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Study of the Department of Children Service's supervisors

Debra Ann Walker

STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN

SERVICE'S SUPERVISORS

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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

———————————

by

Debra Ann Walker

June 2009

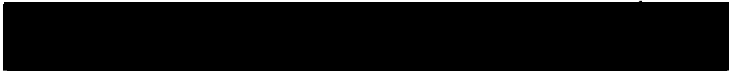# STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN

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Debra Ann Walker

June 2009

Approved by:

Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Faculty Supervisor   Date   5/19/09
Social Work

DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Director of
Children Services, San Bernardino County

Dr. Janet C. Chang,
M.S.W. Research Coordinator

ABSTRACT

This research project has been conducted through the Department of Children Services (DCS) in San Bernardino to find out what the qualities of a good supervisor are and what the barriers are which prevent them from retaining the social workers that work underneath them. When the moral of social workers is down due to high caseloads, an over abundance of paperwork, state and county mandates, and poor or lack of supervision the social workers tend to leave the county agency.

Interviews have been conducted with supervisors in DCS to see what they considered to be good qualities of a supervisor and what they feel are the barriers that prevent them doing a good job. The data gathered from these interviews will be broken down into themes for analysis. This information will be given to DCS management so that it may be used in future trainings of newly hired supervisors and those supervisors who have not been through current training. Hopefully, having all supervisors trained on how to be a better supervisor will improve the retention rates of the social workers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all of my wonderful professors over these past three years. It has been a lot of hard work but I have learned so much. Thanks for taking your time to invest in my future.

A special thanks goes out to my fantastic advisor Dr. McCaslin. Thank you so very much for taking on my research project. You have been a great help and an inspiration during this long hard process.

DEDICATION

Donald, thank you so very much for all of your support, your encouragement, your patience, and most of all your love during these past years. Thank you for always being there for me and just listening to me when I needed to talk. Thank you so very much for having tea made for us when I would get home from school. That was a very special treat for me.

Michael and Tyler, thank you so very much for all of your support, your encouragement, and your love. Thanks for always listening to me and thanks for making me laugh. You boys are the best and I love you so very much.

Dad I am blessed to have you as my dad. You have always there for me no matter what the circumstances. You always told me that I could do what ever I set my mind too; well I guess that is true. Thank you so very much for always taking the time to talk to me and for your words of wisdom. Thank you for your encouragement, your support and most of all your love. Thank you for stressing the importance of a good education and supporting my education. You are the best and I love you so very much.

In loving memory of my amazing mother Joan. I was blessed to have you as my mother. You were always there

for me no matter what. You always told me that having a good education was important. You also taught me that I could do anything I put my mind too, you were right. My only wish is that you could be here to celebrate in my accomplishment. I love you so very much and miss you so much.

Dr. Pamela Norum-Weagley, I have been blessed to have you as my big sister, you are the best. You have always been an inspiration to me. Thank you for your support, your encouragement, and your love. Thank you for always having time to talk when I needed too.

Steve, thanks for being a great baby brother. I appreciate your support, your words of wisdom, and your love. Thank you for loaning me your laptop for these past three years, it was a life saver!

Thanks to all of my friends who have been so supporting and understanding during these years.

To my fabulous and crazy cohort. I have enjoyed spending the last 3 years with all of you. I wish all of you the best of luck in future.

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ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Chapter One discussed the research focus and the reason why this research project has been done. The chapter discussed what paradigm was used for this research project and the reason for choosing this paradigm. Included is a review of literature that has already dealt with this subject matter. Last, how the outcome of this study would be applied to both micro and macro social work practices were described.

Research Focus

The focus of this study has been what the supervisors within the Department of Children Services consider to be good qualities that a supervisor should possess. This study also considered what the supervisors said about the barriers that prevent them from being the best supervisor that they could be. This information will be useful in future training of supervisors in order to help with the retention of social workers.

San Bernardino County has a high turnover rate of social workers due to many different reasons, one of

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which is poor supervision or the lack of having a good supervisor. The study sought to explain what the qualities of a good supervisor are so that the county can provide better training for their supervisors are hopefully, retain the current social workers. Additionally, the study explored what the barriers were to providing good supervision so that the county could try to eliminate as many of these barriers as possible.

Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

The post-positivism paradigm has been used for this research project.

Rationale for Paradigm

According to Morris (2006), this perspective, "takes an inductive exploratory approach to understanding an objective reality" (p. 71). The post-positivism paradigm was chosen so that interviews could be done with each individual supervisor to obtain their personal outlook on the subject of what qualities make for a good supervisor and what they feel are the barriers preventing them from being a good supervisor. Interviews have given the research project a more personal feel rather than just gathering statistics. The information that has been

gathered has been given to the management of San Bernardino County Department of Children Services so that future trainings of supervisors can include the qualities of a good supervisor and hopefully better supervisors will be produced in order to help retain social workers.

Literature Review

The literature review covered what workers would like to have in a supervisor in order to do a better job to help their clients and hopefully prevent burn out which in a lot cases leads workers to quit their employment. Gibbs (2006), Davis-Sacks, Jayaratne, and Chess (1985), Ellett, Ellis, Westbrook, and Dews (2006), and Daley (1979) found that workers would like their supervisors to be available more often to discuss their case load, and to give emotional support. Drake et al. (1998), and Landsman (2007) found they would also like communication when discussing cases on how well they are doing their job and for supervisors to be a liaison between management and the workers. Landsman (2007), Davis-Sacks et al. (1985), Judy et al. (2007), and Weaver, Chang, Clark, and Rhee (2007) also included whether will be training provided by the supervisors on

how a case is suppose to be worked from the time a worker receives the case until the case is closed.

According to Gibbs (2006), Davis-Sacks, Jayaratne, and Chess (1985), Ellett, Ellis, and Westbrook, and Dews (2006), and Daley (1979) workers feel that if they had better or more support, better advice on how to work with their cases, and better feedback on a job well done from their supervisors then they would feel more validated in their positions and they would tend to stay on the job.

Availability

According to Rycraft (1994), Westbrook, Ellis, and Ellett (2006), and Drake, and Washeck (1998) the availability of supervisors at the office and providing guidance with problem cases or just giving emotional support were other factors in the retention of social workers. According to Westbrook et al. (2006) "one supervisor described her primary role in the agency as that of 'supporting my people'...[They] made it their business to be aware of especially difficult cases, took the time to listen to their workers' 'war stories' and took time to pass along their own practice wisdom" (p. 52-53). Also according to the report from Westbrook et al. (2006) when workers received a 'pat on the back'

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for a job well done this made the workers feel supported by their supervisors (p. 53).

Judy and Scannapieco (2007) "observed that workers who had supervisors who were sympathetic and supportive tended to have positive attitudes toward their job, regardless of caseload size or other adverse working conditions" (p. 97).

Communications

Another common theme in the literature, according to Drake et al. (1998), and Landsman (2007) was that workers would like better communications from their supervisors about difficult cases, how they are doing in their jobs, and to be a go between the management and the workers. Drake et al. (1998) gave a questionnaire to workers to find out what kind of communication they needed in order to do a good job. Some of the results show that the workers want a supervisor to be able to communicate clearly and directly, to give feedback, to be honest and to be diplomatic. It also showed that having good listening skills, asking for the workers input, and showing respect to the worker were very important.

Training

According to Landsman (2007), Davis-Sacks et al. (1985), Judy et al. (2007), and Weaver, Chang, Clark, and Rhee (2007) the workers would also like to have more training from their supervisors on how the caseload is suppose to be handled from the start of the case until the end of the case.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Some of literature reviews state that they were done using the ecological approach, social exchange theory, empowerment, social structural theories, competency-based approaches, and structural equation models, which is a statistical technique.

This research project used social exchange theory, since it deals with how agencies look at intraorganizational relationships, such as those between the workers and their supervisors. According to Van Wagner (2007) the definition of social exchange theory

proposes that social behavior is the result of an exchanged process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. According to this theory, people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships. When the risks

outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship.

The focus of this research dealt with the interaction or lack of interaction between workers and their supervisors on a daily basis. When a worker has a good supportive supervisor then the case load that the worker is carrying will run much more smoothly and the clients will benefit from this working relationship. When the workers do not have a supportive supervisor then both the clients and workers suffer. The clients will not get the supportive services that they need in order to help get their lives back in order. The workers could suffer from burn out due to lack of support and end up terminating their employment with San Bernardino County Department of Children's Services.

According to Landsman (2007) "[t]he ecological approach understands that individuals function in the context of their environments, which in the case of employees is their workplace and in the case of organizations, the larger community environment that may differ in rural and urban settings" (p. 109).

This research project has also incorporated the ecological approach due to the fact that the interaction

between the supervisors and their employees affects the outcome of the jobs that they are performing. The organization is affected by the supervisors and the workers since if the workers do feel supported by their supervisors then the clients in the community are receiving the necessary services that they need and the organization is looked on as being client friendly. If the workers do not have support from their supervisors and this in turn causes the worker to have a harder time giving the client the services that are needed, then the whole organization looks bad in the eyes of the community.

Potential Contribution of Study to Micro and Macro Social Work Practice

This research project has contributed to social work practice on a micro level; if the workers have better supervision including more support, the workers are then able to provide the necessary services to their families. On a macro level, when the supervisors have the necessary qualities to be a good supervisor this benefits the agency in that it helps to retain social workers since the workers will feel as though they are getting the support that they need. The past research that has been

reviewed shows that the cost to an agency is approximately $10,000 to $17,000 to replace one worker (Westbrook, Ellis, & Ellett, 2006). If the agency is able to retain current workers then maybe that money could be better spent on hiring more social workers which would help to reduce the huge caseload size and also provide better training for newly hired social workers.

Summary

In Chapter One many topics were covered including what was the focus of this research project, what paradigm was chosen and the reasoning behind why this particular paradigm was used. From the literature review and time on the job, the researcher found out some of the qualities that the workers feel that the supervisors should have in order to perform their jobs more effectively. The supervisors need to be available for guidance with difficult cases.

The research data will hopefully be used within the agency in both micro and macro practice. Using the data on a micro level, the workers that receive better supervision will feel more supported and will be able to help their clients better in providing services that are

needed. In a macro way, with the data will be used to help train both newly hired and experience supervisors so that the social workers will have a better environment in which to work.

CHAPTER TWO

PLANNING

Introduction

The planning stage covered how the study site and
participants have been recruited for this study, and the
initial engagement of participates. Self preparation of
the interviewer which included who was interviewed and
how the interviews were recorded and analyzed were
described. The issues of diversity, ethics, and politics
were discussed. Also included are how the sample of
supervisors has been chosen, what techniques were used in
the collection of the data, how the data were recorded
during the interview process, and how the data were
processed. Qualitative analysis has been used and
included open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and
conditional matrix to sort the data so that it can be
turned into useful findings. This chapter also explained
the communication of the findings, to whom the findings
have been given and the purpose of giving the findings
out. The termination of the study and ongoing
relationships with the study participants has been
discussed.

Plan for Engagement

Research Site and Study Participants

There were two study sites. One study site was an office of supervisors whose supervisees work in the Child Protective Services division. The other site included supervisors whose supervisees work in adoptions, foster care recruiting, foster care licensing, the central placement unit, the relative approval unit, and those that carry a medically fragile caseload. The researcher interviewed eleven supervisors who cover a variety of units under the Department of Children Services for San Bernardino County. The supervisors have a variety of experience, different educational backgrounds, different ages, genders, races, and ethnicities. The researcher chose these sites because she works in the Department of Children Services and has access to these sites.

Engagement Strategies

The researcher did obtain permission from California State University San Bernardino's Institutional Review Board and also from the management of San Bernardino County before the study was started. Once permission had been granted to conduct the study, an email was sent to the all of supervisors in the two different offices.

Along with the email was a letter of explanation of what the study was about, how the interviews were to be conducted, and what role the supervisors would play in the research project. The supervisors responded to the email along with their response of whether or not they would like to participate. Once enough responses were received then the supervisors were contacted via telephone to set up an appointment time to proceed with the interview. The researcher did give out a $5.00 gift certificate to all the supervisors that participated.

Self Preparation

The researcher did review the literature that included studies of different child welfare supervisors from throughout the country. The studies came from a variety of agencies that range from small agencies to larger agencies and from rural agencies to those in the suburbs. The researcher did create questions before hand that were asked during the interviews with the supervisors. The researcher also learned about the diversity issues that were present during the interviews so that the issues did not become a problem for either the interviewer or the interviewee. The researcher remained objective by keeping an open mind, not to

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prejudge any of the supervisors, and not to go in with any preconceived notions of what to expect.

Diversity Issues

Some of the diversity issues that needed to be looked at included gender, age, race, or ethnicity that is different than the researcher's. The personal values of each person did vary and each person did have different assumptions or ideas about the topic of the research project. The researcher did not allow these differences to become a problem while doing the research project, since the researcher is a very open minded person who is not prejudice against other genders, or those that are younger or older then her, and she is open to all races and ethnicity.

Ethical Issues

The research project has undergone a human subject review process that has been conducted by the Institutional Review Board at California State University San Bernardino. This process required that an informed consent and a debriefing statement were included so that they too were approved before this study took place. See Appendix A and B for an attached copy.

Another ethical issue would be the researcher's own personal values concerning what are the qualities of and the barriers to being a good supervisor. Since she is already working in the Department of Children Services this researcher has seen some great supervisors and some poor supervisors based on the qualities that they either possess or do not possess. Some of the better supervisors within DCS have an open door policy which allows workers to come in whenever they need to talk about a case or if they just need to talk. When a worker is working with a difficult client for whom they need the backing and support of their supervisor and the agency their supervisor is there for them. A poor quality that has been seen by this researcher is that a supervisor was assigned a unit in which he had no experience. If the supervisor has no knowledge of how a case is worked on from start to finish then how are they going to be effective in helping out any workers that are not familiar with the steps involved with carrying cases?

Political Issues

The researcher has chosen a research project that does not appear to be controversial in nature so it should not have a negative effect on San Bernardino

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County Department of Children Services, including

management. The data collected were held in strict

confidence in order to protect those who participated in

the study. The data were only given to the director of

Children Services and to the supervisors that were

involved in the study. Hopefully, the data will be used

in future trainings in order to improve the quality of

supervision so that the county can retain social workers.

<center>Plan for Implementation</center>

<u>Data Gathering</u>

The researcher has conducted face to face interviews

with each of the supervisors on an individual basis in

order to collect the data that were needed for this

research project. The interviews occurred in the privacy

of their own office with the door shut so that no one

else could hear what was going on. In preparation for the

interviews, this researcher did develop the questions

before hand.

Crabtree and Miller (1992),

suggest three categories of questions that explore a

person's understanding of a research focus and

assist in the process of sorting data for later

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analysis. These are descriptive, structural, and contrast questions. Descriptive questions are overarching questions...structured questions expand understanding of a particular topic.... Contrast questions develop criteria for inclusion and exclusion for a category of knowledge. (p. 96)

The same set of questions were asked during the course of the interviews and this researcher has been looking for any regularities and patterns in the qualities that a good supervisor should have and what were the barriers to being a good supervisor. Refer to Appendix C for a complete list of question.

Morris (2006),

...notes that in order to assist the interview process should include: essential questions, these are questions addressing the specific research topic they can be grouped together or scattered throughout the interview...., extra questions, these are questions that are similar to essential questions but worded slightly differently to check on the consistency of responses to the same inquiry..., throw away questions, these may be demographic questions or general questions used at the beginning

of interview to establish rapport. They may also be scattered throughout the interview to assist a change in focus or to calm things down if a sensitive topic has been broached. Berg refers to this as "cooling out the subject"..., probing questions, these are simply requests for elaboration, such as 'Tell me about that,' or minimal encouragers such as 'uh-huh' or 'I see.' Again, these might be scattered throughout the interview depending on need for clarification and elaboration. (p. 99)

Selection of Participants

The study used random sampling so that the supervisors chosen brought many different aspects to the research project. The original plans were to have a diversified field of supervisors whom brought different qualities to the interviews. The supervisors have been chosen on the basis of gender, age, race, and ethnicity, their level of education and in what field their degree was obtained. They have also been chosen based on length of time of being a supervisor, so that there are both fairly new supervisors and those with many years of experience. Since the researcher is acquainted with many

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of the supervisors she went into this project knowing some of the basic characteristics such as gender, approximate age, race, the approximate length that they have been a supervisor and the fact that they all must have a Master's level degree in order to become ,a supervisor for DCS. The researcher planned on interviewing between ten and fifteen supervisors.

Phases of Data Collection

Qualitative data have been collected from the interviews that have been conducted. The interviews were conducted in the supervisor's office which provided privacy. During the interviews different types of questions were used, active listening and rephrasing of the answers were used in order to make sure that the answers were fully understood by the interviewer. An example of a question that was been asked in the introductory phase was how long have you been a supervisor for the Department of Children Services? During the middle phase a question that was asked is do you feel that you are an effective supervisor? The ending question was how would you feel if your workers had the option of doing an assessment on your job performance? See Appendix C for questions.

Data Recording

The researcher started the interview by giving the supervisor the informed consent to read over including a section which explained the use of a tape recorder and then asked them permission to record the interviews. If they agreed to have the interview taped then they checked the box on the informed consent and then a digital recorder was used. If the interviewees do not want to be recorded then the researcher would have asked permission to take notes during the interview. If note taking was not possible then the researcher would have to follow Neuman and Kreuger's (2003), "advice on how to recall important information:

- Make notes as soon as possible after the interview; a laptop computer or PDA with a keyboard would be the most efficient mode for doing this

- Make sure you have included identifying information: time, place, interviewee name, role, etc.

- Record the conversation in the order it happened; include everything that you can remember, even if it seems irrelevant right now

- Record your reactions and feelings at this point and any insights that come into your mind as you write

- Make diagrams, charts, or tables if they explain ideas.

- Try not to evaluate what was said; simply record without commentary

- Make sure you have a backup copy of the record you develop" (p. 98-99).

Plan for Evaluation

Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews have been analyzed qualitatively. The data have been analyzed after each interview in order to evaluate if any additional questions needed to be added or any questions needed to be deleted before the next interview was held.

The researcher used open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to help organize the themes found during the interviews. According to Morris (2006),

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They begin with *open coding*. Here the narrative of

the interview or observations is broken down into

themes or categories. Such categories guide

refinement of future questioning and observation. At

the next stage, *axial coding*, relationships between

themes or categories are proposed; these

relationships are tested in further rounds of data

gathering. The third stage, *selective coding*, is

when a theoretical statement is developed. The

conditions of the relationships between categories

and themes are identified and included in a

comprehensive statement. The last stage is the

conditional matrix, where the theoretical statement

is put in the context of current knowledge about

human interaction. (p. 112)

The computer software called ATLAS/ti was used in the

process of sorting out the data into useful categories so

that the data gathered can be turned in to useful

information.

When the first couple of interviews were completed

the data were looked at to find the common themes. If

necessary, the questions could have been refined. Axial

coding helped to find the relationship between the themes

which was tested in rest of the interviews. Once all of
the interviews had been completed then with the use of
selective coding a theoretical statement was made. This
statement was linked to the experiences of the
supervisors that were interviewed with the experiences of
that found in the literature reviews.

Plan for Termination

Communicating Findings to Study Site and Study Participants

Once the study had been completed the researcher
will see if a wrap up meeting can be held with the
director of the Department of Children Services and all
of the supervisors that were involved in the interview
process. At the wrap up meeting a Power Point slide show
will be presented with the results of the research
project. If having a wrap up meeting with all of the
participates is not feasible then the researcher would at
least try to meet face to face with the director of
Children Services to present the results and then the
researcher would send an email out to the supervisors
with the results.

The researcher is hopeful that the director will use
the results to make sure that the qualities of a good

supervisor will become a standard part of training for all supervisors within Department of Children Services.

Termination of Study

At the end of each interview each supervisor was personally thanked for helping in this research project and for taking the time to participate. A $5.00 gift certificate to Starbucks was given out too. With doing it this way instead of through a mass email, hopefully the supervisors have felt appreciated more for their time that they have given to this research project.

Plan for Follow Up

Ongoing Relationship with Study Participants

The only ongoing relationship that may happen is when the researcher would see any of the supervisors in their home office. The researcher would be cordial and say hello but would never discuss the study due to confidentiality.

Summary

Chapter Two covered a variety of topics. Included were how the study site and the participants were recruited and how the initial engagement was going to be accomplished for this study. Self preparation of the

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interviewer were discussed including who was interviewed and how the interviews were recorded and how the data was analyzed. Issues of diversity, ethics, and politics were also discussed. Qualitative analysis for the data were used and did include using open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and a conditional matrix in order to sort the data and turn it into useful findings. Also explained was how the findings were communicated to whom and what the purpose is in the giving out the findings. Termination of the study and the ongoing relationship with the study participants was also discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Chapter Three discussed the implementation stage

which covered how the study site and participants were

chosen. The participants in this study were given the

opportunity to participate on their own accord. The

method of data gathering is discussed along with the

phases of data collection which included the four phases

of interviewing, skilled question asking and active

listening. The method of data recording during the

interview is discussed.

Research Site and Study Participants

At the beginning of this study two study sites had

been chosen but, when the response to the email asking

for participation in this study was low, an additional

office within DCS area was added so that this study would

have enough participants. Two of the study sites are

offices in which the supervisors whose supervisees work

in the child protective services division. The other

office the supervisors were over the Central Placement

Unit and Relative Approve Unit, foster youth programs

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such as Independent Living Program unit, adoptions unit
and also a court supervisor. So the original plan of
trying to have five from each office did not work out. A
total of eleven supervisors ended up participating so
this researcher did not have to choose who would
participate since all eleven took part in this project.
The interviews ended up lasting from 15 minutes to 50
minutes with the average of 20 to 25 minutes. So the
original estimated time of 40 minutes was an over
estimation. This researcher wonders if this original time
estimate scared off some of the supervisors from
participating.

Selection of Participants

An email was sent to thirty supervisors in three
different offices of Department of Children Services in
the San Bernardino area. Out to this number twelve
responded that said they would like to participate in
this research project. One supervisor responded saying
that she was unable to participate since she did not feel
qualified since she had only been a supervisor for about
two months. Eight supervisors read the email but did not
response back either way, while ten supervisors never

read the email according to computer logs. One supervisor

who had said that she would initially be able to

participate sent a later email stating that she would not

be able to participate right now since she had to leave

immediately to go back East for an extremely ill

relative. She said that when she returned, if her

interview were still needed she would be glad to do it.

To this day this researcher has not heard back from her,

so now to interview her would be too late for this

project.

At the start of the project it was hoped that more

supervisors then needed would have responded so that the

researcher could have chosen enough supervisors based on

different characteristic such as age, gender, education

and length of time as a supervisor. With only twelve

supervisors willing to be interviewed the researcher was

unable to select participants based on the different

characteristics.

Data Gathering

Once the interview time and day were set up by phone

with the individual supervisors the researcher met them

at their office to conduct the interview in private. Each

supervisor was given an informed consent to read which

gave them some information about the study and also asked

them for permission to record the interviews. All eleven

of the supervisors gave permission for the interviews to

be recorded, which was good since each interview lasted

approximately 15 to 50 minutes. Recording the interviews

was a great tool which enabled this researcher to be able

to capture everything they had to say.

When the interviews were completed the supervisors

were given a copy of the debriefing statement and a $5.00

gift card to Starbucks. The supervisors said thank you

for the card, which they did not know they would be

receiving before hand and some said that you did not need

to do give me anything.

Phases of Data Collection

Each of the interviews was conducted in the privacy

of the supervisor's office to ensure confidentiality.

After they had read the informed consent this researcher

began to ask some simple introductory questions which

gave some background information such as age, race,

education, level and how long they had been a supervisor

for DCS. Starting off with few simple questions helped to

break the ice which helped to release some of the tension that had built up due to both parties appearing a little nervous. As the interview progressed both the interviewer and interviewee became more comfortable and relaxed. The interviews all went very smoothly with all eleven of the supervisor answering the all of the questions.

Some of the interviewees gave response which surprised this researcher. Several of the interviewees gave some in depth answer which brought up some points that this researcher had not thought about but they made sense. A few of the supervisors gave answers that were vague which in a way surprised this interviewer for the fact that they had been a supervisor for a longer period of time, so the assumption was made that they should have given better, more in depth answers.

Data Recording

After the initial recording of the data each of the interviews were transcribed verbatim which was an extremely time consuming process. This process took listening and rewinding the digital recorder numerous times in order to be able to get all of the information. This was the most consuming part of working on this

project. Now all of the themes will have to be sorted out
in to categories in order to run the information through
the ATLAS TI program so that all of the data will be
complied into useful information.

Summary

Chapter Three covered a variety of topics. Included
was how the research sites and the participants were
chosen. When enough supervisors did not respond to´
participate then another office still under DCS was
chosen. This researcher did not have an over abundance of
supervisor that agreed to the study so all of them were
interviewed. The interviews were all conducted in the
privacy of the supervisor's offices and they were all
recorded after the informed consents had been read and
marked. To break the ice a few simple basic questions
should as gender and age were asked. Then the meatier
questions such as the good qualities and the barriers to
do the job were asked. Last a closing question about how
they felt about being assessed by their workers was
asked. Once all of the interviews were done then they
were transcript verbatim.

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION

Introduction

Chapter Four is where the findings of the study are

reported and interpreted. The interviews were analyzed

utilizing qualitative methods. The researcher identified

themes, open codes, core categories and dimensions and

the relationship between them. A further analysis

identified the relationship between the core categories

and the overall theory of the study.

Data Analysis: Open Coding

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and typed.

The interviews were analyzed resulting in 12 open codes.

These open codes were qualities, training, effectiveness,

impact, barriers, assessing, ethical, trust, power,

boundaries, validity and encouragement.

Qualities

This open code was created based on the answers

given by the supervisors. This code incorporates

different aspects of what qualities a supervisor should

have or use in order to be effective. They include having

an open door policy and being available to their staff,

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having knowledge about the programs that they supervise and having personal experiences with different programs and being a teacher to your employees.

Open Door Policy. For a supervisor, having an open door policy means to be in their office, ready to answer questions, willing to listen, to discuss issues about cases. If the employee just wants to come talk, the supervisor is there and is willing to give that employee the time they need. As interviewee #1 stated "someone who is available", you can have the best supervisor but if they are always busy and unavailable to you as a worker" then they are not going to be effective. If the supervisor is unavailable to the worker then that supervisor is not being an effective supervisor.

Knowledge. The supervisor needs to have knowledge about the different programs which they supervise. They need to have knowledge of policies and regulations which affect every worker. Understanding the different programs is important to both the supervisor and employee so that when the employee needs help or guidance the supervisor will know how to help their employees when they are having problems with their cases. Having first hand experience within the different programs allows the

supervisor to give advice or solutions to problems that they have already used.

Teacher. A supervisor must also have the quality of being able to teach. Having the knowledge and experience they can teach their employees many of the skills that they will need in order to do their jobs. As interviewee #8 stated "a general willingness to continue to learn, continue to teach" which is a great attitude towards being a teacher to your employees.

Training

This open code of training was created based on the answers supplied by the supervisors. As a new supervisor they should be trained on policies, procedures and personnel issues. Most supervisors stated that they do not feel they have been adequately trained. Interviewee #5 said "what training"? Interviewee #4 stated that "I was not adequately trained, especially about dealing with personnel stuff because I did not have any personnel stuff myself." Some of the supervisors felt that they did have some training but most agreed that they got more training from on the job experience.

While conducting these interviews it became evident that the majority of the supervisors did not have

adequate training. Without proper training themselves,

how are they going to help their employees?

Effectiveness

This open code was created based on the fact that if

the supervisor is not an effective one then their unit

will not success as well as they could in the jobs that

they perform. As interviewee #4 stated "yes, I see myself

as being effective because I don't see that there is one

way of dealing with everything." All of the supervisors

felt that they are an effective supervisor now but it

took time for them to feel this way.

Impact

A supervisor's job impacts their unit whether it is

a positive one or a negative one. During the interviews

the supervisors expressed that their impact on their

staff was a positive one. Some of the factors that

contributed to this were supporting the staff, providing

leadership, guidance, and structure.

Supporting. Supporting staff means that the

supervisor is there to help their workers with cases

where the worker is having issues, in order to find a

solution to the problem. When problems arise that need

input from upper management, the supervisor is there to

support the workers and to act as the go between with upper management. As interviewee #9 said "I think having a supportive supervisor affects the job completely" which is very true because if the workers do not have the support they need, then they tend to leave the county.

Leadership. Having strong leadership is also important to the worker. They want a supervisor who can guide them to find solutions to problems on their case load, help out when there is conflict among staff in their unit and help out with any other issues that may arise. Interviewee #4 stated "have confidence in your leadership ability" and the workers will feel that confidence level too. The workers also need a supervisor who has set up some type of structure within the unit so that everyone knows what is expected from them and how the unit runs.

Barriers

This open code was created based on the response of the interviewees. Some issues that were considered to be barriers were too many meetings, the amount of mandatory paperwork such as Work Performance Evaluations (WPE's), and E-Time, which is an electronic payroll system. Numerous departmental policies, lack of time, trying to

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juggle everything and being pulled in different directions.

Meetings. Supervisors are expected to attend many different types of meetings. They must have a monthly unit meeting with their staff, and they must attend the monthly supervisors meeting. They must sign up for several different committees which can have several different meetings during the month. Also depending on what type of committee you are on you may end up going to several meetings a week. All of these meetings takes the supervisor out of the office so this means that they are unavailable for their workers.

Paperwork. Not only does the supervisor need to read and approve all of the court reports that are written by their staff but they must also deal with all of the mandatory paperwork such as work performance evaluation and E-Time. A supervisor must complete about a 10 page work performance evaluation which is done yearly so that the employee can see where they are meeting standards or if they are not meeting the standards of the agency. This tool is used to help employees learn what their strengths and weaknesses are so that they can improve in their job performance. E-Time, which is done bi-weekly, is an

electronic payroll system. The supervisors must look each one over for any mistakes and if there are mistakes, send it back to the worker to correct. The worker then resubmits for supervisor's approval. Interviewee #5 stated that "sometimes I think that I am a paper pusher rather then a supervisor." This paperwork takes up a lot of time, which takes the supervisor away from their workers so that the workers are getting short changed.

Policies. Policies within the department are numerous and they change quite often. Supervisors need to stay on top of the policies so that they are able to inform their workers of the changes that have been made. This is important so when the workers are with their . clients the workers are staying in compliance with the policies. Interviewee #4 said "I think that is kind of the biggest hassle is the department policies."

Time. Time is a major issue since it appears that the supervisors never have enough time due to all of their obligations, and that they are being pulled in different directions. As interviewee #5 stated "time: we have so much work and everyday there seems like there is more work pushed off on us." While conducting these interviews it became apparent that the supervisors felt

that they did not have enough time in the day to complete all of their work. They had to learn how to juggle their time, their obligations, the deadlines for completing their tasks, all while trying to be available for their workers.

Assessment

This open code was formed in order to see how the supervisors would feel about having an assessment done by their workers in order to evaluate how they were performing as a supervisor. The data showed that ten out of eleven supervisors said that they would like for their employees to give them an assessment so they could see what their weaknesses were so that they could try to improve in those areas. Interviewee #11 stated "I feel like everybody should look forward to improving and because I am the supervisor and have experience, many times people are blinded to their down falls so I open myself up to that with my workers at least once a year and I ask them that very question."

Ethical

This open code was created based on the responses that were given by the supervisors during the interviews on how they stay ethical and what do they do to ensure

that their workers stay ethical. Ethics is important within the agency because if the workers do not provide ethical services to their clients it can lead to many problems. Interviewee #7 stated that she shows her workers good ethical values by "modeling what is appropriate, what is necessary and what the county requires." For example, supervisors model appropriate behavior in front of their workers such as, when they are under attack from a client they still need to treat that client with patience, and respect. When the workers see how the supervisor handled the situation, they are more likely to try handling a bad situation with patience and respect for a positive outcome.

Working for the Department of Children Services, one of the main concerns is what is in the best interest of the child. Social workers need to use ethical values that they have learned in order to make the best decisions possible for the children. Interviewee #10 stated that she "asks a lot of questions if something does not seem to fit right or seem to sit right. I ask a lot of questions to get more information." By asking questions the worker will be forced to ask their own questions

about the case and what is the correct and ethical way of handling the situation.

Trust

This code was created based on the respondents' answers and it includes different aspects of what trust building meant to the supervisors. For a unit to run smoothly the supervisors need to be able to build trust among their staff. If the staff does not trust their supervisor this will cause problems since the staff will avoid going to their supervisors for help or for any problems. These aspects would include being a team player, confidentially, having an open door policy and being available to your staff.

Team Player. This researcher has seen some supervisors who are great for barking out orders while they sit back, and give no hands on help to their unit. Being like this does not build trust among their staff who are supposed to have trust in you so that they are comfortable in coming to you with issues. They have seen how the supervisor works so they do not have the trust and confidence that they should in their supervisor. Interviewee #3 "felt that you build trust with your workers by being a team player, when they see that you

are doing what you ask them to do then they are more willing to give what is necessary in order to complete the job."

Confidentially. Confidentially between the supervisor and the employee is very important because if the employee goes to their supervisor with some personal issues and the supervisor tells other people then that employee will not trust their supervisor. This creates a bad situation because the employee will have a hard time talking to their supervisor about their case load since they have been betrayed by their supervisor. Interviewee #1 said "that if they ask me to keep something confidential I will and I will have them come discuss it with me in my office so that no one else can overhear."

Open Door Policy. Several of the supervisors stated that by having an open door policy you are always available to your staff for any questions or concerns they may have. Several of the supervisors also stated that they walk the floor of their units, which helps to build trust since the worker is able to "say I need to talk to you for a minute" as interviewee #5 stated.

Power

    This open code was created to find out if the supervisors felt that they used their position of power to intimate their workers.

The majority of supervisors stated that they did not abuse their power in order to get their workers to comply with what they wanted them to do. One supervisor, interviewee #2, said that "no I think probably over my years I probably had the other problem of not using the power given to me." One supervisor, interviewee #4, stated that "I do not have a problem reminding them that this is your job this is what I expect of you." With some employees a supervisor at times may have to push their power around so that the clients are getting the services that they need.

    Being in the position of a supervisor automatically gives them power over their employees. A few of the interviewees felt that at times you needed to use the power you were given in order to get the work done.

Boundaries

    This open code was created to see what kind of professional boundaries the respondents had with their staff. All of the respondents had some kind of boundary

limitations with their workers whether it was known to the workers or not. If the supervisor does not have boundaries with their staff then the lines can become blurred or crossed over and this will create problems for those involved.

Interviewee #6, stated that "I do have. My expectations are pretty clear and they know that I will go that extra mile for them." She also said that "no doubt about it you can be the most wonderful person in the world but if you have some performance issues I'm going to be there talking to you about them whether it is verbally or in written form." Some of the supervisors said that they do have boundaries which are that they are there to be the supervisor not their friend, buddy or lunch mate.

Validation

This open code was created to show how supervisors show their staff that they are a valuable resource to the unit and that they matter as a person. When a worker feels as though they are not valued or that they matter, then their job performance will suffer and it can lead to more problems. The supervisors all have their own little ways of giving validation to the worker. Some of the ways

were by saying you did a good job, they write notes with

nice sayings on them, they say thank you, please, and

praise them for a job well done. Sometimes the supervisor

will buy lunch for the unit if they did a good job, or

bring donuts to an unit meeting to show their respect and

appreciation for the hard work that their staff does

daily.

Interviewee #6, stated that she validated her

workers by "finding strengths in them in different ways

and all have different talents and so I go to them for

different things."

Encouragement

This open code was created since the respondents all

seemed to have their own ways of giving their workers the

encouragement they need in order to keep working through

the rough spots. Some of the ways that the supervisors

showed their encouragement were by being supportive and

asking how are things going. The supervisors acknowledge

their employees by saying you did a great job, or by

writing a motto of the week and hanging it outside her

office door. Some of them also said that they show

encouragement by being a hands on supervisor. As

interviewee #3, said "I will do the same thing that I ask them to do and will do it with them."

A further analysis included the labeling of open codes, categories and dimensions. Figure 1 shows the first category: supervisor competence.

The collection of the data allowed the researcher to learn what elements are important within the category of supervisor competence.

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+---------------------------------------------------------------+
|                                                               |
|  +-------------+    +-------------+    +-------------+         |
|  | Concept     |    | Concept     |    | Concept     |         |
|  |             |    |             |    |             |         |
|  | Qualities   |    | Effectiveness|   | Training    |         |
|  |             |    |             |    |             |         |
|  +-------------+    +-------------+    +-------------+         |
|                                                               |
|              +-------------------+                            |
|              | Category          |                            |
|              | Supervisor        |                            |
|              | Competence        |                            |
|              |                   |                            |
|              +-------------------+                            |
|                                                               |
|              +---------------------+                          |
|              | Dimension           |                          |
|              | Decease in turn over|                          |
|              | rates               |                          |
|              | Increase of work    |                          |
|              | performance         |                          |
|              +---------------------+                          |
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+---------------------------------------------------------------+
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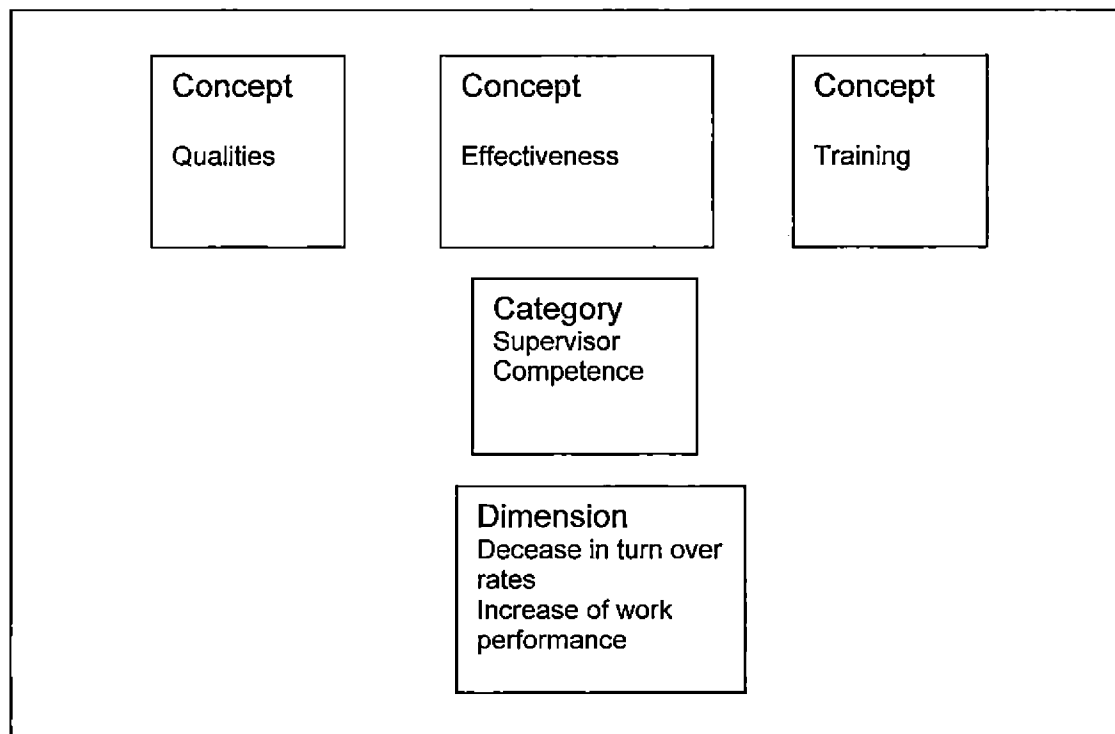
Figure 1. Supervisor Competences

The concepts within supervisor competence consisted of many different aspects which are all important for a

supervisor to possess in order to be considered a competent supervisor. By having competent supervisors who can support the social workers, the social workers will not feel so over whelmed, or unsupported which would help with the retention of social workers.

During the course of the interviews it became evident that all of the supervisors felt that they were good supervisors most of the time but they also felt that there is always room for improvement in order to become a better supervisor.

The county will benefit from having supervisors that are competent since not only will it help in the retention of social workers but it will increase the work performance by those social workers. When a supervisor is available to help out their units, the workers will feel more supported and will be able to complete their work with the help and support of their supervisor.

As evident from the answers that were given, the county needs to provide training for new supervisors from the beginning which will help both the supervisor and their units.

The second category that emerged from the open codes was supervisors' perception of workers' relationships.

(See figure 2) Looking at the data collected for this category showed that the supervisors can have a positive or negative impact on their workers which affects their working relationship. The data also showed that many of the barriers which are beyond the control of the supervisors have an impact not only on the relationship between the supervisor and their staff, but also among the staff in the unit.

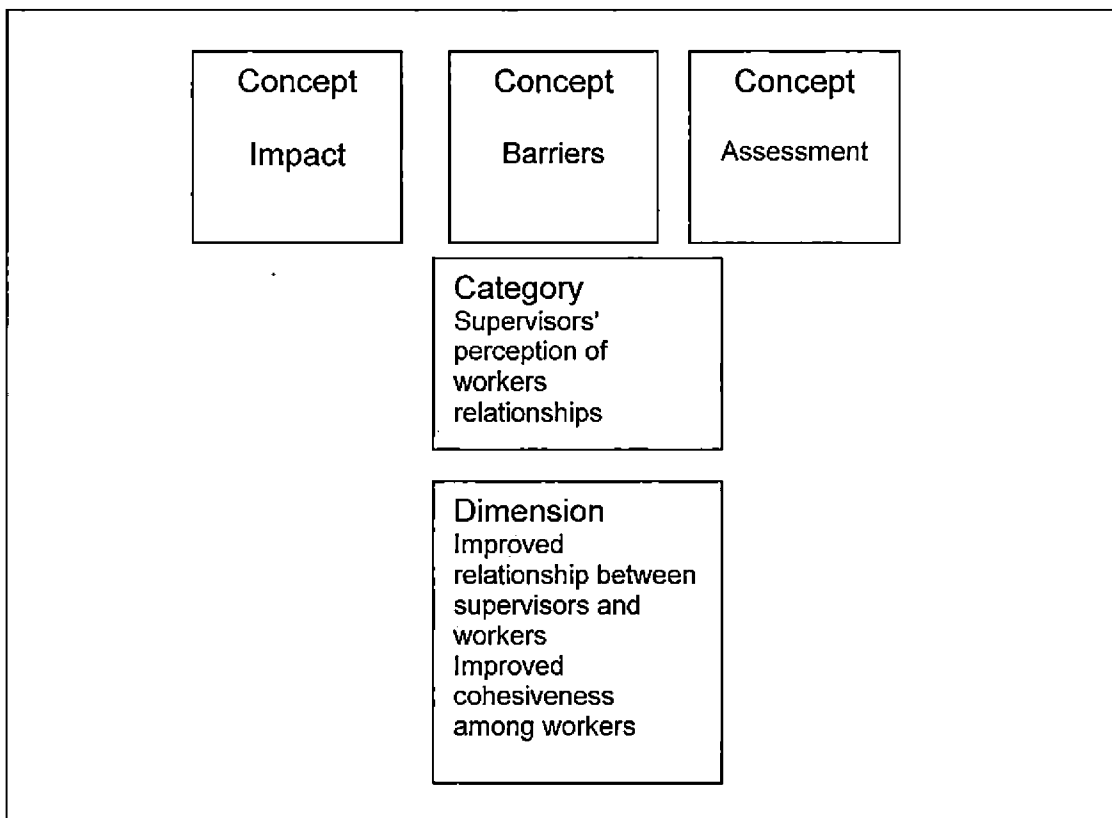| Concept Impact	Concept Barriers	Concept Assessment
	Category Supervisors' perception of workers relationships	
	Dimension Improved relationship between supervisors and workers Improved cohesiveness among workers	

Figure 2. Supervisors' Perception of Workers' Relationship

The data collected showed that a supervisor can use their position to have either a positive or negative impact on their workers. The supervisors all felt that they had a positive impact on their workers by providing leadership, and being a supportive supervisor. The data showed that the barriers are abundant which leads to having a negative impact on their workers by not being available in the office because all of the meetings or even when they are in the office doing paperwork, they normally do want to be disturbed since they must get this paperwork done by the deadline. If they do not then their manager will be on them to complete that paperwork.

The third category that emerged from the open codes was: professional values (See figure 3). As social workers they work using a code of ethnics which are the standards of professional conduct that all social workers need to follow so that they will not cross any lines of being professional. The data that came from the interviews for this category were ethical, trust, power, and boundaries. The supervisor must use make good ethical choices daily, not abuse the power that has been given to them, and have boundaries which they follow so that they

are not crossing those boundaries which could jeopardize their job.

| Concept Ethical | Concept Trust | Concept Power | Concept Boundaries |

| Category
Professional
Values |

| Dimension
Workers learn ethical
values ethical values
from supervisors
Professional
boundaries between
supervisors and
workers |
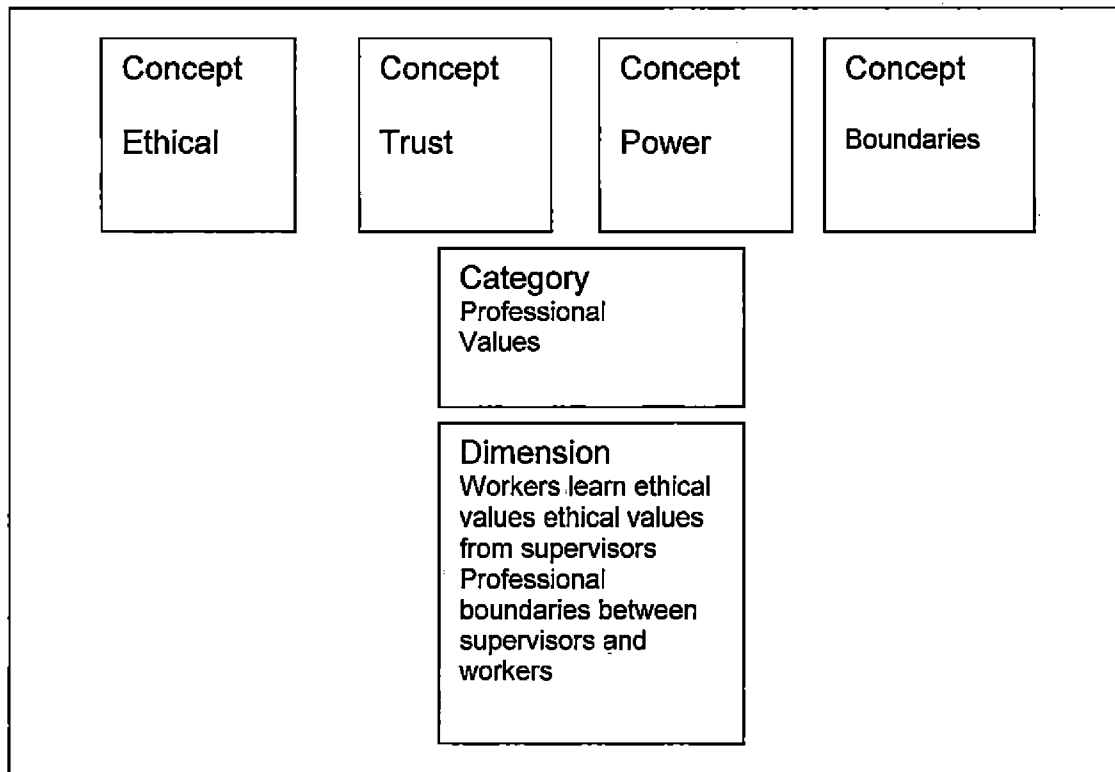
Figure 3. Professional Values

During the course of the interviews it became clear that the supervisors do posses strong ethical values and they know their personal and professional boundaries. An example of having good personal boundaries was interviewee #1, who said that instead of eating lunch with his unit he preferred to read the newspaper since this is just his personally.

The fourth category that emerged from the open codes was treatment of workers. (See figure 4) The treatment of social workers by their supervisor is an important aspect because if the worker feels that the supervisor does not value them as a person then the morale of that person is down and can turn the whole unit up side down. In general the respondents all had their own ways of showing their workers that they are an important and that the supervisor does feel that they are a vital part of the unit. Some examples of how the supervisors showed that they valued their staff were by providing positive feedback both in verbal or written form, and buying lunch or bringing food to a meeting for all to enjoy.

The data gathered also showed that when the supervisors gave encouragement to their workers by being supportive to them, acknowledging their work or by being a hands on supervisor, this created a better work environment for everyone involved.
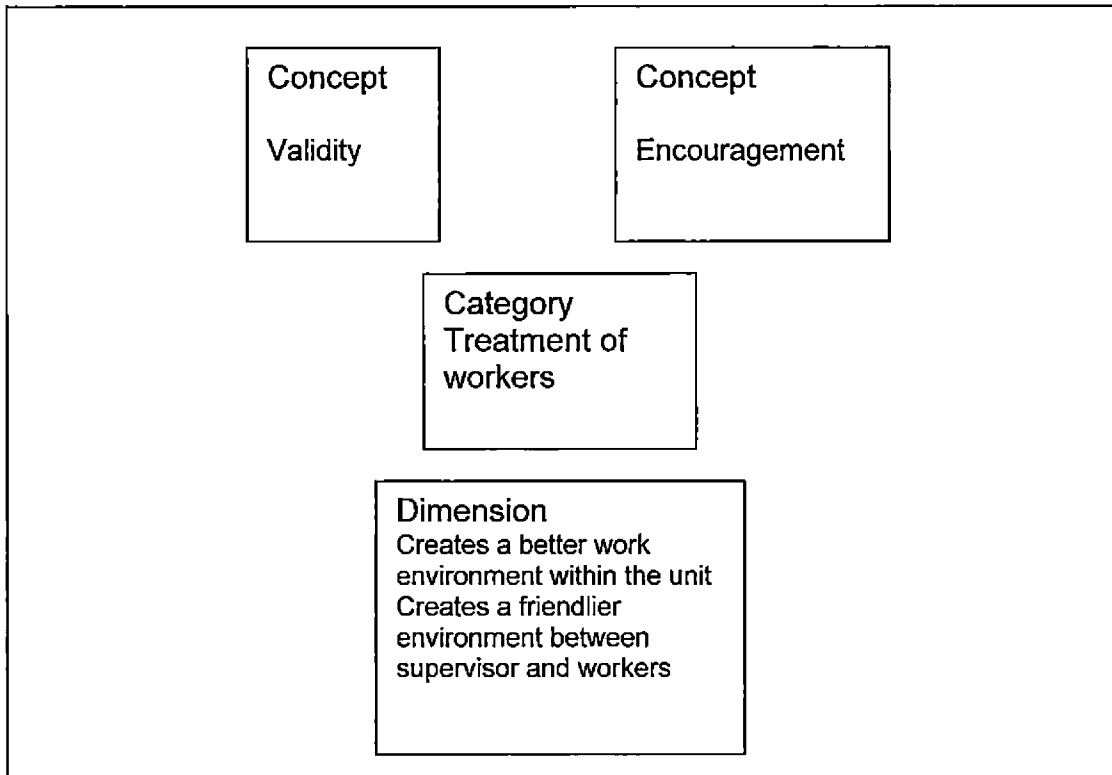
Figure 4. Treatment of Workers

Data Interpretation: Axial Coding

Axial coding allowed the researcher to link the

categories of supervisor competence/supervisors'

perception of workers relationships and professional

values/treatment of workers. The researcher was able to

make statements about the relationship between the

categories and the dimensions.

First, the dimensions of decrease in turn over

rates, and increase of work performance were linked to

improved relationship between the supervisors and the

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workers, and improved cohesiveness among workers. The combination of dimensions can be charted on an axial code as follows:
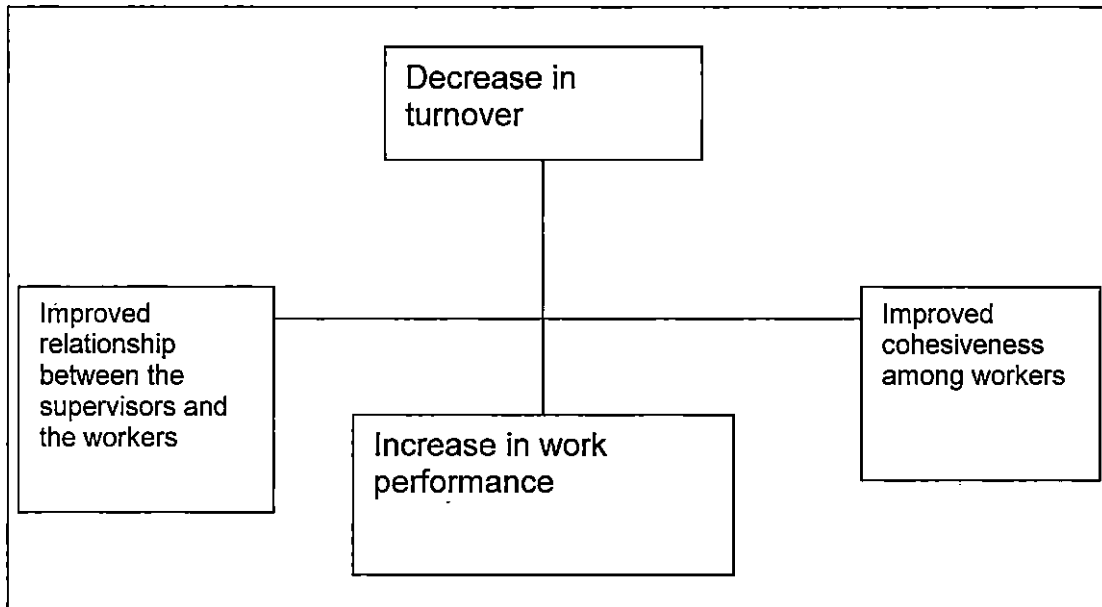
Figure 5. Improved Relationships/Decrease in Turnover

After linking the dimensions the following combinations were gathered: improved relationship between the supervisor and their workers/decrease in turnover. The data that were gathered during the interviews shows that if the supervisors used the qualities of having an open door policy, being available to their workers, and having knowledge and experience which they are willing to teach to their workers, this will help to keep the

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workers happier and less stressed. If the workers are

happier and less stressed then they are not as willing to

quit the county and this creates an improved relationship

with the supervisor because they know that their

supervisor is there to help out in any circumstance.

Improved Cohesiveness among Workers/Decreased Turn Over

By having the support of their supervisor then the

turn over rate is lower which is going to make for better

work conditions among the workers. When the unit has a

high turn over rate then the rest of the workers end up

with a much higher case load so this in turn makes for

unfavorable work conditions. When the turn over rate is

decreased then the number of cases are equally

distributed among the workers. When this happens, the

unit will have improved cohesiveness since all workers

will be equal in case load size which is better for

everyone involved.

Improved Relationship between the Supervisors and their Worker/Increase in Work Performance

When supervisors are being an effective supervisor,

using their skills and training, this will impact their

workers. So when the relationship is good between the

supervisor and their worker then the worker will have an increase in productive.

Improved Cohesiveness Among Workers/Increase in Work Performance

When the relationship between the supervisor and the workers is good, it brings a sense of cohesiveness which then is also found among the workers in that unit. Having cohesiveness among workers creates a friendlier atmosphere in which to work, so workers are happier coming to work and are willing to give their all to their job.

Improved Cohesiveness among Workers/Decrease in Turn Over

When workers felt valued and appreciated by their peers this bought improved cohesiveness within the unit and brings a sense of friendship within the unit. A cohesive unit it runs more smoothly and more efficiently so the turn overrate will decrease which will keep the unit going strong.

Second, the dimension of workers learning ethical values from supervisors and professional boundaries between supervisors and workers were linked to creates a better work environment within the unit and creates a friendlier environment between supervisors and worker.

The combination of dimensions can be charted on an axial

code as follows.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    ┌─────────────┐                           │
│                    │ Learn ethical│                          │
│                    │ values from  │                          │
│                    │ supervisors  │                          │
│                    │              │                          │
│                    └──────┬──────┘                           │
│                           │                                  │
│  ┌───────────┐            │            ┌──────────────┐      │
│  │ Creates a │            │            │ Creates friendlier│ │
│  │ better work├───────────┼────────────┤ environment   │    │
│  │ environment│           │            │ between       │    │
│  │ with the unit│         │            │ supervisors and│   │
│  │            │           │            │ workers       │    │
│  └───────────┘            │            └──────────────┘      │
│                    ┌──────┴──────┐                           │
│                    │ Professional │                          │
│                    │ boundaries   │                          │
│                    │ between      │                          │
│                    │ supervisors and│                        │
│                    │ workers      │                          │
│                    └─────────────┘                           │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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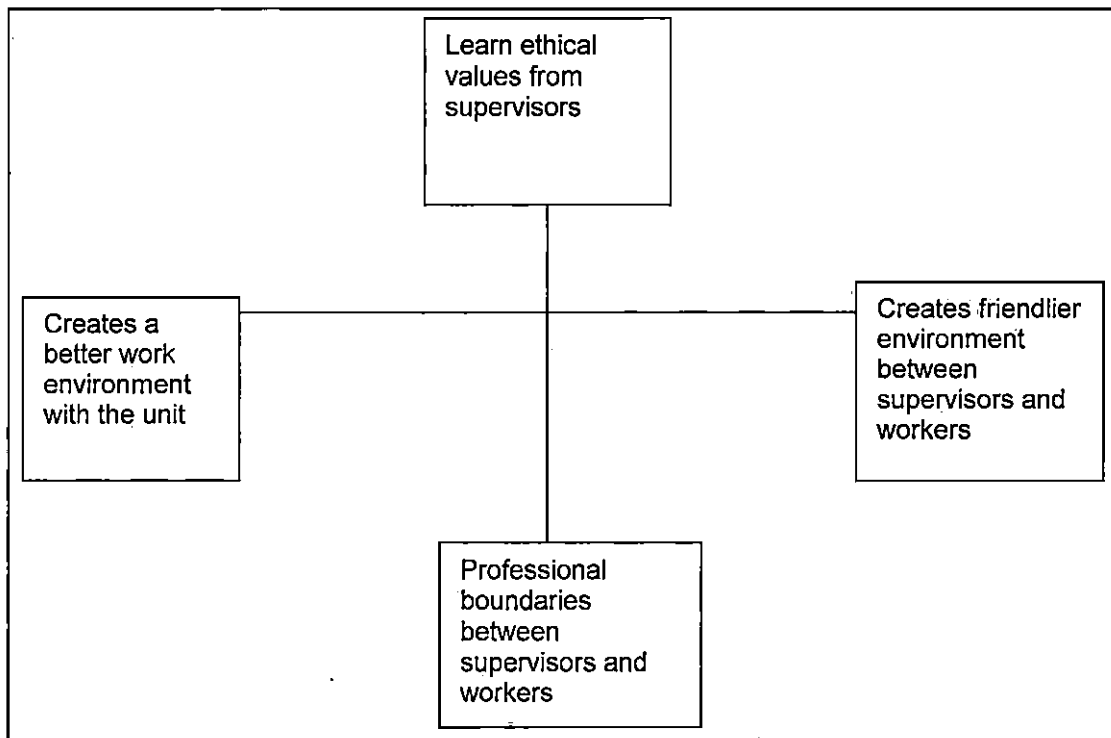
Figure 6. Boundaries, Ethical Values/Friendly Environment

After Linking the Dimensions the Following
Combinations were Gathered: Creates a Better Work
Environment within the Unit/Learn Ethical Values
from Supervisor

The data that were gathered during the interviews

show that if the supervisors teach their workers by

showing examples of good ethics with clients and other

workers then this creates a better work environment

within the unit. When the supervisor uses good ethical

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values, this will help their workers also use good

ethical values.

Creates a Friendlier Environment between Supervisors and Workers/Learn Ethical Values from Supervisors

The data gathered showed that when the workers learn

good ethical values and practice them with their clients

this creates a friendlier environment between the

supervisor and workers because the supervisors do not

have to reprimand their workers for not using good

ethical values. When workers do not use good ethical

values with their clients it creates problems between the

worker and the client; this in turns creates issues

between the workers and supervisors. So when good ethical

values are used, the client is getting the best possible

services and the supervisor will be pleased with their

employee.

Creates a Better Work Environment within the Unit/Professional Boundaries between Supervisors and Workers

The data showed that all of the supervisors had

boundaries with their workers. When workers know that

their supervisors have boundaries in place, this creates

for both the worker and the supervisor a work environment

that is a good one. Boundaries help to keep everyone

working within those boundaries and hopefully they will not be crossed over or become blurred. If they were to get crossed over or become blurred then problems will start to occur within the unit.

Creates a Friendlier Environment between Supervisors And Workers/Professional Boundaries between Supervisors and Workers

The data show that professional boundaries can be upheld while the supervisors show their workers that they are a valued member of the unit. Showing encouragement to the workers in the form of a note, saying "good job" or bringing in food all helps to create a friendly work environment between the supervisors and the workers.

Selective Coding

According to Morris (2006) "selective coding is the process of integrating and refining the categories and their dimensions to develop theory" (p. 116).

After reviewing all of the data that were gathered during the interviews, this researcher was able to identify the core categories of supervisor competence, supervisors' perception of workers relationship, treatment of workers and professional values. Each of these core categories had two dimensions each.

The theory that emerged from this study shows that the four core categories supervisor competence, supervisors' perception of workers relationship, professional value, and treatment of workers.

These four categories form the basic premise which shows what the qualities of a good supervisor are and what the barriers are which prevent them from retaining the social workers that work underneath them.

It became evident during the interviews from the respondents answers that all of the supervisors felt that being a good supervisor involves many different aspects.

The data showed that being a competent supervisor included the workers having access to the supervisors for questions, concerns and any other matters on which they needed to consult with their supervisors. It is important for the supervisors to have knowledge about the programs they supervise because if they do not have the knowledge to help out their workers then the supervisor is not being effective. A supervisor must be willing to teach the knowledge and experiences they have acquired so that the workers will be able to benefit from these teachings.

An issue of concern that came out during the study was that the supervisors have not had the proper training

to be an effective supervisor. This then becomes a concern for the workers since they too will be inadequately trained and will not be able to perform their job to the best of their ability. To help correct this problem the county can provide more intense training in the beginning and also provide continuing training for supervisors.

The data showed that the supervisors' perceptions of workers relationship were affected by the impact from the supervisor, the barriers to a supervisory position, and the workers completing an assessment of their supervisors. The way in which the supervisor impacts their workers can either be a positive one or a negative one. Supervisors need to be aware of how they are impacting their workers and try to make their interactions a positive one at all times since this will be helpful to their employees.

The barriers that prevent the supervisors from spending time with their units helping out are beyond the control of the supervisors. The barriers such as staff meetings, committee meetings, the mandatory paperwork all come down from the top management within the county so

the supervisors are helpless in trying to eliminate some of these duties.

Allowing the workers to perform an assessment of how their supervisors are performing in their job would be a benefit to everyone since then the supervisor would find out their weak points so that they could work to improve on these weaknesses. This could be a useful tool for social workers to use before they are ready to leave the county because if they were able to complete the assessments then the supervisor could be aware of their short comings and make the effort to change in order to retain the social workers under them.

The data showed that supervisor needs to demonstrate that they have professional values which they are using to complete their jobs. The workers can learn new ways of implementing ethical values that they have learned about but may never had used before working with their clients. The supervisors need to earn the trust of their workers by building a relationship based on team work, ensuring confidentially with their staff members, and by being available to the workers. One way of destroying that trust is to abuse their power that has been giving to them or crossing over the line of professional

boundaries. If these two concepts are abuse this will

only make their employee want to leave that unit and go

to another unit or to quit the county all together.

The data showed that it is important for the

supervisor to show their employees that they are a valued

member of the unit and, when the going gets tough, to

give encouragement to their workers to help them get

through the rough spots.

Implications of Findings for
Micro and Macro Practice

At the micro level, if the supervisors had better

training from the beginning on how to deal with the

different personalities of employees and how to better

relate to their workers then the working relationship

between the supervisor and their employee would be more

cohesive and would help with the retention of social

workers. Even with the barriers that were presented some

of those would improve with better training.

At the macro level, the agency would benefit from

having better trained supervisors since this would help

with the retention of social workers. Being able to

retain the current social workers helps out the units

since the workers would have a smaller case load and a

supervisor that is there for them. This would help to cut down the burn out rate of social workers.

Summary

Chapter Four is where the findings of the study were reported and interpreted. The interviews were analyzed utilizing qualitative methods. The researcher identified themes, open codes, core categories and dimensions and the relationships between them. A further analysis identified the relationship between the core categories and the overall theory of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

TERMINATION AND FOLLOW UP

Introduction

Chapter Five discusses the termination process that the researcher implemented and how the researcher presented the study's findings to the agency.

Communicating Findings to Study Site and Study Participants

The researcher presented the study's findings to the agency's personnel by giving them a copy of the completed project.

Termination of Study

Once the interviews were completed with the supervisors the study was terminated.

Ongoing Relationship with Study Participants

The researcher does not plan for any ongoing relationship with the study participants. The researcher may see some of the supervisors in the office and will just be polite and say hi.

Summary

The researcher presented the results of the study at the county agency. There was no further contact with the study participants.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

CSUSB Department of Social Work Research Project
Child Welfare Supervisors perceptions of good qualities of supervision.

Informed Consent

This study in which you are asked to participate is designed to explore the perception of supervisors of what they feel are good qualities of a supervisor and what the barriers are that prevent them from being able to perform their jobs to the best of their ability. This study is being conducted by Debra Walker under the supervision of Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, Professor in the Department of Social Work. This study has been approved by the Department of Social Work Institution Review Board Sub-Committee.

In this study you will be asked about your work experience within the Department of Children Services. You will be asked some questions regarding the qualities of and barriers faced by supervisors. It will take about 40 minutes to complete the interview. All of your responses will be kept confidential. No identifying information will be released. You may receive results of the study on completion on or about September, 2009 at the agency.

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are free not to answer any questions and withdraw at any time during this study without penalty. You can allow or refuse tape recording of your interview. There are no foreseeable risks to those who participate. For participating in this study the participant will receive a five-dollar Starbuck's gift card.

If you have any questions about this study please contact Dr.Rosemary McCaslin at California State University, San Bernardino, the Department of Social Work, 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, California 92407 or call (909) 537-5507.

By placing a check mark in the box below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand, the nature and purpose of the study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

Place a check mark here ☐   Today's date_____

I agree to have my interview audio tape recorded: YES☐ NO☐

APPENDIX B

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Child Welfare Supervisors perceptions of good qualities of supervision.

Debriefing Statement

This study you have just completed was designed to explore the perceptions of supervisors of what they feel are good qualities of a supervisor and what the barriers are that prevent them from being able to perform their jobs to the best of their ability. This researcher was interested in what are the good qualities of a supervisor and the barriers which prevent them from performing their jobs to the best of their ability. It is hoped that the findings from this study will help the Department of Children Services provide better training to supervisors in order to help retain social workers. Information from this study will be used to inform San Bernardino County's Department of Children Services about some of the qualities and barriers that are associated with supervisors and the supervision of their social workers.

Thank you for your participation in this study. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact **Dr. Rosemary McCaslin** at **(909)537-5507**. If you would like to obtain a copy of the results of this study, please contact the agency at the end of September 2009.

APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

What is your gender?

What is your age?

What is your current status: single, married, divorced, widowed, or never been married?

What is your ethnic background?

How long have you been a supervisor for the Department of Children Services?

What is education level? What is your degree in?

Do you have any children? If so how old are they?

As a supervisor what do you feel are some of the qualities that make for a good supervisor?

As a supervisor how do you feel your position impacts your workers?

Do you feel that you are an effective supervisor?

Do you feel that you have been adequately trained for being a supervisor?

What do you feel are some of the barriers to providing good supervision?

As a supervisor how do you validate your workers?

As a supervisor how do you give your workers the encouragement that they need in order to work in a productive way?

As a supervisor how do you practice good ethical values and also make sure that your workers practice good ethical values?

As a supervisor do you use your position of power to intimate your workers?

As a supervisor do you have clear cut boundaries that you do not cross over with your workers?

What have you done as a supervisor to gain the trust of your workers, so that they feel like they can talk to you about any problems at work?

How would you feel if your workers had the option of doing an assessment on your job performance?

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