

The Role of Structural Factors on Child and Family Outcomes in a Foster Care Population

Haruv Institute

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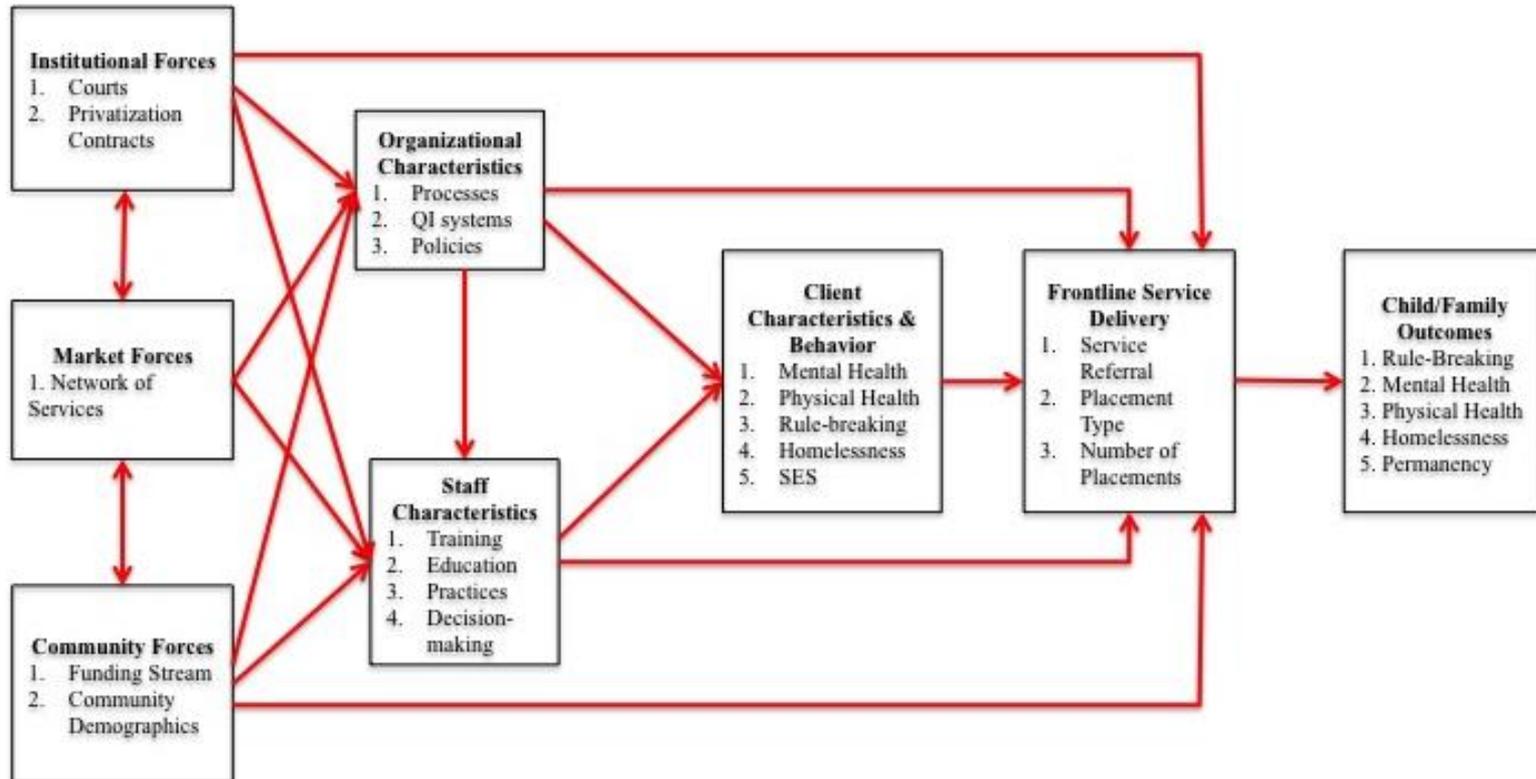
Statement of Problem

- Approximately 400,000 children in foster care in U.S.
- Increased risk for negative outcomes
 - Physical Health
 - Mental Health
 - Rule-Breaking Behavior
 - Academic Performance
 - Homelessness

Structural Factors

- State Level
 - Governance
 - Definition of Maltreatment
 - Funding Streams
- Jurisdictional Level
 - Judicial Philosophy
 - Interpretation of Policies and Procedures
 - Workforce Requirements (e.g. training and education)
- Organizational Level
 - Public vs. Private
 - Workforce Requirements (e.g. training and education)
 - Adaptation of policies and procedures

Conceptual Model, adapted from McBeath et al, 2014



Data Plan

- Dataset 1
 - Jonson-Reid, M. & Drake, B. (2007). Child Neglect: Cross Sector Service Paths and Outcomes [Dataset]. Available from National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect Web site, <http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu>
 - Total sample is 10,187, 1414 of which were in foster care
 - Administrative data gleaned from multiple sources
- Dataset 2
 - Extracted from Child Welfare File
 - 300 of an estimated 2000 files will be randomly selected
 - Siblings will be excluded

Dataset Description

	Dataset 1	Dataset 2
Sample		
N	1414	~300
Timeframe	1993-2008	2003-present
Age Range	Born 1982-1994	Born 1986-present
Jurisdiction	2 counties only	4 counties
Organization Type	Public	Private
ASFA	Pre	Post
Source Material		
Child Welfare	Yes	Yes
Medicaid	Yes	No
Law Enforcement	Yes	No
Mental Health	Yes	No
Court System	Yes	No

Key Variables

Variable	Type	Dataset 1	Dataset 2
Time in Care	Continuous (days in care)	Yes	Yes
Physical Health			
Diagnosis	Dummy variables for each health condition (diabetes, asthma, STI, other chronic conditions)	Yes	Not comprehensive
Service Date	Date	Yes	Not comprehensive
Mental Health			
Diagnosis	Dummy variables for each mental health condition (internalizing vs. externalizing)	Yes	Not comprehensive
Service Date	Date	Yes	Not comprehensive
Service Type	Categorical (evaluation, medication management, counseling)	Yes	Not comprehensive
Homelessness	Count (number of discrete spells of homelessness)	Yes	Yes
Rule-Breaking Behavior	Count-referrals Dummy (Yes/No)	Yes Yes	Not comprehensive

Key Variables continued

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Interviews

- Recruitment
 - Gatekeeper at CPP
 - Foster Parents (n=15)
 - Frontline workers (n=16)
- Incentive
 - \$20 gift card for 1 hour interview group/travel time
- Digital Recording
 - Transcribed by a transcription service
- Thematic Analysis
 - Performed by PI and PhD student RA

Aim 1

- **Aim 1: To explore the relationship between structural factors (e.g. privatization, workforce requirements, and policies and procedures,) placement decisions, and permanency outcomes for youth in foster care**
 - H_1 : There are differential permanency outcomes for youth served in a public child welfare system when compared to youth served by a privatized system.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: Placement Type and Number, ASFA, Public vs. Private, Organization
 - Dependent Variables: Permanency Type, Time to Permanency

Aim 1 continued

- **Aim 1: To explore the relationship between structural factors (e.g. privatization, workforce requirements, and policies and procedures,) placement decisions, and permanency outcomes for youth in foster care**
 - H₂: There are differential natures and prevalence of placement failure for youth served in a public child welfare system in comparison to a privatized system.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: ASFA, Public vs. Private, Organization
 - Dependent Variables: Placement #, Failure Reason

Aim 2

- **Aim 2: To compare child well-being outcomes for youth in a public child welfare system with the child well-being outcomes in a privatized system of care across two jurisdictions in a Midwestern metro area.**
 - H_3 : There is a relationship between placement failure and physical and mental health outcomes for youth in foster care.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: public vs. private, county, organization
 - Dependent Variables: placement failure reason, number of placements

Aim 2 continued

- **Aim 2: To compare child well-being outcomes for youth in a public child welfare system with the child well-being outcomes in a privatized system of care across two jurisdictions in a Midwestern metro area.**
 - H_4 : There is a relationship between placement failure and rule-breaking behavior of youth in the foster care system.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: private vs. public, organization, jurisdiction
 - Dependent Variables: rule-breaking behavior

Aim 2 continued

- **Aim 2: To compare child well-being outcomes for youth in a public child welfare system with the child well-being outcomes in a privatized system of care across two jurisdictions in a Midwestern metro area.**
 - H_5 : There is a relationship between placement failure and homelessness for former foster care youth.
- **Analysis Plan**
 - **Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)**
 - Independent Variables: private vs. public, jurisdiction, organization
 - Dependent Variables: Homelessness

Aim 2 continued

- **Aim 2: To compare child well-being outcomes for youth in a public child welfare system with the child well-being outcomes in a privatized system of care across two jurisdictions in a Midwestern metro area.**
 - H_6 : There are differential permanency outcomes for youth served in a public child welfare system when compared to youth served by a privatized system.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: private vs. public, organization
 - Dependent Variables: permanency type, time to permanency

Aim 2 continued

- **Aim 2: To compare child well-being outcomes for youth in a public child welfare system with the child well-being outcomes in a privatized system of care across two jurisdictions in a Midwestern metro area.**
 - H₇: There are differential permanency outcomes for youth served in different jurisdictions within a Midwestern metro area.
- Analysis Plan
 - Logistic/Multiple Regression, MLM (Time)
 - Independent Variables: Jurisdiction, organization
 - Dependent Variables: permanency type, time to permanency

Aim 3

- **Aim 3: To understand the nature of service delivery within a privatized child welfare system as experienced by frontline foster care workers, foster youth (current or former), and foster parents.**
- **Analysis Plan**
 - Thematic Analysis of interviews with a flexible coding scheme
 - Content Analysis
 - Relational Analysis

Additional Analysis

- Propensity Score Matching
 - To address unbalanced data
 - Improve Robustness
- Survival Analysis
 - Time to Event
 - Placement Failure
 - Permanency

Concerns/Limitations

- Sample
 - Increase case record review sample if time allows
 - Simple random sampling may not be most appropriate, stratification
- Focus Groups
 - Only with private entity
 - Explore recruitment within public agency
- General Concerns
 - Endogeneity
 - Limited Structural Factor variance
 - Missing Data