fifties by school psychologists. Those that support
the doctoral requirement indicate that this level of intensive training is necessary if school psychologists are to serve the schools effectively. In addition, they maintain that allowing the training of sub-doctoral school psychological examiners inhibits the professional development of the field by discouraging individuals from earning the doctoral degree. Proponents of two-level training argue that the characteristics of the school setting coupled with the large demand for individuals to offer psychological services to the schools make the requirement unrealistic or at least premature.

The Doctoral Issue: A Current Analysis

The controversy regarding the level of training required for school psychologists to function independently in the schools has not been resolved; however, the official participants in the controversy have changed. As APA became more oriented toward the doctoral practitioner and trainer, a need arose for an organization to represent the many non-doctoral practitioners. Consequently, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) was formed in 1969 (Brown, 1979b). Thus, the controversy became a basic area of disagreement between APA and NASP. In 1977, APA adopted new standards for "providers of psychological services" (APA, 1977). These standards required anyone with the title "psychologist" who was practicing as a "professional psychologist" to have an earned doctorate in a valid area of specialty from an appropriately accredited program. Division 16 opposed the ruling. It argued that most school psychologists were non-doctoral practitioners and that this was an appropriate level of training for entering the profession of school psychology. As a result, APA did eventually agree
to allow all school psychologists who were certified by September 4, 1974, to be considered professional psychologists under a "grandperson" clause.

While the controversy within APA has been officially resolved, the issue is now argued among members of APA and NASP. NASP continues to support the non-doctoral entry level requirement. NASP argues that "competency is not adequately reflected by the degree" (Brown, 1979b, p. 52). Thus, NASP supports the development of training and certification requirements which insure that school psychologists will develop the competencies they need to function effectively in the schools. Furthermore, as evidenced by Standards for Training Programs in School Psychology (1978), NASP maintains that these competencies can be met in a sixth-year, graduate specialist program entailing a minimum of 60 semester hours and a full year internship or 1,000 clock hours. Currently, most school psychology training programs adhere to this specialist degree model (Brown, 1979b). In addition, NASP has challenged APA's legal authority to place constraints on the use of the title "school psychologist."

The major factors and arguments which have characterized the doctoral issue were clearly evident in the Bardon, Brown, and Hyman debate published in a recent School Psychology Digest (1979). In presenting the APA position, Bardon (1979) cited various forces that support and, he maintained, require the universal enactment of the APA standards. First, Congressional pressure has been exerted on psychological organizations to clearly define "psychologist" for
legislative purposes. Secondly, there is a growing number of doctoral level psychologists who can fill the available positions. Thirdly, the school psychology training programs are currently striving to upgrade their course and practicum requirements. Fourthly, a registry of health service providers has been developed to help insure quality health care in the United States. Fifthly, most private practice licensing and certification regulations require doctoral level training. Sixthly, the knowledge and skills currently required of professional psychologists are highly complex. And finally, there is a large number of professional psychologists who belong to APA. In summary, Bardon (1979) argued that given the demands of the complex body of psychological knowledge, the importance of protecting society from ineffective services, the need to communicate with other professionals, and the large number of well-trained professional psychologists, a sub-doctoral entry level is no longer viable. Furthermore, he emphasized that since school psychology is not a separate profession, but a specialty of psychology, school psychology is not exempt from the doctoral level entry requirement. He did not, however, oppose the sub-doctoral training of school psychological examiners who would function under the direction of a doctoral level school psychologist.

In contrast, Brown (1979a) argued the NASP position. Brown emphasized that given current school psychology certification requirements throughout the United States, the sub-doctoral focus of existing training programs, the level of training of current practitioners, and the employment requirements in today's educational market, APA's demands are unrealistic. Consequently, Brown contended that school psychology
must be viewed as a profession that is linked to, but separate from, the fields of psychology and education. In other words, by blending and applying educational and psychological knowledge and skills, school psychology has created its own professional identity and, as a result, must develop its own training, certification, and licensing requirements.

Several authors have proposed a moderating view. Hyman (1979) suggested that "the top 60-credit programs . . . [be allowed to] . . . offer a Psy.D. or Ed.D. in school psychology" (p. 178). He reasoned that individuals with 60 credits coupled with a one-year internship would provide the schools with the same level of service as an individual who had earned the Ph.D. and taken the required 70 or 80 credits. Trachtman (1981) provided an evolutionary viewpoint. He emphasized that given the current political-educational-economic conditions, the APA view is not realistic. He also noted that even if NASP were to adopt APA's stance, there is little likelihood that state departments of education would modify their certification requirements in the near future. Thus, he urged school psychology to continue to upgrade its programs and certificates in smaller, more rational steps rather than destroying the profession with irrelevant, unacceptable standards.

In summary, the doctoral issue is a major area of disagreement between NASP and APA. NASP argues that "school psychologist" is a term used to reflect the individual who is competent to provide the schools with the psychological services they require. Furthermore, NASP contends that competency is insured through improved training and certification standards. A school psychologist can be competent
following the completion of a well developed three-year non-doctoral specialist program. Thus, the possession of a doctoral degree is not indicative of competency. APA argues that non-doctoral practitioners are not fully trained, and therefore are not competent to deliver effective, unsupervised services to the schools. In other words, doctoral level school psychologists are more qualified than non-doctoral school psychologists to meet the needs of the schools and fulfill the stated role and function of a school psychologist. Consequently, only individuals possessing an earned doctorate should be referred to with the title "school psychologist."

School Psychology Training Patterns

Little emphasis was placed on training school psychologists between the 1890s and the 1950s (Ferguson, 1963). One of the factors which created the need for the Thayer Conference was the lack of formal school psychology training programs (Cutts, 1955). In a survey conducted immediately preceding the conference, 18 institutions indicated that they trained school psychologists. All 18 programs offered sub-doctoral degrees and 10 of them offered the doctorate. There was, however, little continuity among the programs in course and practicum requirements and much of the training was haphazard (Ferguson, 1963). In fact, some early school psychologists were teachers who were awarded a Binet kit and the title of "school psychologist" following many years of service in the classroom (Carp, 1964). Furthermore, many trainers of school psychologists had no experience as school psychologists, having been trained and having functioned in other areas of
psychology (Ferguson, 1963).

Given the demand for school psychologists and the desire to upgrade training, the Thayer Conference recommended that school psychologists be trained at the doctoral level. A doctorate was to require at least four years of graduate study, including a year of internship. It also recommended that psychological examiners receive two years of graduate study, including 1/2 year of internship. Both programs were to require courses in education and psychology; however, doctoral students would receive more intensive study, especially in the areas of research, assessment, supervision, and consultation.

Since the Thayer Conference, school psychology training programs have been increasing in number and improving in quality. White (1964) found 30 institutions that offered training in school psychology. Her list was limited, however, in that only programs in psychology departments were surveyed. Of the 1,055 students in training, approximately 50% were at the master's level, 20% at the doctoral level, and the remaining 30% at the certificate or specialist level. In addition, White (1964) noted that the quality of programs varied. Some sub-doctoral programs barely met their state's certification standards, while some doctoral level programs provided training well above minimum standards. White (1964) also found that coursework in clinical and abnormal psychology was ranked first in importance and emphasis by most programs. She concluded "certain programs seem constructed on the assumption that a school psychologist is only a clinical psychologist in sheepskin clothing" (White, 1964, p. 40). One-third of the programs she surveyed viewed themselves as primarily clinical training programs.
White (1964) disagreed with this emphasis, stating that a school psychologist must be exposed to both educational and clinical principles if he/she is to function effectively in the schools. In other words, White (1964) maintained that school psychologists should have their own identity and, therefore, should not be trained solely as clinical psychologists or educational psychologists.

Smith (1964) expanded the survey of training programs to include those in education and psychology departments. He found 79 institutions offered school psychology training. Of these 79, 37 were located in Departments of Psychology, 22 in Departments of Education, 8 in Departments of Educational Psychology and 12 were joint departmental efforts. Fifteen programs offered only the doctoral (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) degree. Thirty programs trained only at the sub-doctoral level. All of these programs offered a master's (M.A., M.S., or M.Ed.) degree and four also offered a specialist certificate. In addition, 34 programs trained at both the doctoral and sub-doctoral levels.

Bluestein (1967) updated Smith's (1964) survey. She found 85 institutions which offered school psychology training programs. Of the 85 programs, 35 were administered by Departments of Psychology, 19 by Departments of Education, 7 by Departments of Educational Psychology and 24 were joint departmental efforts. Bluestein (1967) also investigated the degrees offered by these institutions. Twenty programs offered only the doctoral (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) degree. Forty-one offered only a sub-doctoral degree, including the M.S., M.A., and M.Ed. degrees and a specialist certificate. Twenty-four institutions offered doctoral and sub-doctoral degrees, seven of which also offered a specialist
certificate or professional diploma. Between the Smith (1964) and Bluestein (1967) surveys, eight more institutions began offering only a doctoral degree and 13 increased the number of degrees they offered. When compared with the results of White's (1964) survey, Bluestein's (1967) results indicated that a greater emphasis was being placed on coursework in assessment, testing theory, learning theory, and educational principles. Without the raw data, however, it is difficult to make definitive conclusions regarding trends in course requirements. Conclusions are also tentative given that White (1964) surveyed only those programs in Departments of Psychology while Bluestein (1967) surveyed programs in both Education and Psychology Departments. All 85 institutions surveyed by Bluestein (1967) required practicum and/or field experiences and all but six also required an internship. The length of these experiences, however, varied widely across programs.

By 1969, Cardon and French found that 87 institutions offered graduate training in school psychology. Of these 87 programs, 52 were administered by at least two departments and one included six departments. Departments frequently involved in these joint efforts included: psychology, education, educational psychology, special education, and guidance. The programs continued to offer three levels of training: master's, intermediate such as professional diplomas or education specialist certificates, and doctorate. Sixteen programs provided all three training options. The other programs trained at one or two levels: master's only (26), intermediate only (1), doctorate only (10), master's and intermediate (7), master's and doctorate (21), and intermediate and doctorate (6). Cardon and French (1969) also analyzed the
average semester credit hours required for each training level: master's (39), intermediate (60), and doctorate (82). Sixty-one percent of 1,814 students were being trained at the master's level. Twenty-nine percent were enrolled in doctoral degree programs and 11% were enrolled in intermediate programs. An analysis of the course content of the three program levels indicated that approximately 65% of the required courses focused on psychological foundations, methods, and techniques and approximately 25% of the required courses concentrated on educational foundations, methods, and techniques.

In 1970-71, Bardon, Costanza, and Walker (1971) found that 112 institutions trained school psychologists. An analysis of their data (Bardon & Walker, 1972) indicated that 14 institutions offered training at three levels. The remaining institutions trained at one or two levels: 88 offered the master's degree, 54 offered an intermediate level of training, and 57 offered the doctorate. Of these institutions, 29 trained only at the master's level, 8 only at the intermediate level, and 8 only at the doctoral level. Data were also obtained regarding the average number of semester credit hours required for each level of training. The results were as follows: master's (46), intermediate (62) and doctoral (80). Of the 3,633 students being trained in school psychology programs, 46% were enrolled in master's programs, 21% in intermediate programs and 33% in doctoral programs. A comparison of these findings with those of Cardon and French (1969) indicated that more students were enrolling in doctoral and intermediate programs than master's programs.
The results of the survey conducted by Bardon and Wenger (1974) revealed that by 1973, 143 school psychology training programs were functioning.

In 1977, Goh reported his findings from a detailed survey of 165 institutions offering school psychology training. Of the 97 institutions which responded, 25 offered only master's degree training, 7 offered only intermediate level training, and 9 offered only doctoral level training. The remaining 56 institutions trained at several levels: master's and intermediate (25), master's and doctorate (8), intermediate and doctorate (9) and master's, intermediate, and doctorate (15). Goh (1977) also found that 71 of these programs had been initiated within a previous 10-year period and 22 of these programs had been established within the previous 5-year period. Of the 22 recently established programs, 19 provided sub-doctoral training and 3 provided doctoral training. The programs were located in various administrative units: Psychology Departments (43), Educational Psychology Departments (15), Education Departments (12), and Graduate School of Professional Psychology (1). In addition, 16 programs were administered interdepartmentally. Goh (1977) analyzed the training content of these programs, psychological evaluation, educational assessment and remediation, and behavior modification technology comprised the three major content areas emphasized by the training programs. Other content areas included: school-based consultation, psychotherapeutic procedures, quantitative methods, community involvement and consultation, professional roles and issues, and psychological foundations. A comparison of the emphases of the three levels of training programs revealed that
doctoral programs placed significantly more emphasis on quantitative methods and school-based consultation than master's programs. There were, however, no significant differences between the areas emphasized by doctoral and intermediate programs or between the areas stressed by intermediate and master's programs. In general, the emphasis on consultation increased from master's to intermediate to doctoral programs while the emphasis on psychological evaluation decreased from the master's to the doctoral level.

Brown and Lindstrom (1978) provided additional information in their survey of school psychology training institutions. Of the 203 institutions they identified, 70 programs trained at the master's level, 151 at the intermediate level, and 66 at the doctoral level. In addition, a breakdown of the number of students was provided. Of the 7,450 students in training, 1,774 were enrolled in master's programs, 3,936 in specialist programs, and 1,740 in doctoral programs.

As the data indicate, the number of school psychology programs, especially intermediate programs, was increasing rapidly. Between Bardon and Wenger's (1974) study and Brown and Lindstrom's (1978) study, seven doctoral programs were established, while 78 specialist programs were initiated (Brown, 1979b). In addition, the number of master's programs declined from 115 to 70 (Brown, 1979b). Thus, most school psychologists entering the field are currently being trained at the post-master's level. Between 1974 and 1978, the number of students in specialist programs increased by 2,744 (Brown, 1979b). In contrast, during this same time period, the number of doctoral students increased to a small degree from 1,371 to 1,774 and the number of students
enrolled in master's programs declined from 3,410 to 1,774 (Brown, 1979b).

French and McCloskey (1980) recently compared doctoral and non-doctoral school psychology training programs. Their findings indicated that the rapid increase in the number of school psychology training programs has been decreasing in the last one to two years. In a brief, somewhat limited, analysis of the content of doctoral and non-doctoral programs, they found few differences between the two types of programs.

Several studies investigated the characteristics of school psychologists currently practicing in the field. In a survey of over 700 school psychologists, Meacham and Peckham (1978) found that 72% of their sample were sub-doctorally trained. Both the sub-doctoral and doctoral psychologists were asked to rank various role functions. Meacham and Peckham (1978) concluded that assessment was the primary task of both groups; however, doctoral school psychologists did spend more time engaging in research, serving as change agents, and consulting. Thus, both groups of school psychologists functioned in the same roles. The amount of time spent in these roles, however, varied.

In response to questions regarding areas of competence, master's level school psychologists ranked themselves significantly higher than doctoral school psychologists in the areas of assessment, remediation, and interpretation. Doctoral school psychologists ranked themselves significantly higher than master's level school psychologists in the roles of change agent and researcher. There were no significant differences in each group's rankings of their competence in the consulting role.
In a national survey of school psychologists, Ramage (1979) found that 1% of the school psychologists were trained at the bachelor's level, 22% had received a one-year master's, 39% a two-year master's, 14% a three-year master's, and 24% a doctorate. Seventy-nine percent of these individuals were employed by school districts. Furthermore, most school psychologists indicated they preferred the two-year master's as the appropriate entry level into the profession. Those individuals functioning in the school indicated assessment was their primary task.

In summary, the data on school psychology training programs indicate that in the past 30 years the number of such programs has risen dramatically, from 18 in 1954 to over 200 in 1978. Recent programs are primarily sixth-year or specialist programs which require credit hours above and beyond the hours necessary to earn a master's degree. Brown and Lindstrom (1978) noted that sixth-year programs typically require between 54 and 72 semester hours. Since these programs have attracted the majority of trainees within the last few years, there is evidence that school psychologists are increasingly better trained. The early programs were frequently haphazard; viewed as offshoots of the larger clinical or experimental programs. In the recent decade, however, school psychology training programs have not only increased their course and practicum requirements, but have designed experiences which are more tailored to the needs and realities of psychologists working in the schools. Both doctoral and subdoctoral programs have placed greater emphasis on content areas such as school-based consultation, educational assessment and remediation, and consulting, as well as the areas of psychological theories, methods,
and techniques and less emphasis on psychotherapeutic techniques (Goh, 1977). While research is limited, available data show little difference between doctorally trained school psychologists and those trained in sixth-year, specialist programs.

School Psychology Certification Patterns

The same factors which led to the development of training standards catalyzed the development of state certification standards. Most of the early school psychologists did not receive school psychology training (Walter, 1925). Cornell (1941) stated that colleges and universities frequently offered courses in "Binet" testing to undergraduates. Consequently, many teachers, even those without a bachelor's degree, were able to administer the intelligence test. Formal training programs were non-existent. Furthermore, states lacked the regulations needed to control the quality of school psychological services. To provide more effective control and thus protect consumers, several states began implementing regulations that governed the certification of school psychologists, New York being the first in 1935 (Cutts, 1955). By 1941, Pennsylvania had also adopted regulations (Cornell, 1941). In addition, some local municipalities, such as Baltimore, developed their own eligibility requirements (Wallin, 1941).

By 1946, Horrocks reported that seven states had established certification standards: Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. As previously indicated, the comprehensiveness of the regulations was extremely varied. For example, New York and Ohio required school psychologists to have earned a master's degree in psychology with a certain number of course hours in psychology.
In contrast, Nebraska and Maine certified individuals as school psychologists who had earned a baccalaureate degree and specialized in psychology. In Maine, this degree had to be granted from a teacher training institution.

Hall (1949) found that 11 states certified school psychologists. In eight states, the certificates were labeled "School Psychologist". In the other three states, the certificate was entitled "Certificate for Specialized Service in Psychology", "School Psychometrist", or "Elementary School Counselor." Six states certified individuals at two or more levels. Two common levels were psychological examiner/school psychometrist and school psychologist. Hall (1949) also investigated the degree and course requirements for certification. Generally, the states placed more emphasis on types and amount of coursework than on degree requirements. Some states were highly specific about course requirements, while others listed general content areas. Ten states did, however, require a master's degree for the highest level of certification. In addition, six states required the possession of a teacher's certificate or the equivalent. As a result of her investigation, Hall (1949) concluded that little continuity existed across state certification requirements, posing a severe difficulty for students in training and individuals already in the field who wished to move from one state to another. Consequently, she urged the consideration of national certification regulations.

Claytor (1950) indicated that only nine states certified school psychologists, having omitted Connecticut and Delaware. She drew conclusions similar to Hall (1949) and again emphasized the inconsistencies
and lack of reciprocity that existed across states.

Prior to the Thayer Conference, a survey was conducted by Newland (Cutts, 1955) to determine the "state of the art" at that time. Newland found that 20 states and the District of Columbia certified school psychologists but that few commonalities existed. As Cutts (1955, p. 109) lamented, "Nationally, the situation is—in one word—chaotic." With regard to certification levels, 13 states and the District of Columbia had adopted one level of certification. Six states certified two levels such as "psychometrist", "diagnostician" or "psychological examiner" at the lower level and "school psychologist", "clinical psychologist", or "director of special education" at the upper level. Indiana certified three levels: "technician", "examiner", and "psychologist". As Cutts (1955, p. 109) emphasized, however, "... what qualifies a candidate for the lower level in one state may more than meet the requirement for the higher level in another."

States also included degree and experience requirements. Three states required a doctorate and 13 states required a master's degree for certain levels of certification. Twelve states required a bachelor's degree plus a specific number of hours and areas of coursework. Cutts (1955) stressed, however, that the specification of additional hours of coursework made the bachelor's requirement confusing since the additional hours often represented the equivalent of a master's degree and in two cases, of a doctorate. Experience requirements were also included in some state regulations. Thirteen states required teaching certificates and in seven states teaching experience was also a necessity. Seven states demanded experience in psychology.
At the time of the Thayer Conference, many states had established certification standards. In spite of these advances, however, over one half the states had not instituted certification requirements and there was little continuity among the states which had adopted such regulations. Consequently, the Thayer Conference recommended that the states be urged to develop certification standards for school psychologists. In addition, it encouraged states to establish reciprocity agreements. Finally, the Conference recommended that a sanctioned APA committee develop specific, model standards for states to use as a guide.

The proposals (APA, 1963) for certification were developed by the Division 16 Committee on Training Standards and Certification and eventually published in 1963. The Committee recommended three levels of certification: full certification, provisional certification, and psychological assistant. Full Certification would be granted to an individual who could "present evidence of successful completion of requirements for the doctoral degree, or 3 years of graduate work, in a school psychology program or equivalent planned sequence of study which includes all the requirements for Provisional Certification . . ." (APA, 1963, p. 713). Provisional Certification would be granted following "successful completion of an approved college or university program consisting of at least 2 academic years in graduate courses, and the recommendation of the preparing institution, or equivalent training and qualifications as determined by the authorized state certification agency" (APA, 1963, p. 713). Coursework was to be taken in five content areas: psychological foundations, psychological methods and techniques,
educational foundations, school organization and program, as well as related elective areas. In addition, one semester of fulltime field experience was recommended for both the full and provisional certificates. Recommendations for certification of a psychological assistant were also developed. The proposal stated (APA, 1963, p. 714), "A certificate authorizing service only under the supervision of a certified school psychologist employed by the same school district may be granted if the applicant for a certificate presents 1-1/2 academic years of graduate credit acceptable in meeting the requirements for a school psychologist's certificate, and evidence of enrollment in an approved college or university program for the preparation of school psychologists." In addition, the individual was to take courses in the content areas listed above and participate in a 350 clock hour externship or the equivalent. As these proposed certification standards indicated, the professional organization was attempting to provide organized, comprehensive guidelines for the purpose of upgrading school psychological services across the United States and to increase continuity among the states.

By 1960, 23 states and the District of Columbia had adopted standards (Hodges, 1960). Eighteen states incorporated the title "school psychologist" in at least one level of certification. With regard to degree requirements, four states required the Ph.D. for their highest level of certification, while 18 states and the District of Columbia required a master's degree or the equivalent. Eight states also required at least a nine-month, fulltime internship. Twelve states required a teaching certificate, and 10 of these states also required
teaching experience. Twenty states included specific or general course requirements in their standards. The two most common content areas were psychometric techniques and theoretical foundations of psychology.

By the time of Nelson's (1963) survey, 13 additional states certified school psychologists. Of the 37 states and the District of Columbia, 22 required at least a master's degree for their lowest level of certification, five other states did not specify a master's degree but required the hourly equivalent, and nine states required the doctorate for their highest level of certification. Levels of certification also continued to vary. Three states had adopted four levels of certification, 22 states had two levels and 11 states had one level. Nelson (1963) did note, however, that the states which had recently developed certification standards had included two levels. In addition, states were choosing to eliminate the teaching certificate and teaching experience requirements. Nelson (1963) found that only seven states required the possession of a teaching certificate and three states required two years of teaching experience. A larger number of states were, however, requiring school or clinical field experience, even for their lowest level of certification.

Thus, in the early sixties, several trends were evident. First, more states were rapidly developing certification standards. Secondly, more training was being required for certification at all levels. Thirdly, more emphasis was being placed on experience in psychology rather than on the possession of a teaching certificate or previous teaching experience.
By the mid-sixties (Gross, Bonham, & Bluestein, 1966), 13 states still had not adopted certification standards. Several states were, however, upgrading their minimal requirements for entry into the profession. Of the 37 certifying agencies surveyed, 33 states required the master's degree or at least two years of graduate training for the lower level certificate. Traxler's (1967) survey provided similar results.

A survey conducted in the early seventies (Graff & Clair, 1973) indicated that 41 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam certified school psychologists. Twenty states certified one level, 16 states certified two levels, and five states certified three levels. The authors noted that seven states had recently increased their certification levels. Six states moved from a unilevel to a bilevel system, while one state moved from a bilevel to a trilevel system. Most of the states which certified at one level required at least a master's degree, though one state did require the doctorate and four required a bachelor's degree with additional graduate coursework. Among the 16 states which had adopted a bilevel system, 14 required a minimum of a master's degree at the lower level and two required a bachelor's degree plus additional hours of coursework. The upper level certification requirements were more varied. Seven states required the doctorate, seven required a master's degree, and two required a specialist's degree. Among the five states that possessed a trilevel system, three required a master's at the lowest level and two required a bachelor's degree with additional coursework. At the intermediate level, four states required a master's degree, while one required a specialist's degree.
All five states required a doctorate at the highest level of certification. Over half the states also included either specific or general areas of coursework in their standards. Most emphasized courses in testing, assessment, counseling, and research. Plus, 37 of the 41 states specified the need for some practicum and/or internship experience. Seven states required a teaching certificate but only three states demanded actual teaching experience.

The most recent research was conducted by Brown (1979b). Currently 48 states and the District of Columbia certify school psychologists. New Mexico and Missouri are the only states lacking standards. At the present time, the states continue to certify school psychologists at various levels. Two states have adopted a four-level system. Ten states have a trilevel system. Twelve states have a bilevel system, and 26 states certify one level of school psychologists. Six states continue to require the possession of a teaching certificate or teaching experience. With regard to degree requirements, 26 states now require a specialist degree for entry into school psychology, one state requires the doctorate at the entry level. Only four states allow an individual with sub-master's training to be certified at any level. Brown (1979b) noted that of the nine states which had recently adopted regulations, six had established a unilevel system. Thirty-nine states now have some practicum or internship provisions.

In summary, all but two states have developed credentialing standards for school psychologists. While many states have adopted multilevel systems, states recently developing standards have opted for a unilevel system. A review of the history of the credentialing process
indicated that the certification requirements have been gradually upgraded. While most early requirements allowed for certification at the master's and sub-master's levels, recent standards require post-master's, specialist training for individuals to be fully certified as school psychologists. Finally, while the teaching certificate and/or teaching experience requirements have been generally eliminated, the majority of states now demand some degree of field experience for certification.

Educator Expectations Regarding the Role and Function of School Psychologists

Because psychologists function in the school setting, it is crucial to determine the services educators expect the school psychologist to deliver and the roles in which the school psychologist is expected to be competent.

Several studies have investigated teacher perceptions of a school psychologist's role, function and qualifications. Gilmore and Chandy (1973b) interviewed 33 teachers regarding their perceptions of school psychologists. The results indicated that the teachers expected school psychologists to be more expert than the teacher in knowledge of emotional development and to conduct individual child studies. When Ford and Migles (1979) surveyed 57 teachers, they concluded that teachers prefer services which are "direct and immediate in benefit, remedial, and nonintrusive" (p. 377) such as screening students for special education placement, psychodiagnostic testing, individual counseling, and remedial case consultation. Using a similar technique with teachers, guidance counselors, and principals, Waters (1973) found
that these school personnel perceived consultation with counselors, teachers, and principals and child study to be the two major roles of the school psychologist. Roberts (1970) analyzed the expectations of teachers and school psychologists. Both groups viewed the roles of psychometrist and diagnostician as important. In addition, while school psychologists felt less emphasis on these roles was desirable, teachers felt more emphasis should be placed on individual testing. Both groups also felt the role of consultant was important; however, the teachers indicated that not enough of the school psychologist's time was currently being spent in consultation with the teacher. Teachers and school psychologists agreed that the school psychologist has little time to serve as a mental hygienist, researcher, therapist, or educational programmer; however, teachers expressed an interest in seeing the school psychologists devote more time to these roles.

Additional studies have investigated the perceptions of other educators. Gilmore and Chandy (1973a) found principals and psychologists viewed the psychologist as more of a consultant than teachers, whereas teachers tended to view the school psychologist in the role of the tester. Cook and Patterson (1977) focused solely on the perceptions of school psychologists. The 31 school psychologists surveyed indicated that in ideal circumstances they would devote most of their time to consultation. In reality, however, most of their time was spent assessing individual children. Lesiak and Lounsbury (1977) investigated the expectations of principals and psychological supervisors. Both groups viewed the school psychologist as a generalist who was capable of performing numerous functions; however, both also rated individual child
study and teacher consultation as extremely important functions. Kaplan, Chrin, and Clancy (1977) found superintendents had similar expectations.

In summary, while school psychologists are expected to have expertise in a variety of roles, school personnel, including the school psychologists themselves, view individual child study and teacher consultation as the primary services that the school psychologist provides to the schools.

Psychological Referrals

Initiation of child study or consultation by the school psychologist is usually precipitated by a referral from the classroom teacher. Nicholson (1967) found that 73% of the referrals received by Ohio school psychologists were from teachers. In Hyde's (1975) study, 89% of the referrals were initiated by teachers.

Several studies have also investigated the types of problems that teachers typically refer to school psychologists. In a survey of four metropolitan child guidance centers, Gilbert (1957) found the reasons for referrals could be classified into four broad categories: intellectual deficiencies, emotional and interpersonal maladjustments, specific behavior problems, and miscellaneous reasons such as need for general educational planning or severe psychiatric difficulties. The majority (45%) of the referrals, however, were due to academic difficulties.

Rice (1963) investigated the reasons children were referred to a California school district's central guidance agency. Of the 283 referrals surveyed, six problems were most frequently cited by the referring teachers: emotional reactions, intellectual disabilities,
motivational inadequacy, moral defect, physical ailments, and social maladjustments. Further investigation revealed that primary elementary children were typically referred as a result of intellectual/academic difficulties. Even though students at the intermediate elementary and junior high school level continued to be referred for intellectual/academic problems, they were also likely to be referred for social adjustment difficulties such as family conflicts. At the high school level, motivational and attitudinal concerns became more apparent.

In general, intellectual/academic difficulties were the major reason that teachers of all grades referred students, followed by social adjustment problems, and moral problems. They were less likely to refer a child for motivational, physical, or emotional difficulties.

Nicholson (1967) surveyed the reasons for referrals in 59 school districts in Ohio. He found the referral problems could be categorized into seven areas: academic difficulties, class placement, emotional reactions, behavior problems, moral problems, family and home problems, and physical problems. The results indicated that 81% of the referrals were made by elementary teachers. The most common reasons for referrals at all grade levels and specifically at the elementary level were academic difficulties, classroom placement, emotional reactions, and behavior problems. Academic difficulties and class placement concerns constituted the reasons for over 70% of the referrals. Only 6% of the children were referred for moral, physical or family problems.

Hyde (1975) investigated the type of referrals received by inner city schools. Similar to Nicholson (1967), she found that 83% of the referrals were made by elementary teachers. Considering all the
children referred from grades K-12, over 57% were referred due to academic difficulties. Referrals resulting from academic difficulties could be divided into two major categories: suspected mental retardation (EMR) and suspected learning disabilities (LD). Over 30% of the students were referred due to emotional problems. Emotional problems could entail either withdrawal or disruptive, acting-out behaviors. The remaining 12% of the students were referred as a result of both emotional and academic problems.

In summary, approximately 4/5 of the children seen by school psychologists are elementary students who are referred by their teachers. A review of the literature suggested that these children are referred for five major reasons: general learning or reading difficulties, special class placement as a result of a learning disability or mental retardation, emotional reactions and behavior problems.

**Psychological Report Writing Research**

Written reports are frequently described as the major vehicles psychologists use to communicate with school personnel regarding referral questions (Erwin & Cannon, 1973; Rucker, 1971a; and Shively & Smith, 1969). Reports enable psychologists to provide a lasting record of interpreted test results, summarize any previous consultation sessions with teachers that have influenced their findings, and furnish specific recommendations for the staff to implement. Baker (1965) surveyed elementary teachers, guidance counselors, and elementary/secondary administrators. The results of the survey indicated that the quality of communication that occurred with the psychologist, the degree to which the teacher was an integral part of the problem-solving process,
and the clarity and relevance of the psychological report and recommendations influenced the teachers' rating of the school psychologist's effectiveness. While guidance counselors and administrators focused on similar factors, they actually rated the school psychologists' ability to communicate, to consult with them, and to write reports with relevant recommendations as more satisfactory than the teachers. Thus, psychological report writing is viewed by school personnel with whom the school psychologist interacts as a very crucial skill for the school psychologist to possess.

Several investigators have analyzed factors which influence consumers' satisfaction with psychological reports. The early research focused primarily on clinical reports. Thus, the consumers were usually psychiatrists, social workers, and other clinical psychologists in hospitals and clinics. Psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers at a VA hospital were asked to rate 16 psychological reports (Garfield, Heine, & Leventhal, 1954). In general, the reports were rated most highly by social workers and most critically by psychiatrists. All three groups criticized the reports' lack of specific behavioral referents, lack of clarity of expression, use of technical jargon, poor organization, lack of clear and coherent integration of the findings, and overspeculation. Thus, the authors concluded, "...it appears that if psychological test reports are to be more useful they should be as concise as possible, avoid generalities and the use of technical jargon, give supporting data for certain kinds of inferences, avoid 'speculative dynamics,' and try to give a portrayal of a specific individual using behavioral terms wherever possible" (1954, p. 286).
Cuadra and Albaugh (1956) analyzed psychology trainees', staff psychologists', social workers', psychiatrists', graduate nurses', and student nurses' ratings of psychological reports written by the psychology trainees. The results indicated that the various groups understood approximately 50% of the concepts being communicated in the reports. The lack of agreement among the judges was frequently due to the use of general, vague terminology. Thus, the authors recommended the use of more explicit terminology and a more specific statement regarding the reason for the referral.

Tallent and Reiss (1959a, b, & c) conducted an extensive investigation of clinical psychological reports. In the first study (Tallent & Reiss, 1959a), 43 psychiatrists, 46 psychiatric social workers, and 71 clinical psychologists employed by the Veteran's Administration responded to a questionnaire regarding the content they felt should be included in a psychological report. An analysis of their responses indicated considerable variation across the three groups. For example, psychiatrists and social workers wanted the I.Q. included while the psychologists did not want to report it. In contrast, psychologists believed they should include treatment recommendations while social workers and psychiatrists were less concerned with this type of information. In the second study (Tallent & Reiss, 1959b), a larger, more detailed investigation of desired content was conducted. All three groups indicated that clinical reports should contain specific descriptive data of the patient's behavior, appearance, and verbalizations, that clearly labeled speculative information was also appropriate, and that social/medical information should not be included in the
psychological reports. With regard to writing style, all three groups favored a descriptive, factual style rather than a literary style. In general, psychologists preferred to interpret the data, while psychiatrists preferred to receive raw, uninterpreted data. The third study (Tallent & Reiss, 1959c) focused on a variety of specific problems associated with clinical psychological reports. The psychiatrists criticized the reports for being too speculative, using inappropriate technical jargon, lack of clarity, and excessive length. Psychologists criticized the reports for their lack of specificity, excessive length, lack of clarity, and general failure to include useful, practical information. Social workers reiterated these criticisms.

Moore, Boblitt, and Wildman (1968) also analyzed psychiatrists' reactions to psychological reports. The results indicated that psychiatrists did not utilize most psychological reports they were given. The psychiatrists also noted that even if the format and content of the reports were altered they would still not find them useful. Thus, the authors concluded the psychiatrists' attitude toward psychology rather than the structure and content of the reports was the main factor inhibiting the reports' utility.

Affleck and Strider (1971) analyzed the extent to which psychological reports provided information that significantly affected patient management in a hospital setting. The data were based on the ratings of the referral sources, the psychiatric residents. The results indicated that approximately 2/3 of the reports provided new, significant data or at least provided data which confirmed existing hypotheses. Furthermore, over 50% of the reports influenced patient management.
Lacey and Ross (1964) investigated the utility of psychological reports in child guidance clinics. The psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers in their study agreed that psychological reports should contain descriptive, specific behavioral information, be written in a factual, non-literary style, and avoid the inclusion of medical and social data. These results are similar to those of the Tallent and Reiss studies (1959a, b, & c). In contrast, however, the three groups of professionals in this study tended to favor the inclusion of specific treatment recommendations.

Recent studies have investigated the attitudes toward psychological reports written by school psychologists. Most of the studies focused on teacher attitudes and preferences since they are the primary consumers of the reports. Mussman (1964) found teachers desired concrete recommendations and specific behavioral observations. Rucker (1967a and b) found that elementary teachers preferred reports which avoided technical language, provided clear and concise interpretations of test data, and contained supportive evidence for any inferences. In addition, teachers were influenced by the organization and length of the report. Reports which provided the necessary information in an organized manner were rated more highly. The most important variables, however, were the recommendations given by the school psychologists. Teachers preferred recommendations which were practical, realistic, new, and specific to the child.

Shively and Smith (1969) selected 30 words and phrases which were frequently included in psychological reports and that were technical in nature or potentially ambiguous. Subjects included elementary and
junior high school teachers, junior and senior high school counselors, and undergraduate education majors. They were given a multiple choice test and asked to select the correct definition for each of the 30 words and phrases. The results indicated that the three groups correctly defined an average of 16 words. Counselors experienced the most success and students the least.

In a recent study, Isett and Roszkowski (1979) analyzed the preferences of the staff at a residential school and center for the mentally retarded. Staff members included art therapists, teachers, social workers, nurses, case managers, and speech and hearing specialists. The results indicated that behavior management recommendations were viewed as the most valuable information included in the report. In addition, information regarding the child's social skills was also viewed as important. The staff placed less emphasis on the results of intelligence and personality testing.

The results of these studies indicate that psychological reports are not always highly valued by consumers. They are frequently criticized for being speculative, vague, too general, overendowed with technical jargon, and lacking integration. While these criticisms have remained fairly consistent across groups of consumers, some differences in consumer preferences are evident. Medical consumers such as psychiatrists and social workers prefer to receive raw data and specific behavioral information so they can formulate their own treatment plans. In contrast, school personnel such as teachers and counselors prefer to receive specific treatment recommendations that are practical and realistic.
Numerous authors have provided guidelines for clinical report writing (Foster, 1951; Hammond & Allen, 1953; Hollis & Donn, 1979; Huber, 1968; and Klopfer, 1967), and school psychological report writing (Handler, Gerston, & Handler, 1965; Keogh, 1972; Reger, 1965; Rogers, 1972; Rogers, 1977; Tallent, 1980; White & Harris, 1961; and Valett, 1963). The purpose of these guidelines is to increase the probability that the psychologist's primary purpose for writing the reports will be achieved—to communicate to the reader information about a particular child. An analysis of their suggestions indicated that several commonalities exist. Furthermore, these suggested tips and techniques can be divided into three major categories: those dealing with language and format, those dealing with content, and those dealing with recommendations.

There are several recommendations regarding language and format. The authors generally emphasize the importance of avoiding unexplained technical jargon. While technical terminology may be useful, it can easily be misunderstood as the Shively and Smith (1969) study illustrated. Secondly, writers are encouraged to select words and phrases which convey information clearly and concisely. Superfluous and flowery words, inappropriate referents, incomplete phrases, and vague terms inhibit understanding. The reader is best informed in unambiguous, accurate language which highlights significant ideas while being grammatically correct. Format is also emphasized. The length of the report generally depends on the purpose of the report and the complexity of the case. Thus, the report must be of sufficient length to address the referral question accurately and fully without being redundant.
Generally, the recommended format is as follows: reason for referral, background information, test behavior, test results, and summary and recommendations. The format should allow the psychologist to integrate all the relevant details of the case and then culminate the discussion with practical, useful recommendations.

Numerous recommendations are also offered regarding the type of information to be contained in the psychological report. The information should be relevant. Inclusion of minor, irrelevant details inhibits communication. In other words, the background information, behavioral observations, and test results should be meaningful. All data which are included should focus on the referral question. Secondly, information included in the report should be interpreted. Raw data alone is useless. It is important, however, for the writer to clearly identify factual information from interpretive, subjective information and to support all interpretive conclusions with factual information. Fourthly, the information should clearly delineate the particular child, thus avoiding the "all reports look alike" syndrome. Finally, while the child's strengths and weaknesses are to be delineated, less emphasis should be placed on the child's disabilities and more emphasis placed on what s/he can accomplish.

In addition, the authors emphasize the importance of providing school personnel with useful and realistic recommendations. Recommendations should be individualized for a specific child and reflect his/her strengths and weaknesses. Consideration should also be given to the teacher's knowledge, skills, and time constraints, as well as any existing spatial and material limitations. Finally, recommendations
should be expressed clearly and concisely.

The goal of a school psychologist's report is to facilitate a child's educational planning by providing specific, prescriptive recommendations based on pertinent, comprehensive, diagnostic information. As Tallent (1980) emphasized, "A carefully thought-out and well written report can do much to improve the education and the life of the child who is the subject of the report; a poorly conceived report can hinder the process and have far-reaching negative consequences for the child" (p. 3).

In summary, psychological reports are an important channel through which school psychologists communicate with school personnel. Consequently, report writing is not only a critical skill for school psychologists to possess, but it is also a factor in determining the degree to which school personnel are satisfied with the school psychologist's services.

Summary

The research indicates that psychologists have been functioning in the schools since the turn of the century. Formal certification and training standards are, however, relatively recent developments. Trend analysis reveals that state departments and training institutions have been rapidly upgrading the profession. Most school psychologists are now graduates of sixth-year, specialist programs. The two major organizations which represent school psychologists nationally, NASP and APA, currently disagree over the required entry level. NASP argues for a sub-doctoral, sixth-year entry level while APA espouses the doctoral entry level. Little research has been conducted, however, which compares the skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists.
Finally, research indicates that school psychologists engage in two major functions, assessment and consultation, and that the primary means of communicating assessment and consultation results to teachers is via the psychological report. Thus, one crucial area in which doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists should be compared is that of psychological report writing.

**Purpose of the Study**

One issue facing school psychologists is the level at which an individual is qualified to enter the profession of school psychology. The purpose of this study is to provide concrete data relevant to this entry level issue. Currently, little research is available that compares the skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists. In spite of the paucity of data, the two professional organizations which represent school psychologists, APA and NASP, have adopted very firm, opposing viewpoints. This study, therefore, is designed to contribute some data to this professional issue by comparing the psychological report writing skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists in three areas: language/format, content, and type of recommendations. Five categories of reports will be used based on the five reasons teachers typically refer elementary children to a school psychologist: possible learning disability, possible mental retardation, reading problem, behavior problem, and emotional difficulty.

**Hypotheses**

1. There are no statistically significant differences \( p < .05 \) in the evaluation of the general report writing skills of doctoral school
psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists in five types of reports as rated by a panel of professional experts.

2. There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the language and format used in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.

3. There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the information contained in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.

4. There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the recommendations included in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The current chapter is divided into five sections. The first section describes the subjects of the study. The raters are described in the second section. The third section discusses the instrument used in the study and the initial pilot study. The procedures of this study are delineated in the fourth section. The last section details the statistical methods used to analyze the data.

Subjects

Initially, 50 Ohio school psychologists were randomly selected to participate in this study. Twenty-five had earned a doctoral degree and 25 had earned a master's or specialist degree. Each school psychologist received a letter from the investigator requesting their participation (see Appendix A). Those individuals who did not respond received a follow-up letter and telephone call from the investigator (see Appendix B). If these school psychologists were still not willing to participate, additional school psychologists were randomly selected and these procedures were repeated. Sixty-seven school psychologists were eventually contacted.

The final sample consisted of 27 school psychologists. Fourteen had earned a doctorate and 13 had earned a specialist degree. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the training and experience of the doctoral school psychologists. Ten had specialized in school psychology. Three had worked as school psychologists for at least 15 years while six had
Table 1
Training and Experience of 14 Doctoral School Psychologists
Who Submitted Psychological Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Specialization</th>
<th>Year of Graduation</th>
<th>Years of School Psychology Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Psychology</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling &amp; Personnel Services</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 to 14 years of experience. None had less than four years of school psychological experience. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the training and experience of the non-doctoral school psychologists. The data indicate that all the non-doctoral school psychologists had earned a specialist degree. Nine had specialist degrees in school psychology. Two had more than 25 years of experience. Five had 6 to 12 years of experience, while 6 had less than 5 years of experience.

Raters

A panel of six professional educators, comprised of two elementary principals, two elementary guidance counselors, and two elementary teachers, was selected to rate the psychological reports.

To obtain the raters, the investigator contacted central office administrators in six local school districts. Each administrator was asked to recommend a teacher, guidance counselor or principal who was a member of at least one professional organization, had a master's degree, had four or more years of experience in his or her current educational position, and had had contact with school psychological services. The investigator then contacted each potential rater by telephone to ascertain their willingness to participate. All six raters who were recommended by the central office administrators met the qualifications and agreed to participate.

Instrumentation

An 18-item rating form was developed by the investigator for use in this study (see Appendix C). Raters responded to each question using a 5-point Likert-type scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5). The 18 items
Table 2

Training and Experience of 13 Non-Doctoral School Psychologists Who Submitted Psychological Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Specialization</th>
<th>Year of Graduation</th>
<th>Years of School Psychology Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Personnel</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Environment</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
focused on three skill areas: Language/Format, Content, and Recommendations. Six questions pertained to the terminology used in the report, six referred to the type of information contained in the report and six focused on the recommendations made in the report.

To determine the best arrangement for the 18 questions, two formats were developed. In one format, the 18 questions were listed in random succession. In the other format, the 18 questions were grouped categorically according to the three skill areas to which they pertained and then labeled with the appropriate heading: Language/Format, Content, or Recommendations.

The nine school psychology interns in the intern seminar at The Ohio State University were asked to read two psychological reports and rate them with the two formats of the rating form. Report A was rated with the form on which the questions were grouped categorically. Report B was rated with the form on which the questions were listed in random succession. Half the interns read and rated Report A first, while half read and rated Report B first.

The results indicated that the successive format produced more consistent responses among the interns. Using the Kuder-Richardson 20, the reliability estimate for the successive format was .720, while the reliability estimate for the categorical format was .088. Consequently, the successive format was selected for use in this study.

Procedures

Each randomly selected school psychologist was asked in a letter to submit two psychological reports to the investigator (see Appendix A). The reports were to meet the following criteria: a) be a response to a
referral which described one of five possible types of disabilities; b) be written within the last year; and c) be based on the evaluation of an elementary (K-6) child who was referred by a teacher. The five possible types of disabilities were as follows: learning disability, mental retardation, reading problem, behavior problem, or emotional difficulty. Each school psychologist was also asked to complete four questions included on an enclosed card (see Appendix D). In addition, each card was coded according to the type of report being requested.

Fifty reports met these initial criteria. The investigator and another school psychologist independently coded the reports according to the type of disability in order to verify the original coded request. Of the 50 reports, 25 were written by doctoral school psychologists and 25 by specialist degree school psychologists. In addition, the reports were evenly divided among the five disability categories: learning disability, mental retardation, reading problem, behavior problem, and emotional difficulty.

The reports were randomly assigned to one rater in each of the three rater groups. Thus, each report was read by three raters: a principal, a guidance counselor, and a teacher.

Each rater was given a packet of material containing 25 psychological reports, 25 answer sheets, and 25 rating forms. The raters were instructed to rate each psychological report using the rating form. All the raters were paid for their services.

Data Analysis

A 2 x 5 analysis of variance was conducted to determine any significant differences (p < .05) in educators' ratings of the following
report writing variables: general writing skills, language and format, content, and recommendations. Tukey's HSD procedure was used to make post hoc multiple comparisons to determine specific areas of significance. The data were analyzed using the SPSS computer program.

The responses to the eight negative items on the rating scale were recoded during the analysis. This procedure enabled all statements and responses to be analyzed in a similar, positive manner.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

The results from this study will be described in this chapter. The findings will be presented in six sections. The first section will present a general analysis of the raters' responses based on frequency data. The second section will present the results relevant to Hypothesis 1 which investigated whether there were any overall differences in educator ratings of the school psychologists' report writing skills as a function of the school psychologists' degree and the type of report. The third section will present Hypothesis 2 which focused on differences in the ratings of the language and format used in the reports as a result of degree and type of report. Section four will present data relevant to Hypothesis 3 which focused on differences in the ratings of the content of the reports as a result of the two independent variables. Section five will present data pertinent to Hypothesis 4 which investigated differences in the ratings of the recommendations included in the reports as a function of degree and type of report. Section six will present data relevant to the consistency of the raters' responses.

General Findings from Frequency Analysis

The six educators' ratings of the psychological reports were reviewed to determine the educators' general view of school
psychologists' reports. Each of the 18 items on the rating scale was reviewed individually. The percentage of raters who selected each of the five points on the Likert scale served as the basis for this overview.

Table 3 shows the six items which received the most positive ratings, while Table 4 shows the six items which received the most negative ratings. Table 3 reveals that the percentage of ratings in the strongly agree and agree categories ranged from 72.0 to 85.3. The items requested the raters' opinions about the clarity of the reason for the referral, length of the report, availability of pertinent background information, and degree to which hypotheses, inferences, and recommendations were based on the test data and informal observations. Table 4 reveals that the percentage of ratings in the disagree and strongly disagree categories ranged from 26.0 to 40.7. These items reflected the raters' opinions about the clarity of test score interpretations and treatment recommendations, the degree the report reflected the child's specific difficulties, the practical nature of the recommendations, and the use of technical jargon.

Hypothesis 1

There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the general report writing skills of doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists in five types of reports as rated by a panel of professional experts.

Table 5 summarizes the results of the $2 \times 5$ analysis of variance based on the two main variables: degree and type of report. The analysis summated 18 ratings of each report. The $F$ value for the main
Table 3

Six Items with Highest Percentage of Positive Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage of Ratings Above 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The report clearly delineates the reason for the referral.</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The report is not too brief to adequately address the referral problem.</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The recommendations are based on test data and/or informal observations.</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The report is not too lengthy.</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The report summarizes pertinent background information.</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The hypotheses and inferences are substantiated with formal test data and/or informal observations.</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Six Items with Highest Percentage of Negative Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage of Ratings Below 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The report uses technical jargon.</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Test scores are clearly interpreted by the psychologist.</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The recommendations focus on the child's individual needs.</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The recommendations are clearly and concisely stated.</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The recommendations are practical and can be implemented in the schools.</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The information in the report addresses the child's specific difficulties.</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5
Analysis of Variance of Educators' Overall Ratings by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>507.84</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>586.44</td>
<td>3.89**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>359.02</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>150.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01
variable of degree was 3.37 and did not reach the .05 level of significance. The $F$ ratio for the main variable of report type was 3.89, which was significant at the .01 level. Further analysis of possible two-way interaction between degree and type of report revealed that the interaction effect was not significant.

Table 6 presents the means and standard deviations of the overall ratings by type of report. The report type main effect proved significant and post hoc multiple comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure. The mean rating of the mentally retarded (MR) reports was significantly more positive than the rating of the learning disabled (LD) reports and the reading problem (RP) reports ($p < .05$).

Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations of the overall ratings by degree and type of report. The two-way interaction effect showed a trend toward significance ($p = .054$). Thus, exploratory post hoc comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure. The mean rating of the reports which focused on children with emotional difficulties (ED) written by school psychologists with a specialist degree was significantly more positive than the mean rating of ED reports written by school psychologists with a doctoral degree ($p < .05$). The comparisons also indicated that a significant difference existed between the mean ratings of MR and RP reports written by doctoral school psychologists ($p < .05$). The mean rating of the MR reports was significantly more positive. Finally, the mean rating of MR reports written by doctoral school psychologists was significantly more positive than the mean rating of ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists ($p < .05$).
Table 6
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators'
Overall Ratings by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>46.27</td>
<td>13.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>37.13</td>
<td>11.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>48.90</td>
<td>13.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>44.43</td>
<td>11.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>42.67</td>
<td>11.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Overall Ratings by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>LD Means</th>
<th>LD SD</th>
<th>MR Means</th>
<th>MR SD</th>
<th>RP Means</th>
<th>RP SD</th>
<th>ED Means</th>
<th>ED SD</th>
<th>BP Means</th>
<th>BP SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td>14.36</td>
<td>39.40</td>
<td>13.43</td>
<td>46.60</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>37.20</td>
<td>7.99</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>13.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>47.53</td>
<td>13.76</td>
<td>34.87</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>51.20</td>
<td>14.62</td>
<td>51.67</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>10.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 2

There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the language and format used in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.

Table 8 summarizes the results of the analysis of variance of the two main variables: degree and type of report. The analysis utilized the summated ratings of the six language and format items on the rating form. As the figures indicate, the $F$ ratio for the main variable of degree was 2.74. This ratio did not reach the acceptable .05 level of significance. The $F$ value for the main variable of report type was 3.63, which was significant at the .01 level. Additional analysis of the two-way interaction between degree and type of report did not prove significant.

Table 9 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of language and format by type of report. The report type main effect proved significant and post hoc multiple comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results revealed that the mean rating of MR reports was significantly more positive than the mean rating of RP reports ($p < .05$).

The six language questions on the rating scale were analyzed individually. The only significant item was Question 13 which asked whether the report was too lengthy. Table 10 summarizes the analysis of variance. As the figures indicate, the $F$ ratio for the main variable of degree was .01, which did not reach the accepted .05 level of
Table 8

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Language and Format by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43.31</td>
<td>3.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.17</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>140</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>149</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

**p < .01
Table 9
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Language and Format by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>13.23</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>16.43</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>14.93</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>14.37</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 13
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>2.70*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Way Interaction:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
significance. The \( F \) value for the main variable of report type was 2.70, which was significant at the .05 level. Additional analysis of the two-way interaction between degree and type of report did not prove significant.

Table 11 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 13 by type of report. Post hoc multiple comparisons of the means were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results revealed that the mean rating of reports which focused on a child with a behavior problem (BP) was significantly more positive than the mean rating of the RP reports \( (p < .05) \).

**Hypothesis 3**

There are no statistically significant differences \( (p < .05) \) in the evaluation of the information contained in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.

Table 12 summarizes the results of the analysis of variance based on the two main variables: degree and type of report. The analysis utilized the summated ratings of the six content items on the rating form. As the statistics indicate, the \( F \) value for the main variable of degree was 2.85, which did not reach the accepted .05 level of significance. The \( F \) ratio for the main variable of report type was 2.67 \( (p < .05) \). Additional analysis of the two-way interaction between degree and type of report did not prove significant.

Table 13 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of content by type of report. Post hoc multiple comparisons of the means were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results
Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings
of Question 13 by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12
Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Content
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64.03</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60.14</td>
<td>2.67*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Way Interaction:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41.78</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>22.51</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

*p < .05
Table 13
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Content by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>15.73</td>
<td>5.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>14.97</td>
<td>4.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
revealed that the mean rating of MR reports was significantly more positive than the mean rating of RP reports.

Two of the six items on the rating form which focused on content proved significant. These items were Question 5 and Question 8. Question 5 asked the raters if the test scores were clearly interpreted by the psychologist. Table 14 summarizes the analysis of variance. As the figures indicate, the F ratio for the degree main effect was .88 and the F ratio for the report type main effect was 2.43. Neither ratio reached the accepted .05 level of significance. The F value for the interaction effect between degree and type of report was 2.77 which was significant at the .05 level.

Table 15 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 5 by degree and type of report. Since the interaction effect was significant (p < .05), post hoc multiple comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results revealed that there was a significant difference (p < .05) between the mean rating of ED reports written by school psychologists with a specialist degree and ED reports written by school psychologists with a doctoral degree. ED reports written by school psychologists with specialist degrees received a significantly more positive mean rating than the ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists.

Question 8 was also significant. Question 8 asked the raters to determine whether the hypotheses and inferences were substantiated with formal test data and/or informal observations. Table 16 summarizes the analysis of variance. As the figures indicate, the F ratio for the degree main effect was .91. This F ratio did not reach the
Table 14

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 5
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>2.77*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
Table 15
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Question 5
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LD</td>
<td>MR</td>
<td>RP</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>BP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 8
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>3.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Way Interaction:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
accepted .05 level of significance. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 3.10 ($p < .05$). The interaction effect did not prove significant.

Table 17 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 8 by type of report. The report type main effect was significant ($p < .05$) and post hoc multiple comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results indicated that a significant difference ($p < .05$) existed between the mean rating of MR reports and the mean ratings of both ED and BP reports. In both cases, MR reports received a significantly more positive mean rating than either the BP or ED reports ($p < .05$).

**Hypothesis 4**

There are no statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the evaluation of the recommendations included in each of the five types of reports written by doctoral school psychologists and non-doctoral school psychologists as rated by a panel of professional experts.

Table 18 summarizes the results of the analysis of variance of the two variables: degree and type of report. The analysis utilized the summated ratings of the six items on the rating form which focused on the quality of the recommendations. As the figures indicate, the $F$ ratio for the degree main effect was 2.81. This ratio did not reach the accepted .05 level of significance. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 4.26, which was significant at the .01 level. Additional analysis of the two-way interaction between degree and type of report revealed that the $F$ value was 2.40, which did not reach the
Table 17

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings
of Question 8 by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Recommendations by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>77.76</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>117.99</td>
<td>4.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Way Interaction:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.58</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>27.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01
accepted .05 level of significance.

Table 19 presents the means and standard deviations of the educators' ratings of the recommendations by type of report. Since the report type main effect was significant ($p < .01$), post hoc multiple comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure. It was found that the mean rating of the MR reports was significantly more positive than the mean rating of either the LD or RP reports ($p < .05$).

Table 20 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of the recommendations by degree and type of report. The two-way interaction showed a trend toward significance ($p = .053$). Thus, exploratory post hoc comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results indicated that the mean rating of MR reports written by doctoral school psychologists was significantly more positive than the mean ratings of LD, RP, and ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists ($p < .05$).

The six questions which focused on the recommendations included in the reports were analyzed separately. Four questions provided significant information. Question 6 asked the raters whether the recommendations adequately addressed the referral problem. Table 21 summarizes the analysis of variance of Question 6. The results indicated that the $F$ ratio for the degree main effect was 6.95, which was significant at the .01 level. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 4.74, which was significant at the .001 level. The $F$ ratio for the two-way interaction effect was 2.58, which was significant at the .05 level.
Table 19
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Recommendations by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>6.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>16.73</td>
<td>6.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>14.80</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>5.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings
of Recommendations by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>MR</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>BP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>15.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>16.73</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>10.60</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>17.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21
Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 6 by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
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<th>F</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>6.95**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>4.74***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>2.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05  
**p < .01  
***p < .001
Table 22 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 6 by degree and type of report. Because the interaction was disordinal, only the interaction effect was analyzed. The post hoc multiple comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean rating of ED reports written by specialist school psychologists and the mean rating of ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists ($p < .05$). The ED reports written by the specialist school psychologists received the more positive mean rating. In addition, there was a significant difference between the mean rating of MR reports written by doctoral school psychologists and the mean ratings of ED, RP, and LD reports written by doctoral school psychologists ($p < .05$). In all three comparisons, the MR reports received the more positive mean rating on Question 6.

Question 12 also provided statistically significant information. Question 12 asked the raters to determine whether the recommendations provided in the report were realistic for the subject of the report. Table 23 summarizes the analysis of variance. As the figures indicate, the $F$ ratio for the degree main effect was 2.40. This ratio did not reach the accepted .05 level of significance. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 3.04, which was significant at the .05 level. The $F$ ratio for the two-way interaction between degree and type of report was 1.13. The ratio did not reach the accepted .05 level of significance.

Table 24 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 12 by type of report. The report type main effect
### Table 22

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Question 6 by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>MR</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>BP</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23
Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings
of Question 12 by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>3.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>140</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
Table 24
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings of Question 12 by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was significant ($p < .05$) and post hoc multiple comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure. The results indicated that the mean rating of MR reports for Question 12 was significantly more positive than the mean rating of RP reports ($p < .05$).

Responses to Question 15 were also statistically significant. Question 15 asked raters whether the recommendations were clearly and concisely stated. Table 25 summarizes the analysis of variance. The $F$ ratio for the degree main effect was .35, which was not significant at the .05 level. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 2.96. This ratio was significant at the .05 level. The $F$ ratio for the two-way interaction between degree and type of report was 1.28. This ratio did not prove significant.

Table 26 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 15 by type of report. Post hoc multiple comparisons were performed using Tukey's HSD procedure; however, no statistically significant differences were found.

Question 18 asked the raters whether the recommendations focused on the individual child's needs. Table 27 summarizes the analysis of variance. The $F$ ratio for the degree main effect was 2.36, which did not reach the accepted .05 level of significance. The $F$ value for the report type main effect was 3.82. This value was significant at the .01 level. The $F$ value for the two-way interaction was 2.32, which was not statistically significant.

Table 28 presents the means and standard deviations of educators' ratings of Question 18 by type of report. The report type main effect was significant and post hoc multiple comparisons were made using
Table 25
Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 15 by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
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<td>Main Effects:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>2.96*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Way Interaction:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
Table 26
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings
of Question 15 by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 27

Analysis of Variance of Educators' Ratings of Question 18
by Degree and Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Effects:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>3.82**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Way Interaction:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree x Report Type</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01
Table 28
Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Ratings
of Question 18 by Type of Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tukey's HSD procedure. The results indicated that the mean rating of MR reports on Question 18 was significantly more positive than the mean rating of LD reports ($p < .05$).

Consistency of Rater Responses

The raters' responses to each item for each report were correlated using Cronbach's alpha to determine the overall correlation for each of the 50 reports. Table 29 presents the average correlation among the raters' responses to each item for each of the 50 psychological reports. The results indicated that the raters' responses were generally consistent. The average correlation for the 50 reports was .71. The correlations ranged from -1.76 to .98. Only 4 of the 50 correlations were negative. When these four correlations were removed from the calculations, the average correlation among the raters' responses was .85.
Table 29

Correlation Among Raters' Responses to 50 Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the results of this study and possible factors which contributed to these findings. Following this discussion the limitations of the study and the implications of the study to the profession of school psychology are presented. A final section suggests some topics for future research.

School psychologists are currently debating the level at which an individual is qualified to enter the profession of school psychology. The purpose of this study was to provide concrete data relevant to the doctoral/non-doctoral entry level issue. Currently, little research has been conducted that compares the skills of non-doctoral and doctoral school psychologists. This study focused on one skill area, psychological report writing. It was designed to determine whether any differences existed in the psychological report writing of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists in three major areas: language and format, content, and recommendations. Fifty psychological reports written by doctoral and specialist school psychologists served as the basis of this investigation. The reports addressed five major reasons that elementary children are frequently referred to school psychologists: possible learning disability, possible mental retardation, reading problem, emotional difficulty, and behavior problem. Since school psychological reports are typically written for educational
personnel, two elementary principals, two elementary guidance counselors, and two elementary teachers were selected to rate the reports.

**Overall Educator Ratings**

The six educators viewed the reports favorably. School psychologists' reports were considered to be well organized, clearly written documents which provided practical and relevant solutions to children's individual difficulties. Furthermore, the background information, test data, and informal observations included in the reports provided information relevant to the referral question and served as the basis for the recommended treatment plan. Thus, the school psychological reports provided very child-specific data designed to meet the needs and demands of educators.

**Degree Level**

The data revealed that there were no significant differences in educators' ratings of the 25 psychological reports written by school psychologists with specialist degrees and the 25 reports written by school psychologists with doctoral degrees.

When trends toward significance were noted, the reports written by school psychologists with specialist degrees were favored by the educators. In particular, the ED reports written by school psychologists with specialist degrees were rated better than ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists.

The raters indicated that the ED reports written by school psychologists with specialist degrees contained test scores which were more clearly interpreted. An in-depth review of the test interpretations included in the 10 ED reports suggested that doctoral school
psychologists placed more emphasis on projective testing. While doctoral school psychologists are more likely to be trained in the use of projectives, educators rarely receive training in projective analysis. As a result, the educators may have found the projective interpretations included in the ED reports written by doctoral school psychologists confusing or irrelevant.

The raters also indicated that the recommendations included in the ED reports written by specialist school psychologists more adequately addressed the referral problem. A comparison of the recommendations contained in the ED reports written by the specialist and doctoral school psychologists did not reveal any differences in the type of treatment that was suggested. There was a tendency, however, for the specialists to highlight their recommendations numerically. This organizational characteristic may have enabled the raters to more clearly identify and process the recommendations that had been provided.

Type of Report

While the degree of the school psychologist who authored the report was not significantly related to the educators' ratings of the report, the type of report was significant. The educators consistently rated MR reports better than the LD, RP, ED, and BP reports. The differences between the ratings of the MR reports and the LD and RP reports were significant.

These results may be attributed to the fact that historically mental retardation has been relatively well defined. Following a review of 10 frequently quoted definitions of mental retardation, Mercer (1973) concluded, "Intellectual subnormality and subnormal
adaptive behavior are two symptoms which appear in all these definitions" (p. 130). Since definitions of mental retardation consistently focus on an individual's level of cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior, school psychologists and educators generally agree on the characteristics of a mentally retarded child. Furthermore, subnormal intellectual functioning has been statistically defined by educators as an IQ of 79 or below (Mercer, 1973, p. 140).

In contrast, the difficulties implied by the terms learning disability, emotional difficulty, behavior problem, and reading problem have not been clearly defined by educators and psychologists. In a discussion of the characteristics of learning disabled children, Wepman, Cruickshank, Deutsch, Morency, and Strother (1975) stated:

Unfortunately, there is little agreement, either in medicine or in education on criteria for identifying children with minimal brain dysfunction or learning disabilities. Because the disabilities presented by these children are extremely heterogeneous, the search for any commonality in symptoms, pathology, or etiology has so far been fruitless. (p. 302)

Given the heterogeneity of the behaviors of children identified as learning disabled, the term has "no consistent meaning and no value as a basis for the development or the application of corrective methods" (Wepman et al., 1975, p. 303).

Similar confusion exists when the terms "emotional difficulty" and "behavior problem" are used. As Prugh, Engel, and Morse (1975) noted in a discussion of emotional and behavior difficulties in children:
Much of the confusion underlying the controversy in this area stems from the use of a variety of often imprecise terms to refer to classification by professional workers from fields ranging from clinical mental health through behavioral theory to sociology. (p. 262)

Prugh et al. (1975) also emphasized that a large number of symptoms or behaviors have been associated with these various terms. In addition, the labeling of these behaviors as being representative of an emotional or behavior problem is to a large extent dependent on the subjectivity and tolerance of the other individuals in the child's environment.

Reading problems are also poorly defined. Reading difficulties are not considered to be a special education category. Children are, however, labeled with the term. While the child's problem obviously concerns reading, the nature and degree of the difficulty may vary widely. Consequently, the child may need assistance with comprehension, word attack skills, or auditory processing.

As a result of the numerous definitions of a learning disability, emotional difficulty, behavior problem, and reading problem, there is less agreement among school psychologists and educators as to the characteristics of the children who are qualified to receive the services implicit in these labels. On the other hand, the clear and concise nature of the definition of mental retardation increases the probability that school psychologists and educators will be in accordence when determining which children qualify for these services.

The availability of a concrete, consistent definition of mental retardation also increases the probability that similar assessment
batteries will be used by school psychologists to determine whether a child qualifies for MR services. Since definitions of mental retardation refer to a child's level of intellectual functioning and degree of adaptive behavior, school psychologists include individual measures of intelligence and adaptive behavior in their assessment batteries. In contrast, the assessment instruments used to make diagnostic decisions regarding other categorical services vary more widely among school psychologists and among districts. Consequently, MR reports may be more clearly interpreted by educators due to their familiarity with the assessment devices and general assessment pattern.

The greater degree of clarity and agreement among educators as to what constitutes mental retardation facilitates communication which in turn enhances psychologists' and educators' ability to delineate a treatment program that meets a mentally retarded child's needs. The results of this study indicated that the educators viewed the treatment-related recommendations included in MR reports as being more realistic and more focused on the child's unique needs. Since the MR reports consistently recommended that the child be placed in a special classroom, it is hypothesized that educators viewed this recommendation positively because special class placement allowed the child to receive the slower paced, individualized instruction educators and psychologists agree MR children require. In contrast, the recommendations included in the LD, RP, ED, and BP reports were more varied and tentative. For example, school psychologists often referred these children to speech therapists, learning centers, reading specialists, medical doctors, and private psychologists. In addition, they often provided
suggestions for techniques which the regular classroom teacher and/or parents could implement. In some reports, teachers were encouraged to use a multisensory approach when working with a learning disabled child. Greater responsibility was generally placed on the regular classroom teachers and parents to alleviate the child's difficulties; special class placement was not consistently recommended in the ED, LD, RP, and BP reports.

In summary, the recommendations in LD, RP, ED, and BP reports tended to prolong the assessment process, involve external professionals or agencies, and/or require the services of regular classroom teachers and parents. Educators were probably less satisfied with these suggestions since they did not insure that the child would receive the prolonged, specific educational assistance he or she needed. These recommendations also tended to place more responsibility on the regular classroom teacher. In contrast, MR reports focused on the need for special classes and special teachers.

Within the five doctoral report categories, MR reports written by doctoral school psychologists were consistently rated better than ED and RP reports written by doctoral school psychologists. While the differences among the ratings of the doctoral reports were not significant, there was a trend toward significance.

Concluding Comments

The degree of the school psychologist was not a factor when educator ratings of school psychologists' reports were analyzed. The type of report, however, was significant. Educators rated MR reports more highly than ED, RP, LD, and BP reports. Differences were evident
in all three skill areas: language/format, content and recommendations. It was hypothesized that the definition of mental retardation is characterized by greater consistency and clarity than the definitions of learning disability, reading problem, emotional difficulty, and behavior problem. As a result, MR reports included more familiar, concisely defined terminology. In the area of content, MR reports typically contained similar assessment batteries and highly descriptive behavioral data. Educators were, therefore, more likely to be familiar with these assessment patterns and to find them easier to interpret. Finally, the recommendations included in MR reports were rated more positively because they usually suggested the child could be placed in a special class designed to meet his or her unique needs. Thus, educators perceived MR reports as being more clearly interpreted, better substantiated, and more child-specific than any other report category.

Limitations

The generalizability of this study is limited by several factors. All the school psychologists who participated in this study were from Ohio. The six raters were elementary personnel and all 50 psychological reports were based on the evaluations of elementary children. Thus, it is not clear whether similar results would be obtained in other states or with secondary personnel and students. In addition, the samples of school psychologists and educators were small. Larger samples may have produced different findings. Consequently, it cannot be stated unequivocally that these results can be extended to all school psychologists or to all educators.
The procedure used to obtain the reports may have influenced the results to some extent. The school psychologists who refused to send reports may have possessed different report writing skills than the school psychologists who sent their reports. Furthermore, it is highly probable that the individuals who sent reports selected their best reports. Thus, these reports are not necessarily representative of all school psychological reports.

Implications

The doctoral/non-doctoral entry level issue has been debated among psychologists for over three decades. The current debate is being conducted by the two organizations which represent school psychologists: The National Association of School Psychologists and The American Psychological Association.

NASP (1978) contends that "... acceptable professional training for school psychologists can be provided at a sixth-year level ..." (p. 6). NASP's Standards for Training Programs in School Psychology (1978) states:

Sixth year programs shall consist of a minimum of three years of full-time academic study or the equivalent beyond the baccalaureate, including at least 60 graduate semester hours or the equivalent, one year's supervised experience, and shall culminate in institutional documentation. (p. 11)

Thus, school psychologists may enter the profession of school psychology upon completion of a non-doctoral program meeting the stated criteria.
In contrast, APA contends that possession of a doctoral degree is required for entry into the school psychology profession. Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Services by School Psychologists (APA, 1981) state:

Professional school psychologists have a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited university or professional school providing an organized, sequential school psychology program in a department of psychology in a university or college, in an appropriate department of a school of education or other similar administrative unit of a professional school. (p. 671)

Furthermore, the guidelines (APA, 1981, p. 672) emphasize that any other persons who provide school psychological services cannot be called school psychologists and must be supervised by a professional school psychologist. Thus, APA's contention is that only individuals with an appropriate doctoral degree can function independently in the schools as school psychologists.

The review of the literature indicated that school psychologists who function in the schools provide two major services: assessment and consultation. They may also be engaged in individual counseling, group counseling, parent education, research, inservice or curriculum development. The majority of their time, however, is spent assessing children individually and consulting with teachers for the purpose of providing recommendations that alleviate children's difficulties.

The written report that the psychologist provides to a teacher following assessment and/or consulting sessions is the culminating
event that finalizes these two activities. The psychological report provides specific behavioral and testing data, interpretations of the data based on well-substantiated hypotheses, and practical, realistic recommendations designed to address the reason the child was referred. In addition, the report summarizes any background data and provides a record of teachers' methods of dealing with the child's problems. As a result, the teachers can use the report as a basis for making ongoing decisions about a particular child. Report writing, therefore, is a highly critical activity which requires the ability to describe, analyze, synthesize, and interpret information that will help a child achieve greater educational success. In addition, this information must be presented in a well-organized, concise and readable manner.

The purpose of this study was to provide concrete data relevant to the doctoral/non-doctoral entry level issue by comparing the report writing skills of doctoral and non-doctoral school psychologists. Report writing was selected because it is the activity that culminates the two major functions of school psychologists: assessment and consultation. Furthermore, report writing requires numerous analytical skills.

The findings of this study did not reveal any significant differences in educator ratings of the non-doctoral and doctoral reports. When trends were evident, they favored the non-doctoral school psychologists. All the non-doctoral school psychologists who participated in this study had earned specialist degrees. Since the ratings were generally positive and consistent, these findings imply that the reports written by both doctoral and specialist school psychologists meet the needs and expectations of elementary teachers, guidance
counselors, and principals.

These results are surprising given that most doctoral programs require a substantial amount of writing. Furthermore, individuals admitted into doctoral programs must usually possess highly developed, competitive skills. It appears from these data, however, that these qualities and level of educational training do not strongly influence the school psychologists' ability to provide the information and recommendations educators require. Thus, this sampling of school psychologists' competence implies that both specialist and doctoral school psychologists are capable of meeting the schools' needs for psychological services in the area of report writing.

The results also indicated that educators are more satisfied with both doctoral and specialist school psychologists' ability to provide them with written reports dealing with a child who is mentally retarded or a slow learner than with a child who has a learning disability, behavior problem, emotional difficulty, or reading problem. It was hypothesized that the consistent, relatively concrete nature of the definition of mental retardation facilitates educators' ability to accept the school psychologists' MR reports and increases the likelihood that they would agree with the recommended treatment plan.

Currently, most school psychologists possess specialist degrees. Training and certification standards have been improving throughout the last three decades. This study indicated that educators feel the reports written by both doctoral and specialist school psychologists meet their needs, especially when mental retardation contributes to a child's difficulties. It appears, therefore, that given the number
of specialist school psychologists who are available, the growing
evidence of educator satisfaction with specialists' services, and the
economic crisis that confronts the schools, insistence upon the doctoral
entry level for school psychologists is unrealistic and unnecessary at
this time.

Suggestions for Future Research

The doctoral/non-doctoral issue is complex. School psychologists
are required to possess a variety of skills in the areas of parent and
child counseling, group processing, research design and methodology,
curriculum development, assessment, and consultation. Report writing
is only one area of expertise.

Additional studies are needed to compare the skills of doctoral
and non-doctoral school psychologists within other areas of functioning
such as counseling, research, inservice, consultation and assessment.
Certain competencies transcend all the activities of school psychol­
ogists. Consequently, data are also needed which compare the inter­
viewing expertise and interpersonal skills of doctoral and non-doctoral
school psychologists.

The area of report writing should be explored in greater depth.
Additional research is necessary to definitively determine the reasons
educators rated the reports as they did. This goal can be accomplished
by expanding the rating scale to include questions which focus on
projective interpretations, specific terms, and specific types of
recommendations. In addition, it would be advisable to include an
open-ended question that would allow the raters to explain in greater
detail their reasons for rating the reports as they did and to describe their overall impressions of each report.

Finally, the present study could be expanded to include larger samples of educators and school psychologists, secondary personnel, and/or educators and school psychologists from other states for the purpose of increasing the generalizability of these results.
Appendix A

Sample Letter
Dear (Name of School Psychologist),

I am currently engaged in my doctoral research at Ohio State University. Part of my research entails analyzing the reports written by randomly selected school psychologists in terms of the format, content, and type of recommendations they include. In order to conduct the research, I need to obtain copies of reports written by practicing school psychologists.

To help me with this endeavor, would you be willing to send me a copy of one report that you have written within the last year that analyzes your evaluation of an elementary (K-6) child who was referred by a teacher for ______________ and one report written within the last year that analyzes your evaluation of an elementary (K-6) child who was referred by a teacher for ______________? [The blanks were completed with 2 of 5 possible sentence stems: a possible learning disability, possible mental retardation, an emotional difficulty, a reading problem, or a behavior problem.]

If you are willing to send the reports, please remove any information which would identify you or the child. I am not concerned with the name of the child or the psychologist. Would you, however, complete the questions on the enclosed card?

I would certainly appreciate your cooperation with this research. I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the reports and the card can be sent to me.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Dare
School Psychologist
Appendix B

Sample Follow-Up Letter
Dear (Name of School Psychologist),

I am again requesting your cooperation with my doctoral research. As I previously indicated, I am analyzing the content, format, and type of recommendations which characterize reports written by randomly selected school psychologists.

In order to conduct the research, I need to obtain copies of reports written by practicing school psychologists. To help me with this endeavor, would you please send me a copy of one report that you have written within the last year that analyzes your evaluation of an elementary (K-6) child who was referred by a teacher for ______________, and one report written within the last year that analyzes your evaluation of an elementary (K-6) child who was referred by a teacher for __________? [The blanks were completed with 2 of 5 possible sentence stems: a possible learning disability, possible mental retardation, an emotional difficulty, a reading problem, or a behavioral problem.]

I am not interested in the name of the child or the psychologist; therefore, please remove any information which would identify you or the child. Would you, however, complete the information on the enclosed card?

I would certainly appreciate your cooperation with this research. I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the reports and cards can be sent to me.

Thank you for your willingness to respond.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Dare
School Psychologist
Appendix C

Rating Form
RATING FORM

Directions: Please use the following questions to rate each psychological report. Mark your responses on the computer answer sheet according to the scale listed below.

Strongly Agree (1)
Agree (2)
Neutral (3)
Disagree (4)
Strongly Disagree (5)

When you have responded to each item, please attach the answer sheet to the appropriate report.

1. The report uses technical jargon.
2. The report does not summarize pertinent background information.
3. The recommendations are practical and can be implemented in the schools.
4. Technical terms are clearly and concisely stated.
5. Test scores are clearly interpreted by the psychologist.
6. The recommendations do not adequately address the referral problem.
7. The report is too brief to adequately address the problem.
8. The hypotheses and inferences are not substantiated with formal test data and/or informal observations.
9. The recommendations are based on test data and/or informal observations.
10. The report is well organized.
11. The information in the report addresses the child's specific difficulties.
12. The recommendations are not realistic for this child.
13. The report is too lengthy.
Strongly Agree (1)
Agree (2)
Neutral (3)
Disagree (4)
Strongly Disagree (5)

14. The report does not clearly delineate the reason for the referral.
15. The recommendations are clearly and concisely stated.
16. The report is written in clear, concise language.
17. The report clearly highlights the child's strengths and weaknesses.
18. The recommendations do not focus on the child's individual needs.
Appendix D

Sample of Card
SAMPLE OF CARD

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Number of years of school psychology experience: ______________

2. Highest degree earned:
   Master's __  Master's + ___  Ph.D./Ed.D. ___

3. Year highest degree was earned:
   19___

4. In what area of specialization was your highest degree earned?
   ______________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!
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