This is to certify that the
dissertation entitled

An Organizational Culture Assessment:
Does Understanding Provide Implications for Effective
Services for Children in Foster Care?

presented by

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

_____Ph. D._____ degree in _____Social Work_____

Major Professor's Signature

_5/10/05_

Date

MSU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
APR 2 5 2007		
0 5 2 4 1 0 AUG 1 1 2009		

AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT:
DOES UNDERSTANDING PROVIDE IMPLICATIONS
FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE?

By

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Social Work

2005

ABSTRACT

AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT: DOES UNDERSTANDING PROVIDE IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE?

By

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga

The major goal of this study was to determine the organizational culture style that exists within a child welfare agency and to consider how this culture might impact service delivery for children in foster care. For this study, culture is used as a construct to provide an insight to how workers understand and utilize the prescribed organizational mission and values

The study was conducted using mixed methods that included quantitative and qualitative data collection with a sample of 92 employees of a private, non-profit sectarian social service agency. The Organizational Culture Inventory was completed by the total sample. Focus group sessions were conducted with subsets of the total sample immediately following their completion of the OCI. Participants came from two different settings within the organization: (1) administrators (upper management, program directors and supervisors) and (2) line workers who provide services to children and families in foster care.

The results of the OCI indicated that the workers identified the Constructive Style as being the predominant behavioral norm within the organization. This cultural style indicates that members are encouraged to be a part of their own goal establishment and attainment. The Passive/Aggressive Style was noted as being the next most prevalent culture. Here, workers identified with the Dependent cultural norm. This cultural norm takes into account how workers interact with agency rules and are expected to follow them at all times. Finally, the Aggressive/Defensive Style was noted as the least prevalent culture in the organization. Within this style, however, workers consistently identified the Perfectionistic culture. This cultural norm highlights the fact that workers work long hours to attain narrowly defined goals. This investigation was an exploratory case study. As such, this study has limitations regarding generalizability of the findings to populations beyond the agency. However, the study has implications for research regarding organizational culture and agency structure, technology and systems and how they impact service delivery and worker performance regarding effective services for children in foster care.

To my children Gabrielle and Cyril and my husband Agbéko

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of a dissertation does not happen without the love, support and most importantly, encouragement from people who witness and partake in every aspect of the journey. With their unwavering support, my dream has become a reality.

First, I would like to thank Dr. Rena Harold, my dissertation chair, whose availability, creativity, flexibility, and unyielding guidance, propelled my efforts to complete this work. In addition to her indefatigable support, Dr. Harold always provided a venue for scholarly dialogue that enriched my quest for obtaining and sharing knowledge. Furthermore, I wish to acknowledge committee members Dr. Ellen Whipple, Dr. John Seita, and Dr. John Davis. They each provided me with extremely knowledgeable research insight throughout this effort.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Gary Anderson, who has provided me with a tremendous amount of support and encouragement. His patience and assistance during my educational journey was munificent and extremely essential to my success.

Thanks also go to Dr. David Campbell, who played an instrumental role in my professional and educational life.

Additionally, I wish to thank the staff in both the College of Social Science Dean's Office and in the School of Social Work. Your thoughtfulness and kind words, I will forever remember.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the unconditional love of my family. The emotional, physical and mental support that I received was immeasurable, and I am forever grateful. A very special thank you, to Agbéko, my husband. You have enriched our family environment by increasing your support and encouragement during the very difficult and tiring times of the journey. Thanks for your incessant reminder for me to celebrate every successful milestone. You have been an excellent model for our daughter by modeling the importance of mutual support in our quotidian interactions. To my son, Cyril, I thank you for the most enlightening three months. You taught me stoicism amidst life's challenges. To my daughter, Gabrielle, thank you for your energy and perpetual excitement to learn and do more. You encouraged me to work hard and still take off time to enjoy life's beauty. You all have played an immeasurable role in helping me see the possibilities of today, tomorrow and years to come…thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter One:

Introduction

Organizations in numerous contexts have played varied roles in the lives of every citizen, young or old, male or female, majority or minority (Germain & Bloom, 1999). For the most part, as individuals within a society, we are born, live, celebrate, and die in various organizations --- hospitals, schools, churches and synagogues, factories, offices, recreational settings and countless others that impact and influence many aspects of our lives (Germain & Bloom, 1999). The cultural context of these agencies are important as one's interaction is influenced by what members of an organization has identified as being the guiding operational principles. It is these operational principles, e.g., mission, values and beliefs that become the norm of worker expectations for interaction with members within and outside of the organizational setting. These norms culminate to create what is defined as the culture of an organization. The identification and understanding of this culture is important because it influences workers' understanding of their role within the organizational setting around goals, decision - making practices and performance expectations.

These aspects within an organizational setting can also create a sense of community among workers that is reflected in the services they provide. On the other hand, if these aspects are not clearly defined and properly utilized, this could create a cultural atmosphere of distrust and lack of support that can also be reflected in services provided. Therefore, as social workers, it is important for us to understand organizations and their influence on individual and group behavior because as we spend most of our time in organizations facilitating change for our clients, because these clients spend their lives working with formal, complex bureaucratic organizations (Germain & Bloom, 1999).

This complexity within an organization is a phenomenon that has been studied and explained by numerous theoretical schools of thought from anthropology. These theoretical schools have been characterized by their particular assumptions, slants and emphasis on various aspects of culture as a socioculture system (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). From this perspective, culture as a sociocultural system has lead to the creation of four schools of thought: (i) functional; (ii) structural-functionalist; (iii) ecological-adaptationist; and historical-diffusionist(Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). The first two

2

schools focus on the study of culture at particular points in time and space — termed as synchronic, but the later two schools' view of culture is more diachronic. They encompass the time dimension by focusing on the process involved in the development of particular cultures (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

For the purpose of this study, the functional school of thought was used as a backdrop to understanding the organizational culture of a child welfare agency. This was deemed appropriate because within the functionalist setting, culture is an instrumental apparatus where a person is put into a better position to cope with concrete circumstances — specific problems that they may face in the course of need satisfaction (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

Therefore, manifestations of culture such as institutions and myths are explained by their functional necessity for the satisfaction of basic human needs (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). From this perspective, culture within the organization resembles that of human relations — where organizations as sociocultural systems ought to reflect their forms, structures, policies and processes from a social and self-achieving concept. Within this context, the organization's purpose is to play out one's needs and either the organization adapts its

structure and functioning to allow the whole person to satisfy their needs through organizational membership or it becomes dysfunctional (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

In summation, the functionalist school emphasizes that organizations are sociocultural systems that will, or should reflect the needs of their members in their structure and processes (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). This includes the workers, clients and the larger society — all of whom the culture of the organization can influence. Organizational culture also, impacts their daily operations over time as it relates to performance, service and satisfaction of needs.

In order for helping professionals to make the best use of complex organizations, they must first understand the nature and functioning of these multi - faceted social settings that interact to improve the quality of life for individuals, groups and families (Germain & Bloom, 1999). This is more so, especially when the organization plays a significant role in the client's identification of a sense of belonging from a familial aspect. One such example of this type of setting is the child welfare system in particular, and the foster care system specifically.

Within this realm, children depend on child welfare agencies to provide a sense of belonging until they are

able to return home. However, the reality of our foster care system does not dictate that these individuals will be returned home. In fact, the reality for many is that they will remain in foster care until their 18th birthday. These children become a part of an organizational structure that may not reflect their home environment but they depend on this setting for many of the components that we expect to find within the home for children to become healthy, active productive citizens. Thus, to fully understand the importance of organizational culture, this study was conducted within a faith – based child welfare organization. To fully understand this organizational culture impact, at this juncture, it is imperative to proceed with an overview of the foster care system from what it used to be, to what it is currently.

The history of the child welfare system in the United States illustrates that since the nineteenth century, policies and various child-saving movements have taken place to make the lives of children better (Gambrill & Wiltse, 1974; Magura, 1979; Taber & Poertner, 1981). In the 1930s, the system's primary purpose was to provide care to homeless and neglected children. However, during the 1980s, as the number of children in care continued to grow, the system shifted to reflect a social service agency

ministering to children and youths with severe emotional, behavioral, and psychological problems usually linked to some sort of abuse and or neglect within the family (Woolf, 1990).

As the number of children in out-of-home placements continued to increase, permanency options changed. In fact, when permanency was not met through placement with the birth or extended family or adoption, long-term foster care became the permanent plan (Barth & Berry, 1987; Fenster, 1997). Unfortunately, this shift has led to an astounding number of children growing up in the foster care system with the system becoming their "family." This reality of children spending more time in foster care was viewed as a problem, and social workers and countless other social scientists fought against it as early as the 1970s (Gambrill & Wiltse, 1974; Magura, 1979; Taber & Poertner, 1981). Today, more than 30 years later, the problem has multiplied with no long-term solution in sight. For example, although children who remained in foster care for an extended period of time had some form of permanency placement, the child welfare system was not prepared for what to do when they reached 18 or when they have aged out of foster care (Barth et. al., 1987; Brandon, 2000; Fenster, 1997; Schorr, 2000;). For years, researchers,

child advocates and former foster care children have continuously raised this concern at various levels (Gambrill & Wiltse, 1974; Magura, 1979; Taber & Poertner, 1981).

As society continued to raise its consciousness around this issue, many policies were created and amended as a response to this increasingly difficult social problem. More recently, the most significant of these efforts, the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, (P.L. 106-169) was established. This act replaced the former Title IV-E Independent Living Initiative established in 1986, to govern the implementation of most federally supported independent living services (National Foster Care Awareness Project {NFCAP}, 2000; Child Welfare League of America {CWLA}, 2000). Title I of this Act contains the most relevant provisions for young people aging out of foster care, which established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. The new program was expected to provide the following:

(1) Increased funding for independent living activities

(2) Increased assistance that included room and board for young people 18-21 who are currently living in foster care

(3) Emphasized importance of securing permanency

(4) Increment in the states' ability to offer Medicaid to young people in transition from the foster care system

(5) Increased states accountability for outcomes of young people transitioning from foster care (NFCAP, 2000; CWLA, 2000).

This Act was assumed to be necessary component that was viewed as a solution to the transition problems facing the foster care system for some time.

There are approximately 588,000 children in foster care (CWLA, 2000). Of these, each year, more than 20,000 age-out of the system, with a large percentage of them ending up homeless, on welfare and jobless (CWLA, 2000; Roman & Wolfe, 1997). This does not bode well for the foster care system. Our response as social workers should be to attempt to make changes that would create a better childhood experience and a smoother transition from childhood to adulthood for foster care children. Obviously, it is time for a new approach was put into place. This new approach needs to include an element that has been missing from the foster care system: tools within the system that help to facilitate internal growth among children in foster care. Therefore, a systems perspective shift needs to occur to acknowledge the past, current and future state of the residential child welfare system as it relates to services for children in care.

Historical Evolution of the Foster Care System

Overview of the Foster Care System

The Encyclopaedia of Social Work defines foster care as a "publicly funded child welfare system of organized services for full-time residential care giving of children whose parents' condition or behavior prevent them from discharging their parental responsibilities" (Everett, 1997, p. 375). Although a societal belief exists that children will be with their parents until they reach adulthood, some unforeseen circumstances such as alcohol or substance abuse may make this an impossible dream. Under these conditions, the children may end up in the Foster Care system. Through the Foster Care system, children are given services that address their needs. These services are provided to the children via the foster family homes by either the foster parents, residential group homes or institutions where the primary adult caregiver may or may not be a relative to the child (Everett, 1997).

To keep the family together, a variety of measures were developed to achieve this goal. The emphasis on the system has been to do as little harm to the child while trying to maintain a stable and loving environment. To this end, the foster care system is designed as a temporary measure that includes comprehensive and planned supportive

services for families with children who cannot be

adequately maintained within their own homes (Everett,

1997).

The primary goals of the foster care system are the

following:

(1)   Provide maximum protection of the child

(2)   Permanency

(3)   Preservation of families

While maintaining the system's primary goals, the innate

aim of the foster care system is:

(1) The reunification of children with their biological
    family or

(2) The adoption by foster parent or other family and

(3) The preparation for independent living

The foster care system, within the context of the larger

child welfare system, was designed to provide the familial

context missing for children. In an effort to respond to

societal expectations and the redefinition of "children"

over time, it has become increasingly difficult to make

responsive changes from a systems perspective.

As with all systems, there are flaws. We have created

and recreated policies to help remedy the situation with

the hope that children are in protected, safe and loving

environments. For instance, over several periods of time

in the child welfare history, we have redefined and

reshaped our values and beliefs around children and

childhood in America and numerous amendments have been made

to Title IV of the Social Security Act in an effort to

respond to various needs of the Foster Care system.

Although imperfect, it is worth taking a brief look at the

history of this system, how far it has come, and how much

further it needs to go. This history begins with indentured

servants.

Foster Care System: A Brief History

During the eighteenth century, government officials

were the overseers of the distribution of services to the

poor. This gave officials the authority to indenture

children from poor families in lieu of providing them

relief, which they did often (Hacsi, 1995). These children

were either orphans, half-orphans, and other dependent

children whose parents were unable to provide for them or

were deemed as unfit (Hacsi, 1995). In this era, the

duties of masters vis-à-vis the children working under them

were to feed, clothe, house, and teach skills.

By the turn of the early nineteenth century, the

indentured servant's label was used only for the poor,

partly due to the emergence of the urban middle class and

its conception of childhood. Although a change was made,

it did not benefit those who deserved to reap the benefits from such a change. Childhood then, was viewed as a distinct phase of human development separating children from adults. Through the acknowledgement of the developmental phase of childhood, it became more apparent that the character of children was shaped not by breaking their will through labor, but by leading them to internalized beliefs about behavior and morality (Hacsi, 1995).

By the 1880s, orphan asylums were faced with a lot of scrutiny from proponents for placing children with families (Hacsi, 1995). In 1853, the idea of placing children in homes in lieu of institutions came to life with the Children's Aid Society (CAS), founded by Charles L. Brace (Hacsi, 1995). Unlike the current Foster Care system, children came to CAS through the following means:

(1) Agents sweeping the streets looking for children and vagrants

(2) Orphan and infant asylums bringing children to the agency

The goal of the placing-out system was to remove children from unworthy, perhaps even dangerous parents (Hacsi, 1995). Between 1854 and 1900, CAS placed more than 22,000 children in "permanent" homes.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, child abuse and neglect began to surface and was recognized as an important societal issue (Hasci, 1995; Woolf, 1990). Furthermore, during the 1880s, Boston's Temporary Home for the Destitute began to make board payments to families, and by the 1890s, board payments completely replaced the previous free placements; which led agencies to look more closely at the placements (Hasci, 1995).

By 1930, it became extremely apparent that boarding-out was out-placing both institutional and free placing-out and this became certain with the creation of AID to Dependent Children (ADC, later AFDC) as Title IV of the Social Security Act in 1935 which was also the beginning of the current Foster Care system (Hasci, 1995). Under this new system, federal funds became available to help assist families while keeping them together. By 1950, more children were in foster homes than institutions. By 1960, almost twice as many children were in foster care as were in institutions. This grew to three times more by 1968 (Hasci, 1995).

During the 1970s the system experienced a decline in the number of children in out-of-home placements that lasted about 10 years. During the 1980s, as the number of children in care continued to grow, the system was known

for being a social service agency, ministering to children and youths with severe emotional, behavioral, and psychological problems that were usually linked to some sort of abuse within the family (Woolf, 1990). In an attempt to further repair the system in response to the needs of the children in care, Congress in 1980 created the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (PL 96-272). This statute was established primarily to restructure child welfare services through incentive funding. It became known as Permanency Planning (Barth & Berry, 1987; Fenster, 1997; Schorr, 2000). This statute attempted to place children in a less restrictive, more family-like placement which included either being placed with their birth or extended family or adoption as a consideration for a permanent home (Barth & Berry, 1987; Fenster, 1997; Schorr, 2000). When permanency was not met through these arenas, guardianship was seen as the next favorable permanent plan followed by the less favorable solution, long-term foster care (Fenster, 1997; Barth et. al., 1987).

Foster Care System Today

For many children, the foster care reality is not short-term. In 1996, it was estimated that approximately 970,000 children were found by child protective agencies to be victims of child abuse or neglect (Curran & Pecora,

14

1999). More than half of these children would become wards of the state until their 18th birthday (Curran & Pecora, 1999). Although long-term foster care is intended to be the last resort, plans to maintain children in foster care until their 18th birthday remain fairly common when the choice of reunification or adoption is not available (Barth, 1990; Kerma, Wildfire, & Barth, 2002).

It is estimated that over 20,000 youth leave the foster care system at 18 or 19 years old with no formal connection to their biological family (NFCAP, 2000). Without support from their biological or foster care family and the system that has been responsible for them, where can these children turn for guidance, love, understanding and support? Unfortunately, the answer to this question is usually quite dismal with respect to a "normal" life because they are often faced with homelessness, unemployment, academic failure, incarceration, and premature parenting (Mech, 1994; Mendel, 2001).

Many child advocates wonder how we can ensure that this option is not a detrimental decision for a child who deserves to have access to a productive and self-sufficient adulthood as they age out of foster care (Woolf, 1990). The most obvious response has been research on the effects that growing up in a foster care setting have on children

from a long-term perspective. Since the inception of the foster care system in this country, countless studies have been conducted to this effect. To date, the most prominent studies looking at the foster care system include; (i) Festinger Study (New York); (ii) Barth Study (California); (iii) Boise Alumni Study; and (iv) National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) (Barth, 1990; Festinger, 1983; Wedeven, Pecora, Hurwitz, Howell & Newell, 1997). Major themes emerged from these studies of the foster care system. Primarily, the children noted concerns in two areas where planning, preparation and decision-making participation was extremely lacking within the foster care system.

The first major concern was with the sharing of information. Many of the foster children believed that they were not privy to their past and current information. The primary focus of this lack of knowledge centered around two core areas; birth family history (cultural and medical) and initial placement history. These voids of memory that have not been filled have left many foster children feeling lost, unaccepted and different from the peers. Furthermore, it feeds into the sense of shame and hopelessness that they feel because they are in foster care. Ultimately, they are left with no real sense of

belonging; something that they have always longed to have.

Therefore, when possible, they tended to maintain a

connection to foster parents and workers if it was a

positive experience that gave them a sense of community.

In fact, many created their family and community through

the services that aided them with their understanding of

expectations and life after foster care.

The second area that was well documented in several of

the studies was the lack of preparation for leaving care.

Consistently, participants reported that they could have

received much more aid in the form of counseling about

career options and strategies to cope with the

inconsistencies that occur as one transitions to

independent living and adulthood (Barth, 1990; Festinger,

1983; Wedeven, et al., 1997). Within this context, the

number one priority would be more job training for children

aging out of foster care.

These studies emphasized foster children's concern

over their lack of education preparation. An astounding

number of children believed that the foster care agency and

their foster parents neglected their educational needs.

Furthermore, some believed that there was not enough

emphasis placed on the foster parent selection process for

those who valued their education. The final premise to all

of these studies is that the participants expressed a genuine feeling of exasperation regarding a lack of control over their foster care experience and the choices made for them as well as the lack of preparation for independent living (Curran & Pecora, 1999).   These findings are all important because they lend to the understanding of the current system and provide entry points for making changes. With the number of children entering into the child welfare system as children in foster care, the problems identified in the studies are widespread throughout the United States.

In fact, a national survey conducted by Westat, Inc. in 1991 with 810 youths who had aged out of foster care in eight states found that:

> 46% had not completed high school within 2.5 to 4 years after exiting care;
>
> Only 49% were employed 2.5 to 4 years after leaving foster care;
>
> 56% of all young adults accessing services from federally funded youth shelters in 1997 had previously been in foster care;
>
> 25% reported being homeless at least one night within 2.5 to 4 years after leaving care;
>
> 42% became parents within 2.5 to 4 years after exiting care;
>
> 38% were diagnosed with emotional disturbances; and
>
> 9% suffered from physical health problems (Mendel, 2001).

The "family," as noted from the current societal perspective, is not the norm for thousands of children who have been placed in foster care. Social problems such as substance abuse and alcoholism have contributed to the increased number of children entering and aging out of the foster care system. Studies have shown that young people who spend most of their adolescence in foster care are more predictably headed for unhappy outcomes than any other group in the United States (Nelson, 2001). These unfortunate outcomes are due partly to the lack of effective services and support they receive during and upon leaving the system after their 18th birthday when they are released as "independent" adults. With limited social support resources, it is difficult for children who age out of foster care to fully self-actualize into self-sufficient adults (Moss, 1999). Unlike youth who are in a familial setting outside of the system, these youth do not have access to services and problem solving skills from parents, biological family members or fictive kin because for most, the system is their only familial bond. It may be that, these support mechanisms are needed more for this group because of the trauma they might have faced in their young life.

Despite the problems listed above, the foster care system and the policies that have helped to craft it since its inception were all put into place with one purpose in mind-- to protect, love and care for children. The system through its evolution was established as a means to save children from neglect, abuse and poverty, and was meant to be a short-term solution to the problem with the hope of reunification of the family (Everett, 1987; Hacsi, 1995). In essence, the system is an attempt to ensure that these individuals will have a chance at childhood with their new living situation and the circumstances that placed them in foster care.

Social workers and other child advocates have campaigned and worked diligently to ensure that the rights of children are protected at various levels. Many have fought to ensure that the needs of children are met to help them become productive citizens within our society. This was done through the creation of systems with various services such as the foster care system.

However, the challenge from yesterday, today and tomorrow is how we ensure, through our current systems, that the best interest of the child be addressed. Without the traditional family structure, we are utilizing the system to ensure that these individuals can become self-

sustaining adults in a society that is not always ready to accept differences. For these children, the difference is being raised by the "system;" a system that attempts to be a family for children who need, deserve and have a right to childhood. Yet, it is clearly noted that the "system" is in need of revision within and not merely an extension of existing policies.

Such a revision should begin with looking within the organizational setting. As referenced in all of the previous research, the reality for children in foster care is that they will remain in care until their 18th birthday. Although this time may be spent in a foster family, their familial ties are structured within an organizational setting. This setting holds the key to these children's past and future. They depend on the organization and its workers for direction, structure and guidance as they plan for the future. However, the environment of the organization needs to be one in which children receive effective services that help them become self-actualized adults.

Therefore, this descriptive exploratory study will examine the following research questions with workers at various levels within a child welfare agency providing services to children in foster care:

(i) What is the mission of the organization?

(ii) How is the mission interpreted and utilized by agency administrators, supervisors and line workers?

(iii) What is the organizational culture of the agency?

(iv) Is there a match between the mission and the identified culture?

(v) How does the organizational culture dictate the structure and performance of workers as they relate to effective services?

(vi) What are the identified gaps between the current organizational culture and the culture needed for a positive culture-performance link to effective services?

This research contributes to social work professional knowledge in three ways. First, it advances our understanding of organizational culture within a child welfare agency setting where children in foster care receive services. There is a lack of empirical literature that looks at organizational culture within a social service agency and its impact on worker performance and quality service. This understanding is important from an organizational perspective because the more one understands the components of an organization and its impact on its ability to function, the better we become at making accurate and productive changes. Also, this information can be used to understand turnover rates of workers in an

extremely demanding job within the child welfare arena. This also becomes more apparent because, as we begin to understand the overarching culture of an organization, areas for positive change and growth are discovered.

Secondly, this research allows exploration of the convergence between performance and organizational culture through quantitative and qualitative means. More importantly, it will add to our understanding of organizational culture's influence on workers' attitudes, behavior and belief systems as they relate to the mission of the agency and workers' interpretation of this mission as it influences service delivery. Through a quantitative analysis of the agency's culture, more will be learned about the components of a culture that can assist with the success or failure of an organization based on performance and successful outcomes. Narratives obtained through focus group interviews will lend to a deeper understanding of these impacts and provide a more accurate picture of the current culture and mission of the organization. This insight will also make it easier to map out sustainable changes that will benefit workers and children being served through the agency.

Finally, this research may help advance our ability to better assist children who age out of foster care. While

we know that these children are more likely to have unsuccessful outcomes, this research may provide another perspective that can be used to guide such children to a higher rate of success following their maturation from foster care. With an insight into the organizational culture, workers' understanding of such culture and the mission of the agency, we can make a direct link to the impact that these components play in the agency's success on the processes and outcomes for children aging out of foster care.

The following chapters will illustrate the foundation and results of this study. Chapter two provides an overview of landmark foster care studies and a review of culture and organizational culture literature as it relates to its definition, influences and link to worker performance. Chapter three illustrates the mixed-methods used that included quantitative and qualitative data collection utilized to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate the study findings. Chapter four includes a thorough illustration of the variations and similarities of the quantitative and qualitative data as they relate to the research questions. Finally, in chapter five, the findings of the research will be used to introduce a research agenda in the area of child welfare around the understanding and

impact of organizational culture. This chapter will also illustrate the importance and next steps for conducting organizational culture research in the child welfare/social service arena.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

While chapter one provided an overview of the foster

care system from the past to present, this chapter begins

with an in-depth review of landmark foster studies. This

review illustrates aspects that have been identified as

missing components for successful development by children.

These identified aspects provide an understanding of and

creates a synthesis of the needs identified by children in

foster care to some aspects of organizational culture.

These aspects, as they relate to organizational culture is

further explored through a literature review that provides

an understanding of culture and its influences within an

organizational setting.

Foster Care Research: A Brief Review of Four Landmark Studies

To date, surveys and focus groups with social workers,

interviews with children's care providers, and case record

extractions have consistently been the methodology

undertaken by various respected studies to explain the

foster care phenomenon (Berrick, Frasch, & Fox, 2000).

Such studies have played a significant role in policy

development at various levels to facilitate best practices

related to the child welfare system in general and children

in foster care specifically.

Festinger Study

As the concern for children aging out of foster care and agencies concerned with service effectiveness increased, studies of consumer feedback have become increasingly important (Curran & Pecora, 1999). Festinger's 1983 study is considered to be a landmark study of foster care alumna. In part three of the study "No One Ever Asked Us," Festinger (1983) interviewed 277 former foster children about their satisfaction with the foster care system. The sample consisted of a group of people who were discharged from foster care in the New York City metropolitan area in 1975. They had been in care continuously for at least the preceding five years and were 18 to 21 years old at the time of discharge (Festinger, 1983).

The bulk of the interviews (142) were conducted with participants in the metropolitan New York area. Sometimes, however, when this was not possible, the interview location was changed to suit the participant. For participants who lived some distance away from the interview site, the following protocol was used (i) 44 interviews were conducted in the participants homes; (ii) 55 telephone interviews; and (iii) 30 participants completed and

27

returned questionnaires in the United states, followed by 6 from overseas (Festinger, 1983).

In general, the study noted that youth were relatively happy with their experience in foster care, although children in individual foster homes were more satisfied than their peers in group homes (Curran & Pecora, 1999; Festinger, 1983). The biggest factor linked to the satisfaction of their placement was whether the participants viewed the placement as a necessity. Furthermore, children who understood the reason behind their placement (e.g. death, emotional impairment of their parents) appeared to be more comfortable in their foster home (Festinger, 1983). It was also found that children who had a close relationship with their foster parents tended to be more satisfied as well. It is interesting to note that, children who were more satisfied with their foster care situation where those who thought that the amount of contact with their biological parents was sufficient (Festinger, 1983). The underlying conclusion was that these former foster children wished that consideration had been given to their preference regarding visits with their biological parents (Festinger, 1983; Curran & Pecora, 1999).

This study provided a mechanism for former foster care children to voice their concerns, disappointment and suggestions for improvement of the foster care system. Again, they requested having their opinions heard during the decision making process, coupled by the need for better screening of foster parents, and they were adamantly against sibling separation (Festinger, 1983). The participants also insisted on the need for having accurate background information about their families. These were viewed as important as they struggled to gain a sense of self and their family medical history (Festinger, 1983).

The knowledge of their familial background would help to alleviate foster children's beliefs that they are different from their peers. In fact, over 50% of the participants stated that at times they did not acknowledge being a foster child.

Another pertinent issue raised during this study was the number of placements children experienced and how this affected their education. Although many deemed education as an important aspect for their future, the lack of interest by the foster parent and their low educational standards factored into why they felt severely unprepared to live independently. Over 65% of the participants chose job preparation and career planning as one of the most

important components for independent living.
Unfortunately, only 23.4% believed that the agency had
prepared them. Many of the participants discussed the need
for support services following discharge, specifically in
the areas of education and employment. Festinger (1983)
concludes that the study revealed three neglected aspects
of foster care services (i) the ability to participate in
decisions affecting their lives; (ii)educational services;
(iii) preparation of these children for independent living.

Barth Study (California)

Barth (1990) used various means to identify 55 young
adults who had left foster care recently in the San
Francisco Bay area. The participants had left foster care,
for longer than one year and were 16 years of age. The
participant recruitment process consisted of flyers that
advertised the study. They were sent to various public
agencies, foster parents, social workers, and group care
providers (Barth, 1990). The interviews centered on
questions concerning employment experiences, continued
contact with former foster parents and birth relatives,
educational preparation, life skills preparation received
during foster care, health and health care use, criminal
activity, and housing and income (Barth, 1990). In

addition, participants were asked about their satisfaction with foster care services and suggestions for improvement.

The average participant's age was 21 years old. Their ethnic breakdown was as follows: (i) 72% white; (ii) 13% black; (iii) 9% latino. On average they had all experienced at least 3 different foster home placements (Barth, 1990). The study found that 29% of the youth identified their dearth of education and skills as the greatest survival obstacle as it interfered with their ability to obtain gainful employment (Barth, 1990). Over 80% indicated that they have contact with their foster parents, followed by 40% who noted that they occasionally communicated with their social worker (Barth, 1990). Overwhelmingly, the participants believed that foster parents and social workers should provide more help as they leave the system and that it was crucial to have more assistance with developing independent skills (Barth, 1990). Sadly, over half of the youth did not have a high school degree upon exiting the foster care system. On average, foster care alumni are more susceptible to a high number of health problems and experience higher levels of depression.

In general, the participants made the following suggestions for improving the foster care system: (i) social workers should place more emphasis on teaching youth

life skills; (ii) social workers should provide more tools for securing adequate and affordable housing for youth exiting the system; (iii) the participants recommended that the youth should save more money while they are in care, utilize counseling services and prepare themselves in the areas of budgeting and planning (Barth, 1990).

Boise Alumni Study

The Boise alumni study was a survey of alumni from the Boise Division of the Casey Family Program (Casey) who were discharged between 1974-1992 (Wedeven, Pecora, Hurwitz, Howell & Newell, 1997). The primary premise of the study was to gain insight to refine services for youth and foster families. The Boise Division staff, current youth, alumni, and advisory committee members developed survey questions, with consultation from the Casey Headquarters Research Department (Wedeven, et al., 1997). The questions focused on the young adult's positive and negative experiences while in foster care, knowledge of agency resources, suggestions for improvement; along with future aspiration questions (Wedeven, et al., 1997)

Of the 106 alumni contacted, 69 responded to the questionnaire and they ranged in age from 17 to 35 years old and over 90% had completed high school either through obtaining a diploma or a GED (Wedeven, et al., 1997). The

majority of the participants viewed their experience as positive with the agency and expressed a desire to continue the relationship. Also, they had a desire to continue a relationship with other alumni. The alumni valued the agency activities as worthwhile experiences. When asked about the turning point in their lives following leaving care;(i) one-third valued the adult responsibilities of marriage and having children because they provided an opportunity to mimic the relationship and parenting skills modeled in their foster homes; (ii) they valued entering college or vocational technical school; (iii) they believed that the placement in a Casey foster home was a key factor in their lives. Still, the participants proposed the following changes: (i) matching youth with families, joint case planning and careful listening of youth in care; (ii) early preparation of transition, self-sufficiency and career tracking choices; and (iii) vocational counseling when transitioning (Wedeven, et al., 1997).

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW)

The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being is a national probability study of children investigated for abuse and neglect (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). Initially, the study was announced by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as the Child Welfare

Longitudinal Study but was renamed (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). The study was designed by a federal steering committee at DHHS that consisted of child welfare experts to address crucial program, policy and practice issues for child welfare agencies and their governmental funders (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). It is the first national study of child welfare to collect data from children and families, and the first to relate child and family well-being to family characteristics, experience with the child welfare system and community environment (NSCAW Research Group, 2002).

This longitudinal study examines the interplay among the history and characteristics of children and families, their experiences with the child welfare system, other concurrent life experiences, and service and well-being outcomes (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). Well-being measures included health and physical well-being, social functioning, academic achievement, mental health, and behavioral adjustments that were placed in the context of developmental stage, prior experience, caregiver behavior, social services use and community environment (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). These various aspects are believed to provide new understandings of how family, child, community, and service factors affect children's well-being

as the researchers aspired to answer the following questions (i) who are the children and families that come into contact with the child welfare systems?; (ii) what pathways and services do children and families experience while in the child welfare system?; and (iii) what are the shorter- and longer-term outcomes for these children and families? (NSCAW Research Group, 2002).

The sample cohort consisted of 6,100 children, ages birth through 14, who had contact with the child welfare system within a fifteen-month period starting in October, 1999 (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). The participant age was capped at 14 to ensure that the child could be located and a decrease in the likelihood that emancipation would occur. The children were selected from the following two groups: 5,400 interviewed were those who entered the system during the reference period (October, 1999-December, 2000), along with 700 children who had been in out-of-home care for 12 months during the sampling time (NSCAW Research Group, 2002).

The 6,100 children were selected from 92 Primary Sampling Units (CPS agencies) sampled proportionate to the size of 97 counties nationwide and Secondary Sampling Units that were selected from a lists of closed investigations or assessments from the sampled agencies (NSCAW Research

Group, 2002). The study called for four annual rounds of face-to-face interviews or assessment for children, their parents or other permanent caregivers, non-parent caregivers if applicable (e.g., foster parents and custodial kin caregivers), teachers (for school-aged children), and Child Welfare Workers. Interviews were conducted with all sampled children at the baseline and at 12-month intervals after the close of the investigation/assessment. Interviews with children 11-14 were conducted using the Audio Computer-Assisted Self – Interview (A-CASI). This included questions on substance abuse, sexual activity, delinquency, injuries, and maltreatment (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). A teacher survey was given to obtain independent measures of the child's academic performance, cognitive abilities, social skills, and relationships with other children (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). This was followed by numerous interviews with the Child Welfare Worker at least every six-months following the collections of baseline data to keep track of the service delivery records (NSCAW Research Group, 2002). Because this is a longitudinal study, there are no definitive findings to report at this time. However, preliminary findings from this study, as well as findings from the other three cited studies provide clear

illustrations of various concerns about the child welfare system. However, the participants from each of the studies alluded to various factors that could be extracted as an organizational cultural aspect within the agency such as, participation in decisions and goal setting.

For example, repeatedly, participants in the previously cited studies noted that they would like to have been a part of decisions made about their placements. Therefore, they note a need for being involved at various aspects of decisions that relate to their placement and their future. The extent to which one is involved in decision - making aspects within an organization is a direct reflection of the organization's culture. The culture of the organization dictates to what extent individuals are able to take part in decision within the organization and feel that their input is valued and considered during the process.

Furthermore, overwhelmingly, participants noted the need to have sufficient support to set and obtain goals especially as they relate to them becoming self-sufficient upon leaving care. These participants are describing a cultural environment that supports their desire to set goals and work toward these goals with encouragement. Therefore, they are able to self-actualize as they become

young adults knowing that they can and should set goals for their future. Again, this type of support speaks to another level of cultural environmental aspects that makes an individual feel that they are a part of the process. Therefore, a new approach and understanding within these settings needs to occur that regards culture as a focus for understanding and a potential factor for change.

Organizational Culture: Its Meaning & Structural Influences

A review of organizational culture literature revealed that the definition and use of the term organizational culture has enormous variations (Gordon & Di Tomaso, 1992). In the search to understand and define culture, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1960), found over 150 meanings of the word that were largely influenced by E.B. Tylor's definition borrowed from the Germans in 1871. Tylor defined culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1960). During this time, culture, no longer referred to the process of cultivation or the degree to which it has been carried out. Instead, it referred to a state or condition, sometimes described as extraorganic or superorganic, in which all human societies share (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1960).

Through the review of various definitions, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1960), developed the following groups and provided numerous definitions related to the categories: (i) descriptive—broad definitions based on Tylor; (ii) historical—emphasizes social heritage or tradition; (iii) normative—emphasizes rules, ideals, and values; (iv) psychological—emphasizes adjustment, learning, and habits; (v) structural—emphasizes the patterning or organization of culture; and (vi) genetics—emphasizes culture as a product or artifact, ideas, and symbols. As society has evolved and culture continues to be used to frame research, it does not have a fixed or broadly agreed-upon meaning even in Anthropology (Alvesson, 1993; 2002). Therefore, one needs to have a clear understanding of culture and its structural influences through continuous awareness of the culture that is imbedded in the environment within which one interacts within on a daily basis.

According to Alvesson (2002), to fully understand culture and organizational culture, a distinction between culture and social structure must be made. Culture is regarded as a cohesive system of meanings and symbols by which social interactions occur (Alvesson, 2002). Social structure is viewed as the behavioral patterns to which the social interaction itself gives rise (Alvesson, 2002). From

this perspective, culture is framed by the beliefs, expressive symbols and values by which individuals define their environment, express their feelings and make judgments. At the social structural level, there is a continuous process of interactions (Alvesson, 2002). Thus, culture is the creation of meaning through which human beings interpret their experiences and guide their actions. Social structure, however, is the form an action takes or the network of social relationships that exists (Alvesson, 2002).

This understanding of culture and social interactions represents different abstractions of the same phenomenon (Alvesson, 2002). This division of understanding is important as one begins to shape and understand organizational culture and its impact on organizational change. The distinction is important because culture describes social action as dependent on the meaning it has for those involved. Social structure describes social action from the point of view of its consequences on the functioning of the social system (Alvesson, 2002).

In an organizational setting, culture is conceived as a building block in organizational design — a subsystem, well demarcated from other parts of the organization, which includes norms, values, beliefs, and behavior

(Alvesson, 1993; 2002). According to Kilmann (1995), the most important aspect of culture within an organization is norms. It is the norms that guide the behavior and attitudes of the workers in the agency. The workers are of the greatest interest and significance to the success of the organization. Therefore, workers are viewed as having a powerful effect on the requirements for a job's success — quality, efficiency, client service and innovation (Kilmann, 1995).

Furthermore, the understanding of norms is also illustrated within organizations as symbols. Symbols that are inherent within an organization tend to embody and express how an organization's patterns of beliefs, values, practices and artifacts that define who members are and how they are to do things, are interwoven at various levels (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Through this comprehension, culture can be used as a product or a process for understanding the organization.

As a product, culture embodies the accumulated wisdom from those who came before the current workers (Bolman & Deal, 1997). As a process, it is continually renewed and re-created as newcomers learn the old ways and eventually become the teachers (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

The culmination and comprehension of these principles are imperative components in the definition of organizational culture. Organizational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions — invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integrations — that have worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985). Additionally, Alvesson (2002), defines organizational culture as an umbrella concept for discussing the importance of people in relation to understanding symbolism—or rituals, myths, stories and legends – and the interpretation of events, ideas, and experiences that are influenced and shaped by groups that include values and assumptions about the social reality of an organization. These two holistic definitions of organizational culture shed light on the complexity of understanding and changing organizational culture.

The variations and consistency used in understanding culture play a significant role in understanding to what extent organizational culture can be controlled. This can be attributed to the evolution of culture. Yet, this is difficult because within an organizational setting, we are

looking at an evolution of social units within a larger "host" culture that has existed for an extended period of time. From this perspective, culture can be applied to any size social unit that has the opportunity to learn and stabilize its view of self and the environment surrounding it (Schein, 1985). This is further compromised by the fact that culture is learned and its evolution occurs in an organizational context as new experiences take place. However, the culture will only change if one understands the dynamics of the learning process and the levels of culture within an organization (Schein, 1985).

The manner by which culture is viewed within an organizational context is further understood through theoretical schools created over time. These well demarcated schools of thought on culture influences one's commitment to specific conceptual assumptions and methods for studying culture.

Organizational Cultural Elements

Cultural elements within an organization include: (i) physical layout of an organization's offices; (ii) rules of interaction that are taught to newcomers; (iii) values, ideologies/philosophy; and (iv) underlying conceptual categories and assumptions that enable people to

communicate and interpret everyday occurrences (Schein, 1985).

Essentially, these four elements create three levels of culture that must be carefully distinguished to avoid conceptual confusion: (1) artifacts; (2) values; and (3) underlying assumptions. The most visible level of culture is its artifacts and creations. At this level, one can look at the physical space, the technological output of the group, its written and spoken language and the overt behavior of its members (Schein, 1985). Often times, these artifacts are not easily found nor are they easily defined within an organization. Therefore, to achieve this level of understanding, an analysis of the central values that provide the day-to-day operating principles must occur (Schein, 1985). To an extent, all cultural learning reflects one's original values, a sense of what ought to be, as distinct from what is (Schein, 1985).

In keeping with this principle, the abilities to problem-solve and make decisions rest on the values of the leader and members within an organization. If a solution has worked in the past, the group uses this shared perception of the success, and this value starts a process of cognitive transformation into a belief, ultimately, an assumption that is maintained until they are no longer

deemed as a necessary solution to the problem (Schein,

1985). In fact, over time, these values are taken for

granted and rest along the lines of beliefs and

assumptions. They become automatic and are conducted at an

unconscious state (Schein, 1985). This is the point where

the importance of assessing organization culture fits.

Once individuals within an organizational structure begin

to take the values, beliefs and symbols for granted, a

breakdown within the culture occurs. If this aspect

continues to be neglected, the organizational culture will

become dysfunctional, and the consequences may further

jeopardize the future of the organization (Schwartzman,

1993).

Organizational Culture: Performance Link

The link between organizational culture and

performance has a relatively extensive tradition within the

field of organizational studies (Wilderom, et. al., 2000).

The roots of this type of research can be traced back to

the 'Hawthorne' studies and the Glacier Metal Works

research. Through progress over time and the continuation

of organizational culture research, researchers began to

note the importance of linking culture to performance.

Thus came empirical studies on organizational culture and

its link to performance. According to Wilderom, Glunk, and

Maslowski (2000), the over-arching theme of the studies on organizational culture is that the culture of an organization is an important key to the success of the organization.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the study of organizational culture and its link to performance gained attention as the investigation of the two became more explicit (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). In fact, Silverzweig and Allen (1976) were the first to explicitly research the effect of a company's culture on its performance (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). The research consisted of eight cases that involved firms from various branches that had suffered losses or intended to raise their effectiveness (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). They found that performance of six of the eight organizations studied increased substantially after changes in their cultures, and the improvements sustained for a longer time period (Wilderom, et. al., 2000).

By the end of the 1970s, explanations for the worldwide success of Japanese firms were beginning to fill the research agenda around the organizational culture performance link (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). Ouchi, a prominent organizational culture researcher, while at the forefront of this movement along with Johnson, brought attention to the importance of workers' commitment and a

unitary vision as a factor of the company's performance (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). Ouchi further argued that the financial success of firms is attributable to their strong emphasis on well-being of employees; also, an emphasis on consensual decision making, which are all characteristics that are inherent in most Japanese companies (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). By the 1980s, Peters and Waterman (1982) and Deal and Kennedy (1982) began to move forward with demonstrating the casual link between strong culture and organization performance (Wilderom, et. al., 2000).

However, the findings of the aforementioned scholars did not come without criticism. In fact, many began to question the methodologies used and the findings that there was a definite link between culture and performance (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). Saffold (1988), noted five important shortcomings of the empirical studies: (i) strong culture studies usually emphasize a single, unitary organizational culture even though multiple cultures may exist; (ii) measures of culture strength are ambiguous because in the study of culture, meanings are central, rather than frequencies; (iii) preference is given to broad-brush cultural profiles that focus on very general values and norms; (iv) insufficient attention has been given to the variety of possible culture-performance links,

i.e., particular cultural features may affect different performance-related organizational processes in varying ways; and (v) there are numerous methodological problems in existing studies that range from overreliance on top management views to the absence of control groups.

Despite the skepticism, the 1990s provided a venue for the study of culture and performance through the creation of a relatively large number of survey studies that empirically tested the long assumed culture-performance link (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). This surge of instruments and methodologies has helped to prove the widespread idea of the 1960s and 1970s that the culture of an organization is an important key to the success of the organization (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). The extent to which this truth has become more apparent through empirical studies is outlined in Table 1.

Several of the studies illustrated in Table 1 suggested findings that show correlations in the context of cross-sectional designs and objective performance data (Wilderom, et. al., 2000). Still, after these aforementioned studies and countless others that show a culture-performance link, there remains a significant amount of skepticism. More importantly, these empirical studies have identified cultural traits that have once

Table 1

Empirical Studies on Organizational Culture-Performance Link

Researcher/ Organizational Culture Dimensions	Performance Measure	Organization Involved	Respondents/ Instrument	Evidence of Culture Performance Link
Amsa (1986) Elements and dimensions of organizational culture	3 years of loomshed workers loitering behavior	Nine mills, six from the private sector and three from the public sector	100-150 workers from the 1st & 2nd shift using the work-sampling method	Loitering behavior is not determined by a simple culture element but by a set of such elements
Denison (1990) Involvement, consistency, adaptability, mission	Averaged more than 6 years of return in sales/ ratio and income/ investment ration	34 large U.S. firms from 25 different industries	43,747 employees within 6,671 work groups/ Values Model	Involvement is positively related to short - & long - term performance Consistency is positively related to short-term performance
Rousseau (1990) Team - or satisfaction oriented norms and security oriented norms	Amount of money raised for community	32 large units of a U.S. nationwide voluntary service organization	263 paid staff members/ OCI 120-item survey	Little emphasis on security oriented norms is significantly related to high performance

Table 1 (continued)

Empirical Studies on Organizational Culture-Performance

Link

Researcher/ Organizational Culture Dimensions	Performance Measure	Organizations Involved	Respondents/ Instrument	Evidence of Culture Performance Link
Gordon & DiTomaso (1992) Strength of culture, adaptability and stability	6 years: growth of assets and premiums	11 U.S. Insurance companies	850 managers/ The Survey of Management Climate	Culture strength and adaptability are both predictive of short-term performance
Kotter & Heskett (1992) Strength of culture, strategy-culture fit and adaptability	Average over 11 yrs. of yearly increase in net income, investment and stock price	207 U.S. firms from 22 different industries	600 top managers	Positive but moderate relationship between culture strength and long-term economic performance
Marcoulides & Heck (1993) Organizational structure, organizational values, task organization, organizational climate, and employee attitudes	Gross revenue and product ratio, market share, profit and return on investment	26 greatly varying U.S. firms	329 employees Structured interview & follow-up questionnaire	All cultural dimensions demonstrated some degree of direct or indirect effect on performance

Note. From "Organizational culture as a predictor of organizational performance," by C. Wilderom, U. Glunk and R. Maslowski, Handbook of organizational culture and climate. Copyright 2000 by Sage Publications. Adopted with permission of the author.

again propelled research on the impact and importance for studying the culture-performance links in an organizational setting. According to Alvesson (2002), there are four perspectives that demonstrate the relationship between organizational culture and performance. These four perspectives play a significant role in defining the culture performance relationship and are identified as the following:

(i)   Strong Culture Thesis: commitment of an organization's employees and managers to the same set of values, beliefs and norms will have positive results-the strength of the culture is correlated with success. Thus, a common culture makes it easier to set and reach goals. The shared culture encourages individuals to identify with the organization and feel a sense of belonging and responsibility.

(ii)   Reverse Relationship Between Culture and Performance: This body of research suggests that high performance levels lead to the creation of a strong organizational culture (culture homogeneity). From this stance, culture is viewed as a by-product of high performances; values and meanings may reproduce

a successful organization and thus contribute to performances.

(iii)   Cultural Type: Another aspect for understanding the culture-performance link draws upon contingency thinking that suggests that under certain conditions, a particular culture is appropriate and at times, necessary. Through this stance, culture may be an important regulatory mechanism in organizational settings too complex and ambiguous to be controlled by the traditional means (bureaucracy and the market).

(iv)   Adaptive Culture: Cultures that are able to respond to changes in the environment are the key to good performance. These cultures are characterized by individuals being willing to take risk, trust each other, being proactive, working together to identify problems and opportunities (Alvesson, 2002).

These four viewpoints illustrate why it is imperative to continue to conduct research on organizational culture-performance links. Moreover, this understanding provides a mechanism for improving workplace dynamics and services

beneficial to all stakeholders (administrators, workers and clients).

Although all of the studies were conducted in a business setting, they provide a point of reference on why it is important to conduct this study within a social service agency setting. The foster care system as noted through its history has endured numerous changes over time to improve the quality of services that children receive in this setting. This is due in part to the reality that most children will not return to their families. Although the decision to remove a child from a home is done to protect the child the family and its importance remains a factor, the family is the thread that holds the human race together (Garbarino, 1992).

Through families, as individuals we are connected to the past - the distant times and places of our ancestors - and to the future - the hope of our children's children (Garbarino, 1992). It is where we learn the cultural context that is used to promote a healthy developmental environment that supports one's ability to make decisions and set and reach goals as satisfaction needs are met. These aspects are what we learn as values that define our family as an organization and social system. As we have used this principle to dictate when, why and how children

should be removed from an abusive setting, this same approach must be taken to make sure that as an organization we are not recreating the family environment from which the child was removed by having an organizational culture that mimics that of an abusive, neglected family.

Formal organizations of all sorts are the dominant form of social arrangements in the modern world (Germain & Bloom, 1999). The child welfare and the foster care system, is a very important organization within the context of our society. It is here that children who are no longer able to reside within the family structure become a child of the "system". The way this child interacts with the "system" and receives the amount of care necessary to move forward into adulthood may be influenced by the culture within the organization.

Within the child welfare system in general, and the foster care system in particular, workers need to have an understanding that one's organizational culture can provide information about homogeneity among workers in reference to the mission and values outlined in the agency. Also, by reframing social workers' thinking about the impact that our work setting has on our decision - making process, we can begin to understand and agree with the applicability of

an organizational culture assessment within the agency setting.

Chapter three provides an in-depth overview of the methodology used to conduct an organizational cultural assessment in a child welfare agency. The chapter will provide information on the various instruments used to collect the data and the format used for analyzing the data.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter includes various subsections that present the following about the study (i)methodology; (ii)research design; (iii) a description of the selected participants; (iv) discussion of the measures used; and (v) an overview of the data analysis techniques employed.

Methodology

An ethnographic organizational research project was developed with knowledge taken from the field of anthropology. It is of particular value to the furthering of organizational knowledge because it focuses on the ways that individuals and groups constitute and interpret organizations and societies on a daily interactional basis (Schwartzman, 1993). Research on the link between organizational and societal culture and performance effectiveness has been on the rise in the United States over the past decade (Wilderom, Glunk, & Maslowski, 2000). However, this proliferation of research has not been widely used in human service agencies, specifically as an explanation of and perhaps eventually a predictor of successful outcomes for abused and neglected children in long-term residential foster care.

As previously mentioned, organizational theory is usually discussed and applied from an administrative perspective, highlighting the definition of the theory, structural design, and budget and financial management (Page, 1988; Anderson, Carter, & Lowe, 1999; Golembiewski, 1988;). Although all of these aspects are necessary components for the structure and service ability of an organization, they still fail to take into account the organizational culture and its impact on the practitioner, service delivery and treatment modalities used. The quantitative and qualitative approach of this study will create a new understanding of the connection and the impact that societal and organizational culture has on the worker and successful outcomes for abused and neglected children in long-term residential foster care.

Research Design

Mixed Methods

This study was conducted using mixed methods that included quantitative and qualitative data collection. Mixed methods were employed to expand an understanding from one method to another to converge or confirm findings from different data sources (Creswell, 2003). This study used a concurrent triangulation strategy for data collection and analysis. Concurrent triangulation occurs when the

57

researcher uses two different methods in an attempt to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study (Creswell, 2003; Denzin, 1989). By using this data collection strategy, an integration of the results from the two methods will occur during the interpretation phase. Therefore, the interpretation can either note the convergence of the findings as a way to strengthen the knowledge claims of the study or explain any lack of convergence that may result from it (Creswell, 2003).

This type of interpretive process is of major importance when studying organizational culture because of the variance of defining "culture" in any setting. Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative methods are complementary approaches to the study and assessment of organizational processes and attributes (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). The advantages of conducting qualitative organizational culture research include the use of the focal unit's own terms to describe itself, the intensive and in-depth information that can be obtained about from a unit, and the amenability of the method for exploratory research on issues and processes about which little or no information exists (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). The advantages of quantitative methods include the ease of cross-sectional assessments and comparisons (across

individuals, organizations, or sub-units), the replicability of the assessment in different units and by other researchers or organizational development professionals, and a common articulated frame of reference for interpreting the data (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Creswell, 2003).

Theoretical Framework for the Research Methodology

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the agency and its societal and organizational culture, an in-depth study using three theoretical frameworks with ethnographic anthropological techniques was utilized. The first theory used for framing this research is the human relations theory. This theory stresses the informal structure and the emotional, non-rational motivations that operate within organizational settings (Anderson, Carter, & Lowe, 1999). Furthermore, this theory supports the understanding that bureaucracies are more than formal organizations; many informal systems (such as primary groups of coworkers) emerge within bureaucratic structures (Germain & Bloom, 1999).

Through this theoretical framework, a clearer understanding emerges about how the informal group structure becomes a method by which needs of the workers are met (Germain & Bloom, 1999). These informal structures

are shaped by the personalities — attitudes, motivations, personal goals, and professional commitments — of the workers and reshaped into the give-and-take in the interpersonal arena (Germain & Bloom, 1999). From this process, a subculture within the cultural organization emerges within the organization as an adaptation to the stressors and challenges of organizational life (Germain & Bloom, 1999). More importantly, these informal systems may facilitate or hinder the goal achievement of the larger organization (Anderson, et. al., 1999; Germain & Bloom, 1999).

One of the most famous uses of this theory was an ethnographic organizational study by Hawthorne studies known to most as the "Hawthorne Effect" (Anderson, et. al., 1999; Schwartzman, 1993). The study helped to frame the new ideology that workers do not function as demarcated units organized in linear chains, but rather as members of groups with norms to which they all adhere (Anderson, et. al., 1999).

In this study, this theoretical perspective was used to understand workers' understanding and interpretation of the mission as they related to providing services to children and families in foster care. Also, how the mission interacts with the prescribed values and is

utilized to maintain a professional commitment toward effective services for children and family in foster care. It placed a focus on the norms that all workers are expected to adhere

The second theoretical framework is the symbolic interaction theory. Through this theory, people are viewed as social beings who interact with one another based on shared meanings, or symbols (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 1998). Therefore, human interaction is symbolic interaction, a fluid interpretive process where human life is seen as dynamic and creative (Robbins, et. al., 1998). Symbolic interactionists stress social and interactional processes that contribute to human development and self-conception (Robbins, et. al., 1998).

The primary concept of this theory rests with the process by which individual socialization occurs through learned norms, values, roles, skills and expectations of society (Robbins, et. al., 1998). From an organizational culture prospective, this theoretical frame fits because it gives value to the components that are inherent within an organizational setting that dictate worker attitude, behavior, and belief systems that all interact to create the organization's cultural make-up. In fact, this becomes

more apparent in the following basic principles of symbolic

interaction:

(i) Human beings, unlike lower animals, are endowed with the capacity for thought.

(ii) The capacity for thought is shaped by social interaction.

(iii) In social interaction, people learn the meanings and symbols that allow them to exercise their distinctively human capacity for thought.

(iv) Meanings and symbols allow people to carry on distinctively human action and interaction.

(v) People are able to modify or alter the meanings and symbols that they use in action and interaction on the basis of their interpretation of the situation.

(vi) People are able to make these modifications and alternatives because they can examine possible courses of action, assess their relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose a course of action.

(vii) The intertwined patterns of action and interaction make up groups, societies and cultures (Robbins, et. al., 1998).

These seven principles strengthen the symbolic interaction

theory connection to the understanding of organizational

culture because they illustrate how symbols, meanings and

interactions are interwoven and give individuals the

capacity to make informed decisions. At this juncture, it

is therefore, fitting to bring in the third theoretical

62

framework to be used to illustrate the importance of understanding the dynamics of culture within an organizational setting-- ethnomethodology.

From an anthropological perspective, enthomethodology is the study of common everyday methods of practical action and reasoning (Livingston, 1987). Also, ethnomethodology refers to the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life (Garfinkel, 1967). More importantly, ethnomethodolgy is an approach that is concerned with the procedures members use to go about knowing what should be done or what is expected of them in a given situation (Benson & Hughes, 1983). In an organizational setting, these actions and expressions include the attitudes, values, beliefs and symbols that all play a role in creating the culture of an organization. In this study it reflects worker's ability to be a part of the decision-making process and the support that they receive to do this in the context of the organization.

Furthermore, it illustrates the mechanisms utilized by workers to have a voice in the agency. The holistic approach outlined in Figure 1 makes a connection between human relations and its impact as it connects with one's

ability to interact and understand the underlying symbols and meanings within the organization. This leads to the action and practices that occur, coming together to create the organization's culture.

From this perspective, the story of the culture can be told through the observation and measurement of the actions and reasoning. This framework also creates a venue for understanding the impact that the combined human relation and symbolic interaction theory have on the understanding of organizational culture. It also shows its link to performance and effective, efficient quality service as individuals come together and create the organization's culture.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework model.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework model.
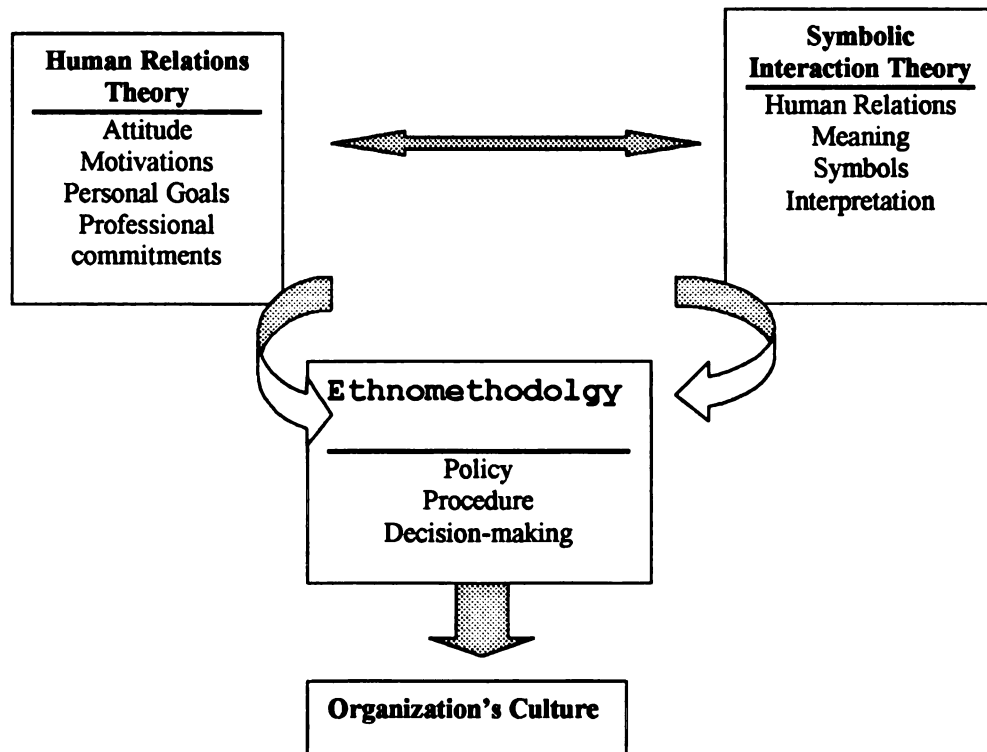
These three theoretical frameworks coupled with anthropological organizational ethnography techniques will be beneficial to our understanding of organizational culture in a child welfare agency and its impact on worker performance and quality services. That, in turn, may be beneficial to a child who receives services from the research site.

The proposed theoretical framework is important because it provides a backdrop for understanding "culture" in a child welfare foster care agency setting. For the most part, in an organizational setting, culture is conceived as a building block in organizational design—a subsystem, well demarcated from other parts of the organization, which includes norms, values, beliefs, and behavior (Alvesson, 1993; 2002).

According to Kilmann (1995), the most important aspect of culture is norms. It is the norms that guide the behavior and attitudes of the workers in the agency who apparently are of the greatest interest and significance to the success of the organization. Workers have a powerful effect on how the requirements of job are carried out for the job's success and quality, efficiency, and innovation as it relates to client services.

Another reason for the importance of this research is that, in order to understand how to plan to use the culture to create and sustain change, we must first understand the organizational culture and its impact on agency goals. Through this approach, an understanding of changes that support the culture and goals within the organization can occur. This type of synthesis that includes agency goals, mission and culture creates a positive environment that supports worker to worker and worker to client relationship. This facilitates a sense of belonging and ownership within the organization.

Sample Selection/Characteristics

Participants in this study were drawn from several units within a Faith-based Child Welfare agency in Michigan. The study was conducted within the agency setting, and each data collection session was conducted during a regularly scheduled administrative/staff/unit team meeting. Thus, individuals were in their usual work environment during their participation in the study. The participants may be considered to comprise a purposive sample as they were selected based on their status of work within the child welfare component of the organization. The sample included ninety-two participants from four segments within the organization. The total sample of

participants (N=92) completed the Organization Culture

Inventory (OCI) that included socio-demographic questions.

Four focus group sessions were conducted that included the

participation of the total sample of participants (N-92).

The group's gender composition was as followings: 68%

female, 20 % males and 12% unknown. The ethnicity of the

total sample was comprised of the following: 68%

White/Caucasian, 9% Hispanic and 8% Asian. A more thorough

assessment of the selected participant characteristics is

included in Chapter 4 as part of the descriptive analysis

of the data.

The Organizational Culture Inventory has be used

effectively with sample sizes as small as 15 to as large as

5,000 (Xenikou & Furnham, 1996). The Cronbach's alpha

coefficient of internal reliability has been reported to

range from .67 to .92 (Xenikou & Furnham, 1996). In

reference to the OCI's validity, there have been moderately

high levels of within-organization agreement on OCI

responses across samples (Xenikou & Furnham, 1996). In

fact, when compared to four of the most established

measures of organizational culture, the OCI was the most

internally reliable instrument (Xenikou & Furnham, 1996).

Therefore, the study sample size is found to be adequate

for the analysis of the agency's cultures.

Procedures

Agency supervisors were sent a memo that introduced the researcher and the purpose of the study. They were asked to schedule a data collection session during one of the scheduled administrative/staff/unit meetings. All of the sessions occurred on site at the agency except for the administrative group. That session was held off-site due to group size that could not be accommodated at the agency. However, the chosen site was the same location utilized by the group for regular monthly administrative meetings. During the line worker sessions, supervisors would begin the meeting by introducing the researcher and then excused themselves. This process reduced duplicate participation and kept line workers and administrators separate during the data collection process. These sessions were guided in the following manner: (1) overview; (2) review of inform consent forms; (3) completion of the OCI; (4) completion of focus group protocol; (5 focus group session; (6) submission of focus group protocol; and finally, (7) session closure.

During the first segment of the sessions, participants were given an overview of the study by the researcher. During the overview session, participants were told that they would be participating in an Organizational Culture

Assessment Study and that this study is a part of the researcher's dissertation work in the School of Social Work at Michigan State University. Furthermore, they were told that in an effort to assess the culture of the organization, they would be asked to complete the Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI) and participate in a focus group session.

Following a complete overview of the study, participants were informed of their right to participate or not to participate in the study. The participants were given a study disclosure and two informed consent forms. The first form was a letter of consent to participate in the study and the second form was a consent to audiotape the focus group segment of the session. The study disclosure and the informed consent forms included a summary of the study, anticipated risk and potential benefits. The disclosure and consent forms also contained a declaration of confidentiality and a statement about the voluntary nature of participation. Participants were reminded that they could discontinue participation at anytime during the data collection session. Once the participants signed their forms, they were collected and placed in a folder with the group name and number on the outside. Participants received a duplicate copy of the

70

inform consent and consent to audiotape forms that included

the names and telephone numbers of contact persons to

discuss any concerns about the study. A copy of the forms

is included in Appendix B and C.

Immediately following the completion of consent forms,

participants were given a copy of the Organizational

Culture Inventory (OCI) instrument. Participants were

instructed not to put any identifiers, i.e., their name on

the form. They were instructed to open the instrument and

were shown the phrase that should be used before each

survey item. Also, a review of the Likert responses was

conducted and questions of clarifications were taken during

this time. After all the instructions were given,

participants were given 45 minutes to complete the

quantitative instrument. Upon the group's completion of

the OCI, they were collected without any unique identifiers

and placed in a folder labeled OCI with the group name and

number. Then, participants were instructed on the next wave

of the data collection that consisted of a focus group.

At this juncture, participants were given a copy of

the questions that were used to guide the focus group

discussion (see Appendix D). The focus group protocol was

double-sided and included 12 questions. The front page of

the protocol included an overview of the purpose of the

focus group and a reminder that the session would be audiotaped for analysis purpose. Also, included on the first page were questions 1-5. The remaining 7 questions were on the back. Participants were instructed to read each question and write their initial thoughts to the questions. They were given 15 minutes to write their initial thoughts to 12 questions. At the end of the 15 minutes, the researcher again informed the participants that the focus group dialogue would be audiotaped for analysis purposes and that at anytime they may choose to reframe from participating in the study.

The focus group sessions were conducted within 45 minutes. The participants were asked the first question outlined on the sheet and the rest of the questions were asked as the dialogue progressed in its direction. Also, participants were asked to state their names before providing input. This technique was used to connect the flow of individual comments. At the end of the focus group session, participants were asked to submit the focus group protocol forms with their responses. Once collected, participants were thanked for participating in the study and dismissed.

Before leaving the research site, signed informed consent forms, surveys and focus group protocols were

separated and placed in their respective accordion style folder with a seal. The group name and date were written on the outside of the folder. This method of collecting and storing the informed consent forms, surveys and focus group protocols was used to instill confidence among the participants that anonymity of the completed surveys would be maintained as outlined in both consent forms. This method was also in line with the University Institutional Review Board's requirements for protecting human subject in a research setting.

Measures

Quantitative Instrument

The quantitative data collection phase of the project used the most widely utilized organizational culture assessment tool, the Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI). Over two million respondents have completed the OCI throughout the world (Cooke, & Szumal, 2000). To date, it has been used in various ways, including directing, evaluating, and monitoring organizational change; identifying and transferring the cultures of high-performing units; studying and enhancing system reliability and safety; promoting collaborative relations within and across units; and testing hypotheses on the relationships among culture, outcome and antecedent variables. This

expansive applicability creates a sound knowledge foundation of ways in which culture operates in different types of organizations.

The Organizational Culture Inventory contains 120 items to produce 12 scales with 10 items each that are summed and plotted(Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). In addition to the 120 questions, the OCI includes 9 socio-demographic questions. The OCI, is a quantitative instrument that measures 12 sets of behavioral norms (humanistic-encouraging, affiliative, approval, conventional, dependent, avoidance, oppositional, power, competitive, perfectionistic, achievement, self-actualizing) associated with three general types of organizational cultures: Constructive, Passive/Defensive, and Aggressive/Defensive (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission). On a scale of 1 to 5, respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which each behavior helps people to 'fit in' and 'meet expectations' in their respected organization (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). Upon completion of the OCI by workers, the scaled scores are plotted on a circumplex that illustrates the distance between their behavioral norms and that of the organization

and reflects the degrees of similarity and correlation (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission).

The behavioral norms plotted on the right-hand side of the OCI circumplex reflect expectations for behaviors that are people oriented. Those on the left-hand side reflect behaviors that are relatively task oriented (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission). Norms toward the top of the circumplex promote behaviors that are directed toward the fulfillment of higher-order satisfaction needs. Norms at the bottom promote behaviors aimed toward the fulfillment of lower-order security needs (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission).

The statistically normed OCI circumplex gives the researcher an opportunity to compare the results of participants within and across groups. However, beyond assessing the current operating cultures of organizations,

it can also be used to identify the ideal cultures for organizations and subunits that lead to successful outcomes as defined by the organization (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission; Cooke, & Szumal, 2000).

Qualitative Instrument

The qualitative segment of the study included focus group interviews of clustered participant groups and document review. Focus groups as a level of measurement within an organizational setting have been found to be particularly effective (Calder, 1980). Within an organizational context, focus groups involve convening groups of employees for an open-ended discussion of their work life (Calder, 1980). Through this process, the moderator/facilitator seeks to establish an atmosphere of easy discussion where topics are introduced, and unobtrusive and important comments can be probed (Calder, 1980).

According to Calder, (1980) the moderator/facilitator conducting research within an organizational setting through focus groups ideally becomes a part of the group. Essentially, this increases the group's acceptance of the

moderator/facilitator. Moreover, it provides the moderator/facilitator an opportunity to see things from the group's perspective (Calder, 1980). In essence, the moderator/facilitator becomes one of them to further their understanding of the concepts and themes presented. However, it is important to note that the key factor of the focus group interview is the interaction among participants (Calder, 1980). In their interaction, the group reproduces their shared perspective they have developed about their work (Calder, 1980). For this study, the questions Appendix C were used to obtain the group's perception of the agency's mission, values, support structure and decision-making processes as they relate to workers who work with children and families in foster care.

The second segment of the qualitative data collection included the review of documents that are a part of the Child Welfare Agency's guiding principle for agency practice. This document exploration included the following documents:

- Mission, Vision & Core Values Statement
- Strategic Plan (2003)

- Strategic Plan Update (2004)

- "Community Voices" Conversations with Customers, Staff, Volunteers and Donors, External Agencies Report

Combined, these materials described the organization's purpose, goals and beliefs and provide a description of components that help to define its cultural make-up. Thus, the researcher explored these documents to identify pertinent areas relative to the stated organizational culture: norms, values, belief systems that guide the daily actions of workers within the agency.

Analysis

The OCI was scored based on the directions of its creators and placed on a circumplex that will be explained alongside the themes identified through the analysis of the qualitative data in chapter IV. Careful attention was afforded to items that had missing responses to ensure that the circumplex was an adequate depiction of the organization's culture. In fact, three of the 92 respondents were missing scale item responses to a few of the questions on the OCI. For the purpose of data analysis, a form of mean item substitution was used to replace the missing value. A sample mean was calculated for all of the missing items and this estimation was used in place of the missing response.

In addition, descriptive statistics were compiled by item for the 120 items designed to create the 12 scales. Further analysis of the items included measures of central tendency, variability, variables' distribution characteristics and percentages. For the purpose of understandability of the findings, additional graphic summaries were created and used appropriately to help guide the readers of the findings illustrated in chapter 4. The approach of comparing across and within groups resulted in the use of several inferential tests of significance that included an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Furthermore, descriptive statistics for demographic questions were calculated. For every statistical tests utilized in this exploratory study, a probability level of .05 was considered statistically significant.

The qualitative data were analyzed using an ethnographic content analysis technique (Altheide, 1987). Through this process, the meaning of a story can be assumed to be the reflection of various modes of information sharing, style and format. Hence, categories and variables guide the study. However, others can, and were expected to emerge. The categories guided the content analysis of the qualitative information obtained during the focus group. The data collected on the focus group protocol forms

included narrative responses to each question that were either in a list format or complete sentences. The data on these forms were coded based on common themes that occurred on responses. These themes were then used to detect patterns or themes in organizational culture identification and its influences on performance and outcomes. This same process was used to analyze the various documents reviewed in this study. According to Calder (1980), it is necessary to identify and organize the materials obtained during the interview by topics. Therefore, the unit of analysis is the 'verbatim quote': comments that are extremely revealing and illustrative of the employee's perspective (Calder, 1980).

The second phase of the content analysis of the focus group interviews and agency documents included reviewing the topical quotes again, searching for patterns (Calder, 1980). Through this process of deduction, a cross-reference of the themes were put together to examine workers' understanding of the organization's culture and its influence within the organizational setting, and was compared to the quantitative findings.

This concludes the explanation of the mixed methods used in this study. Chapter IV illustrates the results of the study.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter provides an overview of the results obtained through qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to answer the following proposed research questions:

(i)   What is the mission of the organization?

(ii)   How is the mission interpreted and utilized by agency administrators, supervisors and line workers?

(iii)   What is the organizational culture of the agency?

(iv)   Is there a match between the mission and the identified culture?

(v)   How does the organizational culture dictate the structure and performance of workers as they relate to effective services?

(vi)   What are the identified gaps between the current organizational culture and the culture needed for a positive culture-performance link to effective services?

Following an overview of the sample descriptive statistics, the results of the questions guiding this study will be presented in the order that they appear. The results may include quantitative or qualitative findings or a combination of both data collection approaches.

81

Descriptive Statistics

Age, Gender, and Ethnicity

Table 2 presents a snapshot of the 92 respondents who met all criteria for participation in the study. They ranged from 20 to over 60 years old. The study sample comprised males (20%) and females (68%) who were employed at various levels within the organizational setting and is a direct reflection of gender diversity in the organization. The racial composition of the respondents is also a direct reflection of the racial diversity within the organization: Asian, 3.3%, Black or African-American, 6.5%, Hispanic, 9.8%, White/Caucasian 73.9%, and 4.3% other.

Education, Level, Salary and Years with Organization

Table 3 illustrates that the highest level of education reported by the participants ranged from High School to a Master's degree. A large majority of the respondents, 70.7%, indicated that they had a Bachelor's degree, some graduate work or a Master's degree.
The sample has a wide range of salary levels that were identified during the project. The salary for the majority of those sampled fell between $18,000 or less to $35,001 to $45,000 to a high range of over $90,000 (see Table 3).

Table 2

Age, Gender and Ethnicity of Participants (N=92)

Age	n	%
20-29	23	25
30-39	19	20.7
40-49	18	19.6
50-59	25	27.2
60 or over	3	3.3
No Response	4	4.3

Gender	n	%
Male	20	21.7
Female	68	73.9
No Response	4	4.3

Ethnicity	n	%
Asian	3	3.3
Black/African-American	6	6.5
Hispanic	9	9.8
White/Caucasian	68	73.9
Other	4	4.3
No Response	2	2.2

The sample included participants from various work levels within the organization. The overall sample included: 35.9% Non-management; 29.3% Line management (supervising non-management personnel); 16.3% Middle management (managing managers); 3.3% Senior management; 5.4% Executive/Senior Vice President; 1.1% CEO/President; and 8.7% who did not identify with any organizational level (see Table 4).

Another characteristic of the participants is the number of years that they have been with the organization. The range of years with the organization spanned less than six months to over 15 years. While 10.9% of the participants noted being at the organization for less than 6 months, 69.6% had been with the organization from 2 to 4 years to more than 15 years (see Table 4). This concludes the demographic overview of sample participants for this exploratory study.

To begin the understanding of the organizational culture that exists within the context of this Child Welfare agency, first the mission, values and vision of the organization will be described. This description is used as a backdrop for understanding how workers interpret them when providing services to children and families in foster care. Following this description, the results of workers'

interpretation and use of the mission, values and vision

statements will be illustrated. This illustration includes

Table 3

Education and Salary of Participants (N=92)

Education	n	%
High School	4	4.3
Some College	9	9.8
Associate's/Technical	10	10.9
Bachelor's Degree	25	27.2
Some Graduate Work	7	7.6
Master's Degree	33	35.9
Other	1	1.1
No Response	3	3.3

Annual Salary	n	%
$18,000 or less	13	14.1
$18,001 to $25,000	18	19.6
$25,001 to $35,000	32	34.8
$35,001 to $45,000	11	12.0
$45,001 to $60,000	5	5.4
$60,001 to $75,000	3	3.3
$75,001 to $90,000	1	1.1
$90,000 plus	1	1.1
No Response	8	8.7

Table 4

Participant's Level and Years with Organization (N=92)

Organizational Level	n	%
Non-Management	33	35.9
Line Management (supervising non-management personnel	27	29.3
Middle Management (managing managers	15	16.3
Senior Management	3	3.3
Executive/Senior Vice President	5	5.4
CEO/President	1	1.1
No Response	8	8.7

Years with Organization	n	%
Less than 6 months	10	10.9
6 months to 1 year	7	7.6
1 to 2 years	4	4.3
2 to 4 years	16	17.4
4 to 6 years	15	16.3
6 to 10 years	10	10.9
10 to 15 years	11	12.0
More than 15 years	12	13.0
No Response	7	7.6

qualitative accounts of the emphasis that is placed on the

various aspects of the agency mission, values and vision.

Organization Mission

Within the past year, this Child Welfare agency began

the process of redefining the mission, values and vision of

the organization. As a part of this study, the first

question to be addressed is – What is the mission of this

organization? This will be followed by an understanding of

the agency's values and how they are utilized by workers to

interpret the mission and provide services to children and

families in foster care.

On May 25, 2004 the Board reaffirmed the following as

the mission for this Child Welfare Agency:

> Based upon the Catholic principle that every
> human life has value, the mission of this Child
> Welfare agency, is to promote and enhance the
> quality and dignity of life by providing
> professional, compassionate services to
> individuals and families in need of emotional,
> physical and spiritual support.

Prior to the reaffirmation of the aforementioned mission,

in October, 2004, the board approved the following vision

statement and core values:

> With faith in God and love for all, we aspire to
> create a healthier community.
>
> We will provide expert services in a
> compassionate manner, true to our mission
> statement and core values, as we strive to work
> together with the individuals we serve to enhance

their capacity to better care for themselves,
their families and their neighbors.

    Core Values
        Compassion
        Service
        Faith
        Stewardship
        Integrity

The aforementioned mission and value statement and the core

values are very important aspects of this organization.

These elements play a key role in the identification of the

organization's culture and its link to the expected and

actual performance of workers within the organizational

setting. Therefore, it is important to gain an

understanding of how the prescribed mission of the

organization is interpreted by administrators, supervisors

and line workers.

    During the focus group sessions of this study, the

participants from the administrative group and the three

line worker groups (N=92) were given an opportunity to

explain their interpretation of the organization's mission.

These responses were analyzed for content that referenced

their interpretation of the mission as it relates to

services to children and families in foster care. The

analysis revealed that the mission was deeply ingrained and

an individual's interpretation of it was the repetition of

key words found in the agency's prescribed mission and

value statement and the organization's values. Six themes

emerged from this analysis (see Table 5).

Table 5

Interpretation of the Mission

Question	Themes
How do you interpret the mission of the agency as it relates to your work with children and families in foster care (FG-Q1*)?	Quality Dignity Compassionate Emotional Physical Spiritual

Note *= Focus Group Question

The examined narratives included in this section are a

direct reflection of the workers' interpretation of the

mission as it relates to the services they provide to

children in foster care. A common way the mission was

interpreted included workers taking a **holistic** approach to

service. For example one worker noted the following about

their approach:

> In thinking about the mission, I approach each
>
> child and family with unconditional positive
>
> regard looking for their strengths and potential-
>
> assisting them to find faith in themselves and
>
> hope for their future--to support them in the
>
> journey from at-risk to thriving emotionally,
>
> physically and spiritually.

A second worker responded and noted the mission as it related to the service and skills of the worker:

> To help prepare children for the future-- spiritually, mentally, emotionally through the works and ongoing training of staff—being professional.

A third worker talked about the aspects of the mission that assist and facilitate the holistic approach by noting this:

> To provide excellent progressive care in a consistent manner. Always seeking to utilize best practices and encourage growth. We intend to serve the whole body, soul, spirit and mind.

Furthermore, workers interpreted the mission to have an influence on the individual in reference to the **quality of life and treating clients with dignity**. The use of the mission to assist with the treatment of clients is clearly noted by this worker who stated that:

> Our job is to help children and families in need and to treat all people with integrity. All people deserve an opportunity for a good quality of life. We are also expected to incorporate spirituality into our practice if necessary.

The mission as a frame of reference for how clients should be treated was noted by this worker as being the following:

>Services provided in a compassionate manner to enhance capacity to become capable of being a contributing member of community.

This last worker highlights the type of clients they encounter and the approach that is taken to do so:

>We work with the most poor and vulnerable populations (children and families). Try to assist clients to self-determination always preserving the dignity and respect of clients.

Finally, the mission is interpreted by workers from a **worker-to-worker interaction** from a positive and negative perspective. From a positive perspective, a worker noted her role of supporting the mission as follow:

>My mission is to support the president and all those providing direct care.

This kind of worker-to-worker support was also noted by other workers in the sample. In fact, a second worker noted that:

>As I work with employees; I feel my position allows me to support them as they are improving the physical, spiritual, and emotional state of our agency's client.

However, some view the revised mission of the organization as having a negative influence on worker-to-worker and

worker-to-client relations. This was clearly illustrated by this worker who noted this:

> The agency's mission appears to be changing-emphasizing superficial "popularity" to the disadvantage of the well-being of children in foster care and of staff.

In an effort to provide a better understanding of how the mission is utilized, two follow-up questions on the inherent values of the organization created another level of narrative analysis. The first question asked workers to note the prescribed values of the agency. Of the values listed in their response to the first question, they were asked to note which of those listed would be categorized as the three strongest values in the agency.

Through a content analysis of participants' narratives, a number of themes emerged that were consistent or inconsistent with the values that have been a part of the agency for the past year. As noted in Table 6, three themes overwhelmingly emerged as being part of the prescribed organizational values. These same three themes were also noted as being a part of what workers believed to be the three strongest values in addition to the others outlined in Table 6. After a content analysis, compassion, service and integrity were noted as being the strongest

values that influence workers interpretation of the agency mission.

Table 6

Organization Values

Questions	Themes
What are the prescribed values of this organization (FG-Q2*)?	Compassion** Service** Faith Stewardship
Of the values mentioned, which do you believe are the strongest three in the organization (FG-Q3*)?	Excellence Love Honesty Dignity Integrity**

Note. * = Focus Group Question. **= Three Strongest Values

As noted in Table 6, the informants repeated current agency prescribed values and added others that by definition could easily fit into one of the prescribed values. However, like their interpretation of the mission, the informants viewed these values as a key component to service delivery. In fact, many tied the values back to the mission as an approach for providing effective service. One worker stated:

> I believe service and integrity are very evident
> in this agency. Underlying these is individual
> and corporate faith…Faith in God and people's
> potential.

A second worker highlighted the use of respect in the

treatment of the clients they serve by stating the

following:

> Respect, no matter what you believe in we will
>
> work with you and treat you fair.

As to the use of the values to facilitate worker support as

a part of the process for effective service delivery, this

worker noted:

> For staff it is the dignity of individuals and
>
> the safety of the children and teamwork.

The aforementioned responses that relate to the mission and

values of the organization by the informants illustrate an

organization that adheres to its mission through workers by

the services they provide to families and children and

through their interaction with their colleagues. Yet, are

we to consider these responses from workers to be a true

depiction of the organization's culture? The following

section will illustrate the culture that has been

identified by the participants in this study.

Organizational Culture

Understanding the OCI Scoring

The organizational Culture Inventory represents a

point in - time picture of the culture of an organization

based on 12 specific behavior norms found in organizations.

These 12 behavior norms are organized into three general

clusters that are distinguished between the following (See

Figure 2):

     (i)   Constructive Cultures: members are
encouraged to interact with people and
approach tasks in ways that will help them
meet higher – order satisfaction needs
(this dimension of the circumplex includes
the Achievement, Self-Actualizing,
Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative
norms):

     a. Achievement (11 O'clock)-members are
expected to set challenging but realistic
goals while establishing plans to reach
and pursue the goals with a strong degree
of enthusiasm;

     b. Self-Actualizing (12 O'clock)-members are
expected to enjoy their work, develop
themselves and take on new and
interesting activities;

     c. Humansitic-Encouraging (1 O'clock)-
members are expected to be supportive,
constructive and open to deal in their
interactions with one another; and

     d. Affiliative (2 O'clock)-members are
expected to be friendly, cooperative and
sensitive to the satisfaction of their
colleagues.

     (ii)   Passive/Defensive Cultures: members
believe they must interact with people in
ways that will not threaten their own
security (this dimension of the circumplex
includes the Approval, Conventional,
Dependent, and Avoidance norms):

     a. Approval (3 O'clock)-members are expected
to agree with, gain the approval of and
be liked by others;

b. Conventional (4 O'clock)- members are expected to conform, make a good impression and follow the rules outlined in the organization;

c. Dependent (5 O'clock)-Members make sure to clear all decisions with superiors and do what they are told; and

d. Avoidance (6 O'clock)-Members are expected to shift their responsibilities to others to avoid being blamed for a mistake.

(iii)   Aggressive/Defensive Cultures: members are expected to approach tasks in forceful ways to protect their status and security (this dimension of the circumplex includes the Oppositional, Power, Competitive, and Perfectionistic norms):

a. Oppositional (7 O'clock)-members are expected to oppose and be critical of the ideas of others while making safe decisions;

b. Power (8 O'clock)-mnembers of the organization are expected to take charge, control subordinates and yield to the demands of superiors;

c. Competitive (9 O'clock)-members are expected to operate in a "win-lose" frame of reference and work against instead of with their peers; and

d. Perfectionistic (10 O'clock)-members are expected to avoid mistakes, keep track of everything, and work long hours to attain narrowly defined objectives (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human

Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by
permission).

The OCI circumplex provides a visual comparison of the
organization's percentile scores across the 12 cultural
norms (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke
and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI:
Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics,
Inc. Adapted by permission).
The OCI profile consists of six circles with a common
center. From the inside out, the circles represent the
10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, 90th, and 99th percentiles (Cooke &
Szumal, 2000).

The first two circles from the center of the
circumplex represents the 10th and 25th percentile. Scores
that fall between these two percentiles represent low
scores relative to other organizations and reflect weak
expectations relative to the behavior in question. The
next two circles on the circumplex represent the 50th and
75th percentile. Scores that fall within this to circles
represents medium scores and are average relative to the
scores of other organizations and therefore reflect
moderate expectations for the behaviors measured within
this domain. Finally, the last two circles on the outer
realm of the circumflex reflect scores on the 90th and 99th

percentile. Scores that fall along these dimensions represent scores that are considered to be high relative to other organizations and reflect strong expectations for the behavior in question. The cultural norms that are most extended from the center of the circumplex are the cultural norms that describe the thinking and behavioral styles expected of members in the organization (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission).

Another aspect of the OCI that is important for understanding the identified culture is the intensity and direction of the behavior norms among groups. The direction of the culture refers to the specific content or substance of the culture that is exemplified although it is not limited to, the values behavioral norms and thinking styles that is emphasized in the organization (Trice & Beyer, 1984). The intensity of the culture refers to the strength of the emphasis as it relates to the values, behavioral norms and thinking styles identified in the organization. The identified cultures that vary in direction support different behavior norms and thinking styles; cultures varying in intensity have different

degrees of influences on organizational members (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission).

The intensity of the culture is a function of several factors that includes the (1) degree of consensus among unit members regarding the culture emphasizes and (2) the strength of the connections between expectations, rewards, and behaviors. The way in which members enact their environment makes up the direction. That illustrates the beliefs regarding how to behave within the organization (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission).

Agency Culture: Quantitative & Qualitative Findings

An Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI) was given to all 92 participants with individuals from four different work groups within the organization (Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission). The groups were as follows:

Group A: Upper Management, Department Directors
and Unit Supervisors
Group B: Line Workers Unit I
Group C: Line Workers Unit II
Group D: Line Workers Unit III

The raw scores were tabulated for the combined and individual group level analysis (see Table 7) and transferred to a circumplex that depicts an Organizational Culture Profile.

The combined OCI profile represents the group's perception of their agency's organizational culture. Furthermore, comparison of the mean scores of the different groups gives a perception of the agency's organizational culture by workers from various levels within the organizational structure that may depict a different culture from that of the total group (see Table 8). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of reliability for this sample is .85, which is similar to the reported reliability of the scale. As illustrated in Table 7, the raw scores computed for the individual and combined groups were different across the various cultural styles. To further investigate these differences, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the means. The Scheffee Post Hoc analysis showed that there is a difference between the means for several groups. However, the magnitude of these differences is small and

Table 7

Organizational Culture Inventory Results (Raw Scores)

Current Style	Combined Groups A,B,C&D	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
	N=92	N=47	N=23	N=14	N=8
Constructive	M	M	M	M	M
Achievement	39.01 **5.679**	39.09 **4.991**	39.25 **6.726**	37.98 **6.067**	39.63 **6.501**
Self-Actualizing	35.08 **6.860**	34.47 **5.952**	36.42 **8.355**	33.43 **7.282**	37.70 **6.273**
Humanistic-Encouraging	40.09 **6.951**	39.83 **6.690**	39.85 **8.610**	38.14 **4.881**	38.14 **3.454**
Affiliative	40.40 **6.570**	39.43 **5.290**	41.26 **9.227**	40.43 **6.382**	43.66 **3.616**
Passive/Defensive					
Approval	27.20 **6.669**	26.55 **5.879**	30.97 **7.361**	25.50 **6.925**	23.16 **4.223**
Conventional	27.43 **7.391**	26.02 **5.936**	31.65 **7.519**	28.93 **9.269**	21.00 **4.209**
Dependent	31.76 **6.285**	31.28 **5.364**	33.70 **7.614**	31.57 **8.007**	29.36 **1.613**
Avoidance	20.28 **5.822**	19.47 **5.315**	22.60 **6.306**	20.93 **6.545**	17.25 **4.133**
Aggressive/Defensive					
Oppositional	20.81 **5.501**	19.84 **4.793**	24.71 **6.429**	19.07 **3.269**	18.38 **4.838**
Power	24.34 **7.537**	23.39 **6.209**	28.35 **9.219**	23.07 **6.318**	20.63 **8.141**
Competitive	18.86 **6.949**	18.11 **5.783**	23.65 **8.864**	15.10 **3.794**	16.13 **4.257**
Perfectionistic	30.45 **7.605**	29.74 **5.832**	34.53 **9.054**	29.71 **8.004**	24.00 **6.612**

Note. Numbers in parenthesis represent standard deviation

101

not meaningful for the following sub-scales across groups:
(1) Approval; (2) Conventional; (3)Oppositional; (4)
Competitive; and (5) Perfectionistic (see Table 8).

When Approval was the dependent variable, Group B & D
showed significant mean differences. The Conventional level
illustrated a significant mean difference between Group A &
B and Group B and D. Within the Oppositional dimension,
Group A and B and Group B & C and B & D had significant
means differences. The Competitive culture showed a
significance between Group A & B and Group B & C and Group
B & D. Finally, the Perfectionistic culture only showed
significance between Group B & D. With obvious unequal
group sizes, the smallest group, Group D was removed and
the t-test revealed the same sub-scales as having
significant differences. However, the culture profiles
create a picture that would explain, from a cultural
perspective, what these differences mean in reference to
the cultures that are valued the most to the least in the
organization.

Group A Organizational Culture Profile

Group A's composition consisted of the management team
that includes: (1) Administration; (2) Program
Directors/Managers; and (3) Supervisors. The total sample
size for this group was N=47. Group A identified

Table 8

Analysis of Variance for Organizational Culture Styles

| OCI Dimension	df	F	P
Achievement	3	.196	.899
Self-Actualizing	3	1.078	.363
Humanistic-Encouraging	3	2.255	.088
Affiliative	3	1.138	.338
Approval	3	4.298*	.007
Conventional	3	6.181	.001
Dependent	3	1.223	.306
Avoidance	3	2.404	.073
Oppositional	3	6.262*	.001
Power	3	3.451*	.020
Competitive	3	6.659*	.000
Perfectionistic	3	4.295*	.003

Note. * = p <.05

Constructive Styles as being the most prominent cultural styles in the agency followed by the Passive/Defensive Styles and then the Aggressive/Defensive Styles (see Figure 2).

Within the Constructive Styles, the Humanistic-Encouraging Culture ranked the highest within the 51st to 74th percentile with Achievement culture fairly close within the same realm within this percentile. Self-Actualizing, Affiliative were fairly low within the 51st to 74th percentile at almost the same level on the circumplex (See Figure 2). Therefore, Group A views the organization as being managed in a participative and employee - centered way. Within this setting, members are expected to be supportive and helpful and interested in the suggestions that may be given by others (Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc. Adapted by permission). This cultural type was identified by many within the administrative group from their view point of working with other administrators or with the workers they supervised. For example, one administrated stated the following about their ideas:

Valued by some. Listened to and considered. I

Figure 2. Group A Organizational culture profile.
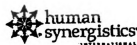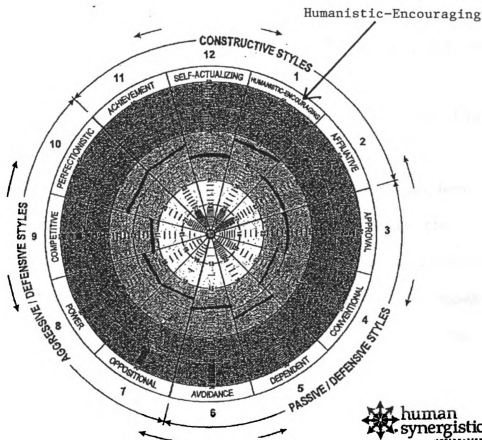
Get a fair amount of support.

Another worker acknowledge this type of support in the following manner:

Help clarify and impact issues. Help direct the organization in understanding what we can afford to do.

Another administrator noted this type of support for ideas as the following:

Feel more supported by those I supervise, than who supervise me.

Along the Passive/Defensive Styles, the Dependent culture, which was most prevalent, ranked within the 51st to 74th percentile. This was followed by the Approval cultural style at the border of the same percentile as the Dependent culture. Finally, Avoidance and Conventional cultures were ranked within the 25th and 49th percentile for this cultural style.

The least prominent culture for this group was the Aggressive/Defensive Styles. On this segment of the circumplex, the Perfectionistic culture was deemed as the highest cultural style falling within the 51st to 74th percentile. Power and Oppositional cultures were within the same degrees along the 26th to 49th percentile, followed by the Competitive culture as the least prominent one.

Thus, it appears that the cultural style identified by Group A mimics that of the entire combined group styles. In fact, they both identified the same to outliers from the Passive/Aggressive and Defensive/Aggressive Styles.

**Group B Organizational Culture Profile**

Group B (N=23) represents the first of three groups of line workers that are included in the study and was the most racially and culturally diverse of all of the groups in the study. Group B identified Passive/Defensive Styles as their most prominent culture followed by the Constructive Styles and then the Aggressive/Defensive Styles (see Figure 3).

Along the Passive/Defensive Styles on Group B's profile, all of the cultural styles ranked in the 51st to 74th percentile. In fact, the ranking of the top three (Conventional, Dependent and Approval) are very close within this dimension of the profile. Avoidance falls slightly behind the previously mentioned styles within the same percentile. This analysis illustrated that members in Group B view the organization as being an environment where members are expected to: (1) only do what they are told and make sure to clear decisions before acting;(2) follow the established organization rules; (3) be liked by their

Figure 3. Group B Organizational culture profile.
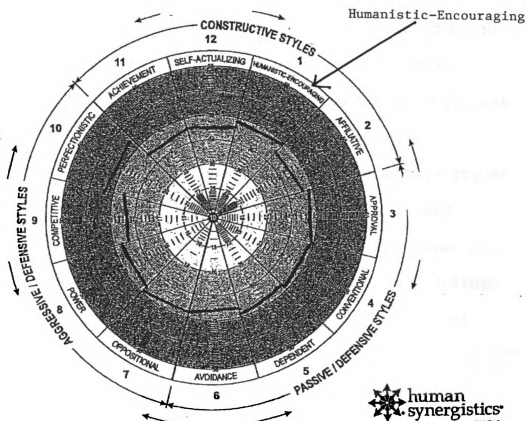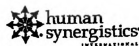
colleagues; and finally (4) avoid taking responsibility for their actions.

The second identified cultural style is the Constructive Style. Humanistic-Encouraging culture peaked as being the most valued cultural style by Group B within the 51st to 74th percentile. This peak was followed by an even dimension spread amongst the Achievement, Self-Actualizing and Affiliative culture along the Constructive Styles on the profile. The least prevalent style identified by Group B was the Agggressive/Defensive Styles. The Perfectionistic Style was rated as highly valued falling within the 75th to 89th percentile. This means that they are expected to work hard to attain narrowly defined goals. The Opposition, Power and Competitive cultural styles followed in a decreasing ranked order within the 51st to 74th percentile. This combination creates a cultural environment where members are not active, supportive participants. In fact, members are usually critical of each other, are controlling of subordinates and competitive.

The overall culture of the organization identified by Group B, is one that causes group members to interact with people in ways that will not threaten their personal

security (Cooke & Szumal, 2000). In fact, workers in this group viewed their relationship with each other as being supportive of their personal and client goals. As noted by this worker:

> If there is something that is going on, other people will come in and say, can you help out with this and that… no individual's job is more important than the other.

This type of work support for assisting others, was also illustrated by this worker who stated:

> They (managers & co-workers) respect your job and the work you are trying to do…I may be busy and can not be bothered and someone else will take over to make sure that the goal is meet…like really working together.

Group C Organizational Culture Profile

Group C (N=14) was the second group of line workers included in the study. This group identified the Constructive Styles as being the prominent organizational culture with 3 of the cultural styles ranking within the 51st to 74th percentile and one just below or within the 26th to 49th percentile (see Figure 4). The Humanistic-Encouraging style ranked the highest within the 51st to 74th

Figure 4. Group C Organizational culture profile.
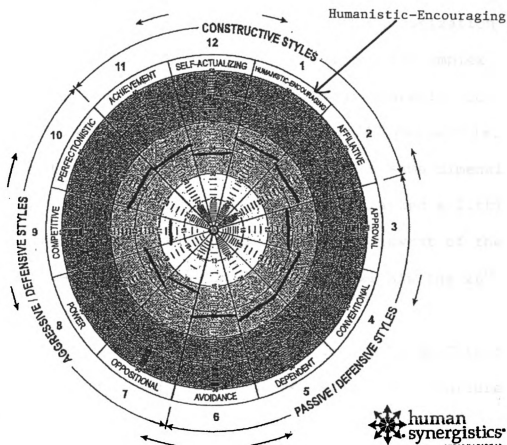
percentile. It was followed by the Affiliative, and then the Achievement culture. The Self-Actualizing culture followed the dimension just below the three other cultural styles.

This group ranked the Passive/Defensive Styles as being the next prominent culture within the organization (See Figure 4). Within this dimension of the circumplex, the Dependent and Conventional cultures are parallel to each other; both fall within the 51st and 74th percentile. The Avoidance culture was also ranked on the same dimension as the two aforementioned. However, it was ranked a little lower. The Approval culture was ranked the lowest of the four cultures within these styles falling within the 26th to 49th percentile.

The least prominent style identified by Group C is the Aggressive/Defensive Styles. The Perfectionistic culture was the highest ranked culture style within this domain falling within the 51st to 74th percentile. Power and Oppositional cultures were both ranked within the 26th to 49th percentile. The fourth cultural style, Competitive culture, was ranked the lowest by Group C. In fact, it was ranked within the 11th to 24th percentile on the circumplex as being the lowest of any of the 12 cultural styles.

Therefore, the line workers in Group C identified the organization as being a place where members' higher order needs are met and they feel secure. As they work toward fulfilling tasks, members work hard toward attaining narrowly defined organizational goals without competing with each other with little sense of power or opposition. This type of cultural environment is illustrated best by a worker who stated the following:

> My supervisor has always encouraged me to think
> both creatively and collaboratively. This has
> made me feel supported. Sometimes the workload
> is such that I don't have enough time to pull
> this off effectively and I don't like that.

Another worker viewed working toward the goals from this perspective:

> They are specific but allow for expansive
> training. I work towards accomplishing them by
> working hard, thinking hard and making efforts to
> draw out the best in my colleagues. Also, by
> keeping an open mind.

Group D Organizational Culture Profile

Group D is the final group of line workers in the study (N=8) that identified various cultural styles within the organization. The following cultures were identified

in order of the most to the least prevalent: (1)
Constructive Styles; (2) Passive/Defensive Styles; and
finally, Aggressive/Defensive Styles (see Figure 5).

Along the Constructive Styles, Group D identified the
Humanistic-Encouraging culture as the most valued culture
style within the organization. The Humanistic-Encouraging
culture was ranked within the 91st to 99th percentile. This
was the highest ranking that this cultural value had
received by any of the groups, individually and combined.
The intensity of this ranking is clearly illustrated in the
comments from workers in this group. One worker noted this
about support in her division:

> Yes, I feel supported while I support others for
> their needs.

A second worker noted:

> I definitely feel supported here.

Another aspect that illustrates the support and
encouragement of the workers in this group, was explained
in the following manner by this worker:

> My supervisor is a very good listener. She
> doesn't always have to agree but I like that she
> listens. I feel very supported by my supervisor
> as I set goals for myself and clients.

Figure 5. Group D Organizational culture profile.
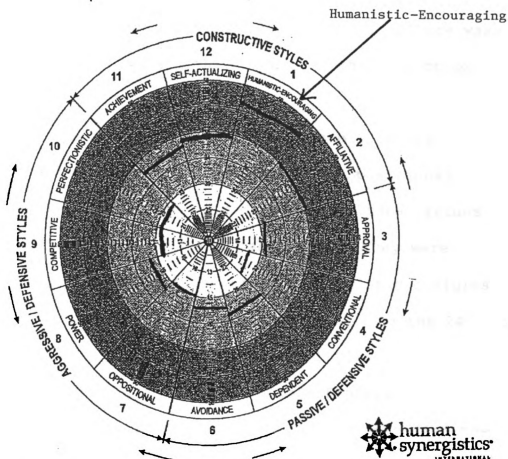
Research and development by:
Robert A. Cooke, Ph.D.
J. Clayton Lafferty, Ph.D.

The Humanistic-Encouraging culture was followed by the Affiliative, Self-Actualizing and Achievement cultures all ranking within the 51st to 74th percentile.
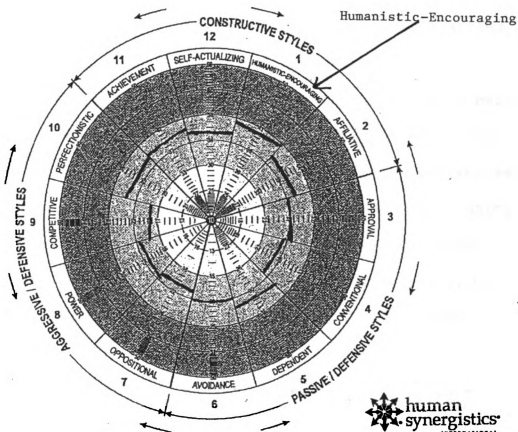
The Passive/Defensive Styles were identified as the next highest values. The Dependent culture was ranked the highest falling within the 26th to 49th percentile followed by Avoidance and Approval. The Conventional culture was ranked the lowest within this domain on the circumplex within the 11th to 24th percentile.

The lowest style identified by Group D is the Aggressive/Defensive Styles. Power and Oppositional cultures were identified as the highest cultural values ranked within the 26th to 49th percentile. They were followed by the Competitive and Perfectionistic cultures that were located paralleled within the 11th to the 24th domain along the Aggressive/Defensive Styles

Combined Groups Organizational Culture Profile

The total sample participants (N=92) identified the Constructive Styles as being the most perceptible cultures in the organization (see Figure 6). This style creates an atmosphere that encourages workers to interact with others and approach their required tasks in ways that will help them meet their higher-order needs (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983,

Figure 6. Organizational culture profile of combined groups.

1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics). The
Organizational Culture Profile shows that the Humanistic-
Encouraging behavioral norm is ranked the highest within
the 51th to 74th percentile range followed by achievement,
affiliative and self-actualizing (listed from highest to
lowest within the identified percentile). Having a strong
humanistic-encouraging behavioral norm within an
organizational setting means that the organization is being
managed in a participatory and person-centered way. This
translates to a humanistic culture that leads to effective,
organizational performance because it provides opportunity
for the growth and active involvement of members (From
Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C.
Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human
Synergistics).

Organizations with a high achievement culture are
characterized as being organizations that do things well
and place a strong value on members who set and accomplish
their own goals within the organizational setting (From
Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C.
Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human
Synergistics). More importantly, within this type of
cultural environment, organizations are effective because
problems are solved appropriately and clients and customers

are well served. This desire to make sure clients receive

effective services became more apparent as workers

discussed the value that is placed on childhood. A worker

said simply:

> Very highly!! We strive to make childhood a

quality experience.

Another worker said:

> It is valued a great deal. We try to let kids be
>
> kids while trying to teach them values and helping
>
> them form and reach goals.

This worker summed up the value placed on childhood in

respect to the services that the agency provides by stating

the following about children:

> Sanctity of life!!! When you work with children
>
> you can transform the WORLD… that is the goal.

Furthermore, the orientation of new members and the

organization as a whole is healthy and productive (From

Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C.

Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human

Synergistics).

The Passive/Defensive Styles were the next highest on

the profile of the combined group. The Dependent culture

ranked within the 51st and 74th percentile. However, the

remainder of the norms within this cultural style fell

within the 26th to 49th percentile and are ranked in decreasing order: Approval, Conventional and Avoidance. The Dependent culture within this cultural style depicts that decision-making is centralized and workers are led to believe that they should only do what they are told and decisions should be cleared with supervisors (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics).

One worker stated this as it relates to being a part of the decision-making process:

> Very little, unless I take part in an uninvited manner.

Another worker said:

> I believe I have some say, though no real power.

This worker viewed their role in the decision-making process in this manner:

> No. We may be "asked" so that it appears we are part of the decision-making process. But most employees feel management will do what they want anyway—however they can pat themselves on the back because they've convinced themselves they've asked for our input.

An Approval culture illustrates an organization where conflicts are avoided and interpersonal relationships are pleasant. In this setting, members believe that they must agree, be liked and gain approval from others (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics). Members of the organization are focused on pleasing others within the organizational setting. This type of work environment can hinder organizational effectiveness because it decreases constructive 'differing' and the expression of ideas and opinions from members (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics).

The Avoidance culture supports punishing mistakes and fails to reward success. Therefore, members begin to shift responsibilities in an effort to avoid being blamed for a mistake (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics).

The least prominent style that was identified by the sample is Aggressive/Defensive. The Perfectionistic culture ranked in the 51st to 74th percentile range. In

decreasing ranked order, Power, Oppositional and Competitive cultures followed in the 26th to 49th percentile.

The Perfectionistic culture is characterized by an organization where perfectionism, persistence, and hard work are valued. However, within this setting, members may feel that they must avoid mistakes, keep good records and work long hours to attain narrowly-defined goals (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics). Although attention to detail is important, when overemphasized, members begin to lose sight of the organizational goals by getting lost in details and developing symptoms of strain (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics).

An Oppositional culture within an organizational setting reinforces confrontation. Within this context, members gain status and influence by being critical, and all are more likely to oppose ideas from others (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics). On the other hand, in a Power cultural environment, members believe that they will be rewarded for taking charge and controlling subordinates.

Finally, the Competitive culture that was ranked lowest by the participants consist of an environment in which winning is valued and members are rewarded for out-performing one another (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics). The Competitive culture's low ranking is a clear indication that workers in this study do not feel they are ranked or rated against each other. Thus, the need to compete is not warranted.

The OCI results of the full sample indicate that the Constructive Styles are valued most by the workers. Therefore, the satisfaction needs and the people-oriented behaviors are the cultural styles valued by the organization. However, it is important to note the two outliers, Dependent (Passive/Defensive Styles) and Perfectionistic (Aggressive/Defenseive Styles), as showing some prevalence at about the same percentile, and to some extent, the same intensity as the cultures located within the Constructive Styles. The impact of these two as they relate to this organization will be noted after a review of the group level profiles.

Identified Cultural Profile Differences

After a review of the mean difference and the profiles created by each and the combined groups, it became apparent that a definite cultural pattern was emerging from the data. All except one group identified the Constructive Style as being the most prominent culture valued in the organization. The Humanistic-Encouraging culture peaked as the most prevalent within this dimension of the OCI. In this type of cultural environment, people take the time to assist each other while sharing ideas. Furthermore, members of the organization are viewed as individuals who 'go the extra mile' while offering solutions to problems (From Organizational Culture Inventory by R.A. Cooke and J. C. Lafferty, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics).

The Passive/Defensive Styles was identified as being the next prominent culture in this organization. The Dependent culture peaked repeatedly across the groups along this segment of the OCI. In this environment, members are reminded that they have to see their superior before special requests can be approved or answered.

Finally, the Aggressive/Defensive Styles were listed as the least prominent culture within the organizational setting. The Perfectionistic culture appeared to be the dominant culture at this level by the individual and

combined group profile. Group B appeared to be the outlier

group that identified the individual and group's first and

second cultural styles in reverse. They viewed

Passive/Defensive Styles as being the most prominent

followed by the Constructive Styles with the same cultural

values ranking high as the other groups and the combined

scores illustrated. Therefore, this illustrates a change

in cultural behavior direction while maintaining the same

level of intensity. This change in directions illustrates

a difference in the behavioral norms and thinking styles

found in the organization. However, it is the intensity of

these norms that is important because it focuses on the

degrees of influence that these behaviors have on the

members of the organization. Although two of the cultures

are reversed, the intensity illustrates that there is a

strong connection between shared beliefs and behaviors.

After a careful review and comparison of the Group

level and combined OCI data, it is clear that these units

have identified this Child Welfare Agency as being a people

- oriented agency where members' higher-order needs are

met. An agency with those predominant cultures allows

members to establish and set realistic goals and encourages

them to pursue these goals with a high degree of

enthusiasm. Furthermore, members are expected to develop

and grow as employees within the organization because they receive a certain degree of support from one another in a friendly and cooperative manner.

Combined, the aforementioned cultures create shared boundaries for setting and accomplishing goals while keeping each individual within the realms of what is expected of them in the organization because they feel valued as an integral part of the organization.

Furthermore, there is a sense of support that helps members to set and work toward the goals. In fact, the qualitative data from the focus group protocol sheets support this level of cultural qualitative findings. Workers acknowledged that their ideas were valued and used and felt that they were supported. The qualitative data revealed that workers noted that their ideas were either **always** or **somewhat** valued and that support structures were located within the organization at various levels. For example, one worker noted the following:

> The amount of support varies at times. I do feel that there are avenues for ideas to be expressed. Our ideas are always welcomed and sometimes implemented after discussion. Team work.

A second worker noted:

Ideas are encouraged; messages are mixed how much

they're valued. For the most part, I feel very

supported.

Another staff member stated:

I feel that my ideas have an impact on my work

environment. Support and feeling supported

are…People are generally emotionally supportive

but my superiors are worried about keeping their

jobs and so have been less supportive.

These various aspects of support identified by workers

support the Constructive Culture Styles with a specific

emphasis on the Humanistic-Encouraging culture that was

identified as being the most predominant by all except one

group.

The Passive/Defensive Cultural Style was consistently

noted as being the next valued culture within the

organization. Overwhelmingly, the Dependent culture was

chosen as the most obvious on this dimension of the OCI.

Within this type of cultural setting, members are expected

to agree with the norm of the group as a method of gaining

approval. As an agency with a strong Dependent culture,

members at this Child Welfare Agency are expected to do as

they are told to do in the organization and all decisions

need to be cleared by a superior. As the highest level

cultural norm along this segment of the OCI, it is assumed

that members get orders from the top and are expected to

follow these orders without any input.

Although workers ranked it high within this cultural

style, their qualitative responses provide an understanding

about how the environment supports goal attainment while

expecting members to follow orders and make decisions

through superiors. During the focus groups, workers were

asked about their ability to be a part of the decision

making process and to explain to what extend this occurs.

A content analysis revealed that workers believed that they

were a part of the decision-making process **totally** or to

some extent and were encouraged to do so through various

means. Participants noted the following as an indication

of the level and type of decision-making processes in which

they have been engaged. For example, one worker said:

> Depends on the situation-if it involves my
>
> department then 80% of the time-if not, then
>
> approximately 10% or less.

Another person noted that:

> Input is nearly always solicited from staff for
>
> long-term goals.

This worker said:

Yes-the agency values input from everyone,

employees as well as customers.

A stronger extend of this practice was illustrated by this

work who stated:

Yes. If I think of something that might improve a

process I know I have the freedom to speak up.

I believe I am part of the decision-making

process at my program level and also at

management meeting and AQIT and other committee

meetings, I have made a point to GET involved-

otherwise I may not feel that way.

Having a strong Dependent culture may make one think

that this is a negative factor. However, within this

organizational setting, there are outlets for workers to

participate and be a part of the decision of new rules and

guidelines that they are then expected to follow as a

viable teammate within the agency.

Finally, the least prominent cultural structure

identified in this agency was the Aggressive/Defensive

Style. The cultural norms on this dimension of the OCI

illustrate an organization where members are task-oriented

and there is little value placed on supporting colleagues.

In fact, members are viewed as opponents in lieu of being

members of the same team. Within this domain of the OCI,

participants ranked the Perfectionistic cultural norm repeatedly as being the most dominant along this side of the OCI. The Perfectionistic culture functions in an environment where members work continuously toward narrowly-defined goals. Within a child welfare setting, it is not surprising to find this as an identified cultural norm. However, when asked directly if the goals of the organization were narrowly defined, the majority of the participants noted that they **were not.** Also, they could easily articulate how they worked toward accomplishment despite the narrow definition. This worker's view illustrates that the goals were not:

> Not really-By doing what's "right", following ethical guidelines, working as a team, I think we meet the focus and mission.

Another worker said:

> No. But they could be clearly and better integrated with line staff

This worker said:

> I don't think they are defined narrowly. My work everyday with any staff and children are directly tied into goals and mission.

Another worker had the following to say about the goals:

Goals are specific in doing my job. I work hard
to bring out the qualities in my clients that
fulfill the mission.

The identified organizational culture in this
organization is such that individuals are treated with
respect, supported, valued and encouraged to do more by
setting and reaching goals. This is directly correlated
with the mission. In fact, as noted through the
qualitative data analysis, workers use the mission in
various aspects of their job - related tasks especially as
it relates to providing services to children and families
in foster care. This cultural/mission approach is coupled
with the values of the agency that create a strong
connection between the cultural environment and worker
performance. The tight bond can also be accounted for
through a sense of oneness between workers and the
prescribed values. For instance, workers noted that the
prescribed agency values are ingrained and facilitate how
they provide services to children and families in foster
care. Another worker has this to say about the agency
values:

They describe a level of personal service.
Another worker said:

> All of these values are a basis of every decision
> we make for our clients.

This worker stated this about the current agency values:

> They are at the core of my thought processes. I
> do this work because of these values.

Another worker's view of the agency's values stems from personal values. This worker noted the following about personal and agency values:

> My personal value system is very contingent with
> that of this agency—Out of this I seek to serve
> all with dignity and faith in their self-
> determination and potential.

This worker summarizes the impact that the agency's values have on decisions and service delivery, saying:

> They are the guiding principles in doing my work.
> Without these values, decisions would not be made
> to preserve the best interest of the child.

Organizational Culture-Performance Link

The organizational culture, mission and values of the agency are used by workers in the agency as a structural component for their involvement and service delivery for children and families in foster care. Combined, the aforementioned provide a template for workers to follow as they set and work toward goals for themselves and clients

with support from each other. This aspect is a part of
what is needed to create a strong linkage between the
culture and a positive culture-performance link for
effective service. As noted in Chapter two, culture
performance relationships are identified through four
perspectives: (1) Strong Culture Thesis; (2) Reverse
Relationship Between Culture and Performance; (3) Cultural
Type; and (4) Adaptive Culture (Alvesson, 2002). All of
these aspects are important to the process of identifying
gaps between the current culture and a culture that is
needed for a positive culture-performance link for
effective services. Table 9 illustrates the culture of the
organization against a backdrop of Alvesson's perspectives.

The agency's identified cultures are fairly consistent
with Alvesson's perspectives for components that account
for a strong culture-performance link for effective
services. A review of Table 9 reveals that the agency is
at its best in respect to a culture-performance link for
effective services when members can depend on each other
and take part in the decision-making while remaining valued
as a worker through shared norms. From this perspective,
workers considered the agency to be at its best when the

Table 9

Culture Performance Link

Perspective	Criteria Met	How
Strong Culture Thesis	Yes	The qualitative and qualitative data showed that employees and managers adhere to shared values, beliefs and norms that create a sense of belonging and ownership
Reverse Relationship Between Culture & Performance	Yes	Based on the findings, culture homogeneity exist and these shared values contribute to how workers provide services
Cultural Type	Some extent	Culture is used as a regulatory mechanism and changes are not always controlled by traditional means.
Adaptive Culture	Yes	Findings support that individuals trust and depend on each other for support and work together as a team to make decisions within the organizational setting

focus was on the **agency, client, worker** or a **client/worker** combination. This worker said:

> High quality compassionate client-centered work by employees who feel their contribution is valued, with effective service outcomes.

Another worker said:

> I believe that one must feed positive messages to adults and children on a continuum. People need to feel valuable and recognized as worthy. Continually providing quality services to clients, continued funding to keep programs running and working towards changes for the better.

This worker noted:

> We put families first by meeting them where they are. Staff is slightly 2nd in importance, but still must be valued.

Summary

The results from the data provided by the OCI present a picture of the prevalent cultural styles that facilitate various aspect of work life at this Child Welfare Agency. The profiles illustrated the differences across groups and to what degree these differences changed the cultural views. In fact, a review of the differences showed a

strong sense of homogeneity of cultural norms by the administrative group and across the three line-worker groups. The dominant cultural styles and identified cultural norms fit well with the prescribed agency mission and values as they relate to providing services.

While these data provided a cultural profile, the qualitative results highlighted these findings by providing anecdotal evidence for understanding the culture and its link to services, as well as explicating the quantitative results. The qualitative findings gave a voice to the prevalent cultural style by illustrating clear examples of how workers view themselves within the agency context. The triangulation of the data using the qualitative and quantitative methods gives a fuller picture of the identified culture in the agency and makes the data more reliable. It is the convergence of the data that provides a clear illustration of the cultural behavior norms by supporting the various cultural styles found and providing an explanation and clarification where differences occurred in the findings. This becomes most apparent when the data across groups is illustrated. With one or the other methods used alone, the culture of the organization would not be clearly defined. Furthermore, the convergence of the qualitative and quantitative data brings life to the

culture. From the workers' perspective, this creates a

voice to match the picture created by the circumplex.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Implications

This final chapter begins with a summary of the study. The primary focus of the chapter will be considering implications the role that organizational culture plays in facilitating effective services for children in foster care. Following this section, limitations, implications for future research and practice are addressed. The chapter will conclude with a brief final synopsis of the study.

Summary of the Study

The major thrust of the investigation was to determine the culture of a child welfare agency and to explore the ways in which this culture may impact workers' performance with regard to effective service delivery for children in foster care. The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in an effort to capture the culture. The narrative perspective provided a voice to the identified culture. The Organizational Culture Inventory was completed by a total of 92 participants and focus groups were conducted with all of the participants, broken into sub-groups. This investigation was an exploratory study using a non-random sample. As such, the study has limitations in the generalizability of the findings to another organization. Participants were workers from four

138

units within the organization. The sample was comprised of 47 agency administrators/managers and 45 line workers from a faith-based child welfare agency. The age range of participants was from late 20s to over 60 years old. The majority of the participants were Caucasian, with a fairly small representation of ethnic minorities.

Using the Organizational Culture Inventory, the culture that emerged as most prevalent in the organization was the Constructive Style. This cultural style indicates an atmosphere where workers' higher order needs are met. Members are encouraged to be a part of their own goal establishment and attainment. To achieve this, colleagues need to provide support as individuals strive to reach these goals.

The Passive/Defensive Style was noted as being the next prevalent culture. Here, workers identified with the Dependent cultural norm. This cultural norm takes into account how workers interact with agency rules and are expected to follow them at all times. Although this was prevalent across groups, the qualitative data illustrated that members counter this by being an active part of the decision making process at various times in the organization. Thus, they are active in creating the rules they follow.

Finally, the Aggressive/Defensive Style was noted as the least prevalent culture in the organization. Within this style, however, workers consistently identified the Perfectionistic culture as the most prevalent along this dimension. This cultural norm highlights the fact that workers work long hours to attain narrowly defined goals.

Again, the qualitative data countered this finding as workers noted overwhelmingly that the goals were not narrowly defined and that they utilized the mission to assist them in providing services to children and families in foster care. Although there were some differences along the cultural profiles across groups, the internal reliability strength was consistent with the reliability noted in the literature.

The identified culture did not have any major identified gaps between the current culture and the culture needed for a positive-culture performance link to effective services based on Alvesson's perspectives (2000). This suggests that the next step of the model about whether this culture leads to better service delivery, should be tested. The homogeneity of the view of identified culture and shared mission and values of the organization create an environment where people are working together treating children in foster care with dignity, respect and

compassion. This also allows them to take part in decisions and setting goals for their future.

Culture and the Foster Care System

As noted throughout the literature, the child welfare system has increasingly become a permanent dwelling for children in foster care. Therefore, these children's reference for family is the system and the workers who are responsible for them until they age out of foster care; which has increasingly become the norm.

A family is supposed to be a setting where an individual's physical, mental and emotional needs are met and nurtured, thus creating a culture that supports the children's ability to self-actualize. This nurturing creates an environment where individuals are valued as a part of the family.

Furthermore, an environment that supports positive child development from birth to adulthood surrounds these individuals. These developmental aspects are important because they create a strong sense of self-awareness. This level of awareness plays a significant role in one's attitude, behavior and beliefs that influence how one establishes and accomplishes goals. In fact, this type of environment assists individuals with their ability to adjust and recover from changes. Therefore, the

aforementioned perspectives assist with one's level of resilience — whereby one is able to grow beyond one's previous limits and move forward.

Yet, for children in foster care, this is not the reality. They have been taken from their families because, to some extent, their needs were not met and they are left vulnerable without the support to reach their potential. They are taken into the system as a means for providing their needs with the intention of assisting them to become productive, adjusted, and self-actualized adults who are able to establish and accomplish goals within their new environmental setting while dealing with extremely difficult circumstances that caused the initial placement in foster care. From this perspective, the new environment — the foster care system, becomes an important aspect from a safety and developmental perspective.

Organizations that bear the responsibility for caring for children in foster care have to look beyond the initial purpose of the agency. By doing so, agencies begin to understand who they are, what they do, and why they do it, i.e., what is the culture? The answer to these questions will assist with identifying and defining the culture of the agency. Furthermore, it will provide an understanding of the agency environment — an environment that is very

important to the development and success of children in foster care. A sound environment that gives children an opportunity to set goals, learn supportive factors and accomplish goals as they grow and develop into adults is imperative for these children as they age out of foster care. This type of environmental setting is dependent upon the agency administrators and workers who interact within the organization on a daily basis to establish goals, values and rules that are significant to an agency's culture.

However, when individuals working in the system are not given an opportunity to be a viable part of the organization, we have to question their ability to self-actualize and facilitate self-actualization. With the organization being the primary focus of a family system for children, the culture of the organization is of extreme importance.

The culture within an organizational setting mimics that of a family structure. At its best, you find an environment where workers are valued and this value translates into quality, effective services because individuals know that their input is valued and that there are shared norms and values that guide decisions and interactions. Therefore, a positive culture would reflect

143

that of the positive functioning family, where children are valued and encouraged to set goals and members are there to provide the necessary support. Children are encouraged to fulfill their goals. However, this type of structural value needs to be imbedded in the child welfare agency where the values are a part of the work environment that translates into service delivery. A worker has to experience this type of cultural environment within the agency and understand how it relates and impacts the developmental path from childhood to adulthood.

On the other hand, a negative culture would promote factors similar to a dysfunctional family where individuals are focused on organizational tasks with the lack of support from colleagues. In this environment, people do not interact with each other in a productive and supportive manner. To be an effective child welfare agency, we want to promote a Constructive Style or work ethic for workers to use as a point of reference when working with this vulnerable population.

In 2000, Seita noted that three aspects were needed to create a shift within the child welfare system to support positive development of children in foster care. One of these places a focus on community. According to Seita (2000), communities should be made safe and loving because

children are a reflection of their community. Given the current research, organizational culture could fit along the community domain of Seita's approach to show that children are the direct reflection of the organization and its culture. By taking Seita's approach into account, the next step to understanding the organizational culture and child development would be to test if organizational culture is the guiding principle within a child welfare organizational setting that can encourage positive youth development?

Limitations

As previously noted, this study used a non-random sample from one child welfare agency. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized beyond the participating agency. The conclusions reached are considered preliminary and limited to the included sample of the study. Also, the sample used does not represent the entire agency as the participants represented units working with children and families in foster care.

Furthermore, recipients of services were not represented as a variable to support and/or to get their perspective the agency's culture as it relates to providing services to children and families.

Other variables that are not accounted for in this study that influence organizational culture include structure, systems and technology. Structure refers to the manner in which components are ordered and coupled to create an organization (Cook & Szumal, 2000). Systems from an organizational perspective refer to the interrelated sets of procedures — like accounting, environmental scanning, and human resources that an organization uses to support core activities and to solve problems (Cooke & Szumal, 2000).

Finally, technology includes the methods organizations use to transform inputs into outputs (Cooke & Szumal, 2000). All three of these variables create another dimension of culture that assists with the identification of the culture that exists within an organizational setting. Furthermore, the study of these dimensions may illustrate how they influence the intensity and direction of the current and ideal culture that is needed to provide a better service environment for clients and workers.

Implications for Research

The assessment of organizational culture within a child welfare organization provides several ideas for future research. First, the study approached the inquiry of culture within a social service setting as a means for

understanding worker interaction and services for children in foster care. However, to determine if there is a strong correlation between organizational culture and service to children in foster care would require replication of the study and taking the study to its next phase. This would include, but not be limited to, comparing worker performance or outcome data and consumer reports to the identified culture. With further research highlighting the aforementioned factors, data could be used to confirm that there is a link between culture and service delivery and the way in which culture facilitates effective service.

This study only looked at one agency and this agency was a faith-based child welfare agency. Therefore, the strong connection to the mission, values and culture may be different from that of a non faith-based child welfare organization. Furthermore, the sample for this study included predominantly Caucasian-American males and females with only one group representing ethnic diversity. Would this level of organizational cultural identity appear the same if the cultural make-up were reversed?

Although difficult to conduct, a cross-cultural organizational culture assessment is also a necessary next step (Dickson, Aditya & Chhokar, 2000). This type of assessment would provide an understanding of how culture is

manifested and may be a product of societal culture, across organizations from different societies (Dickson, Aditya & Chhokar, 2000). The various definitions of culture create a degree of difficulty around conducting a cross-cultural comparative analysis. However, this is a task that must be undertaken, as it is imperative for furthering the knowledge of organizational culture and its impact from a cross-cultural perspective.

As mentioned in the limitations section, this study does not provide input about organizational structure, technology and systems. These three aspects would create another layer of cultural understanding and its impact on group solidarity and service. Would this change the current culture and how would the change influence effective services? All of these aspects are important because they can significantly influence the decision-making process and facilitate organizational change.

Implications for Practice

This study has many implications for practice from a micro, macro and policy perspective. From a micro perspective, culture can be used to modify or create treatment modalities that are in line with the agency mission and values, and more importantly, the culture. Through workers' understanding of the mission and values

and how this impacts the organizational culture, therapists can begin to look at treatments that are in line with the agency's ideology and goals for clients. This creates a shift from utilizing treatment modalities from a historical perspective that may go against the established goals and objectives. This also creates an environment where people feel comfortable to suggest and try new treatment modalities without feeling threatened. The deliberate use of culture for micro practitioners also takes into account how workers process and make difficult, ethical decisions as they are aligned (or not) with the prescribed mission and values in the agency.

The understanding of a culture within an organizational setting can provide macro practitioners with another level of understanding for providing a strength-based approach to treatment. As an organization strives to be one where people are treated from a self-actualization perspective, this perspective takes Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs into account and is in line with the driving core vales and beliefs social work (NASW, 1997).

In fact, Maslow (1954a, 1968b, 1973c) conceptualized self-actualization as the full utilization of personal capacities, talents, and potential as basic needs that drive much of human behavior. More importantly, he began to

differentiate between what "deficiency needs" and "growth needs" or "being needs" were (Maslow, 1954a, 1973c; Moss, 1999). Deficiency needs and deficiency motivations are augmented basically to fill a current gap. For instance, if one is thirsty, as a human being, one will seek water or some type of liquid to quench the thirst. On the other hand, growth needs deal with the innate human yearning to fulfill one's own nature or actualization (Maslow, 1954a, 1973c; Moss, 1999; Nye, 1992).

This insight led to the hierarchy of needs pyramid that is extremely familiar to the social science disciplines as a humanistic approach to problem solving (Maslow, 1954a). He believed that human needs comprise a hierarchy from the lowest biological deficiency needs to the highest spiritual growth needs as outlined below (Maslow, 1954a, 1968b, 1973c; Moss, 1999; Gwynne, 1997). When lower needs are not met, human beings will began to fixate on what is lacking and will be unable to move forward. In order to move from the lowest level of need upward to self-actualization as human beings, one needs a framework of values and a philosophy that we can live by, like we need calcium for strong bones (Moss, 1999).

Too often, our desire to assist children does not reflect the value of understanding their needs from their

perspective and using this information as the foundation of problem solving because this type of dialogue creates a different venue in the helping process (Harper, Harper & Stills, 2003). For example, a 13-year old experiencing a number of disciplinary problems at school was sent to the counselor. After numerous consultations without much progress, the counselor asked the client 'what can I do for you today.' Without delay the client gave a list of needs. Upon fulfilling these needs, the client's self-esteem rose because the physiological and sense of belonging needs were met and the need for counseling decreased (Harper, et al., 2003).

In this way, a culture that supports this type of worker-to-client interaction should facilitate the same from a worker-to-worker perspective at the micro level. Again, this insight and self-actualization approach may assist macro practitioners with creating an environment that facilitates one's movement toward self-actualization as a necessary component for children who have been abused and neglected and live in foster care until their 18th birthday.

At the macro level, organizational culture creates a new level of awareness and expectation for supervision and leadership needed and expected of agency directors,

supervisors and workers. The cultural behavioral norms can be used to guide decisions and facilitate a venue for understanding worker-to-worker and worker-to-client relationships. Understanding organizational culture reveals an invisible dimension of the organization that when neglected over time, can compromise the stability of the agency. When the culture within an organization is competitive, has narrowly defined goals and lacks a supportive environment, workers tend to leave the organization in search of a more supportive environment.

Therefore, the worker turnover rate increases. An organizational culture assessment can be shared with an agency in a forum that outlines the current culture and helps the agency move to a culture that creates a more constructive style environment. Therefore, the organization can become a knowledge management environment that facilitates a learning culture within the organization.

Knowledge management entails effectively gathering and using information systematically throughout an organization that operates with (i) clear and commonly understood goals; (ii) explicit performance expectations; (iii) feedback that allows employees to compare results with expectations; and finally (iv) an understanding that everyone has a

responsibility to share information across the organization (Austin & Hopkins, 2004). These components coupled with the understanding of the organization's culture can create a learning culture where the process of exchanging and sharing ideas is supported. This type of environment promotes systems thinking, team learning and shared visioning. Organizations cannot improve without first learning about themselves, their clients or consumer needs, the service environment, best practices information, and lessons learned by similar organizations (Austin & Hopkins, 2004).

An assessment of an agency's organizational culture is a major part of this learning process. Furthermore, the understanding and sharing of this type of information by macro practitioners raises a sense of awareness about the agency that may provide knowledge around the needs of the workers. This includes, (1) training; (2) rewards; and (3) support needed to create a supportive, productive environment for workers and clients. Again, these are components needed to maintain a level of commitment from workers as they interact with each other and clients.

Like policy analysis, organizational culture analysis is a crucial part of the political, business and social

systems. Through the process of conducting cultural

analyses, solutions to social problems are identified and

can be implemented at the Federal, State and local levels.

Furthermore, this type of study can provide an insight into

current agency policies that work against and support the

desired goals. Also, information gathered through an

organizational culture assessment can be used to create new

policies that support worker professional development and

strategic planning polices that support or move one toward

the desired culture.

Synopsis of Study

This study began with the recognition that culture is

an integral part of an organization. The study approached

the question of what the identified culture is in an

organization by applying organizational culture literature.

This was an exploratory study to find out what the

behavioral norms, values and belief systems are that were

prevalent in this child welfare agency. A mixed-method

approach was utilized to conduct the study. The

predominant, moderate and least prevalent cultural styles

within the agency were revealed through the quantitative

results. The predominant cultural behavior and the

prevalent culture within this domain were supported by the

qualitative findings. Also, the culture in this agency

matched with the prescribed values and mission as they are interpreted and utilized for providing effective services to children in foster care. This study has many implications for future research about how culture can be used to further the success of the children, workers and the agency. The impact of culture within a child welfare setting merits further research.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

APPROVAL

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

September 17, 2004

TO: Rena HAROLD
        232 Baker Hall

RE: **IRB# 04-681**   CATEGORY: EXPEDITED 2-5, 2-7

        APPROVAL DATE: September 17, 2004

        EXPIRATION DATE September 16, 2005

TITLE: Organizational Culture Assessment

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete and I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the **UCRIHS approved this project.**

RENEWALS: UCRIHS approval is valid until the expiration date listed above. Projects continuing beyond this date must be renewed with the renewal form. A maximum of four such expedited renewals are possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit a 5-year application for a complete review.

REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please include a revision form with the renewal. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request with an attached revision cover sheet to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB# and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.

PROBLEMS/CHANGES: Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, notify UCRIHS promptly: 1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or 2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at (517) 355-2180 or via email: UCRIHS@msu.edu. Please note that all UCRIHS forms are located on the web: http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu

Sincerely,

Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D.
UCRIHS Chair

PV: jm

cc: DeBrenna Agbenyiga
      3216 Ronald St
      Lansing
      MI

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF CONSENT

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT
LETTER OF CONSENT

As an employee of Catholic Social Services/St. Vincent Home of Lansing, you are being asked to participate in an Organizational Culture Analysis. The purpose of the study is to assess the current organizational cultural climate and its impact on service delivery to children and families receiving services through foster care programs. The information collected may help determine, in the future, which cultural climate is necessary to ensure that children in foster care are receiving effective services. Also, it will provide information that can be used to recruit and retain foster care workers and strengthen the organization's mission and goals for future stability.

As a participant, we will be asking you to fill out a questionnaire and respond to questions in a focus group during today's session. Your commitment will involve approximately one and a half hours of your time. Your participation is entirely voluntary; you may choose not to participate, or choose not to answer a particular question. You may withdraw your participation at any time.

The findings in this study will not contain identifiable information about you. The information collected will be confidential, and it will be summarized by groups, rather than by individuals. In lieu of names, an identification number will be assigned to each survey. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Rena Harold, Ph.D., Responsible Project Investigator, 232 Baker Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824, by phone: (517) 432-3733, or e-mail address: haroldr@msu.edu.

We hope this research will benefit you and the agency for which you work. Aggregate information collected from this project will be shared with Catholic Social Services/St. Vincent Home of Lansing Administrative team.

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this project, and we look forward to learning from your experiences and perspectives. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact- anonymously, if you wish- Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research

Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) by phone: (517 355-2180, fax: (517) 432-4503, e-mail address: ucrihs@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

_____I have read and understood the above letter of consent, and my signature on this letter indicates my voluntary agreement to participate.

_____   _____
Signature   Date
_____   _____
Witness   Date

APPENDIX C

CONSENT TO AUDIO TAPE

CONSENT FOR USE OF AUDIOTAPE

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this focus group. The focus group will consist of questions about the mission, values, and culture of your organization. The information that you share during the focus group will remain confidential. Information shared will also be used to explain the findings of the previous questionnaire.

With your permission, we will audiotape the interviews to make sure that information is accurately recorded. These tapes will be used only by researchers at MSU to transcribe the interviews and will be kept in a locked office until they are destroyed at the end of the study. An effort will be made to disguise your identity by not using your name. However, total anonymity may not be possible because of the unique stories that you will share.

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this project. We look forward to learning from your experiences and perspectives.

My signature indicates my agreement to be audiotaped.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

_____   _____

Witness   Date

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

<u>Organizational Culture Focus Group</u>

This focus group session is a continuation of the Organizational Culture Assessment that I am conducting at Catholic Social Services/St. Vincent Home in Lansing. The primary purpose of the focus group is to learn more about your views on the organization's values, attitudes and belief systems that can be compared to the questionnaire you completed earlier. Therefore, I will focus on your experiences as a worker in this agency.

I will be taping this session to help me study and analyze what you have said, but information will not be reported on an individual basis. Please make sure that you sign the audiotape consent form that is being passed around. When you have something to say, please repeat your name each time. When listening to the tapes, I will not be able to see who is speaking, but I would like to be able to relate comments you made at different times during the session. Also, please note that anything you say will be held in strict confidence. Again, all of the data collected during this session will be aggregated for reporting purposes.

1. How do you interpret the mission of the agency as it relates to your work with children and families in foster care?

2. What are the prescribed values of this organization?

3. Of the values mentioned, which do you believe are the three strongest values in the organization?

4. How do these three values influence your decision-making practices while working with children and families in foster care?

5. What does it mean to you that this is a faith-based organization?

6. To what extent has the mission/values/culture of the organization influenced your decision to join the organization?

7. To what extent has the mission/values/culture of the organization influenced your decision to remain with the organization?

8. In what way are your ideas valued? Do you feel supported in this organization?

9. Do you believe you are a part of the decision-making process? If so, how?

10.Are the goals and mission of the organization narrowly defined? How do you work toward accomplishing them?

11.What is your understanding of how childhood is valued within this organization?

12.As an organization, what do you look like when you are at your best in reference to providing services to children and families in foster care?

References

Allaire, Y., Firsirotu, M. (1984). Theories of
    organizational culture. *Organization Studies, 5,*
    193-226.

Altheide, D. L. (1987). Reflections: Ethnographic content
    analysis. *Qualitative Sociology, 10,* 75-77.

Alvesson, M. (1993). *Cultural perspective on
    organizations.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Alvesson, M. (2002). *Understanding organizational culture.*
    Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Amsa, P. (1986). Organizational culture and work group
    behaviour: An empirical study. *Journal of
    Management Studies, 23,* 347-362.

Anderson, R.E, Carter, I., & Lowe, G. R. (1999). *Human
    behavior in the social environment: A social systems
    approach,* (5th Edition). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Barth, R. P., & Berry, M. (1987). Outcomes of child
    welfare services under permanency planning. *Social
    Service Review,* 80-87.

Benson, D. & Hughes, J. A. (1983). *Perspective of
    ethnomethodology.* New York: Longman.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing
    organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (2nd
    ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Brandon, P. D. (2000). Did the AFDC program succeed in
    keeping mothers and young children living together?
    Social Service Review, 74, 214-230.

Calder, B. J. (1980). Focus group interviews and
    qualitative research in organizations. In Edward E.
    Lawler III, David Nadler, & Cortlandt Cammann (Eds.),
    *Organizational assessment: Perspectives on the
    measurement of organizational behavior and the quality
    of work life* (pp. 399 - 417).

Calori, R., & Sarnin, P. (1991). Corporate culture and
    economic performance: A French study. *Organization*

Studies, 12, 49-74.

Child Welfare League of America, (2000). *H.R. 1802, The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, Extends Services and Supports for Youths Transitioning from Foster Care (On-line)*. Available: http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/indlivfastsheethr1802.htm

Cooke, R. A., & Lafferty, J. C. (1983, 1986, 1987, 1989). *Organizational culture inventory*. Plymouth, MI: Human Synergistics. Copyright 1989 by Human Synergistics, Inc.

Cooke, R. A., & Rousseau, D. M. (1988). Behavioral norms And expectations: A quantitative approach to the assessment of organizational culture. *Group & Organization Studies, 13*, 245-273.

Cooke, R. A., & Szumal, J. (2000). Using organizational culture inventory to understand the operating cultures of organizations. . In Neal Ashkanasy, Celeste Wilderom, & Mark Peterson (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational culture and climate* (pp. 147-162). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Curran, M. C. & Pecora, P. J. (1999). Incorporating the perspectives of youth placed in family Foster Care: selected research findings and methodological challenges. In Patrick Curtis, Grady Dale, & Joshua, Kendall (Eds.), *The foster care crisis: Translating research into policy and practice._ Published by the University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, in association with the Child Welfare League of America.

Denison, D. R. & Mishra, A. K. (1995). Toward a theory of Organizational culture and effectiveness. *Organization Science, 6*, 204-223.

Deal, T. E., & Kennedy, A. A. (1982). *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

DeGenova, M. (1997). *Families in cultural context:*

strengths and challenges in Diversity. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Co.

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Research Act: A theoretical introduction to sociological Methods.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Dickson, M. W., Aditya, R. N., & Chhokar, J. S. (2000). Definition and interpretation of cross-cultural Organizational culture research: Some pointers from The GLOBE research program. In Neal Ashkanasy, Celeste Wilderom, & Mark Peterson (Eds). *Handbook Of organizational culture and climate* (pp. 447-464). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

DuBois, B. & Miley, K. K. (1999). *Social Work: An empowering profession.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Fenster, J.(1997). Case for permanent foster care. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 24,* 117-127.

Garbarino, J.(1992).*Children and families in the social environment* (2nd ed). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Gambrill, E. D.(1974). Foster care: Plans and actualities. *Public Welfare, 32,* 12-22.

Germain, C. B. & Bloom, M. (1999). *Human behavior in the social environment: An ecological view* (2nd ed). New York: Columbia University Press.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in Ethnomethodology.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey:Prentice Hall.

Golembiewski, R. T., (1988). Organization theory. In Jack Rabin & Marcia Steinhaur(Eds.), *Handbook on human services administration* (pp. 3-44). New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc.

Gordon, G. G. & DiTomaso, N. (1992). Predicting corporate performance from organizational culture. *Journal of Management Studies, 29,* 783-798.

Hardcastle, D. A., Wenocur, S., & Powers, P. R. (1997). *Community Practice: Theories and skills for social workers.* New York: Oxford University Press

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., & Larsen, J. (1997).
    Direct social work practice: Theory and skills, (5th
    Edition). Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing
    Company.

Hildebrand, V., Phenice, L. A., Gray, M., & Hines, R. P.
    (1996). *Knowing and serving diverse families.* Upper
    Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill.

Kilmann, R.H. (1985). Five steps to close the culture gap.
    In Kilmann, R.H., Saxton, M., Serpa, R. (Eds.),
    Gaining control of corporate culture. San Francisco:
    Jossey-Bass.

Kerman, B., Wildfire, & Barth, R. P. (2002). Outcomes for
    young adults who experienced foster care. *Children and
    Youth Services Review, 24,* 319-344.

Kroeber, A. L. & Kluckhohn, C. (1960). *Culture: A
    critical review of concepts and definitions.* New
    York: Vintage Books.

Magura, S.(1979). Trend analysis in foster care. *Social
    Work Research & Abstracts* 29-36.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being.* 3rd Ed.
    New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality.* 2nd Ed.
    New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

Maslow, A. H. (1973). *Dominance self-esteem, self-
    Actualization: Germinal papers of A. H. Maslow.*
    California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Marcoulides, G. A., & Heck, R. H.(1993). Organizational
    culture and performance: Proposing and testing a
    model. *Organization Science, 4,* 209-225.

Mendel, D. (2001). *Fostered or forgotten?: unhappy
    outcomes* {On-line}. Avalaible:
    http://www.aecf.org/publications/advocasey/fall2001/fo
    stered/fostered

Moss, D. (1999). Abraham Maslow and the emergence of

humanistic psychology. In David Moss (Ed.),
Humanistic and transpersonal psychology (pp. 24-35).
Westport:Greenwood Press.

National Foster Care Awareness Project (NFCAP) (2000).
*Frequently asked questions about the foster care
independence act of 1999 and the John H. Chafee foster
care independence program* [On-line].
Available:www.connectforkids.com

Nelson, D. W. (2001). *Gratified but not satisfied on
foster care independence* {On-line}.
Available:
http://www.aecf.org/publications/advocasey/fall2001/fo
stered/fostered

Page, W. J. (1988). Organizational structure and service
delivery arrangements in human services. In Jack
Rabin & Marcia Steinhaur (Eds.), *Handbook on human
services administration* (pp. 45-75). New York: Marcel
Dekker, Inc.

Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H., Jr.(1982). *In search of
excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies.*
New York: Harper & Row.

Robbins, S. P., Chatterjee, P., & Canda, E. R. (1998).
*Contemporary human behavior theory: A critical
perspective for social work.* MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Rousseau, D. M. (1990). Normative beliefs in fund-raising
organizations: Linking culture to organization
performance and individual responses. Group &
Organization Studies, 15, 448-460.

Saffold, G. S.(1988). Culture traits, strength and
Organizational performance: Moving beyond "strong"
culture. *Academy of Management Review, 13,* 546-558.

Schein, E. H.(1985). *Organizational culture and
leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-bass Publishers.

Schwartzman, H. B. (1993). *Ethnography in organizations.*
California: Sage Publications.

Schorr, A. L. (2000). Bleak prospect for public child
welfare. *Social Service Review, 74,* 124-135.

Seita, J. R. (2000). In our best interest: Three necessary shifts for child welfare workers and children. *Child Welfare, 79,* 77-92.

Taber, M. A., & Poertner, J. P.(1981). Modeling service delivery as a system of transitions: The case of foster care. *Evaluation Review, 5,* 549-566.

Trice, H. M., & Beyer, J. M. (1984). Studying Organizational cultures through rites and rituals. *Academy of Management Review, 9,* 653-669.

Wilderom, C., Glunk, U., & Maslowski, R.(2000). Organizational culture as a predictor of organizational performance. In Neal Ashkanasy, Celeste Wilderom, & Mark Peterson (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational culture and climate* (pp. 193-209). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Woolf, G. D. (1990). An outlook for foster care in the United States. *Child Welfare, 69,* 75-81.