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Essential in the Middle: Training, Preparation, and Development of Child Protection Middle Managers

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Essential in the Middle: Training, Preparation, and Development of Child Protection Middle Managers

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to gauge whether the level of preparation among a segment of child protection managers (CPMs) was adequate to meet the challenges of the role. This quantitative-descriptive study looked at a sample of 83 child protection managers in New York City's Child Welfare System, in terms of their education and training, prior to and following assumption of their role as child protective managers and their self-ratings on five domains (leading change, leading context, leading people, leading for results, and fundamental competencies) derived from a taxonomy developed by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. Further, the number of trainings before and after becoming a manager was compared to the self-ratings to see whether training influenced these managers' perceptions of their own competency.

The population of managers was predominantly African American women with a small population of White and Hispanic representation. In reviewing the educational credentials of the managers, 87% percent had a master's degree. The findings of this study showed that while managers had participated in a variety of individual trainings, there was no consistent/collective set of trainings common to their preparation for assuming the role of a child protective manager. Managers' ratings of themselves showed that they were moderately skilled. The study found no connection between the number of trainings managers had and how they rated their competency. The researcher recommends the development of a role transition model for newly appointed managers, with a component that addresses ongoing manager development and evaluation of the model.

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Dedication

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13

My dissertation journey commenced long before I entered St. John Fisher College by way of the early years of my upbringing. My family members and, in particular, my Aunt Joslyn, the matriarch of our family, modeled the characteristics of dedication, commitment, hard work, and unyielding determination—elements that would undergird me through this journey. The life’s challenges that I confronted deposited courage, dispelled fears, infused my abilities, and reminded me that no great accomplishment is free from impediments—the goal is to overcome.

To my children, Renee and Nakita, life and my understanding of it could never have been more meaningful without you. As a parent, you gave me so much to sustain me during this journey. Renee, you recognized that I had a reservoir of untapped potential, and you sought a way to unveil that—you found St. John Fisher’s Executive Leadership program. To my grandchildren, Kayla and Elijah, I plan to restore the time that you loaned to my dissertation. Thanks for your understanding and patience; and beyond that, recognize the path that has been created for you through this undertaking. Be wise and aspire to do and to be more.

To my committee chair, Dr. Sandye Poitier Johnson, and to Dr. Sally Hembach, I thank you for your steady hands and guidance. Dr. Johnson, your constant reminder to me that I should “never let perfection be the enemy of good” took root, and I was able to put my perfectionist element on pause and complete the journey.

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To the members of SJFC cohort six at the College of New Rochelle, you have given me a lifetime gift, an invaluable learning experience; thank you. To my group, the Certi5ables: Anthony Andrew, Susan Green, and Augustina West, you have taught me the art of collaboration and its value. Thank you.

Thanks to Dr. Robin Leake at the Butler Institute for Families, University of Denver. The permission that you granted allowed me to move ahead with my study.

Finally, and of great importance, I owe a debt of gratitude to my mother, Ms. Dalmatia Chapman, who bravely navigated the immigrant terrain and constructed a path that allowed me to attain this educational milestone.

Biographical Sketch

Jacqueline Jeffrey is currently an Assistant Commissioner at New York City's Administration for Children's Services, where she has served in various leadership capacities for the past 25 years. Ms. Jeffrey attended Fordham University from 1984 to 1988 and graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences degree in 1988. She attended Hunter College from 1994 to 1999 and graduated with a Master of Sciences degree in 1999. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2014 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Ms. Jeffrey pursued her research in Training, Preparation, and Development of Child Protection Middle Managers under the direction of Dr. Sandye Poitier Johnson and Dr. Sally Hembach and received the Ed.D. degree in 2016.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to gauge whether the level of preparation among a segment of child protection managers (CPMs) was adequate to meet the challenges of the role. This quantitative descriptive study looked at a sample of 83 child protection managers in New York City's Child Welfare System, in terms of their education and training, prior to and following assumption of their role as child protective managers and their self-ratings on five domains (leading change, leading context, leading people, leading for results, and fundamental competencies) derived from a taxonomy developed by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. Further, the number of trainings before and after becoming a manager was compared to the self-ratings to see whether training influenced these managers' perceptions of their own competency.

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with a component that addresses ongoing manager development and periodic evaluation of the model.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	iii
Biographical Sketch.....	v
Abstract.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Figures.....	xiii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Problem Statement.....	3
Theoretical Rationale.....	4
Statement of Purpose.....	9
Research Questions.....	9
Potential Significance of the Study.....	9
Definitions of Terms.....	10
Chapter Summary.....	12
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature.....	13
Introduction and Purpose.....	13
Review of Literature.....	16
Chapter Summary.....	42
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology.....	43
Introduction.....	43

Research Questions	43
Research Context	44
Research Participants	45
Instruments Used in Data Collection	46
Strategy for Data Analysis	49
Chapter 4: Results	50
Introduction.....	50
Data Analysis Procedure.....	50
Data Cleaning.....	51
Reliability Analysis.....	52
Test of Normality.....	53
Demographics	54
Training Pre-Management and Leadership Competencies	64
Training Post-Management and Leadership Competencies	64
Summary	65
Chapter 5: Discussion	67
Introduction.....	67
Implications of Findings	67
Limitations	71
Recommendations.....	72
Conclusion	73
References.....	74
Appendix A.....	82

Appendix B.....	98
Appendix C.....	101
Appendix D.....	102

List of Tables

Item	Title	Page
Table 3.1	Description of Domains	47
Table 4.1	Variables and Statistical Tests Used to Evaluate Research Questions 1-3	51
Table 4.2	Descriptive Statistics of the Predictor and Criterion Variables	52
Table 4.3	Summary of Reliability Analyses Conducted on the Five Criterion Variables	53
Table 4.4	Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics of the Criterion and Predictor Variables	54
Table 4.5	Frequency and Percentage Statistics of Participants' Gender and Age Group	55
Table 4.6	Frequency and Percentage of the Level of Education and Race Level of Education and Race	56
Table 4.7	Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Type of License/ Certification	57
Table 4.8	Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Prior Experience Prior to Becoming an Employee	57
Table 4.9	Years Spent at Different Levels in Child Protective Services	58
Table 4.10	Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 18	59

Table 4.11	Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 19	59
Table 4.12	Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 20	60
Table 4.13	Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Training Received Prior to Their Management Appointment	61
Table 4.14	Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Training Received After Their Child Protection Management Appointment	62
Table 4.15	Descriptive Statistics: Mean Ratings for the Five the Leadership Domains	63
Table 4.16	Regression Analyses: Trainings Prior to Appointment as a Child Protection Manager	64
Table 4.17	Regression Analyses: Training After Appointment as a Child Protection Manager	65

List of Figures

Item	Title	Page
Figure 1.2	Skills Model	8
Figure 2.1	Katz's Three Skills Approach	20

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first formal system solely committed to the protection of children was the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NYSPCC), which was established in 1875, and served as a catalyst for the development of additional non-governmental charities for the protection of children (Myers, 2006). Following the spread of non-government child protection charities, in 1912, the federal government established the Children's Bureau, an office of the administration of children and families, to provide guidance for federal child welfare programs; this combined the interest of children under one agency (Podolsky, 2015). The enactment of The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1974 was a notable response to child maltreatment as it provided funds for states to support assessment, prevention, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities (McGowan, 2014; Myers, 2006; United States Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], 2011), and it helped to establish national standards for reporting and responding to abuse and neglect. The evolution of the child protection system from non-governmental societies to the establishment of the existing child protection system has crystallized this institution into our modern-day infrastructure, and according to Blome and Steib (2008), child protection is an essential segment of our society.

According to the USDHHS (2013), an estimated 3.5 million referrals of child abuse and neglect reports were recorded nationwide, and of that number, 1,520 were child fatalities. The mounting societal issues have given rise to the increased recognition

that the field of child welfare is complex, multifaceted, and rife with challenges that demands a workforce with high levels of competence to address the needs of children and families (Bernotavicz, McDaniel, Brittain, & Dickinson, 2013; DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; Dickinson & Fisher, 2015; Krugman, 1991; Zlotnik, Strand & Anderson, 2009). The significance of a skilled child welfare workforce has been a longstanding subject, evidenced by the first report of the United States Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect in 1991. The concerns raised about education, training, and professional development of child welfare workforce by Glesson, Smith, and Dubois (1993) in their article, *Developing Child Welfare Practitioners: Avoiding the Single-Solution Seduction*, and subsequent work by scholars Antle, Barbee, and van Zyl (2009); Bernotavicz et al. (2013); Farber and Munson (2010); Lietz, (2012); Pecora, Whittaker, Maluccio, and Barth (2012); and Zlotnik, Strand, and Anderson (2003) has kept a consistent focus on the training of the child welfare workforce, which implicitly includes middle managers.

While the primary focus of the studies has been on the training needs and support of child protection workers and supervisors, similarly, the need exists for middle managers to be prepared, trained, and developed. Wimpfheimer (2004) called to attention the importance of highly-qualified and skilled managers, affirming that “neophytes to management are expected to know what to do with little training and support” (p. 46). Preston (2004) found in his study that a number of states’ curriculum lacked requisite content for management training, and other states lacked manager preparedness for new hires. Wilson and Tilse (2006) advanced the argument and stated that:

Few child protection managers come to their roles with the management knowledge, skills and training to prepare them for the challenge of frontline child protection management. Without ongoing developmental support, it is likely that many will struggle, a number will leave the organizations, and crucial child protection outcomes, such as increased safety and wellbeing, will not be achieved. Statutory child protection managers undertake their roles in a complex and contested organizational environment. In such a context, it can be extremely difficult for them to adopt a proactive, outcome-focused approach that can enable quality outcomes for children, their families, careers and broader communities. (p. 177)

Antle et al. (2009), who recognized the significance of studies focused on child welfare specialists, pointed out that middle managers are equally important to the understanding of the overall function of the child welfare dynamics, yet there is a lack of research focused on middle managers. This affirmation of the existing gap in the literature supports the need for additional studies focused on child welfare middle managers given their essential role and the nascent literature.

Problem Statement

The role of the child protection middle manager is crucial in the day-to-day process, oversight, and decision making for the vulnerable population of neglected and abused children. The child welfare literature emphasizes that those middle managers who assume these roles are not sufficiently skilled nor prepared (Wilson & Tilse, 2006). Preston's (2004) findings from an earlier study revealed that a gap exists in the area of child welfare management training with one-third of the sampled population of states

lacking a middle manager training infrastructure. This raises an even greater concern for middle managers who are promoted into their roles from the population of supervisors who are identified as lacking in their preparation, training, and support (Preston, 2004). To add to this claim and further support the sentiment, Salus (2004) pointed to a flaw in the child welfare promotion process, where an assumption is often made that adequately functioning child protection supervisors can assume advanced roles based upon their current function. Antle et al. (2009) made a similar assertion in their comparison of the child welfare promotional structure to that of the private sector. The promotional process, or structure established by the private sector, is absent in child welfare; consequently, the majority of middle managers who are promoted into their roles may not possess the necessary skills. Austin, Regan Samples, Schwartz, and Carnochan (2011) made a related observation surmising that the political, economic, and social changes have demanded different skillsets at the middle manager level who have traditionally risen through the ranks of the organizations with little training.

Further, Antle et al. (2009) argued that the antidote to management education and training deficit is *access to opportunities*, citing this as crucial. Austin et al. (2011) surmised as much.

Theoretical Rationale

To gain insight into the phenomenon associated with middle managers and the acquisition of skills through training, this topic will be examined through the critical lens of Robert Katz's (1955) three-skills approach and Mumford, Zaccaro, and Harding's (2000) skills approach model, which later advanced and complimented the earlier work of Katz. The central idea of the skills approach is that good leaders possess a core set of

skills that can be developed to increase a leader's capability (Katz, 1955). Katz's work was timely in that it suggested a different approach to the trait theory, which was dominant at the time, and posited that great leaders were born with personality characteristics that made them effective. Katz's (1955) approach, although similar to the trait theory in that they are both leader centered, is primarily focused on skills and abilities that can be learned and developed. The trait theory, on the other hand, subscribes to the notion that great leaders are predisposed to leadership. Katz wanted to go beyond the trait theory by looking at leadership from the perspective of skills development, unlike the trait approach notion where one's characteristics are innate, meaning that individuals are born with specific skills. At the emergence of Katz's work, there were disagreements between two factions: the educators and the administrators—each could not decide upon what made a manager effective. Industries at the time were searching for the right traits to be identified for executives who were able to handle various environments (Katz, 1955).

According to Katz (1955), there are three skills that are requisite for a leader to be effective: technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills. Technical skills are the job-specific knowledge and techniques necessary to carry out tasks competently. Conceptual skill is having an understanding of the overall organization: recognizing the impact when one area does not function well and understanding the political, social, and economic climate in which the organization exists. Conceptual skills are related to ideas and vision. Human skills are focused on working with people and forging good relationships with others as a member of a team or as a team leader. Further, Katz (1955) pointed out that human skills are such an essential component of what a leader does, that

it is easier to recognize when one is deficient in this area. The skills-based theory asserts that leaders need all three skills; however, depending on a leader's level within an organization, the skills vary in order of importance. For a lower level supervisor, human and technical skills are important to the role. The conceptual and human skills are necessary for the upper level manager, but for the middle manager, all three skills are essential. In particular, the conceptual skills are of high importance because they allow managers to coordinate all of the activities of their subordinates (Northouse, 2012).

Katz's (1955) skills approach was the impetus for the concept of leadership in terms of skills; it gained creditability in the 1990s, almost four decades after it was introduced in 1955 (Northouse, 2012). There was increased interest around Katz's three-skill approach theory as researchers sought to understand the characteristics of an effective leader. In this quest, they compared the problem-solving skills of effective and ineffective leaders; they looked at employment experiences and environmental factors.

The United States Army and the Department of Defense funded several of these research with members of the armed forces as participants from various levels within the branches of the military (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000). The researchers used innovative procedures and tools to conduct tests of the participants' experiences and work environments. The overarching goal was to develop a theory of leadership based upon problem-solving skills. Primarily, the researchers wanted to identify leadership factors that led to exemplary performance. The findings of Mumford et al. (2000) became the catalyst for the formulation of a skills-based capabilities model of leadership. In addition to identifying problem-solving skills, social judgment skills and overall knowledge were considered major competencies within this model. The

Mumford et al. model also included elements of personal traits, including personality, one of the four individual attributes.

The Mumford (2000) skills model is also known as the *capability model*, because it explores the connection among the knowledge, skills, and performance of leaders. Further, the model identifies factors that augment the performance of a leader. The model possesses five components: (a) individual attributes that encompass general cognitive ability and crystalized cognitive ability, and it is related to intellectual abilities learned or acquired over time; (b) competencies that include problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge; (c) leadership outcomes that involve effective problem solving and performance,; (d) career experiences that are derived from the leader's work environment; and (e) environmental factors such as the enrollment and participation in an educational program.

Figure 1.2 illustrates a critical portion of the skills model, which provides an understanding of the overall model (Northouse, 2012). Problem-solving, social judgment, and knowledge competencies are the principals of the skills approach model, and they are credited for effective performance. They are also three essential skills that are needed by child welfare managers in order to be effective in their roles. East and Hanna (2009) operationalized the skills approach by showing how the three parts can be reflected through a child welfare manager's work and that the conceptual skills are required in a continuously changing environment such as child welfare. Child protective managers must possess organizational knowledge and understand the policies governing practice. Given the very complex work within child welfare, motivation of the staff is important. The individual attributes take into consideration the leader's cognitive

abilities, personality, and motivation. This model suggests that individual attributes influence the competencies that a leader will develop, and the more competencies a leader has, the greater potential for better outcomes (Northouse, 2012). The emphasis on skill training and development of leaders is at the core of this theory.

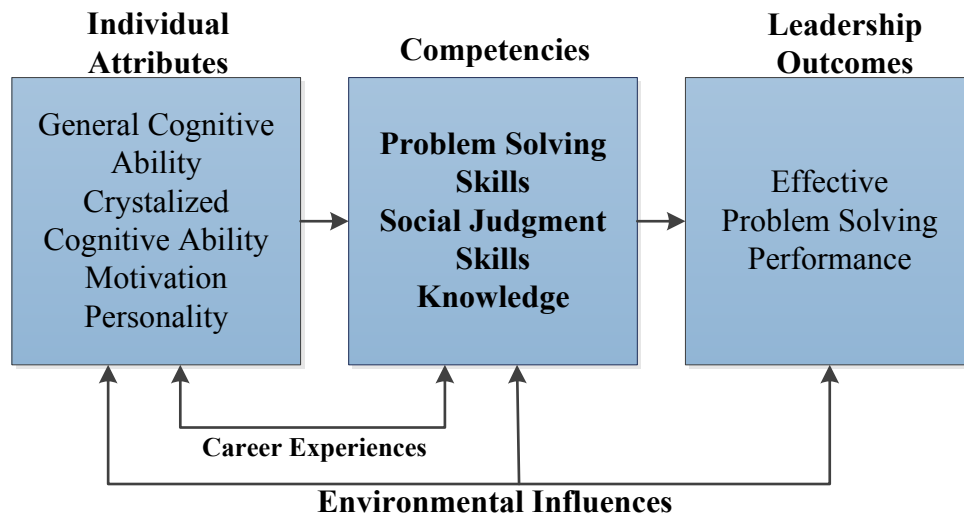


Figure 1.2. Skills Model. Adapted from “Leadership Skills for a Changing World: Solving Complex Social Problems,” by M. D. Mumford, S. J. Zaccaro, F. D. Harding, T. O. Jacobs, and E. A. Fleishman, 2000, Leadership Quarterly, 11(1), p. 23. Copyright 2000 by Elsevier.

Additionally, Katz’s (1955) model emphasizes ability and not innate skills. The child welfare literature emphasizes the lack of preparedness and training of child welfare managers, and it discusses their development. The skills model takes a leader-centered approach, and it implies that a leader lacking in requisite skills can attain a level of skill and capability with the right training intervention because leadership skills can be taught (Northouse, 2012). The skills approach model by Mumford et al. (2000) proposes that

the abilities of managers can be developed given that skills are not inborn. In fact, experience through work environments can serve to develop and or enhance these skills.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the competency level of middle managers in an urban child welfare system to determine their level of competence related to their preparation and training for their roles. The study explores the extent to which these managers possess competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute competency model, which are determined to be requisite for middle-level managers in child welfare (NCWWI, 2010).

Research Questions

The questions that guided the research are:

1. What kinds of preparation did child protection managers have prior to their management appointments, and what trainings have they received since taking on their management role?
2. How do child protection managers rate their own level of competency on selected essential competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute?
3. What is the relationship between the number of trainings and competency ratings of child protection managers?

Potential Significance of the Study

There is a scarcity of literature focused on managers in the social work sector, and even less exists on middle managers in public child welfare agencies (Antle et al., 2009). The literature from various disciplines, including child welfare, emphasizes the

significance of the middle manager role, and paradoxically, they cite the lack of studies related to this population. Furthermore, additional research is required to expand the literature that exists on middle managers overall and, in particular, middle managers in child welfare (Antle et al., 2009).

The findings of this research will be offered for use in the expansion of the infrastructure that supports training, development, and a continuous learning process for child welfare middle managers. Because other child welfare systems use the New York system as a model, changes made as a result of this study can impact child welfare work beyond New York City.

Definitions of Terms

Child Abuse and Neglect – act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker that results in the death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act of failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm to an under-aged individual (CAPTA, 1974).

Child Protection Worker (CPW) – staff member who is responsive to reports of abuse and neglect, and through his/her actions, provide protection to under-aged individuals who are experiencing abuse and neglect, while doing so within the laws and framework governing the state (O’reilly, Luck, Wilkes, & Jackson, 2011).

Competencies – knowledge, skills, and abilities leaders acquire that are necessary to achieve job performance and attain agency goals (NCWWI, 2010).

Continued Professional Development (CPD) – borrowed from the discipline of health care, CPD is the process of ongoing education and improvement of managers, from initial qualifying requirements and for the duration of their careers in order to

maintain competence in their practice and increase proficiency and expertise in their field (Alsop, 2008; Collin, Van der Heijden, & Lewis, 2012).

Frontline – staff closest to the work and who are deemed first responders because of their roles of consistent face-to-face contact with children and families; the term is often used interchangeably for child welfare workers and supervisors. These workers are at the lower end of the organization (Tjan, 2012)

Middle Manager – the first level of a series of supervisors who are positioned between the frontline staff and the executive level of the organization. They oversee and coordinate the work of others. They make up the largest category of managers within an organization, and they are typically referred to as *child protection managers* (Cohen, 2013).

Supervisor – person who provides direct oversight of a team of five child protection specialists who are responsible for guiding the investigation, risk assessments, and service interventions, including legal intervention, of child abuse and neglect cases. According to Hana and Potter (2012), it is in this context that the supervisor must balance the administrative, educative, and supportive roles identified by Kadushin and Harkness (2014).

Title IV-B – part of the Social Security Act comprising two subparts. Subpart one funds a range of child welfare services including those to prevent abuse and neglect, preserve and reunite families, and promote permanence for and the well-being of children in foster care. Subpart two funds promote stable and safe families (Casey Family Programs, 2010).

Title IV-E – funds provided by the federal government to states for child welfare services, including training and technical support, to the child welfare workforce (Pecora et al., 2012).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a brief history of the evolution of the child protection system, and the scope and proliferation of child abuse and neglect. The problem statement gives a synopsis of the essentiality of child protection middle managers and their lack of training and preparedness. The theoretical perspective is presented through the lens of the influential skills models of Robert Katz (1955) and Mumford et al. (2000). The significance of the proposed study provides the potential value to the field of child welfare research.

Chapter 2 presents the literature focused on training and development of middle managers in child welfare, integrating literature from amongst the fields of education, law enforcement, and health care. These texts highlight the lack of middle managers' development amongst these disciplines, more specifically child welfare middle managers, in addition to placing emphasis on the absence of studies concentrated in this area. Chapter 3 presents the research design, methodology and the procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the analysis related to the three research questions, and Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the implications of the findings, limitations, and recommendations for future study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

Research has been conducted in several areas of workforce issues that impact child protection frontline workers: education and training, recruitment and retention, standards of practice, workload, and burnout prevention (Antle & van Zyl, 2009). Arguably, the focus on these frontline staff is well warranted because they are the first responders to reports of abuse and neglect and, as stated by Potter (2009), they are frequently exposed to risks as a result of their work assignments. Oftentimes they experience secondary trauma. An understanding of the complexity of this field and the context within which the work is carried out, however, would be incomplete without the inclusion of the child protection middle managers whose role is fundamentally linked to the work of the frontline staff. Critical decisions, such as the removal of children from homes, court, and other service intervention, are coordinated with, and approved at the middle manager level. Scholars agree that the middle managers serve pivotal roles and, in child protection, they may even influence systems positively or negatively (Antle et al., 2009). Conversely, their development has not kept pace with their roles, and many lack the necessary skills to be effective. The selection, training and development practices of child protection middle managers should be of concern.

Myers (2006) suggested that there is an established hierarchy among child protection professionals that places the staff members who are *closest* to the work at the bottom of this structure, yet they have the most difficult jobs. Since Myers identified

social workers as being closest to the work, an assumption can be made that child protection managers fall into this category as well, given their proximity to the work. Child protective managers are integrally connected to the frontline staff whose work involves the assessment of the maltreatment and neglect of children. Child protective managers collaborate with child protection workers and supervisors to make critical decisions, which can have an immediate and long-term impact on the lives of children and families (Kufeldt & McKenzie, 2011). In fact, Potter (2009) emphasized that such decisions, when focused on child safety, can be *life and death*.

Over the years, this work has become progressively challenging with the increasing recognition of social problems that can lead to child maltreatment. Few managers in child protection come to their job with the management knowledge, skills, and training to prepare them for the challenge of frontline child protection management (Wilson & Tilse, 2006). Wimpfheimer (2008) made a similar claim, as Wilson and Tilse (2006), stating that novices, as well as experienced managers, are charged with doing much without the requisite training and support. This point is further supported by the findings of Preston's study (2004), which showed that there is no comprehensive management training or structure in a number of states for child protection managers (Preston, 2004).

This review is focused on the literature covering areas related to training, role preparation, and professional development of middle managers in the child welfare system. Given the underrepresentation of child welfare managers in the literature, scholarly materials and studies are drawn from the disciplines of education, law enforcement, health and business, disciplines that collaborate with child welfare around

child protection (Langley, 2010). There are also similarities between these disciplines (Blosser, Cadet, & Downs Jr., 2010; Goddard & Hunt, 2011; Knee & Folsom, 2012; Wells, 2006) and child welfare. It must be emphasized that this lack of coverage of middle managers is not unique to the field of child welfare. For example, Birken, Lee, and Weiner (2010) pointed out that the extant health services research gives little attention to middle managers within this field. Wells (2006) acknowledged that there are a number of similarities between the health care field and child welfare services. Busher, Hammersley-Fletcher, and Turner (2007) asserted that in the field of education, the literature covering middle leaders and middle leadership is relatively sparse; in addition, the literature covering education is less rich. Briggs (2005) contended that higher-education middle managers play a vital role in their field, yet, there is a lack of focus on the understanding of the role. Hogan, Bennell, and Taylor (2011) described the middle manager's role in policing as complex, challenging, and of utmost importance, increasing the need for the right fit between the role, the employee, and adequate training. Although the middle manager role in policing is essential, few studies have focused on this area (Hogan et al., 2011). Goddard and Hunt (2011) made a connection between the work conducted by police and child protection, arguing that both professions experience many challenges in similar areas, for example, Internet child exploitation.

A rich body of literature exists that is focused on the field of child welfare, much of which covers the frontline child protection workers, and increasingly supervisors. There is a dearth of information related to middle managers despite the integral role that these workers play. Empirical studies are rarely focused on middle managers in child welfare. Similarly, middle managers in other disciplines are underrepresented in the

literature in their respective fields despite their significant roles. The thematic arrangements of the peer-reviewed articles and studies are presented in the literature review: a history of the federal government's involvement with child welfare, training and leadership development, and competencies.

Review of Literature

What do managers do? This question has spanned decades, yet the answer remains elusive (McClellan & Stringer, 2011). Henry Mintzberg (1973) was one of many researchers who conducted empirical research in response to this question. Mintzberg believed that it was important to first address questions around managerial activities, their identifiable characteristics, and the variations of managerial jobs in order to determine the extent to which management is a science.

Mintzberg's (1973) landmark study included participants from various organizational levels and countries. Mintzberg combed the records of current and past managers, reviewed diaries of middle and senior managers in business to view their daily activities, in addition to observing a small sample of five chief executives in their work environment. Analyzing all of the data, Mintzberg concluded that managerial work was alike across jobs and that these executives engaged in three distinct interrelated roles that he classified into the interpersonal role, informational role, and decisional role. Each role had a specific number of responsibilities for a total of 10 basic roles. The interpersonal role included the roles of figure head, leader, and liaison. The informational role included the roles of monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson; the decisional role included entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator.

History of federal government's involvement with child welfare training.

The Children's Bureau has been in existence for more than a century. The Bureau's initial mandate was focused on infant mortality and child poverty at a time when social work was in the nascent stage, and not many formal systems of child welfare existed (Thomas, 2012). Prior to 1935, the federal government played a minor role in child welfare policy and funding. The establishment of the Children's Bureau paved the way for the Sheppard-Towner Act (U.S. Congress, 1921), which provided money for mothers and infants. The Great Depression in the 1930s was the impetus for several sweeping changes including the enactment of the Aid to Dependent Child Act (AFDC), which provided states with millions of dollars to aid poor families (Myers, 2006).

Over the years, the Children's Bureau evolved as it sought to understand the scope of the nation's public and private child welfare workforce. The Children's Bureau has taken the lead in their support (Thomas, 2012). It formed partnerships with states and child welfare advocates, as well as established a publication to inform its stakeholders. According to Thomas (2012), the earlier years of the Children's Bureau could be termed as exploratory; however, it has long passed that era and has deepened its work on child protection and child welfare topics. The Bureau, through its focus on systems, recognized the need for states to be further supported with the appropriate resources including trained staff. The emphasis was for states to build a strong workforce. The Bureau was dissatisfied with high staff turnover rates, low salaries, and high caseloads throughout the states. At the Bureau's prompting, states began to establish standards for hiring and staff development including supporting staff through social work education (Thomas, 2012).

Many states' child welfare training programs are currently funded under the Titles IV-B and IV-E programs of the Social Security Act. The eligibility for these programs requires that states submit an annual plan that provides details of the organizations' fiscal plans. As a result of IV-E funds over the years, some states have forged partnerships with universities to prepare their workforce with social work education programs.

The Bureau has continued to advance its work in keeping the focus on the continued development of a skilled workforce at the forefront. It provides support for a number of projects around the country, utilizing the findings to address areas such as workforce retention and staff recruitment. Finally, the Bureau maintains oversight of child welfare practices through Child and Family Services Reviews (CFRs), which were authorized by the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act. These reviews inform the Bureau as to how well states are meeting the federal requirement (Thomas, 2012).

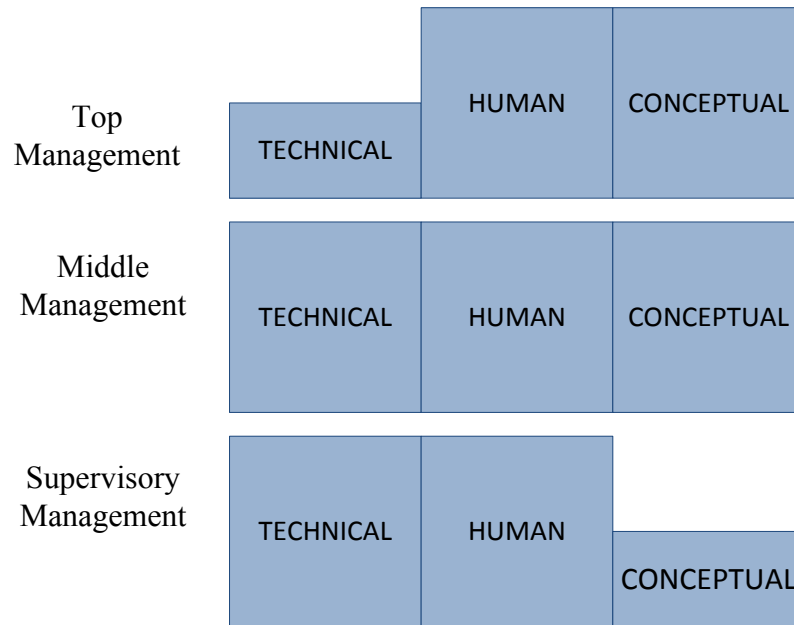
Mitchell, Walters, and Thomas (2012) subsequently summarized details about the Bureau's vision regarding the future of child welfare. The increase in abuse and neglect has pushed the Bureau to intensify its efforts to address and reduce child maltreatment with a goal of improving the health and well-being of children and families. In mapping out this vision, the Bureau envisioned a path that includes evidenced-based services, systems integration, shared outcomes, and a national research agenda. There is also recognition that a key component of *public inclusion* is important. Mitchell et al. (2012) highlighted that the vision by itself is insufficient without a workforce with the required skills.

Peterson and Van Fleet (2004) highlighted Katz's (1955) work on skills, and they called attention to its enduring relevance. To further illustrate this point, Peterson and

Van Fleet first began with a discussion on technical skills, positing that most people are hired for their technical proficiency and may be deficient in other skills when they advance to the managerial level. Mintzberg (1973) and Katz (1955) are among the scholars cited by Peterson and Van Fleet to support the argument for additional skills. Using Bandura and Schunk's (1981) research, Peterson and Van Fleet contended that a person lacking in skills and abilities will not attempt tasks above their skill level. Instead, they will perform what is familiar—the technical aspects of the job, and they will neglect the management portion. This is illustrative of what Peter, Hull, and Frey (1969) referred to as “the Peter Principle,” which states that every employee will advance to a level where he or she is no longer competent. This poses a critical issue for organizations whose recourse is to ensure that managers are equipped for their roles. When skilled managers are able to carry out their roles effectively, the organizational objectives are met, and difficult tasks are not avoided (Peterson & Van Fleet, 2004).

Peterson and Van Fleet (2004) analyzed Katz's (1955) managerial framework and cited other notable scholars and studies that supported their analysis. For example, Senge (2000) and Yukl (2002) were cited in relation to conceptual skills. Peterson and Van Fleet (2004) further supported the durability of Katz's model, citing studies conducted by Mann (1965), whose findings were similar to Katz that showed the variability of the three skills depending on the managerial level. Guglielmino's (1978) study of mid-level managers produced findings that support the indispensability of the conceptual, technical, and interpersonal skills for future managers (Figure 2.1). Last, Peterson and Van Fleet addressed the resurgence of Katz's 1955 classic article, attributing its proliferation to the reprinting by Harvard Business Review (HBR) in 1974 (Katz, 1974). Extending the

argument of the predominance of the skills approach, these scholars presented the results of their examination of “principles of management textbooks.” The findings support the continuing relevance of the skills approach.



*Figure 2.1. Katz’s Three Skills Approach. Adapted from “Skills of an Effective Administrator” by R. L., 1955, *Harvard Business Review*, 33(1), pp. 33-42. Copyright 1955 by Harvard Business Review.*

Training and professional development. Training and development (T&D) is the center of the continuous effort designed to improve employee competency and organizational performance (Mondy, 2010). Training provides learners with essential knowledge and skills for their present jobs, while development addresses learning that extends beyond one’s current job and is focused on the long-term. Organizations benefit when employees receive training and professional development as they are better prepared to keep pace with organizational changes and growth (Mondy, 2010).

The value placed on training may be calculated in terms of cost as illustrated by Nyguen's (2013) analysis of the billions of dollars spent by the federal government on public child welfare training and education. Cunningham and Hillier (2013), however, drew attention to cost from the perspective that billions of dollars are invested in formal training, but much of employee learning is gained informally. Scholars share the consensus that training and development is a key component for organizational success (Collins, Kim, & Amodeo, 2010; Mello, 2014). Across disciplines, there is a concern for the lack of preparation of middle managers. Mather, Bryan, and Faulkner (2010) acknowledged that in education, mid-level staff receive little preparation for their role, albeit, having a distinctively significant role that would suggest their need for supports are unique. Matthews, Tozer, and Walker (2004) made the claim that a number of managers in the healthcare field may not be qualified or experienced for the roles they have assumed. Managers in this profession who lack the requisite skills and development adversely impact the organization in various ways. This includes staff frustration, and in some cases, resignation. Further, Stowe, Haefner, and Behling (2010) emphasized the importance of preparing managers for their roles and responsibilities; which, if unaddressed, can adversely affect an organization.

Similar claims are made in the field of child welfare. Wilson and Tilse (2006) asserted that managers are not necessarily prepared for the roles that they assume. Further, the "contested" environment is not easily negotiated thus inhibiting managers from being proactive. The lack of attention given to managerial training further complicates the situation.

There are acknowledgments that training is integral to child welfare staff who are carrying out their roles effectively (Crosson-Tower, 2007; Preston, 2004; Wilson & Tilse, 2006). Moreover, given the demands of their roles, training and professional development are of heightened concern for managers (Reed, Cahn, & Leake, 2011).

A study conducted by Preston (2004) examined whether the skills and competencies identified in the social welfare literature have been addressed in the management training programs for recently hired child welfare supervisors. Preston evaluated the programs using Menefee and Thompson's (1994) core competency model (CCM) and analyzed 31 state-sponsored training programs. Each state was matched to the dimensions that best represented its respective program. The dimensions were: advocating, aligning, boundary spanning, communicating, evaluating, facilitating, futuring, leveraging resources, managing resources, policy practice, supervising, and teaming. According to Preston (2004), while research has shown that strategic, interpersonal, and technical expertise is essential to the success of management training programs, the strategic component is often neglected. Consequently, the possibility exists that supervisors and future managerial staff impact may be significantly lessened. Preston (2004) included 50 state agencies, and 43 agreed to participate; however, 12 states did not follow through. Nine of the remaining states provided no management training to their newly hired supervisors, and only 22 states' training was available to be analyzed. The study found that the literature on management in social welfare is too narrow and does not accurately reflect the realities and challenges that are faced by child welfare supervisors.

Preston's (2004) study highlighted the disparity in training practices among states, in addition to the need for states to thoroughly evaluate the management training programs that are currently in use, particularly since studies reveal that the strategic dimension that is said to be essential to the work, received low ratings. This raises the question of the effectiveness of the existing practices and the abilities of the managerial body, given that managers are selected from the supervisory cadre to assume the position of a middle manager.

Preston's (2004) work, *Child Welfare Management Training: Towards a Pedagogically Sound Curriculum*, points to research that suggests that few government-sponsored child welfare management trainings at the state level are based on pedagogical models of managerial work. Moreover, Preston (2005) cited findings from his earlier works in 2004 that found only two states that used a pedagogical model, and one-third of all states lacked a comprehensive mandatory management training program. Preston (2004b) pointed to studies dating back two decades that showed that 46% of child welfare managers nationwide had not received recent training at that time (Preston, 2004). In addressing this issue, Preston (2005) underscored the value of a pedagogical model for management training that is significant in providing a knowledge and skills requirement for confronting the turbulent environment and social challenges in child welfare. Preston (2005) analyzed four models of managerial work from the literature: (a) the Rational Model (RM), (b) the Human Relations Model (HRM), (c) the Resource Dependence Model (RDM), and (d) the Public Management Model (PMM).

Consequently, Preston (2005) provided several recommendations for the construction of a sound pedagogical management training curriculum. Preston (2005)

also presented a framework patterned after Quinn and Rohrbaugh's (1983) Competing Values Framework (CVF), which was derived from research that looked at primary indicators of organizational effectiveness, which is the development of people being in one of the two primary dimensions that underlie concepts of effectiveness.

Not much has changed over the years in addressing the pervasive lack of management training in the field of child welfare. This study highlights the need and the importance of preparing managers for their roles. As a result, if unaddressed, an organization can be adversely affected. Preston (2005) did not leave the argument open as to why he analyzed these four models. He admits that several other models exist; however, the ones he analyzed were suitable for practice and the education and training of managers.

Stowe et al. (2010) expanded earlier research that was focused on knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) of executive levels in hospitals. They saw the need to expand this study to the managerial segment of a healthcare system of managers, supervisors, and directors. Stowe et al. argued that in addition to fulfilling organizational goals of effective service delivery, the constant change in the healthcare system requires a prepared workforce to be able to meet those changes. These scholars presented literature for the study that suggests that managers lack the necessary skills and abilities. Added to this, in instances where there was an absence of formal preparation for the roles, managers employed a trial-and-error approach to learning, which adversely impacted the working environment. The sample population of 175 was drawn from various levels of management including supervisors and directors. Coupled with these participants, a snowball sample technique was used. Each participant was asked to forward an

invitation email to at least three other colleagues. A panel of 25 experts from large and small facilities was used to test the instrument. Participants were asked to rate the importance of a total of 50 skills and knowledge and ability concepts, which were deduced to be requisite for successful management in an organization. The variables were age, gender, education, and years of experience. The group was 78.9% female with an 88.1% representation of Caucasian females, 71% were 41 years or older, 90.8% had a bachelor's degree and above, and 70% of the sample were classified as middle managers. The overall results of the Stowe et al. quantitative study indicated that organizational skills are important, followed by business administration skills, and then interpersonal skills. The skills of communication, board relations, and fund raising were selected as next in order of importance. There were gender disparities; women rated organizational KSAs as being more important than males.

Education reforms that occurred in Hong Kong's primary school system, coupled with the effects of globalization on schools in Hong Kong, were the impetus for a research conducted by Ng and Chang (2014). The increased changes in Hong Kong's school system led to a series of plans, one being professional development and training for staff including middle managers. An exploratory study was conducted with an adopted mixed-method approach, which was a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A self-developed survey questionnaire was constructed and validated. Feedback from the respondents who participated in a pilot to test for content and face validity allowed for modification to be made to the instrument. Survey questionnaires were the primary method of data collection for the quantitative section of the study. A total of 120 survey questionnaires were distributed to a sample population

of middle managers in primary schools; the survey produced an 83% response rate. To capture the data related to the developmental needs of the managers, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six managers. The 25 items that formed the themes for the study were extracted from the literature focused on middle managers. They were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being *strongly agree* and 5 being *strongly disagree*. The study was framed by three areas: professional development needs, existing issues that middle managers encounter, and abilities. The guiding questions of the study were: (a) What is the present situation of middle leaders in Hong Kong? (b) What are their professional development needs? And (c) What are the qualities of middle leaders for quality school management? Cronbach's reliability measure was used to test for internal validity. Some of the findings proffered were a lack of opportunities afforded mid-level leaders for training as well as the need for interpersonal skills. One of the study's recommendations was for the ongoing training of middle managers.

The sampling method and the sample size were limitations to the study. The study was conducted in only one school, and, as a result, the question of generalizability was raised. Results from the qualitative method of the study may have yielded rich information that could be considered for use in further study.

Mentoring. Tareef (2013) defined a mentor as an experienced professional who serves as a supporter and guide to a less-experienced professional. The field of social work is one of three areas illuminated within literature of education and business management as presenting evidence that suggests that the work environment is positively impacted through the use of mentoring. The concept of mentoring is not new; its roots date back to hundreds of years ago (Bynum, 2015), and today researchers debate over the

preferred category of mentoring: formal, which is a pairing of an experienced employee with a less-experienced or junior colleague; and informal mentoring, which is less structured and more common (Bynum, 2015). While an effective mentoring program should be well developed and resourced, there are personal and professional benefits from mentorship that are less structured if the former cannot be effectuated.

Wilson and Tilse (2006) concurred that the field of child welfare is extremely complex and managers lack the requisite skills and training to carry out their roles. Wilson and Tilse (2006) report on a 10-month mentoring program, which was part of a management tool. During two separate occasions, 14 child protection managers were interviewed. During the second interview, more than 25 % of the participants reported that the mentoring program had significant impact on their performance, resulting in a dramatic shift in their management approaches. Participants reported an increase in personal development, including gaining greater confidence and utilizing various management techniques. This research presented several implications, including employers being better able to address the educational needs of child protection managers. It established that mentorship can be a valuable medium for insight into the managerial role and the study highlighted the pivotal role of the mentor in the mentee-mentor relationship (Wilson & Tilse, 2006). The mentoring sessions, which were evaluated, included several management strategies that workers reported impacted their practice positively. These included exploring a variety of leadership styles, discussing novel ideas, and completing mentoring agreements after each session as a means of detailing the key management implications of each meeting. The findings revealed that

an overwhelming majority of the participants acknowledged personal development and growth as the most useful components of the mentoring process.

Coaching. Increasingly, coaching has become a profitable business, as evidenced by the demands for coaching services and the duration of the coaching engagements (Grover & Furnham, 2016). In a systematic review focused on academic and business literature related to the effectiveness of coaching, Grover and Furnham (2016) looked at an array of work including published articles, conference papers, and other areas of leadership or executive coaching within organizations. The purpose of this research was to examine the effectiveness of coaching. Using a systematic approach to select quantitative studies and further assess those studies to identify only the ones focused on organizations, 52 studies met the inclusion criteria for the study. The findings show that coaching with other contributing factors was an effective medium, and there were benefits to its use in organizations. The study had a number of limitations, including the lack of a qualitative component, which would have allowed for deeper insight into the coaching phenomenon, the overreliance on self-report with a recommendation for additional forms of rating, and the exploration of the impact of coaching in various cultures (Grover & Furnham, 2016). One of the recommendations for future study is longitudinal research on coaching, given the dearth of research in that area. Moreover, information collected over a period of time following coaching intervention can provide information as to the cost and benefit (Grover & Furnham, 2016).

Technical assistance resources. Unlike private industry, child welfare agencies do not rely upon a test nor structured method by which to promote managers into their roles. As a result, many managers lack training in management or leadership, making

this a high-needs area as it relates to development and training (Antle et al., 2009). More importantly, the need to access resources that will address the training and leadership deficit is urgent. Although states, such as Kentucky and Maine, are focused on providing leadership training, others lag behind. It must be noted that, overall, most states provide some form of general managerial training. Antle et al. (2009) emphasized the need for managers to find ways by which to acquire training and education. In fact, Antle et al. suggested various avenues that managers could pursue in acquiring management training. A manager who does not possess an advanced degree may want to consider enrollment into a graduate program. A manager, who has a graduate degree but lacks requisite skills, may want to explore a post-master's program. A specialized area, such as clinical supervision, can be sought through a school that offers master's degrees in clinical social work. These are some of the recommended areas that Antle et al. (2009) suggested for middle managers to explore for skill enhancement.

Antle et al. (2009) also recommended several programs and organizations that provide valuable training resources, such as conferences, literature, and information, related to courses in specialized areas. Reputable recommended organizations included: The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2003), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), and the Children's Bureau Conference Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI). All recommended organizations are leading organizations in the field of child welfare.

National Child Work Force Institute initiative. Bernotavicz et al. (2013) presented various studies to support the claim that the field of human services lacks a unifying and comprehensive leadership model. Preston (2005) was cited as one of the

supporters of this claim. Specifically, this article uses child welfare as the focus, highlighting the urgent need for a model that can begin to address the leadership skills that are comparable to the complex environment. Bernotavicz et al. (2013) discussed the NCWWI's (2010) leadership model and some results from a training program that applied this model.

The NCWWI was created by the Children's Bureau, and it was given the charge of strengthening the nation's child welfare system through the development of leadership capacity building at every level of these systems. Through partnerships and in concert with a number of universities across states, extensive work was carried out, thus, a leadership model and leadership competency framework was established. The model's five principles, (a) adaptive, (b) collaborative, (c) distributive, (d) inclusive, and (e) outcome focused, are reflective of social work tenets. According to Bernotavicz et al. (2013), a rigorous process followed whereby the competencies were identified and selected.

This model was used to create a curriculum for the NCWWI's Leadership Academy training program, which serves child welfare systems nationwide. Its two component parts, the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM) and the Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS), are designed to serve managers and supervisors in child welfare. More than 1,800 managers and 1,000 supervisors are said to have enrolled in the academies during its first 3 years.

It is clear that a tremendous investment has been made with the undertaking of the initiative by the NCWWI and its partners. The efforts to include states in the training and the continued commitment to this long-established matter of leadership development in

child welfare should not be taken lightly. On the contrary, much more needs to be done to move this agenda forward. Many states, including New York, lag behind in preparing child welfare middle managers for an admittedly difficult role.

Dickinson's (2014) editorial promulgated the NCWWI's efforts to address the recurring themes of leadership inexperience, insufficient training, retirement, and turnover rates within child welfare through the delivery of its *researched-informed* and *competency-based* leadership training. Dickinson (2014) reported on the selection and preparation process for managers who participated in the trainings. Managers were nominated by their respective agency leadership for participation in the training. Dickson (2014) also highlighted that 406 managers from across 50 states participated in the LAMM.

The number of managers who have participated in the leadership academy is impressive; however, when looking at this number in the context of the larger child welfare system, for example New York's child welfare agency which has over 100 child protection managers, that number is small. According to the NCWWI's data, only 1% of managers from New York City attended the LAMM. The literature also indicates that the NCWWI, while it is still very active with its effort of addressing child welfare issues, has advanced its work in another direction.

Competencies. Spencer and Spencer's (1993) definition of competency includes the elements of observation, measurement of knowledge, set of skills, and the distinction between levels of performance, which are said to be common among most competencies (Parry, 1996). "Competencies can be motives, traits, self-concepts, attitudes or values, content knowledge, or cognitive or behavioral skills - any individual characteristic that

can be measured or counted reliably and that can be shown to differentiate significantly between superior and average performers, or between effective and ineffective performers” (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 4).

Wimpfheimer (2004) reported on the ground-breaking work conducted by the National Network of Social Work Managers (NNSWM) in defining competencies for social work managers. Wimpfheimer asserted that a heterogeneous and complex skill set is requisite for successful management of social service agencies. Further, the professional advancement of managers in the traditional social work agencies was frequently made without the proper training of the manager. According to Wimpfheimer (2004) there is an expectation that new managers are given a pivotal role with minimal support or skills. The NNSWM’s concerns regarding the absence of *good standards* for practice and of competencies for their effective functioning, led to the formation of a committee responsible for studying a set of competencies. The recommendation of the committee resulted in the approval of 10 competencies: (a) contemporary social and public policy issues, (b) advocacy, (c) public/community relations and marketing, (d) governance, (e) planning, (f) program development and management, (g) financial development, (h) evaluation, (i) human resource management, and (j) staff development. Wimpfheimer (2004) concluded that these competencies are necessary in today’s organizations, and they are required by agency managers. These competencies are related to the work carried out in child welfare on a daily basis.

Lin, Wu, and White (2005) asserted that nurse managers serve various roles including communication with other areas and organizations, managing nursing resources, influencing hospital strategy, and preparing plans to deal with the increased

competition within the healthcare market. There is a demand for nurse managers to do more with less as their responsibilities are increased. There are concerns that the growth in their responsibilities has not kept pace with their preparation. The proficiency of the nursing managers will require essential skills and knowledge. The empirical study conducted by Lin, Wu, and White (2005) discussed an activity competency model that can be used to investigate the perception of skills that are needed at three levels of managerial staff: top, middle, and supervisory management. A three-part questionnaire was mailed to 501 participants from various medical centers. Part one of the questionnaire was for basic data, part two managerial skills, part three management activities and skills needed. A stratified sampling was used to select 186 healthcare facilities. The researchers initially contacted each medical center by phone and explained the purpose of the study and inquired as to their willingness to participate. There were two central research questions: (a) What are the portfolios of critical management activities performed by nurse managers at different managerial levels? and (b) What are the critical skills required to perform these management activities effectively? A 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 being *strongly disagree* and 5 being *strongly agree*, was used to collect the data. The findings showed that all three levels of management, supervisors, middle managers, and top-level managers ranked the five most important and the five least important management activities the same. The five most important nurse activities were (a) nursing quality management, (b) job planning and assignment, (c) goal setting (d) job monitoring and control, (e) nursing training. The five least important nurse activities were: (a) setting nursing system policy and goals, (b) implementing doctor's

orders, (c) purchasing order and control, (d) interacting with internal and external entities and (e) recruiting

Researchers Qiao and Wang (2009), acknowledged that there is limited research that has explored the requisite competencies for middle managers, and as a result, the mixed method research they conducted was aimed at filling this gap. Two separate studies were conducted. In study one, the participants were Managerial Business Administrators (MBA) and Executive Managerial Business Administrators (EMBA). They were asked to complete a questionnaire survey to examine their perception of what competencies middle managers would need to be successful. The sample size for study one was 450 MBAs and 70 EMBA's. A total of 260 usable survey questionnaires were returned from the sample size. The research questions included: (a) What managerial competencies do you perceive to be important for the success of middle managers in China? and (b) What were the top five most frequently identified managerial competencies for middle managers in China? The survey instrument was based upon a reputable leadership competency model that had a set of 27 competencies, with a detailed definition provided for each one. The participants provided their responses using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with 1 representing not important and 5 representing *extremely important*. The participants were also asked to identify the top five most-important managerial competencies that were critical to their success.

The first study conducted by Qiao and Wang (2009) had a 51% response rate where 45% were middle managers and 10% were executives. The population was 70% male with 54% older than 30. They represented diverse ownership types including major

organizations, private, state-owned, government and non-profit. The 27 competencies were rated to be *important* or *very important*.

The second study by Qiao and Wang (2009) explored the core competencies required for successful middle managers in two companies utilizing the case study approach in as much as it was possible. One company was a joint venture; the other was a local, privately-owned technology company. The joint venture company had 13 participants, and the technology company had 29 participants. The method used was referred to as a *borrowed-and-tailored* approach, which is the use of one company's competency model by another company that customizes the model for use (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999). The competency model was divided into two phases: competency identification and competency verification. In order to identify the competencies, each of the middle managers was asked to identify two to three exemplary performers from among themselves, listing the reasons for each selection. The data were then analyzed and the top five frequently mentioned qualities were identified. Subsequently, a group of candidate competencies was identified from the leadership competency model used in study one. Following the groups' discussion and debate, middle managers voted for eight competencies ranking them in the order of importance. The critical incident technique (CIT) was employed to secure additional in-depth data on the important competencies. The findings were triangulated using CIT, a technique used to identify competencies that were not included but were essential to the company. The CIT interviews included three basic questions: What were the most common job challenges in your daily operation and how have you handled the situation? What were the most common job challenges in your daily operation and how did you usually respond? What were the most common

areas for improvement seen with new employees in our job category? A thematic analysis was done, and the critical competencies were identified.

The processes of the studies were rigorous and researchers employed reliability and validity measures. The sample sizes were different; however, both case studies identified team building and communication as critical to their function. They also identified execution as one of their top five competencies. Case one identified problem solving as one of the top five competencies; however, competency was not selected by case two; this raised the question of whether sample size impacted the outcome. The researchers also noted that, as much as possible, the process was consistent in both cases; however, based upon the findings there is no apparent impact.

Researchers Govender and Parumasur (2010), suggested that when competencies are evaluated, and deficiencies identified in a management team, an opportunity is presented for the organization to address the deficits, thereby making it possible to develop master managers. Organizational challenges are impacting the roles of the managers, compelling them to employ competencies which match the roles. The purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which managers in a public organization possessed the eight managerial competencies that were said to be vital to effective management. The competencies were: mentor role, facilitator role, monitor role, coordinator role, director role, producer role, broker role, and innovator role. The study also aimed at identifying areas in which there were managerial deficits, how to address them, and whether the competencies were related to each other. The competencies were from Robert and Quinn's Competing Values Framework. The population comprised three levels of managers: middle, senior, and top managers. The sample size of 202

participants was drawn from a group of 400 managers using a stratified random sample technique. A self-developed, self-administered, pre-coded questionnaire consisting of a biographical section and a prerecorded section of 40 questions was administered to the participants. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess the managerial roles. A factor analysis was done to test the validity of the instrument and there was also a pretest for suitability of the instrument with a pilot group.

The findings showed that managers in the public sector were good at monitoring and mentoring. The mean score for monitoring was 3.80, and for mentoring it was 3.66. The higher the mean score value, the greater the extent to which the role was being fulfilled. The data also indicated that there were deficiencies in the roles of director and facilitator. The maximum attainable score for the roles was 5. The director role scored a 3.28, while the facilitator role scored a 3.26. The analysis showed other deficiencies and areas for development (Govender & Parumasur, 2010).

The limitation of Govender and Parumasur's (2010) study was the researchers' use of a self-administered questionnaire, which could present a bit of bias. The sample was also from only one public- sector organization, and the use of the finding for a general population is a concern. A qualitative method, which would have allowed for interviews with managers, could have been beneficial.

Given the arguments of scholars from both fields, pertaining to middle managers, a parallel might be drawn between law enforcement and child welfare. Hogan et al. (2011) pointed to the following areas of police middle manager roles: (a) complexity, (b) role significance, (c) promotional processes, and (d) lack of preparedness, areas that are

repeatedly cited in the child welfare literature. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of research on middle managers in both disciplines.

Hogan et al. (2011) conducted a mixed-method study focused on the effectiveness of strategies employed for selecting and training police middle managers. A sample of 378 police officers, predominantly male, participated in the study. Of the 228 who responded to the survey and 50 participated in the semi-interviews. The self-developed Likert scale survey was constructed by a participating researcher and consisted of 25% open-ended questions and 75% closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed for *yes* or *no forced-choice* responses. The 72.88% response rate represented the various provinces. The structured interview questions built upon, clarified, and challenged the questions used in the survey. The analysis of the responses from the face-to-face interviews allowed for themes to be drawn and a content dictionary to be created. Coders trained in the use of the content dictionary analyzed the open-ended questions to establish inter-reliability.

The findings of the Hogan et al. (2011) study showed that while most participants agreed that police managers lacked training, conversely, they reported that managers with whom they have worked were effective and had transitioned well from their *rank and file* positions. The participants agreed on the factors related to effective training but disagreed about the challenges faced by the officers. Additionally, most participants acknowledged that at the onset of a promotion training is provided; however, continued training is not maintained. Overall the participants concurred that effective management was crucial in an organization.

Effectiveness of managerial leadership development. Motivated by the findings in the literature that training lagged behind the *demand curve* for leadership development and the need for a deliberate and meaningful assessment of the leadership field, Collins and Holton (2004) conducted a notable meta-analysis covering the years 1982-2001. The purpose of the analysis was to determine the effectiveness of training to improve the performance, knowledge, and expertise at the individual, team or group, or organizational levels. The researchers looked at 83 studies, conducting separate meta-analyses by research design. This study answered four questions: (a) Across studies measuring knowledge outcomes, how effective is managerial leadership development? (b) Across studies measuring expertise (or behavior) outcomes, how effective is managerial leadership development? (c) Across studies measuring system outcomes, how effective is managerial leadership development? and (d) What moderator effects can be detected for the following variables: training content, organization type, job classification level, publication type, measurement method, research design, and objective-subjective outcomes?

The findings indicated three factors were important to the effectiveness of training: the training need of the leader, the right training, and the right time of the training. The effect size for knowledge outcomes averaged from .96 to 1.37, expertise outcomes from .35 to 1.01, and the system outcomes averaged .39. The findings also indicate that managerial training intervention was effective.

There were limitations with Collins and Holton's (2004) meta-analysis. There were few empirical studies for outcomes of on-the-job training related to coaching, mentoring, or other feedback interventions, which prevented any feedback as to the

effectiveness of such interventions. The size of the sample limited the possible moderators of managerial leadership development programs.

McAllan and MacRae (2010) explored the effect that a leadership development program had on actual and prospective managers within the field of social work. The focus of the study was to gather observable data on the impact a program had, not only on the individual, but on the changes related to collaborative action. The study highlighted previous research as a springboard for assessing training and educational programs that were geared toward providing professional development for those in leadership roles. Furthermore, McAllan and MacRae evaluated the effect that programs had on individual leadership styles, the participants' staff, as well as the remedies that were implemented after identifying performance outcomes. The findings conveyed that the program had a definite influence on the individual as well as on the operations' functionality.

Regarding the importance of training evaluations, Collins (2008) highlighted the cost that is incurred by state and county child welfare systems to provide training with an end goal of high-quality service. Evaluations are important because they inform the process of decision making when identifying what trainings are important and the medium through which to conduct them. As an illustration, Collins (2008) pointed to her previous work with other researchers, Collins, Amodeo, and Clay (2007), which demonstrated that a lack of evaluation expertise, resources, or a lack of commitment in this area are contributing factors to the scarcity of evaluation of the child welfare trainings. Collins (2008) argued that while trainings are valuable, the content of trainings and the mechanics require further evaluation to determine their effectiveness. Collins reported findings of a survey in which child welfare training directors participated. The

focus was on understanding the practice for evaluating training. The sample was representative of all 50 states and had a 92% response rate. Reportedly, there was no other summary data on training evaluation in this field (Collins, 2008). Collins concluded that the training evaluation activities vary greatly from state to state, and therefore, it was quite difficult to gauge their effectiveness. While the article is not specific to managers, it can be inferred that training administered to managers was included in the evaluation.

In making their argument in support of evaluating the effectiveness of child welfare training, Collins et al. (2010) brought into the discourse the complexity of the child welfare environment. These systems are usually under resourced and are steeped in bureaucracy. Even with the efforts to implement a practice model, critical decisions are made with sparse information and within limited time constraints. Consequently, tragic mistakes can be made, and the fear of making a mistake can create an unintended culture of fear. Collins et al. (2010) conducted an in-depth review of the literature published since 1990; 14 articles met the inclusion requirement. The articles were reviewed according to training audience, the length of the training, research design, sample size, outcome measures, and the reported results. The various databases were searched to secure articles that were peer reviewed and had been published since 1990. The references of the articles were checked to possibly identify other articles for use.

There were variations between the research design, training intervention, and the results. Some provided a full description of the training intervention, but the majority did not provide this information. Five of the studies focused on child welfare or child

protective service. The findings of the Collins et al. (2010) study can aid systems in identifying trainings.

Chapter Summary

There are varying schools of thought as to who middle managers are and what they do. In spite of these permutations, there is agreement in the literature that middle managers play key roles in organizations. The importance of the child welfare managers' role and their training and preparation are not aligned; the lack of manager role preparedness across various disciplines including child welfare is a pervasive theme in the literature. Notably, child welfare is a complex field with unique challenges and effective managerial skills are critical to addressing those challenges and to meet the needs of the at-risk population served. The scarcity of studies focused on middle managers is pointed out in the literature.

This study adds to the developing yet important area of the child welfare literature, an area where there is a lack of focus, on child protection middle managers. The research design methodology and analysis are discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

This quantitative descriptive study examined the self-reported competency level and training of child protection managers working in a child welfare agency located in an urban area in the northeast region of the United States. Child protection is a core program in all government child welfare agencies, and the literature emphasizes that this sector of child welfare requires a workforce with skills to match the multitudinous social issues that confront our children and families (Langley, 2010; Pecora et al., 2012).

This study utilized a quantitative research design to answer questions concerning the participants' training, preparation, and continued professional development for their roles. This approach to the study design and analysis was appropriate in light of Gay, Mills and Airasin (2011) assertion that in a descriptive study, data are collected in order to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the existing status of the subject of the study. In conducting quantitative research, the collection of numerical data is the primary factor in seeking facts and causes of human behavior (Gay, Mills and Airasin, 2011). In this study, participants were asked to rate their levels of preparedness and their competency levels in a set of specific competencies using a 5-point Likert scale. Using a quantitative study gave the researcher a way of understanding the entire group of managers rather than a small sample that would be available in a qualitative study.

Research Questions

The research questions answered by this study were:

1. What kinds of preparation did child protection managers have prior to their management appointments, and what trainings have they received since taking on their management role?
2. How do child protection managers rate their own level of competency on selected essential competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute?
3. What is the relationship between the number of trainings and competency ratings of child protection managers?

Research Context

This study was conducted in a child welfare agency located in a densely populated urban area that has one of the largest child welfare systems in the nation, with a staff of approximately 6,000 people. The agency, and the voluntary agencies it contracts with, provides an array of services to families and children to address the varied challenges with which they are confronted. Primary services include: investigation of abuse and neglect, service intervention, prevention, protection, and legal intervention. The agency is structured hierarchically and comprises a number of divisions, each of which assumes a specialized function: administration, child protection, family court, family support, financial services, planning and measurement, youth services, and communication.

Staff in the child protection division were the focus of this study. That division comprises approximately 30% of the agency's employees who are child protection workers who respond to more than 60,000 reports of maltreatment and neglect per year. Child protection managers provide essential oversight of the work conducted by the body

of child protection workers who respond to these reports and assess the safety and risk of children who are alleged being abused and/or neglected

Child protection managers provide oversight of the work conducted by the child protective workers and supervisors. The work that child protection managers oversee consists of: (a) investigation of abuse and maltreatment, (b) case management, (c) court-ordered supervision, (d) service intervention, and (e) critical decision making. Child protection managers are assigned to community districts or *catchment areas*, so that child abuse and neglect cases for those community districts are included in the scope of their responsibility. The minimum requirement for the position of child protection manager is a baccalaureate degree and 4 years of full-time satisfactory professional social services or related experience in organizations dealing directly with children and/or adolescents. A master's degree in social work is not a requirement but a preference.

Potter's (2009) acknowledgement that safety decisions can mean life or death in child protection investigations provides the context for the roles that child protection managers carry out while collaborating with the child protection workers and their supervisors in order to make critical decisions on cases of neglect and abuse. In this division, a child protection manager's work was organized around units with each child protection manager responsible for the oversight of these units, consisting of seven child protection workers per unit plus two supervisors. Each child protection worker maintained an average caseload of 15 families.

Research Participants

The sample in the present study consisted of 83 child protection managers who were the first level in the hierarchical structure of the organization. This reflects a 74%

response rate. The first level of managers was chosen because of their location in the organizational structure; they are closest to the frontline work and are impacted by similar challenges as child protection workers, moreover their roles are essential, yet they are vastly underrepresented in the literature. The sample of managers that responded to the survey was predominantly female (75.9%) with 7% being male. African Americans were the largest ethnic group (77.1%).

Instruments Used in Data Collection

The survey for this study (Appendix A) consisted of three parts. Part one included the consent form and demographic information to identify gender, age, ethnicity, race, educational background, professional licensure, and years of experience.

Part two addressed training and professional development activities engaged in by the managers prior to, and following, their appointment to their management roles. These trainings were identified from agency's training curricula and through dialogues with other child welfare experts. Participants were asked about 11 trainings prior to management appointments and indicated whether or not they had completed each training (1 = Yes, 0 = No). Participants were asked to record any additional trainings. Similarly, they were asked to indicate if they had participated in any of 13 trainings since their management appointments. Participants were asked to record any additional trainings. Part two also included a set of statements related to role preparation, training opportunities and continued professional development. These items were all measured on a 5-point Likert type scale and assessed how prepared managers thought they were for their role at the time of their appointment (1 = Poorly, 2 = Fairly, 3 = Adequately, 4 = Very Well, 5 = Excellent), how whether they thought they had been afforded adequate

opportunities for training since their management appointment (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree), and how important ongoing professional development is to them in their role as a manager (1 = Not at all important, 2 = Slightly important, 3 = Moderately important, 4 = Very important, 5 = Extremely important).

Part three included competencies adapted from an unpublished instrument (Appendix B) developed by the Butler Institute at the University of Denver (2015) for use in the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM). These competencies are divided into five domains (Table 3.1) of the National Child Welfare Work Institute (NCWWI) Leadership Model: (a) leading change, (b) leading in context, (c) leading people, (d) leading for results, and (e) fundamental competencies.

Table 3.1

Description of Domains

Domain	Definition of Domains
Leading Change	The ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals.
Leading in Context	The ability to build collaboratives internally and with other agencies, tribal organizations, and nonprofit and private-sector organizations to achieve common goals.
Leading People	The ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals.
Leading for Results	The ability to meet organizational goals and service expectations.
Fundamental Competencies	These competencies are foundational for success in each of the domains.

Participants rated themselves on each of the competencies using a 5-point Likert type scale (1= Not at all true of me, 2 = Slightly true of me, 3 = Moderately true of me, 4 = Very true of me, 5 = Completely true of me). Items from each of the competency domains were used to calculate a mean score for each domain. These mean scores constituted ratio-level data, which is appropriate for parametric statistical procedures.

The survey was pretested with a group of five child protection managers who worked in different areas than the participants of the study. Pretesting was conducted to ascertain feedback from the group about the clarity of the survey questions, survey instructions, and to identify any other ambiguity in the survey content. The people in the group who pretested the survey did not participate in the study. Following the pretesting, the researcher briefed the executive leadership who had oversight of the population of the child protection managers during a scheduled bi-weekly meeting. The researcher obtained the division's listserv of child protection managers, which was subsequently used to identify the participants. The list was annotated to remove managers who were inactive, as a result of retirement, transfers or leave.

A final list of 112 managers was established. Cross-checking was carried out with the supervisors of each manager to ensure accuracy. This list of the participants was used to create the panel of email addresses which was subsequently used to disseminate the survey to participants. Each participant was contacted by telephone, the consent form was used (Appendix A) as a standard script to introduce the study, share the purpose, risks, and benefits to participants, address the rights of participants and the survey completion time. This approach was taken to encourage participation.

An anonymous survey link was embedded in the “Invitation to Participate” email (Appendix C), which was sent to the participants via the Qualtrics web-based system and all survey responses were collected through the Qualtrics online survey. The anonymous survey link allowed for the participants to maintain anonymity. No identifying information was collected from participants through the surveys.

A 3-week timeframe was allowed for participants to respond to the survey. A follow-up email was issued at the start of the third week from dissemination date of the survey to participants who had not yet completed the survey. This feature of notification to participants who had not completed the survey is set by default. The researcher was not able to determine which participant had not completed the survey.

Strategy for Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey were imported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which was used to conduct all statistical analysis. Prior to analyzing the data, data cleaning and data screening were undertaken to ensure the variables of interest met appropriate statistical assumptions. This included assessing missing data, univariate outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The research questions were then evaluated using frequency statistics, descriptive statistics, means, standard deviation and simple regression analyses to determine if there were significant relationships between variables of interest. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the data, relative to each research question, with summaries and charts explaining the results in details.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This study explored the relationship between training and self-assessment of professional competencies in a sample of child protection managers working in child protection. The trainings taken before and after becoming a manager were considered separately. This study is a response to the complexity of this field and the need for a skilled workforce to adequately address the needs of a vulnerable population of children. Glesson et al. (1993) pointed to concerns about the education, training, and professional development of the child welfare workforce. Subsequent studies have not included a focus on child protection managers, and the present study sought to fill that gap.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data were downloaded from Qualtrics, the online platform used to conduct the surveys. The data were imported into SPSS (version 22) for data analysis. Frequency statistics, descriptive statistics, and regression analyses were used to evaluate the three research questions:

1. What kinds of preparation did child protection managers have prior to their management appointments, and what trainings have they received since taking on their management role?
2. How do child protection managers rate their own level of competency on selected competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute?

3. What is the relationship between number of trainings and competency ratings of child protection managers?

Displayed in Table 4.1 is a summary of the variables and analyses used to evaluate the three research questions.

Table 4.1

Variables and Statistical Tests Used to Evaluate Research Questions 1-3

Research Question	Criterion Variable	Predictor Variable	Analysis
RQ1	Prior and Post Managerial Training		Frequency Statistics
RQ2	Competency Ratings		Descriptive Statistics
RQ3	Competency Ratings	Number of Trainings	Linear Regression

Note. Competency ratings = Leading in Change, Leading in Context, Leading People, Fundamentals, and Leading for Results

Data Cleaning

Prior to running any statistical analyses, the data were screened to ensure they met the assumptions of the statistical tests that would be used. The data were screened for missing data and univariate outliers. Missing data were investigated using frequency counts, and several cases were found. Specifically, those that had one to two missing scores on any one particular criterion variable (Leading in Change, Leading in Context, Leading People, Fundamentals, and Leading for Results) had their missing scores replaced by each of the survey questions' series mean so as to retain as many participants as possible (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, six participants had three or more missing scores and were removed from all further analyses. Thus, 83 responses were received, and 77 were evaluated by the regression analyses ($N = 77$).

The data were screened for univariate outliers by transforming raw scores to z-scores and comparing z-scores to a critical value of +/- 3.29, $p < .001$ (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Z-scores that exceed this critical value are more than three standard deviations away from the mean and thus represent outliers. The distributions were evaluated, and no cases with univariate outliers were found. Thus, 83 responses from participants were received, and 77 were evaluated by the regression analyses ($N = 77$). Descriptive statistics of the criterion and predictor variables are displayed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics of the Predictor and Criterion Variables

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Prior Training	0.0	8.0	3.6	2.0	0.3	-0.4
Post Training	1.0	9.0	4.4	2.1	0.1	-1.0
Leading in Change	2.1	4.8	3.6	0.6	-0.1	-0.4
Leading in Context	2.0	5.0	3.9	0.7	-0.6	0.8
Leading People	2.3	5.0	4.1	0.5	-0.4	1.4
Fundamentals	3.4	5.0	4.3	0.4	-0.1	-0.8
Leading for Results	2.4	5.0	3.3	0.5	-0.3	0.5

Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was conducted to determine if the five criterion variables (Leading in Change, Leading in Context, Leading People, Fundamentals, and Leading for Results) were sufficiently reliable. Reliability analysis allows one to study the properties of measurement scales and the items that compose the scales (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cronbach's alpha (α) reliability analysis procedure calculated a reliability

coefficient that ranges between 0 and 1. The reliability coefficient is based on the average inter-item correlation. Scale reliability is assumed if the coefficient is $\alpha \geq .70$. Results from the tests found that all variable constructs were sufficiently reliable ($\alpha > .70$). Table 4.3 displays summary statistics of the reliability analyses conducted on the five criterion variables.

Table 4.3

Summary of Reliability Analyses Conducted on the Five Criterion Variables

Criterion Variable	# of Items	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Leading in Change	7	.79
Leading in Context	3	.82
Leading People	6	.74
Fundamentals	8	.77
Leading for Results	10	.89

Test of Normality

Before the research questions was analyzed, basic parametric assumptions were assessed. That is, for the criterion (Leading in Change, Leading in Context, Leading People, Fundamentals, and Leading for Results) and predictor variables (summation of prior training types and summation of post training types), assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were tested. Linearity and homoscedasticity were evaluated using scatterplots, and no violations were observed. To test if the distributions were normally distributed the skew and kurtosis coefficients were divided by the skew/kurtosis standard errors, resulting in z-skew/z-kurtosis coefficients. This technique

was recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Specifically, z-skew/z-kurtosis coefficients exceeding the critical range between -3.29 and +3.29 ($p < .001$) may indicate non-normality. Thus, based on the evaluation of the z-skew/z-kurtosis coefficients, no variables exceeded the critical range. Therefore, the variables were found to be normally distributed, and the assumption of normality was not violated. Table 4.4 displays the skewness and kurtosis statistics of the criterion and predictor variables.

Table 4.4

Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics of the Criterion and Predictor Variables

Variable	Skewness	Skew Std. Error	z-skew	Kurtosis	Kurtosis Std. Error	z-kurtosis
Prior Training	0.27	0.27	0.97	-0.39	0.54	-0.72
Post Training	0.08	0.27	0.30	-0.96	0.54	-1.78
Leading in Change	-0.08	0.27	-0.30	-0.44	0.54	-0.82
Leading in Context	-0.46	0.27	-1.69	0.82	0.54	1.52
Leading People	-0.43	0.27	-1.56	1.39	0.54	2.57
Fundamentals	-0.09	0.27	-0.34	-0.84	0.54	-1.55
Leading for Results	-0.27	0.27	-0.97	0.50	0.54	0.92

Demographics

Data were collected from 83 child protection middle managers. As shown in Table 4.5, the majority of the participants were female 75%, ($n = 63$), 8.4% were male ($n = 7$), and 15.7% preferred not to provide their sex ($n = 13$). The largest representation of respondents was between 45-54 years old at 50.6% of the total ($n = 42$), followed by

respondents in the age range of 35-44 years at 31.3% ($n = 26$), and 11 were between 55 and 64 years old at 13.3% ($n = 11$) of the total of the participants.

Table 4.5

Frequency and Percentage Statistics of Participants' Gender and Age Group

Demographic	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	7	8.4
Female	63	75.9
Not Declared	13	15.7
Total	83	100.0
Age Group		
25-34 years	4	4.8
35-44 years	26	31.3
45-54 years	42	50.6
55-64 years	11	13.3
Total	83	100.0

Note. Total $N = 83$

The frequency and percentage of the participants' education and race was tabulated (Table 4.6). The majority of participants (68.7%, $n = 57$) possessed a Master's degree in Social Work, and 15% ($n = 13$) completed course work beyond the master's level. One participant reported having a doctoral degree. More than three-quarters of the participants (77.1%, $n = 64$) described themselves as African American/Black, 9.6% ($n = 8$) described themselves as Latino/Hispanic, and fewer than 5% identified themselves as White. A small percent (8.4%, $n = 7$) identified themselves with more than one race, and the majority were of Caribbean descent.

Table 4.6

Frequency and Percentage of the Level of Education and Race Level of Education and Race

Demographic	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
Level of Education		
Bachelor's Degree	6	7.2
Course Work Beyond Bachelor's Degree	5	6
Master's Degree	57	68.7
Course Work Beyond Master's Degree	13	15.7
Doctoral Degree	1	1.2
Missing	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0
Race		
African American / Black	64	77.1
White	4	4.8
Hispanic	8	9.6
Other	7	8.4
Total	83	100.0
Race (other)		
Caribbean	3	3.6
Haitian	1	1.2
West Indian	2	2.4
Missing	1	1.2
Total	7	8.4

Note. *N* = 83

As shown in Table 4.7, the participants were asked to identify any professional licensure or certification that they held. The results found that 50.65% (*n* = 42) held some form of licensure, and of those 69% (*n* = 29) were licensed Master Social Workers

(LMSWs). Additionally, 10.8% ($n = 9$) held certificates in either supervision or administration, although these figures were not mutually exclusive.

Table 4.7

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Type of License/Certification

Type of License/Certification	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Hunter College Certificate in Supervision	5	6.0
Hunter College Certificate in Administration	4	4.8
Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW)	29	34.9
Licensed Clinical Social Work (LCSW)	2	2.4
Licensed/Certificate in Counseling	1	1.2
Other		
JD	1	1.2
MSW	1	1.2
NYS HIV Pre-Post Test Counselor	1	1.2
Registered nurse	1	1.2
School Social Worker	2	2.4
SIFI	1	1.2

Note. Total $N = 83$

The majority of the participants had no previous managerial experience prior to becoming a child protection manager (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8

Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Prior Experience Prior to Becoming an Employee

Prior Managerial Experience before ACS	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Response		
Yes	7	8.4
No	75	90.4

Note. Total $N = 83$

Table 4.9 describes the average number of years the participants had spent in various positions leading up to and including their current management position. The participants spent an average of 11 years ($SD = 8.9$) as a child protection specialist before advancing to the level supervisor; an average of 3 years ($SD = 3.2$) as a Level I supervisor; nearly 5 years ($SD = 3.7$) as a Level II supervisor; and an average of almost 7 years ($SD = 5.0$) as a manager.

Table 4.9

Years Spent at Different Levels in Child Protective Services

Experience	<i>n</i>	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Child Protection Worker	82	0	32	11.16	8.9
Level 1 Supervisor	83	0	15	3.01	3.2
Level 2 Supervisor	82	0	20	4.84	3.7
Manager	82	1	20	7.15	5.0

Note. Total $N = 83$

The data suggest that the participants did not perceive themselves as being well prepared for their roles at the time of their appointment. As shown in Table 4.10, nearly 70% ($n = 58$) of the participants indicated that they were either fairly or adequately prepared; only 18% ($n = 15$) were either very well or excellently prepared; and 12% ($n = 10$) were poorly prepared.

As shown in Table 4.11, 49.4% ($n = 41$) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had been afforded adequate training opportunities since becoming child protection managers. Slightly more than one third, 38.6%, were neutral on this question and only 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Table 4.10

Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 18: At the time of your appointment, how prepared were you?

Rating	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Poorly	10	12.0
Fairly	28	33.7
Adequately	30	36.1
Very well	12	14.5
Excellent	2	3.6

Note. Total $N = 83$

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 19: I have been afforded adequate opportunities for training since my appointment as a child protection manager.

Rating	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Poorly	3	3.6
Fairly	7	8.4
Adequately	32	38.6
Very well	34	41.0
Excellent	7	8.4

Note. Total $N = 83$

As shown in Table 4.12, 88% of the participants indicated that ongoing professional development was extremely or very important to their roles as manager. Only 1% ($n = 1$) indicated that ongoing professional development was unimportant.

Table 4.12

Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Responses to Survey Question 20: How important is ongoing professional development to you in our role as a child protection manager?

Rating	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Not at All Important	1	1.2
Slightly Important	1	1.2
Very Important	8	9.6
Moderately Important	33	38.6
Extremely Important	41	49.4

Note. Total $N = 83$

Analysis of Research Question 1: What kind of training did child protection managers have prior to and since becoming managers? As displayed in Table 4.13, 74 (89.2%) of the participants had the Supervisory Common Core training; 89.2% ($n = 74$), which was two thirds of the participants, completed the Professional Development Program (PDP) for Distance Learning (62.7%, $n = 52$) prior to their appointment as a manager. Nine participants provided additional types of trainings that they received prior to their appointment. See Appendix D, Table 1 for the additional trainings reported by the participants and Table 2 for specific training descriptors.

As displayed in Table 4.14, after becoming a child protection manager nearly half of the participants received mentoring training 48.2%, ($n = 40$), professional development program distance learning (51.8%, $n = 43$), and/or attended the Leadership Academy at Hunter College (50.6%, $n = 42$). Additionally, 60.2% attended Tim Nolan's manager training ($n = 50$) and 63.9% received coaching ($n = 53$). Again, 24 participants provided

additional types of trainings that they received after their appointment and these responses are displayed in Appendix D, Table 3 for the additional trainings reported by participants and Table 4, also in Appendix D, for specific training descriptors.

Table 4.13

Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Training Received Prior to Their Management Appointment

Training Types Prior to Appointment	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
Supervisory Common Core	74	89.2
Tim Nolan's Supervisory Trainings	19	22.9
Work shop at Regional Conference	9	10.8
Workshop at National conference	3	3.6
Continuing Education Workshop	24	28.9
Professional Development Program Distance Learning (PDP)	52	62.7
Coaching	42	50.6
Mentoring	30	36.1
Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS)	17	20.5
Post Master's in Supervision Courses	15	18.1
Post Master's in Administration Courses	13	15.7

Note. Total *N* = 83

Table 4.14

*Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Training Received After Their Child**Protection Management Appointment*

Types of Training after Appointment	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
New York City Leadership Institute for Middle Managers	24	28.9
Professional Development Program Distance Learning	43	51.8
New York City Management Academy	15	18.1
Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM) National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI)	13	15.7
Leadership Academy –Local Social Work School	42	50.6
Graduate course work in management	22	26.5
Graduate course work in supervision	24	28.9
Workshops at Regional Conference	15	18.1
Workshops at National Conference	4	4.8
Continuing Education Workshops	27	32.5
Tim Nolan's Manager Training	50	60.2
Coaching	53	63.9
Mentoring	40	48.2
Other type of training	24	28.9

Note. Total *N* = 83

Analyses of Research Question 2: How do child protection managers rate their own level of competence on selected competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute? The managers' self-ratings of their competency in five leadership areas were evaluated using descriptive statistics. Fundamental items had the highest mean ($M = 4.25$), and the lowest mean was Leading in Change ($M = 3.6$). All of these figures reflect, on average, a moderate rating of their own skills. The greatest

variation in scores was for Leading in Context (SD = .65917) and Leading Change (SD = .63070). These two had the largest standard deviation. The least variation was for the Fundamental Items. The participants gave very similar answers (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15

Descriptive Statistics: Mean Ratings for the Five the Leadership Domains

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Leading in Change Items	83	2.14	4.86	3.60	.63
Leading in Context Items	80	2.00	5.00	3.87	.66
Leading People Items	83	2.33	5.00	4.06	.48
Fundamental Items	83	3.38	5.00	4.26	.42
Results Items	83	2.40	5.00	3.90	.56
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the number of trainings and competence ratings of child protection managers? Regression analyses were used to determine if any significant relationships existed between the participants' number of trainings and competency ratings. Five regression analyses were conducted for the number of trainings prior to their appointments, and five were conducted for the number of trainings after their appointments. The predictor variables were the number of trainings the participants had experienced before and after their management appointment, respectively. The criterion variables were the five different leadership competencies.

Training Pre-Management and Leadership Competencies

Regression analyses were run to determine if any significant relationships existed between the participants' number of trainings prior to their managerial appointments and their competency ratings. As indicated in Table 4.16, only one of the relationships, Leading in Change, was significant. However, the R^2 for this domain indicates that the effect of the number of trainings on the ratings in this competency domain was weak. Only 5% of the variability in the ratings can be attributed to the number of pre-appointment trainings.

Table 4.16

Regression Analyses: Trainings Prior to Appointment as a Child Protection Manager

Dependent Variable	R	R^2	Standard Error	F	df1	df2	Sig. (p)
Leading in Change	0.23	0.05	0.58	4.03	1	75	0.05
Leading in Context	0.09	0.01	0.65	0.56	1	75	0.46
Leading People	0.03	0.00	0.48	0.05	1	75	0.82
Fundamentals	0.06	0.00	0.41	0.24	1	75	0.63
Leading for Results	0.18	0.03	0.53	2.64	1	75	0.11

Training Post-Management and Leadership Competencies

Regression analyses were used to determine if any significant relationships existed between the participants' number of trainings after being appointed a manager and their competency ratings for Leading in Change, Leading in Context, Leading People, Fundamentals, and Leading for Results. As shown in Table 4.17, there were no

significant relationships between the number of trainings and each of the five competency domains.

Table 4.17

Regression Analyses: Training After Appointment as a Child Protection Manager

Dependent Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Std. Error	F	df1	df2	Sig. (p)
Leading in Change	0.17	0.03	0.59	2.24	1	75	0.14
Leading in Context	0.07	0.01	0.65	0.41	1	75	0.53
Leading People	0.06	0.00	0.48	0.24	1	75	0.63
Fundamentals	0.01	0.00	0.41	0.01	1	75	0.91
Leading for Results	0.08	0.01	0.54	0.55	1	75	0.47

Summary

The findings show that participants were predominantly African American females who varied in the numbers and kinds of trainings they attended prior and after they were appointed to the role of manager. The three most-attended trainings prior to appointment were the Supervisory Common Core, which had the largest number of participants; professional development distance learning; and coaching. More than 50% of participants attended these trainings. The three-most attended trainings following the participants' appointments were Tim Nolan's Management Training, followed by the Hunter Leadership Academy training, and coaching. The majority of the managers reported being either fairly or adequately prepared.

The participants rated themselves between moderately and very skilled on the overall competency items. Taking an average of all of the competencies across the five domains, the average score was 3.94 (Appendix D, Table 5). The number of trainings the participants had before and after becoming a manager did not predict the self-ratings of leadership competencies. Chapter 5 presents a further discussion of the data, making a connection to the literature, and the researcher's experience having served in the capacity at the various level/positions included in the study. The limitations, implications, and recommendation are also included in this Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This cross-sectional study examined the training that the middle managers in child protection received, their self-assessment of leadership competencies identified by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and the relationship between the number of trainings the middle managers participated in and those self-assessments. The sample was drawn from middle managers in the Division of Child Protection of New York's child welfare system and consisted of 83 completed surveys.

The study found that a wide variety of trainings were accessed before and after the participants became managers. This included approximately half or more of the participants receiving mentoring/coaching, participating in distance learning, and/or attending leadership trainings offered by a local social work school or contracted training establishments. The managers rated themselves as moderately effective in the areas of leading for change, leading in context, leading people, leading for results, and fundamental leadership skills. The data did not show significant relationships between those self-assessment ratings and the number of trainings they had participated in prior to or after becoming managers.

Implications of Findings

The findings show that the sampled population was not very diverse in terms of gender and ethnic composition. Mainly, the participants were women. This finding is in accordance with Potter's (2009) observation that the child welfare workforce is

predominantly female. The greatest majority of the participants was African American with a small number of Hispanics and even fewer Whites. Child welfare agencies serve diverse communities/populations. Overwhelmingly, these managers were drawn from the agency's own workforce, and to the extent that that this sample reflects the larger population of the child welfare workforce, it indicates that the workforce is lacking in diversity. This may impact the relationships the workforce can build with the communities it serves, and it may impact its ability to provide culturally relevant services. Developing a diverse workforce that reflects the clients served may require intentional efforts in recruitment.

The number of social work degree holders was highest among the participants, and although the degree and certifications are relevant to the field, it was not a requirement for the participants' role in the study, but it was a preference for the position. Researchers Antle et al. (2009) and Scannapieco and Connell-Carrick (2007) argued that a social work degree, by itself, is not sufficient to inform managers to be proficient in their roles, and they need additional skills. Mitchell et al. (2012), in discussing the Children's Bureau future vision for child welfare, made a similar assertion, that social workers' roles are not necessarily an attestation to the necessary skills required for a child welfare work. Mitchell et al. admitted that social work skills may be a part of the approach, but they are insufficient. The high number of middle managers with social work degrees may indicate that credentialing, rather than skills, is being given preference in hiring. This should be examined in future research to clarify where there is and is not overlap between the degrees held and the skills demonstrated.

The majority of the participants had more than one type of leadership training. No more than one participant per identified license or certification was reported (less than 1% participation). Only nine participants reported having any managerial experience before taking on this role, further supporting the claim of researchers Antle et al. (2009), Scannapieco and Connell-Carrick (2007), Wilson and Tilse (2006), and Wimpfheimer (2004) who argued that many managers have taken on their roles without the benefit of the necessary trainings. To the extent that this sample is representative of the management in the field of child welfare, it indicates that more emphasis needs to be placed on developing management and supervision skills through training offerings, and perhaps training should be required specifically in these areas.

The three most frequently reported trainings prior to appointment as a manager were Common Core, distance learning, and coaching. Following appointment as a manager, the three most frequently reported trainings were contracted management training, mentoring, and a local social work school (Leadership Academy). The participants were asked to record any training beyond the top three, resulting in 24 additional trainings being identified. This suggests that there was no consistent set of training courses that the participants received apart from the top three trainings. In addition, the findings were similar to those in the literature that addressed the inconsistencies in the ways public child welfare organizations train and promote its management personnel (Antle et al., 2009; Preston, 2004; Salus, 2004) and the lack of a defined structure to train and then to promote. The findings in this study indicate that there was not a structured way of providing the participants with training. While individuals may have different training needs and interests, the organizational needs of a

large and under-resourced child welfare system may be better served by developing essential skills from a similar framework, rather than the existing scattershot approach.

The number of years spent at the various levels leading up to the level of manager provided information on the years of experience of the participants. The study shows that most of the child protection managers spent an aggregate number of 19 years between the levels of child protection worker and supervisor levels 1 and 2. This finding indicates that the participants were experienced and stable, given the number of years of employment. This stability and experience is a benefit to the manager and the organization, and they can be capitalized through ensuring that those managers are adequately supported in their professional development and by using shared frameworks for leadership that provide consistency across the system.

Nearly three quarters of the participants (70%) felt that they were only fairly or just adequately prepared at the time they were appointed. Only 18% ($n = 15$) felt that they were very well or excellently prepared. These self-ratings of preparedness offer further support for the need for more leadership training for rising managers.

The findings indicate that there was no relationship between the number of trainings and the self-ratings of leadership competencies. This indicates that it is not merely participating in trainings that makes middle managers feel prepared and competent as leaders in their professional positions. Other factors must be involved in developing competencies. While this study cannot speak to what those factors might be, a first step may be to look at the content of the trainings and the extent to which they deliver information versus develop skills.

Limitations

The sample size was a limitation. With a 74% response rate, it is reasonable to believe that the sample was an acceptable representation of middle managers in the child protection system in a large urban city. However, the sample size of 83 participants and 77 surveys that could be used in the regression analyses reduced the statistical power. There may have been significant relationships that were not detected in this study but that, with a larger sample size and more statistical power, would have been detected.

The use of a survey questionnaire provided important data; however, a mixed methodology that supplemented the survey with qualitative interviews would have provided more details on how the participants experienced the trainings they participated in, including the perceived quality of the instruction, relevance of the content to their professional roles, and impact on their skill development. This would have provided insight into some of the possible factors beyond the number of trainings that may impact the development of competencies. Additionally, interviews would have allowed for better understanding of the contexts in which the managers were working. It might be that there are organizational or contextual barriers to feeling and demonstrating competence that go beyond what can be addressed by training individual managers. The findings show that there was no significant relationship between training and the participants' rating of the competencies, thus interviewing the participants would have allowed the researcher to discuss the trainings they had received.

The study looked at participants' self-reports of their perception of their competency. However, self-perceptions do not always match actual competency, as demonstrated by work performance. It is possible that the participants felt less

competent—or more competent—than a behavioral measure could have shown. Without behavioral measures, it is impossible to know how well the self-ratings reflected the managers' actual performance.

Finally, the participants' bias may have had an impact on how they rated the competencies. According to Donaldson and Grant-Vallone (2002), participants generally want to be viewed in a positive light, and as result, there is a tendency to under-report negative behaviors. In addition, there is a high probability of bias in self-reporting in organizational behavior research, because participants are not fully convinced that the organization will not discover how they responded to the questions.

Recommendations

Most of the participants reported being moderately prepared for their roles. There are several key recommendations that can be made to the organization. These include: developing a transitional model for newly appointed managers, with a component that includes management training and ongoing development for all managers; conducting a needs assessment of newly appointed managers to develop individual plans for training and other methods of development; and including an assessment of the trainings to share with the training division of the organization. The literature shows that the evaluation of training is an important aspect considering the financial investment and the desired outcome of highly skilled staff. This aspect of evaluating trainings is often absent in the child welfare systems (Collins, 2008; Collins et al., 2010). Future study should employ a mixed methodology, to further address the participants' perception of training.

Conclusion

There is ample literature that addresses the complexities of the child welfare field. Research vividly illustrate the challenges within the field and suggest that child welfare is among the most complex of social work environments (Leitz, 2010, Lizano & Barak, 2012). Conversations about the education and training of child welfare workers is not new, however, as the challenges increase in the field, and the focus on the skills of child welfare workers also increases. Managers in child protection have been absent from the studies in spite of their significant role. This researcher sought to fill the gap.

The findings were consistent with the literature in that the trainings that the participants received prior and after assuming their roles were varied, and only three sets of trainings were common among the participants. Child welfare requires a multitude of skills, this small number of trainings raises the question of proficiency of the managers, the quality of the trainings, and the preparedness of the managers, given that most of the participants reported having no previous managerial experience after taking on their role, and not many reported having any managerial training.

In line with the theoretical perspective of Katz (1955) and Mumford et al., (2000), the skills can be developed with the right intervention. Moreover, the data confirmed that the participants were an experienced body, because of the number of years they spent at various levels before advancing to the managerial level. The skills model addresses the element of experience that is acquired while on the job, which is an opportunity for the organization to consistently develop the capacity of its managers, through a deeper focus on their preparedness and sustainability.

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Appendix A

Middle Manager Training and Development (MMTD) Survey Accessed through Qualtrics Link

Q1

St. John Fisher College

Informed Consent

Title of study: Essential in the Middle: Training, Preparation and Development of Child Protection Middle Managers

Name of researcher: Jacqueline Jeffrey

Dissertation Chairperson: Dr. Sandye Johnson Phone: _____

Purpose of study: To explore the competency level of middle managers in an urban child welfare system to determine their level of competence related to their preparation and training for their roles. The study will explore the extent, to which these Child Protection Managers possess competencies identified for child welfare leadership by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institution (NCWWI).

Survey Completion Time: Approximately 25 minutes

Risks and Benefits: There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this study. The main benefit is to have your responses to inform the work that is being conducted around strengthening of the managerial training and development infrastructure.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: No information which identifies you as a participant will be collected. In addition, the Qualtrics system, which will be utilized to conduct the survey, provides "anonymous survey link", a feature for anonymity which will be used for this study.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.
5. Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

Please note that the findings from this study will be shared with the Administration for Children's Services for future training purposes.

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher listed above.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of St. John Fisher College has reviewed this project. For any concerns regarding this study and/or if you experience any physical or emotional discomfort, you can contact Jill Rathbun by phone at _____ or by email at: irb@sjfc.edu.

Q2 Please click "yes" to complete the survey, and "no" to decline

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

Q3 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q4 What category below includes your age?

- 25-34 years (1)
- 35-44 years (2)
- 45-54 years (3)
- 55-64 years (4)
- 65 and above (5)

Q5 Do you identify as Hispanic/Latino/Chicano?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q6 Race What describes your race?

Please check all that apply

- African- American/Black (1)
- Asian/Pacific Islander (2)
- Native American/Native Alaskan (3)
- White (4)
- other (5) _____

Q7 Education What is the highest degree or level of college have you completed?

- Associates Degree (1)
- Bachelor's Degree (2)
- Course work beyond Bachelor (3)
- Master's Degree (4)
- Course work beyond Masters (5)
- Doctoral Degree (6)

Q8 Professional License or certification currently held

- Hunter College Certificate in Supervision (1)
- Hunter College Certificate in Administration (2)
- Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW) (3)
- Licensed Clinical Social Work (LCSW) (4)
- License or certificate in counseling (5)
- List any other professional licensure or certification held (6) _____

Q9 How many years' experience did you have as a child protective specialist in Administration for Children's Services?

- Click to write response (1) _____

Q10 How many years of experience do you have as a level one child protective specialist supervisor in Administration for Children's Services?

- Click to write response (1) _____

Q11 How many years' experience do you have as a level two child protective specialist supervisor in Administration for Children's Services?

- Click to write response (1) _____

Q12 How many years' experience do you have as a child protective manager with the Administration for Children's Services?

- Click to write response (1) _____

Q13 Prior to your employment with the Administration for Children's Services did you have other managerial experience?

- If yes, how long? (1) _____
- No (2)

Q14 Training Rate all of the following training and or professional development activities in which you have participated since becoming a child protective manager. If you did not participate in an activity check did not participate.

	Did not participate (1)	Not helpful (2)	Slightly helpful (3)	somewhat helpful (4)	Very helpful (5)	Extremely helpful (6)
New York City Leadership Institute for Middle Managers (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional Development Program Distance Learning (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New York City Management Academy (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership Transformation (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate course work in management (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate course work in supervision (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workshops at Regional Conference (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Workshops at National Conference (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Continuing Education Workshops (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tim Nolan's Manager Training (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coaching (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mentoring (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q15 List any additional training in which you participated since your appointment as a child protective manager that was not included in the list above

Click to write your responses (1) _____

Q16 You have just rated the training and professional development activities in which you participated since you became a child protective manager, now rate the training and leadership activities which you engaged in before becoming a child protective manager

	Did not participate (1)	Not helpful (2)	Slightly helpful (3)	Somewhat helpful (4)	Very helpful (5)	Extremely helpful (6)
Supervisory Common Core (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tim Nolan's Supervisory Trainings (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work shop at Regional Conference (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workshop at National conference (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Continuing Education Workshop (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional Development Program Distance Learning (PDP) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coaching (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mentoring (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership Academy for Supervisors (LAS) (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post master's in supervision courses (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post master's in administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

courses (11)						
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Q17 List any additional training and or leadership activities that are not part of the list above that you engaged in before becoming a child protective manager

○ Click to write your responses (1) _____

Q18 Role Preparation	Poorly (1)	Fairly (2)	Adequately (3)	Very Well (4)	Excellent (5)
At the time of your appointment, how prepared were you for your role as a child protective manager? (1)	○	○	○	○	○

Q19 Training Opportunities	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I have been afforded adequate opportunities for training since my appointment as a child protective manager (1)	○	○	○	○	○

Q20 Ongoing Development	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
How important is ongoing professional development to you in your role as a child protective manager? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 Think about your current work as a child protective manager, then indicate how well each of the following statements describe you as a manager

Q22 Leading in Change	Not at all true of me (1)	Slightly true of me (2)	Moderately true of me (3)	Very true of me (4)	Completely true of me (5)
I encourage new ideas and innovations (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I design and implement new and cutting edge programs/ and or processes in my area (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider how local, state, and national policies and trends might affect the agency (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I readily adapt to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I implement plans consistent with the long-term interests of the agency (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I influence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>others in the agency to translate vision into action (6)</p> <p>I build consensus with staff around proposed systemic or practice changes (7)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q23 Leading in Context	Not at all true of me (1)	Slightly true of me (2)	Moderately true of me (3)	Very true of me (4)	Completely true of me (5)
I collaborate across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I build consensus with partners by considering input from various parties (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I develop trust among various parties involved in a negotiation process (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Leading People	Not at all true of me (1)	Slightly true of me (2)	Moderately true of me (3)	Very true of me (4)	Completely true of me (5)
I manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I provide my staff with opportunities for career development, including mentoring, coaching and training (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I give people the right amount of freedom and choice in determining how to do their work (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I encourage people to work collaboratively to achieve goals (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I foster an inclusive environment that values all types of diversity and opinion (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I build a diverse workforce that demonstrates a variety of skills (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q25 Fundamental	Not at all true of me (1)	Slightly true of me (2)	Moderately true of me (3)	Very true of me (4)	Completely true of me (5)
I participate in continual professional development (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I communicate effectively with all levels of staff through various methods (oral presentations, written documents, etc.) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I set high standards of performance and strive to achieve them (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I behave in an honest, fair, and ethical manner (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I stay calm and clear- headed under high stress or during a crisis (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I set a personal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

example of what I expect from others (7) I show a commitment to serve the public (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q26 Leading for Results	Not at all true of me (1)	Slightly true of me (2)	Moderately true of me (3)	Very true of me (4)	Completely true of me (5)
I hold staff accountable for high quality, timely, and results (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I hold myself accountable and accept responsibility for mistakes (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I lead with a result-oriented approach (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I ask "what can we learn?" when things don't go as expected (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I ensure the delivery of high-quality services (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make well-informed and timely decisions (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I position the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I take	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives (8)</p> <p>I set priorities and determine resources to develop action plans for addressing program issues (9)</p> <p>I synthesize information from internal and external sources to develop action plans for addressing program issues (10)</p>	○	○	○	○	○
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Appendix B

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (NCWWI)

Unpublished instrument developed by the Butler Institute at the University of Denver (2015) for use in the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM)



The first part of the assessment asks Managers to rate themselves on competencies within the four Domains of the NCWWI Leadership Model using a 4-point Likert Scale. *(All Managers will complete the self-rating of the Leadership scale, however, only those randomly assigned to the 360 group will get feedback from other reporters. This measure will be administered at baseline, before the LAMM training, and again at 12 months.)*

NCWWI LEADERSHIP MODEL COMPETENCIES FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REPORTER ASSESSMENT

Response Scale: 1-Almost Never 2-Occasionally 3-Usually 4-Almost Always		
	Domain	Competency
Encourages new ideas and innovations	Leading Change	Creativity and innovation
Designs and implements new and cutting edge programs and/or processes	Leading Change	Creativity and innovation
Considers how local, state, and national policies and trends might affect the agency	Leading Change	External awareness
Readily adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles	Leading Change	Flexibility
Implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the agency	Leading Change	Strategic thinking
Influences others in the agency to translate vision into action	Leading Change	Vision
Builds consensus with staff around proposed system or practice changes	Leading Change	Vision
Collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals	Leading in Context	Partnering

Builds consensus with partners by considering input from various parties	Leading in Context	Political acumen
Develops trust among various parties involved in a negotiation process	Leading in Context	Influencing/negotiating
Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner	Leading People	Conflict management
Provides opportunities for career development, including staff mentoring, coaching, and training	Leading People	Developing others
Gives people the right amount of freedom and choice in determining how to do their work	Leading People	Developing others
Encourages people to work collaboratively to achieve goals	Leading People	Team building
Fosters an inclusive environment that values all types of diversity and opinion	Leading People	Cultural responsiveness
Builds a diverse workforce that demonstrates a variety of skills	Leading People	Leveraging diversity
Holds staff accountable for high quality, timely, and cost effective results	Leading for Results	Accountability
Holds himself/herself accountable and accepts responsibility for mistakes	Leading for Results	Accountability
Leads with a results-oriented approach	Leading for Results	Accountability
Asks, "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected	Leading for Results	Capacity building
Ensures the delivery of high-quality programs, services, and products	Leading for Results	Service orientation
Makes well-informed and timely decisions	Leading for Results	Decisiveness
Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities	Leading for Results	Entrepreneurship
Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives	Leading for Results	Entrepreneurship
Sets priorities and determines resources requirements	Leading for Results	Planning and organizing
Synthesizes information from internal and external sources to develop action plans for addressing program issues	Leading for Results	Problem solving
Participates in continual professional development	Fundamental	Continuous learning
Communicates effectively with all levels of staff through various methods (oral presentations, written documents, etc.)	Fundamental	Effective communication
Sets high standards of performance and strives to achieve them	Fundamental	Initiative

Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect	Fundamental	Interpersonal relations
Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner	Fundamental	Integrity/honesty
Stays calm and clear-headed under high stress or during a crisis	Fundamental	Resilience
Sets a personal example of what he/she expects from others	Fundamental	Personal leadership
Shows a commitment to serve the public	Fundamental	Social responsibility

Appendix C

Invitation to Participate

Date:

Dear <Participant>:

I am a doctoral candidate at St. John Fisher College, enrolled in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. I am conducting a study focused on child protection middle managers. The purpose of the study is to gain a broader understanding of your preparation for the managerial role, and your assessment of competencies requisite to your role as a child protective manager.

You are being invited to participate in this research because of your essential role as a child protective manager. While the field of child welfare is largely written about, child protection middle managers are vastly underrepresented in the literature. I believe that you can provide **valuable** insight through your participation. The survey will collect the following information:

- I. Demographic information.
- II. Training prior to and after the appointment to your role.
- III. Your self-assessment of identified competencies for the managerial role in child welfare.

It is estimated that the survey will take no longer than 25 minutes to complete.

Please follow the link to the survey:

https://sjfc.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_cSAs1Fmr2fdWTz

If you agree to participate in this study, you will not be asked to provide any identifying information, and you will remain anonymous. Reports or publications generated from the data collected will not include any information which will identify you as a participant.

The findings from the study will be shared with the Administration for Children's Services for the purpose of training.

The researcher does not perceive any risks from your involvement in this study. It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the survey by TBD.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Jeffrey
Doctoral Candidate

Appendix D

Training Before and After Participants Appointment

Table 1

*Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Other Types of Training Received
Prior to Their Management Appointment*

Training Types Prior to Appointment	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
Case management. Effective supervision	1	1.2
Coursework in grad school	1	1.2
Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)	1	1.2
Family Development Credentialing for Supervisors	1	1.2
Leadership for Woman	1	1.2
On the job training	1	1.2
Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI)	1	1.2
Solution Focus Casework	1	1.2
Training on legal issues such as the different types of settlement options	1	1.2

Note. Total *N* = 83

Table 2

Trainings Before: Course Descriptors

Training Types	Course Description
Supervisory Common Core	This 11 training is focused on providing supervisors with knowledge and skills to effectively support and supervise child centered, family-based, child welfare practices.
Tim Nolan’s Supervisory Trainings	This two-day supervisory training provides essential skills for highly effective human services workers. This training helps to enhance performance through: utilizing critical thinking skills, maximizing time management skills, maintaining passion and collaboration skills.
Professional development Program Distance Learning (PDP)	This 21-hour on-line learning is provided to supervisors through the NCWWI. The training is designed to help supervisors develop their competencies, with a goal of supervisors contributing to sustainable systems change.
Post Master’s in Supervision Courses	Designed for MSW holders organizational theory, personnel management, financial planning, management technology, public policy, program monitoring and case studies in agency management
Post Master’s Courses in Administration	Designed for MSW holders with a focus on the administration component of management: supervision, group supervision, case studies in supervision, training and consultation
Tim Nolan’s Manager Training	This two-day training focuses on proven strategies to create a positive culture, develop and lead through implementation of personal/department vision, and teaching how to have effective supervision with staff.

Table 3

*Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Other Types of Training Received After**Their Management Appointment*

Other Training Types after Appointment	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
ACS Workforce Institute-Building Coaching Competency Training	1	1.2
Building collaborative, productive and cohesive teams; Delegating; Women in Leadership; Family Development Leadership Credential	1	1.2
Can't remember	1	1.2
Child Recantation Training, Training on Sex Trafficking	1	1.2
Columbia University - SW workshops	1	1.2
Dale Carnegie	1	1.2
Dave Thomas Foundation Child Focused Recruitment Model Training. Leadership and Management Skills for Women. Managing and Eliminating Unacceptable Behavior and other Employee Performance Barriers.	1	1.2
Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)	1	1.2
Disproportionate Minority	1	1.2
I attended a leadership training that was offered by DCAS. I forgot the name of the training	1	1.2
Interview training, Women Leadership training	1	1.2
Leadership and Management Skills	1	1.2
Leadership and Management Skills for Women	1	1.2
Learning through an Expanded Art Program (LEAP)	1	1.2
LEAP FORUM	1	1.2
New York State Child Abuse and Sexual Abuse Trainings	1	1.2
Office based training	1	1.2
Philadelphia PA Leadership Academy	1	1.2
Powerful presentations, team building, effective communication with difficult staff, DDI Target Interviewer training	1	1.2
Special Victims, safe sleep, Synthesizing information procedure, Regional Partnership with Montefiore	1	1.2
Structural interviewing and unconscious bias	1	1.2
Supervisory common core training	1	1.2
Women in Management	1	1.2
Working with challenging Staff, Inspired leadership, dealing with difficult behaviors	1	1.2

Note. Total *N* = 83

Table 4

Trainings After: Course Descriptors

Training Types	Course Description
New York City Leadership Institute for Middle Mangers	This four-month institute assumes that its participants have mastered the skills needed in daily management, and devotes its curriculum to planning, and implementing strategic change.
New York Management Academy	This four-month program is designed for the City’s new emerging leaders. The goal is to expose participants to exceptional management practices. The focus is on three areas essential to management success in City government: developing and utilizing human resources; improving service delivery; and understanding the operational aspects of city systems.
Leadership Academy – Hunter College	Agency partnership with Hunter College, focused on strengthening managerial skills: team building, communication, presentation and organizational strategies.
Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM)	This competency-based training prepares leaders for the environment of constant change and equips them with new information, skills, and hands-on opportunities to apply practices and principles based on an empirically informed Leadership Model.

Table 5

Averages of Competencies Across the Five Leadership Domains

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Leading In Change							
I design and implement new and cutting edge programs/ and or processes in my area	81	1	5	2.46	1.25		
I consider how local, state, and national policies and trends might affect the agency	83	1	5	3.55	.97		
I readily adapt to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles	83	1	5	3.92	.72		
I implement plans consistent with the long-term interests of the agency	83	1	5	3.81	.85		
I influence others in the agency to translate vision into action	83	1	5	3.80	.89		
I build consensus with staff around proposed systemic or practice changes	80	1	5	3.75	.80		
Leading in Context							
I collaborate across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals	80	2	5	3.84	.74		
I build consensus with partners by considering input from various parties	80	1	5	3.88	.77		
I develop trust among various parties involved in a negotiation process	80	1	5	3.91	.83		
Leading People							
I manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner	83	3	5	4.10	.56		
I provide my staff with opportunities for career development, including mentoring, coaching and training	83	3	5	4.30	.64		
I give people the right amount of freedom and choice in determining how to do their work	81	1	5	3.69	.83		
I encourage people to work collaboratively to achieve goals	80	3	5	4.33	.52		
I foster an inclusive environment that values all types of diversity and opinion	79	1	5	4.14	.78		
I build a diverse workforce that demonstrates a variety of skills	81	1	5	3.77	.93		
Fundamental							
I participate in continual professional development			83	1	5	3.71	.86
I communicate effectively with all levels of staff through various methods (oral presentations, written documents, etc.)			82	2	5	3.93	.78
I set high standards of performance and strive to achieve them			82	2	5	4.26	.66
I treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect			83	3	5	4.63	.51

I behave in an honest, fair, and ethical manner	82	3	5	4.60	.52
I stay calm and clear-headed under high stress or during a crisis	83	2	5	4.04	.77
I set a personal example of what I expect from others	83	3	5	4.41	.52
I show a commitment to serve the public	81	3	5	4.49	.57
Leading for Results					
I hold staff accountable for high quality, timely, and results	83	2	5	4.12	.63
I hold myself accountable and accept responsibility for mistakes	83	3	5	4.46	.55
I lead with a result-oriented approach	82	2	5	4.05	.68
I ask "what can we learn?" when things don't go as expected	82	2	5	4.10	.64
I ensure the delivery of high-quality services	83	1	5	4.02	.72
I make well-informed and timely decisions	83	3	5	4.12	.53
I position the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities	81	1	5	3.43	.92
I take calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives	82	1	5	3.16	1.11
I set priorities and determine resources to develop action plans for addressing program issues	83	1	5	3.73	.95
I synthesize information from internal and external sources to develop action plans for addressing program issues	81	1	5	3.83	.88
	Avg.			Avg.	Avg.
All Questions	81	1	5	3.94	0.75
