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THE IMPACT THE JOB STRESS OF A CHILD WELFARE SOCIAL WORKER HAS ON THE QUALITY OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR INTIMATE PARTNER

Nadine Cazares

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PARTNER

_____

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

_____

by

Nadine Cazares

May 2023

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Approved by:

Armando Barragan, PhD, MSW, Faculty Supervisor

Yawen Li, PhD, MSW, Research Coordinator

ABSTRACT

The study focused on identifying the impact the job stress of a child welfare social worker has on the quality of their relationship with their intimate partner. The study examined child welfare social workers in a Child Protective Services department in a county in Southern California. The study utilized a positivist paradigm with data gathered through self-administered online surveys. The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for the data analysis. The research conducted a correlational analysis, as both the independent variable (job stress) and dependent variable (relationship quality) are interval levels of measurement. The results failed to reject the null hypothesis as there was no significant correlation between job stress and low relationship quality. The study served a purpose to begin a discussion regarding the job stress that child welfare social workers endure throughout their daily duties and the impact it has on their personal relationship with their significant other. The small study may help inspire a future large-scale study that may show a significant correlation between the two variables. Furthermore, the study may inspire similar studies, such as examining the impact that the high job stress levels have on the family unit overall, including spouse and children.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my sister and my mother, the strongest people I know. I would not have accomplished what I have today without their unconditional love and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Chapter one covers the focus of the research project by identifying and discussing the research questions. The chapter identifies the research paradigm and discusses the rationale for the selected paradigm. The literature review provides existing information regarding the stressful demands of the child welfare social worker (CWSW) position and the impact the stress has on the worker. Furthermore, the chapter identifies the theoretical orientation selected for the study. Chapter one concludes with the discussion of potential contributions of the study to micro and macro social work practice.

Research Question

CWSW is a demanding position that requires an extensive skill set including leadership, decision making, oral, interpersonal, and written communication skills (Government Jobs, 2021). Their job duties include but are not limited to compliance home visits, collaboration meetings, extensive documentation, investigations, court reports, testifying, referring clients to different community programs, and writing warrants. CWSWs make critical decisions that permanently shape the lives of children and their families. The study focused on CWSWs in a county in Southern California that will remain anonymous and is referred to as "The County" throughout this study.

A healthy balance between the CWSW's work and personal life is essential. A significant part of the CWSW's personal life is the relationship they

have with their spouse or significant other. Identifying how job stress impacts this relationship can help the worker maintain a healthy work-life balance. The study sought to identify whether the job stress of a CWSW impact the quality of the relationship with their intimate partner.

The study's research question is: What is the impact of child welfare workers' job stress on their relationship with their intimate partner? It is hypothesized that the job stress of a CWSW, negatively impacts the worker's relationship with their intimate partner.

Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

The research paradigm used in the study is positivism. Positivism is the assumption that an impartial reality exists separate from the personal experience that indicate immutable laws and mechanisms (Morris, 2013). In the positivism paradigm the role of the researcher is to take a distant position in the research, by observing, without affecting (Morris, 2013). The positivist paradigm aims to find causes and correlations through quantitative data (Morris, 2013).

The rationale for using the positivist paradigm is that the study hopes to reveal the potential correlation between the job stress as a CWSW and negative effects in their relationship with their intimate partner. Additionally, the rationale for the use of the positivist paradigm includes the ability to collect quantitative data in the form of surveys. The research will be conducting a correlational analysis, as both the independent variable and dependent variable are interval levels of measurement.

Literature Review

The literature review identifies gaps in the research on child welfare social work and the impact of the stress of the position. The literature identifies the challenges within child welfare work, such as stress, work-life balance/work-family conflict, and the child welfare worker's overall wellbeing. The literature review also explores burnout and employee turnover within child welfare. Lastly, the literature review discusses existing interventions to address stress among child welfare workers.

<u>Challenges in Child Welfare Work</u>

Child welfare is a highly demanding and challenging profession. As a result, there are several contributors to the stress child welfare workers experience. Some of the common stressors include high caseloads, long workdays, on-call responsibilities, low wages/ compensation, inadequate supervision or lack of organizational support, insufficient training, bureaucratic agency practices, role ambiguity, and lack of resources for clients (Shier et al., 2012; Travis et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2013). The lack of time a social worker has is also a contributing factor to the stress, and results in diminished boundaries between work and home life, affecting work-life balance (Olsson & Sundh, 2019).

Child welfare work is unique from most public or private agencies because it primarily provides involuntarily services to clients. CWSWs often conduct home visits and are exposed to potentially dangerous environments, such as neighborhoods with high crime and violence, as well as clients who may be resistant to complying with services (Ellett et al., 2007). They are faced with making critical authoritative decisions that affect the wellbeing of children, and

encounter countless cases of trauma, such as child maltreatment and even death (Shier et al., 2012). All these factors affect different aspects of the social worker's overall wellbeing, including work-life balance and the quality of services they provided to clients.

<u>Burnout and Turnover</u>

There is significant research found in child welfare that focuses on burnout and employee turnover rates due to the stressful job demands of child welfare social work. Unfortunately, no conclusive statistics exist on the prevalence rates of stress and burnout in the field of social work (Travis et al., 2016). However, statistics on turnover may be informative. High levels of burnout among social workers contribute to high turnover in child welfare (Salloum et al., 2015). According to Westbrook et al. (2006), the annual turnover rates for CPS case managers range from 20% to 40% nationwide. Burnout occurs when the social worker is frequently exposed to stress in the workplace that results in conflict and a lack of balance between work demands and resources" (Lizano et al., 2014). Burnout can cause emotional exhaustion that leads to depersonalization as a way to cope with the chronic stressors (Travis et al., 2016).

Studies of work-life imbalance reveal that it impacts parenting, and can cause domestic violence, stress, illness, and a decrease in life satisfaction (Wu et al., 2013). Shier et al. (2012) indicated that the stress experienced at work pervades to home life and vice versa. Similarly, Jayaratne et al. (1986) found that work-related stress aggravated stress in a marriage and as a result, conflict with a spouse had a negative impact on the worker's job performance.

Stress and burnout not only have a negative impact on the individual child welfare worker's wellbeing, but also on the clients they serve and the child welfare agency. Work-family conflict has been shown to cause a decrease in worker productivity, morale, absenteeism, low job satisfaction, and high turnover (Nissley, et al., 2008; Salloum et al., 2015). Shier et al. (2012), discussed that agencies with stressful work environments are less likely to provide comprehensive and continuous services to the clients they serve. Increased burnout and impaired wellbeing can impact the quality of services provided by the social worker by impairing their ability to make critical decisions about a children's safety (Salloum et al., 2015; Shier et al., 2012). Furthermore, the emotional exhaustion caused by burnout can cause disengagement in social workers that affects the quality and effectiveness of services provided to clients (Travis et al., 2016)

Interventions

Existing interventions were explored in the literature to help improve and prevent stress, burnout, work-family conflict/work-life imbalance, and improve the overall well-being of the worker. Trauma informed care is an intervention that provides the worker with knowledge and understanding of the effects of trauma in order to recognize trauma in clients and themselves (Salloum et al., 2015). Having an appreciation and value for child welfare work was found to be significant in preventing work-life imbalance and turnover (Wu et al., 2013). In addition, social support from colleagues, supervisors, and outside the work environment such as, family and friend support is a valuable intervention to

prevent burnout and turnover (Nissely et al., 2005; Shier et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2013).

Olsson & Sundh (2019), described implementing curbing strategies/ coping skills for social worker's work and personal lives, in efforts to prevent and manage stress through time management and perception of time. An example of a curbing strategy is forming a collegial buffer group, that serves as a support circle of colleagues to converse with and take short breaks together during work hours to process the workday (Olsson & Sundh, 2019). This curbing strategy prevent work stress from coming home with the worker. At home workers practice self-care or off duty curbing strategies that consists of leisure activities, such as physical activities and hobbies (Olsson & Sundh, 2019).

Although there are existing interventions and prevention strategies for the individual, there is a lack of existing organizational interventions found. However, many are recommended by the literature for example, reducing caseloads, implementing flexible work designs, increasing supervisory support, creating a more collaborative team environment, and developing of mentoring and support programs for new employees (Ellett et al., 2007; Shier et al., 2012; Travis et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2013).

Conclusion

The literature identified a significant gap in the research regarding, the high job stress levels of a child welfare worker and the impact it has on the worker's relationship with their intimate partner. The research found only one study that focused on the impact of burnout on child welfare worker's relationship

6

with their spouses, however the study focused only on heterosexual couples in the 1980s and included only female CWSW. In conclusion, the literature review identified a need for further research to examine the impact of the job stress on one of the most significant relationships in the social worker's life, the one with their spouse or significant other.

Theoretical Orientation

The theoretical orientation selected for the study is Person-in-Environment (PIE) perspective. PIE perspective is described as a foundation in social work practice and proposes that a person's behavior can be understood by looking at their environment (Zastrow et al., 2019). The PIE perspective focuses on the person and their constant interactions with the different systems that make up their environment (Zastrow et al., 2019). Examples of these systems include: family, work, friends, religion/ spiritual, educational, and political systems. PIE perspective incorporates concepts from both Systems Theory and Ecological Perspective as they all focus on the person's environment (Zastrow et al., 2019). The PIE perspective focuses on improving the relationships a person has with their multiple systems (work, family, religion, etc.) (Zastrow et al., 2019).

This theoretical orientation demonstrates a framework for the study by focusing on the social worker as the "person," and how the different systems in their environment and the interactions/ relationships within these systems affect the worker. The PIE perspective has the potential to effectively outline how the work system can negatively impact the family system in the CWSW's life. Furthermore, PIE perspective can assist in identifying how the other systems in

the social worker's life (friends, religion, etc.) may alleviate such stressors caused by the highly demanding duties of the CWSW position. PIE perspective can highlight how improving such interactions and relationships in the social worker's different systems, can have the potential to improve the social worker's their wellbeing. For example, identifying support in friend systems and coworkers in the work system may help alleviate stressors in the family system with their spouse or significant other, caused by the job stress of the child welfare position.

Potential Contribution of the Study to Micro and Macro Social Work Practice

The study has the potential to contribute to micro and macro social practice. The outcome of the study at a micro level can help to better prepare social workers entering the field of child welfare by helping them select a program that best fits the dynamic of their life. By being better prepared and aware of the potential conflict the CWSW position can cause in a relationship, the worker can avoid or prepare for such negative impacts and improve job satisfaction.

By improving the overall wellbeing of the social worker at micro level, the social worker can provide better focus on the services they provide as a line worker to the population they serve. The social worker is likely to stay at a position they are happy with that compliments their relationship dynamic and life. Perhaps this can serve to increase the retention rate of child welfare workers. By decreasing high turnover rates in child welfare, the overall services provided to clients in The County have the potential to improve with experienced workers who enjoy their job.

Summary

Chapter one identified the research question of the study: What is the impact of child welfare workers' job stress on their relationship with their intimate partner? A hypothesis was provided for the research question, and the DV and IV were identified. The rationale for the chosen paradigm of positivism was discussed in this chapter. A literature review identified and discussed existing literature on issues pertaining to the research question. The chapter identified and discussed the Person-in-Environment perspective as the selected theoretical orientation for the study. Lastly, chapter one explored the study's possible contributions to both micro and macro social work and concluded the assessment portion of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

Chapter two discusses the engagement section of the study. The section includes a description of the study site's services and characteristics. This section explores strategies for engagement at the research site. Chapter two also includes the researcher's self-preparation for the study. Additionally, the section identifies diversity, ethical, and political issues, and strategies to address them. Lastly chapter two discusses the role of technology in the study.

Study Site

The study site is Child Protective Services, Children and Family Services (CFS) department in a county in Southern California. The agency provides child protective services to The County in California. For the purpose of maintaining The County's anonymity, the descriptions of programs and qualifications include sources from different CFS agencies in Southern California. The social workers in these programs are required to have either a master's degree, bachelor's degree, or 30 units of education, all accompanied by years of experience in the field (Government Jobs, 2021 & County of San Diego, 2021). The social workers are required to attend several months of trainings including Social Worker Induction Training and a series of trainings on the fundamentals of the California Child Welfare Core Practice Model.

CWSW include a variety of programs include but are not limited to, emergency response, court investigations, child abuse registry, and dependency

investigations (OCSSA, 2021c & San Diego County [SDC], 2021). Other

programs include permanency services programs (PSP), specialized family

services (SFS), continuing services (CS), and voluntary services (VS) (OCSSA,

2021c & San Diego County [SDC], 2021). ER social workers are the initial

investigators of child abuse. They investigate if child abuse took place and

determine if allegations are substantiated through immediate or 5-day referrals,

depending on the severity of the allegations (Department of Children and Family

Services, 2021). PSP social workers provide a variety of services to dependent

youth to ensure timely emotional and relationship permanency and stability

(OCSSA, 2021a). The CWSWs in all programs provide to the community with

services that strive to keep the community's children safe by practicing the

agency's mission to partner with families to keep children safe (OCSSA, 2021b).

Engagement Strategies for Gatekeepers at Research Site

There are no gatekeepers in the traditional sense as the researcher

utilized personal networking as an engagement strategy. The researcher utilized

existing personal networks with CWSWs to recruit other CWSWs for the study.

Existing personal networks and relationships served as the gatekeepers at the

research site, as they connected the researcher to other desired participants for

the study. The researcher made contact with CWSWs within the researcher's

network that work in varies programs, such as PSP, SFS, ER, and DI, through

direct in person contact, social media, and phone text messaging. The

researcher provided the CWSWs with the recruitment email with more

information regarding the study.

Self-Preparation

The researcher's self-preparation for the study began prior to conducting the study, as typical in the positivism research paradigm. The researcher prepared for the data collection of the study by identifying a research question. The researcher conducted a literature review to identify existing research on the area of study. The researcher explored theories to determine the best theatrical orientation for the study, Person-in-Environment theory. Furthermore, the researcher was sensitive to the social worker's demanding schedules and limited availability. For this reason, the researcher collected data in the form of an online survey. This method allowed the participant the flexibility to easily participate in the study with minimal interference in their busy lives.

Diversity Issues

A diversity issue that was present in the study is gender and sexual orientation, specifically gender roles in romantic relationships and marriages. The researcher recognized the importance of considering diversity within the study participant's gender and sexual orientation when studying the impact of the job stress on the relationships with their intimate partner. The researcher took into consideration the diversity of the participants views of gender roles, norms, and values in romantic relationships. The researcher addressed the diversity issue by ensuring the survey questions are inclusive of all genders, relationship gender roles, values, and norms.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues considered in the study include the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants. The study gathered data on an extremely intimate part of the participants' lives, their relationships with their spouse or significant other. Therefore, it was crucial that the researcher protected the identity and maintained the participants privacy throughout the data collection process. The researcher addressed confidentiality by distributing an anonymous survey without collecting identifying information to each participant to maintain anonymity. The researcher ensured that the participant was aware of the protection of confidentiality for the purpose of this study. In addition, the protection of the participants' confidentially encouraged the participants of the study to answer the survey truthfully and comfortably without concern that their privacy will be breached. Following a positivist approach, the researcher provided a consent form to the participants explaining the potential risks and benefits of the study (Morris, 2013).

Political Issues

Potential political issues may be that the results of the study shine a negative light on the government agency, CFS. The study results could potentially make the position of CWSW less desirable to Master of Social Work students entering the child welfare workforce or current employees. As a result, the participants may consider an alternative employment position if it means improving or salvaging their relationships. The study could potentially create awareness of an additional negative impact of the demands of the job of child welfare social work, in addition to those found in the literature review for this

study. The researcher addressed the political issue by being transparent with the participants and reviewing the risks and benefits of the study.

The Role of Technology

Technology played an important role in the research study. Technology was used as an efficient method of communication among the initial study participants and other recruitment study participants. Through phone text messages, social media, and emails. Technology was used as a method of convenience and accessibility for the researcher to recruit participants, to collect data, and obtain consent from the participants through the online surveys. In addition, technology benefited the participants as it minimized disruption in the participants' busy schedules.

Summary

The engagement section provided a description of the study site, CFS. Chapter two identified and explored strategies to engage at the study site. The section reviewed the researcher's self-preparation plan, an essential piece of the engagement process. The chapter covered several issues in the engagement process, such as diversity, ethical, and political that the researcher came across at the study site. To conclude the engagement section, the role of technology was identified in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Chapter three discusses the implementation phase of the study. Implementation focuses on the study participants and data collection. The chapter describes the characteristics of the study participants and the selection process, including the sampling strategy. The section discusses the data gathering process including the instrument selected, and the data collection process. In addition, the chapter identifies the data recording processes.

Study Participants

The study participants were Child Welfare Social Workers, who were full-time employees of Children and Family Services in The County, who have a minimum of 1 year in their current position, and who are cohabitating, married, or in a relationship. The study revealed that 16.7% of the participants were cohabitating, 50% married, and 33.3% reported being in a relationship. The study's participants were within the ages of 23-65 years old. The study revealed a mean age range of 34.27. The participants were not limited to a specific gender, race, ethnicity, nor sexual orientation. The study revealed 86.7% Latino/a, 6.7% African American, and 6.7% middle eastern. 16.7% of participants identified as male, and 83.3% identified as female.

Selection of Participants

The researcher utilized a snowball sampling design to select participants that met the recruitment criteria. The researcher selected participants using the

researcher's personal networks, such as colleagues and friends, The researcher utilized the following forms of communication for recruitment: phone text message, social media, and email. Participants then recommend other potential participants for the study.

Data Gathering

The researcher gathered quantitative data using a survey instrument created through Qualtrics through CSUSB student website. The survey was accessed by participants via website link. The survey consisted of two preexisting Likert scale style surveys that have been tested for validity and reliability, to create one 32 question survey for the study. The first existing survey was The Perceived Relationship Quality Component survey that consisted of 18 questions that measured relationship quality through a 7 point scale that ranges from 1- "not at all" to 7-"extremely" (Fletcher et al., 2000, p. 352). The second was The Job Stress Items survey that measured job stress through a scale of ranging from 1-"strongly agree" to 5-" strongly disagree" (Bernas & Major, 2000, p. 178). Lastly, the survey consisted of demographic questions such as the participants age, sex, and the total number of years they have been working in their program.

Phases of Data Collection

The researcher utilized a script to send via text message, social media, and/ or email. The researcher started by sending out the initial recruitment message, then proceeded to send the second scripted message if the individual was interested in learning more or decided to participate. The initial message

informed the prospective participant of the type of survey (multiple choice), the duration, and briefly communicated anonymity. Furthermore to encourage participation, the initial scripted message informed the prospective participant of the incentive of a chance to win a gift card for their participation. The second scripted message encouraged the prospective participant to share the survey with others to expand recruitment. Lastly, it included a formal message that consisted of a brief introduction of the researcher, a brief description of the purpose of the study, eligibility requirements, survey duration, researcher's contact information, and the survey link.

The researcher gathered quantitative data using a survey instrument created through Qualtrics through CSUSB student website. The survey was accessed by participants via website link. The survey consisted of two preexisting Likert scale style surveys that had been tested for validity and reliability, to create one 32 question survey for the study. The first existing survey is The Perceived Relationship Quality Component survey that consists of 18 questions that measures relationship quality through a 7 point scale that ranges from 1- "not at all" to 7-"extremely" (Fletcher et al., 2000, p. 352). The second is The Job Stress Items survey that measures job stress through a scale of ranging from 1-"strongly agree" to 5-" strongly disagree" (Bernas & Major, 2000, p. 178). Lastly, the survey consisted of demographic questions such as the participants age, ethnicity, and gender.

Data Recording

The data was recorded by the study participants in the self-administered online survey through Qualtrics. The researcher utilized Qualtrics as a tool to anonymously track survey completion.

Summary

In chapter three the implementation phase of the study was discussed. The characteristics of the study participants were identified as CWSWs working full-time positions as CFS employees in The County for minimum of one year, who are cohabitating, in a relationship, or married. The chapter identified that snowball sampling was used to select participants for the study. The section described the data gathering process and identified a survey as the instrument. Lastly, the chapter discussed data collection (survey distribution) and data recording (participant completion of self-administered survey) of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for the data analysis, as it is frequently used to measure quantitative data and is commonly used in social work (Morris, 2013). The study's research question is: What is the impact of child welfare workers' job stress on their relationship with their intimate partner? The dependent variable (DV) of the study is the quality of the relationship between the CWSW and intimate partner. The independent variable (IV) is identified as the stress level of the job. It was hypothesized that the job stress of a CWSW, negatively impacts the worker's relationship with their intimate partner.

The research conducted a correlational analysis, as both the independent variable (job stress) and dependent variable (relationship quality) are interval levels of measurement. A Pearson correlation coefficient found small relationship between job stress (JSSUM) and low relationship quality (PRCCSUM) and, $r = .059$, $n = 18$, $p = .815$. The results failed to reject the null hypothesis as there was no significant correlation between job stress of and low relationship quality.

Figure 1 Correlation Table

Correlations

		PRQCSUM	JSSUM
PRQCSUM	Pearson Correlation	1	.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.815
	N	18	18
JSSUM	Pearson Correlation	.059	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.815	
	N	18	18

Figure 2 Correlation Graph
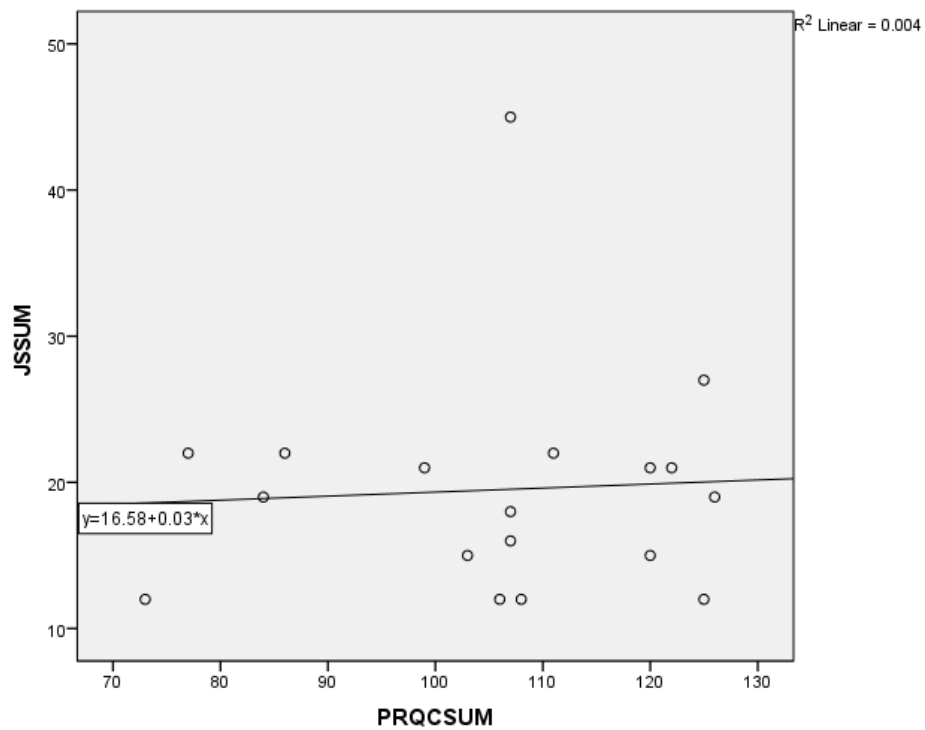
CHAPTER FIVE

TERMINATION AND FOLLOW UP

Limitations

The limitations of the data in the study include the small sample size. The study consisted of 18 participants. The study used positivism research paradigm which utilized quantitative data. The larger the data sample in quantitative data the higher the significance of the study.

Termination and Follow Up

The termination of the study took place once the researcher collected the data necessary to carry out the study. The researcher provided a debriefing statement to the participants that briefly stated the purpose of the study and its potential contribution to macro and micro social work practice. Potential contributions included, preparing social workers for the possible negative impact that the job can have on their personal life. Therefore, helping them become better prepared with coping skills to mitigate the impact. Additionally, the study's potential to improve the overall wellbeing of the social worker at micro level, and at a macro level the social worker may provide better services to the overall community within their scope of practice.

The researcher created a dissemination plan to share the findings of the study with interested parties. The dissemination plan included the distribution of an infographic created in a PDF format by the researcher for the CWSWs. The infographic highlighted the findings of the study and can be easily shared amongst the CWSWs via text message, social media, or email. The purpose is to

raise awareness of the negative effects a highly stressful position in child welfare can have on the social worker's personal life and overall wellbeing. The audience consists of the CWSW whom participated in the study.

The study served a purpose to begin a discussion regarding the job stress that CWSWs endure throughout their daily duties and the impact it has on their personal relationship with their significant other. The small study may serve to inspire a future large-scale study that may show a significant correlation between the two variables. Furthermore, the study may inspire similar studies, such as examining the impact that the high stress levels of the position has on the family unit overall, including spouse and children.

APPENDIX A

THE PERCIEVED RELATIONSHIP QUALITY COMPONENT SURVEY

The Perceived Relationship Quality Component (PRQC)

Relationship Satisfaction

1. How satisfied are you with your relationship?

2. How content are you with your relationship?

3. How happy are you with your relationship?

Commitment

4. How committed are you to your relationship?

5. How dedicated are you to your relationship?

6. How devoted are you to your relationship?

Intimacy

7. How intimate is your relationship?

8. How close is your relationship?

9. How connected are you to your partner?

Trust

10. How much do you trust your partner?

11. How much can you count on your partner?

12. How dependable is your partner?

Passion

13. How passionate is your relationship?

14. How lustful is your relationship?

15. How sexually intense is your relationship?

Love

16. How much do you love your partner?

17. How much do you adore your partner?

18. How much do you cherish your partner

Scoring scale: 1- "not at all" to 7-"extremely"

Fletcher et al., 2000, p. 352

APPENDIX B

JOB STRESS SURVEY

Job Stress Items

1. I work under a great deal of ension.

2. I have too much work to do.

3. My working environment is very stressful.

4. I feel I cannot work long enough or hard enough.

5. I feel stressed by my job.

6. I feel as if I will never get all my work done.

7. It makes me tense to think about my job.

8. While at work, I feel there is too much pressure to get things done.

9. I have unwanted stress as a result of my present job.

10. I feel "burned-out" after a full day of work.

11. The tension I feel at work makes me unhappy.

12. My job is stressful.

Scoring scale: 1- "strongly agree" to 5- "strongly disagree"

Bernas & Major, 2000, p. 178

APPENDIX C:

CONSENT FORM

WE DEFINE THE *Future*

School of Social Work

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407

909.537.5501 | fax: 909.537.7029
http://socialwork.csusb.edu

CHILD WELFARE SOCIAL WORKERS & INIMATE PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS

SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate is being conducted by MSW student, Nadine Cazares, under the supervision of Armando Barragan, PhD, MSW, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to research whether the job demands and duties of a Child Welfare Social Worker impact the relationship with their intimate partner, and whether the impact differs across different programs of child welfare.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation will require you to complete an online survey. The survey will measure job stress and relationship quality. The survey is estimated to take 5-10 minutes to complete.

Please note, your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw your participation from the study at any time.

ANONYMITY: Data gathered from the surveys will remain anonymous. Personal identifiable information will not be collected nor published. Survey data is *not* collected in a manner where the information can be linked to the participant.

POTENTIAL RISKS & BENEFITS: There is no direct benefit to you. However, the study may help increase your awareness of the potential conflict your social worker position has on your relationship. In addition, the study has benefits to society in general. The study's finding can help create awareness of the negative impact and the stressors that child welfare work may have on their relationships with their intimate partner. Potential risks include discomfort, as survey contains questions about your relationship with your intimate partner. Although questions are general, they may cause discomfort in some. You can skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS: Please contact Nadine Cazares at 007424658@coyote.csusb.edu .

RESULTS: An overview of the study's findings will be distributed via email in the form of an infographic to the social workers that participated in the study.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:

I have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

Participant Signature: _____   Date: _____

The California State University · Bakersfield · Channel Islands · Chico · Dominguez Hills · East Bay · Fresno · Fullerton · Humboldt · Long Beach · Los Angeles
Maritime Academy · Monterey Bay · Northridge · Pomona · Sacramento · SAN BERNARDINO · San Diego · San Francisco · San Jose · San Luis Obispo · San Marcos · Sonoma · Stanislaus

APPENDIX D

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Study of the Impact the Job Stress of a Child Welfare Social Worker has on the Quality of their Relationship with their Intimate Partner

Debriefing Statement

The purpose of the study you just completed was to research whether the job stress of a Child Welfare Social Worker impacts the relationship with their intimate partner, and whether the impact differs in different programs of child welfare. The study focused on the following research question: 1) What is the impact of child welfare workers' job stress on their relationship intimate partner?

The study has the potential to contribute to micro and macro social practice. By being better prepared and aware of the potential conflict the Child Welfare Social Worker position can cause in a relationship, the worker can avoid or prepare for such negative impacts and improve job satisfaction. By improving the overall wellbeing of the social worker at micro level, the social worker can provide a better focus on the services they provide as a line worker to the population they serve. The social worker is likely to stay at a position they are happy with that compliments their relationship dynamic and life.

Your participation in the study may have increased awareness of job satisfaction and relationship quality. If you wish to seek assistance the following are resources for individual therapy, couples therapy, or domestic violence/ intimate partner violence for your convenience.

Therapy/ Counseling: Psychology Today, Turning Point Center for Families, and Frances Smith Center for Individual & Family Therapy
Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence: National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE, Human Options 877-854-3594, Interval House 562-594-4555, 714-891-8121, 800-978-3600, Laura's House, 949-498-1511

An overview of the study's findings will be distributed via email in the form of an infographic to the social workers that participated in the study. Please contact student, Nadine Cazares, at 0074244658@coyote.csusb.edu or Faculty Advisor, Armando Barragan, PhD, MSW at (909) 537-3501 or abarragan@csusb.edu . Thank you for your participation in the study.

APPENDIX E:

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

March 15, 2022

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination
Status: Determined Exempt
IRB-FY2022-181

Armando Barragan Jr. Nadine Cazares
CSBS - Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Armando Barragan Jr. Nadine Cazares:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "The Impact the Job Stress of a Child Welfare Social Worker Has on the Quality of their Relationship with their Intimate Partner" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has weighed the risks and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and local guidance. See CSUSB's COVID-19 Prevention Plan for more information regarding campus requirements.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your

protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

- **Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.**
- **Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.**
- **Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.**
- **Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.**

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2022-181 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Nicole Dabbs

Nicole Dabbs, Ph.D., IRB Chair
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

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