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# PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITY AMONG BLACK FAMILIES WITHIN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

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PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITY  
AMONG BLACK FAMILIES WITHIN THE  
CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Kania Alexince Long

June 2018

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## ABSTRACT

The over-representation of Black children within the child welfare system has been an ongoing topic of discussion for decades across the country. The common theme, across the United States, is that Black children are entering the child welfare systems at disproportionate rates compared to their counterparts and they tend to experience disparities in outcomes including higher recidivism rates and lower reunification rates. Although many studies examine the factors that contribute to this alarming trend, the problem still exists within child welfare systems across the country. This quantitative study's purpose was to examine the perceptions of MSW Title IV-E students related to disproportionality and disparity among Black families within child welfare agencies. The study examined whether participants' perceptions varied by the participant's race/ethnicity. Participants completed an online questionnaire using Qualtrics software. Data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software and statistical tests including frequencies, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Tukey's post-hoc test. Significant differences were found in perceptions between Black/African American participants and Latino/Hispanic participants. These findings and their implications are discussed.

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Kania Long



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem Statement

Black children are over-represented in child welfare systems across the country and their rates continue to grow by exorbitant numbers compared to their peers of other races (Font, Berger, & Slack, 2012). Although disproportionality within the child welfare system has been studied time and time again, little is known as to why agencies across the nation continue to suffer with the same concerns, when they have identified that a problem exists. In 2017, the State of California had 11,301 Black children in dependency care which was 23.8% of the total number of children in care (California Child Welfare Indicators Project, 2018). This becomes the true definition of disproportionality, when Black children only make up about 592,333 (7%) of the entire state of California's population but make up 23.8% of the total number of children in care.

The idea of over-representation of Black children within the child welfare system has been an ongoing topic of discussion for decades across the country. According to Font, et al. (2012), the common theme across the United States, in rural, urban, and inner-city communities as well as in upper, middle and lower-class communities, is that children of color are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. Font, et al. reported that data dating back to 1975 showed evidence that Black families, received greater substantiated

maltreatment allegations more frequently than other ethnic groups. Black children make up less than 20 percent of the population, but they account for 40 percent of the foster care population across the nation (Font, et al.). This has been an ongoing topic, and many have hypothesized the reason for this problem, such as social worker biases, other government agency biases, or unfair/unjustifiable targeting of black families (Font, et al.). However, Font, et al. hypothesized that Black families face greater disadvantages, such as systematic circumstances, which leads to their disproportionate representation in the child welfare system. They also suggest that racial disproportionality is an ongoing problem due to the lack of cultural competency of child welfare social workers. Further, a substantial portion of Black families who reside in impoverished communities are prone to constant surveillance by law enforcement or other mandate reporters that make child welfare reports more frequently, which also influences social worker biases and differential treatment by child welfare social workers.

Although many studies examine this phenomenon, there is no conclusive answer as to why Black families receive more child abuse referrals, investigations, substantiations, and removals than any other ethnic group of children. Further, there is no evidence to suggest Black parents abuse, neglect or mistreat their children more frequently than parents of other ethnicity, including Caucasian parents (Font, et al.). Our lack of understanding about this topic limits agencies' abilities to address these challenges. Consequently, there exists a

lack of culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of Black children, to help prevent their removal from their families, and to assist with reunification once removal has occurred.

Social work professionals and students are required to practice with cultural competency and professionalism for diverse groups, according to the NASW Code of Ethics (2008). At any level of professional practice and education, social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior, along with possessing a knowledge base of their clients' cultures in order to demonstrate competence in services (NASW, 2008). As MSW students embark on their various levels of advanced micro- and macro-practice, understanding, advocating and providing appropriate services to disadvantage populations are vital for the success of their practice and the clients they will serve. Unfortunately, Black families are considered one of the greatest disadvantaged populations within child welfare agencies. Black clients may be targeted by government agencies and are not always provided with the tools they may need to be successful, such as culturally appropriate parenting classes and counseling services. This study will take an in-depth look through MSW students', to understanding of disproportionality and disparity among Black families and their own readiness to provide appropriate care to Black families.

## Problem Formulation

As federal and states laws were put into place over the years, the child welfare system evolved into the current system that we currently rely on today to protect our children across the country from forms of neglect and abuse.

Somewhere along the line, according to Casey (2006), this system has failed Black families, as the services implemented over time, which promised to assist families in crisis, again failed to meet the cultural needs of Black families. Casey reported that due to the lack of culturally competent services, children of color are at a disadvantage. Culturally diverse programs, such as parenting courses that are utilized on a regular basis and as part of the list of mandatory providers that are offered to families of diverse cultural backgrounds are limited in many communities.

Historically, there is a stigma behind seeking counseling and supportive services in the Black community, which makes it difficult to ensure that these individuals are receiving proper treatment (Whaley, 2001). The term *healthy cultural paranoia* was introduced by Grier and Cobbs (1968), which explains the Black experience in America resulted in a type of cultural paranoia among Black Americans. Whaley (2001) reported that there is evidence that Blacks and Native Americans have a mistrust and dissatisfaction with and an unwillingness to seek mental health services, due to fear of clinicians' cultural biases and attitudes towards minority groups. Because there are greater social disadvantages and oppression among certain groups, the lack of trust is more



prevalent when seeking mental health services (Whaley, 2001). Having culturally diverse services in place to meet the diverse needs of these families is crucial to help eliminate the disproportion number of Black children within this system. Developing a trust in a system that historically is seen as damaging and intrusive towards families, could possibly bridge the gap between the child welfare system and the families they serve. Preventive services are also key and should be offered from child welfare agencies to assist families with mitigating concerns of safety and risk in the home, prior to the removal process and/or court involvement. Yet, when appropriate services are not being offered to families, this creates a disservice and forces families to take part in services that are not fully meeting their needs.

Black children residing in California are being removed at a greater rate than other children, and they are remaining in foster care or out-home placement longer and reentering the system more often (Child Welfare Indicator Project CSSR, 2018). The population of Black children in the state was 477,886 compared to 2,439,923 Caucasian children. During this period, Black families received 62,641 new allegations of abuse or neglect, whereas 108,229 were received for Caucasian families. Out of all the referrals, 53.4 percent of allegations against Black children were substantiated versus 42.1 percent of allegations for Caucasian. And in 2016, 5,418 Black children entered the system, whereas 6,970 Caucasian children entered the child welfare system. January 1, 2009-December 31, 2013, Black children remained in foster care for

an average of 478 days compared to Caucasian children whose length of stay was 420 days (California Child Welfare Indicators Project, 2018).

### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine MSW students' perceptions of the disproportionate numbers of Black children within the child welfare system and their beliefs about agencies' abilities to provide culturally diverse programs and services. There has been extensive research conducted on the topic of disproportionality and disparity within the Child Welfare System across the nation and this study's goal is to gain insights into MSW students' perceptions on the topic.

This study will be exploratory in nature and will use a quantitative approach. Self-administered questionnaires will be used to measure the attitudes that Title IV-E MSW students have towards disproportionality and disparity in Black families and their beliefs about the availability culturally diverse services. The survey will include Likert scale questions, demographic questions, and two open-ended questions. The surveys were designed and administered using Qualtrics software and will be distributed to current Title IV-E MSW students at CSUSB with the approval of the School of Social Work. Questions will pertain to students' perceptions of Black families' treatment, contributing factors plaguing Black families and services to these families by child welfare agencies. Attitudes towards the topic of disproportionality and disparity vary

depending on experience in the field, lack of experience in the field of practice and education. These factors were operationalized into questions and Likert scales responses to assess whether students can clearly define disproportionality and disparity, whether they had prior experience in the field as an intern, or an employer, and whether they perceive the lack of culturally diverse service contributing to disproportionate number of Black children involved in the child welfare system.

### Significance of the Project for Social Work

The need for this study was developed from my desire to bring awareness to an ongoing topic that has been researched but remains a pervasive problem across the U.S. and in California within child welfare agencies. The goal of this study is to further our understanding of the problem and to suggest ways to improve particular areas of service: parenting classes, counseling services, and other services for Black families. As many child welfare organizations move towards using strengths-based approaches and family centered practice, understanding Black families' needs and preferences are vital for these families to be successful.

The study's goal is to examine student perceptions and beliefs so that schools of social work and child welfare agencies are better able to help students, who very quickly transition to professional social workers, gain the insights and skills they need to address Black families' needs. As knowledge is

gained, social workers will become both more aware of and efficient at utilizing the resources and culturally diverse services available in their community, which will ultimately help facilitate participation by the clients.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are MSW students' perceptions and beliefs about disparity/disproportionality in child welfare?
- 2) Do these perceptions of disparity/disproportionality vary according to the participants' ethnic/racial identities?

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This section reviews current peer-reviewed literature related to the topic of disparity and disproportionality among Black children in the child welfare system. This chapter discusses the concepts of disparity and disproportionality in the child welfare system, along with the socioeconomic, environmental, and systematic factors that contribute to the problem. The chapter also discusses the stigma surrounding treatment programs and whether this contributes to the success of Black families within the child welfare system.

#### Disparity and Disproportionality

While it is commendable to never have any contact with the child welfare system, throughout a parent or caregiver's parenting years, there are certain groups who are usually over or underrepresented within the child welfare system (Shaw, Putnsm-Hornstein, Magruder, & Needell, 2008). Groups who are underrepresented in child welfare are often perceived as more successful parents/guardians. However, when particular groups are overrepresented, concerns about bias and group-specific barriers to service are warranted (Shaw, et al., 2008). When overrepresentation of particular groups occurs within child welfare, it eventually leads to disparity and disproportionality.

Disparity and disproportionality are two separate terms used to describe the fact that some groups are more likely to be found within a governmental system than would be expected, given the composition of their general population within the community that they reside (Bilchik & Stagner, 2009). Disparity “is found throughout the interconnected layers of society, services systems and among individuals”, who may struggle with “institutional and structural racism” (Onunaku, 2008, p.37). Within the child welfare system, according to Onunaku, disparity occurs often when caseworkers, administrators, and supervisors have bias in their own outlooks, stereotypes and approaches toward certain groups of individuals. Disproportionality is a result of those social disparities within the child welfare system, where “families of color have historically faced accessing or receiving quality resources, services provisions and opportunities to thrive” (Onunaku, 2008, p.37). Although child welfare agencies serve all demographics, socioeconomic classes, and ethnic groups, the agencies primarily operate in areas of disadvantage where individuals struggle with institution and societal racism more often than other groups (Onunaku).

Bilchik and Stanger (2009) hypothesize that the reason Black children are overrepresented within the child welfare system is because of the disparities that these families face when they encounter the child welfare system or other government agencies. Their study suggests that in order to rectify this problem, one must address the underlying disparities facing Black families or it would be next to impossible to alter disproportionality within that system. “Ultimately, when

disparities that occur at the entry to the system exist, the system produce disproportionality” (Rolock, 2011, p. 1532).

### Extent of the Problem

According to Rolock (2011), in 2009 Black children made up 15% of the child population in the United States, and yet they accounted for 24% of maltreatment victims, 26% of children entering foster care and 31% of children in foster care, which is a clear definition of disproportionality within the child welfare system. Further, this disproportionate representation of Black children in child welfare is pervasive across states: Black children enter foster care at rates higher than those of their peers of other races in every state except four (Rolock, 2011). Nationally, studies of child maltreatment find that all races experience child maltreatment at roughly the same rate, but children of color receive a higher rate of child welfare referrals compared to their counterparts (Cross, 2008).

Shaw, et al. (2008) found that at the state level, Black children made up 28.2% of the foster care population in California, but only represented 7.2% of the child population within the state. Comparatively, non-Hispanic and White children whose population is 31.0% within the state of California and only 26.1% of the total foster care population. Other groups such as Asian and Pacific Islander children in the state of California tend to be under-represented as they make up 9.9% of the state’s population but comprise 2.3% of the foster care population. Under/over-representation tends to raise questions of “possible bias and group-specific barriers to services” (Shaw, 2008, p.25).

### Factors that Impact Disproportionality

Black families face more scrutiny and maltreatment compared to others involved in the child welfare system. Black families are more likely to be reported to child welfare authorities, to have allegations substantiated by child welfare investigators more often, are more likely to have their children removed from the home at a higher rate and are less likely to be reunified in a timely manner compared to other ethnic or racial groups (Casey Family Programs, 2003).

Dettlaff and Rycraft (2010) suggest that there are family/individual, community and agency/systemic factors contributing to Black families' over-representation. At the family/Individual level, maltreatment occurs more frequently for families living in poverty areas and Black families residing in these impoverished areas are more prone to experience child welfare involvement (Dettlaff & Rycraft). Their study found that families that earn less than \$15,000 a year, single-parent households, and families with four or more children experience higher risk factors of abuse or neglect occurring.

Second, according to Dettlaff and Rycraft, Black families residing in poor communities experience disadvantages related to their personal circumstances and to the community in which they reside. These communities will experience higher crime, violence, inadequate schools and poorer living conditions that place children at risk. They further point out that these communities become targets by government agencies to receive more frequent contact, as well as receiving higher levels of scrutiny from those agencies.



Third, according to Dettlaff and Rycraft, agency and systemic factors related to racial biases contribute to the lack of competency training among child welfare workers. During the course of the child welfare process social workers may hold conscious or subconscious biases towards Black families, influencing the worker's belief in the parents' abilities to parent appropriately or the types of services the worker is willing to provide. Systemic factors including cultural stereotypes, high caseloads, inadequate staffing and poor supervision that social workers face are all factors influencing biases in the system, also according to Dettlaff and Rycraft. Systemic factors start long before Black families come in contact with child welfare agencies, from the point of contact with mandated reporters who may have their own biases related to social class, racial/cultural biases, family structure, and home environment.

#### Disproportionate Reports

One study found that historically, Black parents/caregivers do not abuse or mistreat their children at a greater number than Caucasians but receive more reports to child welfare agencies compared to their Caucasian counterparts (Casey Family Program, 2003). Font, et al. (2012) suggest that when families encounter mandated reporters (teachers, medical workers, law enforcement workers, etc.), there is a potential for biases based on socioeconomic, race or ethnicity or parenting practices which contribute to the child welfare reports being generated. Font, et al. (2012) hypothesized that racial disproportionality in the

child welfare system is caused by racial biases at the reporting level, which then leads to other biases throughout the child welfare process for Black families.

The California Child Welfare Indicator Project (CSSR, 2018) reports that during October 2016 to September 2017, Black families received over 62,000 referrals in the California. According to Cross (2008), the way individuals respond to certain groups who all happen to display the same behavior is one of the factors contributing to the increase reporting rate among Black families. Cross provides the example of a Black woman and White woman who have both given birth and tested positive for drugs at the delivery; the Black mother is 10 times more likely to receive a child welfare report from hospital personnel, compared to the White mother.

#### Disproportionate Substantiations

Once investigations are initiated, Black families are more likely to have their allegations substantiated compared to Caucasian families, and are more likely to have their children removed (Casey Family Programs, 2003). The California Child Welfare Indicator Project (CSSR, 2018) reports that during January 2016 to December 2016, Blacks families received 53.4% substantiated reports, compared to 42.1% of Whites, 37% Latino, 34.3% Asian and 51% of Native Americans. Font, et al. (2012, p. 3) suggest that this disparity is the result of a form of systemic institutional racism, based on the assumption “the CPS worker’s function has a differential impact on the social status and treatment in society by race and potentially, thereby, on the family functioning as well”.

Furthermore, according to Font, et al., racial disparities reflect racial bias or differential treatment due to race at the practice level, which result in the interaction between families and child welfare workers varying due to level of similar background characteristics.

Chand (2000) suggests that other issues may play a significant part in the racial gap between child welfare workers and families, such as language difficulties, child-rearing practices, and Eurocentric assessment tools. The lack of appropriate services for Black families suggests that there will not be an appropriate intervention by social workers, placing children at greater risk. Beliefs that as “black people, their cultures and lifestyles are inherently problematic and need correcting”, warrant unnecessary attention from the child welfare system and a lack of services to meet the needs of the population (Chand, 2000, p. 67).

#### Disproportionate Removal and Reunification

Nationally, out of 25 Black families that have allegations substantiated, at least 8 of those children will be put into placement, although maltreatment is the same across the board for all ethnic groups (Cross, 2008). Some suggest that frequent changes in placement throughout the foster care system, may be one cause of Black children not reunifying with their parents, according to the report by Casey Family Programs (2003). Black children are also more likely to be removed from the home and placed in foster care, where they experience more trauma. According to Anyon (2011, p.245), “black children and their families do not have equal access to effective, concrete family preservation and reunification

services". Not having access to these vital services such as substance abuse programs, employment assistance, parenting classes and mental health services, can result in Black children remaining in care longer than other children, while their parents attempt to complete services needed to reunify or to prevent the removal process all together (Anyon, 2011). Another vital tool is cultural competency training for services providers and child welfare workers, which is needed, according to Casey (2006), to assist disproportionate numbers.

#### Insufficient Resources for Black Families

Evidence suggests that historically, participation in services such as counseling and parenting classes among minority parents may be significantly lower compared to other groups (Stahlschmidt, Threlfall, Seay, Lewis, & Kohl, 2013). This is usually attributed to cultural mistrust among African Americans, which was conceptualized in 1968 by Grier and Cobbs as *cultural paranoia*. The concept Cultural Paranoia developed in response to historical and modern-day experiences with oppression and racism that African Americans face when they encountered government entities or therapeutic services (Whaley, 2001).

African Americans who may experience a higher level of cultural mistrust, tend to have negative views of Caucasian therapist, causing them to resist treatment or not seek services at all. Whaley further suggests that clinicians and program facilitators who are aware of their biases and their stereotypical behaviors towards African Americans, may help guide treatment and allow clients to gain trust in the services being provided and the provider.

Whaley (2001) also suggests that poor outcomes for Black mental health patients were due to Black individuals' attitudes towards their white clinicians. The findings suggest that this behavior stems from attitudes towards white clinicians and their power. Cultural mistrust and dissatisfaction with services adds to the unwillingness to seek services for Black individuals (Whaley, 2001). As cultural mistrust levels increase, negative psychosocial outcomes increase, as Black patients tend to have negative views and expectations of White counselors. This idea of cultural mistrust is expanded among Black women who reside in lower socioeconomic areas and who tend to have a higher level of mistrust towards White clinicians they view as insensitive or unaccepting of Black cultural norms (Whaley, 2001).

#### Efforts to Address Disproportionality

Research suggests that these problems within the child welfare system need to be addressed on various levels. The intake process, the investigative process, the lack of culturally competent social workers, and systematic problems within the agency all contributed to disparity and disproportionality. Although there has been considerable research on the topic of culturally diverse services to meet the needs of the Black families, the problem still exists.

Whaley (2001) recommends that treatment should be facilitated by clinicians who share the same ethnicity as their clients. When agencies are not able to provide ethnically similar clinicians, it is vital that clinicians are aware of their own biases that may be manifested through practices. Although minimal,

Whaley notes that out of the 58 counties in California, some counties in the state are working to address the problem by implementing programs to support Black clients according to their individual websites; such as additional support groups and mentoring programs.

### Gaps in the Literature

Disparity and disproportionality among Black families within the children welfare system is driven by historical practices, stereotypical ideologies, unspoken racism among social workers, a lack of social worker knowledge and appropriate services and efforts to meet the needs of these families. Although the literature does an exceptional job at tracking the history of the child welfare system and the disproportionate numbers associated with the Black population, the literature does not necessarily tell us how to address this problem. The problem across the board is the same, but the cause within each county may vary depending on social worker practices, federal/state laws governing the practice and societal factors.

According to Bilchik and Stagner (2009), some other limitations in the existing literature include that prior studies do not disaggregate by age, place, time or explicitly study disparity. These authors also suggest that other studies are not longitudinal which makes it difficult to explain the disproportionate numbers that currently exist. Bilchik and Stagner (2009, p. 19) argue that “nuanced findings cannot emerge without examining disparities for different

subgroups, at different times, and in different places at the points of entry into and exit from systems”. Some research has also hypothesized that Black families receive unequal treatment compared to other ethnic groups, when it comes to services available and contact by social workers, which result in a slower participation rate among Blacks in services. What other articles fail to address or hypothesize are ways to engage these families to help promote a more active participation in services that may help reduce disproportionate numbers within the system.

### Theories Guiding Conceptualization

*Systems theory* provides a framework for social workers, suggesting they must be knowledgeable about the “range of social systems that people live in” and “the way social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and wellbeing.” (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2010, p. 9). It is also defined as a set of “elements that form orderly, interrelated, and functional whole” (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2010, p. 9). Systems theory focuses on the relationship between multiple systems within a family’s functioning such as individuals, family, environment, group, organizations and community, and requires intervention to address all of these to ensure that all the systems are working to benefit a particular client (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2010).

As Black families continue to encounter the child welfare system at disproportionate rates, they may be more likely to experience fair and unbiased

treatment when child welfare social workers fully understand the systems that influence each other. Anyon (2011, p. 248) used systems theory to examine “social advantage, cultural continuity, family preservation and expedient permanency” and how these areas contribute to racial disparity and disproportionality. As the research suggests, Black families are disadvantaged from the initial contact throughout the child welfare process due to bias and systematic practices. Once the initial contact is made with families, the continued treatment of this group of individuals is guided by a lack of knowledge, understanding and considerations to how the systems all around these families interact and influence one another.

### Summary

The first step of this study will concentrate on three main areas: First, I will look at some of the problems that may be contributing to the disproportionality and disparity that exists within the child welfare system. Second, I will examine the MSW students’ perceptions of the problem. Finally, as problems are identified, I will assess if the needs of Black families are being fully met, in an effort to eliminate any disparity.

As these answers are discovered, this will then guide the second and most important step in this research: discovering if culturally diverse services can assist with prompting the participation of Black families- and ultimately, both



facilitating better outcomes and possibly preventing the harsher tactics that are used by the agency to prevent abuse or neglect within these families.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

The study explored the perceptions about disproportionality and disparity by MSW students who are currently or who have previously worked or interned in the field of child welfare in the state of California. Examining MSW students' perceptions and believe can help to identify strategies schools of social work and child welfare agencies can use to help to reduce or eliminate disproportionate numbers of Black children within the child welfare system. In this section, the researcher identifies methods used, including the study design, data collection, data analysis, and human subject protection.

#### Study Design

This study used a quantitative approach to explore MSW students' attitudes towards the topic of disparity/disproportionality in the child welfare system. An online, self-administered survey was used which included demographic questions and Likert-scale questions to assess students' attitudes and beliefs about the topic, and open-ended questions about students' perceptions. The Likert-scale questions measured students' level of agreement with statements related to the topic of disparity/disproportionality and two-opened questions which allowed participants to provide suggestions for reducing this

problem. The study's independent variable was the participants' self-identified race/ethnicity. The Likert-scale questions were used to develop the study's dependent variable: an overall measure of each participants' attitudes and beliefs about disparity and disproportionality.

According to Grinnell and Unrau (2014), the goal of applied research is to identify a problem and use the data collected to develop solutions to the problem, such as the implementation of new services. A quantitative approach of research is usually exploratory in nature and allows the researcher to examine and compare multiple variables. Although disproportionality and disparity in child welfare have been previously studied, few studies examine MSW students' attitudes and beliefs about the topic. This study fills that gap by surveying MSW students who are also recipients of the Title IV-E child welfare training grant. These students are required to work in internships with child welfare agencies during their graduate studies, to work with child welfare agencies after graduation, and many enter the program with existing child welfare experience.

This study is limited in that study results may not generalize to all MSW students in general, or to social workers in general. Further, participants may have felt pressure to provide socially desirable responses. Finally, the potential pool of participants included only 68 students. This small target population limited the ability to generate a large enough sample to ensure confidence in the data analysis.

## Sampling

Survey participants were recruited from the MSW program at a Southern California University. This sample constitutes a non-probability, convenience sample. All 68 Title IV-E MSW students from the 2017-2018 academic year were invited to participate. No other inclusion or exclusion criteria were applied. Although there 68 eligible participants enrolled in the school at the time of the research, I was only able to gain participation from 53 of the enrolled students. The School of Social Work sent emails to all eligible MSW students with a link to the survey included in the email message. These email invitations were sent on multiple occasions and all participants were given the opportunity to be entered into a raffle to win a Visa gift card as an incentive to complete the survey. Permission to survey the students came from the School's Director and from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Social Work Subcommittee.

## Data Collection and Instruments

The data was collected using a self-administered, online questionnaire. The instrument was created by me for this study and consisted of 7 demographic questions followed by the survey which included 13 Likert-scale questions and 2 open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The demographic questions asked students to confirm their Title IV-E participation, years of experience in the field, working experience with the focus group, gender, and ethnicity. The Likert-scale questions asked about the definitions of disparity and disproportionality,

experiences working with Black families in child welfare, availability of resources for Black families, and the students' own abilities to provide culturally diverse services to the Black clients. Participants were asked to respond to each question using: *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree*. Lastly, two-opened questions allowed the participant to provide feed-back on what they felt were contributing factors to the problem and some possible resolutions to rectify the problem.

### Procedure

After IRB approval was received (see Appendix B) personnel emailed all potential participants requesting their participation in the study. The emailed provided a greeting, introduction, information about the study and the purpose for collecting the data. The questionnaire was created using Qualtrics online survey software and a link was provided via email from January 2018 through February 2018 to eligible participants who were enrolled during the 2017-2018 school year. Participation was voluntary and collected anonymously through the Qualtrics software. Upon closing of the survey, the data were uploaded into SPSS software for analysis. Participants were offered the chance to submit their student identification numbers at the end of the survey for inclusion in a raffle for a visa gift card. School of Social Work personnel drew a random identification number and awarded the gift card to the winner; the researcher did not participate in this process.

## Protection of Human Subjects

Appropriate steps were taken to ensure the protection and anonymity of all participants in this study. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and that participation was anonymous. All participants who agreed to take part in the study were provided with a detailed informed consent at the beginning of the survey, where they marked the appropriate box with that indicated “yes” in agreement for their voluntary participation. The informed consent also included the purpose, description, duration of the study, raffle information and the contact information for the researcher and advisors to the research project. Participants were informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntarily and at any point during the study, they could withdraw their participation. No identifying information was collected from the participants. All the data collected was stored in the Qualtrics database to which only I had password access. After uploading into SPSS, all Qualtrics data was destroyed. After completing the analysis in SPSS, all of the remaining data was destroyed.

## Data Analysis

The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program to examine the data collected. Quantitative data analysis techniques were used to assess the relationships of the independent variables to the dependent variables. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the participants' responses to demographic questions and to all Likert-scale questions.

Inferential statistics including an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test and Tukey's post hoc test, were used to analyze the relationship between participants' race/ethnicity and their attitudes and beliefs about disparity and disproportionality.

### Summary

This chapter provided the methodology used in this study. The data was collected using self-administered questionnaires to explore social work students' attitudes and beliefs about disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system. This chapter addressed the steps taken to recruit participants, conduct the study, maintain anonymity to protect human subjects, and to analyze the data gathered in the process.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

In this chapter, the data gathered from the Qualtrics online survey will be presented. First, I will discuss the demographics of the participants. Second, I will discuss participants' responses from the Likert-scale questions. Finally, I will discuss the inferential statistics used to examine responses by groups.

#### Data Results

##### Demographics

The study consisted of 52 survey participants, out of the 68 possible participants invited to take part in the study (See Table 1). All 52 (100%) participants were identified as Title IV-E recipients. The majority of participants (n=29; 55.8%) reported being in the Foundation year of the MSW program with the remainder (n=22; 42.3%) being in the Advanced year of the program.

The sample was largely comprised of females (n=45; 86.5%), compared to males who comprised 13.5% of the sample (n=7). There was an option to write in a different gender identify, however none of the participants selected this option. Participants were asked to identify their race/ethnicity. The largest race/ethnicity group was Latina/o or Hispanic which comprised 21 (40.4%) of the participants, followed by 14 (26.9%) Black or African American. The next largest group was



White/Caucasian (n=12; 23.1%), and approximately 4 (6%) of participants identified as other. Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian or Alaska Native each comprised 2 (1.9%) of the participants.

Table 1

*Participant Demographics*

	n	%	M	SD
Title IV-E Student				
Yes	52	100.0		
Year in Program				
Foundation Year	29	55.8		
Advanced Year	22	42.3		
Gender				
Male	7	13.5		
Female	45	86.5		
Race/ethnicity				
White/Caucasian	12	23.1		
Black or African American	14	26.9		
Latina/o or Hispanic	21	40.4		
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1.9		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1.9		
Years of Experience in Child Welfare			3.77	4.600
Worked in Child Welfare Investigations or Case Management				
Yes	40	76.9		
No	12	23.1		
Worked with Clients Receiving Services				
Yes	42	80.8		
No	10	19.2		

Regarding child welfare experience, approximately 7 (11.5%) of participants stated that they had no experience working in child welfare. The maximum number of years was 20 with one participant choosing this option. On average, participants had 3.77 years' experience in child welfare ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = 4.600$ ). A large percentage (76.9%) of participants ( $n=40$ ) stated that they had worked in child welfare investigations or case management, with 12 (23.1%) stating they had no experience. A majority of participants ( $n=42$ ; 80.8%) stated that they had worked with parents who have been referred to services by a child welfare agency, with approximately 10 (19.2%) stating that they had not.

#### Master of Social Work Students' Perceptions

The questionnaire had 12 Likert scale questions which assessed MSW students' perceptions on the topic of disparity and disproportionality in the field of child welfare with Black families (See Table 2). Survey participants were provided with the options of *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* as possible answer options for all 12 Likert questions.

Statement one asked participants if "the terms 'disproportionality' and 'disparity' refer to the over-representation and relatively poorer outcomes families of color experience in the child welfare system." Among participants, 27 (51.9%) selected strongly agree. 17 (30%) of participants chose agree, 5 (9.6%) chose neither agree nor disagree, and only 1 (1.9%) of participants chose disagree. No participants chose strongly disagree.

Table 2

*Participant Responses to Questionnaire*

	n	%
The terms “disproportionality” and “disparity” refer to the over-representation...		
Strongly agree	27	51.9
Agree	17	32.7
Neither agree or disagree	5	9.6
Disagree	1	1.9
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Black or African-American families are more likely than other families to experience disproportionality and disparity in the CW system?		
Strongly agree	24	46.2
Agree	22	42.3
Neither agree or disagree	4	7.7
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Black or African-American families in the communities I serve experience disproportionality and disparity in child welfare.		
Strongly agree	16	30.8
Agree	18	34.6
Neither agree or disagree	14	26.9
Disagree	2	3.8
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Black or African-American families are disproportionately represented and experience disparate outcomes at the agency in which I work(ed).		
Strongly agree	14	26.9
Agree	13	25.0
Neither agree or disagree	20	38.5
Disagree	2	3.8
Strongly disagree	1	1.9
Families in the child welfare system have better outcomes when their service providers attend to clients’ cultural differences...		
Strongly agree	32	61.5
Agree	12	23.1
Neither agree or disagree	6	11.5
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Service providers within my agency are well-prepared to meet Black or African-American families' cultural needs.

Strongly agree	3	5.8
Agree	16	30.8
Neither agree or disagree	17	32.7
Disagree	10	19.2
Strongly disagree	4	7.7

Culturally appropriate referral services such as parenting classes and therapy are accessible for Black or African-American clients at my agency

Strongly agree	3	5.8
Agree	18	34.6
Neither agree or disagree	12	23.1
Disagree	11	21.2
Strongly disagree	6	11.5

Black or African-American clients are willing to participate in services to which they are referred.

Strongly agree	1	1.9
Agree	17	32.7
Neither agree or disagree	22	42.3
Disagree	8	15.4
Strongly disagree	2	3.8

I am prepared to provide culturally appropriate services to Black or African-American clients at my agency.

Strongly agree	11	21.2
Agree	23	44.2
Neither agree or disagree	7	13.5
Disagree	9	17.3
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

My agency is able to meet Black or African-American clients' needs.

Strongly agree	2	3.8
Agree	24	46.2
Neither agree or disagree	15	28.8
Disagree	7	13.5
Strongly disagree	2	3.8

The lack of evidence-based, culturally appropriate services negatively impacts Black or African-American clients' outcomes in child welfare.		
Strongly agree	11	21.2
Agree	32	61.5
Neither agree or disagree	7	13.5
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Black or African-American clients would be more willing to participate in referral services if more Black or African-American service providers were available.		
Strongly agree	18	34.6
Agree	27	51.9
Neither agree or disagree	5	9.6
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

---

Statement two asked if, “in general, Black or African-American families are more likely than other families to experience disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system?” Of the participants, 24 (46.2%) chose *strongly agree*, 22 (42%) chose *agree*, and 4 (7.7%) chose *neither agree or disagree*. None of the participants chose *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

Statement three asked if, “Black or African American families in the communities I serve experience disproportionality and disparity in child welfare.” Approximately 16 (30.8%) of participants selected *strongly agree*, 18 (34.6%) selected *agree*, 14 (26.9%) chose *neither agree or disagree*, and 2 (3.8%) chose *disagree*. None of the participants chose *strongly disagree*.

Statement four asked if, “Black or African American families are disproportionately represented and experience disparate outcomes at the agency

in which I work(ed).” For this statement, 14 (26.9%) of participants selected *strongly agree*, 13 (25.0%) selected *agree*, 20 (38.5%) selected *neither agree or disagree*, 2 (3.8%) selected *disagree*, and 1 (1.9%) selected *strongly disagree*.

Statement five asked if, “families in the child welfare system have better outcomes when their service providers (social workers, therapists, etc.) attend to clients’ cultural differences including language, parenting practices, and family dynamics.” 32 (61.5%) of participants strongly agreed with this statement, followed by 12 (23.1%) who agreed, and finally, 6 (11.5%) who neither agreed or disagree with the statement. None of the participants chose *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

Statement six asked if, “service providers within my agency are well-prepared to meet Black or African-American families’ cultural needs.” Participants chose *strongly agree* at 3 (5.8%), 16 (30.8%) chose *agree*, the largest percentage of participants (n=7; 32.7%) chose *neither agree or disagree* and 10 (19%) chose *disagree*, with 4 (7.7%) selecting *strongly disagree*.

Statement seven asked if, “culturally appropriate referral services such as parenting classes and therapy are accessible for Black or African-American clients at my agency.” For the statement, 3 (5.8%) chose *strongly agree*, 18 (34.6%) chose *agree*, followed by 12 (23.1%) who selected *neither agree or disagree*, 11 (21.2%) who chose *disagree*, and 6 (11.5%) who chose *strongly disagree*.

Statement eight asked if, “Black/African American clients are willing to participate in services to which they are referred.” For this statement, 1 (1.9%) chose *strongly agree*. Approximately 17 (32.7%) chose *agree*, and the largest percentage 22 (42.3%) of participants chose *neither agree or disagree*. 8 (15%) participants chose *disagree* and 2 (3.8%) participants chose *strongly disagree*.

Statement nine read, “I am prepared to provide culturally appropriate services to Black or African-American clients at my agency.” 11 (21.2%) of participants chose *strongly agree*. The largest percentage of participants (n=23; 44.2%) chose *agree*, 7 (13.5%) participants chose *neither agree or disagree*, and 9 (17.3%) of participants chose *disagree*. None of the participants chose *strongly disagree*.

Statement ten read, “my agency is able to meet Black or African-American clients’ needs.” 2 (3.8%) of participants chose *strongly agree*. The largest number of participants (n=24; 46.2%) chose *agree*, followed by 15 (28.8%) who chose *neither agree or disagree*, then 7(13.5%) who chose *disagree*, and 2(3.8%) who chose *strongly disagree*.

Statement eleven read, “the lack of evidence-based, culturally appropriate services negatively impacts Black/African-American clients’ outcomes in child welfare.” 11(21.2%) chose *strongly agree*. The largest percentage of participants (n=32; 61.5%) chose *agree*, followed by 7(13.5%) who chose *neither agree or disagree*. No participants chose *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

Statement twelve asked if, “Black/African-American clients would be more willing to participate in referral services if more Black/African-American service providers were available.” 18 (34.6%) of participants chose *strongly agree*. The largest percentage of participants (n=27; 51.9%) chose *agree*, followed by 5 (9.6%) of participants who chose *neither agree or disagree*. No participants chose *disagree or strongly disagree*.

### Presentation of Bivariate Statistics

In order to compare participants’ responses by race/ethnicity, the researcher created a summary score for each participant by adding the responses to questions 7, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 18. These questions were chosen because they were about more general attitudes and beliefs versus participants’ agency, community or self. The responses to these questions from 5 Likert scale responses (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) were recorded into three responses (agree/strongly agree =1, neutral=0, disagree/strongly disagree=2) to reduce the number of categories for each answer. Since there were only three Asian, American Indian or other participants, their answers were omitted from this part of the analysis.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run to examine the differences in summary scores between racial/ethnic groups. Students’ summary scores of perceptions and beliefs about disparity and disproportionality were statistically different based on the participants’ race/ethnicity,  $F(2,42)=3.96$ ,



$p=.027$ . A subsequent Tukey's post-hoc test revealed significant differences between Black/African American and Latino/Hispanic participants' summary scores. There was also a difference in summary score for Latinos ( $M=4.70$ ,  $SD=1.838$ ) compared to the scores ( $M=6.20$ ,  $SD=0.80$ ) in the African/American Black group, which was statistically significant ( $p=.023$ ). There were no significant differences that existed among the other groups.

### Summary

The results obtained from the ANOVA and Tukey's post-hoc tests were used to test the hypothesis. The results indicated that there was a significant difference in perceptions between Black participants and Latino/Hispanic participants. Although there was no significant difference among the other groups; the hypothesis is that perceptions vary by participants' race/ethnicity groups was supported by the data.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This chapter will discuss findings related to the researcher's hypothesis and will explore how the results of the study can add to the understanding of social work students' attitudes toward disparity and disproportionality in child welfare. Additionally, this chapter notes the study's limitations and implications for social work practice, research and education.

#### Summary and Overview

The data collected support the hypothesis that students' perceptions towards disparity and disproportionality among Black families within the child welfare system vary by the students' racial/ethnic groups. There were significant differences in perceptions between African American and Latino MSW students. Black survey participants scored significantly higher than their Latino classmates in their summary scores related to their attitudes and beliefs about disparity and disproportionality in the child welfare system. There were no significant findings among the other ethnic groups. This was an unexpected finding, as both ethnic groups are considered minority groups and face some of the same challenges within the child welfares structure. These findings suggest that MSW students, and potentially MSW social workers', perceptions about disparity and

disproportionality vary by race and ethnicity. These differences should be attended to in future curriculum and in on-the-job training, as they may contribute to biases and may contribute to differences in outcomes (Detlaff & Rycraft, 2010)

This research into the social worker students' perspectives also found that most participants believed that attending to clients' cultural differences would improve clients' outcomes. This is consistent with research by Chand (2000), who suggested that the lack of culturally diverse services being offered by social workers places children at greater risk. Yet, in this current study, approximately 17% of participants reported that they did not feel well-prepared to serve Black families in their agency. This information is concerning, as the MSW programs places tremendous focus on both cultural humility and diversity, and on how it relates to social work practice. Taken together, these findings suggest that both the literature and the student participants in this study recognize the importance of providing culturally appropriate services, but not all students feel prepared to do so. One could assume that this area of unpreparedness could be a contributing factor to the disparity and disproportionality.

However, there were some contradictory findings, as participants' views were inconsistent with the idea that Black clients would have better outcomes within the child welfare system if culturally diverse services were offered. Whaley (2001) had suggested that it was important that clinicians and program facilitators be aware of their biases and stereotypical behaviors towards Blacks. They would then be able to put forth an effort to provide "culturally appropriate treatment",

which would help guide that treatment and allow clients to gain trust in the services being provided.

### Limitations

There were several limitations related to the study. First, the study's small sample size and limited sample population restrict my ability to generalize the study's results to all social work students or to social workers in general.

Although this provided a higher probability that the participant had experience in the field of child welfare, it limited the sample size.

Second, the study does not include clients' perspectives on this issue. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions in place with child welfare agencies and community services providers, I was not granted access to this survey population.

Finally, the study used a survey the researcher created, with unknown validity and reliability. It is suggested that future studies use data collection instruments that have been tested and found reliable for collecting this type of data.

### Recommendation for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

Future research should be expanded in three ways. First, future studies should include practicing social workers, who can provide firsthand knowledge and perspectives into the problems concerning their agencies. Second, future

studies should include clients' perceptions of this problem and their suggestions for how to address it. Third, future studies should use reliable and valid data collection instruments to measure participants' understanding. Attending to these three recommendations would improve future research and contribute to social work practice in the field of child welfare.

### Policy

This research can contribute to social work policy by supporting the need for more training for social work students and practitioners around issues of diversity. Additional training could help improve case management services to all clients, especially for clients of diverse backgrounds. According to the data, education should focus on cultural humility, diversity in services and addressing social worker biases. Agencies and social workers must first acknowledge that a problem exists, so forward movement to address the problem can be initiated, education can be enforced, and progress to ensure fair and appropriate treatment of Black clients can be consistent with others.

### Practice

This study's findings suggest the need for more culturally diverse services for Black families, and that social work students support the notion that providing culturally competent services makes a difference for Black families. The literature also supports this notion (Whaley, 2001). Therefore, agencies and

social work schools should continue to improve their training and education around issues of disparity and disproportionality so social workers are better prepared to meet the unique needs of all of their clients, especially Black clients.

### Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the study, its limitations, and its implications for social work research, policy, and practice. The limitations of this study focused on the small survey population, the inability to survey current or prior clients, and the differences between a qualitative versus a quantitative data-collection style. Addressing these limitations will provide opportunity for additional feedback, more in-depth responses and more engagement between the researcher and the participants.

Finally, the chapter provided recommendations to the field of social work practice, future research and policy changes based on the outcome of the current research. These recommendations included in-depth trainings for social worker practitioners and continued research-backed changes to policy to ensure that Black clients' needs are met.

APPENDIX A  
INSTRUMENT

Instrument

Survey Questions

This survey is designed to gather data on Title IV-E MSW students' perceptions related to racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity among clients in the child welfare system. The first 7 questions ask for your demographic information and information related to your school and work experience. The next 14 questions relate to your perceptions about racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system.

1. Are you currently a Title IV-E student?  
 Yes  
 No
  
2. Are you currently a Foundation or Advanced year student?  
 Foundation  
 Advanced
  
3. What is your Gender?  
 Male  
 Female  
 Other, please specify\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What is your ethnicity? Please check all that apply.  
 White/Causation  
 Black or African American  
 Latina/o or Hispanic  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  
 American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Other  
 Prefer not to answer
  
5. How many years' experience do you have working or interning in child welfare in California? For more than 0, but less than one year's experience, enter 1.  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Do you currently or have you previously worked directly with clients in child welfare investigations or case management?  
 Yes  
 No
  
7. Do you currently or have you previously worked with clients who are referred to services such as parenting classes, domestic counseling services, and general counseling?  
 Yes  
 No



The following questions ask for your perceptions related to your work in child welfare. Please check the response that best fits your answer to the statement.

8. The terms “disproportionality” and “disparity” refer to the over-representation and relatively poorer outcomes families of color experience in the child welfare system.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. In general, Black or African-American families are more likely than other families to experience disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. Black or African American families in the communities I serve experience disproportionality and disparity in child welfare.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11. Black or African American families are disproportionately represented and experience disparate outcomes at the agency in which I work(ed).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. Families in the child welfare system have better outcomes when their service providers (social workers, therapists, etc.) attend to clients’ cultural differences including language, parenting practices, and family dynamics.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. Service providers within my agency are well-prepared to meet Black or African-American families’ cultural needs.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

14. Culturally appropriate referral services such as parenting classes and therapy are accessible for Black or African-American clients at my agency.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

15. Black/African American clients are willing to participate in services to which they are referred.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

16. I am prepared to provide culturally appropriate services to Black or African-American clients at my agency.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

17. My agency is able to meet Black or African-American clients' needs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

18. The lack of evidence-based, culturally appropriate services negatively impacts Black/African-American clients outcomes in child welfare.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

19. Black/African-American clients would be more willing to participate in referral services if more Black/African-American service providers were available.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither agree or disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

20. In your professional opinion, what other factors contribute to disproportionality and disparity among Black/African-American families in child welfare?

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20. In your professional opinion, what can be done to address disproportionality and disparity among Black/African-American families in child welfare?

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Thank you for your participation in this survey. You have the option of entering your student ID number in the space below for a chance at winning a \$25 Visa Gift Card. Four winners will be chosen at random. To be entered in the raffle please enter your student ID) in the space below, tear off this sheet, and return it separately from your survey to the survey administrator. After the data collection is completed, the four winners will be selected at random and notified of their win. ID numbers will be kept separate from surveys to ensure that the researcher will not know which participant completed which survey.

ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument developed by Kania Alexince Long

APPENDIX B  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**  
*Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee*

Researcher(s) Kania Long  
Proposal Title How Students Perceptions about Disproportional  
and Disparity Among Black Families in the Child Welfare System  
# SW1114

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

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Proposals:

- approved  
 to be resubmitted with revisions listed below  
 to be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

- faculty signature missing  
 missing informed consent  debriefing statement  
 revisions needed in informed consent  debriefing  
 data collection instruments missing  
 agency approval letter missing  
 CITI missing  
 revisions in design needed (specified below)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Committee Chair Signature

1/8/2018  
Date

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

APPENDIX C  
INFORMED CONSENT



College of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
*School of Social Work*

## INFORMED CONSENT

**WELCOME:** The study in which you are asked to participate in, is designed to gather data on the perceptions of Title IV-E students' related to racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity among Black/African American clients in the child welfare system. This study is being conducted by Kania Long, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Deirdre Lanesskog, assistant professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The Study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Work Sub-Committee at CSUSB.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to identify MSW Title IV-E students' perceptions about disproportionality and disparity among Black/African American families in child welfare.

**DESCRIPTION:** Participants will be asked a series of multiple choice and fill in the blank questions about the services they currently provide to their client population and the appropriateness of those services to meet to the cultural needs of Black/African American families.

**PARTICIPATION:** Participation in the study is 100% voluntarily. You can refuse participation in this study or termination your participation at any time during the process without any consequence.

**CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONYMITY:** Your response will remain anonymous and data will be reported in group form only.

**DURATION:** The study will take between 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

**RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks to the participants.

**BENEFITS:** Participants may choose to enter their ID number into a drawing for a chance to win one-of-four \$25 Visa gift cards after completing the study.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Lanesskog at 909-537-5501.

## RESULTS

Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2018.

This is to certify that I read the above and I am 18 years or older.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place an X mark here

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## REFERENCES

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