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PREPARATION AND PREPAREDNESS:
A STUDY OF CURRICULUM DESIGN IN GRADUATE TERMINAL MASTER'S
PROGRAMS IN INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Science degree in
Industrial/Organizational Psychology in the
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ABSTRACT

Graduate programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology vary throughout the country with regard to curriculum design and content, raising the issue of preparation and its relationship to preparedness on the job. It was hypothesized that: (1) students with a greater amount of prior field experience would perceive themselves to be better prepared for the workplace than those with a lesser amount of such experience; (2) employers would perceive students who had received a greater amount of prior field experience as better prepared than those with a lesser amount of such experience; and (3) students with previous work experience or job training in the field, whether prior to or concurrent with graduate training, would perceive themselves better prepared than those with either practicum experience alone or with no applied experience in the field at all.

Subjects were graduates of terminal master's programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and the first employers of these graduates. Dependent variables were graduate self-perceptions of preparedness on the job and employer perceptions of employee preparedness on the job. Data were analyzed using chi-square statistics. Results indicated that no significant difference existed among graduates or among employers in their reported perceptions of preparedness in the workplace.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES v

INTRODUCTION 1

METHODS 9

 Subjects 9

 Apparatus and Materials 10

 Procedure 11

RESULTS 16

DISCUSSION 22

 Findings Related to Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 22

 Findings Related to Additional Areas of Study 25

 Directions For Future Research 36

APPENDIX A 38

 Letters and Instructions 39

 Preparedness Survey 42

 Coding Form - Preparedness Survey 44

APPENDIX B 45

 Background Survey 46

 Coding Form - Background Survey 49

 Category Validation Form - Background Survey 56

APPENDIX C 57

 Additional Tables 58

REFERENCES 59

LIST OF TABLES

1. Graduate Perceptions of Preparedness By Group	17
2. Employer Perceptions of Preparedness By Group	19
3. Graduate Perceptions of Preparedness By Experience	20
4. Employer Perceptions of Preparedness By Experience	21
5. Job Skills Matrix	33
6. Curriculum Content By Importance and Percentage of Time	34
7. Graduate Perceptions of Preparedness By Practicum Experience	58
8. Employer Perceptions of Preparedness By Practicum Experience	58

INTRODUCTION

Graduate programs in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology differ from school to school and program to program across the United States. As evidenced by course and content descriptions, much variability exists with regard to curriculum design and coursework contained within these programs, even among those classified under the same degree designation (e.g., terminal master's). One area in which these differences can be seen is that of preparation, including practicum placements and applied-type projects as part of the required coursework. While some programs focus on the practical application of Industrial/Organizational theory to real or hypothetical workplace situations, other programs do not. This wide variability of approach leads to the question of performance in the workplace and the value of graduate preparation relative to on-the-job preparedness.

In this regard, the issue of internship/practica programs has been addressed by both business and education for many years (Dobandi & Schattle, 1984; Fernald et al., 1982; Ginsburg, 1981; Griswold, 1984; Gross, 1982; MacKinney, 1968; Madoch, 1980). Applications of knowledge and theories gained through textbooks and/or classroom experiences to actual problems or situations in the workplace has been touted as a successful means by which to bridge the gap between the academic world

and the professional world (Fernald et al., 1982; Griswold, 1984; Gross, 1982; Madoch, 1980). Ginsburg (1981) defined the goals of such programs as "to provide challenge, stimulation, responsibility, learning, growth, experience, and prestige to the student. At the same time, the program should help the company attract superior students" (p. 60).

In addition to providing career opportunities and information, an internship permits students to observe people actually doing their jobs. It allows the students to experiment with varying career options, while giving the company an opportunity to judge potential future employees in a non-threatening situation (Fernald et al., 1982; Gross, 1982).

Additionally, this informal assessment of an intern's performance may, in fact, enhance the efficiency of a company's selection process by reducing the risk of hiring unqualified workers (Dobandi & Schattle, 1984).

While the significance of work experience as a criterion differs among employers, it nevertheless remains a factor in the job selection process (Dobandi & Schattle, 1984; Fernald et al., 1982; Ginsburg, 1981; Gross, 1982). This, together with a highly competitive job market, reaffirms the advantage of work experience for job applicants. Dobandi & Schattle (1984) said, "We believe it is extremely beneficial for college graduates to enhance their marketability by obtaining work experience prior to graduation. One means of acquiring practical work experience is by participating in an internship program" (p. 101).

Combining theory and practice enables students to gain real hands-on experience as they both observe actual work situations and incorporate

the intangibles associated with solving real-world problems. Students can acquire skills and knowledge from agency professionals, approach workplace situations from a different perspective, provide new or additional insight into old problems, and may even raise morale by their enthusiasm. The personal contacts which students develop on a field experience program can also prove quite valuable on future job searches, as can the career advice, interview experience, and recommendations provided by professionals (Fernald et al., 1982; Ginsburg, 1981; Griswold, 1984; Gross, 1982).

Buckalew and Lewis (1982) believe that "psychology is portrayed as a curriculum which is dedicated to helping one deal effectively with life, though college curricula in this major typically offer little insight into application" (p. 77). Utilizing field experiences to transfer skills between the classroom and the workplace has been one solution attempted by both graduate and undergraduate departments in various colleges and programs within universities (Carroll, Werner, & Ashmore, 1982; Fernald et al., 1982; Madoch, 1980; Nevid & Metlay, 1982). Business programs rely heavily on internship experiences, and industry is recognizing the many benefits which both sides stand to gain through such programs (Ginsburg, 1981; Griswold, 1984; Gross, 1982).

Erdwins and Buffardi (1983) surveyed graduates across several different fields of psychology about work experience and graduate training. They specifically asked the graduates whether the master's program had adequately prepared them for their positions. According to their report, "eighty-three percent of the respondents felt that the

master's program was relevant to their current job responsibilities.... The great majority also expressed satisfaction with their jobs, felt that their MA training had relevancy for their current work activities, and felt that they were adequately trained to carry out their job responsibilities" (p. 115). Courses which the students typically identified as most relevant included industrial content, methodology courses, and practicum. The graduates also indicated that nonapplied or theoretical courses such as general psychology survey courses were least relevant or useful.

What is being done by colleges and universities in response to this issue? Specifically, how are graduate programs structuring their curricula, and what kind of emphasis is being placed on the issues of theory, application, and field experiences? Unfortunately, a paucity of information is currently available comparing and/or contrasting the various graduate programs available in this country (Young & Morrow, 1980), or the relationship between classroom preparation and on-the-job preparedness. While some literature is available regarding undergraduate and graduate programs in general (Buckalew & Lewis, 1982; Fernald et al., 1982; Lunneborg & Wilson, 1982; Nevid & Metlay, 1982; Stoup & Benjamin, 1982), less has been available regarding master's level programs, particularly in the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology (Erdwins & Buffardi, 1983; Stoup & Benjamin, 1982).

The 1982 American Psychological Association Survey of Graduate Programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior lists specifics which can be used to compare areas such as

faculty, enrollments, and financial aid for many programs, but does not go far enough in providing a qualitative analysis of field work in its subsection "Program Requirements For Field Training." While no survey format could be expected to provide all information in depth, that provided regarding practicum/internship in this publication does little more than suggest a possible applied versus theoretical approach. By itself that information could prove helpful, but in this case, it does little to enhance ease of program comparison. Comments are often vague, as in "practicum or internship strongly recommended," "some field work expected," or "extensive training provided." The most specific listing is "extensive research practicum in industry or government." And in this publication, as in so many other sources, there is no clear distinction among use of the terms practicum, internship, and field work.

To more ably compare and contrast the field work requirements of various graduate programs entails an extensive inspection of materials provided by or about the specific programs in question. Attempts by the researcher to solicit information relating to this subject met with varying degrees of cooperation and/or success. Aside from the incomplete information contained in the Survey of Graduate Programs cited above, no single comprehensive comparison listing Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate programs and their specific practica/internship/fieldwork requirements was located in the preparation of this thesis. College catalogs and/or brochures appear to be the best source of information regarding the department's emphasis on

application and preparation. But many schools will not send these materials, particularly catalogs, without charge upon request for inspection purposes. Another difficulty involves schools which, although willing to send materials, provide information which is inadequate, unclear, or otherwise difficult to understand or use in comparisons with other programs. For example, field work is sometimes expressed in terms of actual clock time (300 hours), amount of credit (3-6 credit hours), calendar year (3-6 months), or even academic year (2 semesters). It is sometimes even difficult to determine from the literature provided whether or not practicum experience is provided, encouraged, required, recommended, or available at all.

There is often a great deal of overlap with other departments in the coursework and subject matter associated with programs like Industrial/Organizational Psychology. In fact, many organizations are surprised to find it assigned to psychology departments instead of business administration departments (Fernald et al., 1982). Conversely, the University of Tennessee's Intercollegiate Program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology is actually housed within the College of Business Administration. And schools such as Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Appalachian State University, and Emporia State, recognizing the similarities, include or encourage credit in business/marketing courses within their Industrial/Organizational curricula. After all, application of skills is still transfer of learning and the core of successful stimulus-response fidelity, whether in the classroom, on paper, or in the "real world."

The ultimate goal of this quest for examination and comparison of schools and field experience requirements centers on the question of preparation and preparedness. That is, what type of program or combination of programs, what kinds of courses and requirements, will provide the opportunities which will result in the greatest likelihood for successful on-the-job performance?

With these questions in mind, the objective of this research study was to compare curriculum design in graduate programs of Industrial/Organizational Psychology in America to determine what effect, if any, preparation has on performance in the workplace. The existence of such a relationship, or lack thereof, was determined by observing the perceptions of Industrial/Organizational Psychology program graduates and their employers as reported in survey questionnaires. The dependent variables, perceptions of the graduates and their employers, were compared and then associated with the type or degree of preparation received prior to employment.

The focus of this study was to: (1) examine graduate Industrial/Organizational programs in America with respect to the area of preparation; (2) survey Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduates and their employers relative to perceptions of actual performance in and preparedness for the workplace; and (3) associate the type or degree of preparation with the preparedness perceived and/or demonstrated by the graduate on the job.

More specifically, it was hypothesized that: (1) students with a greater amount of prior field experience would perceive themselves to be

better prepared for the workplace than those with a lesser amount of such experience; (2) employers would perceive students who had received a greater amount of prior field experience as better prepared than those with a lesser amount of such experience; and (3) students with previous work experience or job training in the field, whether prior to or concurrent with graduate training, would perceive themselves better prepared than those with either practicum experience alone or with no applied experience in the field at all.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were graduates of five terminal master's programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and the first employers of these graduates after graduation from the master's program. On a voluntary basis, schools which confer a terminal master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology furnished the researcher a list of names and addresses of their graduates. Questionnaires with return postage were mailed to these graduates, each of whom was asked to complete one copy and forward the second copy to his or her first employer. Each graduate was also asked to complete a background survey to determine the degree of training and/or experience received prior to graduation from the master's program.

Questionnaires were mailed to 305 graduates representing six schools across the United States. Responses eligible to be used in this study were received from sixty-three graduates (21%) and from forty-one employers (13%), and represented only five of the six schools included in the mailing. Thirty-three of these graduates (52%) were male, and thirty (48%) were female. A total of twenty-seven (9%) of the surveys were returned by the United States Postal Service as undeliverable, and an additional nine (3%) were returned, unanswered, by the graduates themselves. Responses used in this study were limited to students who

had graduated within the last 13 years. Sixty-five percent of the eligible responses received were matched graduate/employer pairs.

Apparatus and Materials

Graduate Study in Psychology and Associated Fields (1984) and Survey of Graduate Programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior (1982) were used to determine those colleges and universities which offer programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, whether housed within the psychology department or within another area. Examination of catalogs and brochures provided by the departments which responded to an initial request for such materials yielded categorical information relative to the provision for student preparation both in and out of the classroom.

In order to examine the assumption that preparedness is related to effectiveness, graduates of six Industrial/Organizational Psychology programs and their first employers were surveyed to determine perceptions of performance in the workplace at entry along with on-the-job preparedness at entry. In an attempt to filter out factors such as on-the-job training and concurrent work experience, at entry was defined as "during the first month or so on the job." Materials included initial and follow-up letters to each college or university department offering a graduate program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology or Organizational Behavior; letters to those departments selected for survey purposes; cover letters to each graduate of the program as well as to his/her employer, along with response materials; and the creation

of survey instruments by which to determine the degree of preparation and preparedness.

Procedure

A total of 81 Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate programs across the United States and Canada were contacted by mail during the initial period of this study. No attempt was made to control for quality across programs. Examination of the 63 responses (78% of those contacted) yielded a listing of 35 programs in America offering a terminal master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology or a related field. These 35 schools were contacted again by mail and asked to review and revise information relative to their terminal master's programs. For example, each was asked to specify whether practicum/internship was required, optional, or not available. Each of the 35 was also asked, "How many names and addresses of your graduates could you make available to me?" Responses confirming and/or revising the program information were received from 30 schools (86%), of which 14 (47%) indicated a willingness to furnish names and addresses of graduates to the researcher. Requests for mailing lists were then sent to those 14 schools, six (43%) of which responded by actually furnishing the requested lists. The six schools included in the survey portion of this study and the associated number of their graduates who were mailed questionnaires were: California State University, Long Beach (95); University of Central Florida (80); Purdue University (Indiana) (46);

Montclair State College (New Jersey) (12); The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (51); and North Texas State University (21).

Graduates of the six terminal master's Industrial/Organizational Psychology programs and their first employers were asked to complete surveys dealing with perceptions of preparedness relative to actual work demands. Graduates were also asked to complete surveys providing background data regarding work-related experience as well as graduates' perceptions about the relevancy of graduate school training to demands in the workplace. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes were provided for return of the questionnaires.

Returned graduate and employer responses were assigned to one of four groups, according to the type and amount of practicum and/or other experience reported on the Background Survey. Group 1 contained subjects reporting at least two practica with other related experience. There were 15 graduates and 11 employers assigned to Group 1. Group 2 contained subjects reporting at least two practica with no other related work experience. There were 14 graduates and 13 employers assigned to Group 2. Group 3 contained subjects reporting only one practicum with other related experience. There were 18 graduates and 10 employers assigned to Group 3. Group 4 contained subjects reporting only one practicum with no other related work experience. There were 16 graduates and 7 employers assigned to Group 4.

Information dealing with preparedness was determined by recording the self-perceptions reported by the graduates and the perceptions reported by the employers on the Preparedness Survey, a copy of which

can be found in Appendix A. This preparedness information was reported immediately following Item 15 on the Preparedness Survey. A scale ranging from 1-5 was used, with the label "unprepared" associated with 1 and "well prepared" associated with 5.

Information dealing with preparation was determined by recording the responses of the graduates to questions regarding practicum experience together with responses to questions dealing with job-related training and/or other relevant work experience prior to entry into the graduate program. This information about preparation corresponded to responses reported in Items 20, 27, and 28 of the Background Survey. Response options varied for these three items.

The 15 items on the Preparedness Survey were rated by each graduate and employer using a scale ranging from 1-5, with anchors established as follows: (1) Almost Never - observed 0-25% of the time; (2) Infrequently - observed 26-50% of the time; (3) Often -observed 51-75% of the time; (4) Frequently - observed 76-90% of the time; and (5) Almost Always - observed 91-100% of the time. Each of the 15 items was examined separately. Tallies were made of the number of responses to a particular response category. These frequency tallies were then cast in the form of frequency tables.

Survey items dealing with job title, employer, primary activity at work, job-related training/experience, and comments about specific items were assigned to content-relevant categories determined by the researcher for the purpose of analysis and review. Background Survey items 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 27-28, 30, 31, and V.8 were categorized in

this manner. Specific category designations are presented in Appendix B. General comments written on the Background Survey were divided into two categories only, "those related to Section V of the survey" and "other general comments." The comments written on the Preparedness Survey were all assigned to content-relevant categories. Specific category designations for comments to the Preparedness Survey may be found in Appendix A.

Each item described above was assigned to categories in two separate sessions, independently, by two different raters, specifically the researcher and a 1984 graduate of a terminal master's program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Next, the two sets of ratings were compared and discrepancies were discussed, then resolved by one of three approaches: (1) acceptance of placement assigned by Rater 1; (2) acceptance of placement assigned by Rater 2; or (3) another assignment meeting mutual agreement. Inter-rater reliability for the Background Survey was .82, compared with .77 inter-rater reliability for the Preparedness Survey. Many of the discrepancies involved differentiating between government and public service categories for the employment questions. A sample of the rating form used in this process together with an itemized listing of the responses and categories established for each survey item are presented in appendices A and B. The rating form is titled "Category Validation - Thesis - Background Survey," and is presented in Appendix B. The document listing response and category designations for the Preparedness Survey is titled "Coding Form - Preparedness Survey" and is presented in Appendix A. The document

listing response and category designations for the Background Survey is titled "Coding Form - Background Survey" and is presented in Appendix B.

Chi-square, a summary statistic which measures the likelihood that the variables are statistically independent, was used to summarize results obtained via cross-tabs. Klecka, Nie, and Hull (1975) state that, "Often it is desirable to summarize the relationship depicted in a crosstabulation table with a measure of association or a test of statistical significance.... A measure of association indicates how strongly two variables are related to each other. In essence, it measures the extent to which characteristics of one sort and characteristics of another sort occur together.... A measure of association also indicates the extent that prior knowledge of a case's value on one variable better enables you to predict the case's value on the other variable" (p. 74).

Ferguson (1981) explains that chi-square is "a descriptive measure of the magnitude of the discrepancies between the observed and expected frequencies" (p. 201). He further explains that "the larger these discrepancies the larger χ^2 will tend to be. If no discrepancies exist, and the observed and expected frequencies are the same, χ^2 will be 0" (p. 201).

RESULTS

As the data obtained were categorical data, survey questions were analyzed using non-parametric statistics, specifically crosstabulations or contingency tables with results summarized by chi-square statistics. In order to ensure that data within particular cells met the statistical assumptions of the chi-square analysis, it was necessary to combine cells to form new categories. New categories formed thusly were carefully constructed according to the desired schema of summarization without sacrificing details of the data, and contained some common property or mutual identity which would lend itself to a meaningful interpretation of the outcome when the statistical test was applied. For example, graduates who had participated in three or more practica were grouped together with those who had participated in two practica, creating a category titled "two or more practica."

In order to test Hypothesis 1, that students with a greater amount of prior field experience would perceive themselves to be better prepared for the workplace than those with a lesser amount of such experience, the dependent variable of graduate self-perception was associated with the type and amount of preparation received by the graduate prior to graduation from the master's program. Preparation was defined as practicum or internship experience, other related job training, and/or other related work experience.

A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among graduates in their reported self-perceptions of preparedness in the workplace at entry, $\chi^2 (6, N=63) = 1.74, p > .05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in the chi-square analysis testing Hypothesis 1, graduate self-perceptions of preparedness, are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
GRADUATE PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS

RATING OF PREPAREDNESS	AMOUNT OF PRACTICUM TRAINING			
	2 OR MORE WITH OTHER EXPERIENCE	2 OR MORE WITH NO EXPERIENCE	ONLY ONE WITH OTHER EXPERIENCE	ONLY ONE WITH NO EXPERIENCE
5 (Well Prepared)	5	3	4	6
4	7	8	9	7
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	3	3	5	3
MEAN	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.1
S.D.	0.88	0.83	0.90	0.89

CHI-SQUARE = 1.74

As results of this chi-square analysis were non-significant, a further test of Hypothesis 1 was performed to determine whether a difference existed among graduate self-perceptions of preparedness relative to amount of practicum training received, independent of the job or work experience factor. The dependent variable of graduate

self-perception was associated with the amount of practicum training received. A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among graduates in their reported self-perceptions of preparedness in the workplace at entry relative to amount of practicum training received, $\chi^2(2, N=63)=0.14, p>.05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in the chi-square analysis of this hypothesis test are presented in Appendix C, Table 7.

In order to test Hypothesis 2, that employers would perceive students who had received a greater amount of prior field experience as better prepared than those with a lesser amount of such experience, the dependent variable of employer perception was associated with the type and amount of preparation received by the graduate prior to graduation from the master's program. A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among employers in their reported self-perceptions of graduate preparedness in the workplace at entry, $\chi^2(6, N=41)=10.11, p>.05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in the chi-square analysis testing Hypothesis 2, employer perceptions of preparedness, are presented in Table 2.

As results of the test to Hypothesis 2 were non-significant, a further test of this hypothesis was performed to determine whether a difference existed among employer perceptions of preparedness relative to amount of practicum training received, independent of the job or work experience factor. The dependent variable of employer perception was associated with the amount of practicum training received by the

TABLE 2

EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS

RATING OF PREPAREDNESS	AMOUNT OF PRACTICUM TRAINING			
	2 OR MORE WITH OTHER EXPERIENCE	2 OR MORE WITH NO EXPERIENCE	ONLY ONE WITH OTHER EXPERIENCE	ONLY ONE WITH NO EXPERIENCE
5 (Well Prepared)	6	5	2	1
4	3	4	4	6
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	2	4	4	0
MEAN	4.3	3.9	3.6	4.1
S.D.	0.94	1.03	0.97	0.35

CHI-SQUARE = 10.11

graduate. A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among employers in their reported perceptions of preparedness in the workplace at entry relative to amount of practicum training received $\chi^2(2, N=41)=4.43, p>.05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in the chi-square analysis of this hypothesis test are presented in Appendix C, Table 8.

In order to test Hypothesis 3, that students with previous work experience or job training in the field, whether prior to or concurrent with graduate training, would perceive themselves better prepared than those with either practicum experience alone or with no applied experience in the field at all, the dependent variable of graduate self-perception was associated with the amount of other related job or work

experience reported by the graduate. A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among graduates in their reported self-perceptions of preparedness in the workplace at entry relative to other related work experience or job training in the field, $\chi^2 (2, N=63) = 0.18, p > .05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in the chi-square analysis testing Hypothesis 3, graduate self-perceptions of preparedness with respect to previous work experience, are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

GRADUATE PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS
BY EXPERIENCE

<u>RATING OF PREPAREDNESS</u>	<u>RELATED JOB OR WORK EXPERIENCE</u>	<u>ONLY PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE</u>
5 (Well Prepared)	9	9
4	16	15
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	8	6
MEAN	3.9	4.0
S.D.	0.90	0.87
CHI-SQUARE = 0.18		

An additional test of Hypothesis 3 was performed to determine whether a difference existed among employer perceptions of graduate preparedness at entry relative to previous work experience of the

graduates. The dependent variable of employer perception was associated with the amount of other related job or work experience reported by the graduate. A chi-square analysis indicated that no significant difference existed among employers in their reported perceptions of graduate preparedness in the workplace at entry with respect to previous work experience, $\chi^2(2, N=41)=1.19, p>.05$. The cell frequencies, means, and standard deviations used in testing this additional hypothesis are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS
BY EXPERIENCE

<u>RATING OF PREPAREDNESS</u>	<u>RELATED JOB OR WORK EXPERIENCE</u>	<u>ONLY PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE</u>
5 (Well Prepared)	8	6
4	7	10
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	6	4
MEAN	4.0	4.0
S.D.	1.01	0.87
CHI-SQUARE = 1.19		

In order to ensure that data within particular cells met the statistical assumptions of the chi-square analysis, it was sometimes necessary to combine cells to form new categories. But even by

combining cells in this manner, Table 1, Table 2, Table 4, and Table 8 contain occurrences of very small cell sizes, thereby risking Type II errors by failing to reject the null hypotheses in these cases. The guidelines provided by Walker and Lev (1953) regarding goodness of fit for the chi-square table with respect to small cell sizes, however, suggest confidence in accepting the results obtained in this study.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Findings Related to Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3

The tests of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, when interpreted at a .05 level of confidence, indicated that no significant difference existed among graduates or among employers in their reported perceptions of preparedness in the workplace. The findings applied across all groups, and remained consistent when examined with respect to amount of practicum experience as well as with respect to other types of related work experience and/or training.

These findings would seem to imply the lack of a significant relationship among preparation, preparedness, and effectiveness in ratings of on-the-job performance in the workplace. Several possibilities exist with regard to explanation of these findings. First, both graduates and employers may have had difficulty accurately recalling the information about preparedness at entry, particularly if a significant amount of time had elapsed between initial hire and completion of the survey. As a measure of recall ability over time, an item which said "Please circle how comfortable you feel about the accuracy of your responses" was included on the Preparedness Survey. A scale ranging from 1-5 was used, with 1 indicating "less than comfortable" and 5 indicating "very comfortable." More than half of the

employers (53.7%) indicated that they were very comfortable with the accuracy of their responses, while none of the employers chose ratings of 1 or 2. Nearly half the graduates (47.6%) responded that they felt very comfortable about the accuracy of their responses, with another 39.7 percent choosing response 4. No graduate chose response 1 and only one graduate chose response 2.

A second possible explanation is that employers and graduates may have based their ratings of preparedness on recent or even present work performance rather than on initial job performance. The effect of rating thusly would have served to confound the issue with additional factors such as on-the-job training and general work experience obtained after graduation.

A third possibility is that employers may not have been realistically aware of the performance of their employees at entry or may not have wanted to choose an unfavorable rating which might somehow reflect poorly on them or the employee. Graduates too may have been unaware of their true initial job performance, or may have chosen to present themselves in a somewhat inaccurate light.

Another possible explanation of the results may instead rest with a sample which does not represent the general population. Survey responses were very disappointing, being limited to only 5 schools of the 35 initially eligible for inclusion in this study, and representing only 21% of the graduates contacted. About 3% of the graduates surveyed returned their forms unanswered. Most of the unanswered returns were from graduates who had been unable to obtain employment in the field of

Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Comments accompanying these returns included "I'm sorry my daughter can not help you with your survey. After completing her education, she could not find employment so she joined the Air Force." Another wrote, "As of this date I have been unable to find an Industrial Psychology related position. My degree seems to hold no clout in the business world. I have been employed as a flight attendant for the past year and worked on a boat previous to that." A third wrote, "After completing my master's program in Industrial Psychology I found I was prepared for nothing. I went back to school and got a teaching credential."

Unanswered in this study is the question of how many other Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduates have been unable to obtain employment in jobs related to Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Further research into job placements of Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduates may be a realistic need within the field, and should be considered for the future.

Another weakness of this study, also relating to a possibly non-random sample, was observed in analyses of items dealing with the practicum experiences of the graduates. All the eligible survey responses reflected at least one practicum experience. The opportunity did not exist, therefore, to measure perceptions of preparedness between subjects who had participated in some type of practicum experience and subjects who had not participated in any type of practicum, internship, or applied fieldwork experience. Future research along such lines may

serve to provide valuable information about the possible existence of a relationship between preparation and preparedness.

On the other hand it might simply be, as the data suggest, that preparation of any kind, whether practicum or work-related in nature, transfers to an employment setting and is evidenced in acceptable or more than acceptable job performance in the workplace. Repetition of this study to include a more random sample representing the entire United States certainly seems to be indicated before attempting to draw any conclusions about the relationship which may or may not exist between preparation and preparedness.

Interpretation of Findings Related to Additional Areas of Study

Subject profiles revealed that nearly 70% of the graduates who responded were between 26 and 40 years old, with 10% 25 years old or younger and 18% over 40. Fifty-two percent of the respondents were males and 48% were females. More than 60% graduated between 1980 and 1984, with the remainder evenly divided between those who graduated prior to 1980 and those who graduated after 1984.

Virtually all (94%) were currently employed on a full-time basis when they responded to the surveys. Current job titles for 34% of the graduates included some aspect of personnel or human resources, while another 33% were classified as management or administration. Nearly 20% were involved in research or development. Most were currently employed in business or industry (61%), with 14% in some aspect of civil service

or government or military employment, and another 10% employed in the field of education.

Current primary activity at work for more than one-third of the graduates involved some aspect of human resource management or personnel (38%). Another 15% were primarily involved in education and training, with 12% in administration and supervision. Other primary activities for the graduates included management consulting (8%), research (7%), human factors (7%), and clinical or counseling psychology (5%). When asked to rate how qualified they felt for their current positions on a scale of 1 (under-qualified) to 5 (over-qualified), more than two-thirds (67%) rated themselves a 4, another 20% chose 5, and 13% chose a rating of 3. No one chose ratings below 3 (average) for this item.

In terms of the first psychology-related job held by these respondents after graduation from the master's program, more than half (57%) were involved in some area of personnel or human resources. Research/development and management/administration each accounted for an additional 14% of the job titles. More than half (53%) of the first employers were classified as business or industry, another 21% were classified as civil service or government or military, and 12% were employed in the education field.

Half the respondents (50%) listed the primary activity in their first job as involving some aspect of human resource management or personnel. Another 16% classified it specifically as education and training. Twenty-six percent were employed in that first job for one year or less, and 41% were employed in that first job between one and

three years. These figures concur with the information supplied by the graduates regarding date of graduation, and reflect the fact that many subjects remain currently employed in their first psychology-related job held after graduation from the master's program.

Research findings seem to indicate that a significant number of Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduates obtained employment in some phase of human resource or personnel-related work after graduation. If these findings are indeed representative of Industrial/Organizational Psychology program graduates, then perhaps the graduate schools themselves might choose to examine their curricula and approaches to such training. Students envisioning a career in a personnel-related field may choose to consider carefully a school's approach to the issues of human resource management and the outlined curriculum, including both classwork experience and requirements, as well as the opportunities for practica.

Fifty-two percent of the subjects worked part-time while in graduate school, and another 29% worked full-time. Less than 8% did not work outside while in graduate school. Even during practica, the only significant change was that 21% reported not working outside during practica while 46% worked part-time and 27% worked full-time.

These figures point to the fact that the vast majority of the respondents were employed either part-time or full-time while in graduate school. If these respondents do indeed represent the general population of Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate students in terms of outside work status during graduate school, then program

directors and curriculum planners need to remain cognizant of the demands placed on the students by forces in the workplace, apart from the school setting. Not only classwork, research, and availability of time are affected, but also opportunities for and logistics relating to practica and other field-based experiences can become difficult to interweave. Sensitivity to this issue may be one factor in the attrition rate of graduate students.

The majority of the graduates (54%) completed one practicum experience, while an additional 38% completed two practica. Only 8% reported completing more than two practica. Twenty-nine percent of the graduates felt that more time should be devoted to practicum experience, while only 3% felt that less time or no time should be devoted to it. Comments addressing practicum issues which were generated by the subjects themselves included amount of time spent on practica, benefits, structure, variety of placements, and waiver provisions.

Graduates were asked to rate level of satisfaction with their practicum experience using a scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). About a third of the graduates responding to this survey felt they were satisfied with their practicum experience, about one-fourth were less than satisfied, and only about two-fifths were more than satisfied.

Forty percent of the subjects reported being paid for practica, while 57% were not. When asked how they thought paid practicum affects student performance, 24% indicated that payment made no difference in

performance, 37% indicated that payment improves performance, and 38% said they did not know.

More than one-third of the respondents (36%) obtained their first psychology-related jobs while still in graduate school. Seven percent were already working in their first jobs when they entered the graduate program, and 16% were hired upon graduation from the master's program. Another 35% were not employed in their first psychology-related jobs until sometime after graduation. Several subjects indicated that this first employment was obtained after finishing the required coursework, but prior to completion of the master's thesis. Nineteen percent continued working at their same work locations, 14% were hired at a prior practicum location, and the majority (59%) obtained employment in some other, new location.

When asked to rate how qualified they felt at entry (on "Day One") in the first job, on a scale of 1 (under-qualified) to 5 (over-qualified), less than 9% reported feeling over-qualified and 3% reported feeling under-qualified. Sixteen percent chose a rating of 2, 36% chose a rating of 3, and 35% chose a rating of 4. In essence, nearly 80% felt themselves to have been at least adequately qualified, if not more-than-qualified, for their first psychology-related jobs held after graduation.

Interestingly enough, when asked in a different item how well prepared they were at entry to perform their first job assignment in their first psychology-related job after graduation, 46% felt well prepared in both theory and application, 40% felt theoretically prepared

but needing help with practical application, and only 6% felt inadequately prepared. In essence, then, more than eighty percent perceived themselves to be prepared in theory and/or application for the first psychology-related job held after graduation. These two measures of preparedness, both dealing with perceptions of qualifications at entry, were remarkably consistent with respect to results reported by the graduates.

Comments generated by the subjects about the question of preparedness at entry included praise for the preparation received (8%), the need for more practical courses and applications (10%), and the difficulty applying theory to the "real world" (10%). Additional comments, each generated by 3% or less of the respondents, included the need to have practica better related to actual jobs in the workplace, an imbalance in the graduate school curriculum (e.g., "Emphasis on test construction to the exclusion of other topics"), the need to educate employers about Industrial/Organizational Psychology, and the attribution of preparedness to factors other than and different from the Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate program.

When asked about what types of curriculum requirements would have made the graduate feel better prepared for the first job, 62% perceived a need for more applied projects, 33% requested more practicum experience, 29% indicated the need for a greater variety of courses or coursework, and 32% felt a need for more class emphasis on application, less on theory. Percentages here total more than 100% since subjects were instructed to choose all applicable responses.

Comments generated by the subjects about the issue of curriculum deficits included the need for more "hands-on" exposure to real world situations and applications (11%), the need to continue/increase practicum requirements (11%), the need for more courses in personnel-related areas (16%), and the need for more business-type courses (6%).

Subjects were also asked about where they learned the job skills needed in the workplace, and specifically how much they learned in class and how much on the job. Results are summarized in Table 5 and seem to imply that many of the needed skills are acquired on the job rather than in the classroom. In fact, if these figures are representative samples, then one may infer that nearly three-fourths of the necessary job skills are actually refined on the job after first being introduced in the classroom.

TABLE 5
JOB SKILLS MATRIX

JOB SKILLS	PERCENTAGE OF JOB SKILLS				
	0 - 24	25 - 49	50 - 74	75 - 89	90 - 100
TAUGHT IN CLASS	15.9	28.6	25.4	19.0	6.3
LEARNED ON THE JOB	19.0	25.4	34.9	9.5	6.3
REFINED ON THE JOB AFTER LEARNING IN CLASS	12.7	38.1	20.6	12.7	11.1

Graduates were asked to rate seven topics common to many Industrial/Organizational Psychology program curricula (e.g., job analysis) in terms of importance and percentage of time. Importance was rated according to the following scale: (1) very vital to successful performance on the job; (2) moderately useful to ensure preparedness; (3) important concept - should be taught, but not needed as a class project; and (4) waste of time - drop from required curriculum. Graduates were also asked "How often do you draw on this knowledge/expertise on the job?" Responses were recorded as percentages of time ranging from zero to 100%.

Content areas rated most important by the graduates were Training, Job Analysis, and Performance Appraisal. Assessment Center Training was chosen least often as being vital to successful performance on the job, and was used least often (0-24% of the time) by nearly two-thirds of the

respondents. Table 6 shows the ratings assigned by the graduates for the topics listed in Section V on the Preparedness Survey.

TABLE 6
CURRICULUM CONTENT BY IMPORTANCE AND PERCENTAGE OF TIME

TOPIC	IMPORTANCE				PERCENTAGE OF TIME				
	1	2	3	4	0-24	25-49	50-74	75-89	90-100
JOB ANALYSIS	41.3	27.0	12.7	9.5	25.4	17.5	17.5	17.5	11.1
ASSESSMENT CENTERS	11.1	25.4	41.3	12.7	63.5	12.7	7.9	3.2	1.6
RESEARCH PROPOSALS	27.0	34.9	14.3	15.9	47.6	14.3	9.5	14.3	4.8
PERF. APPRAISALS	39.7	33.3	11.1	7.9	33.3	23.8	15.9	14.3	3.2
TRAINING PROGRAM	47.6	23.8	12.7	7.9	20.6	19.0	19.0	14.3	17.5
APPL RESEARCH PAPER	27.0	33.3	20.6	9.5	36.5	25.4	11.1	11.1	4.8
WAGE/SALARY	19.0	28.6	34.9	7.9	54.0	7.9	11.1	9.5	4.8

There was also a provision in Section V for subjects to include additional topics. Some of the additional items generated by the subjects included employee/labor relations, research design & methodology/ statistical analysis, human factors, management and organizational development, computer applications and related skills, and selection/test development.

Graduates were quite candid in their comments and critiques concerning the preparation provided within the graduate school programs, including practica, and the reality of actually functioning in the

workplace after graduation. Comments ranged from "This degree has added little or no value to my previous level of preparedness, compensation or promotional opportunities" to "My practicum helped me by letting me see the professional side of [Industrial Psychology] consulting work.... Writing a thesis was a significant growth experience which has been of use to me since I started working.... My career has gone from test evaluation-to student placement and testing-to wage and salary administration to personnel manager to compensation analyst to personnel computer systems specialist - Industrial [Psychology] was never such fun."

Several subjects noted that the Importance and Percentage of Time questions addressed in Section V of the Background Survey were not related to their jobs or job duties, and others mentioned how interrelated everything is and how much overlap exists among the different areas.

One graduate even warned the researcher about methodology flaws in the surveys, saying "you're going to lose descriptive resolution in your sample," referring to the population being surveyed. He continued, "In short, don't try to conclude that 'practicum = ↑ probability of career success,' or '↑ level of preparedness' = 'success.'"

Comments on the Preparedness Survey covered topics including praise for employee performance and/or preparation, criticism of research design and/or methodology, and hesitation about completing the surveys. Several subjects commented about classroom or field experience, and some mentioned problems with adaptation to the organization and/or to the

task. Some even attributed preparedness to previous experience as opposed to the graduate program itself.

The research findings presented in this study indicated that perceptions of preparedness on the job were not associated in any significant manner with the amount of practicum or work experience reported by the graduates. But comments in response to the survey questions did indicate that graduates perceived a need to strengthen graduate programs in very specific ways, including practica, in order to ensure a more realistic and effective type of preparedness on the job.

Directions For Future Research

Those in charge of determining departmental curricula in Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate programs may want to do further research to determine specific means of creating practicum experiences and coursework requirements within their programs which more closely meet the needs of the students and reflect the demands of the workplace. A study of content-relevancy may prove useful to determine which courses should comprise a well-designed graduate school curriculum. Specifically, program coordinators may need to examine course content and offerings, classwork requirements, and practical applications linking theory with the "real world." They may choose to consider studies built around the inclusion of business/marketing courses and personnel-related courses in the graduate school psychology

curriculum, testing whether the inclusion of such courses leads to increased perceptions of preparedness among graduates and/or employers.

Studies undertaken either as a result or as an offshoot of this thesis may want to focus on recent graduates, perhaps limiting respondents to those who had graduated within the previous six or twelve months. A related study might examine all graduates of one school or even a group of schools to determine job placements, duties, and salaries of Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduates six, 12, or even 24 months after graduation.

Other related studies will want to ensure inclusion of all types of graduate programs throughout the country, particularly those which emphasize differing aspects and approaches to the curriculum. The various practicum experience requirements of the different schools should all be represented in future studies, and special care should be taken to ensure inclusion of students who graduate without receiving credit for any practicum experience at all.

The survey instrument itself should be redesigned with special emphasis on format, ease of completion, clarity, and brevity. All segments of the target population should be adequately represented, and efforts should be made to ensure timeliness and accuracy of responses. With these modifications in place, a long-term follow-up study seems warranted to examine the relationship which may or may not exist among preparation, preparedness, and performance in the workplace.

APPENDIX A

PREPAREDNESS SURVEY MATERIALS

July 1, 1986

Dear Graduate,

I am an Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate student at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. My master's thesis involves training and preparation as it relates to on-the-job preparedness. After explaining my project to the graduate department at your alma mater, they were kind enough to send me your name and address along with those of your fellow graduates. I assure you that your personal information will be used for no other purpose and will be kept strictly confidential at all times.

Enclosed you will find one copy of my Background Survey, two copies of my Preparedness Survey, and two self-addressed, stamped response envelopes. Please complete one copy each of the Background and Preparedness Surveys yourself, and also forward the second copy of the Preparedness Survey and one self-addressed, stamped envelope to your first employer after graduation. I am looking specifically for the employer in your first psychology-related job after you received your master's degree. I realize that it may be difficult to locate your first employer, especially since many years may have elapsed and you both may have changed jobs or companies since then, but please try if at all possible to locate him/her. As my sample size is quite small to begin with, I need to have as many responses as possible from both graduates and employers. Even if you are unable to locate your first employer, please do fill in your two surveys and return them to me.

Please try to remember your training and first job experiences as fully as possible, and answer the survey questions frankly and candidly, pointing out weaknesses as well as strengths. No one but I will see your responses, and the results will be grouped with those of other graduates and reported as statistics in a table. The last questions (Section VI) address the issue that time and/or other factors may have diminished your recall ability regarding your graduate school training and/or your first job after graduation. Please answer all the questions on both surveys to the best of your ability, then be sure to indicate at the end how comfortable you feel about the accuracy of your responses. This item is not designed to reflect directly on you, but rather to serve as an index of comfort with recall ability over time.

As a graduate yourself, you surely understand the importance of receiving responses such as these. Please make every effort to return these surveys to me as soon as possible so that I, too, can complete my thesis on time. I am particularly looking forward to reading your comments at the end of the Background Survey - feel free to write about anything that might be of help in this or future studies.

Thank you for your time, effort, and cooperation.

Cindy Rubin
P.O. Box 615
Fern Park, FL 32738

Dear Graduate,

Please fill in this form, sign it, and send it to your first employer along with the attached Preparedness Survey. Thank you.

* * * * *

Dear _____,

Please complete the attached survey and return it to Cindy Rubin in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. I authorize you to release this or any related information appropriate to her project.

Signature of Graduate

Date

July 1, 1986

Dear Employer,

I am an Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate student at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. My master's thesis involves training and preparation as it relates to on-the-job preparedness.

I have written to graduates of master's level Industrial/Organizational Psychology programs, asking them to complete both a Background Survey and a Preparedness Survey. I have also asked each graduate to forward a copy of the Preparedness Survey to his/her employer in the first psychology-related job held after graduation from the master's program.

In order to draw any type of reasonable conclusions about how graduate school preparation might affect on-the-job performance in the workplace, I need to associate responses from both graduates and their employers. Please take the few minutes required to complete the attached Preparedness Survey and return it to me in the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Base your answers on what you remember about the employee's job performance at entry; that is, during the first month or so on the job. Trying to remember that far back could, admittedly, be quite difficult. Please simply try to recall what you can, then indicate at the end how comfortable you feel about the accuracy of your responses. This item is not designed to reflect in any way on you, but rather to serve as an index of comfort with recall ability over time.

Please make every effort to return this survey to me at your earliest convenience, so that I may complete my thesis on time. I welcome any comments and/or suggestions from you as an employer. Feel free to write about anything that might be of help in this or any future studies.

Thank you for your time, effort, and cooperation.

Cindy Rubin
P.O. Box 615
Fern Park, FL 32738

PREPAREDNESS SURVEY

RE: _____

Listed below are a wide variety of observations relevant to preparedness and on-the-job performance. They are in no way intended as a judgment or criticism of behavior, nor as a reflection of any individual's capabilities. They are merely an attempt to gain an objective insight into the preparedness of Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate students as perceived by the graduates and their employers.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please check how prepared the employee was AT ENTRY (during the first month or so on the job). Use the following scale in making your observations.

- Almost Never - observed 0-25% of the time
 Infrequently - observed 26-50% of the time
 Often - observed 51-75% of the time
 Frequently - observed 76-90% of the time
 Almost Always - observed 91-100% of the time

PERFORMANCE	Almost Never	Infreq	Often	Freq	Almost Always
1. Maintained regular communication with supervisor regarding progress, changes, and/or problems encountered on the job.					
2. Asked questions and/or sought help from supervisor or other qualified individual when problems were encountered.					
3. Expanded activities beyond those required by the task at hand.					
4. Initiated action on own to obtain more information when necessary.					
5. Responded to suggestions or criticism in a positive manner.					
6. Presented work that was clear, concise, thorough, and accurate.					
7. Evidenced familiarity with or knowledge about assigned tasks.					
8. Reviewed & analyzed relevant documents and literature on assigned projects.					

PERFORMANCE	Almost Never	Infreq	Often	Freq	Almost Always
9. Transferred knowledge gained in one task or project for use with other tasks or areas in the organization.					
10. Utilized or cited previous classroom experience in regard to a task at hand.					
11. Utilized or cited previous work or practicum experience in regard to a task at hand.					
12. Evidenced ability to communicate knowledge as well as explain personal viewpoints in a clear and concise manner.					
13. Demonstrated flexibility in adapting initial viewpoints or task procedures in order to meet the needs of the organization.					
14. Introduced new ideas or viewpoints relevant to the task at hand.					
15. Properly recognized and remedied lack of preparedness by quickly and accurately locating needed information and/or instruction.					

If acceptable preparedness for this position were indicated by a 3 on the scale, circle how prepared this employee was overall to perform his/her assigned job.

(unprepared) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 (well prepared)

Please circle how comfortable you feel about the accuracy of your responses.

(less than comfortable) 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 (very comfortable)

COMMENTS

BACKGROUND SURVEY

I. Please respond to the following questions as completely as possible.

1. Name _____
 2. Age _____ 3. Sex M F 4. Graduation date & degree _____

Please answer these questions about your CURRENT employment:

5. Current employment status: full-time part-time none-skip to #10
 6. Current job title _____
 7. Current employer _____
 8. Current primary activity at work _____
 9. Circle how well qualified you feel for this position.
 (under-qualified) 1...2...3...4...5 (over-qualified)

II. Please answer these questions about your FIRST psychology-related job after graduation. (If never employed thusly, check here and skip to #17.)

10. Job title _____
 11. Employer _____
 12. Primary activity at work _____
 13. Length of employment in this first job _____
 14. When was this first employment obtained?
while in graduate school upon graduation after graduation
already working there other (Explain) _____
 15. Where was this first employment located?
continued at same work location a previous work location
prior practicum location another practicum location other location
 16. Circle how qualified you felt AT ENTRY (on "Day One").
 (under-qualified) 1...2...3...4...5 (over-qualified)
 17. What was your outside work status during graduate school?
full-time part-time summers only none
 18. Did your employer pay for any graduate school? N/A partial full

III. Please answer these questions about your graduate school PRACTICUM program.

19. In your graduate program, how was practicum/field work handled?
not available optional required
 20. How many practica did you complete?
0 1 2 more than 2
 21. What was your outside work status during practicum?
N/A none part-time full-time

22. How much total time was involved in your practicum/field experience?
none 1 semester 2 semesters more than 2 semesters
 Recap: # semesters/quarters _____ # total practicum credits _____
23. How much practicum experience do you think should be required?
more same amount less none Explain _____
24. Were you paid for practicum? yes no N/A # of pd practica
25. How do you think paid practicum affects student performance?
no difference performance is better performance is worse Don't Know
26. What type of college grade did you receive for your practicum experience?
N/A letter grade pass/fail combination other
27. Did you have job-related training other than practicum? no yes
28. Did you have any relevant work experience prior to entry in your graduate program? no yes
- If yes to #27 or #28, explain job-related training or relevant work experience
-

29. Circle your level of satisfaction with your practicum experience.

(not satisfied) 1....2....3....4....5 (very satisfied)

IV. RELEVANCY of graduate program to "real world" job responsibilities

30. How well prepared were you, at entry, to perform your first job assignment(s) in your first psychology-related job after graduation?
well prepared in both theory and application
theoretically prepared, but needed help with practical application
inadequately prepared
never employed after graduation
 Explain _____
31. What type(s) of curriculum requirements would have made you feel more prepared? (Check all that apply.)
greater variety of courses/coursework
more applied projects
more practicum experience
more class emphasis on application, less on theory
more class emphasis on theory, less on projects/applications
other (explain) _____
- Comments _____

32. What percentage of your needed job skills were taught in class?
 ___less than 25% ___25-49% ___50-74% ___75-89% ___90-100%
33. What percentage of your needed job skills were learned on-the-job?
 ___less than 25% ___25-49% ___50-74% ___75-89% ___90-100%
34. What % of job skills were refined on the job after learning in class?
 ___less than 25% ___25-49% ___50-74% ___75-89% ___90-100%

V. Listed below are several course topics or projects common in Industrial/Organizational Psychology graduate programs. Rate each topic in terms of Importance and Percentage of Time according to the following scales:

IMPORTANCE

- 1 - very vital to successful performance on-the-job
- 2 - moderately useful to ensure preparedness
- 3 - important concept - should be taught, but not needed as a class project
- 4 - waste of time - drop from required curriculum

PERCENTAGE OF TIME

- How often do you draw on this knowledge/expertise on the job?
 ___less than 25% ___25-49% ___50-74% ___75-89% ___90-100%

Please rate each of these topics for Importance AND Time % in the chart below.

TOPIC	IMPORTANCE				PERCENTAGE OF TIME				
	1	2	3	4	0-24	25-49	50-74	75-89	90-100
1. job analysis									
2. assessment center									
3. research proposal(s)									
4. performance appraisal									
5. training program									
6. applied research paper									
7. wage/salary									
8. other (specify)									

VI. How long have you been away from your graduate program? _____

Please circle how comfortable you feel about the accuracy of your responses.

(less than comfortable) 1....2....3....4....5 (very comfortable)

VII. COMMENTS:

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
1	School	1. California (California State University, Long Beach) 2. Florida (University of Central Florida) 3. Indiana (Purdue University) 4. Tennessee (The Univ of Tennessee at Chattanooga) 5. Texas (North Texas State University)		
2-3	Student #	01-99		
4	Grad/Employer	1. Graduate 2. Employer		
5	Group	1. At least 2 practica with experience 2. At least 2 practica with no experience 3. Only 1 practicum with experience 4. Only 1 practicum with no experience		
6	Age (2)	1. 20-25 2. 26-30 3. 31-35 4. 36-40 5. 41-45 6. 46-50 7. 51-55 8. 56-60		
7	Sex (3)	1. Male 2. Female		
8	Grad date(4)	1. 1970-1974 2. 1975-1979 3. 1980-1984 4. 1985-1986		
9	Employment Status (5)	1. Full-time 2. Part-time 3. None		
10	Current Job Title (6)	1. Personnel/Human Resources 2. Research & Development 3. Human Factors 4. Management/Administration 5. Public Service 6. Social Service 7. Education 8. Other - Skip		
11	Current Employer (7)	1. Business/Industry 2. Civil Service/Government/Military 3. Research 4. Public Service 5. Social Service 6. Education 7. Other - Skip		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
12	Current Primary Activity at Work (8)	1. Human Resources Management/Personnel 2. Education & Training 3. Administration & Supervision 4. Management Consulting 5. Research 6. Human Factors 7. Clinical/Counseling Psychology 8. Budget & Finance 9. Other - Skip		
13	Qualified (9)	1-5 - Skip		
14	First Job Title (10)	1. Personnel/Human Resources 2. Research & Development 3. Human Factors 4. Management/Administration 5. Public Service 6. Social Service 7. Education 8. Other - Skip		
15	First Employer (11)	1. Business/Industry 2. Civil Service/Government/Military 3. Research 4. Public Service 5. Social Service 6. Education 7. Other - Skip		
16	Primary Activity at First Job(12)	1. Human Resources Management/Personnel 2. Education & Training 3. Administration & Supervision 4. Management Consulting 5. Research 6. Human Factors 7. Clinical/Counseling Psychology 8. Budget & Finance 9. Other - Skip		
17	Length of Employment in First Job(13)	1. Not more than 1 year 2. More than 1 year, but not more than 3 years 3. More than 3 years, but not more than 5 years 4. More than 5 years, but not more than 7 years 5. More than 7 years, but not more than 9 years 6. More than 9 years, but not more than 11 years 7. More than 11 years, but not more than 13 years - Skip		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
18	When First Job Obtained (14)	1. While in graduate school 2. Upon graduation 3. After graduation 4. Already working there 5. Other - Skip		
19	Explain (14)	1. Upon coursework completion, before thesis 2. School was contacted by employer 3. Another job between graduation & this employment 4. Promoted at graduation		
20	Where First Job Obtained (15)	1. Continued at same work location 2. A previous work location 3. Prior practicum location 4. Another practicum location 5. Other location - Skip		
21	Qualified at Entry (16)	1-5 - Skip		
22	Outside Work Status During Grad School (17)	1. Full-time 2. Part-time 3. Summers only 4. None 5. Combination		
23	Employer Pay School (18)	1. N/A 2. Partial 3. Full		
24	Practicum Requirement (19)	1. Not Available 2. Optional 3. Required		
25	Practica Completed(20)	1. 1 2. 2 3. More than 2 4. 0		
26	Outside Work Status During Practicum(21)	1. N/A 2. None 3. Part-time 4. Full-time 5. Combination		
27	Practicum Time (22)	1. 1 semester 2. 2 semesters 3. More than 2 semesters 4. 1 quarter 5. 2 quarters 6. More than 2 quarters 7. None		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
28	Total Hrs(22)	0-9		
29	Credits (22)	0-9		
30	Amount of Practicum Should be Required(23)	1. More 2. Same Amount 3. Less 4. None		
31	Explain (23)	1. Amount 2. Benefit 3. Structure 4. Variety 5. Waive as needed		
32	Paid for Any Practica (24)	1. Yes 2. No 3. N/A		
33	# Pd Prac(24)	0-9		
34	Effect of Payment on Performance (25)	1. No difference 2. Performance is better 3. Performance is worse 4. Don't Know		
35	Grade Received for Practicum(26)	1. N/A 2. Letter grade 3. Pass/fail 4. Combination 5. Other		
36	Job Related Training (27)	1. No 2. Yes		
37	Related Work Exper. (28)	1. No 2. Yes		
38-39	Explain (27 and 28)	1. Personnel/Human Resources 2. Training & Development 3. Research 4. Human Factors 5. Management & Supervision 6. Clinical Psychology (counseling, social work) 7. Education 8. Military 9. Other		
40	Satisfied(29)	1-5		
41	Preparedness at Entry (30)	1. Well prepared in both theory & application 2. Theoretically prepared, but needed help with practical application 3. Inadequately prepared 4. Never employed after graduation		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
42	Explain (30)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduate program prepared me well 2. Need more practical courses & applications 3. Difficult to apply theory to "real world" 4. Difficult to answer - job not psych-related 5. Graduate curriculum not well balanced 6. Need to educate employers about I/O Psychology 7. Well prepared, but NOT due to graduate program 8. Need practica better related to actual jobs 9. Other 		
43-48	Curriculum Needs (31)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater variety of courses/coursework 2. More applied projects 3. More practicum experience 4. More class emphasis on application, less on theory 5. More class emphasis on theory, less on projects/applications 6. Other 		
49-50	Comments (31)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum was satisfactory 2. Need more "hands-on" exposure to "real world" situations and applications 3. Need to continue/increase practicum requirements 4. Need sensitivity toward non-academic student needs 5. Need less emphasis on certain applied work & stats 6. Need business-type courses 7. Need more courses in personnel-related areas 8. Other 		
51	Pct of Skills Taught in Class (32)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 25% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100% 		
52	Pct of Skills Learned on the Job (33)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 25% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100% 		
53	Pct of Skills Refined After Class (34)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 25% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100% 		
54	Job Analysis Import (V.1)	1-4		
55	Job Analysis Pct of Time (V.1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100% 		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
56	Assesmt Ctr Import (V.2)	1-4		
57	Assesmt Ctr Pct of Time (V.2)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		
58	Research Prop Import (V.3)	1-4		
59	Research Prop Pct of Time (V.3)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		
60	Perform Appr Import (V.4)	1-4		
61	Perform Appr Pct of Time (V.4)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		
62	Training Pgm Import (V.5)	1-4		
63	Training Pgm Pct of Time (V.5)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		
64	Applied Paper Import (V.6)	1-4		
65	Applied Paper Pct of Time (V.6)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		
66	Wage/Salary Import (V.7)	1-4		
67	Wage/Salary Pct of Time (V.7)	1. 0% - 24% 2. 25% - 49% 3. 50% - 74% 4. 75% - 89% 5. 90% - 100%		

CODING FORM - BACKGROUND SURVEY

SLOT	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES	X = NO RESPONSE	Y = OTHER RESPONSE
68-70	Other (V.8)	1. Employee/Labor Relations 2. Research Design & Methodology/Statistical Analysis 3. Human Factors 4. Management & Organizational Development 5. Computer Applications & Related Skills 6. Selection/Test Development 7. Other		
71	Away From Program (VI)	1. Not more than 1 year 2. More than 1 year, not more than 3 years 3. More than 3 years, not more than 5 years 4. More than 5 years, not more than 7 years 5. More than 7 years, not more than 9 years 6. More than 9 years, not more than 11 years 7. More than 11 years, not more than 13 years 8. More than 13 years, not more than 15 years 9. More than 15 years		
72	Comfort (VI)	1-5		
73	Comments	0-9 (Direct quotes - related to Section V)		
74	Comments	1-9 (Direct quotes - general)		

CATEGORY VALIDATION - THESIS - BACKGROUND SURVEY

ID _____

QUESTION	CATEGORY	OK	RESOLVE
6			
7			
8			
10			
11			
12			
28			
30			
31			
V8			

ID _____

QUESTION	CATEGORY	OK	RESOLVE
6			
7			
8			
10			
11			
12			
28			
30			
31			
V8			

ID _____

QUESTION	CATEGORY	OK	RESOLVE
6			
7			
8			
10			
11			
12			
28			
30			
31			
V8			

ID _____

QUESTION	CATEGORY	OK	RESOLVE
6			
7			
8			
10			
11			
12			
28			
30			
31			
V8			

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE 7

GRADUATE PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS
BY PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

<u>RATING OF PREPAREDNESS</u>	<u>2 OR MORE PRACTICA</u>	<u>ONLY ONE PRACTICUM</u>
5 (Well Prepared)	8	10
4	15	16
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	6	8
MEAN	4.0	3.9
S.D.	0.86	0.91

CHI-SQUARE = 0.14

TABLE 8

EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS
BY PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

<u>RATING OF PREPAREDNESS</u>	<u>2 OR MORE PRACTICA</u>	<u>ONLY ONE PRACTICUM</u>
5 (Well Prepared)	11	3
4	7	10
3 or less (Not Well Prepared)	6	4
MEAN	4.1	3.8
S.D.	1.01	0.82

CHI-SQUARE = 4.43

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