URBAN MINORITY KINSHIP AND NON-KINSHIP FOSTER PARENTS: A MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ROLE SATISFACTION

By

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ABSTRACT

URBAN MINORITY KINSHIP AND NON-KINSHIP FOSTER PARENTS: A MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ROLE SATISFACTION

By

Bryan Warde

Adviser: Professor Irwin Epstein

Urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents make a significant contribution to the provision of out of home placements for the nation's foster children. Little is known empirically, however, about the factors that contribute to their role satisfaction. This knowledge gap is problematic in that findings from available research suggest that role satisfaction is a critical determinant of a foster parent's ability and willingness to meet the role demands of a foster care agency.

In this quasi-experimental study, 172 urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents who are associated with a single foster care agency in New York City are compared with a focus on the factors that contribute to their role satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis, chi-squares and independent t tests were used to analyze the study's data, which were collected via self-administered rating scales.

This study provides evidence that both urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents' role satisfaction is associated with the support they perceive from the foster care agency and their caseworker. Further, no statistically significant differences were found between urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents in their responses to the four rating scales used in the study, i.e., role satisfaction, perceived agency support, perceived casework support and role perception. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that both kinship and non-kinship foster parents are generally dissatisfied with the level of agency support received, particularly with regard to the provision of respite services and transportation to and from the foster child's miscellaneous appointments. Conversely, both kinship and non-kinship foster parents generally reported high levels of perceived casework support.

Recommendations for program development include the need for foster care agencies to provide kinship and non-kinship minority foster parents with respite services and transportation to and from the foster child's miscellaneous appointments. Further recommendations include the need for foster care agencies to pay greater attention to the training and retention of their casework staff. Implications for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

Pride Family and Children's Services is a large urban foster care agency located in New York City. Under the auspices of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), the agency is contracted to provide foster care, adoption and group home services to a primarily urban minority population (African-American, African-Caribbean, Hispanic and Indian-Caribbean) of approximately 500 foster children, 300 biological families and 300 plus foster parents.

Of the services currently provided, none is of more concern to Pride's administration than foster parenting. That is, a significant decrease in both the rates of reimbursement and number of children placed with the agency by ACS has impacted Pride's ability to provide its foster parents with the support services needed to care for the 500 plus foster children currently placed with the agency.

As a foster parent with Pride, kinship -related to the foster child- and non-kinship foster parents -not related to the foster child- are expected to provide foster children who have been legally placed in the custody of the commissioner of ACS with a variety of supportive services. Primary among these services is the provision of room and board. Additional services include, but are not limited to, monitoring the foster child's physical, psychological and emotional adjustment to foster care, providing the foster

child with age appropriate recreation, monitoring the foster child's educational development, taking the foster child to all necessary appointments, attending the foster child's permanency planning meetings, and providing an environment in which the foster child is nurtured emotionally and developmentally.

To aid foster parents with the aforementioned tasks, Pride is mandated by ACS to provide a number of support services: transportation to the foster child's appointments, baby sitting and day care reimbursement, clothing allowance, and miscellaneous service referrals. In addition, the foster parent is assigned a caseworker, a bachelor's level educated agency employee, whose designated job responsibilities are to provide the foster parent with day to day, or as needed role support. Typically, this involves the caseworker doing some of the following : making monthly, or as needed visits to the foster home, keeping the foster parent appraised of information related to their foster child's status in foster care, responding to the foster parent's miscellaneous concerns as they relate to the foster child, and offering the foster parent on-going emotional and moral support. Of all the agency's employees, it is the caseworker who has the most collaborative, closest and frequent contact with the foster parent.

In years prior to the earlier described external pressures, Pride had indeed provided its foster parents with a wide range of support services that included baby sitting and day care reimbursement, transportation to and from the child's various appointments, camp reimbursement, housing aid, and

clothing grants. These services were augmented by a well trained and long serving casework staff that had been successful in developing collaborative and supportive relationships with the foster parents.

With the fiscal cuts that have accompanied the earlier described external pressures, however, the last five years has seen many foster parent support services cut or scaled back to emergency use only. Additionally, there has been a forty percent increase in casework staff turnover.

In turn, there has been a slow but gradual increase in disrupted placements for the foster children. There has also been an increase in the number of child abuse allegations made against the foster parents, increased problematic interactions between the foster parents and their caseworkers, and a general failure on the part of some foster parents to adhere to the agency's rules and regulations as they relate to the appropriate care of the children. While the aforementioned examples are anecdotal, there is a real concern among Pride's administration that the decrease in support services for the foster parents has impacted not only their role satisfaction but also their willingness and ability to meet the role demands of the agency.

Empirical evidence certainly supported the administration's belief that role satisfaction, as characterized by the role occupant's understanding and agreement with role requirements, feelings of recognition and support from those with interdependent roles, and satisfaction with the agency's provision of resource support, is a critical determinant of a foster parent's willingness and ability to meet the role demands of a foster care agency

(Pazstor, 1985 ; Mietus & Meitus, 1987 ; Urquhart, 1989 ; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993 ; Brown & Calder, 2000 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001). Empirical evidence further suggests when satisfied with their role, foster parents are more willing and likely to successfully meet the role demands of their foster care agency. That is, they are less likely than their non-satisfied counterparts to experience role ambiguity (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000) ; less likely to have disrupted placements (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993) ; less likely to be dissatisfied with agency rules and regulations (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000) ; and less likely to cease fostering (Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001). Further, satisfied foster parents are more likely to have a positive relationship with their caseworker (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Brown & Calder, 2000); and more likely to fully participate in service planning (Sanchirico et al, 1998).

After a review of the literature related to the factors that influence the role satisfaction of foster parents who are from a non-White ethnic minority group and reside in urban communities, two things became clear: 1, little was known empirically about the factors that influence the level of role satisfaction experienced by urban minority foster parents, and 2, the critical role that urban minority foster parents play in providing out-of-home placements for the nation's foster children. That is, kinship and non-kinship urban minority foster parents currently provide out of home placements for roughly 60% of the nation's approximately 500,000 foster children (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000).

Given the critical part that urban minority foster parents play in the lives of so many foster children, the aforementioned research gap is problematic. As a result, the author decided to conduct a multivariate analysis of the factors that influenced the role satisfaction of Pride's urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents. Pride's foster parent population was chosen for analysis because of its demographic profile. That is, approximately 90% of the agency's 340 foster parents belonged to a non-White ethnic minority group; approximately 90% resided in urban communities located within the five boroughs of New York City; there was an even distribution of kinship and non-kinship foster parents; and as a group, the foster parents were easily accessible via a monthly newsletter sent to them by the agency.

This study was important for a number of reasons : 1, it would be the first multivariate analysis of foster parent role satisfaction to focus exclusively on foster parents who are of color, urban and evenly distributed between kinship and non-kinship foster parents ; 2, it would enable Pride's administrators to better understand how agency and casework practice potentially impacts its foster parents' level of role satisfaction, and 3, it potentially provides the foundation for future studies on urban minority foster parents.

This study's primary goal was to determine the strength of the relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group: a perceived supportive

relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with caseworker, and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being. The secondary goal of the study was to assess whether or not there were any statistical differences in the level of influence that the above-described variables as a group have on the role satisfaction of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups of urban minority foster parents.

Making a distinction between urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents was necessary because of significant differences between the two groups as it relates to licensing procedures and the type of foster children boarded. That is, New York State has separate licensing and approval standards (e.g. criminal background checks, required level of training, and minimal housing requirements) for kinship foster parents that are less stringent than those required of non-kinship foster parents. The differences in licensing and approval standards is as a result of policy initiatives (the Casey Foundation Family to Family Initiative) and a law suit (Eugene F) that compels the Administration for Children's Services to first explore potential relative caregivers when placing a child in the custody of the commissioner. If an adult couple or individual relative is willing to board a relative child, their home is approved, without any form of pre-service training, and they become a kinship foster parent. Unlike non-kinship foster parents, who must complete pre-service training, and whose home is licensed, kinship foster parents may only board relative children.

In addition to the aforementioned, prior research findings suggest significant differences in the experiences of kinship and non-kinship foster parents, most notably around the level of role support received from their foster care agency and caseworker. That is, available research suggests that kinship foster parents, who even within the urban minority foster parent population tend to be older, less educated, and have fewer resources, receive less resource and emotional support from their foster care agency and caseworker than do their non-kinship counterparts (Gibson, 2002 ; Berrick et al, 2002 ; Gebel, 1996 ; Le Prohn, 1994).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review Process

The studies included in this review were located via a series of electronic searches performed on Med-line, Psych-Info (key words - foster care, urban, kinship, minority, African-American; years, 1960-2003) and the web sites of the following organizations: the Child Welfare League of America, the Annie. E. Casey Foundation, Families in Society, the University of Tennessee Foster Family Project, the Children's Bureau Express, the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, and the National Resource Centers.

In total, this review was drawn from a 100 plus empirical studies. These studies, which include most of what has been written on foster parent role satisfaction over the last forty five years, are drawn from several disciplines: social work, psychology and medicine.

After reviewing the literature, it was apparent that there was a significant research gap as it relates to prior studies specific to urban minority foster parents. In total, there were only four (Downs, 1986; Denby & Rindfleish's, 1996; Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Gibson, 2002) such studies found. There were, however, numerous other studies, which make up the bulk of this review's cited works, that did not specifically focus on urban or

non-urban minority foster parents, but whose sample population was made up of between five to fifty percent of foster parents of color.

Purpose

This review will offer a conceptual definition of foster parent role satisfaction. It will also serve to identify those factors that have been theoretically and empirically related to influencing a minority foster parent's role satisfaction.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Role Theory

Role theory, which has been the conceptual frame of choice for some foster care researchers evaluating foster parent role functioning and understanding, promulgates the view that individuals define their roles as a response to a set of behavioral expectations (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000). Within organizations that are bureaucratically structured, this expectation typically results from an individual's understanding or perception of the role, or from the understanding and perception of others whose roles are interrelated. When role perceptions differ, most particularly when it relates to interdependent tasks, role ambiguity occurs. (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000).

Within the bureaucratic structure of a foster care agency, foster parents and caseworkers work together to ensure the health and well being of the foster children. Toward this end, both foster parents and caseworkers

are formally trained in their role and responsibilities. If foster parents and caseworkers are not formally prepared for their respective roles, however, problems may occur. For example, the foster parent may, or will, refer to her or his own understanding of what being a foster parent means (role conception) to guide her or his work with the children and interactions with the agency and caseworker. The foster parent's role conception, however, may be at odds with the expectations of the agency and caseworker (role demands). This in turn may potentially lead to the following: problematic communications between the foster parent and the agency and caseworker; role ambiguity on the part of the foster parent, and decreased levels of role satisfaction and performance on the part of the foster parent (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy 2000; Le Prohn, 1994; Sanchirico et al, 1998; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996).

In order to avert the aforementioned problems, a confluence of factors, which work together simultaneously, must be present: foster parent and casework training that accurately transmit role responsibility and expectations; foster parent role perception that is consistent with role responsibility; and a relationship between the agency, caseworker and foster parent that is characterized by role definition and clarification and ongoing support. When these factors are present, a foster parent's level of role satisfaction and performance is maximized (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000; Le Prohn, 1994; Sanchirico et al, 1998; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996).

Structure Of The Review

This review is divided into seven sections. The first section contains a definition of an urban kinship and non-kinship foster parent of color, and a definition of foster parent role satisfaction. The next six sections are a review of the four factors (agency support, casework support, role perception, and motivation for fostering) that were identified as being theoretically and empirically related to influencing an urban minority foster parent's role satisfaction. Each section ends with a summary, followed by a matrix of the significant studies cited.

Defining an Urban Minority Kinship and Non-Kinship Foster Parent

Relatively few studies have focused either primarily or exclusively on the fostering experiences of minority foster parents; and for those that have (Downs, 1986; Denby & Rindfleish's, 1996; Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Gibson, 2002), the focus has been on the experiences of African-American foster parents. Similarly, those studies which include foster parents of color, but are not primarily focused on their experiences, most typically identify the foster parent as being African-American (Sanchirico et al, 1998 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Fees et al, 1998 ; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002 ; Le Prohn, 1994 ; Gebel, 1996 ; Cuddeback, 2004 ; Berrick et al, 1994 ; Scannapieco, Hegar & McAlpine, 1997). Several of the contemporary kinship foster parent studies (Curtis & Denby, 2004; Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002; Albert, Iaci & Catlin, 2004) have attempted to be more inclusive in terms of the range of minority foster parents included in their study samples: Native Americans, Asians, Hispanic/ Latinos, bi-racial, and other unnamed non-White ethnic groups. This said, the aforementioned is still problematic because in ethnically diverse communities such as Flushing, Queens, Flatbush, Brooklyn, Parkchester, Bronx, and Washington Heights, Manhattan, a growing number of foster parents are drawn from a wider range of non-White ethnic groups (e.g. African-Caribbean, Indian-Caribbean, Asian, and Indian) than have been represented in the existing research.

Given the ethnic diversity of the foster parent population from which this study sample is recruited, it was necessary to broaden the definition of an urban minority foster parent to include all non-White ethnic minority foster parents. An urban minority foster parent was therefore defined as any individual who belongs to a non-White ethnic group, resides in an urban community, and is licensed to board related (kinship) or non related (non-kinship) children that have been legally removed from their custodial guardian and placed in foster care.

Defining Foster Parent Role Satisfaction

Among child welfare professionals, it is generally agreed that foster parents occupy a unique and challenging role that requires the integration of childcare and agency responsibilities (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000). In addition to assimilating often-traumatized children into their family, foster parents assume the day-to-day responsibilities of monitoring and supporting the child's physical, psychological and social well-being. They support and facilitate the child's connection to her or his biological family. They participate in, and respond to, permanency and reunification planning for the child. They collaborate with the agency caseworker to ensure and support the child's ongoing transition to foster care (US General Accounting Office, 1989).

The multi-faceted nature of the foster parent's role has typically precluded any single definition of foster parent role satisfaction. In the absence of a single definition, researchers have typically conceptualized

foster parent role satisfaction as being linked to role performance, the assumption being that role satisfaction will be reflected in role performance effectiveness. As a result, researchers have conceptualized and measured foster parent role satisfaction in some of the following ways : ability and willingness to foster special needs children (Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002) ; good communication with caseworker (Cuddeback & Orme, 2000) ; supportive and positive relationship with caseworker (Denby & Rindfliesch, 1996) ; satisfaction with role demand (Fees et al, 1998) ; appropriate role perception (Le Prohn, 1994) ; active involvement in parent-child contact (Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000) ; active involvement in service planning (Sanchirico et al, 1998) ; and positive attitude toward agency and caseworker (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999).

One group of researchers (Fees et al, 1998), however, have forwarded a conceptual definition of foster parent role satisfaction that encompasses the full scope of the foster parent's role responsibility via incorporating all of the aforementioned empirically identified measures of foster parent role satisfaction. That is, Fees et al (1998) conceptualized foster parent role satisfaction as being comprised of three connected components: role demand satisfaction, social service support satisfaction, and personal needs satisfaction. Role demand satisfaction was defined as a foster parent reporting that her or his needs and or expectations are being met as it relates to the agency and or the caseworker providing ongoing role preparation and support; being able to successfully balance

their own personal family demands with those of foster child ; being able to deal with agency and or caseworkers' expectations of the type of care that should be given to the foster child; and being able to understand the legal system that brought the foster child into care (Fees et al, 1998). Social service support satisfaction was defined as a foster parent reporting that her or his needs and expectations are being met as it relates to the agency and or the caseworker providing her or him with information on and assistance with the foster child in her or his care; and providing her or him with the opportunity to meet other foster parents for peer support (Fees et al, 1998). Personal needs satisfaction was defined as a foster parent reporting that her or his needs and expectations are being met as it relates to receiving recognition and appreciation from others; receiving financial reimbursement that is commensurate with the quality of care given to the foster child; having a positive relationship with the biological parents of the foster child; and fully understanding the responsibilities of a foster parent (Fees et al, 1998).

Fees et al (1998) suggested that while a foster parent can be more satisfied in one component and less in another, specific indicators of foster parent satisfaction should always be thought of as being but a part of overall role satisfaction, which is multidimensional. Given the multidimensionality of Fees et al's (1998) conceptual definition of foster parent role satisfaction, this study utilized it as its conceptual definition of foster parent role satisfaction.

Table 1. Empirically Identified Indicators of Minority Foster Parent Parent Role Satisfaction (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Role Satisfaction Component Identified
Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002	Regression Analysis	1048 current foster parents 265 former foster parents	Personal Needs Satisfaction
Cuddeback & Orme, 2000	Regression Analysis	74 kinship foster parents 659 non-kinship foster parents	Role Demand Satisfaction
Fees et al, 1998	Multivariate Analysis	48 foster mothers	Role Demand Satisfaction
Le Prohn, 1994	Multivariate Analysis, Comparison group Utilized	82 kinship foster parents 98 non-kinship foster parents	Personal Needs Satisfaction
Sanchirico et al, 1998	Multivariate Analysis	616 foster parents 313 from Upstate New York 293 from New York City	Role Demand Satisfaction

"Table 1 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Role Satisfaction Component Identified
Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000	Multivariate Analysis	650 foster children	Personal Needs Satisfaction
Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999	Multivariate Analysis	118 foster parents (50 African-American; 68 White)	Role Demand Satisfaction

Agency Support and Non-Kinship Minority Foster Parents

In comparison to the number of studies of White suburban and rural foster parents; there have been relatively few studies of the relationship between agency role and service support and a non-kinship minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction. The studies there are have utilized a variety of variables to identify and measure foster care agencies' role and service support of its non-kinship minority foster parents : pre and in-service training (Fees et al, 1998 ; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996; Sanchirico et al, 1998 ; Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; adequate financial reimbursement for care of the child (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Fees et al, 1998 ; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002), offer of respite care (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; offer of support groups (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; being included in service planning for foster child (Sanchirico et al, 1998 ; Fees et al, 1998) ; providing adequate psycho-social information about the child (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; provision of service referrals (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993 ; Simon & Simon, 1982) ; provision of written information about agency structure, policy and procedures, role expectations, foster care payments, the temporary nature of foster care, who to contact within the agency, and the agency's policy on the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001). Most typically the aforementioned variables have been conceptualized as representing the bureaucratic interaction between the agency and the

caseworker, e.g. agency supports that enable the foster parent, as an agent of the organization, to fulfill, within the mandated guidelines of the agency and its regulatory agency, their obligations as a foster parent (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000).

Findings from the aforementioned research suggest that foster care agencies consistently provide all or some of the above described role and service supports to their non-kinship minority foster parents. The following is a summary of the statistical relationship found between agency role and service supports and non-kinship minority foster parents' role satisfaction.

Training

The empirical evidence supporting a positive statistical relationship between foster care agencies' provision of either pre or in-service training and non-kinship minority foster parents' level of role satisfaction is inconclusive. Denby & Rindfleisch's (1996) study of 804 active African-American and White foster parents in 8 urban counties, for example, found no significant statistical relationship between an African-American foster parent's level of role demand satisfaction and pre-service training. The findings did suggest, though, that African-American foster parents were more likely than their White counterparts to find the content of pre-service training to be at odds with their beliefs on appropriate child rearing practices. Denby & Rindfleisch (1996) suggested that cultural differences in child rearing practices might account for the differing beliefs of trainers and urban African-

American foster parents on appropriate child-rearing practices. They further suggested that foster care agency training that is not culturally sensitive to the needs and experiences of African-American foster parents remains a potentially significant institutional level-barrier to African-American foster parent role demand satisfaction. Despite this, Denby & Rindfleisch (1996) did not find any empirical evidence to suggest that urban African-American foster parents were less satisfied with their overall role because of the content of pre-service.

Sanchirico et al's (1998) survey of 616 Upstate and New York City minority and White foster parents did find a statistically significant relationship between service planning training and minority foster parents' increased quality of interaction with her or his foster care agency and caseworker. The strength of the relationship, however, was relatively weak in comparison to demographic variables such as foster parents' education level and place of residency. That is, foster parents who had higher levels of education (Bachelors degree and above) were significantly less satisfied with the quality of interaction they had with their agency and caseworker than those foster parents with less education; this was particularly true for White males. Further, foster parents who were New York City residents, the majority of whom were minority women, were found to be slightly more satisfied (New York City residence 89%, Upstate New York residence 87.4 %) with the quality of interaction they had with their agency and caseworker. Sanchirico et al (1998) did not offer an opinion on the noted differences.

Findings from Fees et al's (1998) analysis of 48 multi-ethnic foster parents suggested that foster parents - regardless of ethnicity - who rated pre-service training as useful had greater levels of satisfaction with role demands than foster parents who did not rate pre-service training as useful. There was no statistical relationship found, however, between usefulness of pre-service training and foster parents' social service support and personal needs satisfaction. Fees et al (1998) concluded that while pre-service training was a contributor to foster parent role demand satisfaction, its contribution to overall role satisfaction was relatively small.

Findings from Sanchirico & Jablonka's (2000) study of the effects of agency training and support on 1,160 Upstate and New York City minority and White foster parents' ability to keep their foster children connected to their biological families suggested that foster parents (81%) rarely received both the specialized training and support needed to keep their foster children connected to their biological families. The findings further suggested, however, that when a foster parent did receive both training and support they facilitated visits at significantly higher levels than foster parents who received just training, just support, or no training and no support. Sanchirico & Jablonka (2000) concluded that the training and other unspecified supports did indeed contribute to a foster parent's increased willingness to keep their foster children connected to their families of origin.

Rhodes, Orme & Buehler's (2001) study of 1,048 current foster parents and 265 former foster parents found a statistically significant

relationship between a foster parent's perception (regardless of race or residence) of receiving training from the agency that prepared them very well for their role and the decision to continue fostering. That is, foster parents who planned to continue fostering reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with the role preparation received from the training provided by the agency than those foster parents who decided to discontinue fostering. It must be noted, though, that while the relationship between the positive perception of training and deciding to continue or discontinue fostering was statistically significant, the strength of the relationship was weak in comparison to other factors : divorce/marital problems, health problems, conflict between foster child and own child, poor communication with caseworker, inadequate reimbursement, lack of support from the agency, child's behavior, return to full time work, and difficulty seeing the child leave.

Reimbursement, Respite Services, Support Groups, Inclusion in Service Planning, Provision of Information about the Child, and Provision of Information about Role Expectations, Agency Structure, Procedures and Policies

In contrast to training, researchers (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001; Fees et al, 1998; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002 ; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996) have conceptualized and analyzed all of the aforementioned variables - inclusion in service planning aside - as collective rather than individual agency role and service supports of non-kinship minority foster parents. Findings from the available research (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001; Fees et al, 1998; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996) confirm that

the foster care agencies involved in the studies offered their non-kinship minority foster parents all or most of the aforementioned supports. The findings further confirmed a statistically significant relationship between all or some of the variables and a non-kinship minority foster parent's level of role demand and personal needs satisfaction. These relationships were measured via variables such as a foster parent's satisfaction with role demands (Fees et al, 1998) ; the quality of the relationship between foster parent and caseworker (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999 ; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996) ; and a foster parent's willingness to fully involve themselves in all facets of their foster child's life (Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002; Sanchirico et al, 1998)

Findings from Denby & Rindfleisch's (1996) study of 804 active African-American and White foster parents in 8 urban counties suggested that while African-American foster parents had high levels of satisfaction with their caseworker, they had significantly lower levels of satisfaction with agency support as it related to the amount of reimbursement received for care of the child; respite and support services offered; and information given about role and agency procedures.

Similarly, Seaberg & Harrigan (1999) found a statistically significant relationship between an African-American foster parent's level of role demand satisfaction and satisfaction with reimbursement received for the care of the child, provision of respite care, support groups, and information about role expectations and agency procedures.

Findings from Fees et al's (1998) study of foster parent satisfaction suggested a positive statistical relationship between the role demand satisfaction of foster parents of all races and the following: the availability of support groups, having enough information about child in care, and satisfaction with the amount of payment received for care of the child.

Findings from Rhodes, Orme & Buehler's (2001) study of foster parents who quit or consider quitting fostering confirmed a relationship between a perceived lack of agency support, which was characterized by inadequate reimbursement for care of the child, lack of involvement in service planning, inadequate respite services, and inadequate support services, and a foster parent's (regardless of race) decision to discontinue fostering. It must be noted, however, that while Rhodes, Orme & Buehler's (2001) findings confirmed a positive statistical relationship between the aforementioned variables and a foster parent's decision to discontinue fostering, the findings also suggested that personal issues such as divorce, health problems, relocation, and return to work had statistically more influence on a foster parent's decision to discontinue fostering than did a lack of agency support.

Sanchiririco et al's (1998) study of the involvement in service planning and foster parent satisfaction found that those foster parents who were invited to and participated in devising service plans for the children in their care had statistically significant higher levels of satisfaction than those

foster parents who were not involved in devising or participating in service planning.

To summarize, findings from the available research suggest that there is a positive statistical relationship between a non-kinship minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following agency role support services : reimbursement received for fostering, provision of respite services, provision of foster parent support groups, inclusion in service planning, provision of information related to the foster child's psycho-social history, and provision of information related to the agency's role expectations and procedures. Research findings further suggest that foster care agencies do indeed offer all or most of the aforementioned role support services to their non-kinship minority foster parents.

Table 2. Agency Support and Non-Kinship Minority Foster Parents (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996	Multiple Regression Analysis Cross-sectional survey	804 foster parents in 8 urban counties	African-American foster parents report displeasure with issues such as reimbursement, training content and involuntary closure of homes.
Fees et al, 1998	Multivariate Analysis of Co-variance	48 foster mothers	Foster mothers who rated pre-service training as useful had greater satisfaction with role demands than those foster parents who did not rate pre-service training as useful.
Rhodes,Orme & Buehler, 2001	Multivariate Analysis	1048 current foster parents 265 former foster parents	Lack of training, poor interaction with caseworker, inadequate compensation and lack of agency support were among the most prevalent reasons for quitting foster parenting.

"Table 2 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Sanchirico et al, 1998	Multivariate Analysis	616 foster parents 312 from Upstate New York 292 from New York City	Foster parents who were invited and participated in devising service plans for foster child in their care had statistically higher levels of role satisfaction than those foster parents who were not involved in service planning.
Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000	Multivariate Analysis	650 foster children	Specialized training and agency support increased the foster parent's active involvement in parent-child contact.
Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999	Multivariate Analysis	118 foster parents (50 African-American; 68 White)	African-American foster parents felt more supported by agency and caseworker than White foster parents.

Agency Support And Kinship Minority Foster Parents

There is a general consensus among child welfare professionals that kinship care is a distinct type of foster care, which is characterized by a relative providing an out-of-home placement for a child or children who are in the custody of state and local child welfare agencies. (Le Prohn, 1994; Scannapieco, Hegar & McAlpine, 1997). Research findings suggest that the typical kinship foster parent is an African-American maternal grandmother, who resides in an urban neighborhood, is single, older and have significantly less income and education than their non-kinship counterparts (Gibson, 2002; Berrick et al, 2002; Gebel, 1996; Le Prohn, 1994).

Though federal mandates have required the development of standards for kinship foster care that are akin to those for non-kinship foster parents, sensitivity to the differences between non-kinship and kinship care have resulted in states and agencies across the nation devising differing rules and regulations to govern the screening, monitoring, and evaluation of kinship foster parents (Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002). Some states and agencies, for example, have developed regulations and procedures (e.g. criminal checks, foster parent training, minimal housing and income requirements) that are equally stringent for both non-kinship and kinship foster parents (Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002). Others states have developed separate licensing and approval standards for kinship foster parents that are less stringent than those

required for non-kinship foster parents in terms of screening, training, and minimal housing requirements (Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002).

Despite the efforts of states and agencies to recognize the unique challenges of kinship foster care, findings from the available research suggest ongoing deficiencies in the level of role and service support that agencies offer their kinship foster parents. Berrick et al's (1994) study of the quality of care in kinship and foster family care, for example, found that 91% of kinship foster parents had not received any formal training during the previous year. Similarly, Le Prohn's (1994) comparison study of kinship and non-kinship foster parents found that kinship foster parents, who were typically urban, African-American grandmothers, received no training for their role as a kinship foster parent. Cuddeback & Orme's (2002) study of training and services for kinship and non-kinship foster parents found that both kinship and non-kinship foster parents received equally inadequate levels of training. Lorkovich et al's (2004) study of kinship care and permanence found that 58% of the kinship foster parents reported a lack of information from the foster care agency as their primary reason for not adopting their foster child.

Despite the apparent lack of role and service support, kinship foster parents consistently report high levels of satisfaction with their role and respective foster care agencies (Cuddeback & Orme, 2002; Gebel, 1996; Berrick et al, 1994; Le Prohn, 1994). Le Prohn (1994) suggests that because kinship foster parents have likely always been part of their

relative child's life, they assume a much higher level of responsibility for their foster child's total well-being than would be expected of a non-related foster parent. In assuming this higher level responsibility, the kinship foster parent relies less on their foster care agency for role or service support. This view is supported by Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy (2000), whose study of foster parent role perception found that African-American foster parents, the majority of whom were kinship caregivers, believed they had a higher degree of responsibility in fostering than did their White counterparts. They also believed that they had more responsibility for both parenting and agency tasks than did their White counterparts.

In the same vein, Cuddeback (2004) suggests that it is unclear whether or not kinship foster parents are actually offered less training and support by their foster care agency or do they refuse such services because of a belief they have higher levels of responsibility than the foster care agency for the welfare of their relative foster child. Gibson (2002) articulates a similar view with the suggestion that African-American grandmothers, who make up the largest percentage of kinship caregivers, do not seek services until absolutely necessary, preferring instead to try to care for their own and their grandchildren's needs by themselves.

To summarize, findings from the available research, which is a mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis, suggest that kinship minority foster parents are receiving little in the way of consistent agency role support, particularly as it pertains to training and regular contact with agency

representatives. There is little consensus, however, on exactly why this situation exists, particularly given that the empirical evidence suggests that non-kinship minority foster parents consistently receive a plethora of role support services from their foster care agencies. Paradoxically, given the lack of apparent role support offered by foster care agencies, kinship foster parents still report high levels of satisfaction with their foster care agency.

Table 3. Agency Support and Kinship Minority Foster Parents (Studies Cited matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Berrick et al,1997	**Multivariate Analysis**	**61 families : 28 kinship foster parents; 33 non-kinship foster parents**	**Ninety one percent of kinship foster parents had not received any formal training during the previous year. Despite the lack of training, the kinship foster parents reported a high level of satisfaction with their foster care agency.**

"Table 3 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002	Focus Group Interviews	24 kinship foster parents	As opposed to non-kinship foster parents, there are no uniform policy and procedures for kinship foster parents as it relates to training, minimal housing requirements, screening and monitoring.
Cuddeback & Orme, 2000	Regression Analysis	74 kinship foster parents 659 non-kinship foster parents	Both kinship and non-kinship foster parents received inadequate levels of training.
Gebel, 1996	Multivariate Analysis	140 non-kinship foster parents 82 kinship foster parents	Non-kinship foster parents were more likely to be visited at home on a regular basis than kinship. They were also more likely to receive monthly telephone calls from caseworker.

"Table 3 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Gibson, 2002	Phenomenlogical Perspective Approach	12 African-American grandmothers (kinship)	Kinship foster parents are in need of significant agency support, which is not always forthcoming.
Le Prohn, 1994	Multivariate Analysis comparison group utilized	82 kinship foster parents 98 non-kinship foster parents	Relative foster parents were significantly more likely to state that they were responsible for assuring the child's continued contact with birth family than non-kinship foster parents.
Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000	Multiple Regression Analysis	161 foster/adoptive family applicants 67 caseworkers	Budget constraints and staff shortages limit the frequency of contact between foster parents and caseworkers, which hampers the amount of support given to foster parents.
Scannapieco, Hegar & McAlpine, 1997	Two-Tier Case Record Analysis	33 kinship foster parents 56 non-kinship foster parents.	Kinship caregivers, who are primarily African-American females, receive less service than their non-kinship counterparts.

Casework Support and Non-Kinship Minority Foster Parents

In contrast to the bureaucratic support that foster care agencies offer, casework support has been conceptualized by child welfare researchers as a series of ongoing interpersonal interactions between the caseworker and the foster parent that emotionally supports the foster parent's ability to care for the foster child in their charge (Brown & Calder, 2000 ; Henry et al, 1991 ; Gebel, 1996; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000; Urquhart, 1989 ; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998 ; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996). According to available research, casework support is characterized by some of the following : the caseworker keeping the foster parent informed of developments in the foster child's case (Brown & Calder, 2000) ; the caseworker being available to respond to foster parents' concerns in a timely manner (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; the caseworker being sensitive to foster parents' feeling about foster child (Urquhart, 1989) ; the caseworker soliciting foster parents' input on the welfare of the child (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; the caseworker visiting the foster home on a regular basis to ensure the well being of the foster child (Gebel,1996; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000); the caseworker acknowledging the work the foster parent does with the child (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993 ; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998) ; the caseworker facilitating service referrals for the foster child (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001) ; the caseworker clarifying the foster parent's role and responsibility (Rodwell &

Biggerstaff,1993; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998); the caseworker's expenditure of energy, degree of contact, and rapport building with foster parent (Stone & Stone, 1983).

Findings from the aforementioned research suggests that all of the above identified indicators of casework support are indeed statistically related to a non-kinship minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction. For example, findings from Rodwell & Biggerstaff (1993) and Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby's (1998) research suggests that the failure of the caseworker to clarify for foster parents their role and responsibility, and failure to acknowledge their work with the child, were statistically related to a foster parent discontinuing fostering. Similarly, findings from Rhodes, Orme & Buehler's (2001) study suggested that caseworkers' failure to solicit foster parents' input on the welfare of the child, not being available to respond to foster parents' concerns in a timely manner, and not facilitating service referrals for the foster child were among some of the reasons that foster parents decided to discontinue fostering.

Conversely, findings from the aforementioned studies suggest that when casework support was forthcoming, foster parents were more likely to continue fostering (Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998) ; and they were more likely to be satisfied with their role demands (Brown & Calder, 2000 ; Henry et al, 1991 ; Gebel, 1996).

Table 4. Casework Support and Non-Kinship Minority Foster Parents (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Brown & Calder, 2000	Qualitative Design (Concept mapping)	30 foster families	Foster parents identified good working relationship with the caseworker as essential to being a good foster parent.
Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996	Multiple Regression Analysis (Cross-sectional survey)	804 foster parents in 8 urban counties	African-American foster parents' experiences with agency workers are generally favorable. Areas of displeasure focus on macro structural issues such as agency policy concerning training content; allowance for childcare; involuntary closure of homes.
Gebel, 1996	Multivariate Analysis	140 non-kinship foster parents 82 kinship foster parents	Non-kinship foster parents were more likely to be visited at home on a regular basis than kinship. They were also more likely to receive monthly telephone calls from caseworker.

"Table 4 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Henry, Cossett, Auletta & Egan, 1991	Survey of services provided to foster parents who care for sexually abused children	8 foster care agencies 12 social workers 16 foster children 16 foster families	Fifty eight percent of foster parents reported that they needed more support from agency and caseworker in terms of knowing how to work with children who were sexually abused.
Iglehart, 1994	Case Record Review	Multiple foster care agencies	Caseworkers did not monitor kinship foster homes at the same level as non-kinship foster homes
Rhodes, Orme, Buehler, 2001	Multivariate Analysis	252 current foster parents; 265 former foster parents	Poor interaction with caseworker and lack of support from agency were among the most prevalent reasons for quitting foster parenting.
Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000	Multiple Regression Analysis	161 foster/adoptive family applicants 67 caseworkers	Budget constraints and staff shortages limit the frequency of contact between foster parents and caseworkers, which hampers the amount of support given to foster parents.

"Table 4 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998	Logistic Regression	8 Urban counties Unknown number of foster parents	Being unclear about role, and lack of support from caseworker was major reason for ceasing to foster. Also caseworkers failed to articulate or reinforce agency policy and role definition.
Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993	Description of three phases of a Virginia based project "strategies for recruitment and retention of foster care families.	124 Local foster care agencies	Failure of the agency to provide support services for foster parents was a major contributor to a decreased sense of satisfaction with fostering.
Urquhart, 1989	Comparative Census Survey of Statewide foster population	Unknown	Foster parents who were able to adjust to loss and separation from foster children, reported greater level of caseworker support then those foster parents who found it difficult to cope with loss and separation.

Casework Support and Kinship Minority Foster Parents

Much like agency support, empirical evidence suggests that kinship minority foster parents do not get the same level of casework support that is offered to non-kinship foster parents (Cuddeback, 2004; Gebel, 1996; Scannapieco, Hegar & McAlpine, 1997; Berrick et al, 1994; Lorkovich et al, 2004).

Gebel (1996), for example, found significant differences between the frequency of casework contacts with non-kinship and kinship foster parents. That is, non-kinship foster parents were more likely to be visited at home monthly (53.2%) than kinship foster parents (40.8%). Non-kinship foster parents were also more likely to have phone contacts with the caseworker (83.5%) than kinship foster parent (37%).

Berrick et al (1994) found that caseworkers' monitoring of kinship foster homes were at significantly lower levels than the monitoring of non-kinship foster homes. Similarly, Inglehart (1994) found that caseworkers were less likely to be familiar with children in kinship care than they were children in non-kinship care ; adding to the notion that caseworkers do not monitor kinship foster homes at the same level they monitor non-kinship foster homes.

Despite the reported lack of casework support, the studies of Gebel (1996), Berrick et al, (1994) and Inglehart (1994) found that kinship foster parents reported high levels of satisfaction with their caseworkers. While there is no current research that explains this paradoxical finding,

Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy's (2000) study of foster parent role perception does suggest that kinship foster parents, the majority of whom are African-American, believe they have more responsibility than the caseworker and agency for both parenting and agency tasks. This could explain why kinship foster parents are satisfied with their agency and caseworker despite the apparent lack of role and service support.

Table 5. Casework Support and Kinship Minority Foster Parents (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Berrick et al, 1997	Multivariate Analysis	61 foster families 29 kinship foster parents 32 non-kinship foster parents	Caseworkers' monitoring of kinship foster homes was at a significantly lower level than their monitoring of non-kinship foster homes. Despite the lack of monitoring, kinship foster parents' reported high levels of satisfaction with their caseworker.
Cuddeback, 2004	Methodological and substantive synthesis of kinship foster parent research	non-kinship and kinship foster parents	Kinship foster parents, who are most typically older African-American females, have fewer resources, and receive less training, services, and support from their agency and caseworker than their non-kinship counterparts

"Table 5 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Gebel, 1996	Multivariate Analysis	140 non-kinship foster parents 82 kinship foster parents	Non-kinship foster parents were more likely to be visited at home on a regular basis than kinship foster parents. They were also more likely to receive monthly telephone calls from caseworker.
Iglehart, 1994	Case Record Review	kinship and non-kinship foster parents	Caseworkers did not monitor kinship foster homes at the same level as non-kinship foster homes
Lorkovich et al, 2004	Exploratory Study (Qualitative Interviews)	71 kinship foster parents	Foster care agencies and their caseworkers did not provide kinship foster parents with the information necessary to make an informed decision about adopting relative child.

"Table 5 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000	**Multiple Regression Analysis**	**161 foster/adoptive family applicants** **67 caseworkers**	**Budget constraints and staff shortages limit the frequency of contact between foster parents and caseworkers, which hampers the amount of support given to foster parents.**
Scannapieco, Hegar & McAlpine, 1997	**Two-Tier Case Record Analysis**	**33 kinship foster parents** **56 non-kinship foster parents**	**Kinship caregivers, who are primarily African-American females, receive less services than their non-kinship counterparts**

Role Perception and Minority Foster Parent Role Satisfaction

Role perception (how foster parents understands their role) and role conception (how foster parents themselves define their role) have long been thought of as being among the most influential factors on the role satisfaction of foster parents regardless of their race or place of residence (Tinney, 1985; Le Prohn, 1994 ; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000). Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy (2000), for example, suggest that

differences in role expectations among foster parents and foster care workers contribute to a climate of role conflict and ambiguity. This role conflict and ambiguity can in turn lead to problematic communications between foster parents and their caseworkers, which may eventually result in placement disruption for foster children (Rhode, Orme & McSurdy, 2000).

Over the last forty years, findings from the available research have suggested that if foster parents are to perform appropriately in their role, they must know, understand and agree with what is expected of them from the agency (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993). Empirical evidence suggests, however, that foster parents regardless of race are often inadequately prepared to handle the expectations of their role, particularly as it relates to working with biological families and fully participating in permanency planning (Runyan & Fullerton, 1981; Pasztor, 1985; Mietus&Fimmen, 1987; Fees et al, 1998; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993). Runyan & Fullerton's (1981) multi–cultural study of foster parents, for example, found that inadequate preparation was associated with not only disrupted placements, but also feelings of inadequacy on the part of foster parents who ceased to foster because they believed that they could not live up to role expectations. For example, foster parents' experienced difficulties following certain agency rules as it related to allowing children to remain in contact with their biological families. More recent studies (Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000) found that

inadequate preparation for the role of foster parent was associated with difficulty parenting foster children, dissatisfaction with agency rules and regulations, higher rates of attrition, disagreements and misunderstanding between foster parents and case workers, difficulty retaining or recruiting new foster homes, and decreased levels of foster parent satisfaction.

In addition to inadequate role preparation, a number of studies identified role conception (how foster parents themselves define their roles) and role perception (how foster parents understand their role) as potentially critical determinant of role demand satisfaction (Le Prohn, 1994; Tinney, 1985; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000).

Tinney's (1985) study of the role perception of 151 foster parents (98 foster mothers and 53 foster fathers) found that just as with the studies of Ambinder (1962) and Willston (1963) some twenty plus years earlier, foster parents as a whole most frequently described themselves as "substitute parents". In other words, they perceived their role as equivalent to, as and more significant than, that of members of the biological family who are not parents.

Le Prohn’s (1994) multi-cultural study of 114 kinship foster parents and 170 non-kinship foster parents was the first to compare the role conception of non-kinship and kinship foster parents. Findings from his study suggested that kinship foster parents (whose demographic characteristics of single, female, minority with less education than their non-kinship counterparts, was in keeping with previous research)

identified more strongly with all five of the study's proposed birth parent roles than their non-kinship counterparts. That is, kinship foster parents identified themselves as the following: birth family facilitators, facilitator of the child's social-emotional development, agency partner, surrogate parent, and facilitator of the child's spirituality.

Le Prohn (1994) surmises that the significant differences in role conception between kinship and non-kinship foster parents may be attributable to a kinship foster parent's desire to have a high level of involvement in the life of the child. Le Prohn (1994) argues that from an ecological perspective it makes sense that a kinship foster parent, who even before placement has been part of the child's ecological system, would want to retain a high level of involvement and considerable control on all areas of the child's functioning. Le Prohn (1994) cautions agencies to recognize that non-kinship and kinship foster parents conceptualize their roles differently, which may potentially impact role demand satisfaction.

Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy (2000) broadened the thinking about role performance perception by analyzing the following researchable questions:

1. Do foster mothers, foster fathers and workers differ in their role expectations of foster parents?
2. Do foster mothers and foster fathers in foster parent couples differ in their foster parent role expectations?
3. Do workers role expectation of foster mothers and foster fathers differ?

4. Do role expectations of foster parents differ among those with different demographic and background characteristics? (P8)

Utilizing role theory as a conceptual guide, and the Foster Parent Role Perception Scale (FPRP) as a measure of perceived responsibility, Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy (2000) examined the role perceptions of 157 foster mother applicants, 103 foster father applicants and 67 agency workers participating in an agency Model Approach to Planned Parenting (MAPP) training in Tennessee. The study found agreements between foster parents and workers on role perception in the following areas: the importance of the parenting role; the role of the couple as parents; foster parent's primary responsibilities being centered on parent-child relationships. The areas of disagreements between foster parent applicants and workers were as follows: degree of parenting responsibilities (foster parent applicants perceived higher degree, while workers perceived lower); degree of parenting and agency responsibilities (foster parent applicants perceived higher, workers perceived lower).

There were also a number of demographic differences between foster parents in terms of their role responsibility perceptions. African-American foster mother applicants, for example, believed they had a higher degree of agency responsibility than did their White counterparts. They also believed they had more responsibility for both parenting and agency tasks than did their White counterparts. These findings are consistent with those of Denby & Rindfleisch, (1996) who studied

differences in the fostering experiences of African-American and White foster parents.

Lastly, the more educated White foster fathers (Bachelors degrees and above) thought of themselves as having less in the way of responsibility for parenting and agency role than any other foster parent.

To summarize, the available research findings suggest a positive statistical relationship between role perception and foster parent role demand and personal needs satisfaction. This relationship was present regardless of the foster parent's race or gender category. The research findings also suggest that African-American (both kinship and non-kinship) perceive having higher levels of role responsibility for the foster child's all round welfare than do their White counterparts (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000; Le Prohn, 1994). This finding is consistent for both perspective and active African-American foster parents (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000).

Table 6. Role Perception and Minority Foster Parent Role Satisfaction (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Ambinder, 1962	Qualitative Interviews	50 foster parents	Significant differences in role demands of foster care agency and role perception of the foster parent. Foster parents perceived their role as equivalent to and possibly more significant than that of biological family, which is at odds with agency, who perceives role as task oriented specialist.
Le Prohn, 1994	Multivariate Analysis comparison group utilized	82 kinship foster parents 98 non-kinship foster parents	Relative foster parents were significantly more likely to state that they were responsible for assuring the child's continued contact with birth family than non-kinship foster parents.
Mc Coy, 1962	Unknown	Unknown	Notable differences in role demands of foster care agency and role perception of foster parents.
Mietus & Fimmen, 1987	Multivariate Analysis of data obtained from a state-wide study of public foster care agencies	Unknown	Foster parents' role performance affected by lack of foster care agency and caseworker support.

"Table 6 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000	**Multivariate Analysis**	**57 foster mother applicants; 103 foster father applicants; 67 agency caseworkers**	**Significant role perception differences between foster parent applicants even when receiving the same training.**
Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998	**Logistic Regression**	**8 urban counties (unknown number of foster parents)**	**Being unclear about role, and lack of support from caseworkers were major reasons for ceasing to foster. Foster parents also believed that caseworkers failed to articulate or reinforce to them agency policy and role definitions.**

Motivation and Minority Foster Parent Role Satisfaction

Much of the available research on the relationship between motivation for fostering and foster parent role satisfaction (Babcock, 1965; Jones, 1975; Murphy, 1964; Kraus, 1971; Dando & Minty, 1987; Arnold et al, 1998) is relatively dated and questionable as it relates to

generalizabilty to kinship and non-kinship minority foster parents. That is, the majority of the available studies have either small sample sizes (under 50) or the minority foster parents do not reside in urban communities. This said, the studies do offer a conceptual framework that is useful for understanding how motivation for fostering potentially contributes to foster parent role satisfaction. That is, all of the aforementioned researchers were unanimous in the suggestion that motivation alone is not predictive of foster parent role satisfaction. Rather, they suggest that foster parent role satisfaction is actually the result of a number of interacting factors: type of motivation for fostering, casework and agency-foster parent interaction, and level of preparation for fostering.

This multivariate conceptual frame informed the work of Hampson & Tavormina (1980), who conducted one of the earliest studies of foster parent motivation to include minority foster parents. Hampson & Tavormina, (1980) interviewed a multi-cultural sample of thirty-four active foster parents from central Virginia in order to ascertain not only motivation for fostering, but also foster parent characteristics, perceived rewards of fostering, regrets about fostering, specific problems with fostering, and disciplinary styles. Findings from the study indicated that two thirds of the foster parents were motivated to foster for altruistic reasons such as: "love of children", "desire to help someone, and "interest in children's well being." The remaining third were motivated by factors such as companionship, unemployment and filling time. Those parents

motivated by altruistic reasons were found to have maintained foster placements for two or more years, which was significantly longer than those motivated by factors such as companionship, unemployment and filling time. As well as being motivated by altruistic motives, the successful foster parents (those with foster placements of two years and above) reported fewer regrets with fostering than those with non-altruistic motives. Both altruistic and non-altruistic foster parents, however, identified problems with communication and the availability of caseworkers, as well as problems with the behavior of the foster children. Further, while most of the foster parents had experienced some form of behavioral problem with the child in their care, all but two practiced appropriate disciplinary methods with the child . Moreover, regardless of the motivation for fostering, no foster parent said that money was the primary motive for fostering.

On the basis of the data obtained, Hampson & Tavormina (1980) recommended that for foster parents - both minority and White - to be more effective in their role as a foster parent , the following must be in place:

1. An accurate matching of foster parents with particular motivations and ability with foster children with certain types of needs, particularly as certain types of children appear to do better with certain types of foster parents. For example, foster parents who articulated altruistic motives for fostering were found to work better with problematic children than those who articulated non-altruistic motives.

2. Instituting pre-service individual and peer group training for foster parents. The foster parents found training, particularly peer group training, useful for connecting and sharing information with other foster parents experiencing the same kinds of issues.

3. Agency providing consistent support for fosters parents via professional consultants, agency-operated telephone "hot-line" and professional workers as case managers. All of the above will enhance the foster parent's access to consistent agency support.

4. Integrating foster parents into the case decision-making process. The foster parents generally agreed that while they are responsible for the day-to-day care of the children, they are rarely informed or involved in making important case decisions.

While the study's relatively small sample of thirty-four foster parents precludes generalization, it does suggest that supporting increased foster parent role demand and personal needs satisfaction requires agencies to pay greater attention to the interplay of motivation, the appropriate matching of foster parent-child, training, agency support of foster parents, and role of foster parents in case decision-making.

Two more contemporary studies (Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996; Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999), both of which compared the foster parenting experiences of African-American and White foster parents, addressed the issue of motivational differences between African-American and White foster parents. While the studies highlighted the motivational differences

between the groups, they did not offer any empirical evidence of a relationship between an African-American foster parent's motivation for fostering and their level of role satisfaction.

Utilizing an analysis of variance, Denby & Rindfleisch's (1996) study of 804 African-American and White foster parents in 8 urban counties found statistically significant differences between the two groups in certain categories of motivation. For example, of the currently active foster parents, there were statistical differences between African-American and White foster parents on two motivational variables: 1. "Increase household income " (African-American foster parents); 2. "My own family was grown" (African-American"). For currently inactive foster parents, there were statistical differences on two motivational variables: 1. " Siblings for my own children' (African American) 2. "My own family was grown" (African-American) (p532).

Seaberg and Harrigan's study (1999) of 118 African-American and White foster mothers in Virginia identified statistically significant differences in motivation when compared by race. For example, African-American foster mothers more often (90%) reported giving love as a motivation than White foster mothers (73.4%). Conversely, White foster mothers more often (26.6%) indicated self-motivation (e.g. companion for birth child, finding a child to adopt, replacing adult child, and companionship) for fostering than did African-American foster mothers (9.8%) (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999, p.42). For the most part, the study

found that regardless of race, the motivations of love and help were dominant, but African-American foster mothers more often reported altruistic motives for fostering.

As it relates to kinship minority foster parents, there are no studies that specifically address the relationship between their motivation for fostering and their level of role satisfaction. There was one qualitative study (Gibson,2002), however, that explored 12 African-American grandmothers' motivation for fostering. The responses of these kinship caregivers offered some of the following motivations for fostering: a tradition of kin keeping, relationship with grandchildren, distrust of the foster care system, grandmother as the only resource, refusal of the grandchild's other grandmother to assist with care giving (Gibson, 2002) .

To summarize, findings from the available research did suggest a significant difference between non-kinship African-American and White foster parents in their motivations for fostering. There was no statistical evidence, however, of a relationship between non-kinship African-American foster parents' motivation for fostering and their level of role demand satisfaction.

Table 7. Motivation and Minority Foster Parent Role Satisfaction (Studies Cited Matrix)

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Arnold, Crase, Stockdale & Shelly, 1998	Multivariate Analysis of Co-variance	44 adoptive foster mothers; 149 non-adoptive foster mothers	Significant differences between adoptive and non-adoptive foster parents in foster parenting attitudes and motivations for fostering. Adoptive foster parents, who were more motivated to foster for altruistic reason than their non-adoptive counterparts, were more effective than non-adoptive foster parents in three areas: appropriate parental expectations; parental value on physical punishment; empathy toward children.
Babcock, 1965	Multivariate Analysis of Co-variance	Unknown	Foster parents, whose motivation for fostering was company for own child, were unable to take care of foster children once they were no longer babies.
Denby & Rindfieisch, 1996	Multiple-Regression Analysis	804 foster parents (African-American & white) in 8 urban counties	Differences in motivation for fostering between African-American and White foster parents.

"Table 7 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Hampson & Tavormina, 1980	Qualitative Design (Interviews)	34 foster parents	Foster parents motivated by altruistic reasons maintained foster placements for two or more years, which was significantly higher than those motivated by non-altruistic motives.
Jones, 1975	Qualitative Design (Interviews)	149 ex foster parents	Fifty percent of former foster parents who were motivated to foster because of non-altruistic reasons ceased fostering because they could not perform role in an acceptable manner.
Murphy, 1964	Structured Interviews	50 foster parents	Foster parents who gave altruistic motivations for fostering performed significantly better with boys from "poor-risk" backgrounds than foster mothers who did not give altruistic motives. Both altruistic and non-altruistic foster parents performed equally well with" good-risk boys and girls".

"Table 7 – continued."

Study	Analytical Strategy	Sample	Findings
Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999	Multivariate Analysis	118 foster parents(50 African-American; 68 White)	Differences in motivation for fostering between African-American and White foster parents.

Goals and Intellectual Framework of The Study

While there is a lack of empirical clarity as it relates to identifying factors that influence a kinship minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction, findings from the available research suggested that there is a positive relationship between non-kinship minority foster parents' level of role satisfaction and the following three variables: a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Denby & Rindfleisch 1996 ; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1992 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002 ; Sanchirico et al, 1998 ; Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000 ; Simon & Simon, 1982); a perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker (Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Denby & Rindfleisch 1996 ; Urquhart, 1989 ; Stone & Stone, 1983 ; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1993 ; Brown & Calder, 2000 ; Gebel. 1996 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Henry et al, 1991 ; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998 ; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000) ; and role perception that is consistent with a high degree of responsibility for the foster child's well-being (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000; Le Prohn, 1994).

While identifying a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high degree of responsibility for the foster child's well-being, none of the available research had analyzed the simultaneous effects of theses variables on White or urban minority foster parent role satisfaction. This study sought to add to

the field's current knowledge by being the first multivariate analysis of foster parent role satisfaction to specifically focus on a foster parent population that is minority, urban, and at least forty to fifty percent kinship.

A multivariate analysis of the population was selected as it is the author's contention, which is conceptually informed by role theory, that rather than working in a linear and separate manner, the identified three variables actually work together in a reciprocal and circular manner to simultaneously influence an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction. When this process is positive (e.g. foster parent role demand, social service support, and personal needs support is at an optimal level), it is characterized by the foster care agency providing the foster parent with all needed bureaucratic services and support required to effectively care for the child, the caseworker providing the foster parent with all needed ongoing emotional support required to effectively care for the foster child, and the foster parent having a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child's well-being. Conversely, when the process is negative (e.g. low levels of role demand, social service and personal needs satisfaction), it is characterized by the foster care agency not providing the foster parent with all needed bureaucratic services and support required to effectively care for the child, the caseworker not providing the foster parent with the ongoing emotional support required to effectively care for the foster child, and the foster parent not having a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child's

well-being.

This study's primary goal was to determine the strength of the relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group: a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with caseworker and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being. The secondary goal of the study was to assess whether or not there were any statistical differences in the level of influence that the above-described variables as a group have on the role satisfaction of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups of urban minority foster parents.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

The goal of this study is to determine the strength of the relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group: a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with caseworker, and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being. The secondary goal of the study was to assess whether or not there were any statistical differences in the level of influence that the above-described variables as a group have on the role satisfaction of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups of urban minority foster parents.

Based on this study's primary and secondary goals, the below described research hypotheses were tested with the total foster parent sample, and its respective kinship and non-kinship sub-groups. The testing of the hypotheses with the sub-groups of the foster parent sample stems from research findings that suggest significant differences in the experiences of kinship and non-kinship foster parents, most notably around the level of role support received from their foster care agency and caseworker. That is, the available research suggests that kinship foster parents - who even within the urban minority foster parent population tend to be older, less educated, have fewer resources - receive less resource and

emotional support from their foster care agency and caseworker than do their non-kinship counterparts (Gibson,2002 ; Berrick et al, 2002 ; Gebel, 1996 ; Le Prohn, 1994). If this is indeed true, then there is every likelihood that there will be significant differences in the degree of impact that perceived agency and casework support have on the role satisfaction of kinship and non-kinship urban minority foster parents.

This studies three guiding hypothesis are as follows :

Hypothesis 1

An urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child’s well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H1o:There is no relationship between an urban minority foster parent’s level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.

2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Hypothesis 2

An urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H2o:There is no relationship between an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.

3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Hypothesis 3

An urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H3o:There is no relationship between an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

The aforementioned hypotheses were tested empirically by a quasi experimental study of 172 urban minority foster parents (74 kinship and 98 non-kinship) who boarded at least one foster child for a minimum of six continuous months between January 1st 2001 and December 31st 2003. This study was considered quasi experimental as the foster parents already came with the attributes reflected in a perceived supportive relationship with the agency, a perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high degree of responsibility for a foster child's well-being ; thus preventing their random assignment to a control group.

This chapter will describe the empirical research study designed to test the aforementioned hypotheses. The description will be presented in three sections: measurement, research design, and the procedures utilized to statistically analyze the data. Before this, however, is a description of the procedures that allowed the author, who was the Director of Pride Family & Children's Services foster care and adoption program at the time of the study, to conduct the study.

Procedures That Allowed For the Non-Coercive Recruitment and Protection of Confidentiality and Anonymity of the Study's Participants

As the Director of Foster Care and Adoption at the agency from which the study's sample was recruited, the author's job responsibilities did not require any day-to-day interaction with foster parents. Further, there was no direct or indirect responsibility for assessing foster parents, placing or removing children from their home or taking any form of punitive action against them. These responsibilities, as well as others related to the foster parents, fall under the purview of the agency's Director of Family Resources who is not under the span of supervision of the author. This said, it was still deemed necessary for the author to devise a strategy that would allow for the non-coercive recruitment and protection of the confidentiality and anonymity of the study's participating foster parents.

Toward this end, the author solicited the assistance of the agency's foster parent association (a foster parent funded organization to which the agency's foster parents belong). The idea for the study was presented to four of the association's senior members. Suggestions and questions were exchanged, after which the members agreed that the study was worthwhile and not potentially harmful to their members. They further agreed that they would act as a liaison between the author and the participating foster parents (see Appendix C). With this agreement reached, the following procedures were taken to guarantee both non-coercive recruitment, and the protection of

the participating foster parents' confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study.

1. The author placed an advertisement in the agency's monthly newsletter to its foster parents requesting that interested persons who met the study's subject criteria contact the foster parent association's study liaison (see Appendix A).

2. When an interested foster parent who met the study's subject criteria contacted the foster parent association's study liaison, the study liaison procured from them their name and an address to which the study package could be mailed. The study liaison was the only person who had access to the foster parents' addresses. These addresses were used for mailing purposes only. At no time during or after the study did the study liaison share with the author any of the participating foster parents' names or addresses. Moreover, four weeks after the second reminder (which is sent four weeks after the initial mailing) is sent to the interested foster parent, the study liaison destroyed the addresses.

3. Tacit rather than informed consent was sought from those foster parents who volunteered to participate in the study.

4. The data gathering instruments for the study were self-administered rating scales that were mailed to the participating foster parents for completion in the privacy of their own residence.

5. The only identifying information required on the rating scales' cover sheet was ethnicity, gender, age range, foster parent status, (e.g. kinship

or non-kinship foster parent), income, and number of years as a foster parent.

6. Participating foster parents were not required to return their completed rating scales in person to either the study liaison or the author. Instead, they were instructed to return the completed rating scales to the study liaison via a post-paid return addressed envelope, after which the study liaison forwards them to the author.

7. Upon collection of all the completed rating scales from the study liaison, the author stored them in a safe located in his private residence. The author was the only agency employee who has access to the rating scales.

8. After the author entered the data from the rating scales into a SPSS computer program for statistical analysis, the rating scales were restored in author's safe, where they will remain until October 2007; after which they will be shredded.

9. All data from the rating scales were coded and reported in numbers and percentages without any individual responses being noted.

Section 1

MEASUREMENT

This section includes both the nominal and operational definitions of the study's four designated variables. It also includes the reliability and validity of the operational definitions, as well as the data collection strategy utilized.

A. Nominal Definitions Of The Study's Key Concepts

The nominal definition of an urban minority foster parent, an agency caseworker, the foster care agency, and the study's four designated variables are each presented below. This presentation is followed by the operational definitions of the study's four designated variables.

An urban minority foster parent is an individual, at least 21 years of age or older, who belongs to a non-White ethnic minority group, resides in an urban community, and whose home is licensed or approved by a New York City foster care agency to board children that have been legally placed in the custody of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). A licensed foster parent is commonly known as a non-kinship foster parent because they are not related to the foster children they board. An approved foster parent is commonly known as a kinship foster parent because they are related to the children they board.

The agency is any employee of the agency, other than those whose designated job title and responsibilities are that of a caseworker, who in some way assist the foster parents in providing care to the foster child. These employees include the agency's medical staff, who provide medical support; the agency's family resource staff, who provide support around foster parent compliance with agency and state mandates; the agency's intake department, who provide initial placement support services; the agency's training department, who provide training in keeping with agency and state mandates; the agency's Pathways to the Future Program, which provides educational and child support services.

The caseworker is an agency employee whose designated job tile and responsibilities are that of a caseworker. As a caseworker, the employee is responsible for monitoring a caseload of 25 children, 15 foster parents, and 10 biological families. This requires the caseworker to make monthly mandated foster home visits to ensure the foster child's well-being, daily or as needed interaction with the foster parents to ensure that the foster child and foster parents service needs are being met, bi-monthly court appearances to report on case progress, arranging visits between foster child and their family, referring and monitoring biological parents to appropriate rehabilitation programs. Of all the agency's employees, the caseworker has the most interdependent relationship with the foster parents.

Consequent Variable

Foster parent role satisfaction refers to the extent to which an urban minority foster parent reported satisfaction or non-satisfaction in the following three areas: role demand satisfaction, social service support satisfaction, and personal needs satisfaction. Role demand satisfaction is defined as the degree to which a foster parent reports that her or his needs and or expectations are being met via being able to successfully balance their own personal family demands with those of foster child ; and being able to understanding her or his responsibilities as a foster parent. Social service support satisfaction is defined as the degree to which a foster parent reports that she or he receives sufficient payment for providing fostering services. Personal needs satisfaction is defined as the degree to which a foster parent reports that her or his needs and expectations are being met via feeling appreciated for being a foster parent; having a positive relationship with her or his foster child; and being satisfied with her or his role in helping children.

Foster parent role satisfaction is conceptualized as being located on a continuum, of which one end is the foster parent "is very unsatisfied with their role" and on the other end " the foster parent is very satisfied with their role ".

A perceived supportive relationship with the agency refers to the extent to which an urban minority foster parent perceives that agency employees, other than their caseworker, are providing them with concrete

services related to the care of the foster child. These services, which are monitored, coordinated and approved by the agency's administrative staff (directors, assistant directors) are as follows: the provision of the foster child's essential documents (social security card, immunization records, birth certificate), transportation to and from foster child's miscellaneous appointments, provision of respite services when needed, provision of formal support groups, and the provision of daycare and baby sitting services. These items are bureaucratic and provide the foster parent with the concrete services needed to care for the foster child.

A perceived supportive relationship with the agency is conceptualized as being located on a continuum, of which one end is "the foster parent perceives no support from the agency" and on the other end " the foster parent perceives strong support from the agency."

A perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker refers to the extent to which an urban minority foster parent perceives that her or his caseworker provides the following: sensitivity to her or his feelings about the foster child, soliciting her or his input on the welfare of the foster child and being available to her or him on a monthly, or as needed basis. These items are relational and provide the foster parent with the emotional support needed to care for the foster child in their care.

A perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker is conceptualized as being located on a continuum, of which one end is "the

foster parent perceives no support from their caseworker” and on the other end “the foster parent perceives strong support from their caseworker”.

A foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child’s well-being refers to the extent to which an urban minority foster parent believes that her or his responsibilities as a foster parent include the following: being a birth family facilitator, which is made up of tasks such as arranging foster child’s visits with their biological family, and talking to biological parent(s) about their child’s behavior; assisting with the foster child’s social-emotional development, which is made of tasks such as building child’s self-confidence, helping child with separation issues, and helping child develop areas of social functioning that need improvement ; agency partner, which includes task such as helping to train foster parents, and training new caseworkers ; and parenting, which is made of tasks such as selecting the child’s school, working with teachers, and deciding on discipline. These beliefs may be informed by training, personal opinion, or experience

Foster parent role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child’s well-being is conceptualized as being located on a continuum, of which one end “the foster parent’s role perception is consistent with a high level of responsibility for the foster child’s well-being “and on the other end” the foster parent’s role perception is consistent with a low level of responsibility for the foster child’s well-being”.

B. Operational Definitions

Foster Parent Role Satisfaction

On a self-administered rating scale, 6-items were utilized to measure "foster parent role satisfaction". Each of the 6-items had five alternative response categories, ranging from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). For each of the 6-items, respondents were instructed to place an X on the one number on the 5-point scale that best matched their level of satisfaction with the item. See page 76 for the 6 items contained in the scale.

Scoring

Foster parent role satisfaction is the weighted sum of the respondent's responses to the 6-items. The cumulative scores of the 6-items ranged from 6 to 30, with high scores representing a high level of foster parent role satisfaction.

To determine the respondent's overall level of role satisfaction, the cumulative scores were divided as follows : 6-11 (very unsatisfied) ; 12 -17 (unsatisfied) ; 18-23 (somewhat satisfied) ; 24-29 (satisfied) ; 30 (very satisfied). The very satisfied score was the maximum score that could be achieved if a respondent marked very satisfied for all six items in the scale. For all other levels of role satisfaction, the ranges of scores were the maximum numerical value for the respective response category, plus five.

FOSTER PARENT ROLE SATISFACTION SCALE

Below are a series of items. For each item, place an X on the line that best matches your level of satisfaction.

Scores	1	2	3	4	5
Response Category	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Items					
Your role in helping children	____	____	____	____	____
Your relationship with your foster children	____	____	____	____	____
Balancing foster care with your own family's schedule	____	____	____	____	____
Feeling appreciated for being a foster parent	____	____	____	____	____
Understanding your responsibilities as a foster parent	____	____	____	____	____
Amount of payment for providing foster care	____	____	____	____	____

Agency Support

On a self-administered rating scale, 5-items were used to measure "agency support". Each of the 5-items had five alternative response categories, ranging from 1 (no support) to 5 (strong support). For each of the 5-items, respondents were instructed to place an X on the one number on the 5-point scale that best matched the level of agency support they received with the item. See page 78 for the 5-items contained in the scale.

Scoring

A perceived supportive relationship with the agency is the weighted sum of respondent's responses to the 5-items. The cumulative scores of the 5-items ranged from 5 to 25, with high scores representing strong support from the agency.

To determine the respondent's overall level of agency support, the cumulative scores were divided as follows: 5-9 (no support); 10-14 (minimal support); 15-19 (some support); 20-24 (adequate support); 25 (strong support). The strong support score was the maximum score that could be achieved if a respondent marked strong support for all five items in the scale. For all other levels of agency support, the range of scores was the maximum numerical value for the respective response category, plus four.

AGENCY SUPPORT SCALE

Below are a series of functions that the agency may be expected to support you with. For each function , please place an X on the box that best matches your perception of the level of support you actually received from the agency.

Score	1	2	3	4	5
Reponses Category	No Support	Minimal Support	Some Support	Adequate Support	Strong Support
Function					
Provided information related to the foster child's essential documents. (e.g. CIN card, social security card, birth certificate)	____	____	____	____	____
Provided transportation to the foster child's various appointments and visits to the agency	____	____	____	____	____
Provided respite services	____	____	____	____	____
Provide formal support groups	____	____	____	____	____
Provided day care and baby sitting services	____	____	____	____	____

Caseworker Support

On a self-administered rating scale, 3-items were used to measure "casework support". Each of the 3-items had five alternative response categories, ranging from 1 (no support) to 5 (strong support). For each of the 3-items, respondents were instructed to place an X on the one number on the 5-point scale that best matched the level of casework support they received with the item. See page 80 for 3 items contained in the scale.

Scoring

A perceived supportive relationship with the caseworker is the weighted sum of respondent's responses to the 3-items. The cumulative scores of the 3-items ranged from 3 to 15, with high scores representing strong support from the caseworker.

To determine the respondent's overall level of casework support, the cumulative scores were divided as follows : 3-5 (no support) ; 6-8 (minimal support) ; 9-11 (some support) ; 12-14 (adequate support) ; 15 (strong support). The strong support score was the maximum score that could be achieved if a respondent marked strong support for all five items in the scale. For all other levels of casework support, the ranges of scores were the maximum numerical value for the respective response category, plus two.

CASEWORK SUPPORT SCALE

Below are a series of functions that your caseworker may be expected to support you with. For each function, please place an X on the box that best matches your perception of the level of support you actually received from your caseworker.

Score	1	2	3	4	5
Response Category	No Support	Minimal Support	Some Support	Adequate Support	Strong Support
Function					
Being available to see me on a monthly, or as needed basis	____	____	____	____	____
Solicits my input on the welfare of the foster child	____	____	____	____	____
Being sensitive to my feelings about the foster child	____	____	____	____	____

Foster Parent Role Perception

On a self-administered rating scale, 33-items were utilized to measure "foster parent role perception." Each of the 33-items had six alternative response categories, ranging from 0% (not the responsibility of the foster parent) to 100% (the full responsibility of the foster parent). For each of the 33-items, the respondent was instructed to place an X on the one line on the 6-point scale that best matched the % of responsibility she or he had for the item. See pages 82, 83, 84 & 85 for 33-items contained in the scale.

Scoring

Foster parent role perception is the weighted sum of the respondent's responses to the 33-items. The cumulative scores of the 33-items ranged from 33 to 198, with high scores representing a high level of perceived role responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

To determine the respondent's overall level of role perception, the cumulative scores were divided as follows: 33-65 (0% responsibility); 66-98 (20% responsibility); 99-131 (40% responsibility); 132-164 (60% responsibility); 165-197 (80% responsibility); 198 (100% responsibility). The 100% responsibility score was the maximum score that could be achieved if a respondent marked 100% responsibility for all 33 items in the scale. For all other levels of role perception, the ranges of scores were the maximum numerical value for the respective response category, plus 32.

Role Perception Scale

Below are lists of tasks that may need to be done for a foster child or for the foster care agency. You may have done many of these things. For each item, please place an X on the line to show how much responsibility the foster parent should have for that task.

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6
Response Category	0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%

Items

Arrange visits with birth parents

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Supervise visits with birth parents

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Talk to birth parents regarding behavior

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Talk to birth parents regarding child's adjustment

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

“Role Perception Scale – continued.”

Transport child for visits with birth parents

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Arrange visits with siblings

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Teach youth about relationships

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

keep record of placement history

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Prepare child for loneliness

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Help develop skills which need improvement

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Respond to medical emergencies

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Build self confidence,

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Help with emotional problems

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Help with separation issues

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Teach housekeeping

0%___ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

"Role Perception Scale – continued."

Assess development level

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Transport to medical appointments

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Supervise child's recreation

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Train foster parents

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Conduct training for foster parents

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Public relations for the agency

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Plan new foster care services

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Train new social workers

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Recruit foster families

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Keep medical records

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

Keep educational records

0%___ 20%___ 40%___60%___80%___100%

“Role Perception Scale – continued.”

Work with teachers

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Schedule medical appointments

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Select school

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Talk to therapist

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Help youth find housing

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Decide on discipline

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

Select therapist.

0%____ 20%____ 40%_____60%_____80%_____100%

C. Reliability

To ensure that the aforementioned measuring instruments provided consistent results, each of the four scales were pre-tested for internal reliability with 50 urban minority foster parents (25 kinship, 25 non-kinship). The Cronbach's alpha score, which measures internal reliability, indicated that the four scales had reliabilities that ranged from acceptable to excellent (i.e., between .71 and .94).

As computed for the sample respondents of this study, the Cronbach's alpha score for the four scales was as follows:

	Alpha
Foster Parent Role Satisfaction Scale	.71
Agency Support Scale	.81
Casework Support Scale	.86
Foster Parent Role Perception Scale	.94

The above results indicted internal reliability that ranged from acceptable to excellent.

Demographic Variables

Eight demographic variables are used to describe the study's sample – foster parent status, gender, age, ethnicity, borough of residence, income, number of years as a foster parent, and highest level of education completed. This data was gathered by way of a self-administered cover sheet that was attached to the rating scales (see Appendix E).

D. Data Collection

Data for this study were collected between July 15 and August 31, 2004. The data were collected by way of four rating scales and a rating scales' covers sheet that was mailed to respondents by the study liaison. In addition to the rating scales and cover sheet, each respondent was mailed an information page and a pre-paid return addressed envelope.

The rating scales' cover sheet was composed of a single, one-sided page that had 8-items related to the foster parent's demographic data.

The foster parent role satisfaction rating scale was composed of one, single sided page made up of 6-items testing the consequent variable (see Appendix F).

The agency support rating scale was composed of one, single sided page made up of 5-items testing the antecedent variable.

The casework support rating scale was composed of one, single sided page made up of 3-items testing the antecedent variable (see Appendix H).

The foster parent role perception scale was composed of four, single sided pages made up of 33-items testing the antecedent variable (see Appendix I).

The information page was composed of a single, double-sided page. The information page invited participation in the study. It also described the following: the study's purpose, procedures, risks. benefits,

confidentiality and anonymity protections, voluntary nature of participation, rights to terminate participation, rating scales completion and return procedure. The last two paragraphs of the page listed the study's emergency contact person's name and telephone number and how to receive a copy of the study's results (see Appendix B).

The study liaison mailed reminder letters to the participating foster parents two and four weeks after the initial mailing. The letter was a single, one-sided page that asked the foster parent to return their rating scales via the post-paid return envelope as soon as possible (see Appendix J).

E. Validity

The primary purpose for establishing the validity of a measuring instrument is to ensure that the instrument accurately measures what it claims to measure. The following is a description of the steps that were taken to ensure the validity of the study's four scales.

Foster Parent Role Satisfaction Scale

This 6-item scale was adapted by the author from Fees et al's (1998) larger 22-item scale that measured the role satisfaction of 48 White and minority foster parents. Initially, the author adapted 18 items from Fees et al's larger 22-item scale. These items were : ***your role in helping children, your overall satisfaction with foster parenting, your working relationship with other related agencies, your relationship with your foster children, balancing foster care with your own family's***

schedule, availability of additional training, understanding the legal system, working relationships with human service agencies, opportunities to meet other foster families, having enough information about children placed, assistance from social workers, being able to reach social workers when needed, your relationship with biological family of foster child, recognition from your community for foster parenting, feeling appreciated for being a foster parent, understanding your role responsibilities as a foster parent, amount of payment for providing foster care, and being included in planning for foster children. These items had to be paired down, however, when very high inter correlations (.50 and above) were found between this scale and the agency and casework support scales. These high correlations indicated the possibility of considerable conceptual overlap between the role satisfaction scale and the agency and casework support scales. In an effort to remedy this potential overlap, 8-items were removed from the initial 18-item scales. These items, which were all found to overlap conceptually with items contained in the agency and casework support scales, were : ***working relationships with human service agencies, opportunities to meet other foster families, having enough information about children placed, assistance from social workers, being able to reach social workers when needed, feeling appreciated for being a foster parent, understanding your role responsibilities as a foster parent, amount of payment for providing foster care.***

While the second 10-item version of the foster parent role satisfaction scale had lower correlations with the now revised agency and casework support scales, the inter correlations were still high enough to suggest the need for more revision. The third and current version of the scale omitted all but 2-items (***understanding your role responsibilities as a foster parent, amount of payment for providing foster care***) from the 10-item scale.

Added to these 2-items were ***role in helping children, relationship with foster children, balancing foster care with own family's schedule, and feeling appreciated as a foster parent***. These 6 - items were selected from the original pool of 22-items because they best capture the role demand, social service and personal needs components of foster parent role satisfaction. As a result, the 6-item role satisfaction scale would appear to have content validity.

Agency and Casework Support Scales

The items for the researcher designed 5-item agency and 3-item support scales were culled by the author from a number of sources: Seaberg & Harrigan, 1999; Denby & Rindfleisch 1996 ; Rodwell & Biggerstaff, 1992 ; Rhodes, Orme & Buehler, 2001 ; Cox, Orme & Rhodes, 2002 ; Sanchirico et al., 1998 ; Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000 ; Simon & Simon, 1982 ; Urquhart, 1989 ; Stone & Stone, 1983 ; Brown & Calder, 2000 ; Gebel, 1996 ; Henry et al., 1991 ; Rindfleisch, Bean & Denby, 1998 ; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000). Initially, the agency and casework support scales were made up of 24

and 16 items respectively. Each of these items were selected from a pool of items that had been previously utilized by the aforementioned researchers to measure agency and casework support.

As per the prior research, these items were divided conceptually into bureaucratic functions (e.g. the agency's provision of concrete services to foster parents) and relationship dynamic (e.g. the quality of the interpersonal collaboration between the caseworker and the foster parent). The bureaucratic items are as follows ***: provided information related to the social and family history of the foster child, provided information related to the health and medical history of the foster child, provided the foster child's essential documents, provided information related to the length of time the child would remain in the home, provided information about family visiting schedule, provided sufficient reimbursement for needs of the children, provided transportation to and from the foster child's appointments, provided respite services, provided formal support, provided 24-hour hot line, provided medical/mental health service referrals for the foster child, provided educational support, provided sufficient clothing allowance, provided miscellaneous service referrals for the foster child, provided daycare and baby sitting services, provided written guidelines describing role responsibilities and requirements, provided organization chart of the agency, provided notification of foster parent's rights to read their record at agreed upon intervals, provided written confirmation of***

changes in agency policy, provided guidelines describing rights and grievance process, responded to needs as a foster parent in a timely manner, understand the difficulties I face as a foster parent, consider my opinion when making decisions about the foster child, and making me feel as if I were an important part of the agency.

These 24-items had to be paired down, however, when very high inter correlations (.50 and above) were found between this scale and the foster parent role satisfaction scale. The high inter correlation indicated the possibility of considerable conceptual overlap. To remedy this overlap, the scale was paired down to the following 12-items : ***provided information related to the social and family history of the foster child, provided the foster child's essential documents, provided information related to the length of time the child would remain in the home, provided sufficient reimbursement for needs of the children, provided transportation to and from the foster child's appointments, provided respite services, provided formal support, provided 24-hour hot line, provided sufficient clothing allowance for foster child, provided miscellaneous service referrals, provided day care and baby sitting services, provided written guidelines describing role and responsibilities***.

Less conceptual overlap was found with the role satisfaction and agency support with this second 12-item version of the scale. There was still enough overlap, however, to have a correlation with role satisfaction that was still relatively high. The third and current version of the scale has been paired

down to the following five items: ***provided child's essential documents, provided transportation for child's appointments, provided respite services, provided formal support, and provided daycare and baby sitting services***. Of the initial 24-items, these 5 items best capture, without conceptual overlap, the bureaucratic support functions of the agency. As a result, the 5-item agency support scale used for this study would appear to have content validity.

The initial casework support scale was made up of 16-items that measured the quality of the interpersonal collaboration between the caseworker and the foster parent. These items are as follows : ***keeping me informed of developments in my foster child's case, being available on a monthly, or as needed basis, providing information related to the foster child's well being, providing information related to the foster child's medical well-being, provided written notification of foster child's visiting schedule, provided written notification of foster home visits, understanding the difficulties I face as a foster parent, acknowledging the work I do as a foster parent , soliciting my input on the welfare of the foster child, being sensitive to my feelings about the foster child, responding to my concerns in a timely manner, being available by phone or in person to respond to my concerns, returning my telephone calls/messages in a timely manner, clarifying my role and responsibilities, facilitating service referrals for foster child in a timely manner, and accompanying me to appointments for the foster child.***

These 16-items had to be paired down, however, when very high inter correlations (.50 and above) were found between the scale and the foster parent role satisfaction scale. The high inter correlation indicated the possibility of considerable conceptual overlap. To remedy this overlap, the scale was paired down to the following 10-items : ***keeping me informed of developments in my foster child's case, being available on a monthly, or as needed basis, understanding the difficulties I face as a foster parent, acknowledging the work I do as a foster parent, soliciting my input on the welfare of the foster child, being sensitive to my feelings about the foster child, responding to my concerns in a timely manner, returning my telephone calls/ messages in a timely manner, clarifying my role and responsibilities, and accompanying me to appointments for the foster child.***

Less overlap was found with the role satisfaction and casework support with this second 10-item version of the scale. There was still enough overlap, however, to have a correlation with role satisfaction that was still relatively high. The third and current version of the scale has been paired down to the following 3 items: ***being sensitive to my feelings about the foster child, soliciting my input on the welfare of the foster child, being available to see me on a monthly, or as needed, basis.***

Of the initial 16-items, these 3-items best capture, without conceptual overlap, the interpersonal collaboration between the caseworker

and the foster parent. As a result, the 3-item casework support scale used for this study would appear to have content validity.

Foster Parent Role Perception Scale

This scale was adapted by the author from Le Prohn's (1996) larger 40-item scale that had been utilized to measure the role perception of 82 kinship and 98 non-kinship White and minority foster parents. The researcher adapted scale contains 33-items that capture and measure the study's nominal definition of foster parent role perception. As a result, this scale would appear to have content validity.

Section 2

RESEARCH DESIGN

This section includes a description of the sample selection procedure for the study, the procedures for ensuring the study's internal and external validity, and data analysis.

1 Sample Selection

The eligibility requirements for sample selection for this study was as follows: an urban minority foster parent who between January 1st 2001 and December 31st 2003 boarded at least one foster child for at least six continuous months.

The study's sample was recruited from a population of 347 currently active foster parents who belonged to Pride Family and Children's Services, a foster care agency located in Queens, New York. This population was selected because of its ethnic composition, its urban composition, its accessibility, and its even distribution of kinship and non-kinship foster parent sub-groups. As it relates to ethnic composition, 95% of the foster parents belong to one of the following ethnic minority groups: African-American, African-Caribbean, Hispanic, Indian–Caribbean, Native-American, and mixed race. The other 5%, who were excluded from the analysis, are American or ethnic White. As it relates to urban composition, 90% of the foster parents reside in an urban community located within the five boroughs of New York City. As it relates to accessibility, the foster parent population was easily

accessible as a group by way of advertisements that were placed in the agency's monthly newsletter to the foster parents. As it relates to the even distribution of kinship and non-kinship foster parent sub-groups, the foster parent population of the agency is divided almost evenly between kinship and non-kinship foster parents.

As a result of issues related to potential coercion, and the need to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the foster parents, the study sample was recruited by way of an advertisement that was placed in the agency's monthly newsletter to its foster parents. Because of uncertainty related to how many sample eligible foster parents would respond, it was decided that all sample eligible foster parents who responded to the recruitment advertisement would be included in the study. A total of 250 of the agency's 315 sample eligible foster parents responded to the recruitment advertisement. Each of these foster parents was sent a study package, which consisted of a rating scale cover sheet, four rating scales, an information page, and a post-paid return addressed envelope. Follow up reminders were mailed two and four weeks after the initial mailing.

A total of 188 rating scales (e.g. a package of the four rating scales and a rating scales cover sheet) were returned. This represented a 60% return rate. Of the returned rating scales packages, 16 were unusable because whole sections or a number of questions were not answered. The missing information had no particular pattern. For example, no two rating scales had the same missing information. Of the 172 usable rating scales, 13

had demographic information related to income missing, while another 7 had demographic information related to age missing.

Although the sample did not evaluate all eligible foster parents, the large number of returned usable rating scales (55% of the study eligible population and 54% of the total urban minority foster parent population) suggest that it might be representative of the agency's overall foster parent population, and the study's target population.

Description of Respondents

Table 8 contains information on the demographic characteristics of the sample population. The kinship and non-kinship respondents were significantly different as it related to ethnicity, $\chi^2(6, N = 172) = 14.48, P < .05$. That is, 72% of the kinship respondents were African-American, compared to 56% of the non-kinship respondents. Further, 30% of the non-kinship respondents were African-Caribbean, compared to 10% of the kinship respondents. There was also significant difference as it related to years as a foster parent, $\chi^2(4, N = 172) = 15.87, P < .05$. That is, 32% of the non-kinship respondents had served as a foster parent for between 3-5 years, compared to 17% of the non-kinship respondents. Conversely, 24% of non-kinship respondents had served as a foster parent for 11 plus years, compared to 7% of kinship respondents.

The aforementioned findings are in keeping with the demographic characteristics of the agency's total foster parent population. That is, African-

American makes up the largest percentage of the agency's kinship foster parents. Further, non-kinship foster parents typically remain foster parents for a longer period of time than their kinship counterparts. This in large part due to kinship homes, which are opened specifically for the care of a relative child, being closed once their foster child returns home or is adopted.

As it relates to the demographic characteristics gender, age, borough of residence, income and education there were no statistically significant differences between the kinship and non-kinship respondents.

Table 8. Demographic Characteristics of the foster Parents Who Returned Completed Rating Scales (By Foster Parent Status)

	Kinship *n* = 74		Non-Kinship *n* = 98		
Demographics	**n***	**%**	**n***	**%**	**Significance**
Gender					
M	7	10	10	10	NS
F	67	90	88	90	
Total	74	100	98	100	
Age					
21-25	2	3	1	1	NS
26-35	10	14	4	4	
36-45	19	26	25	26	
46-55	25	34	31	32	
56-65	8	11	26	27	
65+	6	8	8	8	
Total	70	96	95	98	

“ Table 8—Continued.”

	Kinship	*n* = 74	Non-Kinship	*n* = 98	
Demographics	**n***	**%**	**n***	**%**	**Significance**
Ethnicity					
Afro-American	53	72	55	56	$p < .05$
Afro-Caribbean	7	10	29	30	
Hispanic	9	12	13	13	
Native-American	1	1	1	1	
Mixed Race	2	3			
Indian-Caribbean	2	3			
Total	74	100	98	100	
Borough of Residence					
Queens	29	39	46	47	NS
Brooklyn	37	50	48	49	
Bronx	4	5	3	3	
Manhattan	2	3	1	1	
Staten Island	2	3			
Total	74	100	98	100	

"Table 8—Continued."

	Kinship *n* = 74		Non-Kinship *n* = 98		
Demographics	**n***	%	**n***	%	**Significance**
Income					
0-$20,000	24	32	24	25	NS
21-$40,000	31	42	45	46	
41-$60,000	10	14	14	14	
61-$80,000	3	4	5	5	
$80,000 +	1	1	2	2	
Total	69	93	90	92	
Years as a foster parent					
0-2	28	38	23	24	$p < .05$
3-5	24	32	17	17	
6-8	11	15	20	20	
9-11	6	8	13	13	
11+	5	7	23	24	
Total	74	100	96	98	

"Table 8—Continued."

	Kinship *n* = 74		Non-Kinship *n* = 98		
Demographics	**n***	**%**	**n***	**%**	**Significance**
Education					
Less than HS	7	9	13	13	NS
High-School	44	59	57	58	
Associates Degree	13	18	18	18	
Bachelors Degree	8	11	6	6	
Masters Degree	2	3	2	2	
Total	74	100	96	97	

* The n for each variable may differ from the total number of cases in each group due to missing values

All percentages rounded off to the nearest integer

Sample Representativeness

Because participation in this study was anonymous, it was not possible to identify by name those foster parents who did not return rating scales. The best that can be said about the potential representativeness of this study's sample is that the demographic breakdown of the respondents (e.g. 43% kinship, 57% non-kinship, 90% female, 10% male, 44 % Queens's residence, 50% Brooklyn residence) approximates that of Pride's total foster parent population. As a result, there is every reasons to

believe that this study's sample is fairly representative of the agency's total urban minority foster parent population.

2 Internal Validity

The best model for good internal validity is an experimental design where potentially contaminating variables are controlled via random assignment to the condition (Weinbach & Grinnell, Jr, 2000) . The experimental design also addresses and ensures temporal priority. An experimental design was not possible for this study because the respondents already came with the given attributes reflected in the study's consequent (role satisfaction) and antecedent variables (perceived agency and casework support, and role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child's well-being). In the absence of random assignment to the condition, internal validity for this study was established by way of eliminating any competing hypotheses and establishing temporal priority. In addition, there was the standard empirical research requirement that co-variation be established between the study's consequent and antecedent variables. The following is a description of the efforts that were made to establish this study's internal validity.

a. Co-variation

In order to establish co-variation it was necessary to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed between each of the study's antecedent variables and its consequent variable, holding any potentially contaminating variables constant. The potentially contaminating variables for this study was being either a kinship or non-kinship minority foster parent. See below, section b - elimination of competing hypotheses - for an explanation of why being a minority foster may be a potentially contaminating variable in this study.

Findings related to co-variation can be found in Table 17.

b. Elimination of Competing Hypotheses

Findings from available research (Gebel, 1996 ; Berrick et al, 1994 ; Inglehart, 1994 ; Cuddeback & Orme, 2001 ; Le Prohn's, 1994 ; Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000 ; Cuddeback, 2004 ; Gibson, 2002 ; Curtis & Denby, 2004 ; Chipman, Wells & Johnson,2002 ; Albert, Iaci & Catlin, 2004) consistently suggest that both kinship and non-kinship minority foster parents report high levels of role satisfaction and feelings of responsibility for their foster child's well being regardless of the level of support received from their agency or caseworker. Gibson (2002) suggests that minority foster parents' high level of role satisfaction may be related to a cultural history of care giving for extended and non-related children. As a result, it is feasible to suggest that being both a kinship or

non-kinship foster parent who belongs to a non-White ethnic group are potentially contaminating variable that could also account for, or influence, role satisfaction. These potentially contaminating variables did not have to be controlled for statistically, however, as all the study's respondents were either a kinship or non-kinship foster parent who belonged to one of the study's six, non-White ethnic minority groups.

c. Temporal Priority

For a foster parent to report role satisfaction, she or he must at the very least have a foster child in their home. When a child is placed in the foster home, the foster parent is then required to have ongoing communication and interaction with their assigned caseworker, and any other number of agency representatives. Given the aforementioned, it can be logically deduced that a foster parent could not report role satisfaction until they are actually carrying out the functions of the role. The same can not be said of role perception, however, because it is possible for a foster parent to have a preconceived definition of their role as a foster parent prior to any placement in their home of a foster child. As suggested in the available research, perspective and active minority foster parents, who tend to be older, and have already raised children, typically reported higher degrees of role responsibly for the foster child's well-being than their White counterparts regardless of whether or not a child was placed in

their home (Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000). Given this, it is highly likely that role perception can and does precede role satisfaction.

Although two of the three conditions were met to establish this study's internal validity, issues with the temporal priority of one of the antecedent variables (role perception) potentially decreased the internal validity of the study.

d. External Validity

The study's hypotheses were tested via an analysis of data provided by 172 urban minority foster parents who boarded at least one foster child for a minimum of six continuous months between January 1st 2001 and December 31st 2003. These 172 foster parents accounted for 55% of Pride Family and Children's Services foster parents who were eligible for the study, and 54% of the agency's overall foster parent population. The foster parents who took part in the study did not significantly differ from 90% of the agency's total foster parent population as it related to ethnicity, place of residence and distribution between kinship and non-kinship foster parents. There is no demographic information, however, on the differences or similarities between the foster parents who participated in the study and the agency's overall foster population as it relates to gender, age, income, years as a foster parent and education. The best that can be observed is that the foster parents who participated in the study are representative of the agency's foster

parents as it relates to the aforementioned noted demographic similarities. Consequently, results from this study have good external validity as it relates to those non participating agency foster parents who are from one of the ethic minority groups represented in the study, reside in Brooklyn or Queens and is either a kinship or Non-kinship foster parent.

External validity to other urban foster care agencies with a large percentage of ethnic minority foster parents is potentially good.

Section 3

DATA ANALYSIS

1 Procedures

The data collected from the study's rating scales and rating scales' cover sheets were coded, verified and entered on a Dell Dimension 2400 Intel Pentium 4 home computer. The SPSS 12.0 version for Windows was the statistical package used in the computer analysis of the data.

The data collected from the study's rating scales were at the quasi-interval level. That is, the data were continuous and somewhere between ordinal and interval level.

Given the quasi interval level of the data and the primary goal of the study (to determine the strength of the relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group: a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with caseworker, and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being), multiple regression analysis, in the form of multiple correlation coefficients, were used to analyze the study's collected data. Multiple regression analysis is the statistical procedure of choice when assessing the relationship between a consequent variable and a group of two or more antecedent variables. It is also the statistical

method of choice when analyzing rating scales' data that is continuous and somewhere between ordinal and interval level (Greenstein, 2001).

In order to determine whether or not the study's hypothesis was confirmed or rejected, the Ho was rejected if findings were positive and $p < .05$. In the case that the Ho was rejected, the Ha was accepted and the Hr asserted.

To address the secondary goal of the study (to assess whether or not there are any statistical differences in the level of influence that the antecedent variables as group have on the role satisfaction of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups of urban minority foster parents), independent *t* tests were used to analyze the mean scores of the total sample and its kinship and non-kinship sub-group. The independent *t* test, which is one of a group of parametric tests, is the procedure of choice when analyzing whether or not there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two independent sample groups (Weinbach & Grinnell, Jr, 2000).

In addition to independent *t* tests, cross tabulations and chi-squares were used to analyze the cumulative scores of the total sample and its kinship and non-kinship sub groups on individual items contained in each of the study's four rating scales. The chi-square, which is one of a group of parametric tests, is the procedure of choice when analyzing whether or not there is a statistically significant association between nominal-level variables (Weinbach & Grinnell, Jr, 2000). In order to be

able to run chi-squares with this study's quasi-interval data, the cumulative responses to the items contained in the study's four rating scales were collapsed into two dichotomous groups (e.g. the highest cumulative score that could be obtained on the respective rating scale vs the combination of all the other cumulative scores). By collapsing the cumulative responses to items contained in the study's four scales into two dichotomous groups, the previously quasi-interval data could be able to analyzed as nominal level data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The data were collected on the study's four variables in order to do the following :1, determine the frequency distribution of the study's four designated variables among the total, as well as the sub-groups (kinship and non-kinship) of the sample ; 2, determine the frequency distribution of the cumulative responses to items contained in the study's four rating scales ; 3, determine the statistical association between the cumulative responses of the sample's sub-groups (kinship and non-kinship) to items contained in the study's four rating scales ; 4, to test the study's three hypothesis with the total as well as sub-groups (kinship and non-kinship) of respondents ; and 5, to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups. Findings are presented as they relate to these purposes.

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS

The distribution of foster parent role satisfaction, agency support, casework support and role perception can be found in Table 9, Table 10, Table 11 and Table 12, respectively.

Foster Parent Role Satisfaction

For the total sample of respondents the scores ranged from 12 to 30 with a mean of 25 and a standard deviation of 3.2. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 24 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for foster parent role satisfaction, the data show that over 60% of the total sample of respondents are satisfied with their role as a foster parent (see Table 9).

For the kinship respondents the scores ranged from 12 to 30 with a mean of 25 and a standard deviation of 3.5. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 24 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for foster parent role satisfaction, the data show that over 60% of the kinship respondents are satisfied with their role as a foster parent (see Table 9).

For the non-kinship respondents the scores ranged from 18 to 30 with a mean of 26 and a standard deviation of 2.9. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 24 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for foster parent role satisfaction, the data show that over 60% of the non-kinship respondents are satisfied with their role as a foster parent (see Table 9).

TABLE 9. Frequency Distribution of Foster Parent Role Satisfaction Cumulative Scale Scores

Scores	Response Category	Total *N* = 172		Kinship *n* = 74		Non-Kinship *n* = 98	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
30	Very Satisfied	19	(11)	7	(10)	12	(12)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
24-29	Satisfied	115	(67)	49	(66)	66	(68)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
18-23	Somewhat Satisfied	35	(20)	15	(20)	20	(20)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
12-17	Unsatisfied	3	(2)	3	(4)	0	(0)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
6-11	Very Unsatisfied	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
	Total	172	100	74	100	98	100

Agency Support

For the total sample of respondents the scores ranged from 5 to 25 with a mean of 15 and a standard deviation of 5.5. The distribution of the scores were skewed negatively.

As 20 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for agency support, the data show that over 70% of the total sample of respondents were below this score and therefore less than adequately satisfied with the level of agency support received (see Table 10).

For the kinship respondents the scores ranged from 5 to 25 with a mean of 15 and a standard deviation of 5.5. The distribution of the scores were skewed negatively.

As 20 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for agency support, the data show that over 70% of the kinship respondents were below this score and therefore less than adequately satisfied with the level of agency support received (see Table 10).

For the non-kinship respondents the scores ranged from 5 to 25 with a mean of 14 and a standard deviation of 5.5. The distribution of the scores were skewed negatively.

As 20 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for agency support, the data show that over 70% of the non-kinship respondents were below this score and therefore less than adequately satisfied with the level of agency support received (see Table 10).

TABLE 10. Frequency Distribution of Agency Support Cumulative Scale Scores

		Total ***N* = 172**		**Kinship** ***n* = 74**		**Non-Kinship** ***n* = 98**	
Scores	Response Category						
		n	%	n	%	n	%
25	Strong Support	10	(6)	3	(4)	7	(7)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
20-24	Adequate Support	32	(19)	16	(22)	16	(16)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
15-19	Some Support	47	(27)	23	(31)	24	(25)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
10-14	Minimal Support	48	(28)	17	(23)	31	(32)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
5-9	No Support	35	(20)	15	(20)	20	(20)
	Total	172	100	74	100	98	100

Casework Support

For the total sample of respondents the scores ranged from 3 to 15 with a mean of 12 and a standard deviation of 2.6. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 12 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for casework support, the data show that over 40% of the total sample of respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the adequate level. The data also show that 31% of the total sample of the respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the strong support level (see Table 11).

For the kinship respondents the scores ranged from 3 to 15 with a mean of 12 and a standard deviation of 2.9. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 12 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for casework support, the data show that over 40% of the kinship respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the adequate level. The data also show that 30% of the kinship respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the strong support level (see Table11).

For the non-kinship respondents the scores ranged from 5 to 15 with a mean of 12 and a standard deviation of 2.4. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 12 represents a “4” on the 5-point scale for casework support, the data show that over 30% of the non-kinship respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the adequate level. The data also show

that 33% of the non-kinship respondents perceived receiving casework support that is at the strong support level (see Table11).

TABLE 11. Frequency Distribution of Casework Support Cumulative Scale Scores

		Total ***N* = 172**		**Kinship** ***n* = 74**		**Non-Kinship** ***n* = 98**	
Scores	Response Category						
		n	%	n	%	n	%
15	Strong Support	54	(31)	22	(30)	32	(33)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
12-14	Adequate Support	71	(41)	34	(45)	37	(38)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
9-11	Some Support	34	(20)	10	(14)	24	(24)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
6-8	Minimal Support	9	(5)	5	(7)	4	(4)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
3-5	No Support	4	(3)	3	(4)	1	(1)
	Total	172	100	74	100	98	100

Role Perception

For the total sample of respondents the scores ranged from 70 to 198 with a mean of 151 and a standard deviation of 30.4. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 132 represents a “4” on the 6-point scale for role perception, the data show that over 30% of the total sample of respondents perceived being 60% responsible for a foster child’s well-being (see Table 12).

For the kinship respondents the scores ranged from 72 to 198 with a mean of 149 and a standard deviation of 32.6. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 132 represents a “4” on the 6-point scale for role perception, the data show that over 30% of the kinship respondents perceived being 60% responsible for a foster child’s well-being (see Table 12).

For the non-kinship respondents the scores ranged from 70 to 198 with a mean of 153 and a standard deviation of 28.7. The distribution of the scores were skewed positively.

As 132 represents a “4” on the 6-point scale for role perception, the data show that over 30% of the non-kinship respondents perceived being 60% responsible for a foster child’s well-being (see Table 12).

TABLE 12. Frequency Distribution of Role Perception Cumulative Scale Scores

		Total		Kinship		Non-Kinship	
		***N* = 172**		***n* = 74**		***n* = 98**	
Scores	Response Category						
		n	%	n	%	n	%
198	100 % Responsibility	4	(2)	2	(3)	2	(2)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
165-197	80 % Responsibility	59	(35)	24	(32)	35	(36)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
132-164	60 % Responsibility	68	(39)	26	(35)	42	(43)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
99 -131	40 % Responsibility	29	(17)	15	(20)	14	(14)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
66-98	20 % Responsibility	12	(7)	7	(10)	5	(5)
		n	%	n	%	n	%
33-65	10 % Responsibility	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
	Total	172	100	74	100	98	100

Cumulative Responses and the Chi-Square Test of Association For Items Contained in the Study's Four Rating Scales

Foster Parent Role Satisfaction Scale

There were no statistically significant differences found between the kinship and non-kinship respondents on any of the six items contained in the foster parent role satisfaction scale. That is, the kinship and non-kinship respondents had similar responses to the six items contained in the role satisfaction scale (see Table 13).

Table 13. Percentage of Respondents With Cumulative Responses of Very Satisfied With Items Contained in Foster Parent Role Satisfaction Scale

	Total *N* = 172	Kinship *n* = 74	Non-Kinship *n* = 98	
Items	**Very Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**	**Significance**
1. Relationship With Foster Child.	n % 111(65)	n % 52 (70)	n % 59 (60)	NS
2. Role in Helping Child	n % 116 (67)	n % 54 (73)	n % 62 (63)	NS
3. Balancing Foster Care with Own Family's Schedule	n % 75 (44)	n % 31 (42)	n % 44 (45)	NS
4. Feeling Appreciated For being a Foster Parent.	n % 69 (40)	n % 27 (36)	n % 42 (43)	NS
5. Understanding Role responsibilities	n % 94 (55)	n % 38 (51)	n % 56 (57)	NS
6. Amount of Payment Received for Providing Foster care	n % 30 (17)	n % 13 (18)	n % 17 (17)	NS

Agency Support Scale

Statistically significant differences were found between the kinship and non-kinship respondents in regards to the agency support scale item provided the child's essential documents, $\chi^2(1, N = 172) = 4.84, P < .05$. That is, 38% of kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with agency support as it related to the provision of the child's essential documents, compared to 22% of non-kinship respondents (see Table 14).

For the other four items contained in the agency support scale, there were no statistically significant differences found between the responses of the kinship and non-kinship respondents. That is, the kinship and non-kinship respondents had similar responses to the four remaining items contained in the agency support scale (see Table 14).

Table 14. Percentage of Respondents With Cumulative Responses of Strong Support for Items Contained in Agency Support Scale

Items	Total *N* = 172 Strong Support	Kinship *n* = 74 Strong Support	Non-Kinship *n*= 98 Strong Support	Significance
	n %	n %	n %	
1. Provided Foster Child's essential documents.	50 (29)	28 (38)	22 (22)	$p < .05$
	n %	n %	n %	
2. Provided transportation for Child's appointments	28 (16)	12 (16)	16 (16)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
3. Provided respite services	26 (15)	11 (15)	15 (15)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
4. Provided formal support	29 (17)	12 (16)	17 (17)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
5. Provided daycare and baby sitting services	37 (22)	17(23)	20 (20)	NS

Casework Support Scale

There were no statistically significant differences found between the kinship and non-kinship respondents on any of the three items contained in the casework support scale. That is, the kinship and non-kinship respondents had similar responses to the three items contained in the casework support scale (see Table 15).

Table 15. Percentage of Respondents With Cumulative Responses of Strong Support for Items Contained in Casework Support Scale

	Total N = 172	**Kinship *n* = 74**	**Non-Kinship *n*= 98**	
Items	**Strong Support**	**Strong Support**	**Strong Support**	**Significance**
	n **%**	n **%**	n **%**	
1. Being sensitive. to my feelings about the foster child	98 (57)	32 (43)	42 (43)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
2. Soliciting my input on the welfare of the foster child	65 (38)	27 (36)	38 (39)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
3. Caseworker being available to see me on a monthly, or as needed basis	83 (48)	39 (53)	44 (45)	NS

Role Perception Scale

There were no statistically significant differences found between the kinship and non-kinship respondents on any of the three selected items contained in the role perception scale. That is, the kinship and non-kinship respondents had similar responses to the three selected items contained in the role perception scale (see Table 16).

Table 16. Percentage of Respondents With Cumulative Responses of 100% Responsibility for Selected Items Contained in the Role Perception Scale

	Total ***N*** **= 172**	**Kinship** ***n*** **= 74**	**Non-Kinship** ***n*** **= 98**	
Items	**100% Responsibility**	**100% Responsibility**	**100% Responsibility**	**Significance**
	n %	n %	n %	
1. Help develop foster child's skills	87 (51)	39 (53)	48 (49)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
2. Help foster Child with emotional problems	102 (59)	44 (59)	58 (59)	NS
	n %	n %	n %	
3. Work with foster child's teachers	113 (66)	51 (69)	62 (63)	NS

Hypothesis and Questions Informing Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis 1

An urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H1o:There is no relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Hypothesis 2

An urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H2o:There is no relationship between an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Hypothesis 3

An urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H3o:There is no relationship between an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

The aforementioned hypotheses were tested by statistically analyzing the relationship of the antecedent variables to the consequent variable in order to determine the following :

1. The zero order correlation between each of the antecedent variables, agency support, casework support, role perception and the consequent variable, role satisfaction.

To determine the zero order correlation, a Pearson's *r,* which is the most commonly used statistical formula when analyzing the linear relationship between variables at the quasi interval level of measurement (Weinbach & Grinnell, Jr., 2000), was computed with the study's three antecedents and one consequent variable.

The results of the computed Pearson's *r* are presented in Table 17, which is a correlation matrix that allows the reader to find the linear correlation between any two of the study's four variables. The reader can find the linear correlation between any two of the study's four variables by noting the correlation coefficient that appears in the matrix where the row in which the first variable appears intersects with the column headed by the second variable.

Findings relevant to the zero order correlation are presented in Table 17. In interpreting the data, it is important to note that correlation coefficients range between -1.0 (perfect negative) at one end to + 1.0 (perfect positive), with 0.0 (no linear connection) at the mid-point.

As can be observed in Table 17, the zero order correlation between role satisfaction and agency support was r = .38, p < .01, which indicates a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables.

The zero order correlation between role satisfaction and casework support was r = .48, p <. 01, which indicates a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables.

The zero order correlation between role satisfaction and role perception was r = .10, p > .01, which indicates that there is not a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables. As a result, the null hypothesis of there is no relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and role perception is asserted.

The reader should note that the aforementioned significance findings say nothing about the effect size of the relationships between the respective variables. Rather, it simply indicates that there is less than 1 in a 1000 chances that the aforementioned described relationships between role satisfaction and agency support, and role satisfaction and casework support occurred by chance. Conversely, the not significant finding between role satisfaction and role perception indicates that there is a high probability that the observed relationship between the two variables is as a result of chance.

An explanation of potential reasons why role perception was not related to an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction will be presented in the summary chapter of this document

Table 17. Role Satisfaction, Agency Support, Casework Support, and Role Perception Correlation Matrix (Total Sample *N* = 172)

Variables	1	2	3	4
1 Role Satisfaction		.376**	.479**	.102
2 Agency Support			.341**	.038
3 Casework Support				.145
4 Role Perception				

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

2. The empirical relationship between the study's three antecedent variables as a group and an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction.

To determine the empirical relationship between the study's three antecedent variables as a group and an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction, a multiple correlation coefficient was computed with the study's three antecedent variables and its one consequent variable. The multiple correlation coefficient is the statistical procedure of choice when assessing the relationship between a consequent variable and a group of two or more antecedent variables. It is also the statistical method of

choice when analyzing rating scales' data that is at the quasi interval level of measurement (Greenstein, 2001).

Findings relevant to the multiple correlation between the study's antecedent variables as a group and its consequent variable are presented in Tables 18, 19 & 20. In interpreting the data, it is important to note that the R represents the absolute value of the multiple correlation coefficient between the study's consequent variable and the combination of the study's three antecedent variables. The R^2 represents the proportion of variance in the study's consequent variable that is explained by the study's three antecedent variables.

The multiple correlation coefficient between the three antecedent variables combined and an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction is .53 (F = 21.96 ; df = 3, 168 ; p < .05). The three antecedent variables in combination account for 28% of the variance in an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 18). The entire variance in an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction was accounted for by the two variables agency support and casework support. While these two variables had considerable overlap, they also made significant independent contributions to the variance in an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 18).

The significance score (F = 21.96 ; df = 3, 168 ; p < .05) supported a rejection of the study's null hypothesis 1 : there is no relationship between the three antecedent variables as a group and an

urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction. That is, the results obtained regarding co-variation do not "fit" into what would be expected by chance. As a result, the study's hypothesis 1, an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction is the function of the three antecedent variables as a group, is confirmed.

Table 18. Independent Contribution and Multiple Correlation between Antecedent Variables and an Urban Minority Foster Parent's Level of Role Satisfaction (Total Sample N = 172)

Antecedent Variables	Cumulative R	Cumulative R^2	Difference in Total R^2 if Variable Removed
Agency Support	.38	.14 *	.14 *
Casework Support	.53	.28 *	.14 *
Role Perception	.53	.28 **	.00 **

* change in R^2. p < .001

** change in R^2. p > .05

The multiple correlation coefficient between the three antecedent variables combined and an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction is .60 (F = 12.90 ; df = 3, 70 ; p < .05). The three antecedent variables in combination account for 36% of the variance in an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 19). The entire variance in an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction was accounted for by the two variables agency support and casework support. While these two variables had considerable overlap, they also made significant independent contributions to the variance in an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 19).

The significance score (F = 12.90 ; df = 3, 70 ; p < .05) supported a rejection of the study's null hypothesis 2 : there is no relationship between the three antecedent variables as a group and an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction. That is, the results obtained regarding co-variation do not "fit" into what would be expected by chance. As a result, the study's hypothesis 2, an urban minority kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction is the function of the three antecedent variables as a group, is confirmed.

Table 19. Independent Contribution and Multiple Correlation between Antecedent Variables and an Urban Minority Kinship Foster Parent's Level of Role Satisfaction (*n* = 74)

Antecedent Variables	Cumulative R	Cumulative R^2	Difference in Total R^2 if Variable Removed
Agency Support	.47	.22 *	.22*
Casework Support	.60	.36 *	.14*
Role Perception	.60	.36 **	.00**

* change in R^2. p < .001

** change in R^2. p > .05

The multiple correlation coefficient between the three antecedent variables combined and an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction is .46 (F = 8.65 ; df = 3, 94 ; p < .05). The three antecedent variables in combination account for 22% of the variance in an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 20). The entire variance in an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction was accounted for by the two variables agency support and casework support. While these two variables had considerable overlap, they also made significant independent

contributions to the variance in an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see Table 20).

The significance score (F = 8.65 ; df = 3, 94 ; p < .05) supported a rejection of the study's null hypothesis 3 : there is no relationship between the three antecedent variables as a group and an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction. That is, the results obtained regarding co-variation do not "fit" into what would be expected by chance. As a result, the study's hypothesis 3, an urban minority non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction is the function of the three antecedent variables as a group, is confirmed.

Table 20. Independent Contribution and Multiple Correlation between Antecedent Variables and an Urban Minority Non-Kinship Foster Parent's Level of Role Satisfaction (*n* = 98)

Antecedent Variables	Cumulative R	Cumulative R^2	Difference in Total R^2 if Variable Removed
Agency Support	.31	.09*	.09*
Casework Support	.46	.21*	.12*
Role Perception	.46	.22**	.00**

* change in R^2. p < .001

** change in R^2 . p > .05

3. The differences between the mean scores of the kinship and non-kinship respondents on the study's four scales.

To determine whether or not there were any statistical differences between the mean scores of the kinship and non-kinship respondents on any of the study's four scales, a series of independent t tests were run with the data. The independent t test, which is one of a group of parametric tests, is the procedure of choice when analyzing whether or not

there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two independent sample groups (Weinbach & Grinnell, Jr, 2000)

Findings related to the mean scores of the kinship and non-kinship respondents on role satisfaction, agency support, casework support and role perception scales are presented in Table 21. As utilized in this study, the four scales had internal reliability that ranged from acceptable to excellent: role satisfaction ($\alpha =$ .71), agency support (α = .81), casework support (α = .86) and role perception (α = .94).

As can be observed in Table 21, there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the kinship and non-kinship respondents on any of the four rating scales.

Table 21. Mean Levels of Role Satisfaction, Agency Support, Casework Support, and Role Perception Scale Scores of Kinship and Non-Kinship Foster Parent Sub-Groups

	Kinship (*n*=74)		Non-Kinship (*n*=98)			
Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Role Satisfaction	25.27	3.54	25.67	2.93	-.817	.415
Agency Support	15.38	5.51	14.80	5.55	.683	.495
Casework Support	12.32	2.87	12.38	2.42	-. 132	.895
Role Perception	148.95	32.57	152.81	28.79	-. 825	.411

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS & NEXT STEP

1. Summary of Research Purpose, Procedures, and Findings

This study's primary goal was to determine the strength of the relationship between an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and the following three variables as a group: a perceived supportive relationship with the foster care agency, a perceived supportive relationship with caseworker, and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being. The secondary goal of the study was to assess whether or not there were any statistical differences in the level of influence that the above-described variables as a group have on the role satisfaction of the kinship and non-kinship sub-groups of urban minority foster parents.

Toward this end, a quasi experimental study of 172 urban minority foster parents (98 non-kinship and 74 kinship) who boarded at least one foster child for a minimum of six continuous months between January 1st, 2001 and December 31st, 2003 was conducted. Multiple regression analysis in the form of multiple correlation coefficients, frequency distributions and independent t tests were used to analyze the study data, which were collected via rating scales and rating scales' cover sheet. The study's hypothesis was that an urban minority foster parent's level of role

satisfaction (consequent variable) is a function of the following three antecedent variables as a group :

1. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their foster care agency.
2. The foster parent perceives a supportive relationship with their caseworker.
3. The foster parent's role perception is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being.

The aforementioned hypothesis was tested with the total sample of respondents and its kinship and non-kinship foster parent sub-groups.

Findings from the analysis confirmed the study's hypothesis with the total sample of respondents and its kinship and non-kinship sub-groups (see Tables 18, 19 & 20). That is, when the hypothesis was tested with the total sample and its kinship and non-kinship sub groups, a strong, positive statistical relationship was found between the antecedent variables as a "group" and an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction.

While the study's three hypothesis were confirmed, it has to be noted that as group, only two of the three antecedent variables, agency and casework support were significantly related to an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction. The third, role perception, accounted for less than 1% of the variance in an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction.

There are two possible explanations for this non significant finding. The first explanation relates to the reliability and validity of the role perception scale. That is, the scale may have had poor internal reliability and poor content validity in terms of actually measuring role perception. Neither of these explanations appear valid, however, as the role perception scale had the highest internal reliability of any of the study's four scales ; an alpha of .94. Further, the items contained in the scale did capture the study's nominal definition of role perception.

The second and more plausible explanation is related to the author's utilization of a conceptual framework, role theory, which is not sensitive to the unique cultural experiences of ethnic minority groups such as African-Americans, African-Caribbean, and Hispanics etc. All of these groups have a cultural experience with child rearing that is characterized by caring for relative as well as non related children (Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996 ; Gibson, 2002). Findings from the available research suggest that these unique cultural experiences around child rearing are manifested via significant differences in the fostering experiences of minority and White foster parents (Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996). That is, kinship, non-kinship, active or perspective minority foster parents report significantly higher levels of responsibility for a foster child's well-being than do their white counterparts ((Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy, 2000; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996; Le Prohn, 1994).

Given this fact, it is feasible to suggest a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for a foster child's well-being is a cultural expectation for the respondents, rather than an influencing factor on their level of role satisfaction. If this is the case, it is clear that any analysis of the relationship between a minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction and role perception would not offer the variability of responses needed to detect a significant relationship, which may explain this study's non finding.

Denby & Ridfleisch (1996) have suggested that the current theoretical frames for understanding foster parent role satisfaction, all of which have been utilized for the analysis of primarily White suburban foster parents, fall short of capturing the unique cultural experiences of minority foster parents as it relates to beliefs about child rearing. Based on this study's findings, the author suggests that role theory, particularly its role perception component, is not a useful theoretical frame for understanding the factors that influence the role satisfaction of urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents.

2. **Research Findings and Role Satisfaction**

Findings from this study indicated that as a total sample, the majority of respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with their role as a foster parent. That is, 78% of the total sample of respondents' cumulative scores on the role satisfaction scale were within the satisfied to

very satisfied range (Table 9). The aspects of their role that the total sample of respondents reported most satisfaction with related to their interactions with the foster children. That is, 65% of the total sample of the respondents reported being very satisfied with their relationship with the foster child (Table 13). Similarly, 67% of the total sample of respondents reported being very satisfied with their role in helping children (Table 13).

The aspect of their role the total sample of respondents reported least satisfaction with was related to reimbursement. For example, only 17 % of the total sample of respondents reported being very satisfied with the amount of payment received for providing foster care (Table 13).

For the kinship and non-kinship respondents, similarly high levels of satisfaction with role are reported. For example, 76% of kinship respondents had cumulative role satisfaction scores that fell within the satisfied to very satisfied range, while 80% of the non-kinship respondents also had cumulative scores that fell within this range (Table 9).

For kinship respondents, the aspects of their role they reported most satisfaction related to their interactions with foster children. That is, 70% of the kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with their relationship with the foster child. Similarly, 73% of the kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with their role in helping children (Table 13).

The aspect of their role that the kinship respondents reported least satisfaction with related to reimbursement. For example, only 18% of the kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with the amount of payment received for providing foster care (Table 13).

For non-kinship respondents, the aspects of their role they reported most satisfaction with related to their interactions with foster children. That is, 60% of the non-kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with their relationship with the foster child. Similarly, 63% of the non-kinship respondents' reported being very satisfied with their role in helping children (Table 13).

The aspect of their role that the non-kinship respondents reported least satisfaction with was related to reimbursement. For example, only 17% of the non-kinship respondents reported being very satisfied with the amount of payment received for providing foster care (Table 13).

The aforementioned findings are consistent with the earlier research findings of Seaberg & Harrigan (1999), Denby & Rindfleisch (1996) & Rhodes, Orme & McSurdy (2000), whose studies suggested that regardless of foster parent status, minority foster parents most typically report high levels of role satisfaction with their work with the foster children, and low levels of satisfaction with reimbursement and respite services offered by the foster care agency.

3. **Research Findings and Agency Support**

Findings from this study indicated that as a total sample, the majority of respondent did not report strong support from the agency. For example, 75% of the total sample of respondents' cumulative scores on the agency support scale fell within the some, minimal and no support range (Table 10).

The aspects of agency support that the total sample of respondents reported receiving least support with were the following : the provision of transportation and respite services (Table 14). That is, only 16% of the total sample of respondents reported being strongly supported via the agency providing transportation to the child's appointments (Table 14). Similarly, only 15% of the total sample of respondents reported being strongly supported via the agency's provision of respite services (Table 14).

For the kinship and non-kinship respondents, similarly low levels of satisfaction with agency support were reported. For example, 74% of the kinship respondents had cumulative scale scores that fell within the some, minimal and no support range of the agency support scale (Table 10). The aspects of agency support that the kinship respondents were least satisfied with was the provision of transportation, and respite services. That is, only 16% of kinship respondents reported strong support via the agency's provision of transportation to the foster child's appointment (Table 14). Similarly, only 15% of the kinship respondents

reported receiving strong support via the agency's provision of respite services (Table 14).

For the non-kinship respondents, 77% had cumulative scores that fell within the some, minimal and no support range of perceived agency support (Table 10). The aspects of agency support that the non-kinship respondents were least satisfied with were provision of transportation and respite services. That is, only 16% of non kinship respondents reported strong support via the agency's provision of transportation to foster child's appointments (Table 14). Similarly, only 15% the non-kinship respondents reported strong support via the provision of respite services (Table 14).

The aforementioned findings indicate that regardless of the respondent foster parent's status, the overall level of perceived agency support is concentrated in the some, minimal, and no support range. The respondent foster parents' low levels of perceived agency support focus primarily on Pride's apparent failure to consistently provide both transportation to the foster child's appointments and respite services.

That these two concrete services would impact the respondent foster parents' level of perceived agency support is of no surprise. The majority of Pride's foster children receive a myriad of medical, psychological and/or educational support services, which often requires multiple weekly appointments outside of the foster home. If a foster parent does not have a car or the money required to transport the foster child to their multiple appointments, public transportation is the only alternative. It

is, however, an unattractive and often impractical alternative for foster parents, as the foster children are often young with behavioral problems that are exacerbated in crowded buses and trains. Further, public transportation often adds at least an hour or two to the required time a foster parent would need to prepare and transport a child to their appointment. As a result of the agency's discretionary use of car service for foster parents, there has been an ongoing argument between the agency's administration and its foster parents, who want the service reinstated for all cases.

Much like transportation, the absence of respite service is another concrete service that has driven a wedge between Pride's administration and its foster parents. Because foster parents are required to service often troubled and problematic children, foster parent requests for respite services are fairly regular. The lack of a permanent body of agency respite services, however, means that children more often than not have to be removed from foster homes when the foster parent feels that they can no longer cope with the demands or needs of the child.

It is clear from this study's findings, as well as the earlier findings of Seaberg & Harrigan (1999) and Denby & Rindfleisch (1996), that foster care agencies' failure to provide transportation and respite services significantly contributes to urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parents' dissatisfaction with the role support they receive from their foster care agency.

4. **Research Findings and Casework Support**

As with the findings of earlier research (Gebel, 1996; Berrick et al, 1994 ; Inglehart, 1994 ; Seaberg & Harrigan,1999 ; Denby & Rindfleisch, 1996), which suggested that both kinship and non-kinship minority foster parents typically report high levels of perceived caseworker support, the respondent foster parents generally reported high levels of perceived support from their caseworker. For example, 72% of the total sample of respondents had cumulative scores on the casework support scale that were within the adequate to strong support range (Table 11). For all three of the questions contained in the casework support scale, the total sample of respondents reported relatively strong casework support. That is, 57% of the total sample of respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being sensitive to their feelings about the foster child. Forty eight percent of the total sample of the respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being available to see them on a monthly or as needed basis, while 38% of the total sample of the respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker soliciting their input on the welfare of the child (Table 15).

For the kinship and non-kinship respondents, similarly high levels of satisfaction with casework support were reported. For example, 75% of the kinship respondents had cumulative scores on the casework support scale that were in the high range of perceived support, e.g. between adequate and strong support (Table 11).

For the three questions contained on the casework support scale, the kinship respondents reported relatively strong levels of casework support. That is, 53% of the kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being available on a monthly or as needed basis (Table 15). Forty three percent of the kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being sensitive to their feelings about the foster child, while 36% of the kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker soliciting their input on the welfare of the foster child (Table 15).

For non kinship respondents, 71% had cumulative scores on the casework support scale that fell within the adequate to strong support range (Table 11).

For the three questions contained on the casework support scale, the non-kinship respondents reported relatively strong levels of casework support. That is, 45% of the non-kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being available on a monthly or as needed basis (Table 15). Forty three percent of the non-kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker being sensitive to their feelings about the foster child, while 39% of the non-kinship respondents reported strong casework support as it related to the caseworker soliciting their input on the welfare of the foster child (Table15).

In a departure from earlier research findings, the kinship respondents in this study acknowledged receiving significant support from their caseworker. Moreover, the kinship respondents reported, at the same level as their non-kinship counterparts, strong support from their caseworker.

These finding challenge the earlier assertions of Berrick et al (1994) and Inglehart (1994), who suggested that kinship foster parents are not only generally neglected in terms of role support by their caseworker and foster care agency, but also avoid actively seeking out the support of their caseworker, who they see as extraneous to the parenting process. These findings suggest that when offered, kinship foster parents are responsive to casework support.

5. **Research Findings and Role Perception**

As described earlier in this document, the findings from this study indicate that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the respondent foster parents' level of role satisfaction and a role perception that is consistent with assuming a high level of responsibility for the foster child's well-being (Table 17).

Despite the not statistically significant relationship between role perception and the respondent foster parents' level of role satisfaction, findings from this study confirm earlier research findings, which suggest that minority foster parents typically report high levels of responsibility for

their foster child's well-being. Seventy four percent of the total sample respondents, for example, had cumulative scores on the role perception scale that fell within the 60-80% of perceived responsibility for the foster child's well-being (Table 12). Further, 67% of the kinship respondent sub-group, and 79% of the non-kinship respondent sub-group had cumulative scores on the role perception scale that also fell within the 60-80% of perceived responsibility for the foster child's well-being (Table 12).

A sizable percentage of the total sample of respondents and its kinship and non kinship sub groups perceived being 100% responsible for all three of the selected items contained in the role perception scale (Table 16). That is, 51% of the total sample of respondents, 53% of the kinship respondents and 49% of the non-kinship respondents reported that they were 100% responsible for helping to develop the foster child's skills (Table 16).

For helping foster child with emotional problems, 59% of the total sample respondents, 59% of the kinship respondents and 59% of the non-kinship respondents reported 100% responsibility (Table 16).

For work with foster child's teacher, 66% of the total sample of respondents, 69% of the kinship respondents and 63% of the non-kinship respondents reported 100% responsibility (Table 16).

6. **Significance of Findings**

As the first multivariate analysis of foster parent role satisfaction to be conducted with a sample that is entirely made up of non-White ethnic minority foster parents who reside in urban communities and are almost evenly divided between kinship and non-kinship foster parents, findings from this study provide a foundation from which future studies on urban minority foster parents can build.

Among the significant findings is the confirmation of the critical contribution agency and caseworker support make to an urban minority kinship and non-kinship foster parent's level of role satisfaction. For the kinship respondents in this study, perceived agency and casework support accounted for a large 36% (Cohen, 1988) of their role satisfaction. For the non-kinship respondents, perceived agency and casework support accounted for a large 22% (Cohen, 1988) of their role satisfaction. These finding suggests that any future studies of urban minority foster parent role satisfaction must start with agency and casework support.

Also significant are the findings that challenge the long held assertion that minority kinship foster parents are not only different from their non-kinship counterparts, but that they occupy a periphery position within a foster care agency. Contrary to these assertions, findings from this study suggest that there were no significant differences between kinship and non-kinship respondents as it relates to their responses on the four scales that were used to measure role satisfaction, perceived agency

support, perceived casework support, and role perception. The findings also suggest that the kinship foster parents are, in fact, an integral, as opposed to a periphery figure within the foster care agency.

7. **Practice Implications and Policy Recommendations**

Contrary to expectations, findings suggest that the respondents are by and large satisfied with their role as a foster parent, particularly as it relates to their direct work with the foster children. Also contrary to expectations, given the high turnover of casework staff, is the high level of support that both kinship and non-kinship respondents report receiving from their caseworker.

Less unexpected, but more troubling, however, is the lack of perceived agency support reported by both the kinship and non-kinship respondents. Given Pride's ongoing budget woes, which have resulted in across the board cuts to many foster parent services, it is not surprising to find that respondent foster parents are dissatisfied with the level of support they are receiving from the agency, particularly as it relates to transportation and respite services.

While the lack of perceived agency support has not currently impacted Pride's ability to retain foster parents (e.g. foster parent retention rates have remained stable for the last ten years), it does have the potential for creating a practice environment in which foster parents are not able to meet the role demands of the agency. For example, foster parents not being able to take children to appointments because of the

lack of transportation or asking for a child's removal because they are overwhelmed and unable to receive any kind of respite services.

If Pride and other foster care agencies with sizeable urban minority foster parent populations are to avoid a practice environment in which foster parents cannot meet their role demands, it is essential that that they explore two key areas : the acquisition of a system of transportation that allows foster parents the ability to attend appointments for children, which for some are numerous, without the stress of having to arrange transportation at their own cost. By doing this, foster care agencies would at the very least ensure that the foster children are actually being taken to their various appointments. Additionally, it would remove a potential foster parent stressor.

The second key area of needed intervention is the development of some form of respite service. At the bare minimum, the process of fostering requires 24 hour, 7 days a week supervision of children who often have a multitude of emotional and physical problems. This without a doubt can become overwhelming for even the best foster parent. As a result, the development of a respite service would enable overwhelmed foster parents to take a break without having to ask for a child to be replaced because they can no longer cope. Not only would respite services remove a stressor from a foster parent, but it would also decrease the number of permanent replacements required, which in turn significantly increase the potential for placement continuity for the foster

child.

Finally, there is a need for foster care agencies to pay far greater attention to the retention of casework staff. Both Kinship and non-kinship respondents perceived strong support from their caseworker. These findings, which are surprising given the high turnover of caseworkers, suggest that ongoing day-to-day interaction with the caseworker provides the foster parent with the emotional support needed to provide care for the children.

The frequent turnover of casework staff, however, threatens the continued day-to-day emotional support of the foster parents. Given the importance of the caseworker's role in providing emotional support to the foster parent, it is imperative that foster care agencies devise strategies for retaining casework staff. By retaining casework staff, foster care agencies are better able to maintain continuity for both the foster parent and foster child. Further, it is feasible to suggest that supportive casework practice may in some way compensate for any lack of bureaucratic support from the foster care agency.

8. **Research Limitations**

This study has limitations in both its theoretical conceptualization and its measurement ; as a result the findings of this analysis must be interpreted with some caution. As it relates to the study's theoretical conceptualization, the role theory frame utilized by the author is not

appropriate for understanding the factors that influence an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction (see pages 142,143 &144 of this document for a more detailed discussion of this issue).

As it relates to the study's measures, persistently high inter correlations between the initial versions of the role satisfaction and the agency and casework support scales suggested significant conceptual overlap between the three scales. Despite the author's best efforts to refine the scales so that they were conceptually independent, the still high inter correlations between the role satisfaction and the agency and casework support scale suggest that there may still be some conceptual overlap.

9. **Next Step**

The next research step for the author is to re-examine the study's agency support, casework support, and role satisfaction scales to ensure that they are conceptually independent of each-other. Further, the author will work toward identifying a theortical framework that is more cultually sensitive, than the existing frameworks, of minority foster parents' beliefs about role in helping children and its impact on role satisafction.

Finally, the author will add a qualitative analysis to this study. The rational for this is to explore, from the foster parents' perspective, aspects of foster parent role satisfaction that are not immediately obvious to the researcher. Much of the existing qualitative analysis on minority foster

parents has thus far focused on kinship foster parents. The author's analysis will seek to broaden the focus to both kinship and non-kinship foster parents, and a cross section of ethnic minority groups.

APPENDIX A

ADVERTISEMENT

Dear Foster Parent:

My name is Bryan Warde. I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate Center of The City University of New York. In partial fulfillment of my Ph.D. in Social Welfare, I am required to complete a research study. Toward this end, I am recruiting foster parents who are willing to voluntarily participate in a study designed to provide information about the factors that influence an urban minority foster parent's role satisfaction.

The primary goal of this study is to determine whether or not an urban minority foster parent's level of role satisfaction is influenced by the following three factors: foster parent perceives having a supportive relationship with the agency; foster parent perceives having a supportive relationship with his/her caseworker; foster parent's role perception is consistent with her/his role expectations.

This study will consist of four separate rating scales that contain items related to role satisfaction, agency support,

casework support, and foster parent role perception. Each rating scale is to be completed by the foster parent and returned to the study liaison; it will then be forwarded to me for coding and recording, after which the data will be entered into a computer for analysis.

In order to begin my study, I am seeking foster parents who are willing to voluntarily participate in the study, and who meet the following criteria:

* You reside in an urban community (Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, Queens) and belong to one of the following ethnic groups: African-American, African-Caribbean, Indian-Caribbean, African, Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese) Hispanic/ Latino (Cuban, Dominican, Panamanian, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Peruvian, Columbian, Uruguayan Salvadorian, Venezuelan), Native American, Indian, Mixed Race.

* At least one foster child was placed in your home for a minimum of six continuous months between January 1st, 2001 and December 31st, 2003.

If you meet both of the above criteria and wish to participate or know more about the study, please contact the foster parent association study liaison at the following telephone number: (718) 523-6199.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION PAGE

My name is Bryan Warde and I am a student in the Social Welfare Ph.D. program at the Graduate Center of The City University of New York (CUNY). I am doing a research study, entitled “Factors Contributing To Role Satisfaction”. My research study will seek to find out what factors influence a minority foster parent’s level of role satisfaction.

In order to carry out my research, I would like to invite you to voluntarily take part in my study. If you choose to take part, you will be required to complete the four enclosed forms and return them within two weeks by way of the attached post-paid return addressed envelope. The forms will take between 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

All information you share in the forms is confidential. That is, your name and address is not required on any of the forms. As a result, neither any one who works for the agency nor I will know your name or address. Additionally, only your foster parent association study worker and I will have any contact with your forms. When the foster parent association study worker gives your forms to me, they will be stored in a safe located in my apartment. After I put the information from your forms into a computer for analysis, the forms will be returned to my safe. The forms will eventually be destroyed. Further, all your responses to the forms will only be reported in numbers and percentages. Your individual answers will not be noted. Finally, at no time during or after the study will your foster parent association study worker tell me or any other person employed by the agency your name or address.

There are no risks related to you taking part in this study. That is, the study does not ask for you to be exposed to any kind of physical or emotional harm. The benefit of taking part in the study is that you have the chance to let the agency know what kind of support/non-support that foster parents have been getting

from both their caseworker and the agency. There will be between 150-200 foster parents taking part in this study.

Please note that taking part in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to respond to this invitation there will be no negative consequences. Also note that if you choose to take part in the study, and for any reason wish to drop out, you may do so without telling anybody or fear of any negative consequences.

If you have any questions or difficulties with the study, you may call me, Bryan Warde, at (718) 404-6666, bryanwarde@aol.com, your foster parent association study worker, Ms. Annie Robinson, at (718) 523-6199 or my advisor, Dr. Irwin Epstein, at (212) 452-7030, iepstein @ hunter.cuny.edu. If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in this study, you can contact Hilry Fisher, Sponsored Research, The Graduate Center / City University of New York, (212) 817-7523, hfisher@gc.cuny.edu.

If you would like to receive a copy of the study's results, which will be available in six-months, please contact Ms. Annie Robinson at (718) 523-6199.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Bryan Warde, MSW, CSW
Principal Investigator
Ph.D. Candidate

APPENDIX C

Partnership Agreement

June 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that Pride Family & Children's Services' foster parent association has agreed to work in partnership with Bryan Warde to ensure not only non coercive recruitment, but also the protection of confidentiality and anonymity of any Lakeside foster parent who voluntarily participates in his study: "Urban Minority Kinship And Non-Kinship Foster Parents: A Multivariate Analysis of Factors Contributing To Role Satisfaction."

Toward this end, the foster parent association has agreed to the following:

1. Provide four foster parent association study liaisons that will field telephone calls from foster parents who have responded to Mr. Warde's subject recruitment advertisement in the agency's newsletter. The study liaisons will procure the names and addresses of the interested foster parents and send to them a study package (four rating scales, a cover sheet, a post-paid return addressed envelope and a consent form).

2. The foster parent association study liaisons will send follow up reminders to the foster parents two and four weeks after the initial mailing, after which they will shred the addresses.

3. The foster parent association study liaisons will receive all returned rating scales and cover sheet via the post-paid return addressed envelope that was sent in the study package.

4. The foster parent study liaisons will forward the returned rating scales and cover sheet to Mr. Warde within five working days of receipt.

5. Throughout the duration of the study, the foster parent association study liaisons will be available to field all/any telephone calls related to foster parent questions/concerns related to the study.

6. At no time during or after the study will the foster parent liaisons share with Mr. Warde or any Pride Family & Children's Services employee, the name or address of any foster parent who participated in the study.

Sincerely,

Pride Family & Children's Services' Foster Parent Association President

APPENDIX D

Letter of Cooperation

June 2004

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to confirm that Pride Family & Children's Services has agreed to allow Bryan Warde to recruit the agency's foster parents for his study: "Urban Minority Kinship And Non-Kinship Foster Parents: A Multivariate Analysis of Factors Contributing To Role Satisfaction."

Sincerely,

Julie Suess, MSW
Director of Programs

APPENDIX E

RATING SCALES' COVER SHEET

Case #: _____ **FP Status** 1 Kinship 2 Non-Kinship

Gender 1 Male 2 Female

Age 1 21-25 2 26-35 3 36-45 4 46-55 5 56-65 6 over 65

Ethnicity 1 African American 2 African Caribbean 3 Hispanic/ Latino 4 Asian 5 Indian 6 Native American 7 Mixed Raced 8 African 9 Indian-Caribbean 10 Other (please specify)

Boro of Residence 1 Queens 2 Brooklyn 3 Bronx 4 Manhattan 5 Staten Island

---

Income 1 $0-20,000 2 $21-40,000 3 $41-60,000 4 $61-80,000 5 $80,000 plus

---

Number of years as a foster parent 1 0-2 years 2 3-5 years 3 6-8 years 4 9-11years 5 11 plus

---

Education Highest Completed 1 less than High School 2 High School 3 Associates Degree 4 Bachelors Degree 5 Masters Degree 6 PhD

APPENDIX F

FOSTER PARENT ROLE SATISFACTION SCALE

Below are a series of items. For each item, place an X on the line that best matches your level of satisfaction.

Score	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Response Category	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Items					
Your role in helping children	____	____	____	____	____
Your relationship with your foster children	____	____	____	____	____
Balancing foster care with your own family's schedule	____	____	____	____	____
Feeling appreciated for being a foster parent	____	____	____	____	____
Understanding your responsibilities as a foster parent	____	____	____	____	____
Amount of payment for providing foster care	____	____	____	____	____

APPENDIX G

AGENCY SUPPORT SCALE

Below are a series of functions that the agency may be expected to support you with. For each function , please place an X on the box that best matches your perception of the level of support you actually received from the agency.

Score	1	2	3	4	5
Reponses Category	No Support	Minimal Support	Some Support	Adequate Support	Strong Support
Function					
Provided information related to the foster child's essential documents. (e.g. CIN card, social security card, birth certificate)	____	____	____	____	____
Provided transportation to the foster child's various appointments and visits to the agency	____	____	____	____	____
Provide respite services	____	____	____	____	____
Provide formal support groups	____	____	____	____	____
Provided day care and baby sitting services	____	____	____	____	____

APPENDIX H

CASEWORK SUPPORT SCALE

Below are a series of functions that your caseworker may be expected to support you with. For each function , please place an X on the box that best matches your perception of the level of support you actually received from your caseworker .

Score	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Response Category	No Support	Minimal Support	Some Support	Adequate Support	Strong Support
Function					
Being available to see me on a monthly, or as needed basis	____	____	____	____	____
Solicits my input on the welfare of the foster child	____	____	____	____	____
Being sensitive to my feelings about the foster child	____	____	____	____	____

APPENDIX I

FOSTER PARENT ROLE PERCEPTION SCALE
("What Foster Parents Do")

Below is a list of tasks that may need to be done for a foster child or for the foster care agency. You may have done many of these things. For each item, please place an X on the line to show how much responsibility the foster parent should have for that task.

Birth Family Facilitator

1. Arrange visits with birth parents
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

2. Supervise visits with birth parents
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

3. Talk to birth parents regarding behavior
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

4. Talk to birth parents regarding child's adjustment
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

5. Transport child for visits birth parents
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

6. Arrange visits with siblings
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

7. Teach youth about relationships
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

8. Keep record of placement history
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

”Role Perception Scale —Continued.”

Assist with Social/Emotional Development

1. Prepare child for loneliness
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

2. Help develop skills which need improvement
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

3. Respond to medical emergencies
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

4. Build self confidence
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

5. Help with emotional problems
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

6. Help with separation issues
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

7. Teach housekeeping
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

8. Assess developmental level
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

9. Transport to medical appointments
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

10. Supervise child’s recreation
    0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

Agency Partner

1. Train foster parents
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

2. Conduct trainings for foster parents
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

3. Public relations for agency
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

"Role Perception Scale —Continued."

4. Plan new foster care services
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

5. Train new social workers
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

6. Recruit foster families
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

Parenting

1. Keep medical records
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

2. Keep education records
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

3. Work with teachers
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

4. Schedule medical appointments
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

5. Select school
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

6. Talk to therapist
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

7. Help youth find housing
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

8. Decide on discipline
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

9. Select therapist
   0%_____ 20%_____ 40%_____ 60%_____ 80%_____ 100%_____

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