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## **Perceptions of service delivery to Department of Children's Services Latino clients by Department of Children's Services social workers**

Michele Renee Hernandez

Angelina Alma Montenegro

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PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE DELIVERY TO DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES LATINO CLIENTS BY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES SOCIAL WORKERS

---

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

Michele Renee Hernandez and Angelina Alma Montenegro

June 1999

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June 1999

Approved by:

  
Dr. Tena Nelson, Project Advisor

6/10/99  
Date

  
Sally Richter, SSSP Agency Representative  
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## ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

This research was a team effort where both authors worked collaboratively in all phases of the study. However, each researcher assumed separate responsibilities for the actual writing. The responsibilities were as follows:

1. Data Collection

Michele Hernandez & Angelina Montenegro

2. Data Entry and Analysis

Michele Hernandez & Angelina Montenegro

3. Report Writing and Presentation of Findings

- a. Introduction and Literature Review

Michele Hernandez & Angelina Montenegro

- b. Methods

Angelina Montenegro

- c. Results

Michele Hernandez

- d. Discussion

Michele Hernandez & Angelina Montenegro

- e. Implications

Michele Hernandez & Angelina Montenegro

## ABSTRACT

The goal of this research was to explore the factors that contribute to effective service delivery to Latino clients according to Department of Children's Services (DCS) social workers. A post-positivist paradigm guided this research. A survey was administered to fifty social workers from the Department of Children's Services in San Bernardino County. This study sought to answer the question, "Are DCS Latino clients provided the same services as Caucasian and African American clients?" The authors null hypothesis was that social workers provide the same level of services to all DCS clients regardless of ethnicity. Findings from the study supports the hypothesis. The results show that ethnicity is not a consideration in determining which services are provided to ethnic clients. However, little consideration was given to cultural relevance in the provision of services. Accountability for quality of services makes this study valuable to DCS social workers working with culturally diverse at-risk clients.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

### Problem Statement

The United States (U.S.) Bureau of the Census predicts that because of the fertility rate well above the national average and increased immigration, Latinos will outstrip African Americans by the year 2050 and constitute more than 30 percent of our population (Jamieson & Seaman, 1993). Approximately 40% of all Latinos are under the age of 20, and close to one-third of all Latino children live in poverty. Latino children remain invisible and unaccounted for in the child welfare systems of our country, yet, they represent the largest growing and most vulnerable group in the United States (Ortega et al. 1996).

As a group, Latinos bear a disproportionate burden of persistent poverty and low-educational attainment. Many of these children and their families are vulnerable or at risk due to both economic and social inequality. Latino families are marginalized within the societal structure as a result of social, economic, and educational disadvantages which have restricted their active role in the policy making processes that influence the quality of their lives. Therefore, of all major ethnic groups, Latinos seem to profit the least from social services (Zambrana, 1998).

Furthermore, Latino families have not benefitted from

existing social service programs, local, state, or federal initiatives, or from private funding sources. Vulnerable Latino children and families have in common high levels of poverty, limited resources, including a lack of employment opportunities and work-related benefits (health insurance, pension plans, paid sick days), and a number of obstacles to overcome in order to access social service organizations. These factors potentially place a large number of Latinos at risk for entering the Child Protective Services system (Zambrana, 1995).

Historically, adequate data on Latinos at all levels have not been collected, thus limiting the progress of resources to respond to their needs (U.S. Surgeon General's National Latino Health Initiative, 1993; Zambrana, 1995). For example, research studies that focus on examination of how social services are being provided to Latinos, need to be collected and analyzed in order for human services providers to be effective in their work with Latinos (Castex, 1994; Zambrana, 1998).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate how services are being provided by the Department of Children's Services (DCS) Social Workers to Latino clients in San Bernardino County. This study is important for several reasons. First, the Latino population has increased in both number

and representation in the U.S., these major demographic changes and potentially expanding numbers place this group at high risk for entering the Child Protective Services (CPS) system. Second, this will present a direct challenge to social service agencies, such as DCS in San Bernardino county, in how they service the incoming Latino clients. Third, as Latinos increase in number in many sections of the U.S., CPS providers increasingly may show interest in developing programs culturally appropriate for them. In this effort, it is important to assess the needs of the Latino client. Fourth, social service practitioners at CPS may find themselves providing services to clients classified as Latinos, a group with which they may have had little experience.

According to Julia (1994), Latino clients present increasing dilemmas for social workers. The high numbers of recent immigrants who have limited English and experience a host of cultural adjustment factors that differentiate them from others in the population, is adding to the complexity of the work. Public child protective workers are often placed on the "front lines" of social work. They are in a position to immediately impact a child's life, and are responsible for protecting the safety and stability of children who are involved in the child

protective service system.

This topic merits attention because we must identify barriers that prevent Latinos from achieving equal access to services provided by social service agencies such as CPS. Zambrana (1998) agrees, "Further research is necessary to document the protective service reasons that bring Latino children into out-of-home care, and their age at time of placement, length of stay, and eventual outcomes" (p. 5). Zambrana further states, "Research that would inform child welfare service development would include: Information on whether placements with families of similar background facilitate family reunification, what ethnic-specific services are successful in strengthening the family to facilitate early reunification, and assessment of Latino family assets in resource-restrictive environments" (p. 5).

Finally, this study is important because the sociopolitical environment that Latino families enter also has a significant effect on the quality of their lives; those that are most in need are often the most vulnerable. We still live in a society that is not friendly toward minorities, especially toward people from third world countries. People coming from Europe get a different type of reception (Horowitz, 1985). They get one that is more

charitable and accepting towards them. It is an element that is still present within our society and it is increasingly becoming more xenophobic and anti-immigrant which has an effect on all institutions including DCS.

Literature on culturally aware services has emphasized the ideology of assimilation, the notion that immigrants and minorities should integrate into the mainstream of American society (Montiel & Wong, 1983). But assimilate to what? Social work practice that accepts institutional racism, discrimination, and oppression will therefore, neglect to provide the correct services needed for the Latino population. Being culturally aware is only a first step in addressing racism. McMahon & Allen-Meares (1992) suggest, "[that assimilation]... can devalue minority values by urging or expecting minority clients to accept and assimilate the social and family values of the majority society" (p. 541), which ignores the specific cultural needs of certain populations. "This color-blind approach treats all clients the same without regard to their specific needs .... This [is a racist] attitude, ... because it views minorities oppression as normal and natural" (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992, p. 541). Therefore, the services provided to Latinos may be negligent because social workers have assumed these clients

should require what every other client needs, which is simply, "...another form of "universalism" in which people are people and should be treated the same. Such beliefs are Eurocentric and have been documented to be highly destructive to racial and cultural minority constituents" (Derald et al. 1992, p. 67).

In summary, the researchers intended to examine whether Latino clients are serviced differently by the Department of Children's Services in San Bernardino County. The study demonstrated that there is a need to assess services for Latino clients. in child protective service agencies, there is also a need for this type of study to be done because, of the lack of research on how services are being provided for Latinos.

The purpose of this research is also an attempt to inform bureaucratic child care systems that fail to respond effectively to a growing number of Latino clients who come to the attention of child protective services. Another purpose is to advocate that services be provided Latinos which are sensitive to understanding cultural traditions, ethnic distinctions in child rearing practices, and cultural differences in the presentation of problem behaviors. This sensitivity is essential to adequate assessment and service provision to Latino children and

their families. A failure to fully appreciate each child's sociocultural environment may lead to misinformation, misinterpretation of information and poor case management decisions (Zambrana, 1997). The researchers utilized the post-positivist paradigm in order to look for differences in services provided to Latino clients.

This study also illustrated the need for social workers to learn to adapt skills and techniques in response to the client's ethnic reality and demonstrated a need to develop a capacity to respond to populations with heightened sensitivity. Additionally, this study created an awareness for the DCS worker to be sensitive to the possibility that people who are in crisis or who are experiencing powerful emotions may have additional difficulties communicating in a second or third language. This study demonstrated and answered the question of whether Latino clients are receiving adequate services from DCS social workers.

### Literature Review

There is little information on how Latinos are being helped by Child Protective Service (CPS) systems and the problems associated with the provision of services for this population. Current CPS programs have emerged primarily as



a result of three major legislative movements. In the early 1960's, "...laws were passed in all states mandating that physicians report, suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the appropriate state or local agency....This legislation reflected an expanded public awareness of child abuse, resulting in notable increases in reporting" (Wells, 1994, p. 431). Approximately ten years later agency response to child abuse were advanced by, "...the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 (CAPTA) (P.L. 93-247). CAPTA linked state compliance with federal regulations to federal funding for child abuse programs and thereby set national standards for child protective investigations" (Wells, 1994, p. 431). In 1980, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (P.L. 96-272) declared a renewed sensitivity to maintaining family stability for children and making reasonable efforts to maintain them in their own homes. This Act was one of the first federal legislative efforts to emphasize maintaining families in which children had been abused or neglected (Wells, 1994).

Chapman (1997), in her examination of Child Protective Services and cultural ramifications for families and communities describes the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272) as focused on preventing

the removal of children from their families, timely reunification of children with their families after they had been removed due to abuse or neglect, and adoption as a permanent plan for children who could not be reunited with their families within a reasonable time. As Chapman notes, "In response to the exposure of 'foster care drift' -- children remaining in out-of-home care due to inadequate case planning and monitoring--this legislation encompassed the concept of making 'reasonable efforts' to keep families together, providing permanency planning services, and placing children in the least restrictive settings"(p. 48).

Service to clients by CPS workers is most often thought of as involuntary. The client comes to the attention of the state by a report, which is usually report by a mandate. CPS will provide services until it is determined that the child has not suffered any harm and is not endangered in his or her current situation (Wells, 1994). During the investigation process the CPS worker has a dual role. On the one hand, the worker is seeking evidence to determine whether the allegation of child abuse is true or false. On the other hand, according to Wells (1994), "...the worker is often asked to determine whether the child is currently safe in his or her environment, and whether there are circumstances that would probably

endanger the child in the near future" (p. 438).

Therefore, the CPS worker has the responsibility of determining what is of the best interest for the child.

American Humane Association (1987) has shown a 180% increase in CPS referrals during the ten-year period from 1976 to 1986 (English & Pecora, 1994). In 1990, it was estimated that two and one-half million children in the United States were alleged victims of maltreatment (English & Pecora, 1994). In 1991, after an extensive national review of child abuse and neglect, "... Congress found that the number of children who experience child abuse and neglect had increased dramatically, and 'that many of these children and families fail to receive adequate protection or treatment' [National Commission Report 1990]..." (English & Pecora, 1994, p. 451). While the knowledge about child maltreatment has grown, statistics show that child maltreatment itself appears to be growing as well. Reports of suspected maltreatment have leapt to 2.9 million children in 1993. "Additional data indicate that every year approximately 2,000 children will die (a conservative estimate)..." (Freeman, Levine, & Doueck, 1996, p. 908). English & Pecora (1994) found that, "...[in order] to cope with increasing and increasingly severe caseloads child welfare agency administrators are looking for methods to

improve service delivery as well as ways to make service delivery more effective" (p. 451).

English & Pecora (1994) found that ways to improve service delivery needed to be accompanied with better ways of predicting whether or not a child will be maltreated in the near future. Therefore, risk assessments were conducted in order to collect information to determine the degree to which a child is likely to be abused or neglected in the future. English & Pecora's (1994) study found that, "...most states are using risk assessment after substantiation of abuse/neglect to determine appropriate levels of service" (p. 452). The process of risk assessment encompasses, examining the child and family situation in order to identify and analyze various risk factors, family strengths, family resources, and available agency services. This assessment information can then be used, "... to determine whether a child is safe, what agency resources are necessary to keep a child safe, and under what circumstances a child should be removed from or returned to his or her family" (English & Pecora, 1994, p. 452).

A review of the literature available, by English & Pecora (1994), regarding risk factors for child abuse and neglect associated with different cultures indicates that

some risk factors may be present in families regardless of culture. What is of importance is, "... how these cultural factors are interpreted, what their relationship to risk is, how each factor should be weighted, and what interventions are appropriate may, however, call for modification of risk assessment systems to reflect cultural consideration" (English & Pecora, 1994, p. 464). English & Pecora (1994) indicate, "...that cultural implications may be related to family values regarding physical discipline [Wu 1981; Horejsi 1987], [and] supervision" (p. 464). There is still much work which lies ahead, "... before we can understand the dynamic role that culture plays in the assessment of risk for child maltreatment and services provided" (English & Pecora, 1994, p. 465).

The work which lays ahead is intensified by the numbers of increasing minorities who are victims of abuse. At the same time that the legislation was enacted, the child welfare field began to see the results of laws mandating reporting by professionals, and the identification of an increasing number of children of color in child protective reports. Chapman (1997) states, that as far back as 1970, "...researchers noted that the threat of child separation appeared to be a particular problem for the families of underprivileged ethnic minority groups.

Observers began to describe this decade as the "browning" of child welfare in America, due to disproportionate number of substantiated reports emanating from the communities of color" (p. 49).

An estimated one in ten of all children reported abused and neglected in 1992 were Latino. Over one-half of the children were non-Latino White (58.5%), while more than one-quarter were African American (27.4%) [Children's Defense Fund 1995]. In States with larger Latino populations, the rates were considerably higher. For example, in California almost one-third 31%, and close to one-half (46%) in New Mexico, of all children reported abused and neglected were Latino (Zambrana, 1998).

A study by Stevenson, Cheung, & Leung (1992) found that, currently, both African American and Latino caseworkers are increasingly represented in the ranks of CPS; while, child welfare workers continue to be predominantly Caucasian. National data, however, "...document an over representation of children from African American, Hispanic, and Native American groups serviced by the child welfare system [Children's Defense fund 1978, Stehno 1982: Jenkins et al. 1983]..." (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). Further, " while the current child welfare system may have become more tolerant of certain

problems within various ethnic groups, assessments, [services], and intervention are harsher once a situation is defined as problematic" (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). Therefore, what type of services are the Latino clients receiving when their situation is defined as problematic.

Overt discrimination against Latino clients, "...has simply been replaced by more covert discrimination, resulting in relatively slight changes in services delivery to this population since 1940" (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). Similarly, national data suggest that, "...Hispanic children are more likely than Caucasians to be recommended for increased protective services... [Olsen 1982]..." (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). According to Hogan and Siu (1988), CPS workers fail to avoid initial placement, misuse family pathology models, and [use] little emphasis on reunification [when providing services to Latino clients] (Stevenson et al. 1992).

In a study of Latino abused children. Loperena (1996), found that abused and neglected Latino children are less likely than other children to receive adequate help or services. The study, which focused on six states with 75 percent of the nation's Latino children said much of the problem stems from the "invisibility" of Hispanic children in child welfare systems. "We are undercounted and over

represented in the system," said Loperena of the National Child Welfare group. National reporting of abused and neglected children considers Latino an ethnicity and not a race, so Latino children are distributed among various race categories. This makes it nearly impossible to understand national incidence rates for Latino children (pp. 1-2).

In addition, the study found that state reporting often miss codes Latino children as Caucasian, African-American or other racial category. The study also found cultural obstacles to reporting Latino children to protective services such as fear, lack of knowledge and language barriers. Latinos reporting abuse neglect cases "have to sign papers they don't understand," said a client who received services from CPS and who participated in the study. The client also said, "there is not a cultural fit" (Loperena, 1996, p. 1), meaning that documents are not written in Spanish in order for clients, who can only read Spanish will understand them. Therefore, this increases the lack of appropriate services which may not be provided to Latinos, due to inability to speak the language.

A study by Bernal, Bonilla, & Bellido (1995) suggested, language is the support of the culture. If the interventions are not available in the appropriate language, "...the treatment may be difficult if not



impossible to deliver..." (Bernal et al. 1995, p. 73). They suggested that knowledge of language infers greater familiarity with cultural knowledge. Language is also related, "... to expression of emotional experiences...and needs to be considered in the treatment process, ... however, language appropriate interventions are more than the mechanical translation of an intervention" (p.73). In order that appropriate services are being rendered, "...culturally sensitive language may be instrumental in ensuring that intervention was received as intended" (p. 74).

In reference to the Latino family, "... Muñoz (1982) highlight[s] the importance of welcoming clients in such a way that they may feel understood, comfortable, and in familiar surroundings with objects and symbols of their culture..." (Bernal et al. 1995, p. 75). They also stated how we, " handle cultural information about values, customs, and traditions...reflects an appreciation of generational differences, [and] couples with a commitment to clinical change, is key ..." (p. 75). The use of language can be an important methodological tool in treatment and in determining the type of services provided. "With families that have members with differing degrees of fluidity with either Spanish or English, the therapist can

choose to speak in one language or another as a means to a particular goal" (p. 79). This will increase the potential services that can be provided to the clients. It is unfortunate, however, that most CPS workers are Caucasian and will not have the ability to communicate in the same language as the clients.

In a related study by Quesada (1976) it was found that, "... analyzing the behavior of urban poor families when interacting with middle-class relief workers, concluded that satisfactory communication in such situations was rather difficult due to different communication habits that the interacting parties had been socialized into" (p. 323). Quesada also found, "Communication problems between members of different social classes proliferate when different ethnic backgrounds also are involved" (p. 323). Different lingual groups see and conceive reality in different ways. Therefore, the language spoken shapes the cognitive structure of the individual speaking that language. Quesada states, "...people's perceptions differ, and these differences are related to and caused by the language used by the people" (p. 324). The lack of adequate communication or understanding may produce dropouts in the system as well as abrupt termination of treatment without adequate follow-ups

(Quesada, 1976). He recommends that programs in language acquisition for monolingual professionals are only a partial solution to the problem. He further stated that language skill is not enough and that, "... other health professionals must be knowledgeable about the culture of the group they are working with in order to be effective" (p. 325).

Stehno (1982) & Jenkins (1983) suggested, "...caseworkers must confront not only possible deficits in knowledge and skill about ethnic differences, but also attitudinal biases, which inadvertently may be reinforced by the nature of their work and sometimes by training efforts themselves" (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). A review of existing CPS training curricula suggests, according to Stehno (1982) & Jenkins (1983), "...that efforts have focused almost exclusively on the broader issues of cultural sensitivity, rather than on specific ethnic sensitivity training" (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 292). Which may be causing Latino population to receive inadequate services for their specific needs.

In another article Proctor & Davis (1994) found that, generally, professionals denied awareness of, "...or feigned blindness to, client race in an attempt to treat minority clients 'just like any other' client" (p. 316).

Color-blind practice was assumed, "... to control for client-worker racial differences, to foster the conveyance of 'true regard' for minority clients, and to ensure that all clients were treated equally" (Proctor & Davis, 1994, p. 316). As researched by Frank (1961), "Clients want therapeutic relationships in which they feel understood, in which they trust their workers, and in which they have confidence in the worker's ability" (Proctor & Davis, 1994, p. 317). According to Brody (1987), the professional must establish credibility and trust, and through words and actions, address and move beyond the client's race-related concerns (Proctor & Davis, 1994). Respect and professional courtesy are particularly important with minority clients, to whom society frequently gives less. It is important to provide the services that the Latino population needs with the knowledge of what this population may need, due to their ethnicity, but provide services with respect and courtesy.

It may be difficult to provide needed services if service oriented professionals are not aware of what this population may need. "Although failure to understand clients is a problem for both white and nonwhite practitioners, those at greatest risk are white practitioners, most of whom do, in fact, have limited

experience with minority communities, cultures, and concerns" (Proctor & Davis, 1994, p. 320). Social workers display their lack of understanding clients social realities in many ways. A basic part of the failure is, "... to understand the clients social reality is the failure to understand the client's language and what various expressions and terms mean to him or her" (Proctor & Davis, 1994, p. 321). Given the continuing history of segregation in society, "... failure to understand language and cultural nuances across racial boundaries should not be surprising. Yet, understanding the client and the client's social reality may be one of the most critical issues in cross-racial practice" (Proctor & Davis, 1994, p. 321).

"Culturally sophisticated (that is sensitive and supportive) human services organizations, programs, and services have been developed within ethnic communities to meet the needs and strengths of Latinos..." (Grant & Gutierrez, 1996, p. 624). Ethnocentric organizations determine their services without considering the unique cultural characteristics of the population to be served (Grant & Gutierrez, 1996). In order to provide the Latino population Ethnic-competent organizations should be mandated. Ethnic-competent or ethoconscious organizations are organized from the perspective of the population in

mind. This is accomplished by, "... integrating the needs and strengths of the ethnic community into their mission, staffing, and programs, these culturally sophisticated organizations often carry out their mission through the development of specialized services, outreach programs, or agencies"(Grant & Gutierrez, 1996, p.624).

These services should be provided to the Latino population with the knowledge of what this population currently needs. However, according to McMahon & Allen-Mares (1992), "...most of the literature on social work practice with minorities is naive and superficial and fails to address their social context. These deficiencies pose severe restraints on the effectiveness of social worker with minority populations" (p.533). The lack of relevant literature is disappointing, and appears to not have taken into consideration that, "by the end of the 1980's minorities were more likely to be poorer, be less educated, live shorter lives, be less healthy, and have their children placed in foster care or given up for adoption than whites (Hogan & Siu, 1988: Ogawa, 1986: V. Washington, 1987)" (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992, p. 533). If the literature had taken this into consideration, then perhaps research focusing on the social needs for the Latino population would have been done. Further research

concerning DCS, needs to be completed since Latinos are more likely to have their children placed in foster care. "Hogan and Siu (1988) provided current and past evidence of racism in child welfare practice with minorities.... [They found] that racial and ethnic minorities receive differential treatment within the social welfare system" (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992, p. 533). This differential treatment needs to be addressed in order that Latino clients receive adequate care.

In order to go about increasing services to Latino clients it has been recommended that, "...[this] can best be accomplished by adopting an ecological perspective through broadening the knowledge base of practice and developing new approaches to assessment and treatment planning" (Morisey, 1983, p.139). She also suggested working with the strengths of the family, extended family, community systems, and on a broader level to address the systemic problems that have such a negative impact on their lives. In the current context of social work practice and the way people live, critical factors are the urban environment, the particular and often disadvantaged situation of blacks and Latinos who have moved to the nation's major cities. Morisey further stated, issues affecting the blacks and Latinos are, "... issues related

to employment and unemployment, money, poverty, changes in the role of the family, and the increasing bureaucratization of service systems." (p. 139). The importance to increase the services to clients as suggested by Morisey, "...is a broader knowledge base and a training and educational plan for every level of staff, as well as for foster parents and child care workers, is needed" (p. 144).

Social work practitioners experience the general effects that the social service system has on people, they know little about the consequences of their own interventive efforts, particularly within CPS programs. Julia (1993) states, "Social workers in such settings generally lack empirical evidence of their effectiveness. To discover that available data about the outcomes of social work services in CPS often consist of enumerating of "cases" serves as both frustrating and disappointing" (p. 329). She also reports, "to make optimal use to the human services professions, individuals must be enfranchised to participate actively both in gathering and evaluating information... to enhance effectiveness of a service, the clientele must be engaged in all aspects of the treatment process.... We have an obligation to those we serve..." (p. 331).



In theory, most approaches to social work practice are consistent with prevailing understanding of cultural, class, race, and ethnic diversity (DeVore and Schlesinger, 1987). They also found that models such as the problem-solving framework, task-centered casework, and the process-stage approach share the same social work values: "The dignity of the individual, the right to self-determination, the need for adequate standard of living, and the need for satisfying, growth-enhancing relationships are uniformly noted" (p. 144). It is important to incorporate these values in an ethnically sensitive approach that delineates human behaviors and social environmental factors for working with ethnic diverse clients.

Literature pertaining to services directly given to Latino clients by CPS workers is difficult to locate. "It is widely recognized that outcome studies in child welfare services are necessary, and that they are difficult" (Shireman, Grossnickle, Hinsey & White, 1990, p. 167). Therefore, this research study hoped to contribute to the literature concerning the Latino population. The researcher's aim was to explore the services provided to Latino Clients by the DCS worker and to provide relevant knowledge to perhaps the lack of services this population is receiving.

These studies in some ways were an exploration of new territory. Though many of the studies concerning protective services "fit" with other studies, or with expectations based on theory, they are only suggestive. Their major contributions lie in the indicators they provide for further research in the area of how services are being provided by DCS to Latino clients. In summary, the literature supported the need for the type of evaluation undertaken by this study.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### Design of the Study

The question guiding this research was to explore whether DCS social workers were providing Latino clients services different from those provided to Caucasian and African American clients. This is a post-positivist study. The post-positivist paradigm was selected because it allows for open-ended questions, which fits our collection design. Questionnaires, (see Appendix C) were sent via inter-office mail to 300 randomly selected social workers who were listed with the Department of Children's Services from San Bernardino county. The hypothesis was that there would be a variation of services provided to Caucasian, Latino, and African-American clients by DCS social workers. Also, we

expected to find that social workers would be less optimistic about successful outcomes with African-American and Latino clients than with Caucasian clients. The researchers specific area of interest was in the area of how services are being provided by DCS social workers to Latino clients. The null hypothesis is that social workers provide the same level of services to all DCS clients regardless of ethnicity. However, we expected to find a variation based on ethnicity.

For the purposes of this research, services provided to clients are defined as helping and empowering clients in making positive changes and to reduce the risk of future child maltreatment. Services include problem assessment, child safety planning, referrals to community resources, court intervention, access to transportation, case management, and bilingual interventions such as referrals to agencies that provide education, counseling, and programs in Spanish.

### Study Sample

The study sample consisted of social workers from four different DCS offices: "E" Street, Mill Street, Rancho Cucamonga, and Victorville. Questionnaires were sent via inter-office mail to 300 randomly selected social workers,

from all levels (ie., MSW, BSW, etc.) who were listed with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) from San Bernardino County. Of the 300 social workers, 52 responded. The participants in this sample are representative of the DCS social worker population from San Bernardino County.

Two questionnaires were discarded because they were incomplete. There was therefore, a 15% response rate. A 15% response rate was anticipated as response rates for mailed questionnaires is generally very low. Therefore, results from this study are not necessarily generalizable.

#### Data Collection and Instruments

Three different questionnaires were created and utilized by the authors for this study (See Appendix C). The instrument was designed to elicit demographic information as to demographic characteristics, nature and effectiveness of services, and perceptions of satisfaction with services provided by the social worker. The questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section of all three questionnaires were the same. They contained demographics such as employment history, degree obtained and year, gender, ethnicity, age, and job title. The second section contained a vignette directed toward a specific ethnicity. The participants randomly received a

questionnaire that was directed at eliciting information about services provided to either Caucasian, Latino, or African-American clients. In each vignette there was a scenario depicting some of the client situations DCS social workers encounter. The vignettes were identical except for the ethnic racial identification of the client. After reading the scenario the participants were asked to answer eight open ended questions pertaining to the scenario they just read.

Prior to sending our final questionnaires we conducted a pre-test in order to insure for internal validity and to safeguard against researchers' subjectivity or biases. Our pre-test consisted of a focus group of experts in child protective services. The experts consisted of six randomly chosen DCS social workers at various levels. The focus group was conducted for two hours. The group consisted of two males and four females. Three of the participants were intake workers, one was a supervisor (SSSP), and two were carrier workers. The ethnicity of the focus group participants were one Asian male, one Caucasian male, two Caucasian females, one Latina, and one African American. The focus group participants were brought together in a room to engage in a guided discussion to control for content validity in our questionnaire. The discussion

consisted of questions such as: (1) did we ask the right questions and (2) have we considered all the possible answers provided regarding the scenarios. The focus group was important because it represented a cross-section of ethnic and gender diversity and had experience with DCS, therefore, it insured against researcher bias in evaluating responses. However, the responses elicited from the focus group can be considered not generalizable to all DCS social worker populations. They may not reflect other DCS social workers responses.

Using answers gathered from the focus group, the researchers categorized and rated responses to open-ended questions on a Likert 5 point scale. Receiving a rating of 1 was equal to the lowest level of response pertaining to each question given and a rating of 5 was equal to the highest level of response. The ratings from questions 1. "What vital information would you need to gather to assess the client and her children?" 2. "What services would you provide this client and her children?" and 4. "Would you refer the client for any additional services? If so, where would you refer them?," were summed to create a total service score which was used as an instrument to test quality of services between the ethnic groups. After completion of the questionnaire each participant was

provided with a Debriefing Statement (See Appendix B).

#### Protection of Human Subjects

The participants privacy was protected using the following procedures consistent with The Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines of California State University at San Bernardino, California.

The researchers assigned each participant a numerical code which was kept confidential. The researchers were the only ones who had access to the code in order to eliminate the possibility of anyone discovering the identity of the participants. All participants were provided with a consent form informing them of precautions which were intended to maintain confidentiality, anonymity, and freedom from injury or harm resulting from their participation in this study. This form also contained information recognizing their right to withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences.

The researchers gave a Debriefing Statement (See Appendix B) to each participant when they completed the questionnaire. This Debriefing Statement provided the participants with information as to how they could receive the results of the study. The statement also informed the participants as to the purpose of the study and provided

them with telephone numbers of sources in case they had any questions regarding the research (See Appendix B).

### Data Analysis

After the data was collected from the questionnaire, a formal statistical analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The final data gathered was computer tabulated using SPSS to assist for control and for objectivity which provided more accurate results. Once receiving the final questionnaires, the data was entered and tabulated. The researchers utilized three specific operations from SPSS. The questionnaire was coded and summative scores and the total scores were calculated. The data was analyzed to determine whether there was a relationship between variables such as, degree obtained, years employed, and ethnicity of client (independent variable) versus interval variable level of services provided by the total service score instrument (dependent variable). To test the null hypothesis to show that there is no difference in service level regardless of ethnicity the researches performed an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test the differences among the means of the degrees obtained, years of employment, and the different ethnicity's of the client, in relationship to the services



provided by the DCS social workers. ANOVA was utilized in testing the social worker's optimism about the case versus the ethnicity of the client.

Additional statistical tests used by the researchers was cross-tabulation and ANOVA to show patterns and correlations between nominal variables such as; client satisfaction with services, the social worker's optimism about the case, and the social worker's evaluation of the success of the client versus the ethnicity of the client. This procedure will also provide additional information on the distribution of values of our nominal variables. The researchers utilized Chi-square to test for association between the nominal variables. This level of measurement was used for the purposes of statistical significance testing.

Certain variable were eliminated from this study such as; annual income of social worker, length of time for completion of service plan, and if a court petition would have to be filed. The social workers income was not a factor in determining how they provide services to their clients. The length of time was also not a consideration, because all social workers gave 6-12 months of mandated time to complete services. In regards to court petition being filed, it was assumed by the social workers that all

substantiated cases have to be filed.

## RESULTS

The data was analyzed and presented in the following tables. Included in the information were frequencies, measures of central tendency, ANOVA, and chi-square for measuring the differences between groups of participants.

### Demographic Information:

The demographic information gathered from the participants is shown in the following tables. As seen in Table 1, of the 50 participants, a majority were from "E" Street and Rancho Cucamonga offices (See Table 1).

### Location

Table 1:

Demographic Characteristics of Participants by Office

	Frequency	Percent
Rancho Cucamonga	16	32.0
Victorville	8	16.0
Mill Street	10	20.0
E. Street	16	32.0
Total	50	100.0

### Ethnicity/Race

The ethnicity of the participants varied among the responses. The ethnicities consisted of Caucasian, Latino, African American, Asian, and Other. Over half were Caucasian while only 16% were Latinos (See Table 2). This

is representative of area population.

Table 2:  
Demographic Information by Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent
African American	13	26.0
Caucasian	26	52.0
Latino	8	16.0
Asian	2	4.0
Other	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

### Gender

One of the demographical characteristics measured was the gender of the participants. Of the 50 participants the majority were female, seventy-four percent( $n=37$ ), and twenty-six percent( $n=13$ ) were males.

### Age

The demographic data presented in Table 3 shows the mean ages of the participants. The median age was 39, mean was 40.26, and mode was 30.0. However, as noted 40% were age 30-40 years. The ages of the participants ranged from 26 to 61 years of age.

Table 3:  
Age of Social Workers

	Valid	Missing	Mean	Median	Mode
AGE	50	0	40.2600	39.0000	30.0

### Education

Of these participants 34 or 68% held masters degrees, 26 MSW and 8 MA/MS, while 16 or 32% held bachelor degrees (See Table 4).

Table 4:  
Degree Obtained by Social Workers

	Frequency	Percent
BA	13	26.0
BSW	3	6.0
MSW	26	52.0
MA/MS	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

### Length of Post Degree Experience

As shown in Table 5, most participants, 46%, received their degree within the last five years prior to this study. The median year by degree was 1994, the mean 1991, and the mode was 1996 (See Table 5).

Table 5:  
The Year the Social Workers Received Their Degree.

	Frequency	Percent
1964 - 1969	2	4.0
1970 - 1974	2	4.0
1975 - 1979	1	2.0
1980 - 1984	1	2.0
1985 - 1989	6	12.0
1990 - 1994	15	30.0
1995 - 1999	23	46.0
Total	50	100.00

Table 6:  
The Mean Year of Degree Received.

	Valid	Missing	Mean	Median	Mode
RECEIVED DEGREE	50	0	1991	1994	1996

### Job Title

Of these participating social workers sixty-two percent (n=31) were Social Service Practitioners (SSP's), thirty percent (n=15) were Social Worker II's, and eight percent (n=4) were Supervision Social Service Practitioners (SSSP's) (See Table 7).

Table 7:  
Social Worker Title

	Frequency	Percent
SW II	15	30.0
SSP	31	62.0
SSSP	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

### Years of Employment

Of these 50 participating social workers the majority have been employed less than five years (n= 24). The years of employment ranged from 1 month to 29 years (See Table 8). The mean year of employment for the participating social workers was 5.1 years, median 4, and mode was 2. Of the participants 86% were employed less than 10 years (See Table 8).

Table 8:  
Length of Employment

	Frequency	Percent
1 month - 4 yrs	24	48.0
5 yrs - 9 yrs	19	38.0
10 yrs - 14 yrs	3	6.0
15 yrs - 19 yrs	2	4.0
20 yrs - 24 yrs	0	0.0
25 yrs - 29 yrs	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

Questionnaire Responses:

Total Service Score

The One-way ANOVA results showed that there was no significance between the total service score measurement of services the social worker provided and the ethnicity of the client ( $P=.943$ ) (See Table 9). The total service score of the participant's responses were representative of, (1) level of assessment, (2) types of services, and (3) additional referral services. The no significance between the total services scores are indicative of the participants not taking into account clients ethnicity. Overall, it appears that social workers are providing equal services and are not practicing cultural sensitivity.

Table 9:  
Total Service Score and Ethnicity

Variable	df	Significance
Total Service Score and ethnicity of client	Between groups 2 Within groups 47	.943

### Total Service Mean Score

As can be seen in Table 10, the mean total service score for the Caucasian client was 29.53 out of a perfect score of 50. The mean total service score for the Latino client was 28.90 out of a perfect score of 50. The mean total service score for the African American client was 28.61 out of a perfect score of 50. A perfect score would indicate the social worker included in their responses to questions 1, 2, and 4, a psychosocial assessment, additional services offered, transportation, and a cultural assessment. As can be noted the social workers all scored low on the total mean scores. This is because they neglected to incorporate cultural sensitivity in their services offered. The three responses with a high score indicated that they included a cultural assessment and provided the additional services(See Table 10).

Table 10:  
Total Service Mean Score by Ethnicity

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Caucasian	13	29.5385	8.7046
Latino	19	28.8947	5.8013
African American	18	28.6111	8.1971
Total	50	28.9600	7.3733

### Degree, Length of Employment and Services

The One-way ANOVA results for the degree obtained by the social worker and the service provided showed that

there was no significance ( $p=.267$ ). According to the One-way ANOVA results for the years of employment and the services provided also showed there was no significance between them( $p=.751$ ) (See Table 11).

Table 11:  
Degree Obtained, Years of Employment and Services

Variables	df	Significance
Degree obtained and the services provided	Between groups 23 Within groups 26	.267
Years of employment and services provided	Between groups 23 Within groups 26	.751

#### Case Optimism and Ethnicity

Cross-tabulation analysis was run to evaluate the frequency of the optimism of the social worker with the differing ethnicities of the client. According to the findings the social workers were not as optimistic with Latino and African American clients (See Table 12).

Table 12:  
Optimism vs. Ethnicity

Rate of Optimism on Likert 5 pt. Scale	Caucasian	Latino	African-American	Total
Optimism				
Low 1	5	8	8	21
2	0	1	1	2
Moderately 3	5	5	7	17
4	0	0	1	1
Highly 5	3	5	1	9
Total	13	19	18	50



The lack of significance in ANOVA in the social workers optimism for the differing ethnicities ( $df=47$ ,  $p=.624$ ) indicates that was no significant differences within the groups tested. Interestingly, the researches found with the cross-tabulation that the Latino clients were rated the lowest and highest of all ethnicities by social workers in determining the optimism of their clients. The wide variation in rating the optimism for the Latino client may be due to the ethnicity of the social worker and how they view the Latino culture.

#### Typical Responses Regarding Services

The participants responded to question 1, regarding assessment responses, as seen in Table 13, reflected a comprehensive assessment of individual, family and community functioning. With typical answers such as; "malnutrition, medical or dental neglect (immunizations), physical injuries, condition of children in home (food, beds, clothing etc.,) financial position of mother, drug use and treatment of mother". Another typical response was, "obtaining the clients explanation of neglect, testing for drug use, assessing social network, and assessing for child's need of services for sexual abuse." Further responses to the questions 2 and 4 regarding

possible services provided were; "child care plan, family support system, parenting classes."

Interestingly, only three of 47 participants remarked about ethnicity. For example, one participant stated that she would, "refer the client for additional services after assessing what cultural supports were available and the historical use of those supports". Another response about ethnicity from question 4 was in regards to assessing for, "English fluency". The remaining 47 participants neglected to mention ethnicity as a factor when answering questions 1, 2, and 4 (See Table 13).

Table 13:  
Typical Responses to Questions 1, 2, and 4

Question 1: Assessment	Question 2: Services	Question 4: Additional Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓History of child abuse</li> <li>✓Location of bruises</li> <li>✓Is mother working</li> <li>✓Prior referrals on family</li> <li>✓Question family support</li> <li>✓Transportation need</li> <li>✓Parenting classes</li> <li>✓Psychiatric evaluation</li> <li>✓Financial resources</li> <li>✓Assessing for sexual abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Drug treatment</li> <li>✓Family therapy</li> <li>✓Medical and Dental care</li> <li>✓Provide food and shelter</li> <li>✓Temporary child care</li> <li>✓GAIN</li> <li>✓Headstart</li> <li>✓Healthy Start</li> <li>✓Bus Tickets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Behavioral problems of children</li> <li>✓What resources they need</li> <li>✓Can a neighbor help with child care</li> <li>✓Perinatal care</li> <li>✓Provide a ready kit</li> <li>✓Case Management</li> <li>✓Family counseling</li> </ul>

Neither focus group nor respondents used any culturally relevant indicator, such as community

resources, natural resource, language, or religion of culturally sensitive practice even though most have professional degrees and most within the last five years!

## DISCUSSION

This research evaluated the perceptions of service delivery to DCS Latino clients by DCS social workers. The goal of our research was to provide a qualitative study to determine if there were any variation in services provided to clients of different ethnicity. The null hypothesis is that DCS social workers provide the same services to all DCS clients regardless of ethnicity. While the finding of this study supports the hypothesis. The results show that ethnicity is not a consideration. DCS social workers who participate in this study do not appear to be culturally sensitive. The data shows that the participants (except for three respondents) in answering the questions do not consider ethnicity as a factor in determining the differing services one may provide. The participants appear to provide the same services to all clients regardless of ethnicity.

The results indicate that improvement in the following areas are necessary: Bilingual resources and services such as, translators/interpreters, bilingual

counseling, assistance in comprehension of service plan, and needs assessment based on ethnicity. For example, "a review of existing CPS training curricula suggests that efforts have focused almost exclusively on the broader issues of cultural sensitivity, rather than on specific ethnic sensitivity training" (Stevenson, Cheung, Leung, 1992).

Results indicate that social workers bypassed considering a clients ethnicity in how they provide services and referrals. This may be the reason for the lack of statistical significance at the  $p=.05$  level on the total service measure. All but three participants neglected to consider ethnicity, and of the three one was a supervisor. The focus group also failed to mention ethnicity as a consideration in their responses to the questions. This leads the researchers to conclude that ethnicity is not a priority when determining services. Therefore, DCS social worker trainers need to stress the importance of applying ethnic sensitivity in the practice of social work.

The results in this study suggests that variables such as degree obtained, MSW training, length of employment at DCS are not determining factors in how services are delivered. However, one would expect that

the social workers awareness would have been enhanced with a higher level of education, time of employment, and training. Therefore, once again this reinforces that, ethnicity is not consideration when providing services.

Perhaps the reason for these findings is that practicing in a culturally sensitive way may require us to rely less on our degrees, educational background, or professional expertise and power, and more on our clients as a source of information and solutions. Or, does the organizational culture lead us to forget?

It appears that the findings from this study may have been based on social workers basic assumptions and beliefs that all clients should be provided services equally. Perhaps the problem lies when resources are limited to certain categories to choose from for their clients. Social workers need to include more culturally sensitive resources on the list of resources, or locate the relevant ethnic resources pertaining to the specific clients needs in the community. Also there is certainly a need for vigilance, supervision, and persistent consciousness raising interventions.

The current study also found that in the Latino scenario the question was never raised if the client was only Spanish speaking or if the social worker understood

if services needed to be provided in Spanish. Why this result occurred is uncertain. However, the question remains is it possible that social workers have a set approach to all clients regardless of ethnicity. If this is the case then ethnic sensitivity must be continually be emphasized, so that minority clients receive their fair share of representation.

Responses regarding satisfaction, success, and optimism indicated that Latino and African American clients are rated less satisfied, successful, and optimistic on how the social worker viewed their outcomes. "Social workers display their lack of understanding of clients' social realities in many ways. A basic part of the failure to understand the client's social reality is the failure to understand the client's language and what various expressions and terms mean to him or her" (Proctor and Davis, 1994). These misunderstandings may have resulted in the CPS social worker rating the Latino and African American clients less favorably than the Caucasian clients. There is a possibility that social workers on a case could have preconceived ideas based on their own prejudices or stereotypes that may be unconscious. This perception may set up clients to fail.

The findings in this study suggests a need for

improvement in cultural sensitivity of participating social workers. It appears that services are applied to all equally and that a client's ethnicity is not even a consideration. Neglecting a client's ethnicity might result in the client not receiving all possible services and/or useful services. Further, by not receiving all possible services there is a risk that clients may not be able to comply with the DCS service plan due to language barriers and misunderstandings of what is expected by the DCS social worker. It is important to be aware of language differences and cultural traditions in order to make accurate assessments in reaching a mutual understanding and acceptance of the social worker's decisions.

The process of evaluating the results of the questionnaires was based on the realization that social workers' decisions are influenced by many factors. CPS social workers may base decisions on their training, orientation, agency guidelines, availability of resources, personal biases, and current philosophical trends. It is important as social workers to remain objective, when evaluating what services a client needs, and to be sensitive to different cultures. If we fail to treat our clients with a lack of respect for their individual cultures, we fail to provide them with the necessary

services. Continued evaluation and examination of our roles will help to define our roles within the agency, and this will allow us to determine how we can best serve our clients.

#### IMPLICATIONS

As we approach the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Latino families will increase in number, therefore playing a crucial role in our society. The role of CPS social workers is critical. CPS social workers face numerous challenges in working with Latino clients. The Latino population is diverse and hard to characterize, understanding this complexity is critical to developing programs and services for and with Latinos.

The findings from this study suggest the need for additional research on the impact of cultural sensitivity for social workers dealing with various ethnic cultures. Further research may be in order to determine if human services professionals determine the impact of perceived agency cultural sensitivity on groups other than Latino clients, and to determine if the perceptions of cultural sensitivity varies from culture to culture. This study suggests that ethnicity of the client is not a consideration in determining what services are needed for minority clients.



This study also suggests the need for several changes DCS can make in training their DCS social workers. As the demands of DCS escalate and the Latino population grows, training and evaluation becomes increasingly important. Sensitizing trainees to Latino issues and training them to use ongoing self-evaluation approach is of paramount importance. This study can be a means in assisting trainers in developing cross-cultural training curricula. Ethnic concepts from this study should incorporate training curricula such as knowledge of relevant resources to Latinos in the community. Other considerations should be assessment of language, knowledge of bilingual services, assessment of child rearing practices of Latinos, importance of natural support systems, religious and cultural traditional practices. This should lead to a better understanding of the influences of ethnicity on practice, especially in assessment.

It can also provide a potential instrument for ongoing evaluation of "front line" social workers in DCS. If Latino sensitivity training is provided, it could help DCS social workers incorporate an ethnically sensitive component into assessment and intervention. To incorporate ethnic aspects into DCS work, attitudes are as important to knowledge development as skill building. An

emphasis on learning about Latino groups and cultural world views so that there is some understanding of how an individual from a particular group may experience life and its problems. A focus on teaching intervention skills and service plans appropriate for use with members of various ethnic groups, requires caseworkers to examine ethnically specific questions about their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward families whose origins are different from their own.

Evaluation is an essential part of any social service program. This is especially true in sensitive fields such as DCS, where the recipients of the services are directly affecting the lives of their children and families. Sometimes evaluation is overlooked in this field because of financial or staffing constraints, as well as unfamiliarity with working with Latino groups. The hopes that this research provides the information for use in developing and implementing future DCS evaluations on service outcomes and for better treatment for the Latino community.

#### Limitations:

Limiting factors can be noted. This study is a random sample of DCS social workers from only one county. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize this study to

other counties. The sample size of DCS social workers is small (n=50), which makes it difficult to generalize to all the DCS population. Every effort has been taken by the researchers to control for selection and researcher bias. The researchers controlled for biases by using a random sampling, focus group, and using statistical measures. The study is representative of the perceptions of professional DCS social workers who graduated in the last six years.

The open-ended questionnaire could have limited our findings in this study. There is still the possibility that certain variables could have been left out when we were controlling for other variables. Interpretation from the answers can be difficult to control for biases. This section was highly subjective, and the information we gathered can be disputed. This section can be difficult, if not impossible to replicate. We do not know the motivation for why the participants made their decisions when answering the questionnaire.

The researchers are aware of the possible limitations and short comings of our study, however, we believe that it has provided useful information regarding the need for increased awareness of culturally sensitive practice with Latino families.

APPENDIX A  
CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,  
You are being asked to participate in an evaluation of how services are being provided by the Department of Children's Services (DCS) among clients in San Bernardino County. The focus is to examine whether or not there are any variations in provision of services to clients. The evaluation is being conducted by Michele Hernandez and Angelina Montenegro, two students in the MSW Program at California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB). The research was approved by California State University San Bernardino, Department of Social Work sub-committee of Institutional Review Board. You are participating in a study which will assist us in our pursuit of our final research thesis project in fulfilling the requirements for a Master of Social Work Degree.

It is not the intent of this study to evaluate your work performance, but to test our research questionnaire. None of the results from our work will be released until the project is completed and the appropriate agency administrators have been notified. To further protect confidentiality, your name will not be used on the instrument. A number will be assigned. You have been chosen for this study because you work for DCS and happen to be in the pool of social workers we intend to survey.

You are being asked to answer questions regarding the topic that is being evaluated: Perceptions of service delivery to the Department of Children's Services clients by DCS social workers. The questionnaire should take you approximately 10 minutes to complete. The questions you will be asked are not intended to offend anyone's sensibility but to reach a precise understanding of how social workers might respond when working with their clients.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this study, it will not affect your employment with DCS in any way. When completing the questionnaire, please answer the questions as best you can without consulting other participants. Remember that the purpose of this study is to evaluate how services are being provided and not to evaluate you as a professional.

Any questions that you may have about this research will be answered by the researchers or by an authorized representative of CSUSB. Michele Hernandez and/or Angelina Montenegro, MSW students at Department of Social Work, can be contacted at (909) 880-5501. Dr. Tena Nelson, a Professor at California State University San Bernardino, can be contacted at (909) 880-7222 if there are questions. The research team has the responsibility for insuring the participants in research projects conducted under university auspices are safeguarded from injury or harm from such participation.

On the basis of these statements, I voluntarily agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Put X above

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX B

### DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

This research was conducted by Michele Hernandez and Angelina Montenegro, MSW students from California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB). The purpose of this study was to assess the perception of services provided by the Department of Children's Services social workers so that they may provide effective services to their clients. The study was approved by CSUSB, Department of Social Work sub-committee of Institutional Review Board.

We would like to emphasize that all information collected is strictly confidential and at no time will your identities be revealed. We encourage participants to contact the research team if you have any questions regarding this project. The research team would like to thank you for voluntarily participating in our research project. We appreciate your time spent in participating in this study. For written results of this study, you may contact the following individuals. Results should be available by July 30, 1999.

Dr. Tena Nelson  
Professor, California State University  
San Bernardino (909) 880-7222

Sally Richter LCSW  
Field Instructor  
San Bernardino Department of Children's Services  
(DCS) (909) 945-3820

Michele Hernandez, Angelina Montenegro  
Department of Social Work  
California State University  
San Bernardino (909) 880-5501

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

SERVICES PROVIDED FOR DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
CLIENTS

Section I

Please answer or circle relevant information.

1. How long have you been employed with Department of  
Children's Services(DCS)?

2. What is the highest degree you have obtained?

AA	BA	BS	BSW	MSW	MS	MSSW
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

3. What year did you receive your degree?

4. What is your gender?	Male	Female
	(2)	(1)

5. What is your ethnicity?

African/American	Caucasian	Latino	Asian
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Native American	Other		
(5)	(6)		

6. What is your age?

7. What is your current job title?	SW-I	SW-II	SSP	SSSP
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

8. What is your current income?

\$0-\$14,999	\$15,000-\$24,999	\$25,000-\$35,999
(1)	(2)	(3)

\$36,000-\$45,999	\$46,000-\$54,999	\$55,000-\$64,999
(4)	(5)	(6)

\$65,000-\$74,999	\$75,000-\$84,999	\$85,000 and above
(7)	(8)	(9)

APPENDIX C  
SECTION II

Ms. Tiffany Anderson, a 27-year-old Caucasian client was referred to DCS by her neighbor for neglect of her two children ages 3 and 5. Specifically, she has been accused of leaving the children alone for as long as 10 hours and both children have been found by neighbors to have bruises on their bodies. Both children appear to be malnourished but this awaits a physician's evaluation. Ms. Anderson has been married three times and is currently separated from her former husband who is serving a year's sentence for sexually abusing her children. Ms. Anderson has a history of methamphetamine use and is currently required to go for treatment as a condition of maintaining custody. It is not known if she is going for treatment or if she has continued using methaphetamines.

Questions:

1. What vital information would you need to gather to assess the client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What services would you provide this client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you think the case will have to go to court? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Would you refer the client for any additional services? If so, where would you refer them?



5. How many months (weeks) would you estimate it might take to resolve this case?

6. Do you feel very optimistic about this case? Why or why not?

7. Evaluate the probability that this family will be able to successfully resolve its problems without further CPS intervention. Give your reasons for this prediction.

8. How satisfied do you think this client is with your service?

APPENDIX C  
SECTION II

Ms. Maria Gonzales, a 27-year-old Latina client was referred to CPS by her neighbor for neglect of her two children ages 3 and 5. Specifically, she has been accused of leaving the children alone for as long as 10 hours and both children have been found by neighbors to have bruises on their bodies. Both children appear to be malnourished but this awaits a physician's evaluation. Ms. Gonzales has been married three times and is currently separated from her former husband who is serving a year's sentence for sexually abusing her children. Ms. Gonzales has a history of methamphetamine use and is currently required to go for treatment as a condition of maintaining custody. It is not known if she is going for treatment or if she has continued using methaphetamines.

Questions:

1. What vital information would you need to gather to assess the client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What services would you provide this client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you think the case will have to go to court? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Would you refer the client for any additional services? If so, where would you refer them?

5. How many months (weeks) would you estimate it might take to resolve this case?

6. Do you feel very optimistic about this case? Why or why not?

7. Evaluate the probability that this family will be able to successfully resolve its problems without further CPS intervention. Give your reasons for this prediction.

8. How satisfied do you think this client is with your service?

APPENDIX C  
SECTION II

Ms. Brenda Jones, a 27-year-old African American client was referred to CPS by her neighbor for neglect of her two children ages 3 and 5. Specifically, she has been accused of leaving the children alone for as long as 10 hours and both children have been found by neighbors to have bruises on their bodies. Both children appear to be malnourished but this awaits a physician's evaluation. Ms. Jones has been married three times and is currently separated from her former husband who is serving a year's sentence for sexually abusing her children. Ms. Jones has a history of methamphetamine use and is currently required to go for treatment as a condition of maintaining custody. It is not known if she is going for treatment or if she has continued using methphetamines.

Questions:

1. What vital information would you need to gather to assess the client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What services would you provide this client and her children?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you think the case will have to go to court? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Would you refer the client for any additional services? If so, where would you refer them?

5. How many months (weeks) would you estimate it might take to resolve this case?

6. Do you feel very optimistic about this case? Why or why not?

7. Evaluate the probability that this family will be able to successfully resolve its problems without further CPS intervention. Give your reasons for this prediction.

8. How satisfied do you think this client is with your service?

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