

INITIAL DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE CHILD WELFARE  
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

by

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(Under the Direction of Kevin L. DeWeaver and Alberta J. Ellett)

ABSTRACT

A multi-dimensional measure of organizational culture in child welfare was developed in this study. It continued development of Ellett's (2000) *professional* organizational culture measure, the only known measure of organizational culture in child welfare agencies. The newly created scale expanded upon Ellett's examination of *professional* dimensions of organizational culture as a factor related to retention of child welfare employees by creating a new measure of the broader concept of organizational culture in child welfare agencies more comprehensively than the one created and used by Ellett in two previous studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). This newly created, comprehensive measure of organizational culture for use in child welfare agencies, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (CWOI), was administered to all Georgia DFCS child welfare employees at the county level in an effort to examine initial measurement reliability and validity estimates using Ellett's Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare scale (IRE) (Ellett, 2000; Ellett, et al., 2003) as a measure of criterion-related validity. Principal Components Analysis identified seven empirical dimensions of organizational culture that explained 45.7% of the total item variance. The seven dimensions demonstrated internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's Alphas) ranging from .47 to .97. Criterion-related validity

estimates of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory were examined using subjects' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare as measured by the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure and a variety of statistical analyses: simple bivariate correlations, stepwise regression analysis, and discriminant function analysis. Furthermore, the study also furthers our understanding of the relationship between organizational culture and (a) organizational characteristics (county geographic type [rural, suburban, and urban] and caseload size) and (b) child welfare employees' personal characteristics (years experience working in child welfare) using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test procedures.

**INDEX WORDS:** Child Welfare, Organizational Culture, Child Welfare Workforce, Survey Measures

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xiii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Overview and Context of the Study .....	1
Problem Statement .....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Significance of the Study .....	5
Study Variables .....	7
Independent Variables .....	8
Dependent Variable .....	8
Research Questions .....	9
Chapter Summary.....	12
2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	14
Child Welfare .....	14
Deprofessionalization of Child Welfare.....	14
Ongoing Crisis in the Child Welfare Workforce.....	16
Costs and Causes of Turnover.....	18

Child and Family Safety .....	19
Disruption of Services .....	19
Supervision.....	20
Professional Development.....	20
Empirical Investigations of Turnover and Retention .....	21
Measuring Intentions to Remain Employed in Child Welfare .....	27
Impact of Organizational Culture on Turnover and Retention.....	28
Organizational Culture .....	33
The History of Organizational Studies.....	33
Defining Organizational Culture .....	34
Three Levels of Organizational Culture.....	37
Ten Categories of Overt Phenomenon That Make Up Organizational Culture .....	42
Two Perspectives for Viewing Organizational Culture .....	43
Differentiating Organizational Culture From Organizational Climate .....	44
Measuring Organizational Culture .....	47
Key Attributes of Organizational Culture .....	49
Empirical Investigations of Organizational Culture.....	50
Chapter Summary.....	63
3 CONCEPTUAL MODEL.....	65
Organizational Theory.....	66
Defining Organization .....	66
Importance of Organizations .....	67



Organizational Analysis .....	68
Conceptual Definitions .....	75
Organizational Culture .....	75
Dimensions of Organizational Culture .....	78
Conceptual Model .....	80
Chapter Summary .....	84
4 METHODOLOGY .....	85
Initial Development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	85
Expert Reviews .....	86
Time and Content Clarification Study .....	88
Research Design .....	88
Population .....	89
Study Measures .....	89
Demographic Information Form .....	89
Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	90
Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare .....	90
Data Collection Procedures .....	90
Data Analysis Procedures .....	91
Chapter Summary .....	92
5 RESULTS .....	93
Respondents' Characteristics .....	93
Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents .....	94
Descriptive Statistics for the Study Measures .....	98

Factor Analysis of the Study Measures .....	99
Factor Analysis of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	100
Factor Analysis of the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale ...	108
Descriptive Statistics for the Factored Dimensions of the Study Measures.....	109
Reliability Analyses .....	110
Bivariate Correlations.....	112
Bivariate Correlations Among the Factored Subscales .....	112
Bivariate Correlations Between the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale.....	113
Criterion-Related Validity .....	114
Bivariate Correlations Between the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale.....	114
Regression Analyses.....	114
Discriminant Function Analysis.....	115
Selected Group Comparisons .....	117
Group Comparisons of Geographic County Type.....	118
Group Comparisons of Years Experience in Child Welfare .....	120
Group Comparisons of Caseload Size.....	122
Group Comparisons of Social Work Degree and Non-Social Work Degree Groups.....	123
Results Pertinent to Each Research Question.....	125

Chapter Summary.....	130
6 DISCUSSION.....	132
Context of the Study.....	132
Overview of the Study.....	134
Assumptions.....	136
Limitations.....	136
Major Findings and Conclusions.....	137
Discussion.....	139
Implications.....	144
Implications for Theory.....	144
Implications for Future Research.....	147
Implications for Practice.....	149
Chapter Summary.....	150
REFERENCES.....	152
APPENDICES.....	164
A INITIAL ITEM POOL.....	165
B EXPERT REVIEW COVER LETTER.....	176
C EXPERT REVIEW DIRECTIONS AND ITEM POOL.....	177
D TIME AND CLARITY STUDY.....	188
E DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE.....	198
F CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY.....	201
G INTENT TO REMAIN EMPLOYED – CHILD WELFARE.....	206
H SURVEY COVER LETTER.....	207

I	COVER LETTER TO COUNTY DIRECTORS .....	209
J	ITEMS MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR STUDY MEASURES.....	210
K	ITEM LOADINGS FOR THE ONE-FACTOR SOLUTION OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY.....	213
L	INDIVIDUAL ITEMS LOADING ON EACH OF THE SEVEN EMPIRICALLY VERIFIED SUBSCALES OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTOY .....	216
M	ITEMS THAT DID NOT LOAD ON THE SEVEN FACTOR SOLUTION OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY .....	219
N	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS OF THE SEVEN FACTORED SUBSCALES OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY.....	220
O	SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR COUNTY GEOGRAPHIC TYPE AND STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY .....	222
P	SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR YEARS EXPERIENCE IN CHILD WELFARE AND STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY.....	223
Q	SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR CASELOAD SIZE AND STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY .....	224

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Summary of descriptive statistics for the demographic characteristics of the survey sample .....	95
Table 2: Summary of item communalities and factor loadings for a one-factor solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	100
Table 3: Summary of item communalities and factor loading for a seven-factor solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	103
Table 4: Summary of the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	107
Table 5: Summary of item correlations and factor loadings for the unidimensional Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale .....	108
Table 6: Summary of mean scores, standard deviations, and percent of maximum possible scores of the seven sub-factors of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale.....	109
Table 7: Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients for the seven factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale .....	111
Table 8: Summary of Pearson product moment intercorrelations among the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory.....	112

Table 9: Summary of Pearson product moment intercorrelations between the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed –Child Welfare Scale.....	113
Table 10: Summary of stepwise multiple regression analysis regressing the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale on the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	115
Table 11: Summary of linear discriminant function analysis for lower and upper quartile groups for the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory .....	116
Table 12: Summary of discriminant function analysis of percent correct and incorrect classifications of cases into upper and lower quartiles on the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale.....	117
Table 13: Summary of one-way ANOVA results for each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor for three levels of geographic county type (rural, suburban, and urban).....	118
Table 14: Summary of one-way ANOVA results for each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor for four levels of years experience working in child welfare .....	121
Table 15: Summary of one-way ANOVA results for each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor for three levels of caseload size .....	122
Table 16: Summary of t test comparisons between social work (BSW and MSW) and non-social work degree groups for each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor.....	124

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 3:1 Conceptual Model .....	81

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to this study regarding the development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory beginning with an overview of the context of the study. This is followed by a statement of the problem this study addresses and the purpose and significance of this study. The independent and dependent variables are explicated. Finally, the chapter concludes with a presentation of the research questions this study addresses.

#### Overview and Context of the Study

Abuse and neglect of children in this country is a serious and all too pervasive problem. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau, the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System reported an estimated 1,800,000 allegations of child abuse and neglect regarding over 3 million children in 2002. Reports of alleged abuse and neglect were substantiated for 896,000 of those children on whom reports were received (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families Children's Bureau, 2004). The General Accounting Office (GAO) estimated in 2003 that more than 800,000 children spend time in foster care each year. Furthermore, it is estimated that approximately 2,000 children in this nation die from abuse and neglect every year (Block, 2002). The responsibility for determining the validity of child abuse and neglect reports; evaluating the safety of those children who are reported as possibly being abused or neglected; making decisions about removal of children from their homes; making placements in foster and other out-of-home settings; and implementing prevention of future abuse and neglect of children is



placed with child protective service agencies and the employees within those agencies (Crosson-Tower, 2002; Knudsen, 1988; Samantrai, 2004).

Services to all those children are expensive; Americans invest a great deal of money in child welfare services. The federal government allocates approximately \$7 billion to the fifty states yearly to be used in the provision of public child welfare services (GAO, 2003). Overall, \$14.4 billion is spent yearly on total expenditures for public child welfare services (Kolko, 2002, p. 21). And costs associated with replacing a child welfare worker are estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$17,000 (Daly, Dudley, Finnegan, Jones, & Christiansen, 2001).

The quality of services provided in child welfare, is only as good as the competence of the professional child welfare employees who provide those services (Ewalt, 1991). A competent and stable workforce is essential to providing quality services to this vulnerable population of abused and neglected children and their families. Yet the field of child welfare continues to face an ongoing workforce turnover and retention problem. The annual turnover rate of child welfare employees is estimated to be between 20% and 40% annually (Cyphers, 2001; General Accounting Office, 2003; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994) and turnover rates over a two year period can soar as high as 90% (Drake & Yadama, 1996). In Georgia's Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) the annual turnover rate, at 44% in 2000, was even higher than national averages (Ellett, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2003). With an estimated 30% to 40% annual turnover rate of child welfare workers and average worker tenure being under two years (GAO, 2003), this workforce is clearly unstable. The consequences of worker turnover go beyond the negative effects on the quality of services provided to children and families. There are negative consequences for the child welfare organization itself including recruiting, hiring, and training costs; a disruption of social and communication structures; a loss of productivity during

replacement search and training time; a loss of quality workers; and decreases in work morale and satisfaction among those who do not leave. Negative consequences to individuals who leave their child welfare jobs include the loss of job seniority and nonvested benefits; disruption of social support systems; stress related to the transition from one job to another; and regression in the career path. There are negative consequences for those employees remain as well, including the loss of valued coworkers; decreases in job satisfaction, cohesion, and commitment; and increases in workload. Furthermore, high turnover rates bring negative consequences to the field of public child welfare and social work in general including increases in the cost of service provision and an inability to attract and retain qualified, knowledgeable workers (Mobley, 1982).

Given this information, studies of child welfare workforce issues may have never been more relevant than now. Many factors have been blamed for this high rate of employee turnover. Studies examining both personal and organizational factors of turnover and retention in child welfare agencies have pointed to human caring, self efficacy, and organizational culture as factors that impact employee retention and turnover (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005).

Several measures have been developed for the purpose of measuring organizational culture in businesses (Ashkanasy, Broadfoot, & Falkus, 2000; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Cooke & Szumal, 1993, 2000; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990; Petty, Beadles, Lowery, Chapman, & Connell, 1995; van Muijen, Koopman, Witte, Lemoine, Bourantas, Papalexandris, Branyicski, Spaltro, Jesuino, Gonzalves Das Neves, Pitariu, Konrad, Peiro, Gonzalez-Roma, & Turnipseed, 1999). The Professional Organizational Culture measure is the only known measure of organizational culture in child welfare (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). However, to date, no known measures exist to measure organizational

culture in child welfare agencies more comprehensively than is done with Ellett's three dimensional measure of *professional* organizational culture.

### Problem Statement

Although, as stated above, measures have been developed to examine organizational culture in the business world (Ashkanasy et al., 2000; O'Reilly et al., 1991; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Cooke & Szumal, 1993, 2000; Hofstede et al., 1990; Petty et al., 1995; van Muijen et al., 1999) and one measure has been developed to assess *professional* organizational culture in child welfare agencies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003), there is no known scale to comprehensively measure organizational culture in child welfare agencies. The lack of a quantitative, self-report scale to measure organizational culture in child welfare agencies underscores the need for additional studies of both personal and organizational characteristics of child welfare employees and agencies. A few studies have initiated this process (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005), by examining relationships human caring and self-efficacy beliefs have with child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. However, to date, only two studies have been completed that examine the relationships between professional organizational culture and retention and turnover in child welfare agencies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). This paucity of research on child welfare organizational culture needs to be addressed. An initial step in addressing this gap in knowledge is to create new, more comprehensive measures of personal and organizational characteristics that affect child welfare agencies and the child welfare workforce.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a multi-dimensional measure of organizational culture in child welfare. This study expanded upon Ellett's examination of *professional*

dimensions of organizational culture as a factor impacting retention and turnover of child welfare employees by creating a new measure of the broader concept of organizational culture in child welfare agencies more comprehensively than the one created and used by Ellett in two previous studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). This newly created, comprehensive measure of organizational culture for use in child welfare agencies, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (CWOI), was administered to all Georgia DFCS child welfare employees at the county level in an effort to examine initial measurement reliability and validity estimates using Ellett's Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare scale (IRE) (Ellett, 2000; Ellett, et al., 2003) as a measure of criterion-related validity.

#### Significance of the Study

This study is important from several perspectives. Due to the workforce turnover issue in child welfare, studies of both personal and organizational characteristics that might be linked to turnover and retention are needed. Two studies have documented linkages between *professional* organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain employed (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). It is important that this line of inquiry continue in order to further our understanding of the relationship between organizational culture and employee retention and turnover. This study not only examines the relationship between organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain in child welfare, it also furthers our understanding of the relationship between other personal (years experience working in child welfare) and organizational characteristics (county geographic type and caseload size) and subjects' intentions to remain employed.

While there is concern for high employee turnover in child welfare and the effects it has on the organization and on the employees of the organization, there have been few empirically-based studies linking personal and organizational characteristics with turnover and retention of

child welfare employees. Any studies that can add to this line of inquiry are important in developing greater understanding of this phenomenon. Furthermore, as posited by Ellett (2000), it may be much more important to examine those factors related to retention than those related to turnover and burnout. While many of those who leave child welfare employment cite psychological stress as a reason or factor in their departure, others stay and persist in the job despite experiencing the same psychological stressors (Westbrook, Ellis, Ellett, in press). Employees' intentions to remain employed is the best proxy measure of actual staying in the job behavior (Steel and Ovalle, 1984; Tett and Meyer, 1993).

Ultimately, organizational research is at least somewhat dependent upon quality measurement. There is a paucity of research in the area of child welfare organizational culture. At this time, Ellett's (2000) measure of *professional* organizational culture, is the only known scale of organizational culture specific to child welfare agencies. Culture is an important element in any organization, child welfare agencies not withstanding. Organizational culture provides members' with information on how to think, solve problems, communicate, and behave as well as informing members about values, beliefs, meanings, and goals. It serves to stabilize organizations and provides direction and clarity to organizational members. Almost every aspect of an organization, from the furniture and written documents to the policies and procedures followed, and the assumptions members make about themselves and the world around them involves the organization's culture (Alvesson & Berg; Childress & Senn, 1999; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Elsmore, 2001; Ott, 1989; Pedersen & Sorensen, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1990; Schneider, Brief, & Guzzo, 1996). Put most simply, organizational culture informs organizational members as to "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 2).

The focus of this study is this vital issue of organizational culture in the very important field of child welfare and its relationship to the crucial workforce retention issue. This study not only furthers the line of inquiry into the relationship between organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain in child welfare, it also examines the relationship between the various dimensions organizational culture and selected personal and organizational characteristics (geographic type of county, length of child welfare experience, caseload size, and education). The study is important to child welfare practice and can possibly be used in future studies to inform agencies about which areas of the organization and its culture most need to improve. It will further future research, most significantly by providing a measure of organizational culture that can be used in a variety of future studies of child welfare agencies. Furthermore, this study informs organizational culture theory development through the explication of empirically verified dimensions of organizational culture found in child welfare and perhaps other social work agencies.

This section has examined the importance of this study. The study variables are described next, followed by the research questions used in this study.

### Study Variables

This section describes the variables, both independent and dependent, used in this study. The study consists of seven research questions: one question regarding each the dimensions of organizational culture; the strength of those dimensions; the reliability of the data gathered; three questions regarding validation of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory; and finally, one question regarding the relationship between the dimensions of organizational culture and selected personal and organizational characteristics. Subjects expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare is utilized as the dependent variable in the majority of the research

questions. A set of seven independent variables (the empirically verified dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory) is utilized for several of research questions. The final, and seventh research question, uses selected personal (years experience working in child welfare) and organizational (county geographic type and caseload size) variables as the independent variables.

### *Independent Variables*

The independent variables for the majority of research questions in this study are the seven empirically verified subscales (dimensions) of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. These dimensions are *Administrative Support*, *Supervisory Support*, *Professionalism*, *Collegiality*, *Organizational Ethos*, *Autonomy*, and *Beliefs About Parents*. Supplemental independent variables are used in the final research question. Those supplemental independent variables are the following three personal and organizational characteristics: three levels of county geographic type (rural, suburban, and urban); four levels of employees' years experience working in child welfare; and three levels of caseload size. These three demographic variables were chosen as important to further understanding employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable utilized in most research questions in this study is the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare (IRE) scale as developed by Ellett (2000) and used in two prior statewide studies of retention and turnover in child welfare (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003). The IRE has been shown in both Ellett's studies and in a third, recent statewide child welfare workforce study completed by Ellis (2005) to yield rather strong reliability coefficients, ranging from .85 (Ellett et al, 2003) to .90 (Ellis, 2005). The IRE was developed by Ellett specifically

for use in child welfare organizations. It is “derived from a larger understanding of the personal, psychological, and work context factors encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements that contribute to the holding power of the child welfare work context for the employee and to the organizational culture” (Ellett, 2000, p. 26). The final research question utilizes the seven empirically verified dimensions of organizational culture as the dependent variables.

### Research Questions

This study addressed seven core research questions. Those questions and the rationale for each are described in this section. In this study, research questions were used, as opposed to hypotheses, since the primary focus of the study was the development of a new, comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare. There was no singular theory of organizational culture from which testable hypotheses about measurement dimensions could be derived.

#### *Question One*

What are the core elements (dimensions) of a comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare?

#### *Rationale*

The only known measure of organizational culture in child welfare is the Professional Organizational Culture measure initially developed by Ellett (2000) and further refined by Ellett, Ellett, and Rugutt (2003). This study expands this work by developing several additional, new dimensions of the organizational culture construct in child welfare settings. Therefore, there was a need to empirically answer this question as part of the initial construct validation of this new expanded measure.



*Question Two*

Which elements of organizational culture in child welfare are the strongest and which are the weakest?

*Rationale*

Because organizational culture was hypothesized to be a dynamic construct that could differ significantly in strength from one dimension to the next, comparisons among dimensions were made. These comparisons were made to examine the relative strength and weakness of organizational culture. This provided an understanding of the culture in the particular organization studied, specifically providing a measure of employees' beliefs about the magnitude of each element of organizational culture.

*Question Three*

How reliable are data collected with this new, comprehensive measure of organizational culture?

*Rationale*

Examination of the reliability of data collected is a common and often necessary occurrence in developing a new measure. Internal consistency reliability reflects the homogeneity of items comprising a measure; it provides a estimate of how accurately the items of a measure are indicators of a common, underlying construct and of the extent to which a measure can consistently differentiate among individuals in a manner that is free of error. Reliability estimates are needed to understand validity since reliability sets statistical limits on validity coefficients.

*Question Four*

Does the new measure demonstrate adequate criterion-related validity using a measure of employees' intentions to remain employed (IRE) in child welfare as a criterion?

*Rationale*

A necessary step in the initial validation of a new measure was to examine relationships between the measure and various criteria of interest. These validation criteria should be conceptually and logically linked to the new measure. Criterion-related validity studies can provide information about emerging nomological networks for the measure that are important for future theory development (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955).

*Question Five*

Do factored dimensions of this new measure of organizational culture demonstrate incremental, criterion-related validity using the IRE as a criterion?

*Rationale*

This research question addressed a second step in examination of the criterion-related validity of the new child welfare organizational culture measure. This step provided a model of which *combination* of elements of organizational culture were most predictive of subjects' intentions to remain employed in the child welfare agency.

*Question Six*

To what extent can the various factored dimensions of the new measure of organizational culture differentiate between child welfare employees with the strongest and weakest intentions to remain employed in child welfare?

*Rationale*

This was the third and final step in addressing the criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory in this study using a known groups validation design. If known intent to remain employed groups can be statistically differentiated with the new measure, further support for criterion-related validity is evidenced.

*Question Seven*

Are there differences in the strength of organizational culture associated with selected work context variables (e.g., urban, suburban, and rural work settings) and personal characteristics of staff (e.g., length of employment in child welfare, size of caseload, and BSW/MSW vs. other degrees)?

*Rationale*

This final research question was designed to examine the relationship between organizational culture and selected personal and organizational characteristics. This question was considered important since the conception of organizational culture was dynamic and contextually and experientially based. Therefore, selected organizational and personal variables should be associated with differences in the strength of various measured dimensions of organizational culture.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a presentation of an overview and the context of the study, including the importance of child welfare organizations and studies of the turnover and retention issue in these organizations and pointing to the paucity of research in this area. A statement of the problem and purpose of this study were also explicated as well as the significance of the

study. The research variables were described and finally, the research questions were presented and the rationale for these questions was explained.

The following chapters explicate the details of this study, beginning with an examination of the relevant literature in chapter two that includes the issue of the child welfare workforce retention and turnover crisis and studies of organizational culture. Chapter three explicates the conceptual definitions of organizational culture and each of its dimensions used in this study as well as the conceptual model behind the study. Chapter four details the methodology used in the study. The results of the study are presented in chapter five. And finally, chapter six includes a discussion of the implications of this study for theory, research, and practice.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of the existing literature relevant to this study. The review begins with a brief explanation of deprofessionalization and turnover and retention issues in public child welfare. Regarding this, national and local turnover rates for child welfare staff, empirical investigations of turnover and retention as well as the causes and costs of high rates of employee turnover are examined. The definition of organizational culture is described beginning with a brief history of organizational studies followed by of the most widely used definitions, levels, and themes of organizational culture. In defining organizational culture, the differences between organizational culture and organizational climate, a closely related phenomenon, are discussed. A discussion of issues in organizational culture including how it has been measured, recommendations about future research, and empirical research studies that have examined organizational culture follows. Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the relationship between organizational culture and retention and turnover of child welfare employees which provides the conceptual basis for this study.

#### Child Welfare

##### *Deprofessionalization of Child Welfare*

By the 1930s, child welfare was being professionalized and social work was becoming the profession of choice for child advocates and child protection workers (Crosson-Tower, 2002; Knudsen, 1988; Williams, 1983; Zellman & Fair, 2002). And although the profession of social work had long been well established as the leader of child protection, the landscape of child

protection changed dramatically when the medical field established its place in the child protection movement during the 1940s and 1950s with the emergence of radiology. It was at this time that John Caffey, radiologist, put forth the notion that many of the multiple fractures he so frequently saw in children were not the results of accidents, but rather were the result of abuse inflicted upon children by their parents and caretakers. In 1962, Dr. Henry Kempe's legendary article "The Battered-Child Syndrome" was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. These events became a watershed in the field of child welfare and child protection (Crosson-Tower, 2002; Knudsen, 1988; Williams, 1983; Zellman & Fair, 2002). With the discovery of the Battered-Child Syndrome came a redefining of the problem of child abuse and neglect and the realization that child abuse and neglect was a much more common problem than was previously believed. This quickly led to the creation of child abuse reporting laws which were enacted in less time than any other law in America, being passed by all fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands within five years (Crosson-Tower, 2002; Williams, 1983; Zellman & Fair, 2002). At the time mandatory reporting laws were instituted, no one foresaw they "would become the driving force for the expansion of child welfare services" and lead to such drastic changes in the working conditions for the child welfare workforce. These changes are often viewed as the beginning of the deprofessionalization of the child welfare workforce (Steib & Whiting Blome, 2003; Zellman & Fair, 2002, p. 450).

An unexpected consequence resulted from the mandatory reporting laws of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Child welfare agencies and schools of social work were not prepared for the massive increase in the number of child protection cases and agencies were quickly overwhelmed. In order to handle the sudden increase in the number of child abuse and neglect reports, agencies lowered educational requirements for new hires in child welfare positions to

increase the number of staff available to work the cases (Steib & Whiting Blome, 2003). The results of this increase of non-professionals in the child welfare employment ranks can be seen in many of the requirements of child welfare workers today: “high level of regulation, vast amounts of documentation, lack of respect from the public and professional groups, and persistent threats of legal liability” (Steib & Whiting Blome, 2003, p. 748).

### *Ongoing Crisis in the Child Welfare Workforce*

For the past several years there has been a crisis in the field of public child welfare. The child welfare workforce is inexperienced, undereducated, inadequately trained, contributing to high employee turnover (Cyphers, 2001; Dickinson & Perry, 2002, Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; GAO, 2003; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992; Zlotnik, 2002). This is devastating to the effectiveness and quality of work performed by child welfare workers and the services provided to children and their families (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003). Turnover rates have been estimated to be between 20% and 40% annually (American Public Human Services Association, 2005; Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994), with as much as 75% of this falling under the category of “preventable turnover” (Cyphers, 2001). Turnover rates over two years soar as high as 90% (Drake & Yadama, 1996). One study found the turnover rates among public child welfare workers to be 76% higher than turnover rates for other types of human services workers. Most turnover among child welfare workers is likely preventable, i.e. due to factors other than relocation of a spouse’s job, advancement of education, retirement, or death (Cyphers, 2001). The average tenure of a child welfare employee is under two years; a number that is especially troubling given that it has been found to take a newly hired child welfare employee approximately two years to learn to perform the job adequately (Louisiana Work Group, 2000). The average national vacancy rate of child

welfare positions is estimated to be 10% (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003). In Georgia, the turnover rate of child welfare employees was 44% in 2000 with 36.3% of current workers planning to leave DFCS employment within 5 years (Ellett et al., 2003).

Whereas in the past, a social work degree, oftentimes an MSW, was the preferred minimum qualification for caseworkers in child welfare, today most child welfare agencies require only a bachelor's degree in any field. Due to the sudden increase in needed staff brought on by mandatory reporting laws, by the mid-1980s almost half the states in the USA no longer required a college degree at all. By 2000, a BSW was required in only four states and a MSW was required of supervisors in only two states. Today only about one quarter of child welfare services are provided by caseworkers with a BSW or MSW (Steib & Whiting Blome, 2003). In Georgia only 13.5% of the public child welfare service workers hold a BSW degree, 6.1% hold a MSW degree, and 10% of child welfare staff in Georgia have only a high school diploma or GED (Ellett et al., 2003). Not surprisingly, several studies have found those child welfare employees holding a social work degree to be more competent and effective at performing their jobs than employees with other degrees or no degree at all (Albers, Reilly, & Rittner, 1993; Booz-Allen & Hamilton, 1987; CWLA, 1998; Dhooper, Royse, & Wolfe, 1990; Lieberman, Hornby, & Russell, 1988; Olsen & Holmes, 1982).

In this child welfare workforce crisis a vicious cycle seems to have emerged; the inability of agencies to retain staff is a contributing factor to the problem of unmanageable caseloads which is often cited as a primary reason for preventable turnover. The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) sets caseload standards for child welfare workers at a ratio of 12 to 15 families for child protection caseworkers and 15 children per foster care caseworker. A recent study conducted by the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) reported caseloads for



child welfare workers range from 10 to 110 children per worker, with an average of 24 to 31 children per worker, double the recommended standards (Cyphers, 2001, GAO, 2003).

Caseloads in Georgia Department of Family and Children Services exceeded the Child Welfare League of American recommended standards for 80% of the child welfare staff (Ellett et al., 2003).

### *Costs and Causes of Turnover*

There are many causes and costs associated with the problem of high staff turnover in public child welfare, many of which seem to be cyclic, with the outcomes of turnover becoming the cause of more turn over. Factors that cause turnover include low remuneration, especially when compared to other social service jobs; inadequate supervision and lack of supervisory support; high caseloads often made up of complex and very demanding cases; inadequate and insufficient training for employees; administrative burdens such as large amounts of required paperwork and documentation; lack of resources for workers and clients; and staff vacancies and shortages (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003; Samantrai, 1992). In a study conducted by Ellett et al. (2003) one participant aptly noted that “high employee turnover breeds more employee turnover” (p. 128). It should also be noted that retention affects recruitment of new, well qualified employees when potential recruits learn of an agency’s reputation to retain or inability to retain existing workers (Ewalt, 1991). Some of the costs of high levels of turnover include limited time for workers to conduct all expected and required tasks; lack of adequate supervision and training for workers; wasted human and financial investment in training new staff; and a disruption in the continuity of services provided to families (Cyphers, 2001; Ewalt, 1991; GAO, 2003; Samantrai, 1992)

### *Child and Family Safety*

Due to turnover, staff shortages and vacancies leave remaining staff with insufficient time to conduct adequate home visits, assess risk and safety, and make quality, professional case decisions to ensure safety and stability in permanent families for children, often placing children's safety at risk. Continuity of services is disrupted when newly assigned caseworkers must perform previously completed safety, health, and educational assessments because prior workers left incomplete or inadequate information in family case records. Additionally, large caseload sizes and employee turnover also limit the frequency with which workers can visit families and children and impedes the completion of important child welfare work in a timely manner. These delays in conducting necessary work hinders the accomplishment of key federal safety and permanency goals (GAO, 2003).

### *Disruption of Services*

When turnover occurs, families are assigned new caseworkers, which can lead to problems in work with clients because they find the transition from one worker to another to be difficult and confusing (GAO, 2003). Typically multiple contacts with clients are required by caseworkers to establish the relationships necessary to build adequate rapport and trust due to the nature of the information workers must obtain in order to ensure children's safety. When a new caseworker is assigned to a family, the rapport and trust established by the previous worker does not transfer to the new worker. The new worker must take the time to establish good working relationships with each family member. With multiple worker changes, families become frustrated and can become hesitant to cooperate (Ellett, 2000; GAO, 2003). Studies have found that in residential settings for children, frequent turnover of staff "compounds children's feelings of neglect and often results in behavior changes that affect their therapeutic treatment plans"

(GAO, 2003, p. 20). Workers in these facilities have noted “that children channel their feelings of abandonment towards remaining staff, become resistant to therapy, and act violently and aggressively towards other children in the residential facility” (GAO, 2003, p. 20). It logically follows that turnover among staff in public child welfare agencies would have similar effects. For example, “some clients have effectively utilized arguments centered on discontinuity of services in court to delay termination of parental rights and adoption for their children” (Ellett, 2000, p. 6).

### *Supervision*

High turnover of staff also negatively affects supervision of the child welfare workforce. Many child welfare supervisors are supervising far too many caseworkers and therefore are not able to devote the amount of time and energy needed for each worker. This is especially problematic for new workers who need to be provided with adequate mentoring and support to learn to perform the complex job of a child welfare worker. A lack of support and inadequate professional development are often responsible for worker turnover. Inadequate supervision and support also leads to lowered work morale, which in turn negatively impacts staff retention. Another disadvantage of high turnover is that workers are often promoted to supervisory positions within three years of being hired, providing child welfare agencies with a cadre of supervisors who are unprepared for the job of supervising others due to a lack of experience and potential lack of leadership qualities (GAO, 2003).

### *Professional Development*

Another problem in child welfare agencies exacerbated by turnover is that workers are not given adequate on-the-job training; many workers receive very high caseloads within their first few weeks on the job, with little training or mentoring provided. Most training

for new public child welfare employees is provided in the first six months of employment.

Oftentimes the training received by new child welfare workers is either inadequate or irrelevant to the work being conducted in the agency. Training that is provided is often cited as being too time-consuming. When workers are provided the opportunity to attend training sessions, work priorities and high caseloads frequently prevent or interfere with attendance (GAO, 2003).

Additionally, when a caseworker leaves the job soon after completion of training, a serious loss occurs in the investment of time and money in the new worker, money an agency with limited financial resources cannot bear to lose. Finally, when competent and experienced workers leave the job, they also take with them the expertise, skills, and knowledge they have gained on the job (Ellett, 2000).

#### *Empirical Investigations of Turnover and Retention*

Several studies have been conducted over the years to examine turnover and retention in child welfare and other social service agencies. These studies highlight some of the causes and problems associated with high turnover and low retention of child welfare staff. Studies of this nature can provide invaluable insight toward solutions for this troubling problem. The following section provides a summary of several studies in this area of research.

Ellett (2000) conducted a two-state study of factors correlated with retention of public child welfare employees in Arkansas and Louisiana using a survey completed by 946 participants, which contained measures of professional organizational culture, human caring, self-efficacy, and employees' intent to remain employed in child welfare. Internal consistency was in the acceptable to strong range for all measures, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .79 to .93. Pearson product moment correlations showed that administrative support (a dimension of the organizational culture measure) and self-efficacy motivation had the highest correlation with employees intentions to remain employed in child welfare ( $r = .34$  and  $r = .32$  respectively).

Other factors with correlations found to be statistically significant (at the  $p < .0001$  level) included human caring ( $r = .16$ ), vision/professionalism/commitment another dimension of organizational culture ( $r = .26$ ), and work tasks another dimension of self-efficacy ( $r = .17$ ). Stepwise regression analysis of the same data showed that 19% of the variance in participants' intentions to remain employed in child welfare was explained by two variables: administrative support and self-efficacy motivation. Hierarchical regression analysis was also completed with self-efficacy and human caring variables entering the model first followed by professional organizational culture variables. This analysis showed that 20% of the variance in participants' intentions to remain employed in child welfare was explained by the three measures. This study clearly pointed to the importance of both personal and organizational characteristics in retention of employees in public child welfare (Ellett, 2000), however more work needs to be done in this area.

Ellett et al. (2003) conducted a study in the state of Georgia similar to the previously discussed research study by Ellett (2000). This study also surveyed public child welfare employees ( $n=1423$ ) using adaptations of the same measures as the prior study (human caring, self-efficacy, professional organizational culture, and intent to remain employed) along with additional measures of work morale, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy outcomes in child welfare. In addition to the survey, this study also included a qualitative study of 385 employees at all levels of the organization (from caseworkers and supervisors to agency directors and state-level administrators) (Ellett et al., 2003).

Bivariate correlations between participants' intentions to remain employed with the agency and each dimension of the other measures of the study (human caring, self-efficacy, professional organizational culture) ranged from  $-.19$  to  $.67$  with professional commitment (a

dimension of human caring) having the highest correlation with intent to remain employed in child welfare. Using step-wise multiple regression analysis with this same data, it was shown that 54% of the variation in participants' intentions to remain employed was explained by professional commitment (a dimension of human caring), job stress (a dimension of work morale), organizational structure (a dimension of general job satisfaction), professional support, and external relations (both dimensions of work morale) (Ellett et al., 2003).

The qualitative portion of this study (Ellett et al., 2003) involved guided focus group interviews in which participants were asked to discuss both personal and organizational characteristics affecting retention and turnover in the agency. It was found that factors such as inadequate salaries, promotional opportunities, client resources, office equipment, training and mentoring, along with unmanageable caseload sizes and paperwork requirements, and the agency's practice of not valuing employees were organizational factors that affected turnover. Personal factors affecting turnover included the intrusion of the job into workers' personal lives, fear of legal liabilities, frustration and feelings of being overwhelmed, and participants' perceptions that they were not valued by the employing agency. Organizational factors found to affect retention of employees included job security, flexible hours within the job, variety and challenge in the work conducted, and support of supervisors and coworkers. A commitment to child welfare and helping others, flexibility, organizational and time management skills, sense of humor, and self-efficacy were cited as personal factors affecting retention (Ellett et al., 2003).

Samantrai (1992) conducted a qualitative study of twenty-seven child protective service workers, all of whom had an MSW and were working or had worked in a California child protective service office. Participants in the two groups (those still employed and those who had left the job) were demographically similar. Data were collected through individual semi-

structured interviews using questions about why the person had stayed in child welfare employment or why the person had left as well as questions about working conditions in the agency. There were many similarities in the data provided by both groups. All participants felt salary and benefits provided by the agency to be reasonable. Participants in both groups reported feelings of aloneness because they had no one to talk with about the extremely stressful work they were doing. Concerns about the physical danger involved in the work, poor public image of public child welfare agencies, and issues of legal liability were discussed by both groups. All participants expressed both despair and outrage that the caseload sizes were unmanageable and that the paperwork requirements of the job were unreasonable (for example, workers were required to complete application forms for funding that had been discontinued). They also all talked about feeling more like secretaries than social workers due to the excessive amount of paperwork required by the job. All participants expressed problems with role conflict in the job, stating that overtly they were told that clients and families were the top priority of the agency, but in reality, administrative duties were given priority over working with families (Samantrai, 1992).

Differences found between the two groups in Samantrai's study seem to indicate certain variables enable some employees to stay in child welfare employment while others leave. Those employees who stayed were often single parents who felt trapped in the job due to family responsibilities and were angry, cynical, and callous about the job. Other employees who had chosen to stay in public child welfare employment had two things in common, supportive supervisors and flexibility within the job. Many employees who stayed were able to move from one unit within the agency to another, take extended time off the job, work part-time, or find diversity in job assignments. Supportive supervisors were described as those who were caring,

helpful, sympathetic, and treated workers like professionals. The two factors that appeared to be most influential in workers decisions to leave the job were lack of job flexibility and lack of support from supervisors. Participants said that as long as their supervisor was supportive, they were able to tolerate all other working conditions. But if a worker's supervisor was critical, unsupportive, and uncaring, the poor working conditions quickly became intolerable. The other primary reason participants left the job was a lack alternatives available within the agency when they became burned out in their job (Samantrai, 1992).

In an attempt to ascertain the nature of the relationship between burnout and job exit in child welfare employees Drake and Yadama (1996) used structural equation modeling. A 77% response rate yielded a random sample of 177 Missouri Division of Family Services employees. Each study participant completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which measures three subconstructs: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The researchers believed the three dimensions of burnout of this measure would only explain a moderate amount of the variance in job exit due to the fact that a decision to leave a job involves multiple factors including job satisfaction, role conflict and ambiguity, health, relocation of spouse's employment, salary, and the availability of other work. A revised version of the MBI was used in this study with four items removed due to redundancy and low squared multiple correlations based on the results of confirmatory factor analysis previously conducted by the researchers (Drake & Yadama, 1996; Yadama & Drake, 1995). The MBI has been shown to have good reliability and construct validity. The reliabilities of data collected for the three constructs of the MBI in this study were .89 (emotional exhaustion), .79 (depersonalization) and .74 (personal accomplishment). The average variance explained by each of the three constructs were 53% (emotional exhaustion), 45% (depersonalization) and 33% (personal accomplishment). The



structural equation model indicated a positive direct effect from emotional exhaustion to job exit, the effects between depersonalization and personal accomplishment and job exit were in their expected directions (negatively and positively respectively), but were not statistically significant. Eighty percent of the variance in job exit was explained by the model. Squared multiple correlation found personal accomplishment to explain 14% of the variance in emotional exhaustion, in addition depersonalization explained 33% of the variance in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. An unfortunate implication of their failing to find a significant link between depersonalization and job exit is that workers who feel depersonalized, and therefore less able to serve clients effectively, may remain in the job. This study also found that 14% of the variance in emotional exhaustion is explained by personal accomplishment and 30% of the variance in depersonalization is explained by personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion. This implies that since personal achievement affects emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, agencies might possibly reduce burnout and job exit by increasing feelings of success and achievement for workers through recognition of accomplishments. This study did suffer from a limitation which is important to note. The sample size of 177 subjects was very low for use with structural equation modeling (Drake & Yadama, 1996).

Rycraft (1994) conducted a qualitative study involving focused interviews using a 54 question interview guide with a random sample (n=23) of child welfare employees stratified by job assignment. All participants had been employed in a public child welfare office for at least two years and were assigned a direct service caseload. Sixty-one percent of the sample held social work degrees (8 MSW degrees and 6 BSW degrees). Content analysis and the constant comparative method used to analyze data collected in the interviews identified four factors that influence retention of these public child welfare employees: mission defined as an employee's

sense of commitment to and belief in the importance of public child welfare work; goodness of fit which refers to “the degree of suitability and flexibility in job assignments” (p. 76); supervision, specifically the importance workers placed on receiving support from supervisors; and investment including the investments workers made in relationships with colleagues, investments in the agency which had lead to tenure and a good professional reputation, investment in the social work profession, and a lack of available opportunities for other employment with similar benefits (Rycraft, 1994).

### *Measuring Intentions to Remain Employed in Child Welfare*

There have been many studies of child welfare workforce issues that focus on turnover and burnout (Aber, 1983; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Fryer, Miyoshi, & Thomas, 1989; Harrison, 1995; Jayaratne & Chess, 1986; Kern, McFadden, Baumann, & Law, 1993; Liederman, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Samantrai, 1992; Scully, 1983; Tett & Meyer, 1993). According to Ellett (2000), it may be much more important, and more helpful, to focus child welfare workforce studies on employee retention instead. Although it is intuitively appealing to assume that turnover and retention are *opposites sides of the same coin*, to the contrary, they are not polar opposites of one another. For example, those who remain in child welfare employment do so despite experiencing the same issues and stressors (high caseloads, low salaries, etc.) that are often cited as motivating factors for departure by child welfare employees who leave the job.

Studying employees’ intentions to remain is assumed to be the best proxy measure of actual staying in the job behavior, just as employees’ intentions to leave employment are excellent proxy measures and the best predictors of actual turnover (Mor Borak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001; Steel and Ovalle, 1984; Tett and Meyer, 1993). Ellett created the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare (IRE) measure to serve as a proxy measure of actual staying

behavior. The IRE provides a measure of employees' determination to persist and remain in child welfare employment "because the career benefits centered on professional growth and self-actualization, professional purpose and mission, professional needs gratification, and importance of their work, are valued more than other job factors such as financial incentives, characteristics of the general work environment and associated work tensions and frustrations" (Ellett, 2000, pp. 26-27).

The Intent to Remain Employed –Child Welfare measure has been used with in several recent large, statewide studies examining personal characteristics (human caring, self-efficacy beliefs, and job satisfaction) and organizational factors (professional organizational culture, work morale, and collective efficacy) related to employees intention to remain employed (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005). In all of these studies, the Alpha coefficient of the IRE has been robust, ranging from .85 to .90). Furthermore, IRE was found to be a strong predictor of professional commitment, an element of human caring (Ellis, 2005), professional organizational culture, self-efficacy beliefs, and work morale (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003).

The Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare is the only known measure of child welfare employees' intent to remain in the job. Thus it was used in this study as the proxy measure of subjects' intentions to continue child welfare employment.

#### *Impact of Organizational Culture on Turnover and Retention*

In the following section, a review of several studies is offered to document the relationship between organizational culture and staff outcomes. This begins with a study completed with a large group of educators, which contains several organizational culture implications. Next a study completed in a large government agency is discussed and finally a

study investigating burnout in social workers is reviewed. These empirical investigations offer insight into how important organizational culture can be for employees in any organization.

Ma and MacMillan (1999) conducted a study of 2,202 teachers to assess how workplace conditions, such as organizational culture and administrative control, affect job satisfaction, hypothesizing that job satisfaction is an indicator of whether employees will be strongly connected to an employing organization, “merely comply with directives” (p. 39), or leave the job altogether. The study focused on three aspects the researcher believed would affect job satisfaction: teaching competence, administrative control, and organizational culture. The factors in the category of administrative control that were found to be related to increased commitment to the job were participants’ feelings of being valued and appreciated for their work, their “perception of meaningful, organizational involvement” (p. 40) in the operation of the organization, and a minimal amount of “administrivia” (defined as unwarranted paperwork which was not seen as being directly connected to teaching). The organizational culture factors found to be associated with increased job commitment were those that promote professional involvement, collegiality, and collaboration. The study found that “cultures of isolation” contributed to dissatisfaction and a decrease in confidence in participants’ professional competence. Using three measures of workplace conditions, one each of teaching competence, administrative control, and organizational culture, as well as data gathered regarding job satisfaction and a multiple regression approach to statistical analysis, four models were tested in this study. Based on the results the authors concluded that all three components of workplace conditions were statistically significant with administration control being the most important, followed by teaching competence and organizational culture. Interestingly, it was found that male teachers’ feelings of commitment and job satisfaction were more heavily influenced by the

organizational culture than were female teachers' level of commitment and job satisfaction. The study findings also indicated that within similar organizational cultures, participants who had been employed for longer periods of time were less satisfied than were newer employees and that participants who perceived they had a good relationship with the administration of their school were significantly more satisfied with their job than those who perceived a poor relationship with the school's administrators (Ma & MacMillan, 1999).

A study completed by Johnson and McIntye (1998) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational culture and organizational climate using a sample of 8,126 employees in a government service agency that provided supplies and services to the federal government. The measures used in this study included the Quality Culture and Organization Climate Survey, a 90 item scale using 7 point agreement style answer choices with a "don't know" answer option. The Quality Culture portion of the measure provides an indication of employees' perceptions of the extent to which quality improvement practices and principles are being implemented in the organization and the extent to which superior management practices are being integrated into the manner in which business is conducted in the organization. The organizational culture portion of the survey consisted of forty items, that make up nine dimensions of organizational culture. The organizational climate portion of the survey measures aspects of the work environment, that provide for superior management principles and practices. This portion of the survey consisted of forty-six items along ten dimensions. The remaining four items of this measure were demographic questions (Johnson & McIntye, 1998).

In this study internal reliability for data collected was found to be good for all portions of the survey with coefficient alphas ranging from .86 to .96. Validity of the instrument was not discussed by the authors. All nineteen dimensions of organizational culture and organization

climate measured were significantly correlated with the measure of job satisfaction used in the study. Job satisfaction was found to be most strongly correlated with the two dimensions of empowerment and involvement, and recognition on the organizational culture measure, and with dimensions of communication, goals, creativity and innovation, and decision making on the organization climate measure. Results of this study found that those participants with the highest job satisfaction also reported they received beneficial job-related feedback; were provided with career development assistance; were presented with fair recognition of job performance; felt empowered to make decisions regarding job duties; were adequately informed on issues that affect them and their jobs; were encouraged to be creative; and were involved in making decisions and setting goals for the organization. This study suggests that employees should be given more autonomy, should be provided with the authority to make decisions related to their jobs, and should be provided with additional inclusion in planning, setting goals, and making decisions in the organization. Furthermore, the study indicated that “employees should be held accountable for and consistently awarded for achieving performance goals” (Johnson & McIntye, 1998, p. 849). These implications are especially important considering that “organizational practices that maximize job satisfaction will likely enhance employees’ services to customers, and their commitment and willingness to contribute to the organization’s business success” (Johnson & McIntye, 1998, p. 849).

Arches (1991) conducted a study of 275 social workers practicing in Massachusetts, most worked in direct practice agency settings, 40% worked in the public sector, 40% in private non-profit agencies, and 20% in private for-profit organizations. Participants provided demographic information and completed several surveys including the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the Job Description Index, and measures of autonomy, control exerted by funding sources, organization

size, and a measure of bureaucratization consisting of indices of formalization, centralization, and routinization. Two hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted with the first of these explaining 28% of the variance in burnout with perception of autonomy and influence of funding sources being significant. The second regression model explained 38% of the variance in job satisfaction with only perception of autonomy and the bureaucratization measure being statistically significant. These findings indicated that social workers in tight bureaucracies are not allowed to use the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained through professional education and development. Arches stated, "Bureaucracies, because of their rigid lines of decision making and authority, undermine professional concepts of morality and confront the worker with ethical dilemmas which he or she has little control." This study implies that social workers in highly bureaucratized agencies, such as child protective service agencies, are likely to exhibit low levels of job satisfaction (Arches, 1991, p. 205).

The previous section summarized several studies that draw attention to the importance of organizational culture in various work settings. The following section provides a detailed explanation of organizational culture. Included in the section is a brief history of organizational studies; several of the most prevalent definitions of organizational culture; an explanation of the three generally viewed levels of organizational culture; a review of two perspectives that can be used for examining organizational culture; a comparison between organizational culture and organizational climate; an examination of how organizational culture is generally measured and studied; and finally a review of several empirical investigations of organizational culture.

## Organizational Culture

### *The History of Organizational Studies*

Formal organizational studies began in the late eighteenth century and are said to be rooted in the industrial revolution of the 1700s. An organizational school of thought termed the classical perspective dominated organizational studies until the 1930s. According to the classical perspective, organizations could be compared to machines and should be organized in such a manner that the “machine” would run as smoothly as possible. The classical school of thought believed that through scientific study, specialization, and division of labor, one could determine the optimum manner by which to run any organization. There was also a strong belief in this school that authority and power were held in a position. Chester I. Bernard, a well known classical organizational theorist, stated that the most important thing a chief executive could do for an organization would be to “establish and communicate a system of organizational values among organization members” (Ott, 1989; p. 149).

The next school of thought to come out of organizational studies was labeled Neoclassical. This was a transitional perspective that laid the groundwork for future theorists. The primary premise of the neoclassic perspective was to challenge the classical theorists, but it did so without sufficiently offering a replacement perspective. This school of thought served primarily as an “anti-school” reactionary to the classical perspective. The primary contributor to the neoclassic theory was Herbert A. Simon. Ott argued that “the organizational culture perspective originated in neoclassical organization theory, particularly in the works of Elliott Jaques and Philip Selznick” (Ott, 1989, p. 150). In fact the first time the word culture was used in a piece of work published on organization studies, it was in *The Changing Culture of a Factory* by Jaques (Elsmore, 2001; Ott, 1989). In this work Jaques defined the culture of a



factory as its customary and traditional way of thinking and doing things, which is shared to a greater or lesser degree by all its members, and which new members must learn, and at least partially accept, in order to be accepted into service in the firm. ...Culture is part of second nature to those who have been with the firm for sometime. Ignorance of culture marks out the newcomers, while maladjusted members are recognized as those who reject or are otherwise unable to use the culture of the firm. In short, the making of relationships requires the taking up of roles within a social structure; the quality of these relationships is governed by the extent to which the individuals concerned have each absorbed the culture of the organization so as to be able to operate within the same general code. The culture of the factory consists of the means or techniques which lie at the disposal of the individual for handling his relationships, and on which he depends for making his way among, and with, other members and groups. (Jaques, 1952, p. 251)

Three organizational perspectives came out of the neoclassical school of thought: the “modern” structural school, the human relations school, and the power school. The organizational culture perspective evolved out of the human relations and power perspectives of organizational studies (Ott, 1989).

### *Defining Organizational Culture*

#### *Definitions provided by leading organizational culture theorists*

There is not any one widely accepted, universally agreed upon definition of organizational culture (Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Elsmore, 2001; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990; Ott, 1989; Pedersen & Sorensen, 1989; Petty, Beadles, Lowery, Chapman, & Connell, 1995; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992); in fact, organizational culture is often considered to be very difficult to define theoretically.

Schneider stated in *Organizational Climate and Culture* that he has “sometimes heard people refer to the problem of defining climate and culture as trying to nail Jell-O to the wall!”

(Schneider, 1990, p. 1). Petty et al. (1995) also address the difficulty in defining organizational culture citing that the concept is borrowed from anthropology and used by researchers applying and defining it differentially, noting furthermore that the “precise nature of the construct” is not even agreed upon (Petty et al., 1995, p. 484). However, there are a few themes common to all or most all definitions of organizational culture. Generally the definition of organizational culture does include systems of meanings, values, norms, myths and routines, and basic assumptions that are shared by members of the organization (Pedersen & Sorensen, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990). Following is an explication of several of the definitions that have been provided by many of the seminal theorists in organizational culture studies.

Edgar Schein (1992), arguably the most prominent researcher and theorists in organizational culture studies, stated that “the most useful way to think about culture is to view it as the accumulated shared learning of a given group, covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements of the group members’ total psychological functioning. For shared learning to occur, there must be a history of shared experience, which in turn implies some stability of membership in the group. Given such stability and a shared history, the human need for parsimony, consistency, and meaning will cause the various shared elements to form into patterns that eventually can be called a culture” (p. 10). Schein goes on to define formally the culture of a group as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has 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, 1992, p. 10; Trompenaars & Hampden-

Turner, 1998). Schein believed culture is a “deep phenomenon, merely manifested in a variety of behaviors” (Schein, 1986, p. 30).

Ott defined organizational culture as something “that exists in an organization, something akin to societal culture. It is made up of such things as values, beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, behavioral norms, artifacts, and patterns of behavior. It is a socially constructed, unseen, and unobservable force behind organizational activities. It is a social energy that moves organization members to act. It is a unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization for organization members. It functions as an organizational control mechanism, informally approving or prohibiting behaviors” (Ott, 1989, p. 50).

Collapsing similarities found in many definitions of organizational culture Reichers and Schneider (1990) stated that organizational culture is “a common set of shared meanings or understandings about the organization and its problems, goals, and practices” (p. 23). Schneider, Brief, and Guzzo suggested that using an anthropological method of viewing culture, one should ask what an organization’s members worship, e.g. routine, innovation, quality of services, etc. “What an organization’s members believe and what they believe their organization *values* ...these beliefs and values constitute the organization’s culture” (1996, p. 9).

Childress and Senn (1999) referred to organizational culture as “the personality of the organization, the shared beliefs, and the written and unwritten policies and procedures that determine the ways in which the organization and its people behave and solve business problems. Culture provides meaning, direction, and clarity (the human glue) that mobilizes the collective energy of a corporation toward goals and accomplishments” (p. 52). They clarified that organizational culture consists of shared values, the things the organization’s members think are important; beliefs, the way members think things should be done; behaviors, the habitual

patterns found within the organization; heroes, the people who personify the culture of the organization; and systems, both written and implicit policies and procedures (Childress & Senn, 1999).

Alvesson and Berg (1992) point out that organizational culture “can be said to contain two basic and partially conflicting meanings: one stabilizing-regulatory, i.e. as an important element in social control, and one evolutionary, i.e. as the driving force behind (social) development” (p. 76). Then they stated that the concept of organizational culture is used “as an overall label for a number of cultural phenomena in an organization” which may be “grouped into four categories: culture as a collective entity, artifacts, collective mental frameworks, and collective action patterns” (Alvesson & Berg, 1992, p. 78). Cooke and Rousseau(1998) defined organizational culture as “the shared beliefs and values guiding the thinking and behavioral styles of organization members” (p. 245) or “the ways of thinking, behaving, and believing that members of a social unit have in common” (p. 248).

But of all the definitions that have been provided of organizational culture, perhaps the simplest is the one provided by Deal and Kennedy (1982). They simply stated that organizational culture is “the way we do things around here” (p. 4).

### *Three Levels of Organizational Culture*

According to Schein (1992), organizational culture consists of three levels: artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. Similarly, Ott (1989) broke culture into what he calls 3 ½ levels: level 1A being artifacts, level 1B Ott defines as patterns of behavior; Ott’s levels 2 and 3 were the same as Schein’s: values and underlying assumptions. In the following section, these will be defined and examples provided of each of these levels of organizational culture.

### *Artifacts*

Artifacts are the easiest parts of organizational culture to identify; they are easily observable, accessible, and can be much more readily identified than other, less tangible levels of organizational culture. Although the artifacts do provide clues and information about those more ethereal levels of culture, it is not wise to rely on the artifacts to infer the beliefs, values, and underlying assumptions of an organization. Artifacts are considered to be difficult to decipher and one can easily misinterpret the clues provided by the artifacts when attempting to use them to deduce information about other layers of organizational culture (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). Included in the artifacts are all patterns and objects, material and nonmaterial, that convey information about an organization's values, beliefs, and assumptions. The information conveyed about the organization by the artifacts is usually intentional, but some information can be communicated unintentionally by artifacts as well. Examples of artifacts include, but are not limited to documents, equipment, buildings, physical layouts and arrangements, furnishings, patterns of dress and dress codes, company cars, ceremonies, and celebrations (Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Schein, 1992).

The language and jargon used in an organization is also considered to be an artifact and is used to both identify members from nonmembers and to communicate effectively and efficiently within the organization. Therefore it is of utmost importance that all organization members learn the language inherent in the organization in order to get along in the organization. "Language is both a product of the culture and a maintainer and transmitter of it" (Ott, 1989, p. 28). Language includes jargon, metaphors, myths, stories, organization scripts, and sagas and legends (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992).

As stated earlier, Ott (1989) defined patterns of behavior as the second part of the first level of organizational culture, referring to patterns of behavior as level 1B. According to Ott, patterns of behavior include rites, rituals, and behavioral norms. Although not all researchers agree on the definitions of ceremonies, rites, and rituals (Alvesson & Berg, 1992), Ott stated, that ceremonies are deliberate celebrations of the organization's values and underlying assumptions, differentially, rites and rituals can be more closely compared to habits, but these habits do have roots in the values and underlying assumptions of the organization. Rites and rituals are more mundane than are celebrations and appear to outsiders as systematic and routine part of daily life in an organization. They provide organization members "with security, establish meaning and identity within organizations, and function as mechanisms of control" (Ott, 1989, p. 36).

Regarding the behavioral norms, Ott noted that they are "so pivotal to organizational culture" (p. 37) that some researchers go so far as to define behavioral norms *as* organizational culture.

Behavioral norms, also called collective action patterns (Alvesson & Berg, 1992), are behavioral instructions or blueprints that inform organizational members about the correct and acceptable manner to act in every social context. Behavioral norms dictate which behaviors, and even what language and speech, are expected for each specific role a person in the organization may take on. Since these patterns of behavior deal only with overt behaviors, they may or may not reflect the actual beliefs, values, and underlying assumptions held by the organization. Ott called these behavioral norms "sea anchors, providing predictability and stability" (Ott, 1989, p. 37) and noted that although behavioral norms are of utmost importance, they are not organizational culture itself. Behavioral norms are in a sense behavioral artifacts that have evolved from the culture of the organization and contribute to maintaining the organizational culture (Ott, 1989). Behavioral norms contain a "high symbolic content" and due to this, the

manner in which many things are conducted within an organization may be more important to the organizational culture than the actual functional output of those actions (Alvesson & Berg, 1992, p. 83).

### *Values*

The second level of organizational culture is referred to as espoused values or shared beliefs or simply as beliefs and values (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992); this level also includes such things as shared assumptions, attitudes, moral codes, and ideologies (Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). Often times the words values and beliefs are used interchangeably, but there are differences between the two. Values are more conscious than beliefs. Values are driven by affect, emotion; they are the wants, desires, and wishes of organization members. Values are those things that members of the organization consider to be important to them. Values differentiate what should from what should not be done or be acceptable within an organization. Beliefs on the other hand constitute what organization members consider to be true or untrue, those things that are realities. These shared values and beliefs afford organization members reasons and justifications for their behaviors and a means of sensemaking and reality interpretation. Espoused values are the rules of the game that any organization member will tell you everyone in the organization goes by, even if the rules established by the values are not always followed in actual practice (James, James, & Ashe, 1990; Schein, 1992).

Although many researchers define the values of an organization as its culture, this practice can be misleading (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). Values, this level of organizational culture, can be used to “predict well enough what people will *say* in a variety of situations but which may be out of line with what they will actually *do* in situations where those values should, in fact, be operating” (Schein, 1992, p. 21). Therefore, when analyzing values on this level of

culture, it is important to inquire as to whether those espoused values are congruent with the beliefs held on higher levels of culture (Schein, 1992).

Schein discussed the formation of these shared values and beliefs, explaining that in the beginning, the value that comes to be shared is that of only one individual group member. Over time, when others perceive the value(s) used by prominent group members or leaders are effective and correct, a process of cognitive transformation occurs and those once individual values and beliefs come to be shared values and beliefs, which all group members agree upon. And then over the course of more time, those shared values and beliefs eventually become shared assumptions, but only the values and beliefs that are continually and reliably effective in solving the group's problems will become shared assumptions (Schein, 1992).

#### *Basic Underlying Assumptions*

Basic underlying assumptions are considered to be the deepest level of organizational culture (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). The distinction that must be made between values and beliefs and underlying assumptions is an important one in organizational culture. Beliefs and values are at the surface of organization members consciousness, people are fully aware and cognizant of their values and beliefs. These can be easily identified by any organization member. Underlying assumptions on the other hand are not within organization member's consciousness, but rather have dropped out of awareness and moved into the preconscious (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). Beliefs and values are what organization members will tell you are at work in making decisions and determining actions. Basic underlying assumptions, however, are actually what people believe; they actually determine behaviors and actions whether people are aware of them or not (Ott, 1989). Basic underlying assumptions are so ingrained in each person's belief and value system that they are under the surface, not discussed, taken for granted. These basic underlying



assumptions are never questioned by group members and are so ingrained that members of the organization will deem behaviors based on other premises to be utterly inconceivable. All organization members usually hold these in common. Underlying assumptions gain power from the fact that they operate outside of awareness. Once these assumptions have developed they become completely taken for granted; they become a “defining property of the group” (Schein, 1992, p. 12). Underlying assumptions then allow the group members to differentiate themselves from members of other groups. Eventually value comes to be attached to the assumptions. There are very high levels of anxiety when someone does question or tries to change these underlying assumption (Schein, 1992). In fact, according to Schein (1992), it is not until a group has enough shared history to have formed underlying shared assumptions that the group can be said to have a culture.

#### *Ten Categories of Overt Phenomena That Make Up Organizational Culture*

According to Schein (1992) organizational culture can be broken down into ten major categories of overt phenomena. These are 1) the observable behavioral regularities that occur when people interact including language, customs, traditions and rituals; 2) group norms which are implicit standards and values; 3) espoused values that are the overtly expressed, public philosophies and values the group declares as its goals; 4) the formal philosophy that includes ideological principles and policies that guide organizational members’ behaviors toward everyone from stockholders and employees to customers and other stakeholders; 5) the implicit rules of the game organization members must know to get along in the organization or simply the way things are done in the organization; 6) climate that includes feelings conveyed by the physical space of an organization and the ways in which group members interact with one another, customers, and other outsiders; 7) embedded skills that include the special expertise

needed to accomplish tasks and abilities which are passed on from one generation to the next without being articulated in writing; 8) the mental models or habits of thinking, and linguistic paradigms, including shared cognitive frames, taught to all new organization members early during the process of socialization and are used to guide language, thoughts and perceptions; 9) shared meanings that can be defined as emergent understandings formed by the organization's members as they interact with one another; and 10) the root metaphors or integrating symbols that include ideas, thoughts, feelings, even images the organization members form to characterize themselves, embodied in the artifacts and reflecting the emotional, as opposed to cognitive response (Schein, 1992).

#### *Two Perspectives for Viewing Organizational Culture*

Within the organizational culture research, there are two camps with opposing views of organizational culture. Some see the culture of an organization in an overt fashion as something an organization *is*; while others view organizational culture as an underlying force, something an organization *has*. Those in the first camp tend to think of culture as very resistant to any change, considering the culture of an organization as the organization's system of underlying, unconscious, difficult to access assumptions and beliefs (Petty et al., 1995). Those using this perspective tend to conduct qualitative, exploratory research from an emic perspective (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). Those in the opposing camp, who view organizational culture as something an organization *has*, think of organizational culture as a malleable, changeable phenomenon, which includes the systems of values and beliefs shared by organization members; the ways an organization develops strategies, rules, goals, markets and products; and the manner in which the organization measures progress and success. Research conducted by persons using this

perspective tends to examine the causes and effects of the organization's culture and is similar to research into the concept of organizational climate (Reichers & Schneider, 1990).

#### *Differentiating Organizational Climate from Organizational Culture*

Some argue that organizational culture and organizational climate are very different, but related constructs (Ott, 1989) , while others (Denison, 1996; van Muijen et al., 1999) argue that organizational culture and organizational climate are actually the same phenomenon and the only differences between the two lie in interpretation. Those who believe organizational culture and organizational climate are different concepts argue that they are not identical or even almost identical, but that there is significant overlap between the two. This "overlap" becomes especially clear when organizational culture and organizational climate are viewed as "reciprocal processes, the one causing the other in an endless cycle over time. In this manner, climate is both the manifestation of culture and the data on which culture comes to be inferred and understood" (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p. 24). The two constructs are interconnected; the values and beliefs employees hold within an organization (organizational culture) directly influence the interpretations those employees make about organizational practices, policies, and procedures (organizational climate) (Schneider, Brief, & Guzzo, 1996).

#### *Defining Organizational Climate*

Organizational climate can be just as difficult to define as organizational culture; in fact, like organizational culture, there is not any one widely accepted definition of organizational climate (Ott, 1989). Organizational climate has been defined as the "shared perception of 'the way things are around here'" (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p. 22), and the attitudes employees collectively possess regarding their work environment (Bednar, 2003). Ott (1989) defined organizational climate as an "amalgamation of feelings, tones, or a transient organizational

mood” (p. 47). Organizational climate, which can be traced back to Lewin’s experiments regarding social climates (Denison, 1996), is a concept closely related to psychological climate. Psychological climate is an individual’s perception of the impact that person’s work environment has on his or her own psychological well-being, the extent to which that work environment is beneficial or detrimental to him or her (Glisson & James, 2002; James & James, 1989). Therefore, organization climate is the aggregation found when many persons within a work environment agree on their perceptions of that work environment (Glisson & James, 2002). Organizational climate is the shared perceptions organization members hold concerning organizational structure, practices, procedures, policies, both formal and informal, and behaviors, which will be rewarded or punished within that organizational setting (James, James, & Ashe, 1990; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schneider, Brief, & Guzzo, 1996; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). In addition to climate being informed by multiple factors within an organization, many factors are affected by organizational climate as well including, job satisfaction, consumer satisfaction, and quality and outcomes of services provided (Bednar, 2003).

Many climates can exist simultaneously within one organization, therefore, organizational climate is used as a construct with a particular referent, such as a climate for service, climate for safety, climate for innovation, etc. (Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Climate is inferred by organizational members around two issues: how an organization conducts day to day business and the goals pursued by the organization. And it is said to have four dimensions, three functional dimensions and one dimension pertaining to goals. Those four dimensions are: 1. the nature of interpersonal relationships, 2. the nature of the hierarchy, 3. the nature of work, and 4. the focus of support and rewards (Schneider, Brief, & Guzzo, 1996).

### *Differences Between Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate*

Organizational “culture exists at a higher level of abstraction than climate, and climate is a manifestation of culture” (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p. 29; Schneider, 1990).

Organizational climate is a property of individuals, organizational culture is a property of the group (James, James, & Ashe, 1990). Organizational climate can be thought of as aggregates of psychological climate and describe the mean, median, and/or mode of the valuations held by individual members within the organization. Organizational climate reports simply the central tendency in the distribution of valuations about the organization (and its environmental attributes such as the policies, structure, and reward systems) using the individual as the frame of reference. Organizational culture on the other hand uses the overall organization or system as its frame of reference and is a “group-level construct, a product of social interactions among group members” (James, James, & Ashe, 1990, p. 76). Cooke and Rousseau (1998) stated that where organizational climate concerns individuals’ perceptions of “how it *feels* to be a member of the organization,” organizational culture is concerning the beliefs organization members hold about how to “*behave*” in the organization (p. 251). Organization climate can be described as the way a work environment is perceived, while organizational culture can be described as the way in which things are done in an organization (Glisson & James, 2002).

### *Similarities Among Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate*

Both organizational climate and organizational culture are concerned with the ways in which members of an organization interpret, make sense of, and come to understand their environment and surroundings. These attempts at sensemaking are “manifested as shared meanings that form the basis for action” (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p. 29). Both organizational climate and culture are learned by organization members through socialization

and symbolic interaction. Both are at the same time monolithic constructs and multidimensional ones. And finally, both are efforts to identify the organizational environment and the manner in which that environment affects the behaviors of organization members (Reichers & Schneider, 1990).

### *Measuring Organizational Culture*

There are many aspects to arguments regarding how to best measure organizational culture. Often hermeneutical methods, such as ethnographies, are used to investigate organizational culture with many researchers on this side of the polemic arguing that culture consists of the meanings people decipher from their environment, organization members' social construction of reality, therefore its study should focus on how people interpret their experiences, which cannot be done using quantitative measurements (Rousseau, 1990; Smircich, 1983; van Muijen et al., 1999). Schein even goes so far as to suggest that it is misleading and unethical to use quantitative measures of organizational culture because they use categories determined by the researcher that cannot possibly tap into the deep, out of awareness, basic underlying assumptions that make up organizational culture in his opinion and therefore very well could misinterpret the experiences of those persons in the organization (Schein, 1986). Those researchers who study organizational culture qualitatively view organizational culture as something an organization *is*. But there are two sides to this epistemological debate and many researchers do study organizational culture quantitatively.

The manner in which one measures organizational culture is somewhat dependent upon how the researcher defines organizational culture and which aspect(s) of organizational culture one wants to examine. For example, if organizational culture is defined as the artifacts found within an organization or if those artifacts are the dimension of interest, those can easily be

observed by any outsider who wishes to study them. It would be very easy for anyone to view the uniforms worn by an organization's employees, the furniture and equipment found within the organization, and the documents and tangible outputs produced by the organization. However, if it is behavioral norms one wants to examine, the employees of the organization might be recruited to assist in differentiating those behaviors which are acceptable from those which are not. Also if organizational culture is defined as the basic underlying assumptions that organization members are not even consciously aware of, examination must consist of more than typical ethnographic techniques and description, but must also include in-depth probing with both organization members and those outside the organization to delve into those deepest dimensions of organizational culture (Rousseau, 1990, p. 157). Other arguments for using solely qualitative methods of study of organizational culture center around the belief that each organization is unique and has its own unique organizational culture, which would make it impossible for an outsider to develop a priori questions and measurement instruments (Rousseau, 1990).

Those who study organizational culture quantitatively are examining culture as something an organization *has* (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). In order to acquire quantitative data regarding organizational culture, a priori identification of probable dimensions or factors, based on theory and prior research, is necessary (Rousseau, 1990). While qualitative measures of organizational culture are focused on identifying long-term manifestations of changes, making change difficult to see, the focus when quantitative measures are used becomes shorter-term, making changes more readily evident and easier to connect to outcomes relevant to the organization (Petty et al., 1995). Studies of the norms of organizational culture focus on the social behavioral expectations held by members of an organization, expectations that are based

on and come from the underlying values and shared assumptions held by members of the organization. Studies of the rituals, ceremonies, myths, and stories present in organizational culture are examinations of those visible reflections of the underlying beliefs and values (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991).

It has been argued that the strength of an organization's culture cannot be measured, but others believe that agreement between many members of an organization about the norms and values of that organization does define the organization's culture (O'Reilly et al., 1991). While some researchers believe that purely qualitative or solely quantitative measures should be used, others argue that multiple methods should be employed when studying organizational culture (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Trice & Beyer, 1993). There are several advantages of using quantitative methods of studying organizational culture such as the ability to conduct cross-sectional assessments and comparisons and the ability to replicate research studies (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988).

The deeper layers of organizational culture, underlying assumptions, cannot be measured quantitatively because they cannot be directly observed. The more visible outer layers, specifically behavioral expectations and norms, are available for examination using methods other than phenomenological ones. The outer layers are parallel to, and though less important to an in-depth understanding of organizational culture, they are critical to the functioning of an organization; they are used in transmitting and expressing the culture of an organization, possibly even more so than are the deeper, more hidden layers (Glisson & James, 2002).

#### *Key Attributes of Organizational Culture*

There are two key aspects of organizational culture that are instrumental in any assessment of it: direction and intensity. Direction is the content of the organizational culture,



the values, behavioral norms, assumptions, and artifacts of the organization (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p. 250). Intensity refers to the strength of this content or the degree to which organizational culture influences the organization members (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p. 250). The intensity of an organization's culture is a function of multiple factors including the extent of agreement among organization members about the content of the organization culture and the degree of connections between expectations, behaviors, and rewards and punishments (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988).

### *Empirical Investigations of Organizational Culture*

Several studies examining organizational culture have been conducted in various types of organizations. In the following section, a review of a few of these empirical investigations of organizational culture is offered, beginning with a study of organizational effectiveness then moving on to organizational culture studies in social service agencies and finally to three studies of organizational culture in child welfare agencies.

Hatton et al. (1999) conducted a study of five organizations in the UK which provide services for persons with disabilities. A sample of 450 participants (44% response rate) provided demographic and basic job information and completed several measures including, but not limited to, measures of: intent to leave, job search behavior, work satisfaction, commitment to the organization, coping strategies, general distress, job strain, social desirability, and the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP) (O'Reilly, et al, 1991), which consists of measures of both actual and ideal organizational culture. Principal Components Analysis was completed on the two 54-item OCP scales (real and ideal organizational culture) in an attempt to reduce the number of dimensions to nine. The nine dimensions identified were: tolerant/staff-oriented (including support), achievement oriented, innovative, analytical (attention to detail), social relationship (importance of encouraging good collegial relationships), rewarding staff, stable

work environment, demanding (demands the organization makes upon itself), and conflict management (ability to resolve conflicts). Cronbach alphas for all dimensions were between .50 and .94 and all but four over .70; mean inter-item correlations were all within or slightly above an acceptable range. The difference between real and ideal organizational culture scores was examined as an evaluation of person-organization fit. Using the OCP, little variation in organizational culture was found across employees in differing job levels within the same organization, indicating agreement throughout staff on the culture of an organization. Overall participants of this study considered the organizational cultures of their agencies to be high in achievement orientation and fostering social relationships and low in managing conflict and providing rewards while the ideal organizational culture would score high on rewarding staff, tolerant/staff oriented, and fostering social relationships and low on demands on staff (Hatton et al., 1999).

Participants generally rated the real culture of their organizations as being less than the ideal except for the demands dimension in which it was felt that the real organizational culture was better than the participants' ideal. In this study the greater the mismatch between an agency's real and ideal organizational cultures, the greater the employees experienced alienation from the organization, use of wishful thinking, job strain, intent to leave the agency, lowered moral commitment to the agency and decreased work satisfaction, supporting the theory of an association between poor person-organization fit, and negative outcomes for staff. The degree to which an organization was tolerant/staff oriented was found to effect the most staff outcomes. Other dimensions related to treatment of staff such as social relationships, rewarding staff, and conflict management were found to be related to commitment to the organization, work satisfaction, job strain, and intent to leave among other things. According to Hatton et al. (1990)

a mismatch between the organization and staff on dimensions of achievement-orientation and innovation were related to outcomes of intentions to leave, job strain, commitment to the agency, and job satisfaction. The findings of this study indicated that person-organization fit can be affected by multiple factors in the well-being of employees; therefore, good person-organization fit can lead to vast improvements in employees' morale. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggested that simply treating staff well is not enough to affect optimal well-being for employees, but for organization members to be highly motivated, value should be placed on achievement and innovation within the organization. It should be noted that the measure of organizational culture used in this study ( the OCP) was not designed for use in agencies that provide services for persons with disabilities and therefore important aspects of organizational culture in this service area may have been neglected. The study also did not address staff performance or quality of services provided (Hatton et al., 1999).

A study by Glisson and James (2002) was the first to examine simultaneously the effects of organizational culture and organizational climate with organizational characteristics such as structure. The model used depicts individual behaviors and attitudes as a function of organizational culture, organizational climate, and structure of the work environment. The study focused on case management teams in child welfare agencies and juvenile justice systems across a state-wide organization. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis provided evidence that organizational culture and organizational climate are two separate and distinct constructs. Hierarchical linear models analysis provided estimates of cross-level relationships linking organizational culture and organizational climate with individual attitudes and behaviors. Decreased turnover of staff was found to be related to teams with cultures that were more constructive than others (Glisson & James, 2002).

### *Instruments Created to Measure Organizational Culture*

The following section will examine several measures that have been created for measuring organizational culture and will explore the validity and reliability estimates of those scales. It is important to note that although there have been instruments designed for measuring organizational culture in other types of organizations, a similar method of measuring organizational culture in child welfare agencies is needed. “Comparative studies have shown that managers in organizations with different technologies or in different functional areas...tend to exhibit systematically different personal orientations. These differences can be attributed to the different structures, goal-orientations, technologies, and subenvironments characterizing these different functional areas as well as to differences in the thinking styles of individuals attracted to these specialties” (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p. 254).

Quantitative measurement instruments that have been created to assess organizational culture can be categorized into two types, typing and profiling. A typing style of survey classifies an organization into one of a given number of taxonomies. A profile survey provides a description of an organization’s culture. Profiling instruments can be further broken down into three categories: those that examine effectiveness, those that are purely descriptive, and those that examine the fit between the organization and those persons in the organization. All three of these profiling “approaches are based on a common notion that important characteristics of organizational culture can be viewed as properties comprising distinct variables that reflect measurable dimensions” (Ashkanasy, et al., 2000, p. 135).

There have been several instruments developed to quantitatively measure organizational culture, many of which are described in the following section. But unlike the measure developed in this study, none of these were created for use in child welfare agencies. Furthermore only two

(the Organizational Culture Profile and the Organizational Culture Inventory) “have been reported as reliable and possessing consensual, construct, and criterion validity” (Ashkanasy et al., 2000, p. 135).

The Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), developed by O’Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991), a Q-sort scale consisting of fifty-four value statements that subjects order from most desirable to least desirable, assesses person-organization fit. The Q-sort methodology “focuses on the salience and configuration of variables within a person rather than on the relative standing of persons across each variable” and requires a large number of items (O’Reilly et al., 1991, p. 490). The value statements in the OCP are used to assess the values that make up the culture of an organization and an individual’s preference for a set of values. Person-organization fit is then found by calculating the correlation between the organizational values and the values preferred by the person (O’Reilly et al., 1991).

Development of the OCP began with a review of organizational values and culture literature and an initial item pool of more than 110 items. Expert reviews eliminated poor and redundant items leading to a final scale consisting of fifty-four items. One hundred twenty-eight employees with extensive experience in eight accounting firms completed the OCP to provide profiles of the organizations for the study. Those profiles demonstrated high reliability, with alphas ranging from .84 to .90. When the OCP scores of different firms were correlated, it was found that the firms did demonstrate varying organizational cultures. When assessing an individual’s organizational culture preference, the instructions are changed from asking respondents to sort items based on the characteristics found in their organization to asking respondents to sort items based on their personal preferences. A person-organization fit score is then determined for each individual by calculating a correlation between the person’s preference

profile and the profile of the organization in which the person is employed. Further development of the OCP involved data collection and analysis from five groups of respondents: two groups of M.B.A. students totaling 224 subjects; a group of 171 new accountants; a group of 128 senior accountants; 96 certified public accountants; and 730 mid-level managers. The OCP was found to demonstrate good internal and test-retest reliability as well as convergent and discriminant validity (O'Reilly et al., 1991).

The Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI) was developed to measure the norms and behavioral expectations within an organization based on a circumplexial model of twelve interpersonal and task-related styles: humanistic-helpful, affiliative, approval, conventional, dependent, avoidance, oppositional, power, competitive, competence/perfectionistic, achievement and self-actualizing. These twelve styles were chosen for the scale to measure both direction and intensity of an organization's norms and expectations and is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all interpersonal and task-related styles that might be found in an organization (Ashkanasy et al., 2000; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Cooke & Szumal, 1993, 2000). The twelve interpersonal and task-related styles assessed by the OCI are each measured using ten items "describing behaviors that might be expected or implicitly required of members of an organization" using a five point likert-type scale (Cooke & Szumal, 1993, p. 1303).

After completing a review of the literature the researchers found that many of the existing measures did not have sufficient empirical or theoretical support. Therefore, a review of the dimensions of organizational culture in the existing literature was used to construct the twelve dimensions to be used in the OCI. Utilizing this method of choosing dimensions also diminished the problems of researcher bias and theoretical preference (Ashkanasy et al., 2000). The definition of organizational culture used by the researchers was "the ways of thinking, behaving,

and believing that members of a social unit have in common” (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p. 248). The inventory is meant to “assess the ways in which organizational members are *expected* to think and behave in relation both to their *tasks* and to other *people*” (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988, p. 252). In addition to assessing the actual cultures found in organizations, the OCI can be used to assess the type of organizational culture a specific individual prefers or believes to be an ideal organizational culture (Cooke & Szumal, 2000).

In order to validate the OCI, the survey was administered to 4,890 subjects in several different studies. These studies demonstrated adequate Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from .67 to .95 with an average alpha of .84; high interrater reliability; and acceptable test-retest reliability (Cooke & Szumal, 1993). The OCI has also demonstrated strong construct, predictive, concurrent and criterion-related validity (Ashkanasy et al., 2000; Cooke & Szumal, 1993). Petty et al. (1995) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and organizational performance. The researchers believed organizational effectiveness to be the most important variable to study with organizational culture. Using focus groups of employees in a firm to guide development of survey questions, the researchers conducted a quantitative study measuring the values held by employees and to determine the extent to which the values of the organization’s Vision Statement had been accepted by the employees of that organization. A fifty-five item survey reviewed by executives of the firm was administered to 3977 employees across the entire company. Principal Components Analysis identified four scales to measure culture: Teamwork (Cronbach alpha = .94), Trust and Credibility (.92), Performance and Common Goals (.88), and Organizational Functioning (.70) (Petty et al., 1995).

The final version of the survey was then “ administered to 832 employees in twelve [service] organizations of the focal company, a firm in the electric utility industry with

approximately 11,000 employees and operations in several states” (Petty et al., 1995, p. 487). One year later, the same survey was administered to 884 employees in the same twelve service organizations. The four organizational culture measures were scored for each participant individually and scale scores were calculated as the mean response of the item scores for each scale (with a possible score range from 1 to 6). Organizational performance data were collected for the two years using a quantitative measurement of five objective measures which the company was already using to measure performance. These five measures were operations, customer accounting, support services, marketing, and employee safety and health and all those scores were combined to obtain an overall score for each of the twelve organizations. Pearson correlations for variables for the twelve organizations at time one found summary performance significantly, positively related with teamwork, trust and credibility, and with performance/common goals, but not significant with organizational functioning. At time two only teamwork was found to be significant. Lagged correlations between organizational culture at time one and performance at time two found teamwork to be the only variable to be statistically significant and related to organizational performance. From this study, the researchers concluded that teamwork is conducive to organizational performance (Petty et al., 1995) with teamwork defined as including helping others, sharing information and resources, and working as a team (Petty et al., 1995).

Van Muijen et al (1999) as part of an international research group developed the FOCUS questionnaire, a quantitative measure of organizational culture to be used in European companies. The group defined organizational culture in “terms of core values, behavioral norms, artifacts, and behavioral patterns, which govern the ways people in an organization interact with each other and invest energy in their jobs and the organization at large” (van Muijen et al., 1999,



p. 555). The FOCUS questionnaire measures organizational culture by examining perceptions of descriptive and value-characteristics statements and is based on Quinn's competing values approach and on an organizational climate instrument developed by DeWitte and Cock. Quinn's competing values model allowed the researchers to assign a score to each organization based on the level of flexibility or rigidity the organization demonstrated in regard to four culture orientations: support, innovation, rules, and goal orientation.

In the process of developing the FOCUS, the research team began by formulating 250 items based on the competing values model, with half these items being descriptive items, measuring behaviors which are directly observable and the other half being value-characteristic items to measure perceptions of which behaviors are typical within the organization. These 250 items were reduced to 128 items which were evenly divided among the four culture orientations (support, innovation, rules, and goal orientation). This 128 item instrument was tested in a pilot study consisting of 884 respondents in 8 European countries. Factor analysis revealed that only two orientations, support and rules orientations, were measured satisfactorily. New items were developed for the other two orientations and a new total instrument was developed consisting of 40 descriptive and 35 value-characteristic items. The final version of the FOCUS questionnaire was then administered to 4400 employees in 61 organizations spread throughout 6 countries. The organizations varied from hospitals, to banks, food companies, government, and industry. Within each sector the measure was completed by top managers, middle managers and front line employees (van Muijen et al., 1999).

Because this measure was developed to be used internationally, Mokken analysis (van Muijen et al., 1999) was conducted to ensure instrument items had similar meanings and psychometric values in each different country in which it was administered. Those items which

did not meet criteria set by the research team were dropped from further analysis. Next all remaining items were tested for reliability with results indicating that coefficient alpha scores for the support, innovation, and goal scales were all reliable with scores above Nunnally's .70 criterion. The fourth dimension of the scale, rules orientation, was found to be reliable within each country individually, but only retained satisfactory reliability on three items when analyzed in all countries together. Hypothesizing that the scale was circumplex, partial correlation analyses were completed. Positive correlations were found between adjoining orientations (between rules and innovation and between goal and support orientations) while negative correlations were found between the diametrical dimensions of innovation and rules orientation. Aside from a higher than expected correlation between goals and support, this hypothesis was confirmed by the data analysis. While reliability of this scale is in the acceptable range, there are no reported studies of validity regarding the FOCUS scale (van Muijen et al., 1999).

In a study named the IRIC Organizational Culture Research Project, Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, and Sanders (1990) created the Organizational Culture Survey measure to examine practices and values within corporate organizations. The measure, containing 135 five-point likert type questions, was based on a scale created earlier to measure national cultures and on one hundred eighty qualitative interviews conducted with employees of the organizations to whom the Organizational Culture Survey was eventually administered. The practices portion of the survey was made up of two sections, one that examined heroes within the organization and another that examined symbols and rituals. Factor analysis revealed six dimensions in the practice portion of the survey. These were a process orientation versus a results orientation; an employee orientation versus a job orientation; parochial versus professional orientation; loose versus tight internal structuring; and normative versus pragmatic structuring of external

contracts. The values portion of the survey was found to be composed of three factors: a need for security; a need for authority; and work centrality. The researchers concluded, based on data collected from 1,295 subjects in twenty organizations, that practice norms are more important to an organization's culture than values. Reliability and validity of the Organizational Culture Survey were not reported (Hofstede et al., 1990; Hofstede, 2001).

Some instruments created to measure organizational culture, examine only a small, specific part of organizational culture. For example, Schriber and Gutek (1987) created the Time Dimensions Scales. The measure is a five point likert type scale to measure thirteen temporal dimensions of organizational culture in order to examine the norms held by organization employees regarding time (Schriber & Gutek, 1987). Van Vianen (2000) conducted a study investigating person-organization fit using a seven point likert type measure created to examine two dimensions of organizational culture: concern for people and concern for goal accomplishment. Hauser (1998) developed the Innovative Culture Questionnaire based on the belief that innovation within an organization is closely related to the culture of the organization. This five-point likert type instrument measures three dimensions of organization culture (structure, content, and strength) in order to determine the role culture plays in innovation within the organization (Hauser, 1998).

An example of a typing style of organizational culture measure is the Organizational-Type Inventory (OTI) (Kets de Vries, Miller, & Reagan, 1994). The OTI is a fifty-eight item measure that categorizes an organization's culture into one of five types: dramatic, suspicious, depressive, compulsive, or detached. However, the authors warn that "the Organizational-Type Inventory is designed for use as an action-research tool rather than as a rigorous data-gathering instrument" and has only face validity (Kets de Vries et al., 1994, p. 168).

*Studies of Organizational Culture in Child Welfare Agencies*

Ellett (2000) created a measure of organizational culture for use in public child welfare agencies, the Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire –Social Work (POCQ-SW), and has conducted two large-scale studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003) using this (and several other) measures. The POCQ-SW was based on the Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire (Bobbett, Olivier, Ellett, Rugutt, & Cavanagh, 1998) and consists of three dimensions: vision/leadership, collegial teaching and learning, and professional commitment. The first of these two studies included 946 public child welfare employees in the states of Louisiana and Arkansas. The second study was a statewide study of child welfare staff in Georgia with a final sample size of 1,423 Department of Family and Children’s Services employees in that state. In both of these studies participants completed not only the POCQ-SW, but also a number of other instruments including a measure of intent to remain employed in public child welfare. A primary goal of each study was to determine factors that affect retention and turnover in the public child welfare arena. There were significant differences in the versions of the POCQ-SW used in each of these two studies. Primarily in the first study, participants were asked to provide answers of both how they perceived the actual organizational culture in their agency and what they believed would be a preferred organizational culture. In the latter of these two studies, participants were asked only to rate the actual organizational culture of the agency with higher total scores on the instrument indicating a stronger professional organizational culture (Ellett, 2000, Ellett et al., 2003).

In the Arkansas-Louisiana study, Principal Components Analysis identified three factors consisting of 26 of the 34 items comprising the measure accounted for 55.6% of the variance in the intent to remain employed measure. The three factors were labeled Administrative Support,

Vision/Professionalism/Commitment, and Professional Sharing and Support. In this study it was found that actual organizational culture was lower than the participants' preferred organizational culture for every dimension of the POCQ-SW. Administrative support showed the greatest differences between actual and preferred ratings of culture. Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged from .80 to .92. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationship between the factors of organizational culture and participants' intentions to remain employed in public child welfare. Bivariate correlations were statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ) and were .34 between the Administrative Support factor of organizational culture and intent to remain employed, .25 between Professional Sharing and Support and intent to remain employed and finally, .26 between Vision/Professionalism/Commitment and intent to remain employed. In this study, which also included measures of human caring and self-efficacy beliefs, the Administrative Support dimension of organizational culture was shown to have the strongest relationship with participants' intentions to remain with their employing agency. Another finding of this study was that "the greater the congruence between employees' actual and preferred perceptions of the frequency and quality of administrative support, the stronger are the employee's expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare" (Ellett, 2000, p. 101).

The study conducted in Georgia, used the 26 item version of the POCQ-SW which, as stated earlier, used only a rating of actual organizational culture. Again, Principal Components Analysis was completed and the results identified three measurement dimensions: Collegial Sharing/Support, Quality of Professional Supervision/Leadership, and Professional Commitment. Cronbach alphas for the three dimensions of the measure ranged from .82 to .94. Bivariate correlations showed that all three dimensions of professional organizational culture were moderately and positively correlated with participants' intentions to remain employed in the

agency ( $p < .01$ ). Those participants who perceived the work environment as being more professional had stronger intentions to remain employed with the agency than those who viewed the organizational culture as being less professional. Using step-wise multiple regression analysis, all three dimensions were also shown to be statistically significant and positively correlated with a measure of job satisfaction, with correlations ( $r$ ) ranging from .26 to .45 (Ellett et al., 2003).

### Chapter Summary

As organizational culture has gained popularity and the ubiquitous nature of organizational culture has come to the forefront of researchers concerns, an increasing number of studies have been completed regarding organizational culture in a wide range of types of organizations from juvenile justice (Glisson & James, 2002) and child welfare (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Glisson & James, 2002) to dissertations, including one examining *Organizational culture and innovation in nonprofit human service organizations* (Jaskyte, 2002). There have been multiple instruments created to measure organizational culture in the past several years (Ellett, 2000; O'Reilly et al., 1991; Petty et al., 1995; van Muijen et al., 1999). And there have been numerous studies of the problems of retention and turnover in the child welfare workforce (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Reagh 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992). However, there is no known attempt to develop a comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare agencies. The Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire-Social Work is an excellent first step in this direction of understanding how professional dimensions of organizational culture relate to intent to remain employed in child welfare. But the POC-SW focuses on a singular element of organizational culture in child welfare, specifically professional organizational culture. Organizational culture in child welfare

agencies has many other dimensions as well that need to be measured and linked to employees' intentions to remain employed. Thus, this study was designed to add to the body of knowledge on organizational culture in child welfare by developing an expanded measure of organizational culture and examining the initial validity and reliability, and most importantly, its linkages to intent to remain employed in child welfare.

## CHAPTER 3

### CONCEPTUAL MODEL

This chapter presents the conceptual framework for this study. The chapter also examines the need for a method of studying organizational culture in child welfare agencies. Organizational theory is presented specifically focusing on the structure and context of organizations and how these can be used to conduct an organizational analysis as well as the importance of organizational culture in organizational analysis. The chapter concludes with a conceptual definition of organizational culture, the hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture used to create the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, and the conceptual model used to develop this new measure.

The previous chapter examined studies of child welfare workforce issues surrounding retention and turnover of employees, studies of organizational culture in agencies other than social service and child welfare agencies, and finally organizational culture studies in child welfare agencies. Although there is a measure of *professional organizational culture* (Ellett 2000; 2003) and there are comprehensive measures of organizational culture for use in other disciplines (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Hofstede et al., 1990; O'Reilly et al., 1991; Petty et al., 1995; van Muijen et al., 1999) noticeably absent from the literature is a comprehensive measure of organizational culture that is tailored for use in child welfare agencies. Studies using Ellett's (2000; 2003) Professional Organizational Culture Scale have shown adequate, initial reliability estimates, but the measure is limited in that it narrowly focuses on only one facet of organizational culture, the *professional* aspect of organizational culture. This gap in the



literature pointed to the need for the development of a more comprehensive measure of organizational culture.

### Organizational Theory

Organizational theory can be thought of as sociology at the organizational level (Daft, 2001). It is the study of “how organizations function and how they affect and are affected by the environment in which they operate” (Jones, 2004, p. 8). The study of organizations, organizational analysis, involves examining organizational structure, organizational culture, and organizational design and change, all the while using a macro perspective, viewing the entire organization as the unit of analysis (Jones, 2004).

### *Defining Organization*

Formal organizations as we know and understand them are a relatively new phenomenon, with large organizations having first been developed during the Industrial Revolution (Daft, 2001). The following section explicates what an organization is. An organization can be said to exist when a group of people coordinate their individual activities and actions in order to achieve a specified goal, which might not be attainable by those individuals working separately. “An organization is both a response to and a means of satisfying some human need” (Jones, 2004, p. 2). Furthermore, an organization is more than simply the buildings people work in and the policies they work under; an organization is the collection of people and their relationships with one another (Daft, 2001).

Organizations are defined as “social entities that are goal directed, are designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems, and are linked to the external environment” with identifiable boundaries (Daft, 2001, p. 12). As indicated by the first part of this definition, the most basic element of an organization is a group of people. An organization

cannot be understood simply through an examination of the people that comprise it. Those people make up a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Therefore, in order to study an organization, one must also examine the relationships among people within the organization (Daft, 2001; Ingram 1995).

Second, an organization must serve some purpose. Organizations are striving to achieve some agreed upon, specified goal(s). These goals serve as transmitters of the purpose of the organization, not only to outsiders, but also to the members of the organization. The goals of an organization also serve as the determinants of the activities and types of activities in which the members of the organization will be expected to engage (Daft, 2001; Ingram 1995). The third element of the above definition dictates that organizations are structured in very deliberate ways that coordinate activities, enforce rules and order, control lines of authority and communication, and determine everything from standards for rewards, punishments, hiring procedures, and salaries to product specifications and work practices (Daft, 2001; Hall, 1999; Ingram 1995). Finally, organizations will have boundaries that are clearly defined and identifiable. These boundaries are both social and physical in nature providing information about not only location of the organization, but information regarding membership of the organization as well. The information provided by boundaries regarding membership denotes not only those persons who are members of the organization, but also distinguishes those persons who are not members of the organization (Daft, 2001; Hall, 1999; Ingram 1995).

### *Importance of Organizations*

Many reasons can be given for the existence of organizations. Perhaps the primary reason formal organizations came into existence and continue to proliferate today is because many “people working together to produce goods and services usually can create more value

than people working separately” (Jones, 2004, p. 5). Organizations draw together resources which are then used to accomplish specific goals and produce chosen outcomes (Daft, 2001). People working together in an organization can produce goods and services more efficiently than those people could if working alone. This is done through the use of division of labor and job specialization (Daft, 2001; Jones, 2004). Organizations can facilitate and encourage innovation (Daft, 2001). Organizations can put modern manufacturing procedures and large scale technology to better use. An organization can adapt to, influence, and manage its external environment. Organizations create value for owners, members, and customers through economizing transaction costs. And finally, organizations can manage the many challenges of diversity and ethics as well as challenges of both coordinating and motivating employees by means of power and control (Daft, 2001; Jones, 2004).

### *Organizational Analysis*

Organizational analysis is a common method of studying organizations and involves examining the organization as a whole and the external influences on the organization. Organizational analysis consists of examining organizational structure, organizational culture, and organizational design (Jones, 2004). The following sections will describe many of the elements that would be examined in a typical organizational analysis in an effort to illuminate the importance of examining organizational culture.

### *Organizational Design*

Organizational design is a primary influence and determining factor for both organizational structure and organizational culture. Organization design and change can be manipulated to provide management of and exact change in an organization’s structure and culture. Organizational design is a process used to choose and manage the various elements of

organizational structure and organizational culture; it is the reason certain types of structures are chosen over others. Organizational change is simply a redesigning of the existing elements of an organization. Organizational design and change are very important in that these tools can be used to maximize the effectiveness, efficiency, and performance of an organization (Daft, 2001; Jones, 2004).

There are two core dimensions of organizational design: structural and contextual. The structural dimension includes issues of formalization (the level of written documentation required), specialization or division of labor, hierarchy of authority, professionalism, and personnel ratios (assignment of individuals to various duties and departments). The contextual dimension involves the size of the organization, the technology used, organizational goals and strategies, and finally organizational culture. These eleven dimensions are interdependent and establish a basis for the analysis of an organization according to Daft (2001).

### *Organizational Structure*

An organization's structure is visually represented in the organization chart (Daft, 2001, p. 86; Jones, 2004) and serves as "a blueprint for the pattern of expectations and exchanges among internal players and external constituencies. ...Structural form both enhances and constrains what organizations can accomplish" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 39). The basis of organizational structure is a system of interrelated roles found in an organization. The roles of individual members in an organization are defined by the task-related responsibilities each person is held accountable for and is expected to carry out. The primary purpose of organizational structure is to control the members of the organization, the manner in which members' activities are coordinated as well as the methods used to motivate organization members toward achieving the overall goals of the organization (Jones, 2004). The principle

focus of the structural perspective of organizational studies is that of creating patterns of roles and relationships that will effectively accomplish the goals set by the organization as a whole all the while allowing for individual differences among those people who are members of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The best or most appropriate structure for any organization is the one that will facilitate the most effective solutions to coordination and motivation issues and problems. As any organization grows and changes, its structure will also evolve. As stated earlier, the structure of an organization is manageable through the use of the processes of organizational design and change (Jones, 2004).

*Components of organizational structure.*

There are three primary components of an organization's structure. First, the structure of an organization explicates reporting relationships within the organization. This includes designating the number of levels in the hierarchy of the organization and the amount of control each hierarchical level is appropriated. Second, organizational structure groups the members of an organization into departments which make up the whole of the organization. And finally, the structure of an organization designates systems of communication, coordination, and integration across different departments to ensure effectiveness in these areas as is relevant to the achievement of the organization's established goals (Daft, 2001). The structure of an organization must provide for both vertical and horizontal flow of information as needed in order to reach the goals of the organization. Both of these are addressed in these three components of organizational structure. The first two of these components make up the structural framework which pertains to the vertical hierarchy found in the organization. The third of these components concerns the patterns of interactions among employees of the organization or the horizontal component (Daft, 2001).

*Organizational linkages.*

Linkage is the extent of coordination and communication encouraged and allowed between organizational members and departments. Vertical linkages coordinate and control activities between the lower levels of an organization's hierarchy and the top or upper levels of an organization's hierarchy. A variety of methods are used to attain vertical linkage, including but not limited to the hierarchical chain of command, policies and rules, and "formal management information systems" (Daft, 2001, p. 88). The horizontal linkages involve the extent of coordination, communication, and collaboration within and across different organizational departments or units. These horizontal links are not shown on organizational charts the way vertical links are, but are nonetheless very important to the functioning and structure of an organization. There is an "inherent tension" between the horizontal and the vertical components of an organization's structure (Daft, 2001, p. 87). The vertical links in an organization are designed to provide control whereas the horizontal links encourage coordination and collaboration between organization members which typically reduces control (Daft, 2001).

*Task differentiation.*

Differentiation refers to the process used to distribute tasks and authority to different organizational members and departments or units. Put more simply, differentiation is the creation and control of the division of labor found within an organization. The division of labor can range from very low in what are called simple organizations to a very high division of labor in more complex organizations. Differentiation, as with linkages, must be determined both horizontally and vertically. The vertical differentiation of an organization refers to the authority and reporting relationships assigned to each organizational role. Horizontal differentiation establishes the division of labor within the organization and refers to the grouping of the entire

organization into smaller subunits or departments. Integration is used in conjunction with differentiation to ensure that individual members' work is coordinated to work toward the overall goals of the organization. For an organization to be its most productive, the right balance of differentiation and integration must be established (Jones, 2004).

*Centralization/decentralization.*

Organizations must also find the correct balance between centralization and decentralization. An organization that reserves all or most authority in the top of its hierarchy is highly centralized. Conversely, an organization that delegates power and authority more evenly throughout various levels of the hierarchy is decentralized. There are advantages and disadvantages to each. Highly centralized organizations allow a select few individuals to coordinate all activities and keep the organization very goal oriented. However, highly centralized organizations can be disadvantaged if those individuals become overloaded with day-to-day organizational issues and have no time for long-term organizational planning. A primary advantage of decentralization is that it allows for more flexibility and quicker responsiveness providing more members of the organization with the authority to make decisions and initiate changes as needed. However, in cases of highly decentralized organizations, the overall goals of the organization can become lost or overlooked (Jones, 2004).

*Organizational hierarchy.*

An organizational analysis might also involve assessing whether an organization is tall or flat regarding its hierarchy. A tall organization is one with multiple hierarchical levels in relation to its overall size. A flat organization has very few levels in its hierarchy. Organizations with too many hierarchical levels may experience many problems. For example, organizations with multiple hierarchical levels may not be able to respond quickly to changing needs due to the

slowing of communication that is inherent when the number of levels in the chain of command increases. Additional problems are found when the amount of authority and area of responsibility each manager possesses decreases with lengthening chains of command. Studies have found employees are more motivated in their jobs when their authority and responsibility is maximized (Jones, 2004). The principle of minimum chain of command states that an organization should employ the minimum number of hierarchical levels needed to work within its goals and environment. A proper organizational design will find the perfect balance (Jones, 2004).

*Assumptions.*

Six basic assumptions serve as underpinnings for the structural frame of an organization. The first assumption is that organizations exist in order to accomplish their specific established goals and objectives. The second assumption is that rationality should take precedence over personal preferences and external pressures. Organizational structure should be compatible with the organization's goals, technology, environment, and other circumstances. Division of labor and specialization will improve performance and efficiency. Proper coordination and control mechanisms are crucial to ensuring that organization members and departments work toward the same goals. And finally, structural problems can cause performance difficulties, but these can be remedied through the use of restructuring (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Structural imperatives in organizations include the size and age of the organization, the core processes or technologies used by the organization, the environment the organization is embedded within, the goals of the organization, and the strategies the organization will use to accomplish these goals, information technology relevant to the particular organization, and the nature of the workforce found in the organization. As the size and age of an organization



increases, the complexity and level of formalization also increases. The technologies used within an organization must be in line with the structure of that organization. Different types of organization structures thrive in different environmental conditions. For example, simple organizational structures work well within stable environments, but more tumultuous environmental conditions require an organization to be more complex and adaptable in order to reach optimum effectiveness. Increased information technology allows an organization to be more flexible and decentralized. Finally, a professional workforce that is highly educated may demand and necessitate increased autonomy and discretion in job duties (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Environmental elements can yield considerable control over an organization. Any element in an organization's environment that provides resources for that organization possesses the ability to influence the policies and practices in place within the organization, with level of influence increasing along with increases in the level of dependency the organization has on that external influence. "Therefore, many organizational practices, ... will reflect the constraints and contingencies imposed by those who control needed resources" (Hansfeld, 2000, p. 96). Power relations between interests groups and individual members within the organization will affect the internal structure of an organization as well. "The relatively high dependence of human service organizations on their external environment for legitimacy and resources makes them particularly susceptible to external influences. Hence, concerns with survival and adaptation must be balanced with the goals of service effectiveness" (Hansfeld, 2000, p. 96).

In the previous pages, organizational theory has been explained, defining and elucidating the importance of organizations. Organizational analysis, design and structure, was also described. Following is an explication of the conceptual definitions utilized in and conceptual model framing this study.

## Conceptual Definitions

The following section explicates the conceptual definition of organizational culture employed in this study. The section begins with a definition of organizational culture developed for this study. Following is a full dissection of each individual facet of that definition including the two levels comprising organizational culture and the primary purposes organizational culture serves. This broad-based definition was created by the researcher based on a comprehensive review of the literature and it served to frame this study and the development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory.

### *Organizational Culture*

The conceptual definition of organizational culture used in this study is as follows: a socially constructed, shared, collective phenomenon that develops over time consisting of an organization's members' latent assumptions and the manifest artifacts resulting from those assumptions that serves as a unifying theme providing social order, meaning, and direction for the members of the organization. It can be compared to a societal culture (Ott, 1989) or thought of as the personality (Childress & Senn, 1999) or *feeling* (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988) of an organization and encompasses "behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects of the group members' total functioning" (Schein, 1992, p. 10). The following paragraphs serve to deconstruct this definition, explaining each aspect of the definition in greater detail.

Organizational culture is socially constructed. It is not composed of hard and fast facts, but rather is entirely symbolic in content. It is an utterly unseen and difficult to observe force that drives the activities that occur in an organization (Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Denison, 1996; Ott, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1990; Trice & Beyer, 1993). In fact, even members of an organization often are not aware of the organization's culture and its

impact upon them. It is not unusual for organization members not to be aware of a cultural expectation until that expectation is violated (Trice & Beyer, 1993).

Organizational culture is shared by all or most of the members of an organization (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Ott, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1990; Smircich, 1983; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Organizational culture provides group members with a sense of shared identity which helps discriminate members from nonmembers. Furthermore, organizational members who do not comply with the culture of the organization are often ostracized and sanctioned, either formally, informally, or both (Trice & Beyer, 1993).

Organizational culture develops over time as organization members find particular solutions are successful while others are not. Those successful practices eventually come to be considered the valid way of doing things and become part of the organization's culture. These methods are then taught to new organization members as being correct during the process of socialization (Schein, 1992).

Organizational culture consists of, but is not limited to, shared beliefs, assumptions, values, meanings and understandings, expectations, acceptable behavior patterns, norms, myths, routines, ceremonies, perceptions, language, and written documents (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Ott, 1989; Pedersen & Sorensen, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1990). The various elements of organizational culture can be separated into two parts: latent underlying assumptions and artifacts, with the former being manifested in the latter.

Organizational culture operates simultaneously at various levels. The deepest manifestation of organizational culture is the latent underlying assumptions that organization members usually are not aware of and which are so ingrained in members' belief systems they

are almost never questioned (Schein, 1992). These assumptions are those things organization members hold at the deepest levels to be real and true. The assumptions also include values-in-use: those values which organization members use to determine behaviors, thoughts, and feelings. These values-in use can be opposed to espoused values which organization members will explicitly assert as being their values even when their behaviors, feelings, and thoughts are to the contrary. This level of organizational culture is the driving force behind the other level of organizational culture: artifacts (Schein, 1992).

All other elements of organizational culture fall under the category of artifacts. Artifacts are much more accessible and therefore more readily identified than are the less tangible underlying assumptions. And though artifacts can be difficult to interpret, they are visible and quantifiable, whereas investigation of underlying assumptions usually requires qualitative methods of inquiry (Ott, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1992; Smircich, 1983).

The underlying assumptions dimension of organizational culture can be described as something an organization *is*, whereas artifacts are viewed as something an organization *has*. Both are malleable, but changes are easier to implement on the artifact level. Changes at the deeper, underlying assumptions level take much more time to realize (Petty et al., 1995; Reichers & Schneider, Rousseau, 1990; Smircich, 1983).

Organizational culture serves as a unifying theme within organizations providing social order, meaning, direction, and clarity for organization members. It functions as a control mechanism, dictating approval of certain behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, while prohibiting others. Included are both written and unwritten policies and procedures that provide for people patterns or guidelines to follow. It can serve to mobilize organization members to work together

toward the established goals of the organization. Finally, it can serve as a means of sensemaking, helping organization members understand their environment (Childress & Senn, 1999; Ott, 1989).

This section provided the conceptual definition of organizational culture used in this study. The elements of this definition were described in detail. The next section of this chapter provides the hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture used to develop the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. A conceptual definition is presented for each hypothesized dimension.

#### *Dimensions of Organizational Culture*

Seven dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare were developed for this study by incorporating an extensive review of the literature with a review of potential dimensions by experts in the field of child welfare. These dimensions are as follows: *Administrative Support*, *Supervisory Support*, *Autonomy*, *Professionalism*, *Professional Sharing and Support*, *Beliefs*, and *Ceremonies and Rituals*. The conceptual definition of each dimension, as used in this research, follows.

*Administrative Support* refers to the frequency and quality of professional child welfare staff's interactions and relationships with agency heads that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. *Administrative Support* is evidenced in the agency in several ways such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between administrators and subordinates; development, explication, and enforcement of rules and policies; administrative guidance and leadership; and the provision of resources. Examples of *Administrative Support* include administrators ensuring their staff have adequate resources

(supplies and equipment) to the their work and showing concern their for staff, showing sensitivity to staff needs and feelings.

*Supervisory Support* refers to the frequency and quality of professional child welfare staff's interactions and relationships with immediate superordinates that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. *Supervisory Support* is evidenced in the agency in several areas such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates; internal and external advocacy on behalf of staff and clients; explanation of and monitoring of compliance with rules and policies; work assignments and professional decision making; and personal and organizational professional development, learning, and guidance as seen in mentoring and job orientation. Examples of *Supervisory Support* are supervisors' recognition and rewards for workers' quality work, helping, advocating for, and mentoring their workers when needed, and recognizing individual workers' strengths and needs.

*Autonomy* refers to the organizational expectation about the degree to which professional staff are allowed to work independently. Independence in work includes exercising professional judgment and self-direction in decision making. *Autonomy* includes expectations that caseworkers be allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions and not be micro-managed by their superiors.

*Professionalism* refers to the extent to which shared values among staff reflect child welfare practices that demonstrate commitment to the continuous improvement of services to clients. It includes areas of ethics of practice; personal conduct; and best professional conduct. Examples of *Professionalism* include professional dress and conduct among staff and in case

documentation, and adherence to professional ethics, such as treating clients with dignity and respect.

*Professional Sharing and Support* refers to the quantity and quality of interpersonal relationships among staff that enhance professional interactions, learning, and development. Examples include: learning from one another; helping one another; and empathy for and caring for one another. *Professional Sharing and Support* is evidenced by caseworkers sharing, mentoring, covering for, listening to, and learning from one another.

*Beliefs* are a conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon when based on examination of the evidence or professional experience. Examples of *Beliefs* include child welfare staffs' beliefs that clients create their own problems, abuse and neglect their children intentionally, and have the right to raise their children however they see fit.

And finally, *Ceremonies and Rituals* refers to customs, organizational events, or behaviors of organizational members that occur with some degree of regularity or routine with a stated or implicitly understood purpose. Examples of *Ceremonies and Rituals* include employees taking coffee breaks together, sharing office humor, celebrating special events (such as birthdays and anniversaries), and holding regular events (such as picnics and luncheons) to bring staff together.

### Conceptual Model

The conceptual model framing this study is explicated in the following section. This conceptual model is shown in Figure 3.1. The model shows how the child welfare organization and its culture is embedded within the larger environment. As shown in the model, employees enter an organization with several personal, historical presage variables, e.g. age, gender, degree, previous work experience, and their own personal values and beliefs. Upon entering an

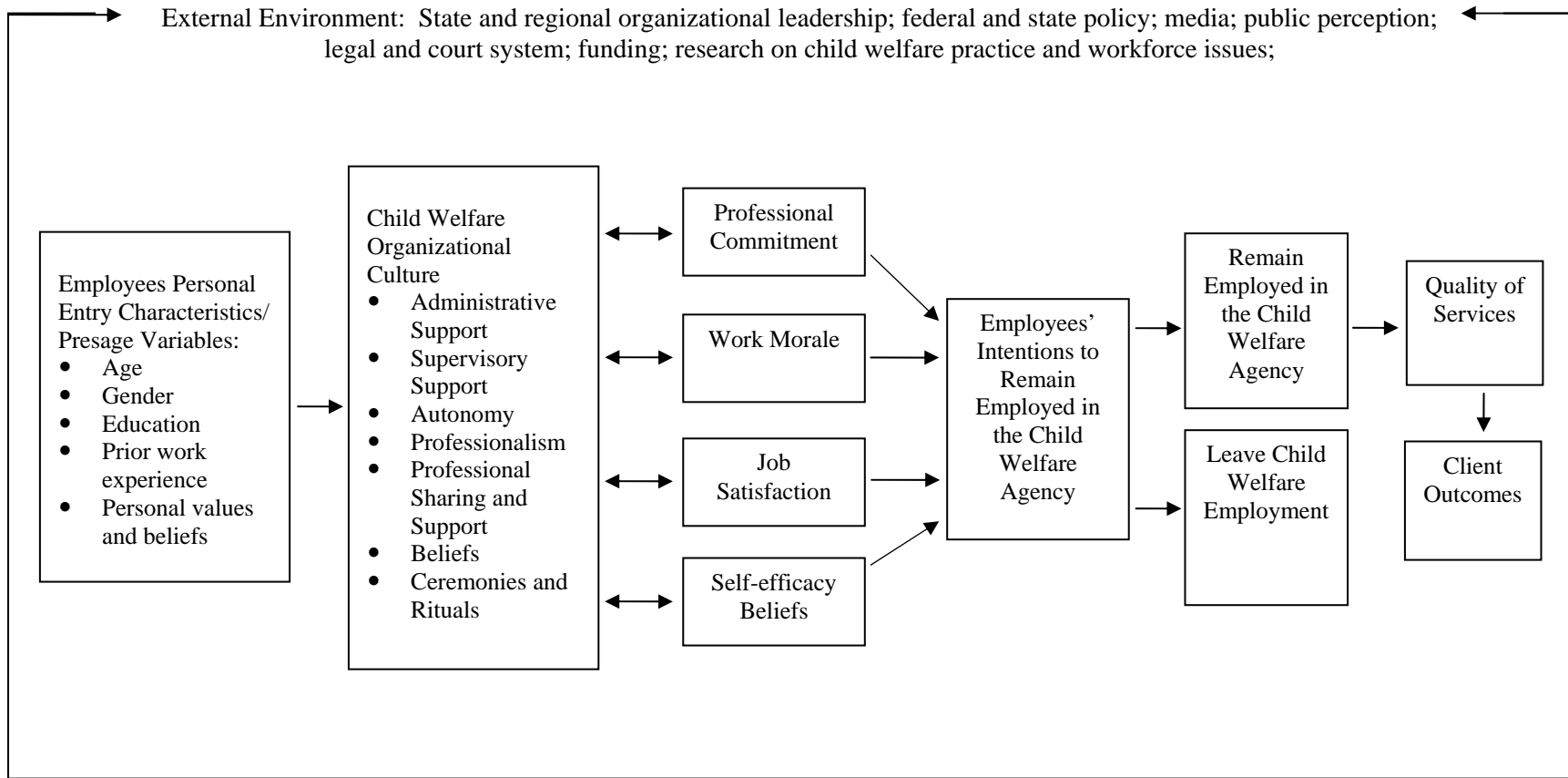


Figure 3.1 Conceptual Model



organization, newcomers are assimilated or acculturated into the organization and its existing culture over the course of their first months of membership in the organization. In this study, organizational culture was initially hypothesized to be comprised of seven dimensions: *Administrative Support, Supervisory Support, Autonomy, Professionalism, Professional Sharing and Support, Beliefs, and Ceremonies and Rituals*. All these variables work together in a reciprocal, dynamic relationship influencing, and being influenced by, employees' job satisfaction, work morale, and professional commitment. These three variables then influence employees' intentions to remain or leave employment in the agency and ultimately the quality of services and client outcomes.

As shown in the model, the entire organization and its culture are embedded within an external environment comprised of multiple factors. Aspects of this environment include, but are not limited to, the organizational leadership at the state and regional levels; state and federal policy that directs child welfare practice; research that affects best child welfare practice; client populations; the community in which the organization is located; funding; media and public perception of the child welfare agency; and the legal system that serves to oversee child welfare agencies. All these factors impact the organization in various and dynamic ways. For example, when the state or federal legislature reduces funding, resources available to clients are often cut, salary increases are withheld, and vacant positions are not filled; conversely, when funding is increased, more resources are available for clients, vacant child welfare staff positions are filled, and allocations are made for additional staff.

New employees enter the organization with several presage variables. These are characteristics child welfare employees bring to the work setting that typically change over time as they are filtered through the elements of the organizational culture. These variables include,

but are not limited to, age, gender, type of education, previous work experience, and personal values and belief systems. These variables also have a direct effect on the organization and its culture (as shown by a one-way arrow in the conceptual model Figure 3.1).

Organizational culture is hypothetically comprised of seven dimensions: *Administrative Support*, *Supervisory Support*, *Autonomy*, *Professionalism*, *Professional Sharing and Support*, *Beliefs*, and *Ceremonies and Rituals*. Elements of organizational culture continuously interact with other organizational and personal characteristics such as work morale, job satisfaction, professional commitment, self-efficacy beliefs, and many other variables not shown (e.g. personal stress and tension). The reciprocal relationship between these personal and organizational characteristics and organizational culture are indicated in the conceptual model through the use of two-way arrows.

The personal and organizational characteristics previously mentioned (job satisfaction, professional commitment, work morale, etc) together have a direct impact on child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in the agency. These intentions then directly affect those employees' actual leaving or staying behaviors. Those employees who remain in the child welfare agency have a direct effect on the quality of services provided to clients. The quality of the services clients receive has a direct impact on client outcomes. Finally, client outcomes ultimately affect the external environment in which the entire organization is embedded.

The conceptual model (Figure 3.1) illustrates a complex relationship between personal and organizational variables, their dynamics, and their influence on client outcomes. This study, however, focused only on the linkages between organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain employed in the agency and the relationships between dimensions of organizational culture and selected personal and organizational characteristics. Due to the paucity of

organizational culture measures for use in child welfare, this study addressed this need to develop a comprehensive measure that can be used in further research on elements of the conceptual framework guiding this study (Figure 3.1).

### Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the conceptual and theoretical framework guiding this study, including the definition of organizational culture used in the study, definitions of the hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture, an examination of organizational theory, and the conceptual model of organizational culture and child welfare organizations framing this study. The next chapter describes the methodology used in the study. It includes the research design, sampling, development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, study measures, and data collection and analysis procedures.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter summarizes the methodology used in this study. The development of the Organizational Culture – Child Welfare Inventory is described as well as the research design, population, data collection procedures, and finally the data analyses completed. The study builds upon recent efforts to develop measures of multiple dimensions of *professional* organizational culture (e.g., quality of supervision and leadership, collegial sharing/support, professional commitment) (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003) by creating a more comprehensive measure of organizational culture for use specifically in child welfare agencies. The research design for the study is preceded in the text that follows by a description of the initial development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory.

#### Initial Development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory

The latent construct for the measure created in this study is organizational culture of child welfare agencies. This construct is defined as a socially constructed, shared, collective phenomenon that develops over time consisting of an organization's members' latent assumptions and the manifest artifacts resulting from those assumptions that serves as a unifying theme providing social order, meaning, and direction for the members of the organization. The score(s) obtained for an agency using the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory will be an approximation of the strength of organizational culture in that agency at the time of data collection.

Measurement is often driven by theory, therefore, a researcher should know about the phenomenon under study in order to create an appropriate measure. Furthermore, the

construct to be measured by the scale should be well defined before scale construction begins (DeVellis, 2003; Spector, 1992). To these ends, a thorough, detailed review of the literature of both organizational culture and turnover and retention in child welfare was first completed. Using knowledge gained from this review of the literature, conceptual definitions of organizational culture and of the seven dimensions hypothesized to constitute organizational culture in child welfare agencies were developed. Subsequently, two hundred draft item stems were developed to serve as the initial Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory item pool (Appendix A). After these initial steps, the face and content validity of the items were assessed using a series of expert reviews.

The next step in developing the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory involved selecting which of the initially drafted two hundred item stems should be used in the new measure. A two part process of item selection was used to achieve the goal of reducing the number of items by choosing those that might best measure the latent construct of interest. This process is described in the sections that follow.

The two hundred item stems written for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory were subjected to content verification by a panel of two child welfare research experts. The items kept after this process were next reviewed by a second, larger panel of twenty child welfare experts working in the Georgia Department of Family and Children's Services. The items kept after this review were then subjected to a clarification and time study. These three steps provided content validity, the next level of validation for the new measure. The following sections describe these steps in greater detail.

#### *Expert Reviews*

The stems of the two hundred draft scale items were first reviewed by two expert

researchers in the field of child welfare employee retention and turnover, both of whom have MSW and PhD degrees in social work, worked many years in public child welfare, and currently are researchers in the area of child welfare workforce issues. These two experts determined which of the two hundred items would best assess organizational culture in child welfare agencies providing the researcher with a pool of ninety-nine items for further expert review. Next these ninety-nine possible scale items, the conceptual definition of organizational culture used in the study, and the conceptual definitions of each of the seven theorized dimensions of organizational culture were presented to twenty child welfare researchers and DFCS employees working at various levels in the agency (from county administrators to state office personnel). This panel of twenty experienced child welfare professionals was asked to rate the strength of each statement as an indicator of the organizational culture dimension for which it was written, using a Likert type scale ranging from 1 = Very Weak to 4 = Very Strong. The cover letter and directions sent to these experts is included in Appendices B and C. Ten of these twenty experts provided responses that were utilized to revise items and to select those items that might best measure organizational culture.

In deleting and rewriting items at this step, several factors were considered: rankings by the panel of experts; concern over patterning of negatively worded items; and further reduction of redundancy. Given these concerns, no item was retained if the mean expert rating was below the rating scale midpoint of 2.5. At this same time, several items were reworded. For example, all items in the *Belief* dimension, except one, were rewritten to eliminate the word *belief*. After these revisions were made, a pool of eighty-four items was arrived at for use in the next step in measurement development, the time and content clarification study.

#### *Time and Content Clarification Study*

The Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was next administered to a purposive sample of 15 DFCS employees and 10 social workers not employed by DFCS to complete a time and content clarification study. The purpose of this was twofold: to ensure that each item and procedure directions were clear and easily understandable and to determine the length of time required to complete the survey. The cover letter and directions used in the time and content clarification study are included in Appendix D. Responses from eight of the 25 study participants suggested further revisions to clarify items and provided estimates of length of time to complete the survey. Three of the DFCS-employed respondents expressed confusion over the items written for the belief dimension that no longer contained the word belief. After consultation with an expert researcher in the field of child welfare workforce studies, these items were rewritten to once again contain the word belief. Two of the non-DFCS-employed respondents expressed confusion over the difference between administrator and supervisor. Reported completion times ranged from nine to twelve minutes.

### Research Design

The primary objective of this study was to develop and examine the initial reliability estimates and validity estimates of data collected using a new, comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare. A secondary objective of the study is to understand the role multiple elements of organizational culture play in child welfare professionals' intentions to remain employed in public child welfare. A correlational design with survey methodology was utilized to accomplish these goals. The following section will describe the study population, study measures, and data analysis procedures used in this study.

## Population

The population of interest for this study was defined as all caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators employed in Georgia's one hundred fifty-nine county Department of Family and Childrens Services (DFCS) offices who provide services to maltreated and alleged maltreated children and their families. Due to vacant positions and ever changing staff allocation figures, the researcher could not determine the exact number of DFCS employees in the population for this study. However, according to the most recent DFCS staffing allocation statistics available (July 2005), the agency is allocated to employ 3,227 individuals in child welfare caseworker, supervisor, and administrator positions across 159 Georgia county DFCS offices. University of Georgia's Internal Review Board granted human subjects approval.

## Study Measures

Survey packets were created for all 3,227 potential participants (plus an additional 10% overage to cover miscalculations in staffing allocation, lost surveys, etc). Each packet contained a scannable demographic questionnaire (Appendix E), the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (Appendix F), and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure (Appendix G) (Ellett, 2000). Each of these measures is described in the sections that follow.

### *Demographic Information Form*

The demographic information form used in this survey was a one-page pencil-and-paper survey consisting of ten items. Survey participants utilized this form to provide information regarding their county of employment, position and work assignment (i.e., case worker, supervisor, administrator; foster care, adoptions, ongoing child protective services), gender, age, ethnicity, level of education, number of years of child welfare work experience, size of caseload,



and number of persons for which supervisory and administrative participants provide supervision.

#### *Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

The eighty-four item Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, hypothesized to encompass seven dimensions of organizational culture specifically developed for use in child welfare agencies, used a four-point Likert scale with agreement response choices ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). Survey participants used this scale to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that each item described the organizational culture in the county office in which they worked.

#### *Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare*

The Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare (IRE) measure is a unidimensional measure consisting of six items (e.g., *I frequently think about quitting my job*) that are rated using a four-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). The internal consistency (Alpha) reliability of the IRE has been consistently strong in recent studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005).

#### Data Collection Procedures

Survey packets were prepared containing a cover letter from DFCS's deputy director explaining DFCS's support and endorsement of the study; a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and instructions for completing the survey packet as well as the voluntary nature of participation and the confidentiality of responses (Appendix H); a list of county office code numbers; a business reply envelope; and a single 11 x 17 double sided, folded page in a scannable format with all three survey measures (the demographic questionnaire, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, and the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare

Scale). Each county office director was sent 10% more than the estimated number of survey packets for each child welfare employee in that office to complete one along with a letter explaining the nature and purpose of the study, the potential benefits to the agency and to child welfare research, and asking their cooperation in distributing one survey packet to each child welfare employee in their county office. The letter to county directors is shown in Appendix I.

A follow-up reminder letter was e-mailed to each county director three weeks after the surveys were mailed. This e-mail again requested county directors' assistance in forwarding the request for completion and return of the survey to each child welfare employee in their county office. A second reminder letter was mailed two weeks later. Again, a sufficient number of letters was sent to each county office director with a cover letter asking that the director distribute the reminder letter to each child welfare employee.

#### Data Analysis Procedures

The research questions framing this study were delineated in the chapter one. In order to answer these research questions, a variety of data analysis procedures were completed. These analyses are described in the sections that follow.

The data analyses began by computing descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) for the demographic characteristics of the sample. These were followed by computing descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for the eighty-four items of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the six items of the IRE. A series of was conducted to empirically derive the dimensions (factors) that comprised each of the two measures used in the study. Reliability analyses (Cronbach Alphas) were computed for the factored sub-scales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and for the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure. Subsequently, Pearson product moment

correlations were computed between the factored dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the IRE measure. Stepwise multiple regression analyses were completed by regressing the IRE measure on the factored dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. A discriminant function analysis was completed using the upper and lower quartiles of IRE scores as a dichotomous dependent variable. A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures was completed using each of the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory as the dependent variable and type of degree, length of employment, and geographic type of county office as independent variable sets with post hoc comparisons computed between groups for those ANOVAs with statistically significant F-values. Finally, seven t-tests comparisons were completed comparing those respondents with social work degrees to those without social work degrees for each of the identified dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory.

#### Chapter Summary

This chapter described the methodology employed in this study. Survey methodology and correlational designs were utilized to meet two primary objectives: development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and of the initial reliability and validity of data collected. Secondly, examination of the role elements of organizational culture play in child welfare professionals' intentions to remain or leave employment in public child welfare. The development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was explicated as well as the research design, sampling procedure, data collection, and the data analysis procedures employed.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the study. It begins with a description of the characteristics of the study sample and the descriptive statistics for the two measures employed in the survey. This is followed by the results of for both the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and Ellett's (2000; 2003) Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure. Subsequently, internal consistency reliability coefficients and intercorrelations of the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the IRE are presented. Next the results of multiple regression analyses that examine the extent to which the factored subscales, or dimensions, of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory predicted variation in the IRE measure are presented. Discriminant function analysis results are reported examining the upper and lower quartiles of employees' intentions to remain employed and elements of organizational culture. Subsequently, group comparisons using one-way factorial analysis of variance and t-procedures are presented in which differences between the sub-factors of organizational culture and county geographic type (rural, suburban, or urban), subjects' length of employment, caseload size, and education (social work degree or non-social work degree) were examined. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of results that are pertinent to each of the seven research questions framing the study.

#### Respondents' Characteristics

The population for this study was the estimated 3,227 DFCS administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers providing child welfare services at the time the data for the study were

collected. In August, 2005 a total of 3,677 surveys were mailed to provide more than an ample number of surveys for all DFCS child welfare employees. Data collection ended on October 18, 2005.

A total of 1,123 surveys were returned and data was scanned into data file by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia. Twenty-three surveys from DFCS employees in positions other than child welfare services (Adult Protective Services; Office of Family Independence, etc) and 67 with excessive missing data were excluded from the data analyses. Surveys were excluded for missing data if nine or more item responses (ten percent) were missing on the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory or if more than one item response was missing from the Intent to Remain Employed measure. These procedures resulted in a final return rate of 32% (n = 1,033 usable surveys). Though the return rate was lower than desired, the demographic results, with few exceptions, mirrored those of other recent, large sample, statewide studies in Georgia (Ellett, 2003; Ellis, 2005).

#### *Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Most respondents were female (872 or 84.4%), with males accounting for only 12% (124) of those DFCS employees responding. Most respondents reported their race as Caucasian (617 or 59.7%) or African American (373 or 36.1%). The ages of respondents were fairly evenly distributed, with 34.2% being 30 years old or younger. Almost the same number (34.6%) of respondents reported being 41 years old or older. The remaining 29.5% of respondents were between the ages of 31 and 40. A large portion of respondents reported possessing non social work baccalaureate degrees (569 or 55.1%) and non social work master's degrees (127 or 12.3%). Only 24.3% of respondents possessed a social work degree; 164

(15.9%) of those possessed a baccalaureate of social work degree and 87 (8.4%) possess master's of social work degrees. Only 75 (7.3%) respondents reported no four-year college degree (44 or

Table 1  
*Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents (n =1,033)*

Characteristics	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	872	84.4
Male	124	12.0
<b>Age</b>		
20 - 25	124	12.0
26 - 30	229	22.2
31 - 35	169	16.4
36 - 40	135	13.1
41 - 45	93	9.0
46 - 50	96	9.3
51 - 55	97	9.4
56 - 60	863	6.1
61 and over	8	0.8
<b>Race</b>		
Black or African American	373	36.1
White	617	59.7
Hispanic or Latino	8	0.8
Asian	3	0.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	0.3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
American Indian or Alaska Native and White	4	0.1
Black and American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.1
Black and Hispanic	1	0.1
Black and White	1	0.1
<b>Highest Education Level</b>		
High School Diploma/GED	44	4.3
Associate Degree (2 year degree)	31	3.0
Baccalaureate Degree – Non Social Work	569	55.1
Baccalaureate Degree – Social Work	164	15.9
Master's Degree – Non Social Work	127	12.3
Master's Degree – Social Work	87	8.4
Doctoral Degree – Non Social Work	2	0.2
Doctoral Degree – Social Work	0	0

## Length of Experience in Child Welfare

Less than 3 months	30	2.9
4 months to 6 months	49	4.7
7 months to 1 year	75	7.3
1 – 2 years	192	18.6
3 – 5 years	249	24.1
6 – 10 years	169	16.4
11 – 15 years	99	9.6
16 – 20 years	68	6.6
21 – 25 years	38	3.7
26 – 30 years	38	3.7
31 – 34 years	16	1.5
35 years and over	3	0.3

## Job Classification

Caseworker/Case Manager	763	73.9
Direct Supervisor	171	16.6
Administrator	70	6.8

## Primary Program Area

CPS Investigation/Intake	232	22.5
CPS Ongoing	223	21.6
Diversion	10	1.0
Foster Care/Placement	261	25.3
Adoptions	25	2.4
Resource Development	35	3.4
Multiple Programs	197	19.1
Other	43	4.2

## Current Caseload Size (for caseworkers only)

0	23	3.1
1 – 5	27	3.7
6 – 10	65	8.8
11 – 15	112	15.2
16 – 20	169	22.9
21 – 25	138	18.7
26 – 30	99	13.4
31 – 35	57	7.7
36 – 40	28	3.8
41 – 45	8	1.1
46 – 50	7	1.0
51 – 55	2	0.3
56 – 60	0	0
61 – 65	1	0.1
66 – 70	0	0
71 and over	2	0.3

Current Number of Supervisees (for supervisors and administrators only)

0	29	13.5
1 – 5	70	32.4
6 – 10	110	50.9
11 – 15	1	0.5
16 – 20	0	0
21 – 25	0	0
26 – 30	2	1.0
31 – 35	2	1.0
36 – 40	1	0.5
71 and over	1	0.5

*Note.* Numbers and percentages may not total 100% due to missing data.

4.3% with a high school education or GED only, and 31 or 3% with an associate or two year degree). Two respondents (0.2%) reported having non-social work doctoral degrees.

Most respondents in this study were caseworkers/case managers (763 or 73.9%), followed by supervisors (171 or 16.6%), and finally administrators (70 or 6.8%). More respondents 261 (25.3%) reported working in foster care than in any other program area. Although foster care was closely followed by child protective services (CPS) investigation/intake (232 or 22.5%) and CPS ongoing services (223 or 21.6%). A number of respondents reported working in multiple program areas (197 or 19.1%). The remainder of respondents worked in diversion (10 or 1%); adoptions (25 or 2.4%); and resource development (35 or 3.4%). Finally, 43 (4.2%) reported working in other, unspecified program areas. Most respondents, 59.1%, reported having worked in child welfare between one and ten years, and only 25.4% of respondents reported having worked in child welfare for eleven years or more. One third, 33.5%, of the respondents had worked in child welfare for two years or less, with 14.9% having been in the child welfare field one year or less. Finally, regarding caseload size and numbers of persons supervisors were responsible for supervising, 730 caseworker responses ranged from 0



to 101 cases with a mean caseload size of 20.78 ( $SD = 10.528$ ). Responses from 216 supervisors and administrators ranged from 0 to 86 supervisees with a mean of 6.10 supervisees ( $SD = 7.33$ ).

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Study Measures

A summary of item means and standard deviations for both survey measures (the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure) is reported in Appendix J. Item numbers can be cross referenced with item statements in Appendices F and G. Items for both the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare measure were rated using a four-point agreement response choice Likert type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree). Eleven of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory items and three of the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare Scale items were negatively worded and therefore were directionally recoded allowing for higher scores to always indicate a stronger organizational culture and stronger intents to remain employed in child welfare, respectively.

Items means on the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory ranged from a low of 2.18 ( $SD = .76$ ) for item number 36 (*Staff believe the state office supports and makes positive contributions to their work*) to a high score of 3.39 ( $SD = .57$ ) on item number 42 (*Staff are hard workers*). It is interesting to note that only one item on either the organizational culture measure or the intent to remain employed measure was answered by all 1,033 respondents. This was organizational culture item number 30, *Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc.) are regularly celebrated* (mean = 2.94;  $SD = .77$ ). Item number 58 (*Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals*) was answered by the smallest number of respondents (986) ( mean = 2.65;  $SD = .62$ ). On the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare measure, mean scores ranged from a low of 2.10 ( $SD =$

.85) on item number 2 (*I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a position outside of child welfare with a higher salary*) to a high of 2.86 (SD = .95) on the reverse scored item number 5 (*I am actively seeking other employment*), indicating a high level of disagreement with this item.

### Factor Analyses of the Study Measures

The data collected from the 1,033 respondents was subjected to a series of exploratory Principal Components Analyses in order to identify the latent constructs measured by both the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed measure. Orthogonal rotation of components was used to extract factors. Although Principal Components Analysis and factor analysis are not identical statistical procedures, the two terms are commonly used interchangeably, as will be done here for ease of reading. Orthogonal rotation of factors was chosen because of the theoretical assumption that dimensions of organizational culture are conceptually independent from one another.

In completing the Principal Components Analyses, the following decision rules were used in determining which items would be retained on each factor. To be considered for retention on a factor, an item had to load at a minimum of .33. Items that loaded on more than one factor were considered for retention on the factor on which the loading was highest and was retained only if the difference between the squared loadings was .10 (ten percent greater item/factor common variance for the highest loading factor than for the next highest loading factor) or more with a parsimonious goal of choosing a solution containing the smallest number of meaningful factors relative to the total variance explained. The results of the factor analyses are presented for both measures in the sections that follows.

*Factor Analyses of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

The 84 items of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory were initially subjected to Principal Components Analysis to obtain an unconstrained factor solution. Only those factors that explained at least 1% of the total item variance were retained. This unconstrained solution resulted in 16 factors. Following this initial unconstrained factor extraction, rotated solutions from one to 16 factors were iteratively extracted and examined.

The one-factor solution retained 69 of the 84 items written for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and explained 26.5% of the total item variance. A summary of item communalities and factor loadings for the one-factor solution is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

*Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a One-Factor Solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (n=1,033)*

Item Number <sup>a</sup>	Communality	Item/Factor Loading <sup>b</sup>
1.	0.29	<b>.54</b>
2.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
3.	0.30	<b>.55</b>
4.	0.40	<b>.63</b>
5.	0.26	<b>.51</b>
6.	0.13	<b>.36</b>
7.	0.44	<b>.66</b>
8.	0.46	<b>.68</b>
9.	0.00	00
10.	0.19	<b>.44</b>
11.	0.25	<b>.50</b>
12.	0.14	<b>.38</b>
13.	0.52	<b>.72</b>
14.	0.45	<b>.67</b>
15.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
16.	0.25	<b>.50</b>
17.	0.53	<b>.73</b>
18.	0.12	<b>.34</b>
19.	0.12	<b>.34</b>
20.	0.59	<b>.77</b>
21.	0.48	<b>.69</b>
22.	0.15	<b>.39</b>
23.	0.50	<b>.71</b>
24.	0.23	<b>.48</b>

25.	0.45	<b>.67</b>
26.	0.02	.13
27.	0.53	<b>.73</b>
28.	0.14	<b>.37</b>
29.	0.38	<b>.62</b>
30.	0.19	<b>.44</b>
31.	0.42	<b>.65</b>
32.	0.41	<b>.64</b>
33.	0.02	.13
34.	0.01	.10
35.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
36.	0.14	<b>.37</b>
37.	0.52	<b>.72</b>
38.	0.44	<b>.66</b>
39.	0.07	.26
40.	0.10	.32
41.	0.30	<b>.55</b>
42.	0.04	.19
43.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
44.	0.37	<b>.61</b>
45.	0.45	<b>.67</b>
46.	0.29	<b>.54</b>
47.	0.18	<b>.42</b>
48.	0.18	<b>.43</b>
49.	0.48	<b>.69</b>
50.	0.56	<b>.75</b>
51.	0.27	<b>.52</b>
52.	0.18	<b>.43</b>
53.	0.27	<b>.52</b>
54.	0.14	<b>.37</b>
55.	0.55	<b>.74</b>
56.	0.18	<b>.43</b>
57.	0.42	<b>.65</b>
58.	0.08	.29
59.	0.19	<b>.44</b>
60.	0.04	.19
61.	0.35	<b>.59</b>
62.	0.10	.31
63.	0.62	<b>.79</b>
64.	0.40	<b>.63</b>
65.	0.01	.12
66.	0.15	<b>.39</b>
67.	0.46	<b>.68</b>
68.	0.18	<b>.42</b>
69.	0.13	<b>.36</b>
70.	0.41	<b>.64</b>

71.	0.10	.32
72.	0.01	.11
73.	0.37	<b>.61</b>
74.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
75.	0.17	<b>.41</b>
76.	0.31	<b>.56</b>
77.	0.40	<b>.63</b>
78.	0.26	<b>.51</b>
79.	0.10	.32
80.	0.26	<b>.51</b>
81.	0.19	<b>.44</b>
82.	0.25	<b>.50</b>
83.	0.24	<b>.49</b>
84.	0.08	.29
<hr/>		
Eigen Value	22.24	
Percent of Variance Explained	26.5%	

<sup>a</sup> Item numbers may be cross referenced with Appendix F. <sup>b</sup> Item/Factor loadings are correlations. <sup>c</sup> Bolded numbers indicate item retained in the one-factor solution.

Loadings for items on the one-factor solution ranged from .34 to .79. Comparisons of the total variance explained by the one-factor solution (26.5%) to the total variance explained by the unconstrained 16-factor solution (58.2%) led to the decision to subsequently extract multiple factors with orthogonal rotation procedures. A list of items included in the one-factor solution is shown in Appendix K.

When examining the other factor analysis solutions (from two to 16 factors), and based on the need to explain the maximum amount of item variance and parsimony for choosing the fewest number of factors, a seven-factor solution was accepted. In this solution, 64 of the 84 organizational culture items were retained and 45.7% of the total item variance was explained. Table 3 provides a summary of the item communalities and factor loadings for the seven-factor solution. In this table, items retained on each of the seven factors are shown in bold face type. A list of individual items loading on each of the seven empirically verified subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory is shown in Appendix L. A list items that did not load on any of the seven empirically verified factors is shown in Appendix M.

Factor I was comprised of 20 items and accounted for 14.36% of the total item variance. This factor was named *Supervisory Support*. Item loadings on this factor ranged from a low of .37 (item 46, *Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice*) to a high of .77 (item 8, *Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients*). This dimension was one of the hypothesized dimensions for which items were written. The conceptual definition of this factor and the other six factored sub-dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory are included in Appendix N.

Table 3

*Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a Seven-Factor Solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (n = 1,033)*

Item #	Communalities	Item/Factor Loadings						
		Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V	Factor VI	Factor VII
1.	.39	.37	.38	.15	.09	.13	-.25	.03
2.	.31	.27	.03	.22	<b>.42</b>	-.02	-.04	.08
3.	.55	.26	.41	.02	.50	.07	.01	.02
4.	.55	<b>.71</b>	.17	.09	.04	.09	.01	-.01
5.	.38	.32	.21	.24	.06	.01	.02	<b>.42</b>
6.	.34	.19	.12	.15	.05	.23	-.18	<b>.42</b>
7.	.52	.47	.46	.03	.21	.16	-.06	.11
8.	.66	<b>.77</b>	.21	.06	.04	.12	-.02	-.04
9.	.35	.09	-.04	-.19	-.03	.07	<b>.54</b>	-.08
10.	.48	.13	.20	.27	.36	.24	-.36	.17
11.	.50	.23	.12	.37	<b>.53</b>	.07	-.10	-.06
12.	.41	.10	.05	<b>.51</b>	.30	.13	-.16	.02
13.	.61	.52	.55	.03	.18	.02	.01	.06
14.	.57	<b>.63</b>	.32	-.02	.19	.11	-.11	.11
15.	.37	.20	.34	-.03	.12	.33	.30	.02
16.	.37	.29	<b>.52</b>	.12	.02	-.06	-.02	.02
17.	.65	<b>.73</b>	.26	.03	.19	.09	.09	.05
18.	.34	.04	.13	.29	.27	.24	-.30	.23
19.	.44	.05	.13	<b>.61</b>	.09	.00	-.18	.08
20.	.70	.45	<b>.64</b>	.09	.25	.08	.08	.06
21.	.58	<b>.68</b>	.28	.13	.06	.08	.12	.01
22.	.40	.10	.12	<b>.54</b>	.06	.25	-.12	.07
23.	.55	<b>.56</b>	.41	.08	.16	.17	.03	.07

24.	.47	.19	.25	<b>.58</b>	.04	.16	-.02	-.07
25.	.56	.34	<b>.69</b>	.19	.02	.08	-.05	.04
26.	.26	.09	-.09	.10	-.05	<b>.47</b>	.07	.04
27.	.67	<b>.71</b>	.35	.16	.02	.02	.13	.00
28.	.36	.24	.18	.09	.07	<b>.49</b>	-.01	-.12
29.	.46	.39	.36	.26	.26	.01	.20	-.08
30.	.48	.06	.27	.16	<b>.61</b>	.05	.02	.07
31.	.59	.31	<b>.66</b>	.22	.02	.08	.02	.05
32.	.48	<b>.60</b>	.16	.18	.25	.05	.02	-.01
33.	.45	.06	.07	-.10	.07	.16	<b>.63</b>	.01
34.	.31	.03	-.04	.04	-.06	<b>.55</b>	.02	.02
35.	.44	.02	.29	.10	<b>.56</b>	.07	.00	.17
36.	.42	.08	.36	.09	.10	.06	-.27	.44
37.	.68	.41	<b>.69</b>	.12	.09	.00	.11	.05
38.	.54	<b>.61</b>	.25	.10	.26	.14	-.04	-.07
39.	.45	-.04	.05	<b>.57</b>	.14	.08	-.28	.12
40.	.37	.19	.26	.02	-.02	.12	<b>.50</b>	.02
41.	.52	.34	.43	-.09	.16	.40	.17	.04
42.	.32	.06	-.14	<b>.52</b>	.15	-.05	.01	-.03
43.	.26	.21	.22	.23	.17	-.08	-.16	.23
44.	.50	<b>.57</b>	.09	.13	.22	.22	-.08	.21
45.	.53	.39	<b>.56</b>	.16	.19	.06	.00	.01
46.	.33	<b>.37</b>	.27	.30	.05	.01	.03	.15
47.	.44	.11	.10	.32	<b>.55</b>	-.03	.10	.07
48.	.43	.25	-.08	.34	<b>.48</b>	.05	.03	.12
49.	.55	.48	.41	.09	.19	.00	.18	.28
50.	.65	.72	.25	.14	.18	.00	.07	.12
51.	.50	.30	.02	.45	.43	-.04	.02	.14
52.	.42	.11	.13	<b>.60</b>	.17	.07	.02	.02
53.	.52	.33	.26	.12	.11	-.04	.41	.39
54.	.44	.11	-.01	.47	.45	-.08	-.03	.04
55.	.70	.41	<b>.66</b>	.06	.24	.07	.11	.12
56.	.44	.08	.24	<b>.60</b>	.08	.08	-.01	.03
57.	.54	.36	<b>.50</b>	.01	.33	.08	.03	.20
58.	.31	.11	.07	.20	.07	.01	-.08	<b>.49</b>
59.	.33	<b>.45</b>	.05	-.03	.13	.11	.00	.31
60.	.33	-.10	.03	<b>.48</b>	.17	.12	-.21	.07
61.	.57	.39	.38	.08	.07	.02	.34	.38
62.	.45	.06	-.05	<b>.62</b>	.21	.06	-.10	.06
63.	.72	<b>.76</b>	.28	.12	.17	.11	.05	.10
64.	.47	<b>.54</b>	.19	.23	.0	.18	.04	.22
65.	.37	-.10	-.04	.21	.06	.34	-.21	.39
66.	.35	.06	.32	.05	.25	<b>.36</b>	.17	.15
67.	.60	<b>.69</b>	.26	.07	.03	.12	.16	.09
68.	.40	.27	.08	<b>.49</b>	-.05	-.02	.22	.18
69.	.36	.16	.05	<b>.55</b>	.02	-.02	.09	.14

70.	.63	<b>.74</b>	.15	.20	-.03	.05	.12	-.07
71.	.47	.07	.05	<b>.67</b>	.05	.02	.00	-.05
72.	.18	.02	.01	-.01	.07	-.01	.11	<b>.40</b>
73.	.53	.35	<b>.60</b>	.14	-.08	.10	.04	.12
74.	.34	.25	.23	.09	.07	<b>.45</b>	.08	-.07
75.	.31	.17	.04	.36	.37	.07	-.01	.09
76.	.48	<b>.62</b>	.20	.09	-.10	-.02	.10	.17
77.	.51	.33	<b>.58</b>	.07	.12	.00	.11	.18
78.	.32	.35	.11	<b>.50</b>	-.02	.10	.16	.14
79.	.36	-.03	.24	<b>.48</b>	.01	.13	-.13	.20
80.	.28	.32	.21	.25	.16	.06	.12	.15
81.	.35	<b>.44</b>	-.05	.20	.13	.27	-.12	.08
82.	.47	.36	-.01	.42	.40	-.03	.05	-.06
83.	.28	<b>.43</b>	.22	.04	.14	.01	.13	.10
84.	.30	-.10	-.10	-.11	-.07	<b>-.49</b>	-.08	-.13
Eigen Value	38.40	12.06	7.64	7.07	4.21	2.53	2.49	2.40
Percent Variance Explained		14.36	9.09	8.41	5.01	3.01	2.96	2.86

Item numbers may be cross referenced with Appendix F. Bolded numbers indicate final

item/factor locations.

The second factor, *Administrative Support*, consisted of ten items and explained 9.09% of the total item variance. Factor loadings ranged a low of .50 (item 57, *Workers are usually acknowledged and rewarded for doing exceptional casework*) to a high of .69 (items 25, *Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs* and 37, *Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints*). Factor II was also one of the dimensions originally hypothesized to be part of organizational culture.

Factor III, *Professionalism*, was defined by 15 items and explained 8.41% of the total item variance. Factor loadings on this dimension ranged from .48 (items 60, *Staff dress professionally*, and 79, *Staff are respected by judges and the court system*) to .67 (item 71, *Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when working with the court system*). This factor



was also one of the dimensions originally hypothesized to be found in organizational culture of child welfare agencies.

The fourth factor, *Collegiality*, consisted of six items and explained 5.01% of the total item variance. The item loadings on this factor ranged from a low of .42 (item 2, *Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work*) to a high of .61 (item 30, *Special events [e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc.] are regularly celebrated*). This was also one of the hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture for which items were written. However, it should be noted that the name of this factor was originally *Professional Sharing and Support*.

Factor V, *Organizational Ethos*, was comprised of six items and explained 3.01% of the total item variance. The item loadings on factor five ranged from .36 (item 66, *Administrators are more concerned with following policies and procedures than with helping clients*) to .55 (item 34, *Staff believe that clients create their own problems*). This was not one of the originally hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture.

The sixth factor, *Autonomy*, was defined by three items and explained 2.96% of the total item variance. The item loadings on this factor ranged from .50 (item 40, *Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage caseloads of their workers*) to .63 (item 33, *Decisions made by caseworkers, no matter how minor, must be approved by supervisors*). Autonomy was also one of the hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture for which items were written.

Finally, the seventh factor was defined by four items and explained 2.86% of the total item variance. This factor also was not conceptualized as a dimension of organizational culture for which initial items were written. It was named *Beliefs About Parents*. Item loadings on this factor ranged from a low of .40 (item 72, *Staff believe parents have the right to raise their*

children as they desire) to a high of .49 (item 58, *Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals*).

Conceptual definitions of each of the seven dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory are reported in Appendix N. Table 4 provides a summary of the seven factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and includes the number of items retained on each factor, the range of factor loadings for each factor, the variance explained by each factor, and the item numbers that define each factor.

Table 4

*Summary of the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

(*n* = 1,033)

Factor	Number of Items	Range of Factor Loadings	Percentage of Variance Explained	Item Numbers <sup>a</sup>
I. Supervisory Support	20	.38 to .77	14.36	4, 8, 14, 17, 21, 23, 27, 32, 38, 44, 46, 50, 59, 63, 64, 67, 70, 76, 81, 83
II. Administrative Support	10	.50 to .69	9.09	16, 20, 25, 31, 37, 45, 55, 57, 73, 77
III. Professionalism	15	.48 to .67	8.41	12, 19, 22, 24, 39, 42, 52, 56, 60, 62, 68, 69, 71, 78, 79
IV. Professional Support	6	.42 to .61	5.01	2, 11, 30, 35, 47, 48
V. Organizational Ethos *	6	.36 to .55	3.01	26, 28, 34, 66, 74, 84
VI. Autonomy	3	.50 to .63	2.96	9, 33, 40
VII. Beliefs About	4	.40 to .49	2.86	5, 6, 58, 72

Parents\*

Totals	64	.38 to .77	45.7	64 items
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<sup>a</sup>Item numbers may be cross referenced with Appendix F. \*Factor not originally conceptualized.

*Factor Analyses of the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare Inventory*

The six items of the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure were subjected to Principal Components Analysis to obtain an unconstrained factor solution retaining only those factors that explained at least 1% of the total item variance. These procedures resulted in a one factor solution with all six items retained, suggesting that the items making up the IRE comprise a unidimensional measurement of employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

This one-factor, six item solution accounted for 60.2% of the total item variance. Table 5 provides a summary of item communalities and factor loadings for the one-factor solution of the IRE. The item loadings ranged from a low of .71 (item 4, *The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare*) to a high of .82 (items 5, *I am actively seeking other employment* and 6, *I frequently think about quitting my job*).

Table 5

*Summary of Item Correlations and Factor Loadings for the Unidimensional Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Measure (n = 1,033)*

Item Number <sup>a</sup>	Communalities	Item/Factor Loadings <sup>b</sup>
1.	0.66	.81
2.	0.56	.75
3.	0.56	.75
4.	0.50	.71
5.	0.67	.82

6. 0.67 .82

<sup>a</sup> Items can be cross referenced with Appendix G. <sup>b</sup> Item/Factor loadings are correlations.

### Descriptive Statistics for the Factored Dimensions of the Measures

Means and standard deviations were computed for all seven factors of the organizational culture measure as well as for the unidimensional measure of respondents' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. These results are shown in Table 6. Because the various sub-scales contain differing numbers of items, a direct comparison of mean scores is not possible. Therefore, to compare respondents' scores across the measurement dimensions, the means were converted into percentages of the maximum possible total score for each factor (mean score for a given factor divided by the maximum possible score for that factor). These scores ranged from a low of 60.17% for *Autonomy* (mean = 7.22; SD = 1.62) to a high of 77.78% for *Professionalism* (mean = 46.47; SD = 5.10). The one dimensional Intent to Remain Employed measure had a mean of 14.97 (SD = 4.31) that converts to 62.38% of the maximum possible score for that scale.

Table 6

#### *Summary of Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Percent of Maximum Possible*

#### *Scores of the Seven Sub-factors of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Measure (n = 1,033)*

Factor	Mean	SD	Percent of Maximum Possible Score <sup>a</sup>
I. Supervisory Support (20) <sup>b</sup>	57.99	9.88	72.49
II. Administrative Support (10)	27.10	5.68	67.75
III. Professionalism (15)	46.67	5.10	77.78
IV. Collegiality (6)	18.02	2.73	75.08
V. Organizational Ethos (6)	16.46	2.33	68.58

VI. Autonomy (3)	7.22	1.62	60.17
VII. Beliefs About Parents(4)	10.54	1.48	65.88
Intent to Remain Employed –	14.97	4.31	62.38
Child Welfare (6)			

<sup>a</sup>Computed by dividing Factor mean score by the maximum possible score. <sup>b</sup>Number of items retained on factor.

### Reliability Analyses

Internal consistency reliability coefficients of the factored measures of the sample were computed using the Cronbach Alpha procedure. Data collected from 1,033 respondents were used to compute Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the one-factor solution and for each of the subscales of the seven-factor solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Scale and for the unidimensional Intent to Remain Employed measure. Table 7 provides a summary of Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients for the one-factor and seven-factor solutions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and for the one-dimensional Intent to Remain Employed Inventory. For this sample of child welfare staff the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the Intent to Remain Employed measure was .87. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient for the one-factor solution of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was .97. The Cronbach Alphas for each of the subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory for the seven-factor solution ranged from a low of .47 for *Beliefs About Parents* to a high of .94 for *Supervisory Support*. Cronbach Alpha coefficients were at or exceeded .75 for four of the seven organizational culture factors. To examine possible improvements in reliability, alpha coefficients were subsequently computed for the six-factor solution. These results showed little increases in Alpha values. The item factor loadings were

subsequently examined to retain only those items that loaded on two factors if the difference between squared loadings was .20 (20% more total item variance explained) or greater. This procedure provided only minimal increases in the magnitude of the alpha coefficients. Thus, the decision was made to retain the original seven-factor solution despite the rather low Alpha coefficients for factors five (.57, *Organizational Ethos*), six (.50, *Autonomy*), and seven (.47, *Beliefs About Parents*).

Table 7

*Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency Reliability Coefficients for the Seven Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Measure (n = 1,033)*

Measure	Alpha Coefficient
<u>Child Welfare Organizational Culture Scale</u>	
One Factor Solution	.97
Factor I: Supervisory Support (20) <sup>a</sup>	.94
Factor II: Administrative Support (10)	.92
Factor III: Professionalism (15)	.87
Factor IV: Collegiality (6)	.75
Factor V: Organizational Ethos (6)	.57
Factor VI: Autonomy (3)	.50
Factor VII: Beliefs About Parents (4)	.47
<u>Intent to Remain Employed (6)</u>	.87

<sup>a</sup> Number of items comprising the subscale.

## Bivariate Correlations

*Bivariate Correlations Among the Factored Subscales*

Pearson product moment coefficients were computed among all factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. These analyses are summarized in Table 8. These correlation coefficients ranged from .76 (the correlation between Factor I, *Supervisory Support*, and Factor II, *Administrative Support*) to a low of .01 (between Factor IV, *Collegiality*, and Factor VI, *Autonomy*). All but two of these correlations were statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ). The two correlations that were not statistically significant were between Factors III and V (*Professionalism* and *Autonomy*,  $r = .10$ ) and Factors VI and VII (*Autonomy* and *Beliefs About Parents*,  $r = .03$ ).

Table 8

*Summary of Pearson Product Moment Intercorrelations Among the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (n = 1,033)*

	F I	F II	F III	F IV	F V	F VI	F VII
F I	1.00	.76	.39	.47	.45	.24	.41
F II		1.00	.37	.47	.42	.23	.40
F III			1.00	.54	.30	-.10*	.38
F IV				1.00	.29	.01	.33
F V					1.00	.20	.24
F VI						1.00	.03*
F VII							1.00

Correlations significant at the  $p < .01$  level unless marked with an asterisk.

\*Not statistically significant

*Bivariate Correlations Between the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed Scale – Child Welfare Scale*

Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were computed to examine bivariate relationships between each of the seven factored sub-scales of the organizational culture measure and the intent to remain employed in child welfare measure. These correlations are reported in Table 9. All correlations were positive, in the predicted direction, and statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ). Correlations between the factors of organizational culture and the IRE scale were rather robust to low, ranging from .11 (*Professionalism*) to .45 (*Supervisory Support*).

Table 9

*Summary of Pearson Product Moment Intercorrelations between the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Measure (n = 1,033)*

Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factored Subscale	Intent to Remain Employed
F I	.45
F II	.43
F III	.11
F IV	.23
F V	.36
F VI	.17
F VII	.18

*Note.* Correlations are significant at the ( $p < .01$ ) level.



### Criterion-Related Validity

Three of the statistical analysis procedures completed provided criterion-related validity evidence for the newly developed Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory including: (a) bivariate correlations between the factored sub-scales of the organizational culture measure and the intent to remain employed measure; (b) stepwise multiple regression analysis; and (c) Discriminant Function Analyses examining the top and bottom quartiles of Intent to Remain Employed responses and the discriminating power of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. The results of these statistical procedures are reported in the sections that follow.

#### *Bivariate Correlations Between the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed Scale – Child Welfare Scale*

The first analysis to explore criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was a computation of Pearson product moment correlation coefficients between each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor and the unidimensional measure of intent to remain employed in child welfare. These correlations are included in Table 9 and have been previously described. Considered collectively, these results provide moderate ( $r = .11$ , *Professionalism* with IRE) to rather strong ( $r = .45$ , *Supervisory Support* with IRE) support for the criterion-related validity for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory for the sample in this study.

#### *Regression Analysis*

To examine the incremental, criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was completed using the IRE as the dependent variable and the factored dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory as an independent variable set. The purpose of this analysis

was to examine the extent to which the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory in combination explained variation in responses on the Intent to Remain Employed measure. Four variables entered the model and explained 26% of the variation in subjects' intentions to remain employed (*Supervisory Support, Organizational Ethos, Administrative Support, and, Professionalism*). Table 10 provides a summary of the stepwise regression analysis and includes the variables entered in each step of the analysis.

Table 10

*Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Regressing the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Scale on the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (n = 1,033)*

Step	Variable Entered	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	F	p
1.	I. <i>Supervisory Support</i>	.45	.20	—	256.4	.0001
2.	V. <i>Organizational Ethos</i>	.48	.23	.03	41.61	.0001
3	II. <i>Administrative Support</i>	.50	.25	.02	20.56	.0001
4.	III. <i>Professionalism</i>	.51	.26	.01	16.96	.0001

#### *Discriminant Function Analysis*

A series of linear discriminant functions were computed using the seven sub-factors of the organizational culture measure as an independent variable set and dichotomizing respondents' intentions to remain employed into upper and lower quartiles to form two

contrasting IRE groups (respondents most and least likely to remain employed in child welfare respectively). The results of these analyses are reported in the following text.

Table 11 reports the results of the Discriminant Function Analysis. Shown in the table are discriminant function weights of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors for each contrasting group (upper and lower IRE quartiles). The most heavily weighted variable in the discriminant function for each group was the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory *Autonomy* factor (Q1 = 2.76; Q2 = 2.75) closely followed by the weights for Factor VII (*Beliefs about Parents*) (Q1 = 2.26; Q2 = 2.25)

Table 11

*Summary of Linear Discriminant Function Analysis for Lower (n =286) and Upper (n = 299 ) Intent to Remain Employed Quartile Groups for the Factored Subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

Organizational Culture Factor	Discriminant Function Weights	
	Group 1 (Lower Quartile)	Group 2 (Upper Quartile)
I: Supervisory Support	0.04	0.09
II: Administrative Support	-0.44	-0.35
III: Professionalism	1.20	1.14
IV: Collegiality	0.41	0.51
V. Organizational Ethos	1.69	1.91
VI: Autonomy	2.76	2.75
VII: Beliefs About Parents	2.26	2.25

Using the linear combination of variables obtained through the discriminant function analysis, 68.2% of cases would be correctly classified in the lower quartile of intent to remain scores, the remaining 31.8% of would be misclassified into the lower quartile. Classification into the upper quartile was more clear, with the results indicating that 80.6% of cases would be correctly categorized in the upper quartile of Intent to Remain Employed scores. These results are reported in Table 12.

Table 12

*Summary of Discriminant Function Analysis of Percent of Correct and Incorrect Classifications of Cases into Upper and Lower Quartiles on the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare Measure*

Actual Group	Predicted Group	
	Lower Quartile	Upper Quartile
Lower Quartile	68.18%	31.82%
Upper Quartile	19.40%	80.60%

#### Selected Group Comparisons

A series of group comparisons was completed for selected demographic variables to examine possible differences in organizational culture. One-way ANOVAs were computed for *each* of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors as the dependent variable and geographic county type (three levels), years of experience (four levels), and caseload size (three levels) as independent variable sets. For statistically significant F values (ANOVAs), post hoc comparisons between groups were completed using Tukey's procedure. In addition, seven t test comparisons were made between social work degree (BSW and MSW) and

non-social work degree (all other degrees) groups, one for each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors.

*Group Comparisons of Geographic County Type (Urban, Suburban, Rural)*

Seven one-way ANOVAs were computed with each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors as the dependent variables and geographic county type (categorized into three levels) as the independent variable sets. All 159 county offices were defined as either rural, suburban, or urban based on Georgia DFCS categorizations. The results of these ANOVAs are reported in Table 13 and Appendix O. The ANOVA results were statistically significant for six of the seven organizational culture dimensions in this analysis (*Supervisory Support, Administrative Support, Professionalism, Collegiality, Organizational Ethos, and Beliefs About Parents*). For those ANOVAs with statistically significant F values, post hoc comparisons between groups taken two at a time were completed using Tukey's procedure. The results of those post hoc t tests are reported in the following section and in Appendix O. The ANOVA for the remaining factor (*Autonomy*) was not statistically significant.

Table 13

Summary of One-Way ANOVA Results for Each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factor for Three Levels of Geographic County Type (Rural, Suburban, and Urban) (n = 1,009)

Factor	f	p
Supervisory Support	17.71	.0001
Administrative Support	34.83	.0001
Professionalism	24.49	.0001
Collegiality	14.43	.0001

Organizational Ethos	4.28	.0141
Autonomy	2.13	.1190
Beliefs About Parents	6.70	.0013

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The post hoc comparisons (Tukey's procedure) between the rural, suburban, and urban groups for Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factor I (*Supervisory Support*), showed that two of the three post hoc tests were statistically significant. The rural group mean was higher than urban group the mean (mean difference = 3.92;  $p < .05$ ) The suburban group had a higher mean score than the urban group (mean difference = 3.27;  $p < .05$ ). The post hoc comparisons of county geographic type groups for the *Administrative Support* factor found statistically significant differences between all three groups. In comparisons between the rural group and both the suburban and urban group the rural group mean was higher than the suburban and urban groups (mean differences = 1.43 and 3.38;  $p < .05$ ). The comparison between the suburban and urban groups showed that the suburban group mean was higher than the urban group mean (mean difference = 1.96;  $p < .05$ ). The post hoc comparisons for the *Professionalism* factor also showed that all three comparisons statistically significant. The rural group mean was higher than both the suburban and urban group means (mean differences = 1.39 and 2.63;  $p < .05$ ). The suburban group mean was higher than the urban group mean (mean difference = 1.24;  $p < .05$ ). Post hoc comparisons for the rural, suburban, and urban groups on the *Collegiality* factor showed that the statistically significant ANOVA was accounted for by the mean score difference of two of the three comparisons. The rural group mean was higher than the urban group (mean difference = 1.00;  $p < .05$ ). The suburban group mean was higher than the urban group mean (mean difference = 0.79;  $p < .05$ ). In post hoc comparisons of geographic

county type groups for the *Organizational Ethos* Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor only one comparison was statistically significant. The rural group mean was higher than the urban group mean (mean difference = 0.52;  $p < .05$ ). Finally, the post hoc comparisons on the seventh Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor (*Beliefs About Parents*), showed the statistically significant ANOVA was largely accounted for by the mean score difference between the rural and urban groups. The rural group mean was higher than the urban group mean (mean difference = 0.41;  $p < .05$ ).

#### *Group Comparisons of Years of Experience in Child Welfare*

Seven one-way ANOVAs were computed with each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors as the dependent variables and respondents' length of time working in child welfare (categorized into four levels) as the independent variable sets. Years of experience in child welfare variables were defined as follows: group one = six months and fewer; group two = seven months to two years; group three = three to ten years; and group four = more than ten years). The ANOVA results were statistically significant for four of the seven organizational culture dimensions in this analysis (*Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Organizational Ethos*, and *Autonomy*). For those ANOVAs with statistically significant F values, post hoc comparisons between groups taken two at a time were completed using Tukey's procedure. Those results are reported in the following section. The ANOVAs for the remaining three factors (*Professionalism*, *Collegiality*, and *Beliefs About Parents*) were not statistically significant. The results of these statistical procedures are reported in Table 14 and Appendix P.

Table 14

Summary of One-Way ANOVA Results for Each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factor for Four Levels of Years Experience Working in Child welfare (n = 1,026)

Factor	f	p
Supervisory Support	3.71	.0113
Administrative Support	5.10	.0017
Professionalism	1.45	.2257
Collegiality	0.98	.4036
Organizational Ethos	5.73	.0007
Autonomy	10.77	.0001
Beliefs About Parents	0.39	.7617

The post hoc comparison between groups of four levels of years experience working in child welfare for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory *Supervisory Support* factor found the statistically significant ANOVA was largely accounted for by the mean score difference between group three (three to ten years) and group four (more than ten years). Group four mean was higher than group three mean (mean difference = 2.75;  $p < .05$ ). The post hoc comparisons for the *Administrative Support* factor found statistically significant differences among two of the three comparisons. Group one mean was higher than the group three mean and the group four mean was higher than the group three mean (mean differences = 1.59 and 1.50;  $p < .05$ ). Post hoc comparisons for years of experience groups on the *Organizational Ethos* Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factor found all three comparisons to be statistically significant. Group four mean was higher than group three mean (mean difference = 0.63;  $p <$



.05); the group four mean was higher than the group two mean (mean difference = 0.64;  $p < .05$ ); and group one mean was higher than the group three mean (mean difference = 0.63;  $p < .05$ ). Finally, for the *Autonomy* factor, two of the three post hoc comparisons were statistically significant. Group four mean was higher than group three mean (mean difference = 0.55;  $p < .05$ ) and the group four mean was higher than the group two mean (mean difference = 0.83;  $p < .05$ ).

#### *Group Comparisons of Caseload Size*

Seven one-way ANOVAs were computed with each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors as the dependent variables and caseload size (categorized into three levels) as the independent variable sets. The variables for caseload size were defined as follows: group one = zero to 15 cases; group two = 16 to 30 cases; and group three = 31 cases or more. For those ANOVAs with statistically significant F values, post hoc comparisons between groups taken two at a time were completed using Tukey's procedure. The ANOVA results were statistically significant for only one of the seven organizational culture dimensions (*Collegiality*) in this analysis. This statistically significant ANOVA was largely accounted for by the comparison between group one and group three. The group one mean was higher than the group three mean (mean difference = 0.88;  $p < .05$ ). The ANOVAs for the six remaining factors (*Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Professionalism*, *Organizational Ethos*, *Autonomy*, and *Beliefs About Parents*) were not statistically significant. The results of these one-way ANOVAs are reported in Table 15 and Appendix Q.

#### Table 15

Summary of One-Way ANOVA Results for Each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factor for Three Levels of Caseload Size (n = 733)

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Factor	f	p
Supervisory Support	2.18	.1143
Administrative Support	1.40	.2481
Professionalism	2.12	.1207
Collegiality	3.72	.0248
Organizational Ethos	1.40	.2470
Autonomy	1.58	.2057
Beliefs About Parents	1.12	.3266

*Group Comparisons of Social Work Degree and Non-Social Work Degree Groups*

A series of two tailed t tests of statistical significance was computed to explore statistically significant differences between social work (BSW and MSW) and non-social work (all other) degree groups. Seven t tests were computed comparing these two groups, one for each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors. The results of these comparisons are shown in Table 16. As can be seen in the table, statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) differences between the two degree groups were evident for both the *Supervisory Support* and *Administrative Support* Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors. The mean difference between social work and non-social work degree groups for the first factor (*Supervisory Support*) was  $-1.88$  favoring the non-social work degree group. The mean difference between the two groups for the second factor (*Administrative Support*) was  $-.99$  favoring the non-social work degree group. The t test results for the remaining five factors (*Professionalism*, *Collegiality*, *Organizational Ethos*, *Autonomy*, and *Beliefs About Parents*) were not statistically significant.

Table 16

*Summary of t Test Comparisons Between Social Work (BSW and MSW) and Non-Social Work Degree Groups for Each Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory Factor*

CWOCI Factor	BSW/MSW		Non-Social Work		Mean	t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
	Degree				Difference <sup>a</sup>		
<i>Supervisory</i>	56.62	11.59	58.50	9.18	-1.88	-2.692	.009
<i>Support</i>							
<i>Administrative</i>	26.38	6.65	27.37	5.28	-.99	-2.409	.016
<i>Support</i>							
<i>Professionalism</i>	46.56	5.53	46.73	4.96	-.17	-.461	.645
<i>Collegiality</i>	18.15	2.76	17.99	2.72	.16	.812	.417
<i>Organizational</i>	16.54	2.50	16.45	2.28	.09	.539	.590
<i>Ethos</i>							
<i>Autonomy</i>	7.15	1.69	7.26	1.60	-.11	-.926	.354
<i>Beliefs About</i>	10.59	1.63	10.54	1.42	.06	.517	.605
<i>Parents</i>							

<sup>a</sup>Mean difference score calculated by subtracting non-social work degree mean from BSW/MSW degree mean.

### Results Pertinent to Each Research Question

This study set out to answer seven core research questions. Five questions centered on the development and initial validation of a new multidimensional measure of organizational culture in child welfare organizations (Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory). Two research questions (questions two and seven) focused on an examination of the organizational culture in Georgia's 159 county DFCS offices. These seven questions and the data analysis results pertinent to each question are explicated in the following section.

#### *Question One*

What are the core elements (dimensions) of a comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare?

Seven measurement dimensions were originally conceptualized in developing and operationalizing the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. While the results of extensive principal components analyses completed did identify seven measurement dimensions, these dimensions did not exactly mirror those originally proposed. The initial dimensions for which items were written and verified through content validation procedures using expert panels were as follows: *Administrative Support*, *Supervisory Support*, *Autonomy*, *Professionalism*, *Professional Sharing and Support*, *Beliefs*, and finally, *Ceremonies and Rituals*. Five of these seven measurement dimensions were empirically verified through the . However, two were operationalized and conceptually defined somewhat differently than those originally developed. The two new factors that emerged from the were *Organizational Ethos* and *Beliefs about Parents*. Although the original *Ceremonies and Rituals* dimension was not empirically verified as a distinct factor, and a separate and distinct *Beliefs* factor was not identified, several of the items written to operationalize these original constructs were retained on other factors identified

through the completed. The results of the are shown in Table 3 (summary of item communalities and factor loadings) and Table 4 (summary of the factored subscales).

### *Question Two*

Which elements of organizational culture in child welfare are the strongest and which are the weakest?

Because each of the seven factored dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory retained differing numbers of items, a direct comparison of mean scores among the factors is rather meaningless. Therefore, a mean score expressed as a percentage of the maximum possible score for each of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions was computed. This index allowed for more direct comparisons of scores among the seven organizational culture dimensions based upon a common scale ranging from 25% to 100% because the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory rating scale for each item is not zero based (i.e., the rating scale for each item ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree). The results to make comparisons between the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors are shown in Table 6. All of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimension percentages were only moderately strong given the four-point scale used to rate the items. These percentages ranged from 60.17% (*Autonomy*) to 77.78% (*Professionalism*). Percentages were above 70% on three of the seven factors (*Supervisory Support*, *Professionalism*, and *Collegiality*) and were below 70% on the remaining four factors (*Autonomy*, *Administrative Support*, *Organizational Ethos*, and *Beliefs About Parents*).

### *Question Three*

How reliable are data collected with this new, comprehensive measure of organizational culture?

A Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient was computed for each of the seven Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions and for the one-factor Intent to Remain Employed (IRE) measure. These coefficients are shown in Table 7. Alphas for four of the factors comprising the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory demonstrated moderately strong (.75, *Collegiality*) to very strong (.94, *Supervisory Support*) reliabilities for this sample. Alpha coefficients for the remaining three factors (*Beliefs About Parents*, *Autonomy*, and *Organizational Ethos*) were somewhat lower than desired (.47, .50, .57 respectively). The Alpha reliability for the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare measure was also rather strong (.87) for this sample.

#### *Question Four*

Does the new measure demonstrate adequate criterion-related validity using a measure of employees' intentions to remain employed (IRE) in child welfare as a criterion?

The first concern in exploring the criterion-related validity of the new Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was examining the bivariate correlations between each of the seven measurement dimensions and the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare measure. Understood as validity coefficients, these correlations ranged from rather moderate in magnitude ( $r=.11$ , *Professionalism* with Intent to Remain Employed) to rather strong in magnitude ( $r=.45$ , *Supervisory Support* with Intent to Remain Employed). All correlations between dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the IRE were positive in direction and statistically significant ( $p<.0001$ ). Considered collectively, these results provide support for the criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. These findings are included in Table 9.

### *Question Five*

Do factored dimensions of this new measure of organizational culture demonstrate incremental, criterion-related validity using the IRE as a criterion?

To examine incremental, criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, a stepwise regression analysis was completed regressing the one dimensional IRE measure on the factored sub-dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. The results of this analysis (see Table 10) identified a four-variable model that incrementally accounted for a total of 26 percent of the variation in IRE scores for this sample. The Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions demonstrating statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ) incremental validity in this analysis were *Supervisory Support*, *Organizational Ethos*, *Administrative Support*, and *Professionalism*.

### *Question Six*

To what extent can the various factored dimensions of the new measure of organizational culture differentiate between child welfare employees with the strongest and weakest intentions to remain employed in child welfare?

Discriminant function analysis was used to examine the extent to which a best linear combination of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory variables (factored dimensions) could best differentiate between upper and lower quartile Intent to Remain Employed total score groups. Results of this analysis are included in Table 11. The most heavily weighted variables in the linear combination of Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory variables for both upper and lower quartile IRE groups were *Autonomy*, *Beliefs about Parents*, *Organizational Ethos*, and *Professionalism*. The discriminant function derived in this analysis correctly classified 68.2% of the cases in the IRE lower quartile group and 80.6% of the

cases in the IRE upper quartile group (see Table 12). These results show stronger group membership predictions (greater validity) for child welfare employees with strong intentions to remain in child welfare (high IRE total scores) than for those with weak intentions to remain employed in child welfare (low IRE scores). Considered collectively, these findings provide additional support for the criterion-related (discriminant) validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory using known groups validation procedures.

#### *Question Seven*

Are there differences in the strength of organizational culture associated with selected work context variables (e.g., urban, suburban, and rural work settings; size of caseload) and personal characteristics of staff (e.g., length of employment in child welfare, and BSW/MSW vs. other degrees)?

Comparisons of the seven subfactors of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and three levels of geographic county type (rural, suburban, and urban) using one-way ANOVAs found statistically significant differences by geographic county type for six of the seven organizational culture dimensions (*Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Professionalism*, *Collegiality*, *Organizational Ethos*, and *Beliefs About Parents*). Results of these analyses are reported in Table 13 and Appendix O.

Comparisons of the seven factored dimensions of organizational culture and four levels of length of participants' experience in child welfare (six months or less; seven months to two years; three to ten years; and more than ten years) using one-way ANOVAs found statistically significant differences by years of experience on four of the seven organizational culture dimensions: *Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Autonomy*, and *Organizational Ethos*. Results of these analyses are reported in Table 14 and Appendix P. Group comparisons of the



seven subfactored dimensions of organizational culture and three levels of caseload size (zero to 15 cases; 16 to 30 cases; and 31 cases or more) using one-way ANOVAs found statistically significant differences by caseload size on only one of the seven organizational culture dimensions (*Collegiality*). The results of this analysis are reported in Table 15 and Appendix Q.

Comparisons of social work (BSW and MSW) and non-social work (all other) degree groups were made using a series of seven t tests, one for each organizational culture factor. The results of these analyses are reported in Table 16. Statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) differences were found between the groups on both the *Supervisory Support* and *Administrative Support* Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory factors.

#### Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the results of the data collection and data analysis procedures completed in this study beginning with the characteristics of the respondents and descriptive statistics for the study measures. This was followed by factor analysis and internal consistency reliability analysis of both the measures used in the study (the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare). Bivariate correlations were computed among the factored subscales for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and between those factored subscales and the intent to remain employed measure. To examine criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, the results of Pearson product moment bivariate correlations between the factored subscales of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and the Intent to Remain Employed scale; regression analysis; and discriminant function analysis were reported. The final statistical analysis procedures completed were group comparison tests using one-way ANOVA and t-test

procedures. The chapter concluded with a summary of results pertinent to each of the seven research questions explicated in chapter one.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the study including its purpose, conceptual framework, research design, and methodology. This is followed by an explication of the assumptions and limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the findings and conclusions of the study pertinent to: (a) a discussion of the major findings regarding dimensionality of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory; (b) the relationship between organizational culture and child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in the field; and (c) a discussion of the findings with implications for theory, research, and practice.

#### Context of the Study

A continuing and important issue is at hand in the child welfare workforce, with turnover rates reaching as high as 20% to 40% annually (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994). In Georgia's Department of Family and Children's Services, at 44%, the turnover rate is even higher than the national average (Ellett, 2001; Ellett et al., 2003). With an average tenure of a child welfare worker being under two years (GAO, 2003) and the cost of replacing a child welfare worker estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$17,000 (Daly et al., 2001), it is imperative that research examine the reasons for this turnover and generate ideas about means to reduce high turnover rates. Other costs and consequences of high turnover include the disruption of services experienced by families when turnover occurs (Ellett et al., 2003; GAO, 2003; Mobley, 1982); high caseload sizes for those who do not leave the job (in

Georgia, caseload sizes exceed recommended standards for 80% of workers) (Ellett et al, 2003); supervisors who are supervising far too many workers (GAO, 2003); employees being promoted to the supervisory level too early and are therefore inadequately prepared for their new job demands (GAO, 2003); a loss of human capital when experienced, qualified workers leave and take their expertise, knowledge, and skills with them (Ellett et al., 2003); and the agency's inability to recruit highly qualified new staff due to negative public perceptions earned (Ewalt, 1991).

Recent studies have pointed to the importance of maintaining stability in the workforce (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003) and several studies have examined factors related to retention and turnover of staff (Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992). These studies have pointed to factors affecting turnover and retention such as a commitment to the job and social work (Rycratt, 1994); feelings of personal accomplishment (Drake & Yadama, 1996); lack of other job opportunities (Rycratt, 1994) and lack of new opportunities within the agency (Samantrai, 1992); quality supervision (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Rycratt, 1994; Samantrai, 1992); human caring (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005), self-efficacy, and organizational culture (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003).

One important, but understudied variable is organizational culture. Ellett's (2000) and Ellett et al. (2003) studies have shown a connection between organizational culture in child welfare agencies and employees' intentions to remain employed, using the only known measure that measures organizational culture in child welfare. However, these studies have focused solely on elements of *professional organizational culture*. The paucity of studies of organizational culture in child welfare agencies points to a need to develop more comprehensive

measures of organizational culture and to examine linkages between organizational culture and personal characteristics of child welfare staff and organizational outcomes.

There is not one widely-accepted, conceptual definition of organizational culture. In fact, organizational culture has been considered difficult to conceptually define. Many definitions have been posed and it appears that each researcher and theorist uses a somewhat different definition (Alvesson & Berg, 1992; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Ott, 1989; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1990). For the purpose of this study, the researcher developed and used the following conceptual definition: *organizational culture is a socially constructed, shared, collective phenomenon that develops over time consisting of organizational members' latent assumptions and the manifest artifacts resulting from those assumptions that serves as a unifying theme providing social order, meaning, and direction for the members of the organization.* This conceptual definition has many elements that are explicated in detail in chapter 3.

### Overview of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to develop and explore the initial characteristics of a measure of organizational culture in child welfare agencies. Scales exist to measure organizational culture in contexts other than child welfare (e.g. school systems, businesses). However, there was only one existing measure designed to examine one element of culture in child welfare organizations (Ellett's [2000] measure of *professional* organizational culture). Until the current study there were no known comprehensive measures of organizational culture for specific use in child welfare agency research.

In this study, items were initially developed for seven hypothesized dimensions of organizational culture. Those seven dimensions were: Administrative Support, Supervisory

Support, Autonomy, Professionalism, Professional Sharing and Support, Beliefs, and Ceremonies and Rituals. An initial pool of 200 items (Appendix A) was developed to operationalize these seven dimensions with a thorough review of the relevant literature in mind giving this item pool initial face validity. Content validity for the items and a reduction in the number of items was achieved through three expert panel reviews. These expert panelists made judgments about the clarity and understandability of the items and provided time estimates for responding to the item set. Following these steps, an 84-item scale was eventuated for use in a statewide survey of child welfare staff.

The 84 item scale (Appendix F) was distributed via mail to some 3,227 child welfare employees working in Georgia's Division of Family and Children's Services along with a demographic form (Appendix E) and Ellett's (2000) Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare scale (Appendix G). A total of 1,033 usable surveys was received from 159 DFCS county offices representing employees' at all ranks of the child welfare workforce (caseworkers, supervisors, and county administrators). A variety of data analyses were completed beginning with an empirical identification of dimensions of organizational culture using Principal Components Analysis followed by an examination of measurement reliability. Initial criterion-related validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (CWOICI) was examined using a variety of procedures including bivariate correlation, multiple regression, and discriminant function analysis using a unidimensional measure of employees' intentions to remain employed as a criterion variable. Finally, one-way ANOVAs and t-tests were used to make comparisons among different groups based on selected demographic variables (county geographic type, length of experience in child welfare, caseload size, and type of education i.e., social work degree or non-social work degree).

### Assumptions

This study was based upon three core assumptions. The study was based on the assumption of honesty in subjects' self-reports on the survey. The second assumption was full cooperation from directors in fair and even distribution of the survey to all child welfare staff in their respective county offices. Finally, the study was based on the assumption that child welfare employees' expressed intentions to remain employed is the best predictor of actually remaining employed in child welfare.

### Limitations

This study was limited in that the exact size of the population under study was indeterminable. The most recent staff allocation statistics provided by DFCS indicated that the 159 DFCS county offices employed 3,227 individuals in child welfare administrative, supervisory, and caseworker positions. However, the vacancy rate of child welfare positions has been estimated to be 10% (Cyphers, 2001; GAO, 2003). Therefore, the exact number of employees in the population surveyed could not be determined.

The study was also limited in that participation in the study was completely voluntary. Thus, those participants choosing to complete and return the survey could qualitatively differ from those employees' that did not. Those employees choosing not to participate might be more dissatisfied with the agency and its organizational culture than those who did complete and return the survey. Employees' who did not participate in the study might have larger or more challenging and time-consuming caseloads that prevented them from having the time available to complete and return the survey.

## Major Findings and Conclusions

### *Major Finding*

It is possible to empirically develop a literature-based, multi-dimensional, self-report measure of organizational culture in the child welfare context.

### *Conclusion*

Though originally conceptualized as a seven-dimension construct, the organizational culture dimensions empirically verified through Principal Components Analysis were not exactly the same seven dimensions hypothesized to constitute organizational culture. Two dimensions for which items were initially written to operationalize two child welfare agency culture dimensions, *Beliefs* and *Ceremonies and Rituals*, were not empirically verified through the statistical analyses completed. However, many of the items written for both of these hypothesized dimensions did load on other factors. Two factors for which items were not written, *Beliefs About Parents* and *Organizational Ethos*, were identified through the Principal Components Analyses. Therefore, the conceptual and operational definitions of organizational culture as measured by the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory reflect literatures from which they were derived.

### *Conclusion*

Only four of the seven empirically identified CWOCI factors, *Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Professionalism*, and *Collegiality*, demonstrated sufficiently strong alpha reliability coefficients for this large sample. Therefore, additional development of three of the seven factors (*Organizational Ethos*, *Autonomy*, and *Beliefs About Parents*) is needed.



*Conclusion*

While many studies have examined the importance of quality supervision (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; GAO, 2003; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992), research on the role of child welfare administrators has been given much less attention. The findings from this study show that the supportive role of administrators and supportive supervision are independent and important dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare.

*Major Finding*

There are positive linkages between dimensions of organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

*Conclusion*

This study used multiple statistical procedures to explore the initial construct validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory for a large statewide sample of child welfare employees. Considered collectively, the results documented bivariate and multivariate relationships between multiple dimensions of organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain employed, which provides initial criterion-related validity evidence for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. This validity evidence was much stronger for some measurement dimensions of organizational culture than for other measurement dimensions.

*Major Finding*

The dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare differentially interact with and are impacted by both personal and organizational characteristics.

*Conclusion*

The many group comparisons made using the multiple dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory and personal (e.g. years experience working in child welfare,

type of education) and organizational (e.g. caseload size, county geographic type) variables generated a variety of differences in perceptions of organizational culture in child welfare settings. Therefore, organizational culture in child welfare agencies is best understood as dynamic and contextually based.

Considered collectively, the results of the initial content and face validity procedures, the principal component analyses, the criterion-related validity analyses, and group comparison analyses establish an initial nomological net (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) for organizational culture in child welfare. As well, the study procedures and results support the construct validation of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (CWOICI) consistent with modern concepts of validity described by Samuel Messick (1989; 1996a; 1996b).

### Discussion

The primary goals of this study were to develop a comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare agencies and to examine the relationship between organizational culture and child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in the child welfare agency. Following is a discussion of the major findings and conclusions in relationship to these two main goals of the study.

The measure of organizational developed in this study, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, consists of seven empirically identified measurement dimensions (sub constructs). For the large sample used, four of the seven factored dimensions yielded sufficiently strong measurement reliability coefficients to be trusted for use in future research (*Supervisory Support, Administrative Support, Professionalism, and Collegiality*). The remaining three dimensions need additional work to strengthen their measurement reliability. Three of these four measurement dimensions (*Supervisory Support, Administrative Support, and, Professionalism*)

have a sufficient number of items (20, 10, 15) to be used as single measures of dimensions of organizational culture. It may be, for example, that there is interest in a child welfare agency in only one element of organizational culture (e.g., supervisory support). The results of this study would support the use of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory *Supervisory Support* items as a single measure of this dimension of organizational culture. Similarly, an agency or researcher might be interested in only two or three dimensions of organizational culture in studies in child welfare. Thus, statistical findings for the quality of four Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions (*Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Professionalism*, and *Collegiality*) support using one or more of these four measurement dimensions to develop a short form of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory.

There was also some support in this study for using the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory as a global, uni-dimensional measure of organizational culture in child welfare for those items that met the decision making rule used for retention of items (i.e., an item/factor loading at or exceeding  $r=.33$ ). However, it should be recognized that use of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory as a uni-dimensional measure loses considerable diagnostic value when compared to using the entire measure or some combination of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory measurement dimensions. If one only needed a global assessment of the strength of organizational culture in testing a complex model (e.g., in structural equation modeling studies), the single factor solution derived for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory in this study might be used.

Several of the CWOCI dimensions were found to have moderately strong correlations with employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (*Supervisory Support*, *Administrative Support*, *Collegiality*, and *Organizational Ethos*). The correlations with the

Intent to Remain Employed (IRE) measure for two Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions (*Autonomy* and *Beliefs about Parents*) may have been considerably attenuated by rather low reliability estimates. The remaining measurement dimension (*Professionalism*) had the weakest correlation with respondents' intentions to remain employed (.11), even though the Alpha reliability for this dimension was rather robust (.87). Thus, interpersonal elements of the child welfare organization such as supervisory and administrative support, and structural features of the organization (e.g., salary, promotional opportunities) may be better predictors of employee retention than shared, normative features of the organization such as the degree of professionalism shared among organizational members.

Of all seven identified measurement dimensions of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, *Supervisory Support* demonstrated the strongest, positive correlation with survey respondents' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Thus, in child welfare offices where workers feel supported by their supervisors, employee retention rates would be predictably higher than in offices where supervisory support is weak or non-existent. When supervisors are able to devote adequate time and energy to support, reward, advocate for, and educate their supervisees, their workers will likely have enhanced job knowledge, strengthened self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997), reduced job stress, and stronger intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The importance of quality supervision in child welfare has been well documented in the extant literature.(Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; GAO, 2003; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992). This study has added to that literature by clearly demonstrating a positive linkage between quality supervision as a dimension of organizational culture in child welfare and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare

*Administrative Support* had the second strongest, positive correlation with the IRE measure. As with the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory *Supervisory Support* dimension, in offices where employees feel supported by administrators, intentions to remain employed in child welfare are strengthened relative to offices in which employees do not perceive such support. The linkage between these variables is more than likely mediated by several other critical factors such as those described above for supportive supervision.

The majority of the dimensions hypothesized to comprise organizational culture, and for which items were written (*Supervisory Support, Administrative Support, Professionalism, Collegiality [originally Professional Sharing and Support], and Autonomy*) were empirically verified through the completed. These findings generally support the reviews of the empirical and theoretical literatures in which the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was grounded and the conceptual definitions for the initial measurement dimensions which were used to write the initial item pool. Two factors, Beliefs and Ceremonies and Rituals, were hypothesized as important dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare. These dimensions were not empirically verified. However, many of the items initially written to operationalize these two dimensions were retained on other measurement dimensions as a result of the (e.g., *Staff believe that parents who abuse or neglect their child[ren] do so intentionally*, an item that loaded on the *Organizational Ethos* factor and *Staff share informal rituals [e.g. casual dress days, sharing humor, coffee breaks, etc]* an item that loaded on the *Collegiality* factor). Thus, while Beliefs, and Ceremonies and Rituals do not appear to be distinct dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare, they are threaded among other distinct measurement dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare.

A recent study by Ellis (2005), showed a similar finding in the development of a new measure of human caring in child welfare. In her study, items developed for what was initially considered a distinct measurement dimension of human caring as derived from the theoretical literature (i.e., personal reward accruing to an individual through completing an act of caring for another) were distributed among several other measurement dimensions. These findings show that constructs described in the theoretical literature are not always empirically verifiable. Alternatively, the results of this study and those of other studies such as the recent Ellis study, may suggest the need to further refine measures to more accurately reflect theoretical constructs described in the literature.

In this study, Ellett's (2000; 2003) Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare (IRE) was used as the criterion variable. This scale has been shown to yield rather strong measurement reliability in several large-scale studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005) and in this study as well. While intent to remain employed is not an exact measure of actual retention and turnover, it has been successfully used as a proxy measure with literally thousands of child welfare professionals in several recent studies. There is some evidence that the strength of an individual's expressed intention to remain employed is the best predictor of actual retention or turnover. (Mor Borak et al., 2001; Steel and Ovalle, 1984; Tett and Meyer, 1993). The results of the current study, when combined with those of other recent studies (Ellett, 2000; Ellett, et al., 2003; Ellis, 2005), show that such intentions can be positively linked to multiple personal and organizational variables. These quantitative linkages, and the results of several qualitative studies as well (e.g., Westbrook, Ellis, & Ellett, in press; Ellett, Ellett, Ellis, Westbrook, & Dews, in press) are beginning to develop a nomological net (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) for a rather complex intention to remain employed construct.

The findings from this study support the conception of organizational culture in child welfare agencies as a dynamic, fluid, and perhaps malleable construct. The measured dimensions of organizational culture varied considerably in strength from one dimension to the next. As well, dimensions of organizational culture as defined by the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory varied considerably in their relationship to the intention to remained employed (IRE) measure. These findings suggest that organizational culture in child welfare settings is neither predictable and nor static across measurement dimensions or among child welfare work contexts. Thus, dimensions of organizational culture in child welfare settings are dynamic, and both influence, and are influenced by, many personal and organizational variables comprising the total organization.

### Implications

The results of this study have implications for the further development of theory; for future research in social work, child welfare workforce issues, and organizational culture studies; and for child welfare practice. A discussion of these implications follows.

#### *Implications for Theory*

The development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory further explicates the conceptual definition of organizational culture and the various dimensions that constitute organizational culture in child welfare agencies. From a theoretical and operational perspective, the results of this study further support the conceptualization and measurement of organizational culture in child welfare as a multi-dimensional construct. The results also contribute to the knowledge base of quantitative organizational culture studies that view organizational culture as something an organization *has* by examining behavioral norms and espoused, shared beliefs and values as proxy measures of organizational culture.

For the purposes of this study organizational culture was assumed to be something an organization *has*, not something an organization *is*. When organizational culture is viewed in this light (as something the organization *has*), it is believed to be more malleable and dynamic than when assumed to be something an organization *is*. Examining organizational culture in this manner involves an examination of the systems of values and beliefs; the means by which the organization develops strategies, rules, and goals; and the means by which the organization measures progress and success (Reichers & Schneider, 1990).

The measure of organizational culture developed in this study used behavioral norms and shared, espoused values and beliefs as proxy measures of organizational culture. This is not an especially unusual manner of examining organizational culture, despite the fact that some theorists and researchers warn against this practice. These researchers assert that the examination of only these aspects of organizational culture (behavioral norms and shared, espoused values and beliefs) can be misleading. They posit it is unwise to omit an examination of the basic underlying assumptions although these assumptions can only be inferred through in-depth, qualitative studies because this level of organizational culture (basic underlying assumptions) is so deeply ingrained that it has dropped out of organization members' consciousnesses (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). Because an in-depth qualitative study is not always feasible or possible, there remains a need for quantitative self-report measures.

The results of this study suggest that theoretically, within child welfare agencies, behavioral norms of support are more important in employee retention than many of the other elements of organizational culture (e.g. behavioral norms of professionalism, beliefs about clients, etc). These results are also supported by research pointing to the importance of support, especially from supervisors, in child welfare organizations (Ellett, 2000; Ellett et al., 2003; GAO,



2003; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992). The results of this study also suggest that behavioral norms and values of autonomy elements of organizational culture are not crucially important to retention and turnover of staff.

The conceptual model (see Figure 3.1) that framed this study demonstrates that employees bring with them presage variables (age, prior work experience, personal values and beliefs, etc) into an organization that has existing state, regional, and local leaderships that all affect the organization's culture. Organizational culture in turn interacts reciprocally with job satisfaction, morale, and professional commitment. These variables then impact employees' intentions to remain or leave employment leading to their actual retention or turnover behavior. The conceptual model assumes that the quality of services, and finally client outcomes, are eventually affected by actual retention and turnover.

This study examined some of the presage variables employees bring into the organization with them (age, gender, and education) and those employees' intentions to remain employed in the agency. However, prior work experience and new employees' personal, presage values and beliefs were not examined this study; these need to be addressed in future studies. Also impacting organizational culture, according to the conceptual model, is the leadership of the organization. Leadership is considered by Schein to be a very important variable in organizational culture (1992). Examination of organizational leadership was not included in this study. Interacting reciprocally with organizational culture are job satisfaction, morale, professional commitment, and a host of other variables (for example self-efficacy beliefs). These too need further examination as they were not investigated in this study.

The theory of organizational culture in child welfare could be conceptually broadened through the use of qualitative studies. For example, after an administration of the Child Welfare

Organizational Culture Inventory to several child welfare offices, qualitative research could examine the difference in those offices scoring highest from those offices scoring lowest on the organizational culture measure.

A developing theory of organizational culture in child welfare should be able to accommodate variations in the strength of various dimensions of culture and show how these dimensions are related to the holding power of the organization for staff. From a higher order theoretical perspective, the *holding power* of an organization for employees might be useful in explaining the results of this study and integrating the results of future studies. For example, the holding power of the organization should be strengthened as dimensions of culture are strengthened which in turns strengthens employees' intentions to remain employed. Conversely, weakening dimensions of culture would weaken the holding power of the organization resulting in weakened intentions to remain employed and increased turnover. This logic has some empirical support given the findings of this study.

A theory of holding power of child welfare organizations might be useful in explaining a variety of personal and organizational variables other than culture, that can be linked to employee retention and consequently client outcomes. Possibilities include efficacy beliefs (self, collective, and work group efficacies) (Bandura, 1997; Dellinger, 2001) and organizational variables such as salary, benefits, and promotional and career opportunities.

#### *Implications for Future Research*

The findings of this study suggest several needs for future research. These include: 1) continued development and refinement of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory; 2) the design and implementation of additional Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory validation studies; 3) the use of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory in

organizational research and evaluation efforts and needs assessments. There are also implications for longitudinal research studies to examine changes that occur in child welfare when there are changes in leadership or longitudinal outcome-based intervention studies with the goal of improving organizational culture and retention of employees.

In regard to reliability and continued development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory, four of the seven empirically defined dimensions were found to have reasonable to strong measurement reliability. However, the remaining three factors (*Organizational Ethos*, *Autonomy*, and *Beliefs About Parents*), were found to have less than desirable Cronbach alpha reliabilities (.57, .50, and .47 respectively). All three of these dimensions could benefit from further development, through development and testing of additional items for example, in order to improve reliability. It should be noted that two of the three dimensions with low reliability coefficients were those that were not originally hypothesized to comprise organizational culture and for which items were not specifically written. Additionally, it is possible that other dimensions of organizational culture exist that were not measured by the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory. Therefore, one possible avenue of research might include determining what these dimensions are and developing items to capture them.

Research for continued examination of the validity of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory might include using other measures of personal and organizational variables (aside from employees' intentions to remain employed) as criterion measures. For example, measures of job satisfaction, employee work morale, self-efficacy beliefs, professional commitment, and organizational leadership could be utilized as criterion measures.

Furthermore, in examining validity for example, a mixed-methods study could be implemented by administering the *Supervisory Support* subscale to a sample of child welfare offices which would then be dichotomized into those with high *Supervisory Support* scores and low *Supervisory Support* scores. Subsequent qualitative interviews to examine differences between the two groups might further our understanding of Supervisory Support as an element of organizational culture in child welfare. Though presenting complex research design issues, ultimately future studies should be designed to examine relationships between organizational culture in child welfare and client outcomes.

#### *Implications for Practice*

There are several potential uses of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory in practice settings. Some possible practice uses for the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory include its use in understanding and improving retention and reducing turnover of child welfare employees; use in needs assessments to determine which areas of organizational culture in an agency would most benefit from changes and improvements; or individual items of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory could provide more specific information from which a targeted intervention might be developed to improve specific elements of organizational culture.

The statistical analysis results in this study demonstrated that the *Supervisory Support* and *Administrative Support* dimensions of the organizational culture have the strongest correlations of all Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory dimensions with subjects' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. These findings imply a need to ensure that both supervisors and administrators understand the importance of supporting their employees through provision of continuing education, support, adequate resources, rewards for excellent work,

fairness and sensitivity to workers' needs, and by simply being available to their workers for assistance and guidance when needed. A study by Samantrai (1992) found that when child welfare employees felt their supervisor was adequately supportive, otherwise intolerable aspects of the job were not enough to cause those workers to leave employment. This indicates that even with the many challenges often associated with child welfare employment (low salary, high caseloads, etc), strong organizational culture (especially in regard to support from supervisors and administrators) can facilitate in retention of employees. When used to assess organizational culture, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory might also yield results that examine distributive justice and equality in work distribution.

The Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory could be administered to employees in offices with high rates of turnover to determine which areas of organizational culture might most benefit from change. For example, in offices that score low on the Supervisory Support dimension supervisors might provide professional development activities to better fit existing models of quality professional supervision. Likewise, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory could be administered to several offices within a larger system (such as the 159 individual county offices in the larger Georgia DFCS system) to determine which offices most need improvements in strengthening organizational culture.

The implications of the study for theory, research, and practice were described in the previous sections. The following, and final, sections will explicate the assumptions followed by the limitations of the study.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a summary of the entire study including the context and an overview of the study; the statements of assumptions and limitations; a presentation and

discussion of the major findings and conclusions of the study; and finally, implications of the study findings for research, theory, and practice.

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APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## INITIAL ITEM POOL

1. Supervisors are willing to help caseworkers when problems arise
2. Administrators are willing to help caseworkers when problems arise
3. Leadership roles are shared by front caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators
4. Administrators encourage line staff to provide leadership for new projects
5. Administrators provide visible, ongoing support for innovations and ideas
6. Furthering social work education and professional development activities are encouraged
7. Caseworkers are encouraged by administrators and supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions
8. Caseworkers assist administrators in developing new agency programs and policies
9. Administrators show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals
10. Administrators are empathetic to work-related problems and difficulties
11. Caseworkers receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients
12. Administrators often undermine caseworkers
13. Administrators demand compliance with policy even at the expense of clients
14. Local administrators make certain their caseworkers are provided with the resources needed to complete the job (computers, money, paper and pens, etc)
15. State level administrators make certain caseworkers in the county office are provided with the resources needed to complete their jobs (computers, money, paper and pens, etc)
16. Administrators are far too concerned with petty rules
17. Administrators are more concerned with following policy and procedure than with helping clients
18. Administrators are concerned about caseworkers' emotional well-being

19. Administrators treat caseworkers as individuals
20. When a worker is having a bad day, supervisors are sensitive to that
21. Supervisors and administrators are sensitive to the personal ups and downs of their caseworkers
22. Supervisors encourage self-care in caseworkers
23. Supervisors encourage caseworkers to take respite (i.e., mental health day) when needed
24. Taking a mental health day is highly frowned upon in this office
25. Caseworkers are expected to work at their full capacity, even on bad personal days
26. Veteran caseworkers in this office spend time mentoring new employees
27. Training is provided in a timely manner
28. The training provided is relevant to the work being done
29. Training provided by DFCS is poor and unhelpful
30. New caseworkers shadow veteran employees
31. Employees receive adequate on-the-job training
32. Employees are well trained before being given a caseload
33. New workers are given caseloads before they are prepared
34. Supervisors provide mentoring to new employees
35. Veteran workers take new employees “under their wing”
36. New workers are quickly “thrown to the wolves” (i.e., given caseloads without adequate training or knowledge)
37. Workers are allowed to build the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed before being given full responsibility for a full caseload
38. Training is a waste of time
39. Veteran workers are encouraged to share their expertise with novice workers
40. Workers feel comfortable making decisions about their caseloads

41. Superiors allow workers the freedom to make their own case decisions
42. Workers are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions
43. Every decision made by caseworkers, no matter how small, must be approved by administrators
44. Policy must be followed to the letter, even to the detriment of clients
45. Administrators allow sufficient professional autonomy for caseworkers to make decisions in their work
46. Administrators suppress independence and autonomy of front line workers
47. Staff are proud to work in child welfare
48. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work
49. Staff use research findings in their work with children and families
50. Staff are committed to continuous professional development
51. Staff clearly understand the agency's vision for child welfare programs
52. Staff believe they can have a positive impact in the lives of their clients
53. Workers treat clients ethically
54. Workers treat clients with dignity and respect
55. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner
56. Documentation in case records is done in a professional manner
57. Documentation in case records accurately reflects the clients' situations
58. Case documentation accurately reflects the work being done with clients
59. Staff dress professionally
60. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner on a day-to-day basis
61. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when dealing with the court system

62. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when dealing with other professionals (doctors, teachers, therapists, etc)
63. Staff present themselves in a professional manner while in court
64. Workers present themselves in a professional manner when dealing with other professionals (doctors, therapists, etc)
65. DFCS places children and families as the top priority
66. Children and families are caseworkers' number one priority
67. Children and families are supervisors number one priority
68. Children and families are administrators' number one priority
69. DFCS views families and children as more important than on paper work
70. DFCS places more priority on paperwork and administrative duties than on helping clients
71. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals
72. Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals
73. Flexible hours make this job easier
74. The flexible hours this job allows are very important
75. When a caseworker feels "burned out" in their work, they can find flexibility in job duties to help feel "refreshed"
76. When a caseworker feels "burned out" with their job, they would be able to transfer to another unit within the agency for "fresh start"
77. Variety in job duties and work with clients are important parts of this job
78. Workers are allowed a lot of flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time
79. DFCS allows flexibility in individuals' work schedules
80. Administrators allow workers to have specialized caseloads depending on individuals' desires, needs, and/or strengths
81. Caseworkers are allowed a lot of flexibility in the interventions they provide to clients

82. Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage the caseloads of their workers
83. Staff professionally share and learn from one another
84. Staff share work experiences with each other to improve service effectiveness
85. Staff encourage each other to exercise professional judgment when making case decisions
86. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when problems arise
87. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues
88. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive
89. Staff will readily offer a ride to someone when needed
90. Colleagues assist one another in transporting clients when one is busy with other clients
91. Workers conduct joint interviews at times
92. When going into a bad neighborhood, a worker can count on a another worker going with them on the home visit
93. Caseworkers assist each other in watching and taking care of children in the building
94. Caseworkers can count on one another to switch on-call days when needed caseworkers assist and cover for one another
95. Caseworkers take time to problem solve tough cases together
96. Caseworkers will stab one another in the back if given the opportunity
97. Caseworkers are very critical and degrading of one another
98. Staff check in on one another emotionally
99. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another
100. Each caseworker is completely on his/her own
101. Caseworkers must get support elsewhere because they can't get it here
102. For the most part, staff feel secure that they will not lose their jobs
103. Staff feel certain that their jobs are secure



104. A caseworker would protected in a lawsuit as long as policy had been followed
105. Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions
106. Fear of a child or family being harmed is the most significant determining factor in making casework decisions
107. Child and family well being is the most significant determining factor in making casework decisions
108. Staff often worry about themselves or a case of theirs showing up in the media
109. Most staff have a constant fear that they will be fired
110. If something goes wrong with a case the caseworker will be blamed
111. If something goes wrong with a case, supervisors and administrators will share responsibility with the caseworker
112. Caseworkers often scared while in the field
113. Caseworkers often worry that they will be harmed during a visit with a client
114. Considering total job duties and relationships with co-workers and clients, there are more positives than negatives in this job
115. In this job, there are more positives than negatives
116. Staff have access to and support for technology that makes the job easier and/or safer
117. This job is more difficult than most caseworkers originally expect it to be
118. Working relationships between DFCS and other agencies (e.g. mental health, vocational rehabilitation, schools) need to be improved
119. Job promotions are based upon an employee's ability, experience, and quality of job performance rather than favoritism and political considerations
120. Working relationships between DFCS and the courts need to be improved
121. Decision making in DFCS is too highly centralized (too top down)
122. Caseworkers receive adequate supervision, guidance, and support from supervisors
123. Caseworkers feel safe and secure in their work tasks

124. Caseworkers feel safe and secure in their work environment
125. Caseworkers assume or do many tasks that should be assigned to clerical/support staff
126. There is a need to increase public awareness of the nature and value of my work
127. The rationales for policy developments and policy changes in DFCS are make clear to me
128. The amount of paperwork require in my job interferes with the professional contact I would like to have with clients
129. Professional development opportunities and activities provided by DFCS are relevant to my job
130. Working relationships between DFCS and law enforcement agencies need to be improved
131. The potential danger, random violence, and unpredictability of my work environment is a major source of job stress for me
132. DFCS is effective in responding to public criticism when this arises
133. Clerical support and assistance is adequate/sufficient to support the quality of my work
134. More professional input from DFCS workers is needed when legal cases involving clients are negotiated or settled in court
135. The frequent changes in DFCS policies have had a negative impact on my job performance
136. Professional development opportunities and activities provided by DFCS are a adequate/sufficient to enhance my ability to do my job
137. I believe I have sufficient input in decision making in the office in which I work
138. DFCS policies are formulated considering best professional practices and the best interests of clients
139. DFCS legal services are adequate to meet the needs of the children and parents that DFCS serves
140. Negative public criticism of DFCS staff's work is sometimes justified
141. Both the number of existing cases AND the work intensity/complexity of cases should be /is considered in determining caseloads

142. I am provided with adequate, clean office space and necessary supplies and equipment to effectively do my job
143. Inquiries made about my work by supervisors usually assume that I have done something wrong in violation of official procedures
144. Working relationships between DFCS and district attorneys need to be improved
145. Job duties and responsibilities of DFCS employees should be clearly differentiated based upon degree levels (i.e., MSW vs BSW)
146. The profession of social work has as much to contribute to case planning and services to clients as other professions (e.g., medicine, law, education, psychology)
147. There is a need for more informal recognition and support for my work (e.g., pats on the back, positive strokes) from my superiors
148. Professional development opportunities and activities provided by DFCS are accessible and convenient
149. When promotions are considered, years of quality work experience should be interchangeable with advanced degrees
150. If I were involved in litigation relative to my work with clients, DFCS would provide me with adequate professional and personal support
151. The general public holds employees of DFCS in high professional esteem
152. The main reason I seek promotional opportunities in my job is to increase my salary and financial benefits
153. Other professionals (e.g., lawyers, doctors, judges, teachers) hold employees of DFCS in high professional esteem
154. DFCS attorneys have sufficient knowledge to adequately represent the agency
155. Informal recognition of the quality of my work from supervisors is as important to me as my salary
156. Workers are treated with professional respect by the courts
157. DFCS provided adequate legal support for child welfare staff to effectively accomplish their work tasks
158. If explanations of policy decisions were made more clear to me, I would be better able to carry out my job duties and responsibilities

159. There is a need to improve DFCS attorneys' knowledge/understanding of legal documents/issues in child welfare (e.g., the Juvenile Court Code, prominent/pertinent case law decisions, federal and state laws)
160. Parents who abuse or neglect their child(ren) usually intend to harm the child(ren)
161. Parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices
162. Parents will generally make choices that are easiest for them, even if those choices put their children at risk
163. Clients generally want to be cooperative with DFCS and other agencies in order to better their family
164. Clients are generally willing to receive assistance from DFCS and other agencies
165. Clients are naturally resistant to receiving help from DFCS and other agencies
166. DFCS employees are hard workers
167. DFCS employees want what is best for their clients
168. DFCS employees will slack off/shirk their duties if at all possible
169. DFCS caseworkers do as the least amount possible to get by
170. Caseworkers are very helpful to clients
171. DFCS has more of an investigative mindset than a helpful or assisting mindset
172. Workers value and strive to provide excellent quality casework to their clients
173. Workers generally only provide the minimum level of work to clients as needed to get by
174. Clients are to be blamed for their problems
175. Clients create their own problems
176. Parents should be able to do as they please with their own children
177. Parents should be allowed to raise their children however they see fit
178. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, etc) are celebrated regularly in this office

179. This office holds celebrations of special events
180. Ceremonies are held often to celebrate good case outcomes
181. Workers are usually rewarded for doing exceptional casework
182. This office holds special events to celebrate its workers and the hard work they perform
183. This office celebrates workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, good casework, work anniversaries)
184. This office holds funds raising events that bring staff together
185. This office holds regular events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc)
186. A celebration is held when a veteran worker retires or leaves the job
187. There are special events held by this office that staff really look forward to
188. This office has casual dress days
189. DFCS has a good working relationship with the local court system
190. DFCS maintains a good working relationship with other local social service agencies
191. The relationship between DFCS and the court system is strained/stressful
192. Those in the court system have and show respect for DFCS and vice versa
193. Other local social service agencies have and show respect for DFCS and vice versa
194. DFCS has a good working relationship with CASAs
195. DFCS employees work well with their SAGs
196. The relationship between DFCS and their SAGs is strained at best
197. CASAs are close working partners with DFCS employees
198. CASAs only get in the way of DFCS workers in completing/carrying out case work and making case decisions
199. The opinions of DFCS workers receive little respect from other professionals (judges, SAGS, teachers, doctors, etc)

## APPENDIX B

## EXPERT REVIEW COVER LETTER

February 7, 2005

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a social work professional with experience in child welfare, you are requested to participate as an expert in a validation study of a proposed survey by reviewing the attached pool of potential items. These items are potentially to be used in the Child Welfare – Organizational Culture Scale, an instrument being developed to measure organizational culture in public child welfare agencies.

As you may know, our public child welfare system is currently experiencing a workforce crisis. Low retention and high turnover of child welfare employees is a serious problem within Georgia's Department of Family and Children's Services as well as in other child welfare agencies across the nation. These turnover and retention problems impede our ability to effectively serve the vulnerable children and families who are our clients. Undoubtedly a multifaceted strategy to improve child welfare employee retention is needed. Professional organizational culture has repeatedly been shown in studies to be correlated with child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed. This study will expand on Dr. Alberta Ellett's measure of Professional Organizational Culture in order to create a more comprehensive measure of organizational culture in child welfare agencies.

The pool of potential items and directions for rating them are attached. Completion of this review of potential survey items should take about 30 minutes. Please return the completed form to me in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope no later than February 17, 2005. Your responses are confidential. If you have questions, please contact me at 706-549-4283 or at [tonymw@uga.edu](mailto:tonymw@uga.edu).

Your expertise in child welfare will help me identify the best indicators of Organizational Culture. I will provide you with a copy of the revised scale that will be used in my dissertation research. Thank you for taking time to review these items. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Tonya M. Westbrook  
Ph.D. Candidate, University of Georgia

APPENDIX C  
EXPERT REVIEW DIRECTIONS AND ITEM POOL  
**Expert Review of Potential Indicators of  
Organizational Culture in Child Welfare**

**Directions:** The Child Welfare Organizational Culture scale is being developed to measure the organizational culture found within child welfare agencies. Organizational culture is defined as a socially constructed, shared, collective phenomenon that develops over time consisting of an organization's members' latent assumptions and the manifest artifacts resulting from those assumptions which serves as a unifying theme providing social order, meaning, and direction for the members of the organization. Organizational culture is believed to be a multi-dimensional construct composed of seven dimensions: administrative support; supervisory support; autonomy; professionalism; professional sharing and support; beliefs; and ceremonies and rituals.

**Your task in this review of possible survey items** is to rate the extent to which each individual statement is an indicator of each dimension of the larger Organizational Culture construct. Each statement under each of the seven dimensions describes a phenomenon is theorized to shape or influence organizational culture.

Please respond to each item in the survey as follows:

- Read and carefully reflect upon the definition of the organizational culture dimension shown; then
- Rate the strength of each statement as an indicator of the organizational culture dimension using the four-point scale provided below.

**1=Very Weak      2=Weak      3=Strong      4=Very Strong**

- Circle only one number for each item reflecting the strength of your rating.
- Statements marked with an asterisk are negatively worded items and are indicators of a poor or unsatisfactory organizational culture. All other items are indicators of a good or positive organizational culture.

- Feel free to write comments about individual items, especially those you think are unclear or should be rewritten.

## Dimension: Administrative Support

**Definition:** Administrative support refers to the frequency and quality of professional level child welfare staff's interactions and relationships with agency heads that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. Administrative support is evidenced in the agency in several areas such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between administrators and subordinates; development, explication, and enforcement of rules and policies; administrative guidance and leadership; and the provision of resources.

Please rate how well each of the following 18 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
1. Administrators show a genuine concern for staff as professionals	1	2	3	4
2. Administrators are sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff	1	2	3	4
3. Administrators recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff	1	2	3	4
4. *Administrators show little concern for staff	1	2	3	4
5. *Administrators are more concerned with following policy and procedure than with helping clients	1	2	3	4
6. Administrators make certain their staff understand and follow policy	1	2	3	4
7. Staff receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients	1	2	3	4
8. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators	1	2	3	4
9. Administrators encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.	1	2	3	4



	1	2	3	4
	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
10. Staff are encouraged by administrators to be the best they can be in their assigned positions	1	2	3	4
11. Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs	1	2	3	4
12. Administrators make certain adequate resources are available to meet client needs	1	2	3	4
13. *If something goes wrong with a case the caseworker will be blamed	1	2	3	4
14. Local administrators serve as a buffer between workers and state level administrators	1	2	3	4
15. If a caseworker were involved in litigation relative to work with clients, administrators would provide him/her with adequate professional and personal support	1	2	3	4
16. Administrators advocate for employee needs with the state office	1	2	3	4
17. Administrators provide support in settling disputes between staff	1	2	3	4
18. Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints	1	2	3	4

## **Dimension: Supervisory Support**

**Definition:** Supervisory support refers to the frequency and quality of professional child welfare staff's interactions and relationships with immediate superordinates that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. Supervisory support is evidenced in the agency in several areas such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates; internal and external advocacy on behalf of staff and clients; explanation of and monitoring of compliance with rules and policies; work assignments and professional decision making; and personal and organizational professional development, learning and guidance such as seen in mentoring and orienting to the job.

Please rate how well each of the following 22 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>
1. Supervisors help staff when problems arise	1	2	3	4
2. Supervisors show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals	1	2	3	4
3. Supervisors are empathetic to the needs and feelings of staff	1	2	3	4
4. Supervisors recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff	1	2	3	4
5. Supervisors support caseworkers when they need to take sick leave, annual leave, and comp time	1	2	3	4
6. *Taking a mental health day is highly frowned upon in this office	1	2	3	4
7. Supervisors serve as a buffer between workers and administrators	1	2	3	4
8. Supervisors advocate for their workers needs to administrators	1	2	3	4
9. Supervisors are fair and provide support for workers in addressing client complaints	1	2	3	4
10. *Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions	1	2	3	4
11. *Supervisors are more concerned with following policies and procedures than with helping clients	1	2	3	4
12. *New workers are assigned caseloads without adequate training and knowledge	1	2	3	4
13. Supervisors assign cases depending on individual caseworker strengths and client needs	1	2	3	4
14. Supervisors allow caseworkers to have specialized caseloads or change job assignments (e.g. move from foster care to adoptions) to meet worker needs	1	2	3	4
15. Supervisors provide mentoring to new employees	1	2	3	4

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
16. Supervisors encourage experienced workers to help newer workers learn the ropes	1	2	3	4
17. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers and supervisors	1	2	3	4
18. Caseworkers are encouraged by supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions	1	2	3	4
19. Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients	1	2	3	4
20. Supervisors encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.	1	2	3	4
21. Supervisors are accessible for case and emergency consultations as needed by their caseworkers	1	2	3	4
22. Supervisors and their caseworkers have regularly Scheduled case conferences	1	2	3	4

## Dimension: Autonomy

**Definition:** Autonomy refers to the organizational expectation about the degree to which professional staff are allowed to work independently. Independence in work includes exercising professional judgment and self-direction in decision making.

Please rate how well each of the following 6 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
1. Workers are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions	1	2	3	4
2. Caseworkers are allowed sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work	1	2	3	4
3. *Every decision made by caseworkers, no matter how small, must be approved by superiors	1	2	3	4

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
4. *Policy must be followed to the letter, even to the detriment of clients	1	2	3	4
5. *Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage the caseloads of their workers	1	2	3	4
6. Workers are allowed flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time	1	2	3	4

## Dimension: Professionalism

**Definition:** Professionalism refers to the extent to which shared values among staff reflect child welfare practices that demonstrate commitment to the continuous improvement of services to clients. It includes areas of ethics of practice; personal conduct; and best professional conduct.

Please rate how well each of the following 17 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
1. Staff treat clients with dignity and respect	1	2	3	4
2. Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice	1	2	3	4
3. In as much as possible clients are allowed self-determination in case decision making	1	2	3	4
4. Confidentiality of work with clients is satisfactorily maintained	1	2	3	4
5. Staff dress professionally	1	2	3	4
6. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when dealing with the court system	1	2	3	4
7. Staff are proud to work in child welfare	1	2	3	4
8. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work	1	2	3	4

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
9. Staff use research findings in their work with children and families	1	2	3	4
10. Staff are committed to continuous professional development	1	2	3	4
11. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner	1	2	3	4
12. Documentation in case records is done in a professional manner	1	2	3	4
13. Staff make children and families top priority	1	2	3	4
14. *Staff place more priority on paperwork and administrative duties than on helping clients	1	2	3	4
15. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals	1	2	3	4
16. Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals	1	2	3	4
17. Children and families are supervisors number one priority	1	2	3	4

## **Dimension: Professional Sharing and Support**

**Definition: Professional Sharing and Support refers to the quantity and quality of interpersonal relationships among staff that enhance professional interactions, learning, and development. Examples include: learning from one another; helping one another; and empathy for and caring for one another.**

**Please rate how well each of the following 9 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.**

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
1. Staff professionally share and learn from one another	1	2	3	4
	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
2. Caseworkers take time to problem solve tough cases together	1	2	3	4
3. Experienced caseworkers spend time mentoring newer employees	1	2	3	4
4. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when needs arise	1	2	3	4
5. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues	1	2	3	4
6. Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work	1	2	3	4
7. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another	1	2	3	4
8. *Caseworkers are critical and degrading of one another	1	2	3	4
9. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive	1	2	3	4

## Dimension: Beliefs

**Definition:** Beliefs a conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon when based on examination of the evidence or professional experience

Please rate how well each of the following 20 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong
1. *Staff believe they or one of their cases might show up in the media	1	2	3	4

2. *Staff beliefs about being reprimanded play a significant role in making casework decisions	1	2	3	4
3. *Staff beliefs about children and families being harmed is the most significant factor in making casework decisions	1	2	3	4
	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>
4. *Parents who abuse or neglect their child(ren) usually intend to harm the child(ren)	1	2	3	4
5. Parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices	1	2	3	4
6. *Parents will generally make choices that are easiest for them, even if those choices put their children at risk	1	2	3	4
7. *Clients create their own problems	1	2	3	4
8. Clients generally want to be cooperative with DFCS and other agencies in order to better their family	1	2	3	4
9. Parents have the right to raise their children as they want to	1	2	3	4
10. DFCS staff are hard workers	1	2	3	4
11. DFCS staff want what is best for their clients	1	2	3	4
12. Caseworkers are very helpful to clients	1	2	3	4
13. *Staff's orientation to casework is more focused on investigation and compliance than on providing assistance and support	1	2	3	4
14. Workers value and strive to provide quality casework for their clients	1	2	3	4
15. Staff believe they have a positive working relationship with the local court system (judges, SAAGs, CASAs, etc)	1	2	3	4

16. Staff believe they maintain a good working relationship with other community agencies (schools, law enforcement, mental health agencies, etc.)	1	2	3	4
17. Staff believe they are respected by judges and the court system	1	2	3	4
18. *Staff believe they receive little respect from other professionals (doctors, teachers, etc).	1	2	3	4
	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>
19. Staff believe they have positive relationships with the general public and community	1	2	3	4
20. Staff believe the state office is supportive and makes positive contributions to their work	1	2	3	4

## Dimension: Ceremonies and Rituals

**Definition:** Ceremonies and Rituals refers to customs, organizational events, or behaviors of organizational members that occur with some degree of regularity or routine with a stated or implicitly understood purpose

Please rate how well each of the following 7 items serves as an indicator of administrative support in child welfare agencies.

	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>
1. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc) are regularly celebrated	1	2	3	4
2. This office holds regular social events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc)	1	2	3	4
3. This office has casual dress days	1	2	3	4
4. This office celebrates workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, work anniversaries, promotions, awards, etc.)	1	2	3	4





## APPENDIX D

## TIME AND CLARITY STUDY

July 7, 2005

To: Selected DFCS Staff

From: Tonya Westbrook

Re: Time and Clarity Study

As you may know, I am a Ph.D. student in the UGA School of Social Work. I am at the stage in the program where I am preparing to collect data for my dissertation. My professional concern for improving our child welfare system has led me to my interest in recruitment and retention issues of the child welfare professionals who are expected to carry out complex policies and deliver services to clients in a difficult work context. I believe research on organizational factors predictive of committed and resilient child welfare staff who choose to remain employed in child welfare, which is scarce in social work literature, is important to know. Studies like mine should yield important information about how to improve organizational culture and thus improve retention of competent, committed child welfare staff.

My study will disseminate the attached survey to all workers and supervisors employed in DFCS child welfare programs statewide. The survey will be completed voluntarily and anonymously. The final survey will be professionally printed on electronic scan sheets.

I need to obtain an estimate of the time it will take participants to complete the survey and ensure that all instructions and survey items are clear and easy to understand. Only a few OCS staff are being asked to complete the survey at this time and then provide me with two pieces of information: (1) THE AMOUNT OF TIME IT TAKES YOU TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY AND (2) ANY ITEMS AND INSTRUCTIONS YOU IDENTIFY AS UNCLEAR.

1. How long did it take you to complete this survey? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

2. Are there any survey items or instructions that are not clear?

Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

Part I Item #s: \_\_\_\_\_

Part II Item #s: \_\_\_\_\_

Part III Item #s: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also highlight unclear items and instructions as well as offer suggestions for how best to make the items or instructions more understandable.

**Your professional contribution and cooperation in completing this task is greatly appreciated!**

## **CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE SURVEY**

This survey asks child welfare workers and supervisors to make a series of judgments about their experiences as child welfare professionals. It includes three parts (1) Demographic Information; (2) Organizational Culture; and (3) Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare. Please complete all three parts of the survey.

### **I. Demographic Information**

**Directions:**

Please complete the following items by filling in the appropriate space or by writing in any relevant information. Data for this study will be aggregated and analyzed so that no individual will be identified. **Please mark only one answer for each item.**

**1. County Office in which you work:**

County code number [\_ \_ \_]                      County name \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Primary Program Area in which you work:**

- [ ] CPS Investigation/Intake            [ ] CPS Ongoing            [ ] Diversion
- [ ] Foster Care/Placement            [ ] Adoptions            [ ] Resource Development
- [ ] Multiple Program Areas – please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- [ ] Other – please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Job classification in which you work:**

- [ ] Caseworker/Case Manager            [ ] Direct Supervisor            [ ] Administrator

**4. Gender:**

- [ ] Male    [ ] Female

**5. Age:**

20-25     31-35     41-45     51-55     Over 60

26-30     36-40     46-50     56-60

**6. Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)**

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latino

Asian

American Indian or Alaska Native

White

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

**7. Highest Educational Level:**

High School Diploma/GED

Associate Degree (2 year degree)

Baccalaureate Degree – Non Social Work

Baccalaureate Degree – Social Work (BSW)

Master's Degree – Non Social Work

Master's Degree – Social Work (MSW)

Doctoral Degree

**8. Years Experience in Public Child Welfare?**

less than 6 months

6 months to 1 year

1-2 years

3-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

21-30 years

16-20 years

31-34 years

35+ years

**9. Approximate number of cases on your current caseload: [ \_ \_ \_ ] Cases****10. If you are a supervisor, how many caseworkers do you currently supervise? [ \_ \_ \_ ]**

## II. Organizational Culture

### **Directions:**

This section includes a set of statements that are indicators of organizational culture in the child welfare work context. The statements reflect characteristics of key members of the organization and the larger work environment. Using the scale provided below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that each item statement is *characteristic of the office in which you work*. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please note that each question begins with...*In this office...*

**SCALE:**     **1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**  
                   **2 = Disagree (D)**  
                   **3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree (N)**  
                   **4 = Agree (A)**  
                   **5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

### *In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. Administrators make certain their staff understand and follow policy	1	2	3	4
2. Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work	1	2	3	4
3. This office celebrates workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, work anniversaries, promotions, awards, etc.)	1	2	3	4
4. Supervisors are accessible for case and emergency consultations as needed by their caseworkers	1	2	3	4
5. In as much as possible, clients are allowed self-determination in case decision making	1	2	3	4
6. Parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices	1	2	3	4
7. Administrators encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.	1	2	3	4
8. Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients	1	2	3	4
9. Policy must be followed to the letter, even to the detriment of clients	1	2	3	4

*In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
10. Staff are committed to continuous professional development	1	2	3	4
11. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another	1	2	3	4
12. Caseworkers are very helpful to clients	1	2	3	4
13. Administrators recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff	1	2	3	4
14. Supervisors encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.	1	2	3	4
15. Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions	1	2	3	4
16. Local administrators serve as a buffer between workers and state level administrators	1	2	3	4
17. Supervisors are empathetic to the needs and feelings of staff	1	2	3	4
18. Staff are proud to work in child welfare	1	2	3	4
19. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner	1	2	3	4
20. Administrators show a genuine concern for staff as professionals	1	2	3	4
21. Supervisors support caseworkers when they need to take sick leave, annual leave, and comp time	1	2	3	4
22. Confidentiality of work with clients is satisfactorily maintained	1	2	3	4
23. Quality casework is regularly recognized, even if only informally	1	2	3	4
24. Staff maintain a good working relationship with other community agencies (schools, law enforcement, mental health agencies, etc.)	1	2	3	4

*In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
25. Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs	1	2	3	4
26. Parents who abuse or neglect their child(ren) usually intend to harm the child(ren)	1	2	3	4
27. Supervisors are fair and provide support for workers in addressing client complaints	1	2	3	4
28. New workers are assigned caseloads without adequate training and knowledge	1	2	3	4
29. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive	1	2	3	4
30. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc) are regularly celebrated	1	2	3	4
31. Administrators advocate for employee needs with the state office	1	2	3	4
32. Supervisors encourage experienced workers to help newer workers learn the ropes	1	2	3	4
33. Every decision made by caseworkers, no matter how small, must be approved by superiors	1	2	3	4
34. Experienced caseworkers spend time mentoring newer employees	1	2	3	4
35. This office holds regular social events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc)	1	2	3	4
36. Staff believe the state office is supportive and makes positive contributions to their work	1	2	3	4
37. Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints	1	2	3	4
38. Supervisors recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff	1	2	3	4
39. Documentation in case records is done in a professional manner	1	2	3	4

*In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
40. Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage the caseloads of their workers	1	2	3	4
41. If something goes wrong with a case, the caseworker will be blamed	1	2	3	4
42. DFCS staff are hard workers	1	2	3	4
43. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work	1	2	3	4
44. Supervisors provide mentoring to new employees	1	2	3	4
45. Staff receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients	1	2	3	4
46. Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice	1	2	3	4
47. This office has casual dress days	1	2	3	4
48. Clients create their own problems	1	2	3	4
49. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators	1	2	3	4
50. Caseworkers are encouraged by supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions	1	2	3	4
51. Staff professionally share and learn from one another	1	2	3	4
52. Staff treat clients with dignity and respect	1	2	3	4
53. Workers are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions	1	2	3	4
54. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues	1	2	3	4
55. Administrators are sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff	1	2	3	4



*In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
56. Staff have positive relationships with the general public and community	1	2	3	4
57. Workers are usually acknowledged and rewarded for doing exceptional casework	1	2	3	4
58. Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals	1	2	3	4
59. Supervisors assign cases depending on individual caseworker strengths and client needs	1	2	3	4
60. Staff dress professionally	1	2	3	4
61. Caseworkers are allowed sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work	1	2	3	4
62. Workers value and strive to provide quality casework for their clients	1	2	3	4
63. Supervisors show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals	1	2	3	4
64. Children and families are supervisors' number one priority	1	2	3	4
65. Clients generally want to be cooperative with DFCS and other agencies	1	2	3	4
66. Administrators are more concerned with following policy and procedure than with helping clients.	1	2	3	4
67. Supervisors advocate for their workers' needs to administrators	1	2	3	4
68. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals	1	2	3	4
69. DFCS staff want what is best for their clients	1	2	3	4
70. Supervisors help staff when problems arise	1	2	3	4

*In this office:*

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
71. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when dealing with the court system	1	2	3	4
72. Parents have the right to raise their children as they want to	1	2	3	4
73. Administrators make certain adequate resources are available to meet client needs	1	2	3	4
74. Staff place more priority on paperwork than on helping clients	1	2	3	4
75. Caseworkers take time to problem solve tough cases together	1	2	3	4
76. Supervisors serve as a buffer between workers and administrators	1	2	3	4
77. Administrators provide support in settling disputes between staff	1	2	3	4
78. Staff make children and families top priority	1	2	3	4
79. Staff are respected by judges and the court system	1	2	3	4
80. Workers are allowed flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time	1	2	3	4
81. Supervisors and their caseworkers have regularly scheduled case conferences	1	2	3	4
82. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when needs arise	1	2	3	4
83. Supervisors allow caseworkers to have specialized caseloads or change job assignments (e.g. move from foster care to adoptions) to meet worker needs	1	2	3	4
84. Staff's orientation to casework is more focused on investigation and compliance than on providing assistance and support	1	2	3	4

### III. Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare

**Directions:**

This section of the survey asks you to make a series of judgments about your personal attitudes and beliefs related to your intentions to remain employed in child welfare as a profession. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided below. Fill in one number for each item that best corresponds to the strength of your disagreement or agreement.

**SCALE:** 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 = Disagree (D) 3 = Agree (A) 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. I intend to remain in child welfare as my long-term professional career.	1	2	3	4
2. I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a position outside of child welfare with a higher salary.	1	2	3	4
3. I would leave child welfare work tomorrow if I was offered a job for the same salary but with less stress.	1	2	3	4
4. The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare.	1	2	3	4
5. I am actively seeking other employment	1	2	3	4
6. I frequently think about quitting my job.	1	2	3	4

*Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete this survey.*

**Prepared by Tonya M. Westbrook**

*Please return this survey to Tonya M. Westbrook at The University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Tucker Hall, Athens, GA 30602 in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your responses will remain confidential. Again, your professional contributions and cooperation in completing this survey are greatly appreciated!!!*

## APPENDIX E

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

## PART I - Demographic Information

**Directions:** Please complete the following items by filling in the appropriate space or by writing in any relevant information. Data for this study will be aggregated and analyzed so that no individual will be identified. **Please mark only one answer for each item.**

**1. County Office in which you work (see enclosed list of county code numbers):**

County code number [\_ \_ \_]                      County name \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Primary Program Area in which you work:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CPS Investigation/Intake | <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptions              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CPS Ongoing              | <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Development   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversion                | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Programs      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Care/Placement    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify |
- 

**3. Job classification in which you work:**

- Caseworker/Case Manager                       Direct Supervisor                       Administrator

**4. Gender:**

- Male     Female

**5. Age:**

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 51-55 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> 56-60 |



1 - 2 years

26 - 30 years

3 - 5 years

31 - 34 years

6 - 10 years

35+ years

**9. If you are a worker, what is the approximate number of cases of your current caseload:**

[ \_ \_ \_ ] Cases

**10. If you are a supervisor, how many caseworkers do you currently supervise? [ \_ \_ \_ ]**

## APPENDIX F

## CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

**PART II – Organizational Culture in Child Welfare**

**Directions:** This section includes a set of statements that are indicators of organizational culture in the child welfare work context. The statements reflect characteristics of key members of the organization and the larger work environment. Using the scale provided below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that each item statement is *characteristic of the office in which you work*. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please note that each question begins with...*In this office...*

***In this office:***

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. Administrators make certain their staff understand and follow policy.	1	2	3	4
2. Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work.	1	2	3	4
3. Staff celebrate workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, work anniversaries, promotions, awards, etc.).	1	2	3	4
4. Supervisors are accessible for case and emergency consultations as needed by their caseworkers.	1	2	3	4
5. In as much as possible, clients are allowed self-determination in case decision making.	1	2	3	4
6. Staff believe that parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices.	1	2	3	4
7. Administrators encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.	1	2	3	4
8. Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.	1	2	3	4
9. Policy must be followed to the letter, even to the detriment of clients	1	2	3	4
10. Staff are committed to continuous professional development.	1	2	3	4
11. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another.	1	2	3	4

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 12. Staff are very helpful to clients.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Administrators recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Supervisors encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. Local administrators serve as a buffer between workers and state level administrators.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. Supervisors are empathetic to the needs and feelings of staff.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. Staff are proud to work in child welfare.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. Administrators show a genuine concern for staff as professionals.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. Supervisors support caseworkers when they need to take sick leave, annual leave, and comp time.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22. Confidentiality of work with clients is satisfactorily maintained.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23. Quality casework is regularly recognized, even if only informally.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24. Staff maintain a good working relationship with other community agencies (schools, law enforcement, mental health agencies, etc.). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 25. Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs.                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 26. Staff believe that parents who abuse or neglect their child(ren) do so intentionally.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 27. Supervisors are fair and provide support for workers in addressing client complaints.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28. New workers are assigned caseloads without adequate training and knowledge.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |



- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, retirements, etc) are regularly celebrated. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 31. Administrators ensure that employee have the resources(supplies and equipment) necessary to do their work.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 32. Supervisors encourage experienced workers to help newer workers learn the ropes.                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 33. Decisions made by caseworkers, no matter how minor, must be approved by superiors .                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 34. Staff believe that clients create their own problems.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 35. Staff hold regular social events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc).                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 36. Staff believe the state office staff supports and makes positive contributions to their work.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 37. Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 38. Supervisors recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 39. Documentation in case records is completed in a professional manner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 40. Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage the caseloads of their workers.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 41. If something goes wrong with a case, the caseworker will be blamed.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 42. Staff are hard workers.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 43. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 44. Supervisors provide quality mentoring to new employees.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 45. Staff receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 46. Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 47. Staff share informal rituals (e.g. casual dress days sharing humor, coffee breaks, etc).                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

48. Experienced caseworkers spend time mentoring new employees.	1	2	3	4
49. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators.	1	2	3	4
50. Caseworkers are encouraged by supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions.	1	2	3	4
51. Staff professionally share and learn from one another.	1	2	3	4
52. Staff treat clients with dignity and respect.	1	2	3	4
53. Staff are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions.	1	2	3	4
54. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues.	1	2	3	4
55. Administrators are sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff.	1	2	3	4
56. Staff have positive relationships with the general public and community.	1	2	3	4
57. Workers are usually acknowledged and rewarded for doing exceptional casework.	1	2	3	4
58. Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals.	1	2	3	4
59. Supervisors assign cases depending on individual caseworker strengths and client needs.	1	2	3	4
60. Staff dress professionally.	1	2	3	4
61. Caseworkers are allowed sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.	1	2	3	4
62. Workers strive to provide quality casework for their clients.	1	2	3	4
63. Supervisors show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals.	1	2	3	4
64. Children and families are supervisors' number one priority.	1	2	3	4
65. Staff believe that clients generally want to be cooperative with DFCS and other agencies.	1	2	3	4
66. Administrators are more concerned with following policy and procedure than with helping clients.	1	2	3	4

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 67. Supervisors advocate for their workers' needs to administrators.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 68. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 69. Staff want what is best for their clients.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 70. Supervisors help workers when problems arise.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 71. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when working with the court system.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 72. Staff believe parents have the right to raise their children as they desire.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 73. Administrators make certain adequate resources are available to meet client needs.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 74. Staff place more priority on paperwork than on helping clients.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 75. Caseworkers work together to solve difficult cases.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 76. Supervisors serve as a buffer between workers and administrators.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 77. Administrators provide support in settling disputes between staff.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 78. Staff make children and families a top priority.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 79. Staff are respected by judges and the court system.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 80. Workers are allowed flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 81. Supervisors and their caseworkers have regularly scheduled case conferences.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 82. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when needs arise.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 83. To meet worker needs, supervisors allow caseworkers to have specialized caseloads or change job assignments (e.g. move from foster care to adoptions) to meet worker needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 84. Casework is more focused on investigation and compliance than on providing assistance and support.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

## APPENDIX G

## INTENT TO REMAIN EMPLOYED – CHILD WELFARE

**PART III – Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare**

**Directions:** This section of the survey asks you to make a series of judgments about your personal attitudes and beliefs related to your intentions to remain employed in child welfare as a profession. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided below. Fill in one number for each item that best corresponds to the strength of your disagreement or agreement.

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. I intend to remain in child welfare as my long-term professional career.	1	2	3	4
2. I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a position outside of child welfare with a higher salary.	1	2	3	4
3. I would leave child welfare work tomorrow if I was offered a job for the same salary but with less stress.	1	2	3	4
4. The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare.	1	2	3	4
5. I am actively seeking other employment	1	2	3	4
6. I frequently think about quitting my job.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX H  
SURVEY COVER LETTER

August 15, 2005

Department of Family and Children Services Child Welfare Employee,

Please find enclosed a copy of the *Child Welfare Organizational Culture and Intent to Remain Employed (in Child Welfare) Surveys*. This survey is being sent to all Georgia DFCS child welfare employees. Data obtained in this survey will be used to develop a new scale to measure organizational culture in public child welfare agencies. I am requesting your professional assistance in developing this new measure.

This dissertation research is being conducted by social work doctoral student Tonya M. Westbrook, MSW, of the University of Georgia's School of Social Work under the direction of Dr. Kevin W. DeWeaver (706-542-5473). Any questions about this survey and the research being conducted can be directed to Tonya Westbrook at 706-542-3949 or 706-549-4283 or by e-mail at tonyamw@uga.edu.

You are being asked to complete the enclosed survey and **return it to Tonya M. Westbrook at the University of Georgia's School of Social Work, Tucker Hall, Athens, Georgia, 30602-7016 using the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope**. The survey requires approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

*There will be no benefits or risks for you for participating in this survey. Participation in this study is **completely confidential and voluntary**. You will not be asked to provide any information that could be used to personally identify you. You may withdraw at any time or omit any questions in the survey that you do not feel comfortable answering. All information will be treated confidentially. The results of this study will be aggregated so that no individual respondent will be identified. The results of the study may be used in academic publications. All county directors will be provided with an executive summary and/or a larger report of the results of this study and should be made available for you to access.*

Please complete the survey and return it using the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided in this package by September 2, 2005.

Thank you in advance for you cooperation and assistance in the development of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Scale.

Tonya M. Westbrook, MSW  
tonyamw@uga.edu  
706-542-3949

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

## COVER LETTER TO COUNTY DIRECTORS

August 15, 2005

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Please find the enclosed survey titled the *Child Welfare Organizational Culture Scale*. For my doctoral dissertation research at the University of Georgia's School of Social Work, I am developing the *Child Welfare Organizational Culture Scale* to measure organizational culture in child welfare agencies. The study will examine the link between organizational culture and staff turnover and retention.

The administration of this survey to all DFCS child welfare employees has been approved and endorsed by the Department of Family and Children's Services. Enclosed is an endorsement letter from DFCS Deputy Director Cliff O'Connor. The study is funded by the U.S. DHHS Children's Bureau through a research grant.

Please distribute one of the enclosed surveys to each child welfare employee (child welfare caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators only) working in your county office. A few extra surveys have been included in case they are needed. Unused surveys do not have to be returned. If you find there are not enough surveys enclosed, please contact me and I will gladly send additional survey packets to you.

I would also greatly appreciate it if you could encourage your child welfare staff (caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators) to complete and return the survey. Completion of the survey should take only 10 to 15 minutes. I also plan to send follow-up memos in one week and again in two weeks reminding all child welfare staff to complete and return the survey.

When the study is completed, I will provide each county director with an executive summary outlining the results. A larger, more detailed report of the results will also be available to county directors upon request.

Thank you for your assistance in this study of child welfare organizations in Georgia. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to contact me via email or phone for discussion.

Tonya Westbrook, MSW  
UGA School of Social Work  
Athens, GA  
706-549-4283  
tonyamw@uga.edu

## APPENDIX J

## ITEM MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR STUDY MEASURES

Item Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory</b>		
1.	3.11	.648
2.	3.17	.667
3.	2.74	.822
4.	3.17	.721
5.	2.83	.613
6.	2.77	.557
7.	2.74	.802
8.	3.11	.704
9. <sup>a</sup>	2.25	.757
10.	2.86	.647
11.	3.05	.622
12.	3.08	.514
13.	2.75	.756
14.	2.78	.767
15. <sup>a</sup>	2.35	.831
16.	2.86	.709
17.	2.86	.783
18.	2.72	.718
19.	3.12	.551
20.	2.72	.835
21.	3.10	.750
22.	3.21	.621
23.	2.76	.790
24.	3.11	.618
25.	2.70	.759
26. <sup>a</sup>	2.96	.562
27.	2.96	.684
28. <sup>a</sup>	2.77	.875
29.	2.89	.672
30.	2.94	.765
31.	2.79	.745
32.	3.14	.638
33. <sup>a</sup>	2.41	.785
34.	2.72	.579
35.	2.67	.792
36.	2.18	.763
37.	2.80	.715
38.	2.93	.629
39.	2.98	.580



40. <sup>a</sup>	2.56	.766
41. <sup>a</sup>	2.33	.838
42.	3.39	.575
43.	2.67	.681
44.	2.77	.725
45.	2.83	.707
46.	2.86	.610
47.	3.13	.611
48.	3.06	.635
49.	2.72	.751
50.	2.98	.700
51.	3.11	.556
52.	3.12	.537
53.	2.71	.673
54.	3.11	.457
55.	2.62	.820
56.	3.02	.556
57.	2.43	.831
58.	2.65	.619
59.	2.38	.767
60.	2.97	.583
61.	2.72	.653
62.	3.18	.477
63.	2.88	.753
64.	2.90	.729
65.	2.62	.610
66. <sup>a</sup>	2.58	.746
67.	2.86	.780
68.	3.18	.552
69.	3.16	.493
70.	3.10	.674
71.	3.26	.528
72.	2.29	.621
73.	2.71	.668
74. <sup>a</sup>	2.75	.703
75.	2.94	.641
76.	2.85	.670
77.	2.64	.722
78.	3.16	.560
79.	2.73	.839
80.	2.97	.641
81.	3.05	.679
82.	3.16	.560
83.	2.54	.780
84. <sup>a</sup>	2.32	.662

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Intent to Remain Employed – Child Welfare

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1.	2.66	.951
2.	2.10	.847
3. <sup>a</sup>	2.35	.967
4.	2.40	.872
5. <sup>a</sup>	2.86	.946
6. <sup>a</sup>	2.59	.993

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<sup>a</sup> Reverse scored item

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## APPENDIX K

## ITEM LOADINGS FOR THE ONE FACTOR SOLUTION OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

## Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory – One-Factor Solution

1. Administrators make certain their staff understand and follow policy.
2. Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work.
3. Staff celebrate workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, work anniversaries, promotions, awards, etc.).
4. Supervisors are accessible for case and emergency consultations as needed by their caseworkers.
5. In as much as possible, clients are allowed self-determination in case decision making.
6. Staff believe that parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices.
7. Administrators encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.
8. Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.
10. Staff are committed to continuous professional development.
11. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another.
12. Staff are very helpful to clients.
13. Administrators recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.
14. Supervisors encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.
15. Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions.
16. Local administrators serve as a buffer between workers and state level administrators.
17. Supervisors are empathetic to the needs and feelings of staff.
18. Staff are proud to work in child welfare.
19. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner.
20. Administrators show a genuine concern for staff as professionals.
21. Supervisors support caseworkers when they need to take sick leave, annual leave, and comp time.
22. Confidentiality of work with clients is maintained.
23. Quality casework is regularly recognized, even if only informally.
24. Staff maintain a good working relationship with other community agencies (schools, law enforcement, mental health agencies, etc.).
25. Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs.
27. Supervisors are fair and provide support for workers in addressing client complaints.
28. New workers are assigned caseloads without adequate training and knowledge.
29. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive.
30. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc) are regularly celebrated.

31. Administrators ensure that employees have the resources (supplies and equipment) necessary to do their work.
32. Supervisors encourage experienced workers to help newer workers learn the ropes.
35. Staff hold regular social events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc).
36. Staff believe the state office staff supports and makes positive contributions to their work.
37. Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints.
38. Supervisors recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.
41. If something goes wrong with a case, the caseworker will be blamed.
43. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work.
44. Supervisors provide quality mentoring to new employees.
45. Staff receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.
46. Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice.
47. Staff share informal rituals (e.g. casual dress days sharing humor, coffee breaks, etc).
48. Experienced caseworkers spend time mentoring newer employees.
49. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators.
50. Caseworkers are encouraged by supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions.
51. Staff professionally share and learn from one another.
52. Staff treat clients with dignity and respect.
53. Staff are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions.
54. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues.
55. Administrators are sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff.
56. Staff have positive relationships with the general public and community.
57. Workers are usually acknowledged and rewarded for doing exceptional casework.
59. Supervisors assign cases depending on individual caseworker strengths and client needs.
61. Caseworkers are allowed sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.
63. Supervisors show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals.
64. Children and families are supervisors' number one priority.
66. Administrators are more concerned with following policies and procedures than with helping clients.
67. Supervisors advocate for their workers' needs to administrators.
68. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals.
69. Staff want what is best for their clients.
70. Supervisors help workers when problems arise.
73. Administrators make certain adequate resources are available to meet client needs.
74. Staff place more priority on paperwork than on helping clients.
75. Caseworkers take time to problem solve tough cases together.
76. Supervisors serve as a buffer between workers and administrators.
77. Administrators provide support in settling disputes between staff.
78. Staff make the well-being of children and families their top priority.
80. Workers are allowed flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time.
81. Supervisors and their caseworkers have regularly scheduled case conferences.
82. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when needs arise.

83. To meet worker needs, supervisors allow caseworkers to have specialized caseloads or change job assignments (e.g. move from foster care to adoptions).

## APPENDIX L

INDIVIDUAL ITEMS LOADING ON EACH OF THE SEVEN EMPIRICALLY VERIFIED  
SUBSCALES OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORYIndividual Items Loading on Each of the Seven Empirically Verified Subscales of the  
Child Welfare Organizational Culture InventoryFactor One – Supervisory Support

4. Supervisors are accessible for case and emergency consultations as needed by their caseworkers.
8. Caseworkers receive assistance from supervisors to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.
14. Supervisors encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.
17. Supervisors are empathetic to the needs and feelings of staff.
21. Supervisors support caseworkers when they need to take sick leave, annual leave, and comp time.
23. Quality casework is regularly recognized, even if only informally.
27. Supervisors are fair and provide support for workers in addressing client complaints.
32. Supervisors encourage experienced workers to help newer workers learn the ropes.
38. Supervisors recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.
44. Supervisors provide quality mentoring to new employees.
46. Staff engage in culturally competent social work practice.
50. Caseworkers are encouraged by supervisors to be the best they can be in their assigned positions.
59. Supervisors assign cases depending on individual caseworker strengths and client needs.
63. Supervisors show a genuine concern for caseworkers as professionals.
64. Children and families are supervisors' number one priority.
67. Supervisors advocate for their workers' needs to administrators.
70. Supervisors help workers when problems arise.
76. Supervisors serve as a buffer between workers and administrators.
81. Supervisors and their caseworkers have regularly scheduled case conferences.
83. To meet worker needs, supervisors allow caseworkers to have specialized caseloads or change job assignments (e.g. move from foster care to adoptions).

Factor Two – Administrative Support

16. Local administrators serve as a buffer between workers and state level administrators.
20. Administrators show a genuine concern for staff as professionals.
25. Administrators make certain their staff are provided with sufficient resources to effectively do their jobs.

- 31. Administrators ensure that employees have the resources (supplies and equipment) necessary to do their work.
- 37. Administrators are fair and provide support for staff in addressing client complaints.
- 45. Staff receive assistance from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.
- 55. Administrators are sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff.
- 57. Workers are usually acknowledged and rewarded for doing exceptional casework.
- 73. Administrators make certain adequate resources are available to meet client needs.
- 77. Administrators provide support in settling disputes between staff.

### Factor Three - Professionalism

- 12. Staff are very helpful to clients.
- 19. Written documents (letters, court reports, etc) are completed in a professional manner.
- 22. Confidentiality of work with clients is maintained.
- 24. Staff maintain a good working relationship with other community agencies (schools, law enforcement, mental health agencies, etc.).
- 39. Documentation in case records is completed in a professional manner.
- 42. Staff are hard workers.
- 52. Staff treat clients with dignity and respect.
- 56. Staff have positive relationships with the general public and community.
- 60. Staff dress professionally.
- 62. Workers strive to provide quality casework for their clients.
- 68. Staff give priority to child safety above other agency goals.
- 69. Staff want what is best for their clients.
- 71. Staff conduct themselves in a professional manner when working with the court system.
- 78. Staff make the well-being of children and families their top priority.
- 79. Staff are respected by judges and the court system.

### Factor Four – Professional Sharing and Support

- 2. Caseworkers assist and cover for one another's work.
- 11. Staff can be counted on to listen to one another.
- 30. Special events (e.g. birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, retirements, etc) are regularly celebrated.
- 35. Staff hold regular social events that bring staff together (picnics, luncheons, etc).
- 47. Staff share informal rituals (e.g. casual dress days sharing humor, coffee breaks, etc).
- 48. Experienced caseworkers spend time mentoring newer employees.

### Factor Five – Client Services and Beliefs

- 26.<sup>a</sup> Staff believe that parents who abuse or neglect their child(ren) do so intentionally.

- 28.<sup>a</sup> New workers are assigned caseloads without adequate training and knowledge.
- 34.<sup>a</sup> Staff believe that clients create their own problems.
- 66.<sup>a</sup> Administrators are more concerned with following policies and procedures than with helping clients.
- 74.<sup>a</sup> Staff place more priority on paperwork than on helping clients.
- 84.<sup>a</sup> Casework is more focused on investigation and compliance than on providing assistance and support.

#### Factor Six - Autonomy

- 9.<sup>a</sup> Policy must be followed to the letter, even to the detriment of clients.
- 33.<sup>a</sup> Decisions made by caseworkers, no matter how minor, must be approved by superiors.
- 40.<sup>a</sup> Supervisors and administrators often micro-manage the caseloads of their workers.

#### Factor Seven – Parent and Permanency Beliefs

5. In as much as possible, clients are allowed self-determination in case decision making.
6. Staff believe that parents generally want what is best for their children, even when that means making sacrifices and difficult choices.
58. Staff give priority to permanency planning activities above other agency goals.
72. Staff believe parents have the right to raise their children as they desire.

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<sup>a</sup> Reversed scored.



## APPENDIX M

ITEMS THAT DID NOT LOAD ON THE SEVEN FACTOR SOLUTION OF THE  
CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORYItems That Did Not Load on the Seven Factor Solution of the  
Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory

1. Administrators make certain their staff understand and follow policy.
3. Staff celebrate workers' accomplishments (e.g. obtaining a MSW degree, work anniversaries, promotions, awards, etc.).
7. Administrators encourage staff to continue their professional development through social work education, training, etc.
10. Staff are committed to continuous professional development.
13. Administrators recognize strengths and weaknesses among individual staff.
- 15.<sup>a</sup> Fear of being reprimanded plays a significant role in casework decisions.
18. Staff are proud to work in child welfare.
29. Interpersonal relationships among professional staff are positive.
36. Staff believe the state office staff supports and makes positive contributions to their work.
- 41.<sup>a</sup> If something goes wrong with a case, the caseworker will be blamed.
43. Staff spend time in professional reflection about their work.
49. Leadership roles are shared by caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators.
51. Staff professionally share and learn from one another.
53. Staff are allowed to use their own professional judgment in making case decisions.
54. Staff accept the need for support from their colleagues.
61. Caseworkers are allowed sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.
65. Staff believe that clients generally want to be cooperative with DFCS and other agencies.
75. Caseworkers take time to problem solve tough cases together.
80. Workers are allowed flexibility in day-to-day duties as long as larger goals are accomplished on time.
82. Staff are willing to provide support and assist each other when needs arise.

## APPENDIX N

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS OF THE SEVEN FACTORED SUBSCALES OF THE  
CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

**Factor I – Supervisory Support:** This dimension refers to the frequency and quality of professional child welfare staff’s interactions and relationships with immediate superordinates that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. *Supervisory Support* is evidenced in the agency in several areas such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates; internal and external advocacy on behalf of staff and clients; explanation of and monitoring of compliance with rules and policies; work assignments and professional decision making; and personal and organizational professional development, learning and guidance such as seen in mentoring and orienting to the job.

**Factor II – Administrative Support:** *This dimension* refers to the frequency and quality of professional child welfare staff’s interactions and relationships with agency heads that frame, encourage, and reward persistence, commitment, and excellence in professional practice. *Administrative Support* is evidenced in the agency in several areas such as the quality of interpersonal relationships between administrators and subordinates; development, explication, and enforcement of rules and policies; administrative guidance and leadership; and the provision of resources.

**Factor III – Professionalism:** This dimension refers to the extent to which shared values among staff reflect child welfare practices that demonstrate commitment to the continuous improvement

of services to clients. *Professionalism* includes areas of ethics of practice; personal conduct; and best professional conduct.

**Factor IV – Collegiality:** This dimension refers to the quantity and quality of interpersonal relationships among staff that enhance professional interactions, learning, and development. Examples of *Collegiality* include: learning from one another; helping one another; and empathy for and caring for one another.

**Factor V – Organizational Ethos:** This dimension refers to basic values and beliefs held by members of the organization. *Organizational Ethos* includes beliefs staff have about how the values the child welfare agency holds and beliefs about intentions of parents' (clients') in their actions.

**Factor IV – Autonomy:** This dimension refers to the organizational expectation about the degree to which professional staff are allowed to work independently. Independence in work includes exercising professional judgment and self-direction in decision making.

**Factor VII – Beliefs About Parents:** This dimension refers to ideas organization members hold true regarding the parents of the families they serve as clients. *Beliefs About Parents* includes staffs' understandings of clients' values and priorities in relation to their children.

## APPENDIX O

SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR COUNTY GEOGRAPHIC TYPE AND  
STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE  
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

*Summary of One-Way ANOVAs for County Geographic Type and Statistically Significant Factors of  
the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

Factor	Source	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p
<u>Supervisory Support</u>						
	Model	2	3347.455	1673.727	17.71	.0001
	Error	1006	95074.186	94.507		
	Corrected	1008	98421.641			
	Total					
<u>Administrative Support</u>						
	Model	2	2105.986	1052.993	34.83	.0001
	Error	1006	30414.983	30.234		
	Corrected	1008	32520.969			
	Total					
<u>Professionalism</u>						
	Model	2	1225.659	612.830	24.49	.0001
	Error	1006	25174.571	25.024		
	Corrected	1008	26400.230			
	Total					
<u>Collegiality</u>						
	Model	2	210.326	105.163	14.43	.0001
	Error	1006	7331.672	7.288		
	Corrected	1008	7541.999			
	Total					
<u>Organizational Ethos</u>						
	Model	2	46.518	23.259	4.28	0.014
	Error	1006	5464.776	5.432		
	Corrected	1008	5511.294			
	Total					
<u>Beliefs About Parents</u>						
	Model	2	28.686	14.343	6.70	0.001
	Error	1006	2153.144	2.140		
	Corrected	1008	2181.830			
	Total					

## APPENDIX P

SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR YEARS EXPERIENCE IN CHILD WELFARE  
AND STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE  
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

*Summary of One-Way ANOVAs for Years Experience in Child Welfare and Statistically Significant  
Factors of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

Factor	Source	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p
Supervisory Support	Model	3	1075.903	358.634	3.71	0.011
	Error	1022	98787.160	96.660		
	Corrected	1025	99863.064			
	Total					
Administrative Support	Model	3	483.556	161.185	5.10	0.002
	Error	1022	32313.085	31.618		
	Corrected	1025	32796.641			
	Total					
Organizational Ethos	Model	3	91.594	30.531	5.73	0.000
	Error	1022	5442.952	5.326		
	Corrected	1025	5534.546			
	Total					
Autonomy	Model	2	82.425	27.475	10.77	0.000
	Error	1022	2608.246	2.552		
	Corrected	1025	2690.671			
	Total					

## APPENDIX Q

SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVAS FOR CASELOAD SIZE AND STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF THE CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE  
INVENTORY

*Summary of One-Way ANOVAs for Caseload Size and Statistically Significant Factors of the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory*

Factor	Source	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p
Collegiality	Model	2	57.007	28.503	3.72	0.0248
	Error	730	5598.406	7.669		
	Corrected	732	5655.413			
	Total					