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A Study of Board Members' Perceptions of Leadership Competencies That Professionally Trained Social Workers Should Possess Who Lead Nonprofit Human Service Organizations as Adopted in the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Strategic Plan, 1998-2000

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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A STUDY OF BOARD MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP
COMPETENCIES THAT PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED SOCIAL
WORKERS SHOULD POSSESS WHO LEAD NONPROFIT
HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AS ADOPTED IN
THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
(CSWE) STRATEGIC PLAN, 1998-2000

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Dissertation dated May 2016

This study examined the perceptions that board members of human service organizations have of the leadership competencies of professionally trained social workers to lead such organizations. Participants of this study were 51 executive leaders of nonprofit human service organizations who were selected using non-probability convenience sampling among the target population. Findings of this study indicated that a majority (78.0%) believed that professional social workers are seen as welfare workers. Most respondents (65.3%) disagreed that the media's portrayal of social issues has influenced perceptions of the leadership abilities of social work professionals. The

majority of respondents (78.4%) agreed that nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today and, as a result, all leaders of these organizations should possess training and experience similar to those of professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas.

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A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Study	6
Research Questions	7
Hypotheses	7
Significance of the Study	8
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	10
Social Work Professionals	10
Historical Review of Social Work Administration.....	13
Council on Social Work Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2000.....	16
Nonprofit Organizations	17
Leaders of Nonprofit Organizations	18
Leadership.....	19
Leadership Preparation in the Social Work Profession	32
Educational Preparation of Social Work Administrators.....	49
Societal Perceptions of the Social Work Profession.....	56
Theoretical Framework.....	61

CHAPTER

III.	METHODOLOGY	68
	Research Design.....	68
	Description of the Site	69
	Sample and Population	69
	Instrumentation	69
	Treatment of Data	71
	Limitations of the Study.....	71
IV.	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	72
	Demographic Data	72
	Research Questions and Hypotheses	80
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	89
	Recommendations.....	93
APPENDIX		
A.	PERMISSION LETTER.....	96
B.	QUESTIONNAIRE.....	97
C.	SPSS PROGRAM ANALYSIS.....	99
	REFERENCES.....	103

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1. Demographic Profile of Study Respondents (N=51)	73
2. Professionally trained social workers who lead nonprofit human service organizations are perceived by board members of human service organizations as welfare workers	75
3. Leadership abilities of social work professionals are influenced by social issues in the media.....	76
4. Nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today than in previous years.....	76
5. Social work professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations should have the same leadership competencies as other professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations	77
6. Nonprofit human service organizations should employ only leaders with business skills and prior managerial leadership experience.....	78
7. Leaders of nonprofit human service organizations should have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas.....	79
8. Social Workers seen as welfare workers by need for training and experience similar to.....	81
9. Leadership abilities of social workers influenced by the media	83
10. Organizations more accountable today by leadership training and experience	85
11. Perceived by board members as welfare workers by gender of respondent	87

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, an estimated 2,300,000 nonprofit organizations were operating in the United States and nearly 1,600,000 were registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) (Roeger, Blackwood, & Pettijohn, 2012). According to Roeger, Blackwood, and Pettijohn (2012), registered organizations exclude nonprofits that are not required to register with the IRS, such as organizations with less than \$5,000 in annual revenue or religious congregations and their auxiliary groups (although many congregations choose to register). This 1,600,000 encompasses a variety of organizations including health, education, arts, advocacy organizations, labor unions, and business and professional associations. Over the past 10 years, the number of nonprofits registered with the IRS has grown by 24% (Roeger, Blackwood, & Pettijohn, 2012).

The nonprofit sector is a critical component of the U.S. economy. In 2010, the Bureau of Economic Analysis reported over 1,500,000 tax exempt organizations including nearly 1,000,000 public charities (Sherlock & Gravelle, 2009). These organizations represent 9% of all wages and salaries paid in the U.S., as well as over 5% of the overall gross domestic product (GDP) of the United States economy. This figure includes a diverse group of organizations, both in size and mission, which range from hospitals and human service organizations to advocacy groups and economic development corporations (Sherlock & Gravelle, 2009).

According to Roeger, Blackwood, and Pettijohn (2011), human service organizations accounted for approximately one-third of all organizations in the public charities category. This makes human service organizations the largest segment in the nonprofit sector.

Tierney (2006b) noted that nonprofit organizations depend on two resources to fulfill their missions. One, of course, is money. The other resource – just as vital but perhaps even more scarce – is leadership. Indeed, qualified leadership candidates may be even rarer than six-figure donors. As one highly respected director recently observed, “If I have the choice between spending time with a \$100,000 donor or a potential candidate for a senior role, hands down it’s the candidate” (Tierney, 2006b, p. 5).

It was Tierney’s (2006b) assertion that nonprofits are not only growing more plentiful, they are also being held more accountable. Under relentless performance pressure from donors, regulators, and the public, these organizations’ management teams will have to expand to include executives with specialized skills. The need for additional management talent is unabated (Tierney, 2006b).

Today, many nonprofit organizations struggle to attract and retain the talented senior executives they need to convert dollars into social impact. Searches for chief executive, operating, and financial officers often turn up only one to three qualified candidates, compared with four to six for comparable private sector positions (Tierney, 2006a).

Tierney (2006b) stressed that one of the biggest challenges facing nonprofits today is their dearth of strong leaders – a problem that is only going to get worse as the

sector expands and baby boom executives retire. Over the next decade, nonprofits will need to find some 640,000 new executives, nearly two and a half times the number currently employed. During the next 10 years, the nonprofit leadership deficit will become impossible to ignore (Tierney, 2006b).

According to Austin, Regan, Samples, Schwartz, and Carnochan (2011), the United States has undergone considerable political, economic, and social shifts in the last several decades that have altered the ways that human service organizations deliver services and have brought a unique set of managerial challenges to administrators at all levels. Highly skilled managers are needed to lead organizations and enable them to survive in changing times, especially in this era when members of the baby boom generation are retiring from senior positions (Austin, Regan, Samples, Schwartz, & Carnochan, 2011).

To understand the magnitude of the leadership deficit and why it will intensify, Tierney (2006a) emphasized that we need to examine what shapes the supply of, and demand for, nonprofit leaders. The author pointed out that the supply side of the story begins with the baby boom generation. Because of the boom, the pool of American men and women of prime executive age (34-54 years) swelled to 35,000,000 between 1980 and 2000.

Furthermore, Tierney (2006a) contended that the first wave of this nearly 80,000,000-strong generation is turning or has already turned 60 and, because the boomers did not have as many offspring as did their parents, the cohort that follows them

has a lot fewer people. From 2000 to 2020, the number of people in the prime leadership age bracket of 34 to 54 will grow by only 3,000,000 (Tierney, 2006a).

The nonprofit sector has little choice but to think and act in new ways to meet the need of new leaders (Tierney, 2006b). Board members and other recruiters will have to explore previously untapped networks of talent – women returning to the workforce after raising their families, baby boomers shifting out of corporate work, mid-career executives looking for a change, officers retiring from the military, and idealistic young graduates wanting to make their careers in the nonprofit sector (Tierney, 2006b).

To determine how many new senior managers nonprofits will need to hire by 2016, Tierney (2006b) suggested that we make the following assumptions: 1) the sector will continue to grow at the same rates as it did from 1995 to 2004, a period that embraced a significant business cycle; 2) retirement rates will remain constant from 1996 to 2016, save for a six percentage point demographic boost from 2004 through 2009 due to baby boomer retirements; and, finally, 3) rates of other forms of transition out of nonprofit leadership positions will remain the same. On the basis of these assumptions, it is projected that nonprofits will require 78,000 new senior managers in 2016 alone, up from 56,000 in 2006 (Tierney, 2006b).

Statement of the Problem

There is currently a scarcity of social work administrators to lead many nonprofit organizations. Other studies show that many social work students have a decreased interest in pursuing leadership roles (Wilson & Lau, 2011). Nonprofit social work agency effectiveness is often dependent upon the success of individuals who serve in leadership

and management roles. Wilson and Lau (2011) allege, however, that there continues to be a growing lack of well-trained and prepared leaders in nonprofit organizations across America in the 21st century. Therefore, non-profit human service organizations are filling their leadership roles with individuals in professions known for specific skills training relative to management, budgeting, strategic planning, board relations, or funds development/fundraising. Traditionally, this has not been particularly evident in the social work profession, and it is becoming less so as the years progress (Wilson & Lau, 2011).

Logically, it would seem appropriate to include administration skills in social work education. Social work administration was included in social work programs in the 20th century and, consequently, many schools offered concentrations or specializations in this area (Wuenschel, 2006). Wuenschel (2006) noted that student interest and enrollment in these administration courses experienced slow-growth; therefore, some schools of social work began offering macro-concentration courses that combined social work administration, community organization, and/or policy practice. One side effect of these course offerings is that combining management education with other educational content can diminish it as an area of expertise (Patti, 2003). While enrollments in macro programs remain at about 10% of social work students, only about 3% to 4% are in administration programs as defined by CSWE (Patti, 2003).

The decline in this area appears to be due to more interest in micro-practice as opposed to macro-practice. The lack of professional administration preparation in their courses coupled with an “anti-management climate” at schools has led to diminished

management skills preparation for these students (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004).

Many graduate public administration, business, and public health schools offer programs in nonprofit management; however, these graduates will lack the training in social work values and ethics required of social work administrators (Friedman, 2008).

Despite the significant expansion of the nonprofit sector and the social work profession, the field of social work administration has not followed suit. Very few students in graduate social work programs express an interest in preparing for careers in administration; a large majority of students select clinical or interpersonal work as their practice focus (Wilson & Lau, 2011; Wuenschel, 2006). This has created a serious scenario: on one hand, many nonprofit social service administration jobs are filled by individuals with no social work background; while, in parallel, fewer social workers are being prepared for leadership positions in organizations (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to measure perceptions of social work leadership capabilities held by members of nonprofit human service organizations with hiring authority. The participants of the study were comprised of nonprofit human service organization Board Members, Chief Executive Directors, Executive Directors, Presidents, and Human Resource officials.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and leaders of non-profit organizations with the same professional training and experience?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and social work professionals with leadership ability who are influenced by social issues in the media?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between non-profit human service organizations being required to be more accountable today than in previous years and the belief that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training as leaders in business, legal or public administration arenas?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the nonprofit human service organization leaders and professional social workers being perceived as welfare workers?

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and leaders of non-profit organizations with the same professional training and experience.

2. There is no statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and social work professionals with leadership ability who are influenced by social issues in the media.
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between non-profit human service organizations being required to be more accountable today than in previous years and the belief that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training as leaders in business, legal or public administration arenas.
4. There is no statistically significant relationship between the gender of the nonprofit human service organization leaders and professional social workers being perceived as welfare workers.

Significance of the Study

Rank and Hutchinson (2000) investigated individuals (N=75) who held leadership positions within the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and concluded that education and training in this area fell short of both the demands for leadership in the field and our curricula's ability to adequately teach and educate students about the concept. Their comprehensive analyses made a cogent case for the uniqueness of social work leadership, and they offered a number of constructive suggestions to direct social work in this regard into the 21st century (Rank & Hutchinson, 2000).

The NASW (1999) Code of Ethics makes clear that work with clients or constituent groups may take the form of direct practice, community organization, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, research, and evaluation. Although some of the schools of social work emphasize social work administration, the primary focus of most schools is educating students in direct practice (Hoefler, 2009).

This study adds to the research regarding the need to prepare a greater number of social work professionals for nonprofit organizational leadership. Furthermore, it draws greater attention to the need for a more aggressive and intentional plan towards the development of nonprofit social work executive leaders from every level of the profession. This study is significant because it takes into account views and opinions from several sectors of the profession responsible for developing policies, programs, and training decisions to advance social work standing in society. Hopefully, it will also increase the attention paid to this issue by the National Association of Social Workers and the Council on Social Work Education, as well as other professional social work organizations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this review of the literature was to lay a scholarly foundation in order to establish a need for the study. This chapter is a review of the current literature on the state of social work positions of leadership in nonprofit human service organizations. It includes literature documenting efforts to prepare social work leaders at various levels of the profession, i.e., higher education, post-graduate training, and supportive systems to advance excellence.

Social Work Professionals

The progressive movement emerged in the United States during the late 19th century (Edwards, Cooke, & Reid, 1996). Edwards, Cooke, and Reid (1996) noted that progressives promoted a rational, public, social sciences-based government response to social problems that emphasized economic regulation, meritocracy, social insurance, and other protections as well as the “professionalization” of services. Progressives were optimistic and humane, and they promoted an environmental view of human behavior that was in contrast to the 19th-century view of individual character and will as explanations of the shortcomings of society. The progressive view helped create the context of the development of social work as a profession, and established the American social policy agenda for the 20th century (Crunden, 1982; Hofstadter, 1955).

According to Garrett (1994), social work has only existed as a profession since the early years of the 20th century. During that time, though, beset by the usual growing pains and pressed by the emergency needs of extraordinary social conditions, it has made very satisfactory progress. The social work profession has developed a body of knowledge and a core of tested case work skills and procedures. It has developed standards of professional education and has trained a nucleus of skilled workers, supervisors, and teachers in the field. In addition, it has produced a valuable and growing body of professional literature (Garrett, 1994).

In 1981, the NASW Task Force on Labor Force Classification gave this definition:

The profession of social work by both traditional and practical definition is the profession that provides the formal knowledge base, theoretical concepts, specific functional skills, and essential social values which are used to implement society's mandate to provide safe, effective and constructive social services.

(Gibelman, 1999, p. 300)

The most recent definition of the profession comes from the revised Code of Ethics (NASW, 1999):

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty. (p. 1)

Gibelman (1999) expressed that a historical and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living (Gibelman, 1999).

Gibelman (1999) articulated that the NASW has struggled for years to classify the social work labor force in a way readily understandable to its members, government, and the general public and that accurately reflects the totality of the profession. This struggle resulted, in part, in the expansive and expanding boundaries of social work and the difficulty in providing succinct encapsulated descriptions of a complex and multifaceted profession. After all, "person-in-environment" encompasses most of the human condition to which people are subject individually and collectively. The complexities of this task are accepted as a given, and it is recognized that efforts to organize and categorize what social workers do is, to some extent, arbitrary (Gibelman, 1999).

Social work has developed a unique set of professional values and goals for practice. Fundamental is the belief in the intrinsic worth and dignity of every human being and a commitment to the values of acceptance, self-determination, and respect of individuality (Canadian Association of Social Workers, 2005; NASW, 1999).

The fundamental values and goals of practice characterize the professional identity of social work and provide a blueprint for schools of social work to develop their programs and standards of practice. Prior to graduation or the completion of field placement, students will be assessed to determine if they demonstrate practice behaviors that reflect such fundamental values of social work or not (Tam & Coleman, 2009).

Social work educators are responsible for assessing and screening students' professional suitability to practice social work. Professional suitability is defined as good understanding of social work knowledge, skills, and values and the performance of appropriate behaviors in given practice situations (Lyons, 1999). The assessment and screening processes of students' professional suitability begin at admission to a social work program, continue throughout coursework and fieldwork, and carry on before graduation (Gibbs, Rosenfeld, & Javidi, 1994). Assessing and screening students' suitability for social work practice is essential to ensure that only suitable social work graduates are allowed to enter the profession of social work (Moore & Urwin, 1990).

Historical Review of Social Work Administration

The development of social welfare administration in the United States has followed a pattern that is distinctive, indeed unique, among national societies, with the possible exception of Canada (Austin, 2000). Austin (2000) surmised that the development of social welfare administration in the United States has been shaped by four forces: the development of the "limited liability stock corporation" as the model for business organizations; the development of voluntary, nonprofit, charitable corporations during the last half of the 19th century; the development of professional training programs in social work and of social work as an organized profession beginning in the early 20th century; and the creation of a nationwide public social welfare sector beginning in the 1930s (Austin, 2000).

According to Austin (2000), a new source of organizational leadership for Charity Organization Society (COS) organizations and other voluntary social welfare agencies began to develop as colleges and universities established academic social science programs. Particularly important was the development of the first Ph.D. program in social science at Johns Hopkins University. A number of men who graduated from this program became general secretaries or executives of philanthropic organizations, as did men who took undergraduate courses in social ethics at Harvard and other private universities (Austin, 2000). The first widely recognized university-educated philanthropic administrator was Amos Warner (1894), who was appointed as general secretary of the Baltimore Charity Organization Society in 1887 while still a doctoral student at Johns Hopkins. Following completion of his doctoral studies, he was appointed to be the superintendent of charities for the District of Columbia (Austin, 2000).

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal federalized many progressive-initiated state-level social programs (Edwards, Cooke, & Reid, 1996). As result a new scope of program construct was created through federal legislation with significant implications for program funding and responsibility. During this time, social services were generally nonmarket professional services to individuals and families who met an income requirement or had other defined special needs (Reid, 1971). Services related to rehabilitation, child welfare, protection, or care and advice and were provided by religious, secular nonprofit, or government providers. Recipients were typically called "clients" or "patients" (not consumers) and the problems of nonmarket or functional monopoly provision were rarely considered (Reid, 1971).

Edwards, Cooke, and Reid (1996) contended that primary management tasks involved organizing the delivery of services, accounting for the dollars spent, and relating to the funding and authority sources. Accountability was largely upward and internal, from worker to supervisor to director to board or legislative authority. External interests were represented on policy or advisory boards. The authors further alleged that the workers were not accountable to clients, who typically had little choice in consumption and little voice in program design or operations. Funding at the federal and state levels was categorical (that is, particular to a specific service in a particular problem context). The job of a manager in this context was comparatively simple in that the important actors were visible and near, continuity was insured from year to year, and the system was closed to the intrusion of competitors or evaluators searching for evidence of cost-effectiveness (Edwards, Cooke, & Reid, 1996).

In the last two decades, administrators with a social work background have faced significant challenges. While human services leadership jobs at the most senior levels have increasingly been filled with lawyers, economists, and MBAs, enrollments in social work administration and organizational leadership programs has been falling (Ezell et al., 2004; Hoefler, 2009). Social workers appear to be missing from leadership roles even in agencies that have unique social work traditions, such as settlement houses. A review of the 37 member agencies of the United Neighborhood Houses of New York City reveals that only 30% of settlement house leaders hold an MSW degree (United Neighborhood Houses, 2012). If schools of social work are to remain viable vehicles for the training and professional development of social work leaders and managers, they must focus on

competency development that these social workers will need to be successful in leadership and senior management roles.

Council on Social Work Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2000

Leadership development is a core concern of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE's Strategic Plan for 1998-2000 addresses leadership in the Value's statement: "CSWE believes in exerting vision and leadership to maintain the highest quality and consistency of social work education in accordance with the values and ethics of the profession" (Council on Social Work Education Strategic Plan, 1998, p. 15). In 2008, the CSWE Leadership Institute was developed by the Council on Leadership Development with support from the Commission on Professional Development. During 2008-2009, the Institute's three initiatives were launched. All three were designed to promote future leaders in social work education, higher education, and the social work profession (CSWE, 2009). This focus demonstrates a high regard for seeking and developing social work leadership in a manner that is conducive to the success of organizations and the profession.

The CSWE (2009) announced three initiatives to enhance the development of successful leadership in the social work profession. Initiative 1 is the launch of the CSWE Leadership Institute in Social Work Education (LISWE). Initiative 2 is the launch of the CSWE's Leadership Scholars in Social Work Education Program (LSSEP). LSSEP was designed to attract a cohort of 12 to 15 future leaders, and provide them with targeted education, training, and mentoring. Initiative 3, the CSWE Leadership Networking

Reception (LNR), was launched at the 2008 Annual Program Meeting (APM) in partnership with the New York Academy of Medicine Social Work Leadership Institute. In conjunction with the LSSEP initiative, this networking reception was implemented to support, encourage, and honor new leadership in the profession (CSWE, 2009).

Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations refer to those non-governmental entities that possess special legal status under state law. This status permits them to accept tax deductible gifts and exempts them from paying federal tax (Giffords & Dina, 2004). While there are a variety of definitions of nonprofit organizations (NPOs or NGOs), and debate around its terminology, the core essence of the nonprofit sector is around its not-for-profit, if not charitable, nature. Furthermore, according to Giffords and Dina (2004), their private and self-governing natures are the foundation of associational life and civil society as they serve collective and public purposes. In addition, the voluntary nature of NPOs or NGOs highlights the critical role played by the volunteers.

Berry (2005) characterized the current period as an age of nonprofits. The nonprofit sector encompasses an enormous range of organizations, including associations involved in the arts, healthcare, human services, education, environment, social justice, religion, and philanthropy. The term is so all-encompassing that it covers virtually all organizations that are neither businesses nor units of government. At best, “nonprofit” is an imprecise term. Even the simple notion that they are organizations that eschew profits

is misleading. It is perfectly legal for a nonprofit to make a profit; it is impermissible to distribute any profits to shareholders, but making a profit is just fine (Berry, 2005).

Nevertheless, as Barkdull and Dicke (2004) argued, giving a definition of NGOs with consistency is challenging because it can describe a small, loose association of people with like-minded goals, to a large extent, formally incorporated structure with hundreds of volunteers and paid employees. Although there is overlap and similarity between the management and leadership practices of nonprofit and for-profit organizations, what differentiates the two is whether the organization develops their product or service out of the idea of money making or to attain some social value. This will have a distinct impact on the management practice of the organizational leaders (Bramwell & Ng, 2014).

As indicated by J. Crawford (2010), to meet the challenges, today's nonprofit executives need to demonstrate a wide range of behaviors. They also need to have a wide repertoire of knowledge, skills, and experiences, and know when to apply their array of skills, as the situation dictates. They must make sure that business operations run smoothly without displacing the relationship-based approach to nonprofit leadership, or losing sight of the vision and mission (Crawford, J., 2010).

Leaders of Non-Profit Organizations

Menefee (1997) reported that executive directors in nonprofit agencies devised complex and seemingly contradictory strategies for success as a result of economic, political, social, and technological trends. These strategies include remaining true to

mission; promoting the highest level of professionalism; accurately assessing and planning for the future; managing internal structures and operations in response to external demands and expectations; influencing both the internal and the external environment to promote department and organizational goals and objectives; and preserving the legitimacy of their agencies' services through boundary spanning, public relations, advocacy, interagency collaboration, networking, relationship building and competition when appropriate (Mizrahi & Berger, 2005).

Leadership

Leadership has re-emerged as one of the “big ideas” of human enterprise over the past 20 years. Many professions now embrace leadership as something that is needed both quantitatively -- that is, more people are needed in leadership roles -- and qualitatively -- that is, better leadership is needed (McDonald & Chenoweth, 2009). Business, politics, health, education and community development have all engaged in the ongoing development of leadership theory and practice, leadership training and development. According to McDonald and Chenoweth (2009), professions such as nursing and teaching have identified a crisis of leadership and have instigated (successful) strategic initiatives and programs to develop leaders and leadership. However, social work has been less proactive and even reluctant in taking on leadership as an issue for theory and practice. In our view, social work has actually recoiled from the idea of leadership, harboring an historical view that leadership is somehow contradictory to social work values and its underlying philosophy (McDonald & Chenoweth, 2009).

Although leadership is an age-old concept, it remains a complex term that researchers and scholars grapple with continuously. One of the main reasons is the extensive number of definitions for this term (Trottier, Van Wart, & Wang, 2008). According to Armandi, Oppedisano, and Sherman (2003), leadership is the ability to influence people toward the achievement of a common goal. Early leadership theories were content theories, focusing on “what” an effective leader is, and not on “how” to effectively lead. Leader trait and behavioral theories tried to identify these characteristics and behaviors (Armandi, Oppedisano, & Sherman, 2003).

While many people use the terms “manager” and “leader” interchangeably, they refer to different functions. Armandi et al. (2003) explained that a manager is appointed by the organization and is given formal authority to direct the activity of others in fulfilling organization goals. A leader is a person who influences others because they willingly do what he or she requests. A leader can be appointed formally by an organization or may emerge informally as "the people's choice." A leader can be a manager, but a manager is not necessarily a leader. If a manager is able to influence people to achieve company goals, without using his or her formal authority to do so, then the manager is demonstrating leadership (Armandi et al., 2003).

Barnard (1938) contended that the key point in differentiating between these two concepts is the idea that employees willingly do what leaders ask - or follow leaders - because they want to - not because they have to. Leaders may not possess the formal power to reward or sanction performance; however, followers give the leader power by

complying with what he or she requests. On the other hand, managers may have to rely on formal power to get subordinates to accomplish goals (Barnard, 1938).

Winston and Patterson (2006) characterized a leader as one or more people who select, equip, train, and influence one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization's mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. The leader achieves this influence by humbly conveying a prophetic vision of the future in clear terms that resonates with the follower(s) beliefs and values in such a way that the follower(s) can understand and interpret the future into present-time action steps (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

In this process, the leader presents the prophetic vision in contrast to the present status of the organization and, through the use of critical thinking skills, insight, intuition, and the use of both persuasive rhetoric and interpersonal communication, including both active listening and positive discourse, facilitates and draws forth the opinions and beliefs of the followers (Winston & Patterson, 2006). In so doing, the followers move through ambiguity toward clarity of understanding and shared insight that results in influencing the follower(s) to see and accept the future state of the organization as a desirable condition worth committing personal and corporate resources toward its achievement (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

According to Winston and Patterson, (2006), the leader achieves this using ethical means and seeks the greater good of the follower(s) in the process of action steps such

that the follower(s) is/are better off (including the personal development of the follower as well as emotional and physical healing of the follower) as a result of the interaction with the leader. The leader achieves this same state for his/her own self as a leader, as he/she seeks personal growth, renewal, regeneration, and increased stamina—mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual—through the leader-follower interactions (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

The leader recognizes the diversity of the follower(s) and achieves unity of common values and directions without destroying the uniqueness of the person. The leader accomplishes this through innovative flexible means of education, training, support, and protection that provide each follower with what the follower needs within the reason and scope of the organization's resources and accommodations relative to the value of accomplishing the organization's objectives and the growth of the follower (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

Winston and Patterson (2006) expounded that the leader, in this process of leading, enables the follower(s) to be innovative as well as self-directed within the scope of individual-follower assignments and allows the follower(s) to learn from his/her/their own, as well as others' successes, mistakes, and failures along the process of completing the organization's objectives. The leader accomplishes this by building credibility and trust with the followers through interaction and feedback to and with the followers that shapes the followers' values, attitudes, and behaviors towards risk, failure, and success. In doing this, the leader builds the followers' sense of self-worth and self-efficacy such that both the leader and followers are willing and ready to take calculated risks in making

decisions to meet the organization's goals/objectives and through repeated process steps of risk taking and decision-making the leader and followers together change the organization to best accomplish the organization's objectives (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

The leader recognizes the impact and importance of audiences outside of the organization's system and presents the organization to outside audiences in such a manner that the audiences have a clear impression of the organization's purpose and goals and can clearly see the purpose and goals lived out in the life of the leader. In so doing, the leader examines the fit of the organization to the extent of the leader's capability to insure the best fit between the organization and the outside environment (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

The leader throughout each leader-follower-audience interaction demonstrates his/her commitment to the values of (a) humility, (b) concern for others, (c) controlled discipline, (d) seeking what is right and good for the organization, (e) showing mercy in beliefs and actions with all people, (f) focusing on the purpose of the organization and on the well-being of the followers, and (g) creating and sustaining peace in the organization—not a lack of conflict but a place where peace grows. These values are the seven Beatitudes found in Matthew 5, and are the base of the virtuous theory of Servant Leadership (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

Boswell (2009) maintained that leadership is not accidental. It is nurtured and it is leveraged for non-personal gain. Leaders come in different sizes, shapes and styles, yet

the core elements of good leadership are consistent: talent, integrity, courage, commitment, empathy, humility, and confidence (Boswell, 2009).

Leadership research has a very long history. Aas, Ellingsen, Lindoe, and Moeller (2008) noted that research during the first half of the 20th century concentrated on mapping the personal traits of supervisors, and a research program on leadership at Ohio State University after World War II contributed to a new focus on the behavior of supervisors. Several studies have quantified leadership styles and behaviors. The most well-known are the theories of transformational and transactional leadership, and task versus relation/people-oriented leadership. Both schools were criticized by a third direction – the situational and contingency theories of leadership – for not including situational dependency. Situational theories focused on the interaction between the supervisor and the subordinate. This research indicated that supervisors who are able to adjust to different situations are more effective (Aas, Ellingsen, Lindoe, & Moeller, 2008).

A common theme across leadership theory development has been motivation on the part of theorists to ascertain whether there is truly a formula or set of skills that could be emulated to mold successful leaders. One of the most direct and historically impactful ways in which to determine commonalities that exist in the field of leadership is to survey and/or interview a series of successful leaders and to aggregate their responses into a uniform approach or resulting theory of leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Hemphill & Coons, 1957; Kouzes & Posner, 1987). To this end, the researchers of this study interviewed a sample group of women leaders in an effort to

ascertain information on the commonalities in their leadership approaches, relationships with followers, decision making processes, and perspectives on the role of women in leadership (Lansford, Clements, Falzon, Aish, & Rogers, 2010).

Theories such as Bass' (1985) full range leadership model, which includes both transactional and transformational leadership approaches, are an important part of the leadership research. Bass' model presents researchers with a theory that can be empirically tested and provides insight into the duality that leaders face in current organizational settings (Trottier, Van Wart, & Wang, 2008).

The ability to use the full range of leadership behaviors is what separates ineffective from effective leaders (Barbuto & Cummins-Brown, 2007). Transformational and transactional leadership are affected by moral and personal development, and training and education (Bass, 1999).

Bass' (1985) expanded operational definition of leadership includes eight types of leadership: laissez-faire, passive management by exception, active management by exception, contingent reward, individualized consideration, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. His operational definition explicitly covers a number of the aspects discussed in the Handbook of Leadership and implicitly covers most of them. In his operational definition, leaders are implicitly the center of group processes; personality is pronounced in all of his four I's (individual consideration, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation); influence and persuasion processes are explicit and vary from sanctions (management by exception) to rewards (contingent reward) to inspiration (inspirational motivation); goal achievement is

especially explicit in his outcome interest (performance beyond expectations); initiation of structure is explicit in his transactional leadership elements (particularly management by exception and individualized consideration); and follower perceptions are implicit in the effectiveness that leaders must demonstrate in a number of styles (Bass, 1985).

Although Bass does not focus on some elements, such as role differentiation or power differentials, the theory is still relatively comprehensive in terms of covering the major transactional and transformational elements commonly emphasized in the field (Trottier et al., 2008).

Mizrahi and Berger (2005) expressed that performance leadership includes areas such as visionary leadership, focusing on results, technology, financial management, and political leadership. Change leadership includes entrepreneurial leadership, driving strategic direction, and innovation and change. Interpersonal leadership covers areas including building strategic relationships, empowerment, team building, and influence. Personal leadership addresses self-development, adaptability, and trust (Mizrahi & Berger, 2005).

Bower (1977) wrote that although we know enough about management in the public sector to know that it is different from corporate management, we do not know nearly as much as we should. Twenty-five years later, Van Wart (2003) pointed out the lack of empirical research on public leadership. A number of studies have been undertaken aimed at describing and understanding the differences, if any, between public and private management (Andersen, 2010).

Some scholars, such as Kelman (2005) and Houston (2000), complain about the general scarcity of empirical studies of public management. Rainey (1982) found differences between public and private managers regarding reward preferences, but did not investigate differences in behavior. Consequently, Rainey (1989) presented a table of distinctive characteristics of public management and public organizations, including work-related attitudes and behaviors.

One of the areas for research mentioned by Rainey (1989) was a comparison of public and private managers in terms of behavior. He discussed the developments in research on the distinctive characteristics of public managers and the organizations in which they work. Public and private organizations and their employees often do virtually the same tasks. There is no real distinction between public and private management. The present study challenges this statement regarding managerial behavior (Andersen, 2010).

Previous research indicates both differences and similarities between public and private managers as well as among public managers in a number of aspects. Therefore, two general propositions are formulated: (1) there are significant differences between public and private managers in leadership behavior (leadership style, decision-making style, and motivation profile); and (2) there are significant differences among public managers in leadership behavior (leadership style, decision-making style, and motivation profile) (Andersen, 2010).

Over the past several decades, women have been assuming a greater number of the top leadership roles in organizations. In the non-profit sector, 18.8% of the nation's largest 400 philanthropic organizations are led by women, in contrast to only 3% of the

leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies (Joslyn, 2009). Since leadership roles have historically been more accessible to women working in non-profits than in other sectors, there has been a richer history of role models, and less “glass ceiling” effects, as compared to their for-profit counterparts.

Interviewing women that hold leadership positions in non-profits provides an excellent opportunity to gain insight into their leadership characteristics, decision-making processes, their expectations of followers, and their views on women in leadership roles. This understanding may be helpful to other women seeking leadership positions in both non-profit and for-profit enterprises (Lansford, Clements, Falzon, Aish, & Rogers, 2010).

Despite rapidly changing racial and ethnic characteristics in the United States, human services executive leadership remains dominated by whites. This is true both in agencies’ governance structures, where boards of directors are comprised of predominately white males, and among executive directors. A national survey of nonprofit executives found that 82% of executive directors were white, 7% were African American, 4% were Asian-Pacific Islander, 4% were Latino/a, 0.7% were Native American, 0.4% were Middle Eastern, and 2% were “other” (Cornelius, Moyers, & Bell, 2011).

Salamon (1987) identified several significant challenges that today’s NGOs (particularly in the US) have to face in the broader changing context, namely fiscal challenge, competition challenge, effectiveness and technology challenge. First, due to the economic downturn or other cause (such as increased military spending), the cutbacks in the government support and the private donations hit the nonprofit sector hard. Second,

in addition to the amount, the government also changed the form of support it provides to the nonprofit sector, from direct grants to consumers of service (such as vouchers or tax expenditures). While the change maximizes consumer choice in the marketplace, it forces NGOs to follow the course of the private sector market (Bramwell & Ng, 2014).

As a result, to be able to withstand the various kinds of challenge and be accountable not only to the organizations, but also to the wider community, we can argue that the leaders of nonprofit sectors nowadays required a broader skill set, character, and qualities, particularly in relation to the value/moral vision and collaboration—the capability in working with wide ranges of stakeholders. The emphasis of these two qualities, however, is becoming emerging and imperative (Bramwell & Ng, 2014).

It is not surprising to find many nonprofit leaders nowadays spend most of their time and effort on fund raising and maintaining internal operation, given the limited community resources. They also have to face multiple, sometimes competing, accountability demands and need to manage relationships with a wide range of stakeholders (including government officials, funders, business sector, participants, and local community). While the current priority for nonprofit leaders is on upward accountability to their patrons and funders, others also argue that they have to pay serious attention to how they might be more accountable to the communities they seek to serve (Bramwell & Ng, 2014).

In a highly competitive environment, leaders in the civil sector are challenged to simultaneously demonstrate their competency and worth, identify new opportunities for

growth and innovation, and remain agile and responsive as they continue to lead nonprofit organizations in:

- (a) Supporting multi-culturalism and globalization;
- (b) Developing productive, performance-based work environments;
- (c) Building organizational capabilities to fulfill future needs;
- (d) Accommodating new and ever-changing forms of regulation;
- (e) Leveraging and integrating new technologies to support the mission of the organization; and
- (f) Meeting increasing expectations for socially responsible and sustainable organizational practices (Wirtenberg, Backer, Chang, Lannon, & Applegate, 2007).

The absence of effective leadership has had a significant impact on the ability of organizations to implement and sustain strategic change initiatives. Reinertsen (2005) suggests that leadership skills should include such elements as envisioning the future, establishing goals, communicating, rallying support for the vision, planning for its implementation and putting the plans in place. Degeling and Carr (2004) add that leader development is built on a foundation of cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills. These skills, supported by leader attributes such as self-awareness, openness, trust, creativity, and practical, social and general intelligence, provide the basis for leadership. Thus, it is important that organizations pay special attention to development of future leaders in order to sustain long-term effective leadership practices and high organizational performance (Amagoh, 2009).

Over the past decade, enhancing nonprofit management has become a front-and-center concern of the social sector. Sector leaders such as Paul Brest, president of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Michael Bailin, former president of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, and Barbara Kibbe, former vice president of the Skoll Foundation, have argued the point forcefully. Funders created Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) in 1997 to enhance organizations' ability to measure results and to ensure sound financial oversight and organizational management (Tierney, 2006b).

Prior research has suggested a more pivotal leadership position for the chief executive than that suggested by the familiar, prescriptive model, which places the board of directors at the top of the hierarchy of authority and at the center of leadership responsibility in nonprofit organizations. Recent discussions about nonprofit organizational leadership share a common belief in the centrality of the chief executive (Helmovics, Herman, & Coughlin, 1993).

Leaders require new and a wider array of skills and competencies in the 21st century (Marquardt & Berger, 2000). Government agencies, like corporate companies, need managers to produce efficient, cost-effective business results while effectively maximizing the talents of the public workforce (Raudenbaush & Marquardt, 2008).

One study focuses specifically on the evaluation of commonalities in leadership traits between female leaders in a sample group in the non-profit/human services sector. Non-profit organizations have historically demonstrated a more complex set of expectations regarding the importance of leadership versus managerial skills (Drucker,

1990; Hesselbein, 2004) than for-profit organizations. As a result, the researchers chose to focus their interviews solely on leaders in the non-profit arena to determine what commonalities presented themselves (Lansford, Clements, Falzon, Aish, & Rogers, 2010).

Leadership Preparation in the Social Work Profession

Despite a rich history of social work leadership, over the past few decades there has been an increasing level of concern regarding social work leadership preparation. Brilliant (1986) noted that training for leadership in social work education has been de-emphasized in contrast to the profession's historical roots in leadership development and the emphasis on leadership development by other professions such as law, medicine, and public administration. She challenged the profession to be more proactive in building on its strengths and paying more attention to the theory and practice of leadership, with a particular emphasis on the role of social work education (Bliss, Pecukonis, & Vogel, 2014).

Understanding leadership in the social work profession has become increasingly important as the profession itself has changed. Social, cultural, economic, political, and demographic factors are creating changes in the human service delivery systems as the social work profession has become increasingly more diverse, more market-driven, more research oriented, and more complex (Austin, 1998).

One study (Rank & Hutchison, 2000) noted five common elements that define social work leadership. This includes proaction, values and ethics, empowerment, vision,

and communication. The study also found that leaders in the social work profession tend to distinguish their leadership from that of other professions because of five common elements:

- (a) Commitment to the NASW Code of Ethics;
- (b) Systems perspective;
- (c) Participatory leadership style;
- (d) Advocacy of altruism; and
- (e) Focus on the public image of the profession.

These elements defined the leadership of Whitney Young more than 40 years ago.

Whitney Young's model of leadership is defined by collaboration and negotiation (Boswell, 2009). Leadership in the social work profession has taken on greater importance in response to social, cultural, economic, and political forces that shape social service provision (Gabel, 2001; Menefee, 1997; Rank & Hutchison, 2000). Whitney Young's leadership of the National Urban League is a compelling example of how social work skills of communication, mediation, empowerment and coordination can take an organization with many disparate parts and leverage the strengths of each part to make a better functioning and more effective whole.

Whitney Young's model of leadership is defined by collaboration and negotiation. The notion that people, performance, profits and social responsibility are linked in an important way is a significant societal shift, but was part of Whitney M. Young, Jr.'s legacy to the civil rights movement. His innovative efforts to advance the goals of racial equality should be recognized as forerunners of many 21st century private-public

partnerships, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and diversity recruitment efforts. What today is called “transformational leadership” was Young’s vision to build a sense of pride, respect and trust; to clearly communicate high expectations; to encourage problem solving; and to explicitly value each individual (Boswell, 2009).

Recent social work management literature has discussed the need for an “integration” of social work values with management skill and expertise (Richardson, 2010). In 2010, the Social Work Congress convened over 400 social work leaders for the purpose of defining social work “imperatives” to promote the advancement of the profession in the next decade. Among the ten imperatives was a call for leadership development to integrate leadership training in social work curricula at all skill levels, which may call for a restructuring of how social work educators prepare the next generation of leaders in the field (Richardson, 2010).

Cooke, Reid, and Edwards (1997) outline some very specific leadership skills that are expected of social work managers as they transition agencies into the next century. These include “managing environmental relationships, such as effective agency or program representation and positioning, networking, coalition building, negotiating hostile environments, and dealing with multiple customer and stakeholder groups” (Cooke, Reid, & Edwards, 1997, p. 240).

The range and patterns of leadership styles in human service organizations are important for social work educators and their students to understand if social work administrators are to compete successfully in the marketplace for executive director and other top management roles. Using a sample of executive directors of human service

organizations located in a state in the Northeast section of the U.S., the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was used to explore their leadership style. The authors compare various elements of leadership style (charisma, inter-personal transactions, reactions to work issues, etc.) as well as perceptions of effectiveness and satisfaction with leadership style across academic backgrounds of executive directors. These results highlight the competencies required of successful leaders and can assist educators in identifying curricular gaps developing courses preparing social workers for leadership positions in the field. This study provides critical information on the core leadership skills and knowledge relevant for effective social work administration. Implications for social work training and education are discussed as well as possible avenues for curriculum revision (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013).

The 45-item instrument (MLQ) utilized in this study comprised six characteristic leadership categories (measured through nine sub-scales) and three self-perception of outcome scales (extra effort by administrators, perception of effectiveness as administrators, and satisfaction with leadership). The six characteristic leadership categories are further collapsed into three components – transformational leadership (comprising charisma, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration), active transactional leadership, and passive transactional leadership. Additionally, the MLQ also contains items that evaluate the administrators' self-perception of engaging in extra efforts as a leader, perception of effectiveness as a leader, and personal satisfaction with one's leadership. Each item on the MLQ was assessed on a Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always) (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013).

When thinking about possible gaps in leadership and management training at the MSW level, it is worth noting that “many current human service managers began their careers as direct service workers and bring more micro perspective into what, by definition, is a macro-oriented job” (Hopkins & Hyde, 2002, p. 12). The presence of unplanned transitions from direct service worker to manager bolsters the argument for social work educators to seek opportunities to nurture and enhance the administrative inclinations and abilities of social work students and their exposure to the theories, skills, and techniques of leadership (Ezell et al., 2004; Long & Shobe, 2010; Nesoff, 2007).

Social work professionals with clinical backgrounds that engage in direct practice continue to fill the majority of supervisory and middle-management roles (Kadushin & Harkness, 2000). Transitioning clinicians must realign their focus to concentrate on the health of the agency rather than on that of the client. This means a shift from the individual justice goal of the clinician to the equity-focused proportional justice of the administrator (Kadushin & Harkness, 2000).

Moreover, the clinical focus on client-centered, quality-services can conflict with the agency-centered, cost-effective focus of an agency administrator. In other words, while the clinician’s main focus is providing quality services, an administrator must balance quantity and quality of services rendered (Freerksen, 2012). Clinicians also often lack the analytical skills and methods knowledge necessary to evaluate services and complete performance measurements because they typically lack formal training in organization and program management (Freerksen, 2012.)

Part of the transitioning clinician's identity crisis relates to the agency's politics and hierarchical structure. Clinicians often try to fill a neutral role in agency politics, but the managerial role is by nature more directive (Cousins, 2004). Transitioning clinicians are encouraged to seek out seminars, workshops, classes, and trainings in a process parallel to their clinical training. Training and professional developmental opportunities allow a new manager to develop techniques and tools for their "administrative tool box," much like the proverbial therapist's toolbox, from which they can draw in various administrative situations (Cousins, 2004).

In a retrospective study of 200 social work administrators, only one-fifth of these administrators came from a purely administrative social work program, while about one-third came from a direct practice-focused education and one-half came from a mixed-focus education (Barak, Travis, & Bess, 2004). Rank and Hutchison's (2000) analysis within the social work profession identified five common elements in leadership: pro-action, values and ethics, empowerment, vision, and communication. They also draw attention to the notion that challenges faced by social work leaders can be somewhat different from those experienced by other disciplines; challenges which may be generated by conflicts with professional values, our holistic and systemic orientation, the overarching concern for others, and a strong desire to promote inclusive practices.

Similar findings were reported by Menefee (1997) about executive directors in nonprofit agencies who, in response to economic, political, social, and technological trends, juggled complex and seemingly contradictory strategies for success. In the last

decade, a move to more humanistic principles has guided some of the more successful corporations in the United States.

In a Canadian study of hospital restructuring, Globerman, Davies, and Walsh (1996) identified three areas of concern to social work managers: control over the nature of their work and decision making, social work roles, and the organizational structure. More specific concerns which they identified included fears of losing a social work identity and actual social work departments, and uncertainty about cross-training and multi-skilling which, they claim, contributes to boundary blurring.

A brief review of the social work literature on management and leadership demonstrates that the most notable developments have been in health and hospital social work where the demands of major changes in and consequent restructuring of health systems have prompted professional attention. A recurrent theme in this work is that hospital social workers must demonstrate, at a minimum, leadership competencies and confidence in shaping organizational change, while at the same time, balancing needs of many stakeholders. Such competencies include: "...an ability to balance the needs of the patient, the institution, and the staff while coping effectively with the tensions in meeting these competing demands" (Mizrahi & Berger, 2005, p. 172).

A number of research projects in other areas of practice argue that social workers possess competencies and abilities that are congruent with those required for leadership, but they also argue for one further step; the need for social workers to assume leadership roles. Writing about family-centered practice, Briar-Lawson (1998), for example, contends that social work is ideally positioned to address some of the challenges posed by

welfare reform because it avoids reductionist and uncritical thinking which has marred the engagement of other helping professions in welfare-reform related programs and activities. Further, social work possesses a unique capacity to integrate social and economic foundations in practice. For these strengths to be recognized, however, grass roots leadership is crucial.

Researchers, such as Stoesz (1997), have also put forth that the majority of social workers who move into leadership roles often have less adequate training and mentoring. Clearly, these examples display a gap regarding the lack of training and education being offered to social workers through social work school curriculums, at both the BSW and MSW levels.

Rank and Hutchison (2000) add to the above arguments through their investigative findings, stating that 75 individuals who held leadership positions within the NASW (National Association of Social Workers), identified the education and training they received didn't meet their expectations. Thus, this then carries over to effect job satisfaction of employees within organizations. If social work leaders are not prepared with adequate leadership skills, then how is this supposed to translate to environments having high levels of job satisfaction? It is ultimately now time for social work programs at the BSW and MSW levels, to become aware of this "non-theme" in regards to education and leadership training.

Social work programs must begin to equip professionals with adequate tools in the form of leadership training, in order to lead and create work environments where job satisfaction thrives amongst social workers. Based on these findings above, one

conclusion that can be drawn is that leadership is one of the most critical aspects that impacts job satisfaction with regards to social workers. Simply, if social workers don't possess adequate training in regards to leadership, then they will be setting up work environments to fail and consist of low job satisfaction (Farmer, 2011).

In 1986, Brilliant questioned whether leadership in social work training was a "missing ingredient" and charged that leadership "is essentially a 'non-theme' in social work training" (p. 325). She noted further that training for leadership was not emphasized and that the concept of leadership only appeared sporadically in social work publications. Brilliant questioned why "leadership has no prominence in the social work curriculum" (p. 327), especially as there have been so many distinctive leaders in the profession in the past: Jane Addams, Edward T. Devine, Florence Kelley, Mary Ellen Richmond, Harry Lloyd Hopkins, and Bertha Cappen Reynolds. Brilliant also noted that although leadership is a major theme in the literature of other disciplines and professions, it is not a part of the professional foundation for social work education (Brilliant, 1986).

Moran, Frans, and Gibson (1995) state that "there is likely something fundamental to the educational process to account for social work losing ground in the leadership of its own organizations" (p. 104). Brilliant (1986) has recommended that training and practice in leadership skills should be a part of every social work student's education.

There is an emerging trend where many of the direct practice-oriented students get promoted after graduation to supervisory or managerial positions, yet haven't mastered the needed macro-level competencies. This can effectively put these recent

graduates into the untenable position of needing to step into professional roles they did not envision early in the careers, but also being inhibited in moving up in administrative hierarchies because they do not have the leadership/managerial qualifications that those from other professions have by virtue of their educational and practice experiences (Bliss et al., 2014).

For more than three decades, some social work educators have recognized the unique challenges of training social work administrators and the limitations of schools of social work in preparing students as administrators (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004; Neugeboren, 1986; Patti, 1987; Wuenschel, 2006). During this period, a decline has been documented in the number of NASW members identifying themselves as administrators, and attempts have been made to determine the management competencies that should be addressed in social work education programs (Wimpfheimer, 2004).

One of the reasons for this is the absence of a conceptualization and the documentation of specific competencies that are essential for administrative practice (Edwards, Cooke, & Reid, 1996; McNutt, 1995; Menefee, 1997; Wimpfheimer, 2004). Another reason is uncertainty around the unique knowledge base and skills required to be effective managers and organizational leaders. It is imperative, therefore, to assess the specific competencies and knowledge-based requirements of service administrators and managers in the field, highlight the essential differences between administrators/managers trained in social work and those trained in other disciplines (such as law, business, public health, etc.), and evaluate the impact of specific leadership training on competencies needed in the field.

Fortunately, in response to more recent social, cultural, political, and economic forces, leadership within the social work profession has begun to take on greater importance (Wilson & Lau, 2011). Over the past decade various studies have suggested competencies required for effective social work leadership (Wilson & Lau, 2011; Holosko, 2009).

MSWs transitioning into leadership roles should have had at least some exposure to administrative thinking and management strategies. Knee and Folsom (2012) identify five skills commonly focused on in foundation year curricula and provide examples of how more explicit connections could be made to a management practice. Building on the work of earlier social work scholars, they argue that the foundational skills of communication, supervision, facilitation, teaming, and interpersonal skills, which are all hallmarks of social workers ability to relate and connect to people and communities, can be capitalized on in the management arena (Knee & Folsom, 2012).

Scholars have acknowledged the possible inadequacies of leadership and management training at the MSW level, since 1987 the number of social work students specializing in administration has been declining steadily (Ezell et al., 2004). Approximately 80% of MSW graduates report a primary interest in direct or clinical practice (Austin & Ezell, 2004). Only 3% of graduate social work students specialize in administration in their academic programs (Wuenschel, 2006), suggesting that many social work students have extremely limited exposure to administrative and leadership activities during their professional education.

The landscape of professional social work education also reflects these circumstances. The Council on Social Work Education's website lists a total of 68 accredited Masters of Social Work programs offering an administration or management concentration, and over 130 programs offering a clinical or direct practice oriented program. Thus, while many students may not come to advanced social work education with administration in mind, the limited number of programs that even offer such a concentration ensures that many students cannot even be exposed to this content even if they are interested in it (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013).

Social work educators are studying the issue of how best to include management content in the social work curriculum (Nesoff, 2007). The fieldwork component of social work education has historically focused on clinical practice and community organization rather than on the development of management skills. While the broad term "macro practice" has encompassed both community level interventions and management and administration, macro practice fieldwork has more often focused on the first than on the latter. There is, therefore, not sufficient information about the effectiveness of macro field experiences in preparing social workers to become competent managers (Barak, Travis, & Bess, 2004).

Enrollment in macro practice tracks in any form has been low. It did not exceed 10% of students in MSW programs around the nation in the last twenty years (Mamphiswana & Noyoo, 2000). Macro practice that aims to bring about change through community organization, administration, and policy development is central to social work practice and in some ways defines the identity of social work (Netting, Kettner, &

McMurtry, 2008). Although relatively few social work students specialize in this concentration, it is essential that we articulate a set of advanced competencies, ensure they are included in MSW curriculums, and design methods for assessing the degree to which students possess these competencies at various points in their education (Regehr, Bogo, Donovan, Anstice, & Lim, 2012).

Although a growing literature examines competencies in clinical practice, competencies of students in macro social work practice have received comparatively little attention. The scholarly literature with respect to the identification and evaluation of practice competencies has focused primarily on micro or clinical practice across disciplines including medicine (Farrell, 2005; Resnick, 1993), pastoral care (Gordon & Mitchell, 2004), respiratory therapists (Cullen, 2005), dentistry (Albino et al., 2008), psychology (Spruill et al., 2004), nursing (Bondy, Jenkins, Seymour, Lancaster, & Ishee, 1997), and social work (Bogo et al., 2004; Regehr, Regehr, Power, & Bogo, 2007).

Hardina and Obel-Jorgensen (2009) suggested that eight skills or competencies are necessary for social action or advocacy practice: self-awareness and cultural competency, engagement, problem identification and assessment, facilitating constituent self-determination and empowerment, verbal and written communication, weighing the ethical implications of strategies, taking action, and evaluating outcomes. The National Network for Social Work Managers (Wimpfheimer, 2004) developed a set of core competencies for social workers in administrative and managerial practice based on a review of the literature and further modified by Barak et al. (2004) that include: advocacy; program evaluation; resource development and financial management;

program planning, development, and management; public relations and marketing; governance; and human resource management (Regehr et al., 2012).

However, limited evidence suggests that these competencies may not be taught in MSW programs. Deal, Hopkins, Fisher, and Hartin (2007) found that macro students perceived that they had limited learning opportunities that they believed were in part due to the complexity of the setting, in part due to the challenges in linking theory and practice, and in part due to limited availability of supervision. Thus it appears that there is limited exposure in the practicum setting to the range of skills required in macro practice and thus limited opportunities to develop these skills (Regehr, Bogo, Donovan, Anstice, & Lim, 2012).

Research documenting the macro practice field experiences of social work experiences is scarce. In a comprehensive search of social work peer-reviewed journals from 1990 to 2002 (utilizing Psychinfo and Social Work Abstract databases), less than one dozen empirical studies that examined the educational preparation for management and administration careers were found, and of these studies very few focused specifically on the fieldwork component. Several studies described creative substitutions for macro fieldwork experiences, such as classroom-based projects or computer simulations but their applications were primarily in the areas of community development and organization (e.g., Butler & Coleman, 1997). Other studies compared the preparation and orientation provided to future nonprofit managers by different types of professional schools such as public administration, business administration, and social work, though

these studies did not focus on the field component of the preparation (Mirabella & Wish, 2000).

Those who design social work curricula need to understand the reasons human service agencies are hiring leaders from non-social work backgrounds. Do these disciplines provide knowledge or skills that are critical to leadership? If so, what specifically is this content? Can it be provided in the social work curriculum (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013)? The practice of social welfare administration in a devolved policy environment will be more diverse. Policy diversity may well become a social welfare norm. Policy diversity will obviously lead to greater differences among states, cities, counties, and communities in terms of social welfare priorities and administrative practices (Martin, 2000).

The lessons for social work – collectively and individually – are clear. First, social work professional associations and individual social workers in specific organizational contexts can, if they choose, act as strategic and transformative leaders, and engage deliberately in a sustained process of theorizing institutional change. And as we have suggested, in the current context of welfare reform and other institutional change, the need to develop leadership at all levels becomes imperative. Professional associations in particular need to acknowledge that institutional instability is real and that threat exists.

To that end, the NASW (2004) public education campaign, *Changing the Perceptions, Improving the Profession*, provides an encouraging, but nevertheless partial, example from which other countries could learn. Professional associations and individual

leaders must do the following: understand the nature of the threat and the nature of probable consequences if ignored; articulate that threat in succinct and accessible ways; envisage alternatives; and, frame and articulate these in terms morally acceptable to the profession. But perhaps most importantly both groups should be attentive to the warning that such processes, to be successful, need to be vigorously sustained over a significant period of time. Successful leadership – on an individual and/or a collective level – is not a quick fix. Rather, it is a way of life which the profession can no longer ignore (NASW, 2004).

After interviewing a manager who calls for fewer social workers in managerial positions, Patti (2003) noted that the “call of high level managers for more business talent” (p. 7) results in one getting “the sense that many executives are saying that social workers don’t bring to the table what they are looking for in upper level management” (p. 7). If this is not addressed through increased investment in training practicing social workers as administrators, the result may be that social workers will no longer be viewed as the appropriate professionals to run social services agencies.

Packard (2004) underscored this when he wrote,

Schools of Social Work need to pay particular attention to the ‘competition’ that their MSW graduates are facing from managers who have learned on-the-job and through continuing education and from graduates of MBA, MPA or nonprofit management degree programs.

Agency executives and board members who hire human service administrators will need to see clear evidence of how an MSW with an

administration specialization adds value to the organization beyond what may be offered by someone with other credentials or experience. (p. 19)

Social welfare administration in the future will become increasingly concerned with demonstrating and documenting the performance (outputs, quality, and outcomes) of social welfare programs, including a primary focus on the achievement of client outcomes. The continued push for greater performance accountability will come from a variety of sources, including government, managed care, and private foundations (Martin, 2000). Despite significant barriers, a majority of social work directors are strategic and transformational leaders. They utilize strategies that position social workers well for policy and practice roles in their institutions and in the community (Mizrahi & Berger, 2005).

According to Bailey and Uhly (2008), as the field of social work evolves, it becomes more diverse, market driven, and research-oriented. It also has become more political, with social workers elected to the United States Congress, and hundreds more serving in local and state legislatures. While some contend that leadership is not a core component of social work education, and often leaders of social work organizations come from other disciplines, there is significant evidence demonstrating that the core social work values are aligned with key 21st century leadership attributes.

The profession requires strong proactive leadership for the new millennium. This strong proactive leadership philosophy should involve an understanding of pluralistic leadership (Nixon & Spearmon, 1991) and collaborative skills to engage colleagues, clients, other professionals and policymakers in an environment supportive of diverse

perspectives. As Bailey (1995) states, a critical task for social work leaders in the new millennium is to reorient perceptions of the world by focusing on the interconnections between people in ways that celebrate their similarities and differences.

Educational Preparation of Social Work Administrators

As part of their 1997 strategic planning efforts, members of ACOSA began work to develop advanced level macro practice knowledge and skills. It was assumed that the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provides guidelines for the foundation curriculum. However, in order to help schools of social work with curricula relating to community organization, policy practice, administration and management, social planning, community development, and organizational leadership, it was important to identify competencies for these advanced areas. The ACOSA leadership took as its guiding framework for this work the community practice processes identified as themes in the ACOSA sponsored journal, *The Journal of Community Practice*. These process themes in the early stages of the work were organizing, planning, development, and change. By 2005, members working on the macro competencies had modified the process themes to be organizing, planning, collaboration, sustainable development, and progressive change. The knowledge items that formed the basis for the competencies had grown to 50 items (Weil, Gamble, & MacGuire, 2009).

An examination of approximately 25 years of data from the CSWE illuminates the enrollment trends of MSW students choosing to specialize in administration (see Figure 1). From 1975 until 1982 there was a sharp growth trend not only in the number of students specializing in administration but the percent of all MSW students selecting

administration concentrations as well. In 1982, there were almost 1,400 students specializing in administration, 6.5% of all MSW students. After the peak year of 1982, both the number and percent dropped for several years followed by a short rise, peaking in 1988 at 1,232 students. After 1988, and discounting 1998, which seems to be an aberration, the number of MSW students in an administration concentration has remained relatively stable at approximately 1,000 per year. The percent of all MSW students selecting administration specializations, however, has been declining since 1987. From 1995 through 2000, the trend seems to remain steady at just above 3%, half what it was in the peak year of 1982 (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004).

There are a number of possible explanations for the decline in the number and percent of students concentrating their studies in social administration and planning for careers in social service management. Some have suggested that schools of social work are unable to offer adequate curriculum to prepare graduates for management positions. At least some published outcome studies of administration concentration graduates and a national study on the adequacy of the administration curriculum by McNutt (1995) suggest otherwise. McNutt concluded that, although the comprehensiveness of macro curricula could be improved, the social work curriculum “does not explain the declining fortunes of macro social work education” (p. 73). In fact, he found evidence of what he called the “maturing of the field of social administration” (p. 71). Likewise, based on a long-term follow-up of one school’s administration concentration graduates, Martin, Pine, and Healy (1999), after examining skill acquisition and employment, concluded that a school of social work with a management concentration “can prepare managers who are

employable in significant managerial positions and who have confidence in their preparedness for managerial work” (p. 90).

As McNutt (1995) concluded,

If we are to understand the source of our (macro practice) deteriorating position, it will be necessary to explore the institutional context of social work education, particularly the social work professional organizations and schools of social work.

It is here that the fate of macro social work education, and ultimately the social work profession, will be decided. (p. 73)

Ezell (1990) contended that other explanations for the decline relate more directly to a pervasive anti-management ideology within the social work profession and within schools of social work. Several of the alternative explanations are summarized below.

1. State licensing laws require applicants to demonstrate clinical social work knowledge in the qualifying exams and may require specific clinical coursework and/or experience; this can discourage students from selecting macro/administration concentrations (Pine & Healy, 1994).
2. The CSWE standards that require a generalist foundation course of study in schools of social work is often heavily micro-oriented and may not prepare students for specialization in macro-practice.
3. The growth in the number of master’s degrees in nonprofit management could be attracting potential administration students away from the profession, along with continued competition from MPA and MBA degrees. There has not been much

concern expressed about the increasing number of social service agencies led by executive directors with training and experience outside the social work profession.

4. High quality administration practicum placements are difficult to find and keep. There is a relatively small number of social work administrators who are willing and able to provide field supervision. Chronic budget cuts make administrative jobs more demanding and time consuming, leaving little, if any, time for supervision. Funding crises create agency turmoil into which many social work administrators are reluctant to bring students. Many of the administrators who are willing to take students were not trained in administration, and, therefore, are unable to provide a high quality practicum experience (Ezell, 1990).

While little research has been done on selection of specializations, Schwartz and Dattalo (1990) identified three factors that are likely to influence student selection of their method concentration: “professional ideologies,” the job market, and the available curriculum at their school of choice. Neugeboren (1986) earlier wrote that availability of concentrations and perceptions about the job market shape student interest in micro or macro.

Patti and Austin (1977) identified “a long-held belief in social work that learning about administration is simply a matter of superimposing a layer of management knowledge and skill on an intact foundation of clinical competence” (p. 269). Schwartz and Dattalo (1990) found that this belief has been complicated by licensing and by growth of private practice. In selecting their concentration, students may want to hedge

their bets for reasons of employment, or they may be influenced by the dominant view that they must obtain micro skills, even if they are interested in administration. Schwartz and Dattalo's study asked students at one school of social work to rank factors affecting their decision not to select a macro practice specialization. Out of a total of 158 MSW students, 17 were macro majors; another 37 said they seriously considered macro as a concentration, but ultimately chose micro practice (Schwartz & Dattalo, 1990).

Schwartz and Dattalo (1990) surveyed those who considered, but did not select, macro concentration on the reasons for their choice. The most significant factor, ranked important by 69%, was the desire to get clinical experience before macro. Second was being sure to be prepared for licensure with 61% ranking this important. Concerns over the availability of jobs in macro practice was reported by 30%, and 22% reported lack of information about macro practice. Fear of isolation from the majority of (micro) students was important or somewhat important to 19%. They note that whether one accepts the argument that prior direct service experience is necessary for effective macro practice, it is important to note that students in this study believe this to be true and appear to adjust their educational plans accordingly (Schwartz & Dattalo, 1990).

In another study of the question, Neugeboren (1986) surveyed deans of schools of social work and asked whether they agreed with the following: "Direct service skills is a necessary foundation for effective performance of administrative roles and functions" (p. 5). Of those responding, 63% agreed with this statement, showing clear adherence to the ideology of micro before macro by leaders in social work education. Furthermore, he

found that schools led by deans who agreed had fewer students enrolled in macro practice concentrations (Neugeboren, 1986).

Neugeboren (1986) identified “ideological and political forces operating in the social work education system” (p. 1) as the reason for low enrollment in administration concentrations. Although much evidence exists that the field needs agency leaders with strong administrative skills, social work curriculum continues to emphasize direct practice. In his article, he argues that the move toward a generic or generalist curriculum was in fact a solidification of direct practice emphasis, as the content of most generalist programs stress micro rather than macro practice. Thus, in the drive to establish a single, unified profession through a generalist foundation curriculum at both the BSW and MSW levels, generalist practice and education are overwhelming micro. Compounding this is the increased popularity of “advanced clinical generalist” as a graduate concentration or specialization (Austin, 2000).

One study of how graduates assessed their preparation for administrative practice (Martin et al., 1999) found that administration concentrators said that they learned little in the way of useful interpersonal skills in the foundation curriculum, as the content taught was focused on individuals and families. Thus, the authors concluded that “because the large majority of social work students select micro practice specialties, the concomitant focus of faculty and texts on micro practice models, and because of the need to learn from the simple to the complex, macro practice examples are mostly excluded from foundation practice curricula” (Martin et al., 1999, p. 92).

Following the publication of a report on the state of macro practice in social work by distinguished senior colleague Dr. Jack Rothman in 2012, a movement was sparked amongst faculty, practitioners and students to promote and strengthen the development of the field of macro practice (Rothman & Mizrahi, 2012). The Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work includes community organizing, planning, development, policy practice, management, and administration. Anticipated outcomes of the special commission include:

- (a) Strengthening macro policies and standards;
- (b) Focusing on knowledge development in macro research, scholarship and practice models;
- (c) Supporting the conducting of research for the purposes of developing knowledge for community practice;
- (d) Identifying successful methods of macro student recruitment, financial support, and post-MSW, employment information and networking;
- (e) Addressing the issue of licensing that supports and deters macro practitioners;
- (f) Increasing macro coverage in news releases, and featured stories;
- (g) Examining credentialing by CSWE, NASW, and other social work organizations;
- (h) Promoting utilization and application of community level interventions in the field;
- (i) Promoting social work leaders to executive management positions in the administration of social and human service programs;
- (j) Influencing accreditation criteria and membership on site teams;

- (k) Balancing micro and macro practices of social work; profiling social work leaders in academia, policy, political, and community roles (Rothman & Mizrahi, 2012).

In a study conducted by the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) (2011), it was found that many school colleagues were said to be disinterested in macro curriculum content. Macro faculty are a minority in social work schools, either a handful or often a meager one or two. They have to rely on faculty associates to influence curriculum in favor of macro interests, affect the culture of the school, and attract students to the macro program. The open-ended comments indicated that this backing and cooperation is often missing. One respondent notes that many faculty have a clear clinical bias that guides their actions. Another indicates hearing disparaging remarks about his field. A third relates that his colleagues tell students: “You will never get a job,” or “It is a mistake.”

Societal Perceptions of the Social Work Profession

A 1978 survey was conducted that examined how the public viewed social work (Condie, Hanson, Lang, Moss, & Kane, 1978). The researchers pointed out that earlier studies of public opinion conducted in the 1950s had concluded that the public was unclear about what social workers did.

According to Kaufman and Raymond, 1995-1996, only one study since the Condie and colleagues' (1978) study was found to focus specifically on public knowledge and perceptions. In Alabama a survey of 452 adults was conducted to measure the public's knowledge of social workers in the areas of education, credentialing, types of

social work, type of clients and presenting problems, and public attitudes about the activities in which social workers engage. Although noting the limitations of their study, including the low visibility of social workers in Alabama “because the public and private human service agencies of the state of Alabama are not highly professionalized” (Kaufman & Raymond, 1995-1996, p. 32) the researchers reported that the overall attitude of their respondents toward social workers was negative.

LeCroy and Stinson (2004), recognizing changes in social work practice in the 25 years since Condie et al.’s (1978) research, sought to reassess public perception. The authors reasoned, “if the general public is confused, uninformed or even hostile toward social work, the profession is less able to fulfill its mission of helping those in need” (LeCroy & Stinson, 2004, p. 164). Finding only limited recent studies, they executed a nationwide survey to assess public sentiment toward social work. They discovered that the public associates social workers with frequent media stories reporting children being taken from their parents, indicating little change since Condie et al.’s (1978) study about the role of social workers. Strikingly, almost one in five respondents believed the stereotype that “social workers take advantage of the government” (LeCroy & Stinson, 2004, p. 169).

Zugazaga, Surette, Mendez, and Otto (2006) described a study, commissioned by the NASW, which investigated how the public viewed the profession. Participants had little direct experience with social workers; their perception of the field was shaped predominantly by the media. They associated social workers with child welfare, the

government, and the poor or underprivileged. They had an altogether positive regard for the profession despite the prevalence of negatively portrayed child welfare cases.

The limited research conducted shows that the public often takes a polite view of social workers because of the belief that compassionate work is being done. However, there are also common negative perceptions: (a) an overall ignorance of the extent of social work's mission (often thought to be predominantly child welfare); (b) a lack of understanding of what social work roles include (often perpetuated by the profession's lack of clarity); (c) a negative view of social workers' competence when compared to similar helping professions; and (d) an unfavorable view of some client populations with which social work aligns itself.

Silverman (2012) reflected that without self-awareness of our own profession, mission, and professional identity, how can we presume that others will understand us any better? Internal exploration of how the field should outwardly present itself is complex because of pressures to serve clients and communities while maintaining confidentiality. Yet perception affects financial support of programs and efficacy of our work. A conflict emerges over who defines the social work brand: social workers, the public, and/or the media. When social workers abdicate their responsibility, it allows others to control their image.

Only a few decades ago, it would have been the exception to find a social worker in private practice or working in industry; now these are frequent phenomena. Also, other factors have changed the environment in which this practice is carried out. Managed care and sweeping changes to the welfare system have introduced elements into social work

that could not have been imagined 20 years ago. Moreover, modern representations of social work and social workers in the popular media often do not compliment or support the profession (LeCroy & Stinson, 2004). A critical consequence of these changes over the past several decades is that they have influenced how the public perceives and understands social work as a profession. Why is this influence critical, and why is it so important to know what the public thinks of social work?

When the public's approval of social work wanes, recruitment into the profession suffers as does the professional credibility of social workers in both the public eye and the eye of other professionals. Finally, given that the public is the primary consumer of services that social workers offer, how it views social work is vital to its acceptance of social work services, as well as the policy positions supported by social work (LeCroy & Stinson, 2004).

Much of the public does not interact directly with social workers, so a large part of the profession's perception is attributable to depiction in the media. Zugazaga et al. (2006) discovered that most social workers believed the media cast a negative image on their profession. Freeman and Valentine (2004) examined American movies from 1938 to 1998 with a "social work" character. Twenty-nine of the 44 movies focused on child welfare. Most social workers were women, white, middle-class, and incompetent. They were caretakers in a subordinate position of authority and served as a buffer between oppressed groups and their oppressors. Many characters had sexual relationships with a client. Overall, the characters reinforced rather than challenged the status quo (Freeman & Valentine, 2004).

Although a survey of 60 newspapers and 399 articles by Reid and Misener (2001), over a period of four and one-half years, demonstrated a largely positive image of social work, they concluded that more could be done. The positive stories portrayed social workers as experts, described program innovations and interesting direct practice work, and demonstrated the potential impact of positive publicity (Reid & Misener, 2001).

If perception does not match the profession's stated mission, social workers must learn how to influence public understanding. "Social workers themselves are best suited to enhance the public's knowledge and opinions about the profession... [because] no one else is likely to step forward" to do so (LeCroy & Stinson, 2004, p. 174). The NASW (2004) set out to raise the public's esteem of social work given the stereotypes the profession had endured. This goal, developed in concert with the 50th anniversary of the NASW's founding, spurred an advertising campaign to increase awareness, which included magazine and newspaper ads, press releases, appearances on radio and television programs, and a new website (NASW, 2004). Moreover, the campaign stimulated efforts to engage social workers in the topic of effecting change in social work's perception.

Results from research conducted for NASW's Social Work Public Education Campaign show that the general public considers social work an essential "helping profession," but does not understand what education and credentials are required to be a social worker and does not have a grasp of the diversity of the profession (NASW, 2004). The research was conducted through eight focus groups held in three cities. The focus groups were part of the research stage of a multiyear public education campaign NASW

is undertaking to change the way the nation views social workers. NASW (2004) is working with Crosby Marketing Communications on a strategic plan for the campaign.

“This kind of research is crucial for us to be able to develop the most effective campaign possible to educate the public about what social workers do” (NASW, 2004, p. 1), said NASW President Gary Bailey. He further stated, “With information gleaned from these groups, we will be able to strategically focus our message” (p. 1).

Theoretical Framework

Behavioral theories of leadership are based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born. Rooted in behaviorism, this leadership theory focuses on the actions of leaders not on mental qualities or internal states. According to this theory, people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation (Andersen, 2010). Bower (1977) wrote that although we know enough about management in the public sector to know that it is different from corporate management, we do not know nearly as much as we should. Twenty-five years later, Van Wart (2003) pointed out the lack of empirical research on public leadership. A number of studies have been undertaken aimed at describing and understanding the differences, if any, between public and private management (Andersen, 2010).

Despite being a broadly understood notion, leadership is a concept that has defied a consensus in definition and measurement (House & Podsakoff, 1994). In one of the penultimate treatments of theory and research on leadership, Bass and Avolio (1990) observed there are seemingly as many definitions of leadership as there are scholars

endeavoring to study this concept. Bass and Avolio articulated common unifying themes across a wide range of definitions, noting that leadership involves influencing a group or individual into compliance through the leader's charisma, power, persuasion, or other behaviors. In general, such efforts are made with the intent of creating structure and/or coordinating effort with the ultimate hope of achieving some prescribed goal (Schafer, 2010).

Most leadership development programs, whether corporate or academic, are ineffective and expensive (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002). Mintzberg and Gosling (2002) opine that “contemporary business education focuses on the function of business more than the practice of managing” (p. 28). As a result, organizations are beginning to look at new, less traditional ways for training their managers (Raudenbush & Marquardt, 2008). The realization that there is no one correct type of leader led to theories that the best leadership style depends on the situation. These theories try to predict which style is best in which circumstance.

Strategic leadership theory (aka upper echelon theory) asserts that because leaders operate at a strategic level, organizations are reflections of the cognition and values of their top managers. The specific knowledge, experience, values, and preferences of top managers will influence their assessment of the external environment, and ultimately the choices they make about organizational strategy. Therefore, overtime, the organization comes to reflect the top leader (Phipps & Burbach, 2010).

Contingency theories of leadership focus on particular variables related to the environment that might determine which particular style of leadership is best suited for

the situation. According to this theory, no leadership style is best in all situations. Success depends upon a number of variables, including the leadership style, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation. For instance, when you need to make quick decisions, which style is best? When you need the full support of your team, is there a more effective way to lead? Should a leader be more people-oriented or task-oriented? These are all questions that contingency leadership theories try to address.

Students and scholars of leadership have long sought to characterize those traits and habits that undergird the efforts of those deemed to be particularly effective (Burns, 2003). Early studies of leadership tended to focus on the “great man/great woman” theory (House & Podsakoff, 1994; Schackleton, 1995); a well-regarded leader was studied in a biographical format to derive an understanding of their success. Over time, studies expanded this approach to consider samples of recognized leaders (e.g. Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Though research has not always found clear causal links between a given trait and leadership efficacy (Bass and Avolio, 1990; Burns, 2003), trait-based thinking still dominates both leadership scholarship and corporate leadership literature (Collins, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Maxwell, 2002).

More recent theories of leadership emphasize the need for managers to lead in an era of “white water” change (Vail, 1998), to handle complex adaptive systems (Mathews, White, & Long, 2000), and work in chaos (Wheatley, 1992). Vail (1991) points out the need for today's managers to have both a high level of action and reflection. Pfeffer and Fong (2002) note that the most important skills of leaders include interpersonal and communication skills as well as the ability to solve problems and take action. The

workplace needs transformative leaders who, according to Sashkin and Sashkin (2003), possess four transformative leadership behaviors: (a) communications skills, (b) reliability and integrity, (c) response and concern for others, and (d) the ability to create opportunities and learn from failure. Bennis and Nanus (2007) identify four areas for leadership competency: attention through vision, meaning through communication, trust through positioning, and deployment of self through positive self-regard. Leaders need to be able to define the problem or understand the environment before attempting to engineer a solution. Most organizational theorists and practitioners agree that new leadership skills are needed. Styles and skills that may have worked in stable, predictable environments are no longer adequate (Marquardt & Berger, 2000; Marquardt, 2005).

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (2008) argue that the approach to management undertaken by the practitioner depends largely on the situation being addressed. In this regard, the authors provide evidence to support their position that there are three basic competencies that managers need to develop to react to a variety of behaviors of individuals with whom managers work. The first competency reflects the ability to diagnose existing situations to determine a direction for action. The second competency is the capacity to adapt professional behavior to gain control of a situation. The final competency is the ability to communicate to others in a way by which they can accept a proposal for action. To convey the importance attached to each of these competencies, the authors provide many examples illustrating how applying theories associated with the behavioral sciences can make a positive difference in the performance of individuals. To

the authors, the outcome of management is long-term growth achieved through helping individuals become more productive while allowing them a greater share of the benefits of their efforts.

In recent decades, the economics of nonprofit organizations has become a truly booming field. The nonprofit sector, and the associated institutional constructs referred to as the third sector, voluntary sector, and social economy, is gaining increasing recognition from policymakers, practitioners, and academics. The growing impact of the nonprofit sector on diverse aspects of social life across the world has been matched by significant advances in the nonprofit economics literature. This literature has revealed unique roles for nonprofit firms in public goods provision (Weisbrod, 1991), building trust in situations of information asymmetry (Hansmann, 1987), ensuring better consumer control over the economy (Ben-Ner, 1986), and serving as an outlet for ideological entrepreneurship (Rose-Ackerman, 1996). Given this broad range of economic roles, it is not surprising that the nonprofit sector is extremely diverse. In the words of Boris and Steuerle (2006), it includes “religious congregations, universities, hospitals, museums, homeless shelters, civil rights groups, labor unions, political parties, and environmental organizations, among others. Nonprofits play a variety of social, economic, and political roles in the society. They provide services as well as educate, advocate, and engage people in civic and social life” (p. 66).

Economists traditionally define nonprofit organization in terms of the so-called non-distribution constraint. Accordingly, a nonprofit firm is one precluded from distributing, in financial form, its surplus resources to those who control it (Steinberg,

2006, p. 118; Hansmann, 1987, p. 28). The non-distribution constraint “provides a clear distinction that affects how organization obtains resources, how it is controlled, how it behaves in the marketplace, how it is perceived by donors and clients, and how its employees are motivated” (Steinberg, 2006, p. 118). At the same time, it flexibly accommodates the above mentioned diversity of nonprofit firms; it remains their defining attribute independently of the nature of activity they engage in, of their funding structure, and of their specific governance procedures. Furthermore, the non-distribution constraint does not prohibit nonprofit firms from earning financial surpluses; it only constrains the uses to which these surpluses can be put (Steinberg, 2006).

In terms of systems and complexity theories, public organizations and public administration are regarded as adaptive as well as open to their environment. Complexity theory has important potential for understanding the behavior of the economy and political systems, especially when impacted by sudden events (Amagoh, 2008).

Complexity is defined as the measure of heterogeneity or diversity in internal and environmental factors such as departments, customers, suppliers, socio-politics and technology (Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007, p. 10). Complexity theory focuses on how parts at a micro-level in a complex system affect emergent behavior and overall outcome at the macro-level (McElroy, 2000, p. 198; McKenzie & James, 2004, p. 35). It is concerned with the study of emergent order in what otherwise may be considered as very disorderly systems (Sherif, 2006, p. 73). As the complexity of a system increases, the ability to understand and use information to plan and predict becomes more difficult.

Over time, the increasing complexity leads to more change within the system (Chakravarthy, 1997, p. 74).

As the system becomes more complex, making sense of it becomes more difficult and adaptation to the changing environment becomes more problematic (Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007, p. 11; Cao & McHugh, 2005, p. 477). Complexity theory paradigm rejects the mechanical ontological models, which assume linear causality between events and effects (Styhre, 2002: 346; Ferlie, 2007, p. 156; Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007, p. 22). According to Rhee (2000), the characteristic structural and behavioral patterns in a complex system are due to the interactions among the system's parts.

Complex systems tend to be deterministic in nature and evolve through a phase of instability, which eventually reaches another threshold where a new relationship is established between its internal and external environments and itself (Sullivan, 2004, p. 46; McElroy, 2000, p. 197). Systems that operate near a threshold of instability tend to exhibit creativity and produce new and innovative behaviors at the level of the whole system (Price, 2004; Styhre, 2002).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter III presents the methods and procedures that were used in conducting the outcome evaluation. The following are described in this chapter: research design, description of the site, sample population, instrumentation, treatment of data, and limitations of the study.

Research Design

Descriptive and exploratory research methods were used in this study. This study was designed to ascertain data in order to describe and explain perceptions of nonprofit board members and executive leaders towards competencies of social work professionals who aspire to leadership positions in this arena.

The descriptive and exploratory research design allowed for the analysis of the demographic profile of the survey respondents. It also facilitated the explanation of the statistical relationship between perceptions of professional social workers by executive leadership professionals of nonprofit human service organizations and their competency to hold such positions in these organizations.

Description of the Site

The study was conducted in Atlanta, Georgia and to a limited extent in two large northern cities (New York, NY and Boston, MA). Atlanta is the largest urban metropolitan city in Georgia. It is composed of hundreds of nonprofit organizations providing various services to various populations. Atlanta is the home/hub of many major nonprofit organizations, including the American Red Cross, CARE, and the Boys and Girls Clubs. Atlanta was selected because of its metropolitan status and the vast array of nonprofit organizations located in the city.

Two organizations were located in the cities of New York, NY and Boston, MA. The New York organization was the National Association of Social Workers. The Boston organization was chosen because it had a presence in Atlanta, but could only be contacted through its Massachusetts' office.

Sample and Population

The target population for this research study was composed of executive-level staff of nonprofit organizations. This included nonprofit board members, chief executive directors, chief financial officers, human resource officers, and executive directors. One hundred (100) organizational respondents were selected utilizing non-probability convenience sampling from among the target population.

Instrumentation

A survey questionnaire entitled *A Study of Board Members' Perceptions of Leadership Competencies that Professionally Trained Social Workers should Possess*

Who Lead Nonprofit Human Service Organizations was utilized. The survey questionnaire consisted of two sections with a total of eleven (11) questions. Section I solicited demographic information about the characteristics of the respondents. Section II utilized a research design that was developed in order to measure beliefs concerning competencies and qualifications of social workers in relationship to nonprofit leadership preparedness and participation.

Section I of the survey questionnaire consisted of five questions (1-5). Of the five questions, items were selected to serve as the independent variables for the study. Section I's questions referenced gender, age group, racial category, education, and professional affiliation. The five questions provided information for the presentation of a demographic profile of the respondents of the survey.

Section II consisted of six questions (6 through 11) to measure perceptions and beliefs of nonprofit leaders about the credibility of social work professionals seeking leadership positions. This section is a measurement of the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to lead nonprofit organizations according to those in executive leadership positions in the field. It also looked at the views or perceptions of other leadership professionals concerning the social work profession. Items on the survey instrument were responded to on a four point continuum Likert Scale. The scale was as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree.

Treatment of Data

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The analysis used descriptive statistics, which included frequency distribution and cross tabulation.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of the study was the number of responses. One hundred total surveys were mailed out to nonprofit organization executive leaders/representatives. Ninety-seven surveys were mailed to organizational representatives throughout the Metropolitan Atlanta area. Three of the surveys were mailed outside of Atlanta. Two were mailed to an organization in New York, NY (the National Association of Social Work headquarters) and one was sent to an organization in Boston, MA. However, only 51 surveys were completed and returned. Four of the mailings were returned due to “insufficient address.” A second limitation might be that the questionnaire used was developed and designed by the principle investigator. This was the first use of this survey tool.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings of the study in order to describe and explain the perception(s) held by leaders in the nonprofit human service world of the capabilities of professional social workers to lead these organizations in the new millennium. It was to determine if nonprofit human service leaders who make hiring decisions in these organizations have perceptions that eliminate professional social workers from consideration for leadership positions.

Demographic Data

This section provides a profile of the study respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the following: gender, age group, education, professional affiliation, and race/ethnicity.

A target population for this research was composed of leaders of nonprofit organizations. The leadership levels include representatives of Boards of Directors, executive leaders (i.e., Chief Executive Officers, Chief Financial Officers, and Executive Directors), and Human Resource Executives. One hundred nonprofit leaders were selected utilizing non-probability convenience sampling. Table 1 illustrates the frequency distribution of the demographic profile of the study respondents.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Study Respondents (N = 51)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	20	39.2
Female	31	60.8
Age Group		
21-30	3	5.9
31-40	4	7.8
41-50	13	25.5
Over 50	31	60.8
Education		
Some College	1	2.0
College Grad	50	98.0
Professional Affiliation		
Social Services	20	39.2
Healthcare	5	9.8
Education	4	7.8

Table 1 (continued)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Professional Affiliation (continued)		
Law	6	11.6
Business	13	25.5
Other	3	5.9
Race		
Black	16	31.4
White	32	62.7
Hispanic	2	3.9
Asian	1	2.0

As indicated in Table 1, the typical respondent of the study was a White female, over 50 years old, with a College Education, and professionally affiliated with the Social Services field.

Table 2 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Professionally trained social workers who lead nonprofit human service organizations are perceived by board members of human service organizations as welfare workers.”

Table 2

Professionally trained social workers who lead nonprofit human service organizations are perceived by board members of human service organizations as welfare workers

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	42	84.0
Agree	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0
Mean 1.92	Std. Dev .695	

Table 2 indicates that 84% of the respondents agreed that board members of human service organizations have a perception of professionally trained social workers leading nonprofit organizations as being welfare workers.

Table 3 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Leadership abilities of social work professionals are influenced by social issues in the media.”

Table 3

Leadership abilities of social work professionals are influenced by social issues in the media

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	32	64.0
Agree	18	36.0
Total	50	100.0
Mean 2.34	Std. Dev .658	

Table 3 indicates that 64% of the respondents disagreed that their views about the leadership abilities of social work professionals are influenced by issues in the media.

Table 4 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today than in previous years.”

Table 4

Nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today than in previous years

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	5	9.8
Agree	46	90.2
Total	51	100.0
Mean 3.45	Std. Dev .730	

Table 4 indicates that 90.2% of the respondents believe that human service organizations are required to be more accountable today than in the past.

Table 5 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Social work professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations should have the same leadership competencies as other professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations.”

Table 5

Social work professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations should have the same leadership competencies as other professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Agree	51	100.0
Mean 3.73	Std. Dev .451	

Table 5 indicates that 100% of the respondents agreed that social work professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations are expected to have similar competences as professionals from other arenas who lead nonprofit human service organizations.

Table 6 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Nonprofit human service organizations should employ only leaders with business skills and prior managerial leadership experience.”

Table 6

Nonprofit human service organizations should employ only leaders with business skills and prior managerial leadership experience

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	24	48.0
Agree	26	52.0
Total	51	100.0

Mean 2.48 Std. Dev .909

Table 6 indicates that 52% of the respondents agreed that only professionals with business skills and prior managerial leadership experience should be employed as leaders of nonprofit human service organizations.

Table 7 demonstrates the frequency distribution for the responses to the statement, “Leaders of nonprofit human service organizations should have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas.”

Table 7

Leaders of nonprofit human service organizations should have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas

Attribute	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	11	21.6
Agree	40	78.4
Total	51	100.0

Mean 3.04 Std. Dev .747

Table 7 indicates that 78.4% of the respondents agreed that leaders of nonprofit human service organizations should have the same professional experience as professionals in the business, legal, or public administration fields.

In summary, a majority of the respondents were white females over the age of 50 years. The largest percentage of the respondents were affiliated with the social services profession. The second largest professional affiliation was that of business administration. Only one of the respondents did not have a college degree.

A large majority of the respondents were in agreement with the fact that nonprofit human service organizations are expected to be more accountable today. The majority of the respondents were in agreement with the fact that professionals seeking or employed as leaders of nonprofit human service organizations must have skills and experiences reflecting those of professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas.

All the respondents agreed that social work professionals interested in leading nonprofit organizations must possess the same leadership competencies as other professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations. Although there were a decent number of respondents who did not agree with this.

A large majority of the respondents disagreed that social workers are viewed as welfare workers. A large percentage of respondents also disagreed with the notion that social workers' abilities are influenced by the media.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and leaders of non-profit organizations with the same professional training and experience?

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and leaders of non-profit organizations with the same professional training and experience.

Table 8 is a cross tabulation between social workers seen as welfare workers by human service non-profit leaders having the same training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas.

Table 8

Social Workers seen as welfare workers by need for training and experience similar to

	<u>Social workers seen as welfare workers</u>					
	Disagree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Training</u>						
Disagree	10	20.0	1	2.0	11	22.0
Agree	32	64.0	7	14.0	39	78.0
Total	42	84.0	8	16.0	50	100.0
Phi = .100 df = 1.0 Chi Square = .479						

As indicated in Table 8, only 22% of the respondents indicated that they did not perceive professional social workers as welfare workers and did not believe that leaders of human service organization need to have the same training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas. A majority of the respondents (78%) agreed that social workers are viewed a welfare workers and that specific skills training and experience is needed.

As shown in Table 8, the statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between perceptions of social workers by nonprofit human service organization executive leaders and their beliefs about skills training and experience requirements for leaders of nonprofit human service organizations. As indicated, there was no statistically significant relationship ($\Phi = .100$) between the two

variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .479$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and social work professionals with leadership ability who are influenced by social issues in the media?

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and social work professionals with leadership ability who are influenced by social issues in the media.

Table 9 is a cross tabulation between board members (and other executive leaders) of nonprofit human service organizations perceptions of professional social workers as welfare workers and the influence that the media has on perceptions of social work professionals' leadership abilities.

Table 9

Leadership abilities of social workers influenced by the media

	<u>Leadership Abilities</u>					
	Disagree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Media Influence</u>						
Disagree	29	59.2	3	6.1	32	65.3
Agree	12	24.5	5	10.2	17	34.7
Total	41	83.7	8	16.3	49	100.0
Phi = .258 df = 1 Chi Square = .071						

As indicated in Table 9, a majority of the respondents (65.3%) indicated that they disagreed with a relationship between the influence of the media's portrayal of social issues and perceptions of the leadership abilities of social work professionals. While 34.7% of the respondents agreed that the portrayal of social issues in the media affects the perception that board members (and executive leaders) of nonprofit human service organizations have of the leadership abilities of social work professionals.

The statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between issues in the media regarding social issues and nonprofit human service organization executive leaders' perceptions of leadership abilities of professional social workers. As indicated, there was a weak relationship ($\Phi = .258$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null

hypothesis was accepted ($p = .071$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between non-profit human service organizations being required to be more accountable today than in previous years and the belief that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training as leaders in business, legal or public administration arenas?

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between non-profit human service organizations being required to be more accountable today than in previous years and the belief that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training as leaders in business, legal or public administration arenas.

Table 10 is a cross tabulation of the requirement of nonprofit human service organizations to be more accountable today than in previous years and the need for non-profit human service organization leaders to have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal or public administration arenas. It indicates whether or not there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

Table 10

Organizations more accountable today by leadership training and experience

	<u>Organizations more accountable</u>					
	Disagree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Training</u>						
Disagree	2	3.9	9	17.6	11	21.6
Agree	3	5.9	37	72.5	40	78.4
Total	5	9.8	46	90.2	51	100.0
Phi = .148 df = 1 Chi Square = .291						

As shown in Table 10, the statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between the requirement of more accountability for nonprofit human service organizations today and the need for leaders of these organizations to have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas. As indicated, there was no statistically significant relationship ($\Phi = .148$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .291$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

As indicated in Table 10, only 21.6% of the respondents disagreed that the need for nonprofit human service organizations to be more accountable today requires that

leaders of such have training and experience similar to professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas. While the majority of respondents (78.4%) agreed that said organizations are required to be more accountable today and that all non-profit human service leaders should possess training and experience similar to those of professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas.

Research Question 4: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the nonprofit human service organization leaders and professional social workers being perceived as welfare workers?

Hypothesis 4: There is no statistically significant relationship between the gender of the nonprofit human service organization leaders and professional social workers being perceived as welfare workers.

Table 11 is a cross tabulation between board members (and other executive leaders) of nonprofit human service organizations perceptions of professional social workers as welfare workers and the gender of the respondent.

Table 11

Perceived by board members as welfare workers by gender of respondent

	<u>My gender</u>					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Welfare Workers</u>						
Disagree	15	30.0	27	54.0	42	84.0
Agree	5	10.0	3	6.0	8	16.0
Total	20	40.0	30	60.0	50	100.0

Phi = -.200 df = 1 Chi Square = .156

As indicated in Table 11, more of the female respondents (54%) than the male respondents (30%) disagreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers. While a larger number of male respondents (10%) than female respondents (6%) agreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers by leaders of nonprofit human services organizations.

As shown in Table 11, the statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between differences in gender perceptions of professional social workers. As indicated there was a weak relationship ($\Phi = .200$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .156$) indicating that there was not a statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

In sum, the majority of the leaders of non-profit human service organizations responding to the survey (78%) agreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers and that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training and experience as professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas. Whereas the majority of respondents (65.3%) did not agree that perceptions of leadership abilities of social workers was influenced by the portrayal of social issues in the media. A majority of the respondents (78.4%) did agree that there is a need for non-profit human service organizations to be more accountable today, thereby requiring leaders of these organizations to have training and experience similar to professionals in the business, legal, and public administration arenas. Perceptions of professional social workers as welfare workers varied by 24% between male respondents (30%) and female respondents (54%). However, the majority of respondents (84%) disagreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research study was designed to examine perceptions of Board Members (and Executive Leaders) of non-profit human service organizations regarding the leadership abilities of professional social workers and competencies required to prepare professionals for leadership positions in these organizations. Leadership development of professional social workers was considered relative to the Council on Social Work Educations' Strategic Plan for 1998-2000. Leadership Development is a strong concern of the Council on Social Work Education (Rank & Hutchison, 2000). The study answered four questions regarding perceptions of social work leadership capabilities and needed competencies to lead nonprofit human service organizations.

The conclusions and recommendations of the research findings are presented in this chapter. Recommendations are proposed for future discussions for social work educators, social work practitioners, and social work leaders in academia and in non-profit organizations in various professional arenas. Each research question is presented in order to summarize the significant findings of interest.

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and leaders

of non-profit organizations with the same professional training and experience?

Of the 51 non-profit human service leaders surveyed, a minority (22%) indicated that they did not perceive social workers as welfare workers. However, a majority of the respondents (78.0%) agreed that social workers are viewed as welfare workers and that specific skills training and experience is needed.

The statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between professional social workers perceived as welfare workers and the need for all non-profit human service organization leaders to have specific skills training and experience. As indicated, there was no statistically significant relationship ($\Phi = .100$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .479$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability (See Table 8).

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between professional social workers who are perceived as welfare workers and social work professionals with leadership ability who are influenced by social issues in the media?

Of the 51 non-profit human service organization leaders surveyed, a minority (34.7%) of the respondents agreed that the portrayal of social issues in the media affects

the perception that board members (and executive leaders) of nonprofit human service organizations have of the leadership abilities of social work professionals. A majority of the respondents (65.3%) indicated that they disagreed with a relationship between the influences of the media's portrayal of social issues on perceptions of the leadership abilities of social work professionals.

The statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between issues in the media regarding social issues and nonprofit human service organization executive leaders' perceptions of leadership abilities of professional social workers. As indicated, there was a weak relationship ($\Phi = .258$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = 3.263$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability (See Table 9).

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between non-profit human service organizations being required to be more accountable today than in previous years and the belief that leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training as leaders in business, legal or public administration arenas?

Of the 51 non-profit human service leaders surveyed, a minority (21.6%) of the respondents disagreed that the need for nonprofit human service organizations to be more accountable today requires that leaders of such have training and experience similar to

professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas. While the majority (78.4%) of respondents agreed that these organizations are required to be more accountable today and that all non-profit human service leaders should possess training and experience similar to those of professionals in the business, legal, or public administration arenas.

The statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between the requirement of more accountability for nonprofit human service organizations today and the need for leaders of these organizations to have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas. As indicated, there was no statistically significant relationship ($\Phi = .148$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .291$) indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability (See Table 10).

Research Question 4: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the gender of the nonprofit human service organization leaders and professional social workers being perceived as welfare workers?

Of the 51 nonprofit organization leaders surveyed, more of the female respondents (54.0%) than the male respondents (30.0%) disagreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers. While a larger number of male respondents

(10.0%) than female respondents (6.0%) agreed that professional social workers are perceived as welfare workers by leaders of nonprofit human services organizations.

The statistical measurement phi (Φ) was employed to test for the strength of association between differences in gender perceptions of professional social workers. As indicated, there was a weak relationship ($\Phi = .200$) between the two variables. When chi-square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was accepted ($p = .156$) indicating that there was not a statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability (See Table 11).

In sum, the majority of the respondents agreed that professional social workers are seen as welfare workers. More male respondents agreed with this view than female respondents. However, most respondents did not indicate that the media's portrayal of social issues influenced their perceptions of professional social workers as potential leaders of non-profit human service organizations. The majority of respondents did agree that nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today and thus leaders of such should possess training and experience similar to professionals in business, legal, or public administration arenas.

Recommendations

Understanding leadership in the social work profession is extremely important as the profession and the non-profit human service arena has changed. In 1986, Brilliant questioned whether leadership in social work training was a "missing ingredient" and charged that leadership is essentially a 'non-theme' in social work training. Brilliant also

noted that although leadership is a major theme in the literature of other disciplines and professions, it is not a part of the professional foundation for social work education.

Moran, Frans, and Gibson (1995) stated that “there is likely something fundamental to the educational process to account for social work losing ground in the leadership of its own organizations” (p. 104).

Professional social workers are not viewed in the highest regard by other leaders in the non-profit human services arena as having major leadership ability. Leaders from other professions in the nonprofit arena view social workers as more suited for case management services. These leaders believe that all nonprofit human service leaderships should have training, skills, and competencies similar to those of leaders in the business, legal or public administration arenas. This is not the case for the majority of social work professionals. There is a need to ensure that social work professionals have the option and the skills development programs to prepare them for executive leadership at the helm of nonprofit human service organizations of today.

As a result of the findings of this study, the researcher is recommending the following:

1. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) should strongly encourage post-secondary social work educational programs to include specific curricula and concentrations on leadership development in light of the scarcity of social work professionals in nonprofit organization executive leadership positions.
2. CSWE should commission a study to investigate the reason for the scarcity of leadership/macro specific programs in schools of social work.

3. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) should develop a platform devoted to efforts to encourage and strengthen an increase in the number of professional social workers to pursue leadership roles in the nonprofit sector.
4. The National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) should develop a platform aimed at increasing the number of African Americans in leadership roles in the nonprofit human service organization sector.
5. An increased number of Historically Black Colleges and University's (HBCUs) should offer macro practice or leadership development social work programs in light of the fact that a very small percentage of the leaders of nonprofit human service organizations are African American or minorities.
6. Social work educational institutions should offer dual degree or collaborative programs between schools of business, law, and public administration. The curricula should be very specific to the topics of leadership development.

APPENDIX A
PERMISSION LETTER

Dear:

My name is Vanessa Milton. I am a full-time doctoral student at Clark Atlanta University Whitney M. Young, Jr. School of Social Work. One of the principal requirements for successful completion of my program is writing, defending, and submission of an acceptable dissertation. The title of my dissertation is “A Study of Board Members’ Perceptions of Leadership Competencies That Professionally Trained Social Workers Should Possess Who Lead Nonprofit Human Service Organizations As Adopted in the CSWE Strategic Plan, 1998-2000.”

To facilitate the data collection process, I am submitting this two-page Survey Form for your completion. I am asking you to please complete and return this document to me at your earliest convenience. A self-addressed stamped envelope with pre-paid postage is enclosed for your use. The entire process will not consume more than 10 minutes of your time.

Thank you so much for your assistance in this matter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. My email address isvanmilt11@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Milton, MSW
Doctoral Student, Clark Atlanta University
Whitney M. Young, Jr. School of Social Work

Robert Waymer, PhD
Research Advisor, Clark Atlanta University
Whitney M. Young, Jr. School of Social Work

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

**The Relationship Between Leaders of Nonprofit Organizations and
Social Work Professionals**

School of Social Work Ph.D. Program
Vanessa T. Milton, MSW - September 2014
Clark Atlanta University

Section I: Demographic Information

Instructions: Circle the appropriate answer below. Choose only one answer for each question.

1. My gender: 1) ___ Male 2) ___ Female
2. My age group: 1) ___ 18-20 2) ___ 21-30 3) ___ 31-40 4) ___ 41-50
5) ___ 51 & up
3. My education: 1) ___ Less than High School 2) ___ High School/GED
3) ___ Some College 4) ___ College Graduate
4. Annual Income: 1) ___ Under \$30,000 2) ___ \$30,000 - \$34,999
3) ___ \$35,000 - \$39,999 4) ___ \$40,000 - \$44,999 5) ___ \$45,000 - \$49,999
6) ___ \$50,000 & up
5. The one racial category that best describes me: 1) ___ Black 2) ___ White
3) ___ Hispanic 4) ___ Asian 5) ___ Other

Section II: Instrument

Instructions: The following statements are designed to determine your opinion of issues affecting the ability of Social Work Professionals to achieve position of Executive Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations. Write the appropriate number (1 thru 4) in the blank space in front of each statement (1 = strongly disagree; 4 = strongly agree). Please respond to each statement.

6. ___ The Social Work Profession defines leadership in a different manner than other human service professions.
7. ___ Leadership roles/responsibilities in the social work profession changed over the last decade.

APPENDIX B

(continued)

The Relationship Between Leaders of Nonprofit Organizations and
Social Work Professionals

Vanessa T. Milton, MSW

8. ____ Our beliefs about social work leadership responsibilities have been affected by CSWE policies and efforts toward fostering leadership development in the profession.
9. ____ Social work professionals leading nonprofit organizations should have the same skill requirements as other nonprofit leaders?
10. ____ Schools of Social Work are adequately preparing future social work leaders to oversee nonprofit organizations today.
11. ____ Non-social work professionals increasingly predominate as leaders of non-profit organizations.
12. ____ The present state of the deficit of social work professionals at the helm of Nonprofit Organizations is cause for alarm by the profession.

APPENDIX C

SPSS PROGRAM ANALYSIS

TITLE 'BOARD MEMBERS PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES'.

SUBTITLE 'Vanessa Milton- School of Social Work PhD Program'.

DATA LIST FIXED/

ID 1-3

GENDER 4

AGEGRP 5

EDUCAT 6

PROFES 7

ETHNIC 8

WORKER 9

LEADER 10

ACCOUNT 11

WHOLEAD 12

EMPLOY 13

TRAIN 14.

VARIABLE LABELS

ID 'Questionnaire Number'

GENDER 'Q1 My gender'

AGEGRP 'Q2 My age group'

EDUCAT 'Q3 My education'

PROFES 'Q4 My professional affiliation'

ETHNIC 'Q5 The one racial category that best describe me'

WORKER 'Q6 Professionally trained social workers who lead nonprofit human service organizations are perceived by board members of human service organizations as welfare workers'

LEADER 'Q7 Leadership abilities of social work professionals are influenced by social issues in the media'

ACCOUNT'Q8 Nonprofit human service organizations are required to be more accountable today than in previous years'

WHOLEAD'Q9 Social work professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations should have the same leadership competencies other professionals who lead nonprofit human service organizations'

EMPLOY 'Q10 Non profit human service organizations should employ only leaders with business skills and prior managerial leadership experience'

TRAIN 'Q11 Leaders of non-profit human service organizations should have the same professional training and experience as professionals in business legal or public administration arenas'.

VALUE LABELS

GENDER

1 'Male'

2 'Female'

APPENDIX C

(continued)

AGEGRP

- 1 '18-20'
- 2 '21-30'
- 3 '31-40'
- 4 '41-50'
- 5 'Over 50/'

EDUCAT

- 1 'Less than High School'
- 2 'High School Grad-GED'
- 3 'Some College'
- 4 'College Graduate'
- 5 'Trade School/'

PROFES

- 1 'Social Services'
- 2 'Healthcare'
- 3 'Education'
- 4 'Law'
- 5 'Business'
- 6 'Other/'

ETHNIC

- 1 'Black'
- 2 'White'
- 3 'Hispanic'
- 4 'Asian'
- 5 'Other/'

WORKER

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree/'

LEADER

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree/'

ACCOUNT

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree/'

WHOLEAD

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree/'

APPENDIX C

(continued)

EMPLOY

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

TRAIN

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

RECODE WORKER LEADER ACCOUNT (1 THRU 2.99=2)(3 THRU 4.99=3).

RECODE WHOLEAD EMPLOY TRAIN (1 THRU 2.99=2)(3 THRU 4.99=3).

MISSING VALUES

GENDER AGEGRP EDUCAT PROFES ETHNIC

WORKER LEADER ACCOUNT WHOLEAD EMPLOY TRAIN (0).

BEGIN DATA

00125421344423
00225412324414
00315412223323
00413462324414
00515431114334
00615452234333
00722412123423
00815422234433
00923412224434
01015451114444
01124452223323
01224442223442
01324451224322
01424452222424
01524432223333
01615412134413
01725452224444
01825412224422
01915412224412
02024451232343
02125452224323
02225412224413
02315411113311
02423462234333
02514412133422
02624451224423
02725412204434

APPENDIX C

(continued)

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04624441034403
04725412124424
04824432223332
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END DATA.

FREQUENCIES

/VARIABLES GENDER AGEGRP EDUCAT PROFES ETHNIC
WORKER LEADER ACCOUNT WHOLEAD EMPLOY TRAIN
/STATISTICS = DEFAULT.

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