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A Document Analysis of Two States' Child Protective Services Agency Permanency Policies

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Abstract

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Barbara Liston-Garcia

MLA, Baker University, 1998

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

U.S. Child Protective Services Agencies (CPSA) have had mixed success in achieving

stable, permanent placements for foster care children. To address the adverse effects of

unstable placements on foster care children's emotional well-being and physical

development, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 was enacted to better ensure

permanency, safety, and well-being of children in foster care. Using Stone's policy

paradox as the framework, the purpose of this qualitative document analysis was to

explore whether policy constructs contributed to the success or failure of promoting

permanency for foster care children. Data was used from 2 states, representing those most

and least successful in terms of decreasing foster care populations during federal fiscal

years 2011 to 2014. Data for this study consisted of publicly available documents,

including statues, policies, and official publications. These data were analyzed using an

inductive coding approach and then subjected to a content analysis procedure. Key

findings indicated the states differed in 3 critical policy areas: incentives to achieve

progress towards reunification; facts used to change behaviors among policy actors to

achieve the goal of recruiting adoptive and foster care parents; power in terms of how

authority was delegated to service providers. The findings of this research may enhance

policymakers' and advocates' knowledge of policy issues critical to achieving

permanency for children. It is recommended that future policy changes focus on the

needs of the children and the alignment of statutes, policies, and publications so they

promote adequate incentives, utilization of factual information, and consistent policy

interpretation at the federal and local levels.

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Dedication

First, I want to give thanks and gratitude to God for allowing me to start and complete my dissertation. Second, I dedicate this dissertation to all foster care children. My experience as a foster care child, foster care mother, CASA worker, and advocate gave me profound understanding and empathy for the ordeals that foster care children experience. I am who I am because of my experiences, which allowed me to take this journey. I am forever grateful to God for giving me the strength and will to complete this journey.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I thank God for the strength, health, and opportunity to start and finish the doctoral program. This journey had many twists-and-turns along the way, and I was able to overcome all of them by maintaining my spirituality, well-being, and with my unwavering support system. Second, I want to acknowledge and thank my committee, consisting of Dr. Anne Hacker, Dr. Ross Alexander, and Dr. Joyce Haines, for their continued support throughout this journey.

Third, I want to specifically acknowledge my chairperson, Dr. Anne Hacker, for her guidance, insight, suggestions, and continuous support. I am eternally grateful for her time, energy, and guidance in assisting me with this journey. Fourth, I owe special thanks to my dear friend, Celia Martinez. Ms. Martinez's unwavering support and encouragement kept me motivated and focused on the results. My doctoral journey was successful because of the guidance, support, love, family, friendship, and encouragement of many individuals, for which I am genuinely thankful.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Advocates and legislators have made numerous attempts to create laws to address the multidimensional and complex issues surrounding unstable, placements of abused and neglected children in the United States. As of April 30, 2017, Congress has enacted 28 U. S. federal laws to address ongoing child welfare in the states (HHS, 2014). When President Clinton and the U.S. Congress enacted Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 (Public Law 105-89), their three top priorities regarding child abuse and neglect issues were ensuring the permanency, safety, and well-being of children (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 2014). Safety and well-being are key components of stable, permanent placements for foster care children, and all three priorities overlap with one another (HHS, 2013a). Out of these three priorities, stable, permanent placements for foster care children stood out as a tangible goal to me. According to HHS (2016), the federal government collects data from the states' CPS regarding the number of children entering and exiting from foster care each year. In this study, I used those counts to determine stable, permanent placement rankings for foster care children.

HHS (2014) has defined permanency as stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children is evident by the number of children having multiple placements and long-term tenures in foster care (Pasalich, Fleming, Oxford, Zheng, & Spieker, 2016). The lack of stability and permanency may adversely affect the emotional well-being and physical development of children in foster care (Lloyd, Akin, & Brook, 2017). For example, removing children

from their parents due to abuse, maltreatment, and neglect can create placement disruptions, which contribute to developmental problems of children (Pasalich et al., 2016). According to Cassidy et al. (2013), after the removal of the children from their parents or caregivers, the children may experience the lack of stability and permanency while in care. Removing children from their parents due to abuse, maltreatment, and neglect can create placement disruptions, which may contribute to developmental problems of children (Widom, Czaja, Kozakowski, & Chauhan, 2017).

The Child Protective Services Agencies (CPSA) in many U.S. states struggle with reducing the number of children in foster care and establishing stable, permanent placements. Some of the conflicts (or, paradoxes) related to these efforts involve reunification versus parental termination and parental rights versus children's rights (Ben-David, 2016). According to Stone (2012), paradoxes are the presence of inconsistencies ideologies and perspectives within statutes and policies related to child welfare. Federal- and state-level CPSA statutes, policies, and publications have several conflicting ideologies present in them, according to Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) and Stone. Examples of conflicting ideologies involve reunification versus parental termination and parental rights versus children's rights (Ben-David, 2016).

I conducted a content analysis of publicly available documents to explore the common and divergent aspects of two U.S. states' (Missouri's and South Carolina's) CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. This research may contribute to positive social change by clarifying and increasing knowledge to assist states' CPSA that are struggling to address the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The study's

findings may shed light on what the other 48 states' CPSA may consider and create

opportunities for social change within CPSA. With this knowledge, stakeholders and

advocates may be compelled to make policy changes, which may contribute to reducing

foster care populations and creating more stable, permanent placements for foster care

children.

I reviewed the challenges surrounding the phenomenon of 48 states', the District

of Columbia's, and Puerto Rico's CPSA foster care placements in this chapter (HHS,

2016a; see, Appendix C). I also provide an overview of my research design and rationale,

methodology, and theoretical framework. Also, I include a list of key definitions used in

the study and a discussion of the assumptions, scope and delimitations, and limitations of

the study. I conclude the chapter by discussing the significance of my research.

Background of the Problem

For several years, state-level CPSA have contended with issues related to securing

permanent and stable placements for children in foster care. On November 19, 1997,

President Clinton signed into law a key federal law, ASFA, that changed the focus and

standards of CPSA (HHS, 2014). ASFA federal law attempts to provide standards and

focus on correcting issues at the state-level CPSA, including issues related to stable,

permanent placements for foster care children. For state' CPSA to continue to receive

federal funding, ASFA requires state-level CPSA to focus on reunification or adoption

within a specified period (HHS, 2014).

The federal laws specified that CPSA's child abuse and neglect goals are

permanency, safety, and since 1997, the well-being of children (HHS, 2014). Fernandez

(2013) defined permanency as establishing long-term, positive, and healthy caregivers for foster care children until adulthood or while in foster care. Due to these requirements, during the initial stages of foster care, CPSA creates permanency plans that focus on achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Barbell & Wright, 2001; Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013a). ASFA significantly reduces the amount of time CPSA has to achieve the permanency plans from 18 to 12 months.

ASFA does include an exception rule to its permanency plans allowing family courts to give parents additional time for reunification. States' CPSA create two types of permanency plans for children enter into foster care; reunification and termination of parental rights (Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013a) The plans are conflicting and enacted simultaneously in order to achieve permanency within the specified time. The exception rule can alter the timeframe for achieving permanency. The exception rule for additional time is vague, and implementation varies throughout the United States (Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013a). Family courts support using the exception rule for incarcerated parents, especially if their convictions are not long-term, and incarceration is the only reason their children are in foster care (U.S. General Accounting Office [GAO], 2011a; Leloux-Opmeer et al., 2016). Usage of the exception rule is the norm for family courts (Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013).

The exception rule creates an environment that extends foster care stays. The exception rule ends when family courts pursue termination of parental rights in CPSA cases (Barbell & Wright, 2001; Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013). Barriers that make it difficult for states to achieve stable, permanent placements for children in foster care

include unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, limited resources, court delays, policy conflicts, and inadequate availability of adoptive parents for special needs and teenage foster care children (Falk & Spar, 2014; GAO, 2011b). These barriers are complex and multidimensional. Adoptive parents are ill-prepared to deal with the mental and developmental issues of children with special needs, and most adoptive parents prefer small children versus teenagers (Biehal et al., 2015).

In 2008, Congress passed the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act of 2008 (FCSIA; HHS, 2014). FCSIA promotes fiscal incentives aimed at motivating states' CPSA to pursue adoption, kinship care, guardianship, and reducing foster care populations to establish permanency (HHS, 2014). FCSIA has not prevented children from long-term tenure in foster care (Pasalich et al., 2016). Children with long-term tenure in foster care are likely to have multiple placements.

Multiple foster care placements can create detachments in the relationships that foster care children have with their caregivers. Research suggests that long-term tenure in foster care can be harmful to foster care children, likewise, experiencing abuse and neglect from parents can be harmful (DeGarmo, Reid, Fetrow, Fisher, & Antoine, 2013). Connolly, de Haan, and Crawford (2014) defined long-term foster care tenure or foster care drift as occurring when children experience multiple foster care homes while in placement for extended time.

When states' CPSA findings conclude that it is necessary to have caseworkers remove children from their parents and places them in foster care, they seek to establish permanency, provide safety, and promote the well-being of children: however, some

states struggle to meet their primary goals (HHS, 2013a). The unintended consequences of multiple foster care placements may compromise the well-being of foster care children, according to researchers. According to DeGarmo et al. (2013), children who experience multiple placements may become detached from their caregivers, something which may affect their developmental and emotional well-being. Stone (2012) referred to unintended consequences as policy side effects. If placement disruptions occur, then CPSA has no choice but to find new placements.

Attempts by the federal government to address the lack of stable, permanent placements of children in foster care have been unsuccessful, thus far. Children who experience the lack of stability and permanent caregivers may have behavioral difficulties and developmental issues well into adulthood, according to Pasalich et al. (2016). Federal policymakers have attempted to transfer the responsibility for addressing these issues to the states' CPSA via unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives (Grave, 2012; Stone, 2012). Federal-level transfer of its responsibilities to state-level has grown in momentum over the years. The Federal-level ties these types of actions to federal funds thereby making it difficult for the state-level CPSA to decline the transfer of responsibilities. These mandates have been found to hinder the ability of states to address constituent needs, including stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Ryan, 2015). The U.S. states' CPSA are struggling to reduce foster care populations and, at the same time, attempting to address issues related to meeting the evolving federally unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives (Godsoe, 2013).

Stone (2012) referred to restrictive rules and incentives as power mechanisms to create and control behaviors of others. If the states comply, the federal government rewards them with federal funds. If they do not comply, their federal funding may decrease. Numerous advocacy groups have attempted to lobby and influence lawmakers, and, ultimately, change in U.S. federal laws. Since 1974, advocacy groups have lobbied Congress for legislation to promote permanency, safety, and well-being of foster care children. Permanency continues to be an issue for the states' CPA in relations to reducing foster care population (HHS, 2016). Some child abuse advocates have sued the U.S. states' CPSA to force the states' CPSA to change (Children's Rights, 2014). Children's Rights (2006a, 2006b, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), an advocacy organization, has sued Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA multiple times. I provide more information on these lawsuits against Missouri and South Carolina in Chapter 3.

My goal in conducting this study was to address a gap between legislation and program outcomes. I did so by analyzing Stone (2012) policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers in the statutes, policies, and publications of two U.S. state's CPSA. My focus was to determine the similarities and differences on assessing the implications of these constructs for the creation of permanency for foster care children. The two states selected for this study were Missouri and South Carolina. South Carolina's CPSA seems to be succeeding at reducing its foster care population while Missouri's CPSA appears to be failing (see Appendix C). I present my rationale for selecting Missouri and South Carolina for analysis in Chapter 3. This research may contribute to positive social change by clarifying and increasing legislator's and advocates' knowledge

of permanency implications for foster care children. With this knowledge and understanding, these stakeholders and advocates may be compelled to make policy changes, which may contribute to reducing the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

Problem Statement

U.S. states' CPSA continue to struggle to address issues related to establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Children who experience multiple foster care placements may have attachment disorders and behavioral issues, according to Pasalich et al., (2016). U.S states' CPSA have complied with the majority of the federal incentives and rules with the intention of receiving federal funds for their programs. As of April 30, 2017, Congress has enacted 28 federal laws to address ongoing child welfare issues in the U.S. states' CPSA by creating unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to gain their compliance to the federal guidelines (HHS, 2014).

If the U.S. states' CPSA comply with federal requirements, then they receive federal funds (HHS, 2014). States interpret the federal laws in unique ways based on addressing their jurisdictional and culture needs. The federal laws demonstrate that Congress intended CPSA to achieve permanency for foster care children. There are disconnects between federal laws and some of the implementation practices of U.S. states' CPSA. CPSA cannot provide proper services and treatments to their constituents if they do not have the necessary tools or knowledge to accomplish the task because of unfunded mandates, policy paradoxes, and vague laws (Godsoe, 2013). According to Stone (2012), federal laws depend on the use of rules and incentives to motivate states to

change their behaviors. The federal government has used facts to measure the U.S. states'

CPSA progress or failure to reduce foster care placements long-term tenures (see

Appendix C). U.S. states' CPSA continue to struggle to meet the unfunded federal

mandates and simultaneously serve the needs of their constituents (HHS, 2014).

I hope this study offers a different approach to the multidimensional problem of

lack of permanency for foster care children, instead of creating legislation, which,

according to critics is mired in unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds,

conflicting ideologies, and vague laws (HHS, 2014; Stone, 2012). The findings from this

study may offer legislators' and advocates' more awareness and knowledge about how to

address the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The number of

children staying in foster care for extended periods is too high, according to Fuller and

Zhang (2017) and Godsoe (2013). Eventually, these children will age out of the system

via emancipation (Fuller & Zhang; Godsoe). According to HHS (2016a), in 2015,

approximately 428,000 children in foster care experience the lack of permanency through

the system. Out of these 428,000 children, 102,000 children were available for adoption

in 2015 (HHS, 2016a). In the federal fiscal years 2013 through 2015, foster care

populations increased nationwide; they increased from 397,000 to 428,000 in 2015 due to

increases in parental drug abuse (HHS, 2016a). Parental addiction to prescription

painkillers called opioid is now a national epidemic making it the second leading cause of

removal of children from their homes, according to HHS (2016a).

Limited federal funds are available for child welfare services. The federal

government allocates those funds based on the number of children in foster care. In 2013,

the federal government allocated over $273 million to state-level child welfare services (Stoltzfus, 2014). Federal laws require the U.S. states' CPSA to use 90% of their funding to meet federal standardized requirements (Stoltzfus). The state of Missouri (2012c) cited a reduction in budget and staff as a contributing factor for its failure to address U.S. states' CPSA-related issues. Reducing the number of children in foster care is a problem that is difficult to resolve and appears to have no end in sight. The scope of this study was set up with parameters that limited this research scope (Simon & Goes, 2013). The scope of this study focused primarily on the selected two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis to determine permanency outcomes for foster care children.

According to Stone (2012), to resolve these difficulties, it is important to reveal and clarify the issue, such as the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children, to determine where they differ from their objective to move forward with solutions. This study revealed and clarified the challenges surrounding the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children, and opened new avenues of understanding to move forward with solutions. I discuss the findings of this study in Chapters 4 and 5.

Each year, there are more than a million unsubstantiated child abuse and neglect reports. According to HHS (2017), in 2015, the U.S received over 4 million child abuse and neglect reports involving 72 million children. Out of the 7.2 million reports, over 2.2 million child abuse and neglect reports warranted follow-up. Over nineteen percent of those cases found substantiated child abuse or neglect, which involved approximately 683,000 children (HHS). In 2015, the national child abuse and neglect victim ratio were

9.2 per 1,000 children (HHS). Congress recognizes the ongoing issues and continues to

work on the issues by enacting legislation to promote the permanency, safety, and well-

being of foster care children, however, usually, by unfunded legislation. Continuing to

create unfunded legislation to fix issues at the state level, thus far, achieves mixed

success rates (HHS, 2017).

This study was important because it addressed a gap between legislation and

program outcomes by bringing awareness, knowledge, and clarification of Missouri's and

South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. I selected Missouri and South

Carolina because they appeared to be heading in opposite directions in reducing their

foster care population. The results of Appendix C indicated that South Carolina's CPSA

was improving by reducing their foster care population while Missouri's CPSA was not.

I present the selection of the two states for this study in Chapter 3. The clarification and

knowledge gained from this study may be the tilting point that creates momentum and

social changes in unsuccessful U.S. states' CPSA ability to reduce their foster care

populations. Foster care children are one of the most vulnerable populations in our

society.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose that I selected for this study was to determine how policy constructs

of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible

outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster

care children. To do this, I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's

and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency

for foster care children. Stone's (2012) policy constructs related to deconstruction and analysis of policy were the theoretical framework through which I explored the issues surrounding stable, permanent placements for foster care children of Missouri and South Carolina.

I selected South Carolina's CPSA because their foster care population declined from 2007 to 2012, and again in 2014 (South Carolina, 2010c, HHS 2016a). South Carolina was in the top 10 most improved foster care populations rankings in federal fiscal years 2011 and 2012 (HHS). In federal fiscal years 2013 to 2015, foster care populations increased in two thirds of U.S. states due to parental drug abuse (HHS). Parental addiction to painkillers and heroin is now a national epidemic making it the second leading cause of removal of children from their homes, according to HHS. South Carolina's foster care population increased in the federal fiscal year 2013 and declined in 2014 compared to 2013 (HHS).

I selected Missouri's CPSA based on its low rankings as least improved foster care populations in the most recent available data collected from HHS (2016a) in federal fiscal years 2011 to 2014. Missouri's foster care population increased from federal fiscal years 2011 to 2014 (HHS). Appendix C presented a nationwide list of the most and least improved foster care population rates from 2011 to 2014 (HHS). The selected two states were from this list. Content analysis was used to examine the two selected states' CPSA publicly available documents to explore their patterns and themes. Krippendorff's (2012) content analysis process helped to organize the data and allowed for inferences in a systematic manner.

Research Question

The central research question addressed in this study was, How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? In order to answer this question, I analyzed Missouri's and South Carolina's CPS statutes, policies, and publications to assess their similarities and differences and their implications on permanency for foster care children. The two states that I selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. I provide more information on how I used content analysis methodology to answer the research question in Chapter 3.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework for research is important because it provides the parameters to focus the data analysis. Stone's (2012) policy constructs provided the theoretical lens through which I explored how Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications create an environment of success or failure in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Stone's policy constructs underlying the framework were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers.

Change does not come easy, and the federal government uses strategic processes to lure compliance. According to Stone (2012), incentives create behavioral changes via enticements or punishments while rules are the guidelines to determine when an incentive is necessary. Facts influence and persuade others that the rules are necessary. Rights

invoke powers of individuals, groups, organizations, and governments. These rights provide the power to enforce the rules, and governments use power to force changes or behaviors of others (Stone).

Newly elected political parties use the power of their office to create change. According to Ryan (2015), political parties attempt to reform governments and transfer federal responsibilities to the states via legislation with unfunded mandates and restrictive conditional funding, which creates chaos, conflicting ideologies, and limited resources for services at the state level. The federal government promotes fiscal sustainability via unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to the states in attempts to control their behavior and gain compliance to solve issues (Grave, 2012; Stone, 2012). Elective officials use this power to influence government agencies performance and outcomes (Ryan; Stone). I present the key policy constructs: incentives, rules, rights, facts, and powers as it relates to this study in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The nature that I selected for this study was a qualitative content analysis of publicly available documents. Appendix C presented the nationwide foster care population rankings for federal fiscal years 2011 through 2014. Based on the U.S. states' CPSA most and least improved foster care population changes and other factors, I selected Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to explore. I discuss the rationale for the selection of the two U.S. states' CPSA in Chapter 3.

The research approach that I used for this study used publicly available data in the form of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. I collected and used publicly available data from public records, scanned or downloaded these documents, and uploaded them into the computerized data management software. I used publicly available documents only. There was no transferability to any live human participants. The possibility of transferability occurs in the findings of the selected two states' CPSA with similar organizations (Schreier, 2012). This study used the codebook (see Appendix A) and a computerized data management software to assist with collecting, categorizing, and managing the data to indicate pertinent factors of differences and similarities in the selected two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. This study analyzed the two U.S. states' CPSA documents by working inductively on the research data detecting inferences, patterns, and themes embedded in the data and formulating and developing general conclusions for the two states (Krippendorff, 2012; Schreier).

The findings of this study brought clarification and understanding to a multidimensional problem for the selected two states' CPSA. I present the results and finding of this study in Chapters 4 and 5. Stone's (2012) policy constructs were the lens used to explore the theoretical framework constructs to guide this research to determine the influences that may promote or negate permanency for foster care children. The theoretical framework constructs were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. After completing the analysis for each state separately, the next step was to compare the

similarities and differences between the selected two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

One of the federal government's primary goals, as established by Congress and President Bill Clinton, was permanency for foster care children. With the creation of this priority and others, the federal government uses federalism power to influence behavioral changes at the state level using unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives (Stone, 2012). I present the challenges and conflicts surrounding the federal government attempts to create behavioral changes at the state level in Chapter 2.

I identify the two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used for the research in this study in Chapter 3. A computerized data management software was used to assist me with the collection, organization, and management in exploring the selected two states' CPSA research documents. This content analysis study used a child abuse and neglect codebook terms as defined by HHS and revealed during the literature review. I present the content analysis and codebook located in Appendix A in Chapter 3. I present the concepts that are common with U.S. states' CPSA in the next section. Also, I discuss the data analysis, research findings, recommendations and conclusion of this study in Chapters 4 and 5.

Definitions

I used CPSA operational concepts, which, while they may not be familiar to the average reader, are commonly found in U.S. states' CPSA literature. The operational concepts were, as follows:

Adoption: A legal action by family courts to grant individuals, who are not the birth parents, full responsibility and permanent parental rights related to the children in question (HHS, 2013e). Adoption makes the children the individuals' legal heir and part of their families (HHS). Once the adoption becomes final, the state discharges the CPSA case (HHS, 2013d).

Emancipation: An action whereby U.S. state's CPSA terminate custody of foster care children when they become adults. Emancipation, usually, occurs between 18 and 21 years of age, depending upon the U.S. states' CPSA statutes and policies (Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013).) Once foster care children become adults, the state discontinues financial support for them making them financially responsible for their welfare (HHS, 2013e).

Family court: A judicial branch that has oversight of child abuse and neglect cases within the court system. Child abuse and neglect court cases are different because the issues are ongoing and evolving over time. Family court works with CPSA to address parental behavioral issues. The family court makes decisions regarding care, custody, placement, safety, and well-being of abused and neglected children. Family court decisions influence CPSA policies and procedures (Summers & Shdaimah, 2013).

Federalism: A theory that evolves multifaceted, political organizational mechanism that divides and separates into different branches to create and protect the balance, equality, and liberty of the people it governs (Gerston, 2007; Weingast, 2014). Elected political parties influence government structures (Weingast). In recent years, the

concept of *federalism* has blurred, making it difficult to determine the difference between federal and state roles and responsibility.

Foster care: An action taken by CPSA that provides nonrelative custody as a temporary solution to children removed from their custodial or parental caregivers to protect them. Children enter foster care when CPSA and family courts temporarily suspend custodial or parental rights to provide care for their children (Robertson, 2016).

Foster care drift or *shuffle*: An action that occurs when foster care children experience multiple foster homes that create unstable environments and placements while in CPSA and family court's custody (Connolly, de Haan, and Crawford, 2014).

Guardianship: An action taken by state's CPSA and family courts grant legal authority to individuals to have control, rights, and financial responsibility for foster care children as a means to establish stable, permanent caregivers (Balsells, Pastor, Mateos, Vaquero, & Urrea, 2015).

Intensive/wraparound program: An action taken by states' CPSA that provides foster care children and their families of origin or guardians with specific resources and professional personnel designed and focused on recovery and obtaining long-term stable, permanent placements (Tarren-Sweeney, 2013).

Kinship care: An action taken by the legal authority granted by family courts to relatives or friends to raise foster care children in their home. The relatives or friends nurture and protect the foster care children with the states' oversight and financial support. The state's CPSA and family courts temporarily suspend the custodial or parental rights of the caregivers to provide care for their children (Landsman, Boel-Studt,

& Malone, 2014). During the placement, the state's CPSA and family courts retain custodial rights of the children.

Permanency: An action that occurs when stable, permanent placement establishes long-term, positive, and healthy caregivers for foster care children until adulthood or while in custody and care of the state's CPSA and family courts. The ultimate stable, permanent placements for foster care children are reunification, adoption, or guardianship with families who have existing positive relationships with the children (Balsells et al., 2015).

Policy paradox: A theory that evolves from political representatives trying to understand the parameters that surround the issues, and attempting to find solutions while at the same time subjective to special interest. According to Stone (2012), paradoxes are different perspectives regarding the same thing that simultaneously coexist. She recognized that policies were mechanisms that governments used to create and force change. Implementing policies can have unintended consequences creating paradoxes, which are common and create issues because policies are vague, conflicting, and illogical.

Reunification: A legal action taken by CPSA and family courts that relinquishes state legal custody and authority of foster care children to their fit custodial or parental caregivers. Reunification is not always possible due to parental unfitness (HHS, 2013e).

Assumptions

The resources for this study were federal and two U.S. states' CPSA publicly available data via statutes, policies, and publications. It is essential the federal and states'

CPSA data is accurate; otherwise, the findings of this study could be misleading and incorrect. According to Simon and Goes (2013), assumptions are unproven beliefs that may be true. The design of this study rested on three assumptions. First, publications of foster care data were accurate, and states did not alter the information sent to the federal government. Second, states submitted valid data about their CPSA to comply with federal requirements. Third, the federal government and states' CPSA information from their statutes, policies, and publications was accurate. I used documents that are readily available to the public. Exhibit D presents a list of publicly available document names and sources used in this study.

Stable, permanent placements for foster care children could indicate as an exit from CPSA via a decrease in foster care population. I limited my research to exits from CPSA of foster care children that were alive. In 2015, the United States reported approximately 1,670 children fatalities from alleged abuse. The fatalities were not necessarily foster care children (HHS, 2017). Reunification, guardianship, adoption, and emancipation are types of permanent exits from foster care.

Scope and Delimitations

The delimitations in this study were all decisions made in this study from the proposal to the findings. I documented the entire process in a journal and automatic logging of activities using a computerized data management software creating transparency and liability. The journal and auto-log created an audit trail and established dependability, while the computerized data management software minimizes the uncertainty, biases, and reliability issues. Delimitations arise from the limitations and

decisions made to conduct this study (Simon & Goes, 2013). An example of limitations in this study is the theoretical framework, selecting two states' CPSA, justification to conduct this research, and research design and question.

Limitations

According to Simon and Goes (2013), limitations can restrict and affect a study's outcome, validity, and reliability. This study recognized three limitations; my personal experience as a researcher, the research participants were different, and the research focused on two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. The first limitation was my personal experience as a foster care child, foster care mother, CASA Advocate, foster care crisis nursery advocate, and teenage shelter advocate for a non-profit agency. Due to my personal experiences, this may bring biases to this study concerning pre-existing experience and knowledge of the political landscape and stakeholder perspectives on the topic of CPSA practices and experiences. To minimize biases, via the nature of the data collection and analysis, I used a computerized data management software, NVivo 11 Pro.

The second limitation was the research participants were different. The selected two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were not philosophically and structurally set up the same, nor do they completely mirror each other. States interpret the federal laws differently and according to their jurisdictional needs. Because the statutes, policies, and publications are not set up in the same fashion, this might be a limitation of this study. Both states are self-report to the Federal government. There was no outside agency to verify the data.

If the states were not accurately reporting their data to the federal government, this might alter their outcome data. Also, the states do not share best practices or data with each other, which includes maltreatment that results in fatalities (HHS, 2017). The third limitation was limiting the number of research participants by analyzing two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications and not the entire nation in my research, findings, and conclusions. By looking in depth qualitatively at two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications via content analysis approach, the findings of this study may create momentum for the stakeholders, and advocates to change states' CPSA struggling with the lack of stable, permanent placements. To limit potential biases of this study, I used a computerized data management software to assist with the collecting, managing, and organizing of the two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

Significance of the Study

Foster care drift is a term that represents foster care children experiencing the lack of stable, permanent placements through the CPSA. Foster care drift has the capability of opening new avenues for U.S. states' CPSA and may create momentum for social change on a national level for foster care children once it is better clarified and understood. The purpose of this study was to determine how policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contributed to the outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children.

I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency for foster

care children. This study brought clarification, knowledge, and awareness regarding the two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. Foster care children are one of the most vulnerable populations in our society. The study's findings may shed light on what the other 48 states' CPSA, stakeholders, and advocates that may consider and create opportunities for social change within U.S. states' CPSA that are struggling with achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications for U.S. states' CPSA issues. I discuss the findings of this study in Chapters 4 and 5.

Summary

When CPSA places children in foster care, their stable, permanent placements need to be an achievable priority. The federal government has enacted 28 laws in attempts to correct issues in CPSA, by creating unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to gain states compliance to the federal guidelines (HHS, 2014). Transferring federal responsibilities to the states, via federal laws create issues for CPSA, such as the lack of resources and conflicting ideologies (Ryan, 2015; Stone, 2012). Approximately 428,000 children in foster care experience the lack of permanency through the U.S. states' CPSA annually (HHS, 2016a). An attempt to create stability, Congress created laws focused on permanency, safety, and well-being (HHS).

Federal laws create guidelines, unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives for the states to implement the deliverables to try to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children and collect federal dollars. Unfunded federal mandates and policy paradoxes make it difficult to implement or interpret at the

state level (Ryan, 2015; Stone, 2012). I used content analysis to analyze two states'

CPSA statutes, policies, and publications separately. After analyzing each state

separately, the next step was to compare the similarities and differences that emerged

from the data that impacted stable, permanent placements for foster care children using

policy constructs to guide the research.

It is unknown why the selected two U.S. states' CPSA differ in their success rates

at achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children especially since both

states are attempting to meet federal guidelines, unfunded mandates, restrictive

conditional funds, and incentives. This lack of knowledge and understanding as to why

the two U.S. states' CPSA success rates differ at achieving stable, permanent placements

for foster care children indicate a knowledge gap. I provide a literature review of selected

materials that detail the CPSA challenges surrounding the lack of stable, permanent

placements for foster care children, such as displacement, conflicting ideologies, and

permanency practices in Chapter 2. Stone's (2012) policy constructs provided the

theoretical framework through which I used to explore this phenomenon. The theoretical

policy constructs underlying the exploration of this study were incentives, rules, rights,

facts, and powers. The central focus of the literature review related to policy constructs

and the parameters surrounding stable, permanent placements for foster care children in

two U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

I describe the content analysis approach, research design and rationale, data

collection, and my role as a researcher in Chapter 3. I entail the data collection, data

analysis, and presentation of the findings in Chapter 4. Finally, I present an overview of

this study, interpretation of the findings, implications for possible social change,

recommended action, and reflection of my experiences as a researcher in Chapter 5.

This research may have legal, legislative, and advocacy implications for the

selected two U.S states' CPSA. This study brings clarification and knowledge of selected

two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. This lack of knowledge as to why

the two states' CPSA success rates differ in achieving stable, permanent placements for

foster care children especially when all states are trying to meet the same federal

standards, unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to obtain

federal funds indicates a knowledge gap. The study's findings may open new avenues

and opportunities in U.S. states' CPSA struggling with stable, permanent placements for

foster care children by creating awareness and momentum for social change in reducing

the foster care population. I present the selected two U.S. states' CPSA stable, permanent

placements for foster care children practices, and issues surrounding the lack of stable,

permanent placements in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Positive and healthy caregivers can be important because they produce stable, permanent placements meeting the emotional, physical, and safety needs of the children. Abused and neglected children may experience behavioral, developmental, and emotional difficulties (Naughton et al., 2013). CPSA removal by CPSA workers of children from their custodial or parental caregivers for safety reasons may inadvertently cause damage to the attachment or bond between the children and their caregivers (Fawley-King, Trask, Zhang, & Aarons, 2017).

According to Stone (2012), policy practices and outcomes can have side effects that may create unintended consequences. To minimize the impact of the unintended consequences in foster care, such as detachments, when CPSA workers remove children from their caregivers, their objective is to minimize side effects by establishing positive, stable, and permanent placements for foster care children (Pasalich et al., 2016). Once CPSA establishes long-term stable, permanent placements, children can learn to trust their new caregivers. Children learn to trust new caregivers when they provide a safe, nurturing environment that meets their needs (Fawley-King, Trask, & Zhang, 2017).

Moving foster care children from one placement to another placement creates instability of care and ultimately affects their well-being. Multiple foster care placements and caregivers may contribute to behavioral and psychological problems of foster care children can create long-term difficulties for foster care children well into their adulthood (Cassidy, Jones, & Shaver, 2013). CPSA attempts to create permanency for foster care children are unsatisfactory, according to HHS (2016).

The lack of permanency for foster care children is not a new issue. In 1997, President Clinton and Congress signed into law ASFA (PL105-89) in an attempt to correct CPSA issues, including permanency for children in foster care, at the state-level (HHS, 2014). Since 1974, the lack of stable, permanent placements phenomenon has eluded resolution (see Appendix B). I found a limited number of current articles for my research within the past 5 years in support of my research question. I extended my literature search past the last 5 years in order to obtain a complete picture of this phenomenon. A discussion of my literature search strategy for this study is in the next section.

Literature Search Strategy

As I reviewed the peer-reviewed journals related to the stable, permanent placements of foster care children, I extended the search timeframe past the last 5 years to capture relevant and comprehensive research contributions that were important to this study. After I had completed the research, I verified the limited number of current articles that were 5 years old or less in support of the research question before proceeding with my research. I explored the literature focusing on the efforts of how states' CPSA produced stable, permanent caregivers and placements for foster care children. I discuss the permanency issues within the states' CPSA in Chapters 1 and 2.

I retrieved the online peer-reviewed journal articles collected for this chapter from Walden University Library databases, GAO, and Children's Rights websites. I collected the Child abuse and neglect laws (e.g., Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, ASFA, and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act of

2008) from HHS services. The library databases used to conduct research included Walden University's Databases and the EBSCO research databases, Business Source Premier, Business Source Complete, Academic Search Premier, Academic Search Complete, Military and Government Collection, Psych Articles, ProQuest, and PsycINFO. Search terms included, but were not limited to, *adoption*, *ASFA of 1997*, *child abuse*, *child protective services*, *child welfare*, *children*, *children's rights*, *displacement*, *emancipation*, *federalism*, *facts*, *family court*, *foster care*, *foster care drift*, *guardianship*, *incentives*, *intensive/wraparound program*, *kinship care*, *neglect*, *parental rights*, *parental termination*, *permanency*, *policy paradox*, *powers*, *public policy*, *rights*, *reunification*, *rules*, *safety*, and *well-being*.

I review the U.S. states' CPSA permanency practices and the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children, theoretical framework of Stone's (2012) policy constructs, and lawsuits filed against the selected two states' CPSA in this chapter. The policy constructs were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. I give a brief introduction to the history of how the federal government became involved in protecting abused and neglected children in the next paragraph.

History of Child Protection in the United States since 1912

In 1912, the federal government's involvement in protecting abused and neglected children began with the establishment of the Children's Bureau. The federal government established and authorized laws to create the Children's Bureau (Stone, 2012). The Children's Bureau sole purpose was to guide federal oversight and financial support to the states' CPSA (HHS, 2013f). Appendix B outlined 28 federal laws related to CPSA

enacted since 1974 (HHS, 2014). The federal government hands the implementation of

the deliverables of CPSA over to the states. Not all states operate in the same fashion, and

service deliverables can vary from state-to-state.

Since 1974, Congress enacted federal legislation to create rules in the form of

standards to address ongoing CPSA issues. From 1974 to 2008, Congress has enacted 28

federal laws to address ongoing child welfare issues. In 2008, the foster care continued to

experience the lack of stable, permanent placements, and in response, the federal

government enacted the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act

of 2008. The enactment of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption

Act of 2008 places additional pressures on the states to return performance measurements

to obtain federal dollars (HHS, 2013f). Federal laws restrict the amount of time CPSA's

social workers can work to achieve stable, permanent placements to 12 months, and at

least, ensure that the children are no longer in harm's way from their abusers (HHS,

2017). This scenario sets up an adversary relationship between all parties as the social

worker bounces back and forth trying to protect the abused children and achieve

reunification with the abusive parents in hopes that the parents change. This policy

paradox is difficult for social workers to achieve.

The abusive parents are the offenders and simultaneously, CPSA primary focus to

achieving stable, permanent placements within the abused children's lives, a policy

paradox. For U.S. states' CPSA to protect children from harm, there are times when it is

necessary to separate children from the abusers (Arbeiter & Toros, 2017). The states'

CPSA remove children via a court order, but the removal from caregivers' care creates

displacement and detachment for the abused and neglected children. Foster care children experience displacement and detachment from all known loved ones, friends, and culture creating psychological issues in the form of abandonment, which affects them well into adulthood (Fawley-King, Trask, Zhang, & Aarons, 2017). As of 2014, the facts showed that more than 20% of foster care children continued to experience the lack of stable, permanent placements within the first 12 months of the initial placement. As foster care children in-care time increased, the likelihood the number of placements would increase; at least three or more placements. The percentages increased significantly over time and as children age. The national foster care average stay rate was approximately 21 months, with 28,058 foster care children in foster care 5 years or longer (HHS, 2016c). Between the first and second year of foster care, approximately 38% of foster care children experienced three or more placements. After the second year, more than 67% of foster care children experienced three or more placements (HHS, 2013d).

It appears that the U.S. states' CPSA continue to struggle with the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. It is the national norm within CPSA to have at least two foster care placements within the first 12 months: emergency entry placement and initial placement (HHS, 2012). According to the HHS (2016c), Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Report System (AFCARS), in 2014, 415,129 children were in the foster care. Approximately 264,746 entered into foster care, and in the same year, 238,230 exited, which left approximately 415,129 children in-care as of September 30, 2014 (HHS). Out of the 415,129 children in-care; 15,554 awaiting adoption, 120,334 kinship care, 190,454 foster care, 23,233 group home, 4,474 supervised independent

living, 4,544 runaways, and 21,989 trial home visit (2016c) . A 6-year trend of foster care

populations decreasing from federal fiscal years 2006 through 2012 from a low of

397,000 foster care children in care ended. Since federal fiscal years 2013 through 2015,

over 70% of the U.S. states' CPSA had foster care populations increased to a high of

428,000 (HHS, 2016a). U.S. states' CPSA contributed these factors to increases in

parental substance abuse, neglect, and other factors (HHS).

From the national foster care average time in care, it becomes apparent that CPSA

struggles with addressing the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care

children. As of September 30, 2014, HHS (2016c) indicated 415,129 foster care

children's average time in care mean equaled 20.8 months, and the median equaled 12.6

months. Out of the 415,129 children in foster care, approximately 200,465 were in foster

care for less than 12 months, and approximately 214,651 children were in foster care for

12 months or longer. Out of the 214,651 foster care children, the time in care were 62,447

between 12 to 17 months, 39,620 between 18 to 23 months, 29,401 between 24 to 29

months, 18,833 between 30 to 35 months, 36,292 between 36 months to 48 months, and

28,058 for 60 months or longer. The AFCAR report does not account for 13 children in

foster care as of September 30, 2014 (HHS).

Restricted funding and limited resources continue to hinder the states' CPSA

ability to address the lack of stable, permanent placements. According to Stoltzfus

(2014), Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, federal funds supported most states' CPSA,

however, federal funds do not cover all CPSA expenses, and unfunded federal mandates

result in fewer dollars for services. The federal government limits financial support to the

states' CPSA based upon the number of children in foster care. In 2013, the federal

government allocated over $273 million to the child welfare services. The states were

required to use 90% of the funding to meet federal standardized requirements and

restrictive incentives (Stoltzfus).

There are more than a million unsubstantiated child abuse or neglect reports made

each year. According to HHS (2017), in 2015, the United States received an estimated 4

million child abuse or neglect reports, which involved more than 7 million children. Out

of 4 million reports, 2.2 million reports involved 3.4 million children that warranted

follow-up. Nineteen percent of those cases found substantiated child abuse or neglect,

which involved approximately 683,000 children. In 2015, the national child abuse and

neglect victim ratio were 9.2 per 1,000 children (HHS).

Each state has their unique CPSA laws in an attempt to address child abuse and

neglect within their jurisdiction and culture. The Children's Bureau controls the flow of

federal funds to states' social programs, which ultimately controls the states' behaviors,

including CPSA (Godsoe, 2013). Abused children and their families' needs are often in

direct conflict with the federal mandates at all levels of service deliverables. Research

showed that there was a 30% recidivism rate of children returning to foster care for

disruptions in care within 10 years (Landsman, Boel-Studt, & Malone, 2014). Achieving

stable, permanent placements within the CPSA is not easy.

States are attempting different methods to achieve stable, permanent placements

for foster care children, and to reduce their foster care populations. U.S. states' CPSA

attempt to meet the federal mandates of stable, permanent placements for foster care

children met with mixed results (Godsoe, 2013). Achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children rates are higher for children who enter foster care at a younger age and in care for less than a year. Nationwide, states achieved stable, permanent placements at different rates. Achievement rates varied depending on age, time in custody, and disability (Biehal, Sinclair, & Wade, 2015). According to the HHS (2016c), the national age of children in foster care mean equaled 8.7 years and the median equaled 8.0 years. Out of 415,129 children in foster care as of September 30, 2014, 134,542 were newborns to 5 years old, 123,969 were between 6 to 12 years old, 126,198 were 13 years old or older, and ages not reported on 30,420 children. Out of the 415,129 foster care children, 52% were males and 48% females. In 2014, out of the 415,129 foster care children their most recent placements were 190,454 foster care homes (non-relatives), 120,334 foster family homes (relatives), 32,955 institutions, 23,233 group homes, 21,989 trial home visits, 15,554 pre-adoptive homes, 4,544 runaways, 4,474 supervised independent living arrangements, and 1,592 foster care placements were not reported (HHS).

When children enter foster care, the states' CPSA create permanency plans for them. According to HHS (2016c), the national case plan goals for the 415,129 foster children as of 2014 were 218,889 reunification with parents or primary caregivers, 99,521 adoptions, 18,934 emancipation, 15,008 long-term foster care placements, 18,408 case plans pending, 14,810 case plan goals not reported, 14,739 guardianships, and 12,351 kinship care placements. The races/ethnicities of the 415,129 foster care children were 174,477 Caucasians, 97,540 Blacks/African Americans, 90,299 Hispanics, 27,179 were two or more races, 12,747 Unknowns, 9,517 American Indians/Alaskan Natives,

2,107 Asians, 693 Native Hawaiians/other Pacific Islanders, and 570 races not reported (HHS, 2016c). Apparently, abused and neglected children are from all cultures and ethnicities.

It appears that behavioral and psychological issues for foster care children are side effects of the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Pasalich et al. (2016) agreed with Villodas, Litrownik, Newton, and Davis (2016) that foster care children continue to experience the lack of stable, permanent placements within CPSA. Villodas et al. conducted a study of foster care placements and their outcomes. The researchers interviewed 330 foster care children cases for an 8-year period from 1992 to 2005. The researchers interviewed the children every two years starting at 4 years old and ending at 12 years old. Villodas et al. design study focused on mental, physical, and emotional development using latent class analysis. The results of the study indicated four stable placements (32% adoption, 15% kinship care, 27% reunified, & 9% foster care) and two unstable placements (12% disrupted reunified, & 5% unstable foster care) using descriptive statistics. Villodas et al. declared the findings demonstrated significant associations between multiple foster care placements and behavioral and psychological issues for foster care children. The researchers argued that the outcomes were predictable based on the number of placements (Villodas et al.).

The lack of stable, permanent placements and reducing foster care populations within CPSA can interfere with the well-being of foster care children (Plummer & Cossins, 2016). Not having stable, permanent caregivers can affect the development and well-being of foster care children (Plummer & Cossins). Fernandez (2013) conducted a

mixed-method research focused on behavioral, education, and emotional outcomes of foster care children. Villodas et al. (2016) research design used multi-informant measure approach. The facts of study supported the notion that children in long-term foster care had behavioral and developmental issues contributed to multiple foster care placements, such as disciplinary problems and educational deficiencies.

It appears that the lack of stable, permanent placements result in displacements causing behavioral challenges for youth. Lee, Courtney, and Tajima (2014) agreed with Fernandez (2013) that long-term displacements caused severe behavioral and development issues. I explore how Stone's (2012) policy constructs theoretical framework plays a role in the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children, and the parameters surrounding these issues in the next section.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study was Stone's (2012) policy constructs. Stone promotes and uses her interpretation of politics and finding solutions to complex issues using deconstruction of policies. Stone offers guidance on agenda setting, decision-making, goal setting, causes, stakeholders, policy paradoxes, policy deconstruction, and solutions. Her guidance was not a systematic, step-by-step procedure for creating policies and finding solutions. Instead, Stone's guidance can assist government officials with creating, proposing, decision-making, goals, agenda setting, solutions, and deconstruction of existing policies. Stone recognized that policy paradoxes and conflicts evolved from political representatives trying to comprehend the parameters

surrounding these issues and attempting to solve those issues while being influenced by special interest groups.

The federal government uses CPSA facts to promote changes, influence others, and gain acceptance by states to establish permanency. According to Stone (2012), to gain influence, acceptance, and support from others, businesses, and government agencies, the federal government grounds their causes in facts. Facts are tools that may influence and create voluntary behavioral changes in others. Stone further elaborated that businesses and government agencies used facts as a marketing tool to promote causes, and at times, withhold the facts, to manipulate outcomes. DeGarmo et al. (2013) recognized that multiple foster care placements and caregivers caused long-term behavioral, developmental, and emotional difficulties for children. Since 1974, Congress enacted 28 federal laws addressing child welfare issues, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89 (ASFA; HHS, 2014). Since the enactment of the ASFA in 1997, Congress enacted 17 additional federal laws.

These rules in the form of laws are guidelines, unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to promote certain types of behaviors or actions. If the states comply with the federal incentives, the federal government rewards the states with federal dollars. If the states decline to comply with federal incentives, the federal government can withhold federal funds from the states. The federal government uses these laws as a powerful mechanism to control or change the states' behaviors (Stone, 2012). Unfortunately, federal laws have not prevented children from experiencing the lack of permanency through foster care (HHS, 2012).

U.S. states' CPSA comply with federal guidelines and standards to receive federal dollars. Federal dollars are inadequate or too restrictive to meet the needs of abused and neglected children and their families. The 1980 Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) restricted federal assistance by focusing on conditional incentives for states promoting permanency planning for foster care children (HHS, 2014). Although the goal of the AACWA was family preservation, the law created unintended consequences by creating more foster care children experiencing the lack of permanency through foster care while CPSA focused on reunification and reinstatement of parental rights (Landsman, Boel-Studt, & Malone, 2014). AACWA was the first federal law that mandated states' CPSA to file for the termination of parental rights for children who are in foster care for 15 months or more (Barbell & Wright, 2001; Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013a). As early as 1980, federal law established timelines and specific conditions for termination of parental rights, which makes it more tragic that foster care children are still experiencing the lack of stable, permanent placements through the system. Federal laws mandated that states' CPSA make reasonable efforts to locate and notify estranged parents that their children are in foster care, and create permanency plans for all foster care children (Barbell & Wright; Carnochan, Lee, & Austin).

The U.S. states' CPSA continue to have issues with the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Nationwide, states' CPSA success rates at establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children were inconsistent (Fernandez, 2013; Godsoe, 2013). States need to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children because it affects their well-being (Villodas et al., 2016). Healthy

children were a result of having healthy attachments with stable, permanent caregivers (Villodas et al.). Research showed children as early as six months have behavioral issues from rejection or abandonment by their caregivers (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall 1978; Villodas et al.). According to Villodas et al., stable, permanent placements for foster care children were essential to their behavioral development and prevention of aggressive behavior. Cross, Koh, Rolock, and Eblen-Manning (2013) asserted multiple foster care placements affect foster care children with behavioral and developmental problems. Likewise, DeGarmo et al. (2013), contended that compromising the basic needs of children was predictive of future behavioral and emotional problems.

Cross et al. (2013) conducted a qualitative content analysis study that used 61 welfare case files involving 184 children to look at why children experience multiple foster care placements. The 184 children entered foster care before July 1, 2006. The 61 case files had placement instability with an average of six or more placements per a case from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The number of days children spent in foster care ranged from 211 to 524 days. Sixty-four percent of the children moved at least once, while 27% experienced at least three or more foster care moves (Cross et al.). According to Cross et al., 53% of the cases, children moved due to their behavior problems. The authors coded for three reasons for placement moves. The three categories were caregiver-related reasons, child behavior-related reasons, and system or policy-related reasons. The findings found all stakeholders played a role in the lack of stable, permanent placements for children. The stakeholders were caregivers, children, and CPSA (Cross et al.).

Apparently, the case files' missing data hampered the findings. Cross et al. (2013) recognized that missing data might have biased their findings and advocated a web-based program instead of hardcopy files. The authors recognized that the lack of stable, permanent placements was complex. Primary reasons for instability occurred after traumatic occurrence involving the caregivers and children. Twenty percent of case files indicated unnecessary moves by CPSA, and an additional 38% of the placements were temporary movements. The findings of this study found that CPSA moves created instabilities especially placing children in initial temporary placements (Cross et al.). The Cross et al. study was a collaborated effort of the University of Illinois, Children and Family Research Center, and CPSA. The project research design used content analysis to explore and understand the characteristics of disrupted foster care placements (Cross et al.).

The authors examined specific reasons for foster care displacements and discovered the research data incomplete or omitted. The research results discovered four primary reasons for disruptions in placements (Cross et al., 2013). The reasons for the disruptions in placements were caregiver-related by 34%, foster care children behavior-related by 40%, CPSA-related by 20%, and non-categorized by 6%. Cross et al. used content analysis to assess the focus of the underlying meaning of the case data in a systematic manner in this study.

The findings of this study were conflicting. According to Cross et al. (2013), the mixed results of the research demonstrated the complexity of CPS. Cross et al. concluded that multiple foster care placements do not necessarily mean behavioral and

developmental issues for foster care children, and it was impossible to create stable, permanent placements while in foster care. Cross et al. did not follow-up with the children indicated in the files so determining the impact was difficult but concluded that foster care children's mental health needs consideration when placing children in foster care placements. The authors' statements contradicted each other.

With the knowledge that the research design used case files, and not live human participants, and limited by missing or incomplete data, it was difficult to follow their justification and dismissal of mental health reasons for foster care disruptions. Cross et al. (2013) recognized that the incomplete or omitted data hindered their results and caused biases. The most important factor of this research was that the researchers recognized the importance of establishing stable, permanent foster care placements from the onset, and not after emergency placements (Cross et al.). The content analysis research conducted by Cross et al. demonstrated how content analysis assisted with the evaluation and determination of the underlying meaning of the CPSA foster care case files. The authors did not follow-up and interview any of the social workers in the foster care case files.

Social workers are those public servants that have oversight of child abuse cases. The social workers steer families on how to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Sometimes, families are unsuccessful at achieving stable, permanent placements (HHS, 2013f). Social workers' decisions are conditional depending on abusive parents' willingness to adhere to CPSA requirements and conditions. Social workers have a form of power that influences parental behavior (Stone, 2012). If parents

adhere, there are positive incentives, such as overnight visits, unsupervised visits, and reunification.

Apparently, if parents refused or could not follow the program, there were negative consequences, such as no visits, supervised visits, long-term foster care for their children, and parental termination. Stone (2012) asserted rules and incentives in the form of laws giving power to enticements. For example, rules and incentives appeared as federal laws, U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and social workers' decisions. Stone stated these influences were types of coercion that created and motivated behavioral changes. The side effects of using these rules were displacements that could create developmental and emotional disorders in foster care children. If social workers used force only, they would not be successful in creating long-term positive changes (Stone). For this process to work, social workers needed to influence parents using a balance of incentives to gain cooperation and create behavioral changes.

It appears that if social workers gained acceptance and cooperation from the parents; this was a powerful tool in creating positive changes. Stone (2012) indicated this type of influence as a persuasion tool that used facts to gain acceptance, compliance, and influence. Within CPSA, social workers were not always successful at steering families in the right direction if the families were unwilling (HHS, 2016). Meanwhile, children continue to experience the lack of stable, permanent placements through the foster care system hoping for normalcy. When children have healthy, stable, and permanent caregivers, it may create a chain reaction in establishing stable, permanent placements (Pasalich et al., 2016; Villodas et al., 2016).

Parental and children's rights are a type of policy paradox that social workers have to find some balance to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Stone (2012) defined these constructs as policy strategies. Social workers used policy strategies to find solutions and motivate parents to change negative behaviors. According to Stone, government entities used policy strategies to create behavioral changes and to exerted power over the people.

According to HHS (2013f), Social workers have the difficult tasks of applying complex and conflicting policies with limited and restrictive resources to families with multidimensional problems. Social workers deal with policy paradoxes as they attempt to protect abused children from their abusive parents and at the same time try to reunite the abused children with their abusive parents (HHS). Policies become paradoxical when CPSA attempts to implement them and misses the target or intent (Stone, 2012). For social workers to resolve these difficulties, it is important to reveal and clarify the issues to determine where they differ from their objective to move forward with solutions. Stone further explained the original ideas were to create changes within the system and mold the characters of their clientele into acceptable behaviors. Nevertheless, some states' CPSA are struggling to address the lack of stable, permanent placements for abused children. I present the five policy constructs: incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers; and how Stone's policy constructs play a role in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children in the next section.

Incentives

Incentives are powerful policy strategy in creating change. According to Stone (2012), incentives change behaviors or exert power over others to create behavioral change via enticements or punishments. Incentives are enticements defined by federal laws and states' statutes and policies designed to meet federal standards for the states to receive federal dollars. Incentives also are in the form of punishments within CPSA, such as the federal government withholding federal dollars and CPSA terminating parental rights. The judicial branch of the government has numerous rulings that affect and allow U.S. states' CPSA authority to remove children and terminate parental rights. I present these legal decisions in this chapter.

It appears that the federal government has found a way to control the states' behavior. Stone (2012) referred to incentives and rules as power mechanisms that the federal government used to create or control the states' behaviors. If the states comply with the federal mandates, they receive federal dollars in return for their compliance (HHS, 2013f). The federal government is not the only branch of government using incentives to control or change behaviors of others. The U.S. states' CPSA use incentives to influence parental behavior and the create change (HHS).

It appears that governments use incentives to alter the behavior of a target audience. Stone (2012) recognized that policy incentives could have unintended consequences creating paradoxes. These unintended consequences were common and created issues because policies were vague, conflicting, and illogical. These types of contemporaneous policies created difficulties in the implementation of said policies and

may hurt the very group they were supposed to protect (Stone). Incentives can support rules in creating behavioral changes. I present the rules policy construct in the next section.

Rules

Rules direct a specified individual, group, or organization to behave or not behave in a particular manner. If rules become broken, then incentives play a role to reinforce behavioral changes (Stone, 2012). There are numerous rules within CPSA from 28 federal laws, judicial decisions, social workers' decisions, and U.S. states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications (HHS, 2014; see Appendix B).

Allegedly, governments created rules in policies to benefits society and achieve a specific goal. The problem with rules was that they could be vague, conflict with other rules, which may have unintended consequences, and conflicting interpretations (Stone, 2012). Rules impose responsibilities on others. If rules forbid lucrative or gratifying behaviors, the target audience will manipulate the rules to gain the incentives and, they will not change their behaviors (Stone). I do not explore the formulation of rules, but I do study preexisting publicly available rules in the form of two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

It appears there are different types of rules. According to Stone (2012), there are two types of rules, firm or flexible. Flexible rules allow for interpretative meaning, enforcement, challenges, and changes. Firm rules are rigid, restrictive, and not modify for special or unforeseen circumstances (Stone). Stone asserted that incentives give power

via rules in the form of laws. Laws use facts as a policy strategy to promote the

government's agenda. I present the facts policy construct in the next section.

Facts

Facts are information data used to influence and persuade people's behavior,

thinking, and acceptance (Stone, 2012). U.S. states' CPSA uses facts to demonstrate the

need for federal funds for services. The federal government uses facts to create new laws

with incentives, rules, and rights. According to Stone, facts are marketing tools that

governments and businesses use to promote their agenda. Governments use the facts to

influence attitudes and behaviors, change behaviors, manipulate information to gain

support, and withhold facts to prevent change or negative consequences. Target

audiences vary depending on the cause or agenda (Stone). In CPSA, target audiences are

abusive parents, Congress, future adoptive parents, foster care parents, advocacy groups,

and public opinion. For example, to meet the needs of the families and abused children, it

is important to have the availability of resources. Congress is a target audience because

they are the bank for CPSA. Stone suggested using the facts to lobby for the cause.

Facts are powerful strategy tools. According to Stone (2012), facts influenced the

target audience's mind and perception gaining their voluntary compliance or acceptance.

The key to facts was the knowledge and information used to manipulate the targeted

audience to resolve the conflict. Ironically, I used facts in this study to demonstrate the

need for the study and social change. Different organizations use facts to promote their

cause, such as Children's Rights (2014). Children's Rights used CPSA facts and rights of

children to show the need for reform.

There are more than 14 national child welfare organizations advocating foster care children's rights. These child welfare organizations lobby Congress for foster care children's permanency, rights, safety, and well*-being (Child Welfare, 2009). Children's Rights, located in New York City, is a national child welfare organization that advocates foster care children's rights in the United States using class action litigation, policy analysis, and public education to address foster care and service issues (Children's Rights, 2014). Children's Rights successfully used facts to persuade the courts and influence U.S. states' CPSA to change their behaviors (Stone, 2012). Children's Rights (2006a, 2006b, 2017) sued Missouri three times. Children's Rights (2013, 2015) sued South Carolina twice. I discuss the lawsuits later in this chapter. Children's Rights is a strong advocate for foster care children leading the path in creating change for foster care children. Children's Rights (2014) acknowledged that prolonged foster care tenures and conflicting ideologies were serious issues in CPSA. Children's Rights has successfully sued and won numerous cases against various U.S. states' CPSA. I present the rights policy construct in the next section.

Rights

Rights can be adversarial by nature and in direct conflict with other rights, creating policy paradoxes. Governments use rights to invoke the power of an individual, group, or organization on behalf of enforcing the rules (Stone, 2012). Children's rights and parental rights can be oppositional by nature. Stone asserted that rights establish standards of behavior to resolve conflicts or challenges. Within CPSA, parental rights versus children's rights and reunification versus parental termination can be adversarial

and conflict for all parties involved (Ben-David, 2016). Parental and children's rights are a type of policy paradox that social workers may have to find some balance to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Stone).

The U.S. Constitution, Fourteen Amendment first established individual rights and limited all states and local officials from interfering with those rights. The judicial system helped defined and recognized both parental and children's rights. By the judicial system recognizing both parental and children's rights, it created two sets of ideologies that created paradoxes (Meyer v. State of Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390, (1923); Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510, (1925); Levesque, 2014). The judicial system enforces the rights of individuals and does not allow the states to use their power to overstep the rights of individuals. Since the federal government cannot force their power onto the states, it uses incentives and restrictive funds to gain compliance and control the states, according to Stone (2012). I present both parental rights and children's rights in the next section.

Parental Rights. The U.S. Constitution, Fourteen Amendment, Section 1 and the U.S. Supreme Court, implied the protection of the fundamental liberty of parents to raise their children. The U.S. Constitution does not address parental or children's rights, however, the Fourteen Amendment gave citizens' rights and equal protection of the laws and limited all states and local officials actions against those protections and rights. Adopted on July 9, 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment responded to citizenship issues regarding former slaves. Citizenship in the United States has evolved and expanded over the years. The evolution of citizenship includes the Citizenship Clause and the Indian

Citizenship Act of 1924, which prescribes all persons born in the United States, including African American and Indians, are U.S. citizens. *Jus soli* is the legal term for guaranteed citizenship. *Jus soli* exists in the Americas, but not in Europe, Asia, or the Middle East (Ferguson & Petro, 2016). The Equal Protection Clause, which is part of the U.S. Constitution, Amendment 14, Section 1, states all citizens, which includes parents and foster care children, have rights, and no state can deprive them life, liberty, or property without due process, nor deny any citizen of equal protection of the laws.

Parents have the right to educate their children in a foreign language. Meyer v. State of Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390 (1923), involved the State of Nebraska interfering with the parental right to have their children educated in a foreign language rather than English (Levesque, 2014). The U.S. Supreme Court recognized and protected parental right to choose how they educate their children, and State of Nebraska Supreme Court error in judgment that an infraction occurred because private school taught a foreign language to young children instead of English. The Supreme Court recognized the liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment, which surpasses the power of the state. The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the State of Nebraska Supreme Court's decision.

Parents have the right to have their children taught in private schools. Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510 (1925), involved Pierce v. Society of Sisters with the parental rights to have their children taught in private school (Levesque, 2014). The U.S. Supreme Court found that the District of Oregon interfered with the parental authority by forcing their children to receive instruction from public teachers only. The court deemed this interference as unreasonable with parental rights on how to raise their children

according to the Fourteenth Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the District of Oregon decision. I present the children's rights in the next section.

Children's Rights. Children's rights came about in an indirect way. In the 1900s, the *parens patriae* doctrine developed and evolved in the United States, and continues to expand in American Law (Steinke, 2014). In the 1900s, the *parens patriae* doctrine was the first legal decision that mandated and gave States' power and authority to intervene to ensure the protection and rights of children when their parents abused or neglected them (HHS, 2013f; Levesque, 2014; Steinke). Originally, the *parens patriae* doctrine was intended to protect disabled people who were unable to fend for themselves and eventually evolved to include abused and neglected children (Steinke).

It appears that the parens patriae doctrine protects individuals who are unable or too young to understand their rights. If parents are incapable or refuse to protect and take care of their children, states have the authority and power to intervene and take action to protect the children, which includes taking custody of the children (HHS, 2013f; Steinke, 2014). The reasons U.S. states' CPSA remove children from parental care; include, but not limited to, abandonment, abuse, alcohol, death, drugs, illness, incarceration, mental health, neglect, and physical health (Jackson, Kissoon, & Greene, 2015). The *parens patriae* doctrine sets the foundation for government's involvement in protecting abused and neglected children (Steinke). The *parens patriae* doctrine gives the U.S. states' CPSA the power to intervene and protect abused and neglected children. I present the powers policy construct in the next section.

Powers

The federal government uses powers to transfer responsibilities to the state governments. Stone (2012) asserted that governments use powers to change behaviors. The transferring of responsibilities between different levels of government is a type of political power restriction called decentralization. Stone defined decentralization as the federal government transfers their responsibilities via incentives and rules to the states. According to Greve (2012), the Federal government justification for this transfer was to put the powers into the hands of the people: however, research showed that the real reason was to control the states' behavior.

The U.S. Constitution grants power to the federal government, and the Fourteenth Amendment grants power via rights to individuals. Since the states cannot override the rights of the individuals, they had to get creative. The U.S. states' CPSA used incentives to gain power over parents and to modify and control their behaviors with the promise of regaining custody of their children. If parents declined or failed to follow the incentives, their actions could result in termination of their parental rights. The federal government started using incentives to gain power over the states and target audiences to modify and control their behaviors.

Congress could not simply mandate the states into compliance, therefore, they have to be creative in creating requirements for the states to follow. In the 1960s, Congress began passing standardized requirements onto the states as a condition of receiving federal funds (HHS, 2014). The federal government created these rules and incentives as a powerful mechanism to control states' behaviors (Stone, 2012). By the

federal government passing responsibilities and financial burdens onto the states, via

unfunded mandates and incentives, this creates limited funds and resources. Limited

funds and resources ultimately affect the effectiveness, and efficiency of government

services, including treatment, and services for abused and neglected children and their

families (Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013). Stone referred to this shift in

responsibilities as variations of reform. Reform appears as membership changes,

leadership changes, expanding or limiting authority or power, accountability changes,

and delegation or power shifts.

It appears that the federal government shifted their CPSA responsibilities to the

states via unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to limit the

states' authority on how to use the funds, which ultimately changes accountability

methods. By the federal government shifting their responsibilities to the states, they can

allegedly ensure compliance with their requirements (Ryan, 2015). The federal trickle-

down process and contradictory requirements create defragmented CPSA operational

environments, which transpires into the U.S. states' CPSA inability to provide services to

their constituents due to heavy workloads, limited resources, and paradoxes (Camasso &

Jagannathan, 2013; Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013). According to Stone (2012),

federal mandates can transfer federal responsibilities to the states creating conflicts over

federal and state roles and responsibilities.

Within the U.S. Constitution, it describes the structure of government and

delivery of services to the people, however, it does not prescribe how the government

will perform those services. This conflict between roles and responsibilities was a heated

debate during the creation of federalism in the United States of America (Ryan, 2015).

The states' CPSA jump through the hoops following unfunded federal mandates,

restrictive conditional funds, and incentives to obtain federal funds. The states' CPSA are

dependent upon federal dollars on protecting and serving their constituents, yet are

independent to create and implement their programs to meet their constituents' needs

(Stone, 2012). Incentives became the federal government's tool to control the states.

Incentives and unfunded mandates create paradoxes that may interfere with establishing

stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

As federal budgets decreased, the federal government became creative in reducing

and shifting their responsibilities to the states. This creative practice by the federal

government became a factor in policy-making, decreasing funding for programs, and

controlling the states' behavior (Gerston, 2007; Weingast, 2014). The unfunded

mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives restrict usages of federal funds via

block grants to achieve federal compliance and control over the states and to meet their

policy objectives (Gerston; Weingast; Stone, 2012).

Most states' CPSA are having issues trying to meet federal requirements and

simultaneously provide efficient and effective services to abused and neglected children

and their families. When the 104th Congress enacted the welfare block grants, the

purpose was to shift responsibilities to the states and place restrictions on the usage of

funds. With the federal government using the money to gain control over the states, states

responded with creative problem solving, however, sometimes this creativeness did not

achieve the desired results of creating permanency (Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013;

Stone, 2012). CPSA ideologies of keeping families together, and creating stable,

permanent placements for foster care children can be adversarial by nature because it is a

paradox (Fuller & Zhang; Godsoe; Stone).

Apparently, conflicts often accompany American politics ranging from special

interests, public interests, compromises, and ambiguities, which results in vague policies

and paradoxes that stifle the creativity and ability of state leaders. The continued reliance

on the government to provide all services create ineffectiveness and inefficiencies may

have exacerbated the issues without a solution (Fuller & Zhang, 2017). According to

Godsoe (2013) and Fuller and Zhang, CPSA is inefficient and ineffective due to the

foster care drift, inadequate resources, poor adoption rates, and the number children aging

out of the system. They further contended that the first step to CPSA reform lies in the

reduction of the foster care population, however, at what costs does CPSA reduce the

number of children in foster care (Fuller & Zhang).

Based on the states' CPSA inconsistency to achieve stable, permanent placements

for foster care children, it demonstrated that something was not working correctly in

CPSA. Since 1997, federal laws emphasized the importance of permanency, safety, and

well-being principles in the CPSA arena for states to follow to address the lack of stable,

permanent placements for foster care children (Balsells et al., 2015). I explored the

parameters that surrounded the two states' CPSA outcomes at achieving stable,

permanent placements for foster care children. This lack of knowledge and understanding

as to why the two states' CPSA are inconsistent at achieving stable, permanent

placements for foster care children indicates a knowledge gap.

States' CPSA continually adjust their focus as the elected parties change the laws and their agendas. Congress creates laws with these guidelines and standards for the states' CPSA to follow to control those (Stone, 2012). States' CPSA then change or modify current practices to ensure federal compliance and obtain federal funds. Congress creates new legislation to address ongoing challenges or conflicts and uses their influence to motivate states to change (Stone). The federal government promotes policy paradoxes with competing or conflicting interest to limit the power or dominance of the states. According to Stone, policies are contradictory and vague by nature in order to control the states' behavior, but when put into practice the policies spawn trouble. Policies cannot have contradictory goals and be logical. Even the framers of the U.S. Constitution used policy paradoxes to spread the power among the states to preserve the authority and power of the states. In other words, this bureaucratic approach may appear to meet the needs via policies; however, it does not necessarily address the issues (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011; Stone).

Governments use the five policy constructs strategies to create policy solutions to change or prevent certain behaviors and curtail conflicts or challenges (Stone, 2012). Policy paradoxes are temporary conditions that allow the decision-makers, such as social workers, to create solutions for unique situations (Stone). I present the role of policy paradox on displaced foster care children in the next section.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

Displacements

The lack of stable, permanent placements may be detrimental to the well-being of foster care children. Foster care children are affected by the lack of stable, permanent placements by ongoing development and emotional issues (Pasalich et al., 2016). It is essential that the states' CPSA limit the number of displacements. When CPSA removes children from their caregivers, displacement occurs by removing them from all social networks and friends, placing them into new, strange environments, such as foster care (DeGarmo et al., 2013). CPSA has numerous policy paradoxes that create conflicts and challenges for social workers. Social workers are struggling with policy paradoxes, such as addressing abuse and neglect issues while the children remain with their abusive custodial or parental caregivers, and protecting children from their abusive custodial or parental caregivers by removing them from their care and placing them in foster care (Stone, 2012). These policy paradoxes create battles within CPSA causing struggles and conflicts (Camasso & Jagannathan, 2013). Removing children from their parents can be harmful and cause detachment issues.

On the other hand, leaving children with their abusive parents can be harmful to their safety and well-being. CPSA has to deal with parental rights versus children's rights, which further exacerbates issues and conflicts. The relationship between the families and CPSA often leads to conflicts and challenges (Plummer & Cossins, 2016). Returning foster care children to their families too soon, when the environments are unstable, results in additional disruptions in placements and the removal of children from

their homes a second time (Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013). Godsoe argued that these CPSA challenges caused by ineffective services were due to the lack of resources, which created chain reactions of ineffective permanency plan designs for foster care children and their families. Fuller and Zhang and Godsoe blamed CPSA bureaucracy because it created conflicting ideologies, which resulted in disputes, challenges, and conflicts.

Challenges happen when social workers try to achieve reunification with families that may have multidimensional, complex issues within restrictive timelines and at the same time working toward parental termination. Federal laws limit the amount of time CPSA can work to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Currently, federal law restricts the amount of time to 12 months to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Arbeiter & Toros, 2017). Sometimes achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children in this amount of time is impossible especially if dealing with parental incarceration or addiction issues (Leloux-Opmeer et al., 2016). The longer foster care children experience the lack of permanency through the system, the higher the likelihood of causing long-term behavioral and developmental difficulties (Pasalich et al., 2016).

Apparently, the states felt the babies bonding with their incarcerated mothers were beneficial and more important than the displacements that occurred when the babies turned six months old. Cassidy et al. (2013) analyzed research reports that studied incarcerated women allowed to keep their newborn babies for six months in a special nursery inside the prison. Incarcerated mothers sometimes do not have a choice but to

place their children in foster care until their prison term ends, or to release their children for adoption. Initially, the study benefited the babies because the babies successfully bonded with their mothers.

Once the study ended and, displacement occurred as mothers surrendered their babies to CPSA, the study found there were ongoing challenges. The main challenge was that social workers were unable to maintain contacts between mothers and babies, which resulted in detachments (Cassidy et al., 2013). Over 14,000 foster care children have incarcerated parents (GAO, 2011a; Shaw, Bright, & Sharpe, 2015). According to Stone (2012) theory, this paradox was a dilemma of self-interest versus public interest. Mothers bonding with their babies created positive attachments, which promotes the development and emotional well-being of their babies, however, placing babies with mothers who were unable to keep them long-term created unnecessary displacements and detachment issues for the babies.

It appears that the self-interests of the mothers' relationships with their babies were more important than creating stable, permanent placements for the babies. Public opinion may not agree with the mothers since the incarcerated mothers committed crimes that caused them to be in jail (Leloux-Opmeer et al., 2016). Apparently, the public interest took precedence over the mothers' interest and their babies' well-being; both punished for their mothers' crime. Stone (2012) recognized these types of paradoxes and their unintended consequences. This paradox of allowing the mothers to bond with their babies while knowing that these placements were temporary ultimately created displacements for the babies.

These struggles demonstrated the conflicts of two different perspectives that were simultaneously happening; babies' well-being and interest versus the incarcerated mothers' interest or incarcerated mothers' and their babies' interest versus society's interest. These conflicts continue to grow as the number of incarcerated parents increase (Cassidy et al., 2013). According to Cassidy et al., the incarcerated women in this study lived in poverty; their newborn babies were at-risk for multiple caregivers, and behavioral and emotional difficulties related to detachment issues. The qualitative research design used in-depth interviews and statistical analysis using connotative measures methods. Cassidy et al. interviewed the incarcerated mothers over the six months period as they participated in the study with their babies, and after the completion of this study.

It appears that CPSA violated the babies' rights because they knew the incarcerated mothers were unable to establish permanency promptly, nevertheless, they allowed the babies to participate in this study. According to Cassidy et al. (2013), when the babies turned six months old, placement disruption occurred with the removal of the babies from their incarcerated mothers. After the removal of the babies from their mothers, there were ongoing contact challenges. Social workers were unable to move forward with reunification with their mothers due to their incarceration, and the social workers were restricted to the amount of time to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Cassidy et al.). The issues within CPSA are difficult to address, not to mention the dramatic impact that occurs within the lives of foster care children as

they experience detachment, and lack of stable, permanent placements through foster care (DeGarmo et al., 2013).

The U.S. Constitution does not address parental or children's rights. The judicial system recognized both parental and children's rights. The judicial system has created paradoxes with two sets of ideologies that can be conflicting at times: parental protection and rights, (Meyer v. State of Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390, (1923); Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510, (1925)), and child protection and rights, *parens patriae* doctrine (Levesque, 2014). Stone (2012) identified paradoxes as the creation and outline of two different rights advocating the same right as conflicting ideologies. Examples of conflicting ideologies were parental rights and children's rights, which illustrated how rules were conflicting (e.g., children's rights and parental rights).

Stable, permanent caregivers offer stable, permanent placements for foster care children, which benefits their well-being. Displacement occurred when the states' CPSA removed children from their caregivers and placed them in foster care. The displacements of the children from their support and social network were disruptive (DeGarmo et al., 2013). Displaced Children from their caregivers may result in cognitive and behavioral developments challenges. Research suggested strong and supportive caregivers provided a positive and substantial impact on the children's mental health (Bowlby, 1988; DeGarmo et al.).

The states' CPSA need to minimalize the effects that disruption and displacement may have on foster care children by creating stable, permanent placements. Research has shown that stable, permanent placements can diminish behavioral disorders and

attachment difficulties for the foster care children (DeGarmo et al., 2013). There is hope that stable, permanent placement of abused children can have a positive impact on their recovery (Biehal et al., 2015).

The results of this study were promising for abused and neglected children. As cited in Biehal et al. (2015), abused and neglected children appeared to respond positively to treatments. According to Fuller and Zhang (2017) and Godsoe (2013), the issues within CPSA could be resolved with additional resources and an intrusion into families' lives to prevent and curtail abuse. Fuller and Zhang and Godsoe contended that the prevention of abuse starts with the states. The authors argued that the states needed to play an active role in the lives of children-at-risk and was necessary for states to support families before and after crises, thereby preventing abuse before it happens. Godsoe planned to have states involved in all aspects of at-risk children's lives in order to curtail abuse. Godsoe further contended that families could decline services from the states, but the states needed to be available just in case.

It appears that Fuller and Zhang (2017) and Godsoe (2013) failed to understand the limitation of resources, and most importantly, the invasion of privacy by the states, not to mention disregarding parental rights. Fawley-King et al., (2017) did not promote the intrusion of the states into families' lives like Fuller and Zhang and Godsoe but agreed that displacement affects abused children's well-being. Fawley-King et al. examined 152 foster care children and the impact of displacement using Linear and Poisson regression to determine the impact on relationships and mental health issues. Fawley-King et al. interviewed foster care children about displacements of abused

children in foster care by looking at the strengths of relationships with the biological parents, peers, relatives, and foster care parents. The authors examined the amount of contact with biological parents and the correlation with alleged mental health problems of foster care children. Fawley-King et al. pointed out to the connection between with more contracts with biological parents may cause mental health issues for the foster care children. This study seemed to suggest that foster care children adapt well with limited contact with biological parents, peers, and relatives. The authors recognized that not all foster care children were the same, therefore, making them an unusual group to study.

Displaced from everyone and everything normal affects the well-being of the children, but so does abuse and neglect. According to Fawley-King et al., (2017), a key variable affecting foster care children's well-being was whether they bonded in their new placements. Fawley-King et al. argued the negative aspects of displacement for foster care children affected their well-being even for protection from a dangerous environment and contacts with their abusers. They further suggested that the impact of foster care children having too much contact with their abusers can impact the stable, permanent placements and puts them at risk for long-term psychological problems, which varied depending on the degree of contact. Fawley-King et al. understood that sometimes it was necessary to protect the children and limit contact with their abusers.

Resolving the states' CPSA lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children is a controversial topic. Fuller and Zhang (2017) and Godsoe (2013) argued that the states' positions of reunification and protecting abused children were in direct conflict with each other, a policy paradox. They further contended that the dynamics of this

relationship were adversarial by nature, and the conflicts were creating chaos in CPSA. Stone (2012) agreed with Fuller and Zhang and Godsoe that this policy paradox causes issues. Fuller and Zhang, and Godsoe argued this adversarial relationship was due to the CPSA focused on the abusers as a means of rehabilitation while trying to protect the abused children from the abusers. Godsoe advocated that the answer to child abuse was to promote prevention before it happens. The author contended that the focus is on vulnerable populations and partnerships between states and parents with available resources as the key agents of change.

The states' CPSA, according to Godsoe (2013) need to support families, not remove their children. The author further argued that the problem was abuse, not the parents who committed the abuse, and prevention was the key to resolving this social issue. Involving the states in the lives of families at-risk, according to Godsoe, they would be able to prevent abuse. Abuse knows no boundaries, such as social or economic status, racial, ethnic, gender, culture, or demographic barriers (HHS, 2013b).

Singling out families that fit within a specified category is discriminatory by nature. According to HHS (2013f), authorities become aware of abuse through someone reporting it, not through the invasion of privacy by the states or stereotyping people. Abuse is a global issue, with differing definitions dependent upon the country and culture. What might be abuse in the United States may not be abuse in Africa and vice versa. For example, in one country a 15 years old girl having her genital area mutilated for cultural traditions is abuse, while, in a different country, it may be an acceptable norm (Lashley, Hassan, & Maitra, 2014). According to Fawley-King et al., (2017),

displacements of foster care children from their social and cultural networks can have a

positive impact. Furthermore, Fawley-King et al. implied that forcing abused children to

visit with their abusers were a form of abuse.

Unintended consequences, such as the side effects of displacements, are difficult

to address. Fuller and Zhang (2017) and Godsoe (2013) failed to recognize that

displacement could give foster care children opportunities, safety, support, and social

networks that were important in the healing and recovery process from abuse. Creating

stable, permanent placements for foster care children was more than just biological

connections (Fawley-King, Trask, & Zhang, 2017). Godsoe argued that the states were

responsible for the abuse because the states could prevent such crimes against children by

having active roles in the lives of at-risk children before abuse becomes an issue. This

argument is illogical and lacks personal responsibility by the abusers.

The states' CPSA continued to look at paradoxes as the solution to child abuse

and neglect issues, which created conflicts, such as the abusers as a means of resolving

abuse. The solution cannot be simultaneously two different things without creating

conflicts (Stone, 2012). For abused children to recover, the focus needs to include

treatment and stable, permanent placements in addressing their multidimensional needs.

Some states' CPSA inability to address the lack of stable, permanent placements for

foster care children continues to be a challenge (Rolock, Pérez, White, & Fong, 2017).

CPSA uses social workers to assist and work with abused and neglected children

and their families. Platt (2012) agreed with Arbeiter and Toros (2017) qualitative study

on the extent to how well CPSA social workers work with parents of abused children in

foster care. The study was an exploratory design that analyzed data from interviews for themes. The author compared and contrasted the findings. The participants were 11 parents and 11 CPSA social workers. The study revealed CPSA' policy paradoxes, such as mandated to work with abusive parents, family-centered focus, rehabilitation of abusers, coercive approach, achieving stable, permanent placements, protecting abused children, and meet all criteria within 12 months as set forth by federal mandates (Arbeiter & Toros, 2017). The study revealed that social workers felt the system needs improvement in rethinking the role of parents as the primary theme instead be the abused children. Social workers resented the fact they were supposed to become the parents' best friend using traditional methods that focused on parents when their job was to protect the abused children from their abusive parents (Arbeiter & Toros).

It appears that policy paradoxes are the norm within CPSA, which creates conflict. Arbeiter and Toros, (2017) revealed that parents did not want CPSA involved in their lives, which included any resources they had to offer them. Parents felt that social workers were controlling, intrusive and were arrogant and not forthright in telling them how to get their children back, while social workers were reluctant in providing this information for fear of manipulations, unwilling to accept the problem or noncooperation by the parents (Arbeiter & Toros). The focus needs to be on the children and their recovery from abuse and neglect whether they are at home or in foster care. Arbeiter and Toros, (2017) found child abuse recovery and creating reunification was a complex, multidimensional, and serious problem. The effects of child abuse on children in foster

care can span a lifetime from who raises them to where they live, and if they have contact with their families (Arbeiter & Toros).

Some researchers believed that prevention was a good idea, however, they also recognized limited resources. Godsoe (2013) argued that only 10% of the children warrant removal from their parents for severe abuse, which would assist in the reallocation of limited funds for prevention programs. Prevention does not include the intrusion of family lives or a violation of the parental rights that were innocent of any wrongdoing, even if they met the criteria of vulnerability (Platt, 2012). Fawley-King et al., (2017) and Godsoe recognized the limitation of their research and recommended further research on displacement and stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

Foster Care children may be able to recover from abuse and neglect with treatment and stable, permanent placements. Fawley-King, Trask, and Zhang (2017) asserted children placed with permanent, stable caregivers would adapt, and the caregivers then become their new families as if they were kin. Furthermore, Plummer and Cossins, (2016) contended that the trauma of abuse causes long-term psychological and development issues and children were at-risk due to unresolved trauma issues caused by abuse. They argued that abusive parents had parents that abused them, they can have unresolved trauma from abuse as well, and the unresolved issues reproduced in abusing their children. The researchers further explained that abuse cycles from one generation to the next, and prevention and treatment starts with addressing the trauma of abuse in both parents and their children (Plummer & Cossins).

Apparently, abusers used the cycle of abuse theory as excuses to justify their actions and not take personal responsibilities. Plummer and Cossins, (2016) asserted the problem was not the cycle of abuse, but attachment disorder. As cited by Smith, Cross, Winkler, Jovanovic, and Bradley (2014), and Jaffee, Bowes, Ouellet-Morin, Fisher, Moffitt, Merrick, and Arseneault (2013) conducted an environmental risk longitudinal twin study to investigate the cycle of abuse and its association with 1,116 families by assessing mothers' who experienced neglect and abuse during their youth via interviews and abuse records. The Jaffee et al. study's focus was the comparison between abused and neglected families versus families without abuse and neglect history, and how broken families address the abuse cycle. All families within this study lived in the United Kingdom (Jaffee et al.).

The study's design used multivariate analyses to determine factors that may contribute to overcoming the abuse cycle. The study's findings indicated that supportive, and nurturing relationships in their adult life to assist in overcoming abuse (Jaffee et al., 2013). Jaffee et al. recognized the findings were causal associations, and future research needed to confirm the cycle of abuse theory. The Jaffee et al. study's focus was on supportive and trusting relationships, maternal warmth towards children, and low or non-existence of violence with other adults. In the comparison of mothers who experience abuse and neglect versus mothers who did not experience it, revealed mothers who experience abuse and neglect had a history of depression and low levels of social support (Jaffee et al.)

Jaffee et al., (2013) indicated 178 mothers lacked support was an indication that abuse and neglect would continue with their children. In addition, 46% of the mothers' twins who experienced abuse and neglect by the age of 12 years old continued the cycle of abuse (Jaffee et al.). The findings indicated mothers who experienced abuse and neglect during their youth were 3.55 times more likely to continue the cycle of abuse with their children compared to mothers who never experienced abuse and neglect during their youth (Jaffee et al.).

According to Jaffee et al. (2013), 81 mothers who experienced severe abuse and neglect in their youth were 5.31times more likely to continue the cycle of abuse. Out of the 1,116 families in this study, 646 families did not experience abuse and neglect, and 133 mothers broke the cycle of abuse (Jaffee et al.). The findings of this study suggested that mothers with poor support and nurturing systems were high predictors of potentially becoming abusers, especially if they have poor attachments to their children (Jaffee et al.).

Abusers are not taking personal responsibility for abusing and neglecting their children seems to be a theme. Schmid (2015) agreed with Smith et al. (2014) that the cycle of abuse was an oversimplified explanation or excuse. Schmid indicated the lack of personal responsibility of abusers to make excuses for committing child abuse and society excepting their excuses was the real problem. Smith et al. even provided an example of abusers blaming child abuse as a medical issue or sickness, therefore, provided the abuser justification for committing the abuse, which lacks personal responsibility for their actions.

The authors indicated resolving child abuse issues starts with prevention, however, they do not agree on the type. Godsoe (2013) advocated for intrusiveness and invasion of privacy, Fawley-King et al., (2017) advocated for limiting foster care children from spending time with their abusers, while Plummer and Cossins (2016), advocated for treatment and psychological resources to address abuse trauma and unresolved issues. Research has shown overwhelmingly that multiple foster care placements caused further damage to children who can have developmental and psychological issues (Fernandez, 2013). To prevent further damage to foster care children, CPSA needs to first focus on healthy stable, permanent placements for foster care children to promote their well-being (DeGarmo et al.; Fernandez; Plummer & Cossins). I present CPSA foster care stable, permanent placements for foster care children in the next section.

CPSA Foster Care Placements

The qualities of the stable, permanent placements are essential elements for the overall well-being of foster care children. The states' CPSA attempt to meets federal guidelines with the aim of receiving federal funds (Stoltzfus, 2014). According to Carnochan, Moore, and Austin (2013a), CPSA used reunification and adoption as tools to meet federal guidelines and reduced the time foster care children spend in care. According to Carnochan, Moore, and Austin, past research persuaded CPSA professionals that it was possible to meet the needs of abused children through cost-effective in-home, community-based programs called intensive/wraparound, however, this program was not possible in all cases.

I discuss the intensive/wraparound program later in this chapter. Research suggested that reunification and adoption efforts were not catalysts in reducing the amount of time children were in foster care (Carnochan, Moore, & Austin, 2013b). It is difficult for CPSA to establish stable, permanent placements for foster care children with federally mandated restrictive timelines, limited resources, and families with multidimensional issues (Stoltzfus, 2014). Social workers can have the difficult task of evaluating the needs of abused and neglected children when developing their permanency plans. As cited by Falk and Spar (2014), according to the U.S. General Accounting Office (2011b), the majority of the foster care children may have health problems, such as physical, mental, and developmental. Federal requirements mandated states to provide health services for foster care children, however, there were multiple barriers to achieving this mandate. Foster care children faced barriers to receiving proper medical care, such as unavailability of their medical histories, disruptions in services by health care providers, limited or unavailable resources, and limited medical professionals that accepted Medicaid (GAO; Falk & Spar). These barriers affected CPSA success rates to address and achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children, especially with families that may have multiple, complex issues.

Families in CPSA bring co-occurring problems ranging from addiction to mental health issues. CPSA used foster care placements when children need protection from maltreatment and endangerment, such as abuse, alcohol, drugs, mental issues, abandonment, and neglect, therefore, separations from custodial or parental caregivers were sometimes necessary to protect the children (Biehal et al., 2015). The states' CPSA

permanency plans vary from state-to-state. States use different approaches to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (e.g., reunification, guardianship, adoption, intensive/wraparound program, and emancipation), according to HHS (2014). The stable, permanent placements path for foster care children is dependent upon the facts of their cases and the tractability of the participating family members.

The foster care stable, permanent placements process begins with children entering into foster care for this research. According to Biehal et al. (2015), CPSA's first step is to establish a permanency plan for reunification and a termination of parental rights concurrently: however, depending on the severity of the abuse and the state, the first step may be terminating custodial or parental rights. When states' CPSA terminate custodial or parental rights, the foster care children then become legally eligible for adoption. Adoption gives the new parents legal authority, rights, and control over their adopted children. Allegedly, adoption provides foster care children a new abuse-free start with new permanent families (Carnochan, Moore, & Austin, 2013b).

The trauma that abused children experienced may affect them into adulthood and possibly cause psychiatric disorders and ill health. The impact of abuse on children can adversely affect their brain development well into adulthood (Fawley-King et al., 2017). Permanency, safety, and well-being are important to the overall well-being of foster care children (Biehal et al., 2015). As soon as CPSA places children in foster care, the priority needs to be stable, permanent placements, not reunification.

Reunification may become the stable, permanent placement option. Biehal et al. (2015) conducted a study of foster care children that explored the different life pathways

and the perception of children by staff, foster caregivers, adopted parents, and managers

from seven local authorities. The authors explored and compared the emotional,

behavioral, perception, education, stability, and relationship difficulties of children in

different types of foster care placements. The study used a focus group of 374 foster care

children. The authors' methodology consisted of interviews, surveys, and publicly

available data from a study that interviewed 37 children, foster caregivers, or adoptive

parents (Biehal et al.).

It appears that prevention and treatment are important aspects of permanency

plans for foster care children. Biehal et al. (2015) findings mimic the findings from the

HHS 2006 – 2009 Report to Congress Executive Summary (2012). The research

reviewed stable, permanent placement approaches of foster care children; included

reunification, intensive/wraparound programs, guardianship, kinship care, adoption,

congregate care, and emancipation. Biehal et al., study's findings emphasized the

importance of foster care children receiving treatment and recovery from abuse ensuring

their well-being. Furthermore, the findings indicated that adopted, abused children's

psychological issues caused by inflicted abuse do not disappear, and they will need

substantial ongoing support after adoption (Biehal et al.).

The side effects of abuse and neglect on children are long-term. Moran,

McDonald, Jackson, Turnbull, and Minnis (2017) agreed with Biehal et al. (2015) that

the abuse and neglect affect the overall well-being of abused children. Moran et al. used a

cross-sectional study to explore attachment disorder and psychopathology symptoms with

a correlational design. The study used three assessment modules: strengths and

difficulties questionnaire, relationship problems questionnaire, the child and adolescent psychiatric assessment, reactive attachment disorder module.

The strengths and difficulties questionnaire assessed psychiatric symptoms, conduct and emotion, hyperactivity, prosocial behaviour, and peer relationships subscale measures. The strengths and difficulties questionnaire contained 25 questions, which took less than 10 minutes to complete. The relationship problems questionnaire explored attachment disorder symptoms. The relationship problems questionnaire contained 10 questions and took 10 minutes to complete. The third assessment tool, the child and adolescent psychiatric assessment, reactive attachment disorder module, was semi-structured caregiver interviews to determine if the children had psychopathology symptoms and observational checklist used to observe the children while they waited in the clinical waiting room.

Participants lived in large metropolitan area, receiving intensive youth justice services, fluent in English, and were referred by their clinician over an 8-month period (Moran et al.). Eighty-six percent of the children had a history of maltreatment. Children diagnosed with attachment disorder or borderline systems ranked 52% out of the 86% of the children. The study's findings found a positive correlation between attachment disorder and mental health issues. The findings demonstrated an insignificant association between attachment disorder and emotional symptoms and conduct problems (Moran et al.).

It appears that understanding the connection between attachment disorder and mental health issues can assist in diagnosing and treating abused and neglected children

with their recovery. Bernard, Simons, and Dozier (2015) agreed that understanding how abuse and neglect affects children was important factors in preventing and overcoming abuse. Malvaso, Delfabbro, and Day (2016) argued that CPSA gives little attention to parenting skills and treatments for abused children. The authors recognized that some states' CPSA have started working on these principles; however, these principles received little attention from most CPSA. I briefly present the methods the states' CPSA attempt to reduce their foster care populations in this chapter. Adoption, congregate care, emancipation, guardianship, intensive/wraparound program, kinship care, and reunification are the different method types.

Adoption. When family courts terminate custodial or parental rights, foster care children become eligible for adoption. Adoptions are a means to end the foster care children's instability within CPSA. According to Carnochan, Moore, and Austin (2013b), approximately 32% discharged CPSA cases were via adoptions. Adoptions allowed legally and permanently placement of foster care children in new families. Terminating parental rights of abused children could result in children experiencing the lack of stable, permanent placements through foster care (Widom et al., 2017). Adoptions become the perfect solution for children whose parents were no longer part of their lives. Adoptions gave the new parents legal authority, rights, and control over their adopted children (Carnochan, Moore, & Austin, 2013).

The legal adoption proceedings allowed adults to adopt non-biological children as their children. Nearly half of the children adopted will need additional ongoing support to address psychological, behavioral, and mental issues due to the impact of abuse (Biehal

et al., 2015). Foster care children may have emotional and mental issues. Research indicated that approximately 75% of foster care children would not receive needed treatments due to limited resources (Fuller & Zhang, 2017; Godsoe, 2013). According to Biehal et al., the states' CPSA need to improve meeting and to address the needs of abused children's mental and emotional well-being, which may assist with behavioral issues, such as delinquency.

Foster care children with mental, behavioral, psychosocial, and academic problems could make adoptions difficult to achieve. Adoption was less likely for children with specified characteristics (e.g., health, age, race, psychological issues, behavioral problems, siblings, and pre-exposure to drugs or alcohol), according to Carnochan, Moore, & Austin (2013b). Teenagers had a higher likelihood of not finding adoptive families and experiencing the lack of permanency through foster care until they become adults, and emancipation occurred (Biehal et al., 2015). Sometimes, foster caregivers had the option to adopt children that were eligible for adoption but elected not to adopt. According to Biehal et al., foster caregivers distressed over the loss of financial support and available resources, therefore, were reluctant to move forward with adoption. Adoptions were not a solution for all foster care children. I discuss a congregate care in the next section.

Congregate care. Foster care children remained in foster care in different types of congregate care placements. The different types of placements were foster care homes, group homes, independent living programs, and residential treatment centers (Lee, Courtney, & Tajima, 2014). Sometimes children remained in foster care under long-term

care options. Long-term foster care options happened for a variety of reasons from age, lack of available resources or psychological and behavioral issues (Biehal et al., 2015). Regardless of the number of unfunded federal mandates, restrictive conditional funds, incentives to get states' CPSA to achieve stable, permanent placements and discharged cases, CPSA would more than likely always have children in long-term foster care placements (Lee, Courtney, & Tajima). Children who remained in foster care long-term would eventually experience emancipation. I discuss the issues surrounding emancipation in the next section.

Emancipation. When the foster care children transitioned to adults; the states' CPSA emancipated them, and they legally become adults who were financially responsible for their well-being. The age CPSA recognizes foster care children as adults vary from state-to-state, usually between 18 and 21 years of age. According to Tao, Ward, O'Brien, Lorenzo, and Kelly (2013), policymakers and advocacy groups have started focusing and promoting services and policies that would help youths as they age out of CPSA. Many young adults faced with emancipation were ill prepared for the responsibility that CPSA bestowed upon them (Biehal et al., 2015).

Emancipated youths face numerous issues from a lack of education, substance abuse, pregnancy, poverty, incarceration, lack of health care, and emotional support. There are various programs to help youths with the transition into adulthood, however, available resources are limited (Biehal et al., 2015). In 1986, Congress created the Independent Living Service program designed to give support and resources to develop independent living skills of youths who aged out of the CPSA. There are several federally

funded emancipation programs available to help young adults with this transition from

foster care (Kahn & Hansen, 2017). These assistance programs help qualified young

adults with education, employment, financial management, housing, and support. I

discuss how state's CPSA use guardianship in the next section.

Guardianship. States are turning to family relatives and close friends of the

abused children's family to become the new caregivers and to meet stable, permanent

placement requirements. The states' CPSA used guardianship placements as a mean to

reduce the cost and foster care population. In comparison to foster care, guardianship cost

less by using relatives and close friends (Courtney & Hook, 2012). States are starting to

subsidize guardianship placements to assist relatives and close friends with the

burdensome financial cost.

In comparing foster care to guardianship placements cost, guardianship

placements cost significantly less, which varies from state-to-state. Nevertheless, states

pay foster parents less than what one would pay to house their dog in a kennel. Relative

placements are cost-effective for CPSA by reducing foster care and administrative

expenses for the states (Biehal et al., 2015). Guardianship placements are stable,

permanent placements with relatives and close friends, which lessens the impact of

displacement (Courtney & Hook, 2012). I discuss how the intensive/wraparound

programs may be helpful to use in difficult cases in the next section.

Intensive/wraparound programs. The intensive/wraparound programs are new

within CPSA with limited research and outcomes data. According to Lee, Courtney, and

Tajima (2014), CPSA was a severely underfunded system that was full of bureaucratic

red tape and policy paradoxes. She argued that to end the "bureaucratic maze," the states'

CPSA needed a different approach that used professional teams to address the needs of

abused children. The team approach should consist of professionals who were experts in

their field of study. Some of the experts in consideration were pediatricians,

psychologists, educators, law enforcement, attorneys, and CPSA social workers. The

designated professionals create and design customized treatment and service plans that

meet the needs of abused children, and their families (Lee et al.).

A few states' CPSA are attempting the federally initiated intensive/wraparound

programs for families with multidimensional issues. These programs are proving to be

successful. According to Lee et al. (2014), the intensive/wraparound programs addressed

the legal and emotional needs of abused children and created support for those needs,

which resulted in growth and solution. The intensive/wraparound concepts are not new;

other disciplines use these approaches, such as mental health, addiction, and

rehabilitation agencies. Within CPSA, intensive/wraparound programs are need-driven

custom design plans for the abused children and their families with professional and

personal support individuals (Lee et al.). The focus of the intensive/wraparound programs

varied and differed from state-to-state. All intensive/wraparound programs had a general

principle in mind to create long-term, healthy, positive, and stable, permanent placements

for foster care children. A few states' CPSA started using these intensive/wraparound

programs to address backlogs and the multidimensional, complex cases with the intention

of making progress with difficult cases (Lee et al.). I present how the states' CPSA use

kinship care placements in the next section.

Kinship care. Kinship care placements are not a stable, permanent placement. Kinship Care occurs when CPSA places children with their relatives or friends while retaining legal custody, rights, and control over the children (Biehal et al., 2015). The states' CPSA considered kinship care placements as temporary foster care placements. According to Biehal et al., for the states to close child abuse cases, they started requiring relatives to adopt or become guardians of the children in their care, however, this practice has met resistance from the relatives.

Kinship care placements can have the possibility to develop into guardianship or adoption. Relatives are resistant to adopting the children or becoming guardians in fear it could damage family ties and the additional financial burden of raising children without financial support from the states. Testa, Snyder, Wu, Rolock, and Liao (2014) argued that not compensating families who care for these children sacrifices significant benefits to children and their caretakers which create unnecessary burdens on these families. If families agreed to adopt or become guardians of foster care children in their care, it allowed CPSA to establish stable, permanent placements and decreased their foster care populations. I present how state's CPSA attempt to create reunification with families in the next section.

Reunification. Reunification is one of the possibilities to create stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Reunification means to return the abused or neglected children to their parents' home by making resources and assistance available to resolve the abuse or neglect issues. According to De Bortoli, Ogloff, Coles, and Dolan (2016), CPSA could promote best practices by providing abused children and their families with

various methods of achieving reunification. Some states' CPSA create primary permanency plans, and backup contingency plans, both working towards different goals simultaneously in the event the primary plans fail (Stoltzfus, 2014). The strategic plans simultaneously aiming for two opposite goals are policy paradoxes (Stone, 2012). A number of scholars have mentioned that CPSA primary goals are to meet the federal guidelines, including stable, permanent placements for foster care children within a restrictive period to obtain federal funds (Brustin & Martin, 2016; Kahn & Hansen, 2017).

If reunification is not possible, then the goal changes to finding and establishing stable, permanent placements outside CPSA. When family courts and CPSA remove children from their families by legal means, these types of displacements are allegedly temporary (Broadhurst & Mason, 2017). Research suggested that displaced children were at a higher risk of developing psychological and mental issues (Fawley-King et al., 2017). Likewise, children, who experience abuse or neglect, were subject to developing psychological and emotional issues (DeGarmo et al., 2013). Biehal et al. (2015) indicated psychological and behavioral difficulties make it difficult for older children to establish stable, permanent attachments and were more likely to leave CPSA through emancipation.

Emotional and behavioral difficulties may cause disruption in foster care placements and services; therefore, it was critical to understand and meet the needs of abused children. According to Geiger, Hayes, and Lietz (2013), there were not enough foster care families to care for the number of children in foster care, especially children

with extensive behavioral and emotional needs. Some organizations used intensive/wraparound programs to deal with complex, multidimensional cases to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Lee et al., 2014). I discuss the findings of this chapter in the next section.

Summary

Abused and neglected children experience the lack of permanency through foster care, and experiencing multiple foster care placements can adversely affect them (Fawley-King, Trask, & Zhang, 2017). Federal bureaucracy dominates states' CPSA by shifting their responsibilities via federal laws to the states. States have the option not to comply, but this would mean the loss of federal dollars, according to Stone (2012). The federal government used unfunded mandates, restrictive conditional funds, and incentives as a catalyst to control states behaviors (Stone). I explored the similarities and differences of how policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contributed to the outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications in promoting permanency for foster care children in this study. The lack of knowledge and understanding as to why the selected two states' CPSA differ in their success at reducing their foster care population and establishing stable, permanent placements is the knowledge gap.

There was an overwhelming amount of research focused on parental rights and reunification and limited focus on the actual recovery of the abused children and children's rights. Research showed detachment treatments and stable, permanent placements with healthy, positive caregivers were essential to the well-being of foster

care children (Lee et al., 2014). Foster care children and their families receive little or no treatment for abuse because of limited and restricted resources. Financially strapped states may have difficulties in meeting the needs of foster care children and their families (Godsoe, 2013). Lee et al. declared that CPSA current approaches to achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children were not working. The author further argued that the intensive/wraparound programs seem to be working, but the lack of available resources makes it difficult to create significant changes in the foster care population (Lee et al.)

This research adds to the CPSA body of knowledge and understanding as to why two states' CPSA differ in their success rates at achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children. This knowledge, clarification, and awareness may lead, contribute, or open new avenues of understanding within states' CPSA that are struggling to reduce their foster care populations and possibly create momentum for social change by assisting them in reducing their foster care populations and establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I present the methodology, research design and rationale, participant selection, data collection, and my role as the researcher in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to determine how the policy constructs of

incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contributed to the possible success or failure of

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children.

To do this, I examined the similarities and differences of Missouri's and South Carolina's

CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analyzed to assess for impact on

permanency for foster care children. U.S. states' CPSA can have had mixed success in

achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Moving foster care

children between multiple placements may cause long-term difficulties that persist well

into adulthood, according to Lee et al. (2014).

The U.S. federal government has enacted 28 federal laws pertaining to child

welfare in an attempt to reconcile issues and challenges within states' CPSA (HHS,

2016). Since 2012, foster care populations continue to increase in the majority of the

states (see Appendix C), and its unknown why some states are successful at decreasing

the foster care population while others struggle to decrease their foster care populations.

According to HHS (2013d), 10 states' CPSA were responsible for more than 90% of the

decline in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children between the

federal fiscal years 2002 and 2012 (HHS, 2013b). The remaining states' CPSA

maintained or increased their foster care populations during this timeframe (HHS,

2013b). In federal fiscal years 2013 through 2015, foster care populations increased by

30% in over 70% of the states' CPSA due to parental drug abuse (HHS, 2017). Parental

drug abuse to painkillers and heroin is the second leading reason for removal of children from their parents' custody, and child neglect is the first, according to HHS.

The selected two states' CPSA for this study were Missouri and South Carolina. Both states' CPSA selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. South Carolina ranked in the top 10 for the most improved foster care population through 2012 while Missouri ranked in the bottom for the least improved foster care population as compared to the other 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (HHS, 2016a; see, also, Appendix C). In the federal fiscal year 2012, the Missouri foster care population increased compared to what it was in the federal fiscal year 2011 (HHS). I present in detail the research design and rationale, methodology, document selection and collection, the selection of the sample populations for this study in this chapter. I also discuss my role as a researcher.

Research Design and Rationale

My research question was, How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? To answer this question, I examined the similarities and differences of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analyzed to assess for impacts on permanency on foster care children. The two states that I selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. I used a triangulation approach in

conducting this research. The triangulation approach was to analyze Missouri's CPSA

statutes, policies, and publications; analyze South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and

publications; and compare the findings of the two states using Stone's (2012) policy

constructs. Stone's constructs constituted my theoretical framework for exploring the

research question.

 The multidimensional issues that surround child abuse and neglect statutes and

policies seem to create difficulties to rectifying the lack of stable, permanent placements

for foster care children (DeGarmo et al., 2013). DeGarmo et al. recommended exploring

patterns and themes to determine the common and divergent aspects of the focus. I

focused on Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to

determine the common and divergent aspects of permanency for foster care children. My

reason for selecting content analysis method for this study was to identify the meaning

embedded in the data, which allows for the creation of inferences in a systematic manner

(Schreier, 2012). According to Kastner, Antony, Soobiah, Straus, and Tricco (2016),

choice of research method depends on a researcher's strategy, costs, and research

questions. While quantitative methods use measurements and statistical tests to prove a

hypothesis, qualitative methods use patterns and themes to explore and interpret the data

(Kastner et al.).

 Researchers argue and debate the best research method strategy. In the quest to

determine the appropriate research design for this study, I considered using quantitative

and mixed-method research designs; however, I realized that the mixed method was

redundant because HHS (2016a) had statistical data available. After I reviewed the

amount of data available from HHS, I concluded that an extensive mixed-methodology would be unnecessary because the data I intended to analyze was readily available to the public. HHS collects and compiles the number of children entering and exiting the foster care system from the states' CPSA annually.

I considered various research designs. These approaches included grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, exploratory, content analysis, biography, and interviews. For the purpose of this research, several approaches were deemed not a match or unnecessary; these included grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, exploratory, explanatory, biography, and interviews. These designs may be appropriate for future research I conduct; however, I do not think they were appropriate to use in this study based on my purpose. For this study, I believe it was appropriate to start with Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis to analyze issues with permanency for foster care children. I used the Stone's (2012) policy constructs as a theoretical framework to examine data of publicly available documents.

Other researchers have explored the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. As I discussed in Chapter 2, Cross et al. (2013) performed a qualitative content analysis study which involved 184 children who had experienced multiple foster care placements. According to Cross et al., in 53% of the cases, children's foster care placements changed due to their behavior problems. The main concern regarding Cross et al. qualitative study was that missing case files would hamper their findings. Cross et al. recognized that missing data could have biased their findings. Cross

et al. recommended a computer web-based program instead of hardcopy paper files to correct this issue in the future. The authors recognized that the lack of stable, permanent placements were multidimensional, complex issues. Primary reasons for instability occurred after traumatic occurrence involving the caregivers and children. Twenty percent of case files indicated unnecessary moves by CPSA, and an additional 38% of the placements were temporary movements. Cross et al. findings found that CPSA moves created instabilities especially placing children in initial temporary placements (Cross et al.).

The study conducted by Cross et al. (2013) did not view any statutes, policies, or publications for their research. My research focuses on the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that represented the implementation aspects of policies related to stable, permanent placements for foster care children. It does not focus on federal laws or the Children's Bureau because they were the broad umbrella used by all states, and a few states were successful at reducing their foster care populations and creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children, such as South Carolina. Between federal fiscal years, 2002 and 2012, foster care populations declined, however, only 10 states were responsible for more than 90% of the decline (HHS, 2013b).

Each state has different interpretations of the federal laws. South Carolina's CPSA appeared to be successful at reducing their foster care populations from 2007 to 2012 and Missouri was not. It appeared that the qualitative study was the most cost-effective method to determine how policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible success or failure of Missouri's and South

Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. I used content

analysis to examine the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South

Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that may promote or negate

permanency for foster care children.

I used content analysis methodology to analyze the text and set the foundation for

future research regarding states' CPSA foster care populations in my study. The most

appropriate methodology to analyze text was content analysis to explore patterns and

themes. This research used content analysis method using Stone's (2012) policy

constructs as its theoretical approach of two states' CPSA publicly available documents.

Stone's policy constructs provided the lens through which this study explored the lack of

stable, placements for foster care children phenomenon by exploring two states' CPSA

statutes, policies, and publications. I discuss my role as the researcher in the next section.

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher was to identify the purpose of this study, research design

and rationale, methodology, participant selection, data collection, data analyses,

comparison of analyses, and writing up the findings. The overall approach of this study

was in three phases: document collection, data analysis, and comparison of findings.

Documenting the entire process in a journal and automatic logging of activities using a

computerized data management software created transparency and liability. The journal

created an audit trail and established dependability, while the computerized data

management software minimizes the uncertainty, biases, and reliability issues.

Stone's (2012) policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers were the parameters that guided this research. I used policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers to determine how they contributed to the outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children to assist with validity in this study. I examined the policy constructs similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency for foster care children. I explain in detail the methodology used in the next section.

Methodology

The research design was of an explorative qualitative nature. Prior to the start of the research, a systematical selection process assisted in the selection of the two states. The systematical selection process used the rate of change in foster care population method. The rate of change formula examined the foster care populations by using foster care entries and exits data from all 50 states, plus District of Columbia and Puerto Rico for the federal fiscal year 2011 and 2014 (HHS, 2016a). The federal fiscal calendar year is from October 1st through September 30th of the following year. The rate of change in foster care population calculation ranked each state according to the four most recent years of data available from the national database information statistics for 2011 and 2014 (HHS). Appendix C lists the rankings for the federal fiscal year 2011 and 2014. I present the selection of the two states' CPSA for this study in this chapter.

I used content analysis approach using a computerized data management to assist with the analysis of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. Below is a

brief synopsis of my research design approach adapted from Creswell (2012),

Krippendorff (2012), Schreier (2012), and QRS International (2015). My role and

research design approach were as follows:

1. Write all actions, issues, and decisions in a journal.

2. Turn on the automatic project log in the computerized data management

    software to track all steps.

3. Prepare, scan, and import data into the computerized data management

    software.

    a. Organize the documents into folders.

    b. Only use data applicable to the research.

4. Import code tree from Appendix A and set up attribute properties in the

    computerized data management software.

    a. Set up the parent nodes.

    b. Set up the child nodes.

5. Code the documents using different types coding methods.

    a. Code the text using manual coding

    b. Code the text using words with similar meanings.

    c. Code the text using group and compound (complex) queries.

6. Review and reveal emerging codes in the documents.

    a. Frequently compare text to coded text.

    b. If the data reveals emerging codes, then add, categorize, and recode all

        documents for the new codes.

7. Prepare and analyze the data and write up and discuss the findings.

   a. Use cluster analysis to assist with the identification of similarities and differences between categories.

   b. Conduct indexes and frequency counts of the coded data.

   c. Code the documents by source.

   d. Create matrices for the findings.

8. Answer the research question.

   a. Discuss what the data reveals.

   b. Discuss what the data omits.

   c. Identify the inferences, patterns, and themes emerging from the documents.

   d. Identify the emerging similarities and differences between categories.

   e. Provide sufficient interpretation to answer the differences and similarities between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research question.

   f. Provide sufficient interpretation to answer the research question.

9. Report the method and findings in Chapters 4 and 5.

This study used NVivo 11 Pro, computerized data management software, to assist with the collecting, managing, and organizing the research documents in preparation for the coding process. The computerized data management software assisted with management and organization based on the established criteria in the coding book found in Appendix A. Content analysis used a codebook that collected child abuse and neglect terms definitions from HHS (2013e) and policy paradox definitions (Stone, 2012), as well

as terms revealed during the literature review. I used the computerized data management software to assist with the management and organization of the publicly available data, minimizing personal biases, and the establishment of dependability with the nature of data collection, coding, and analysis (QRS International, 2015).

According to Xiao, He, Xia, and Xia (2016), computer coding needs a codebook with an explanation of dictionaries terms and method of applying them. After I had coded the text from the two states' CPSA' statutes, policies, and publications, the next step was to explore and identify patterns, themes, and developing ideas. The codebook was not all-inclusive, and as the research unfolded, the process revealed new codes that modified the codebook. The codebook was a hierarchical code arrangement, which resembled a tree and a branching arrangement of parent and child codes. Child codes in the tree related to their parents. Parent codes were the key variables that connected to the child codes (Stuart, Collins, Alger & Whitelaw, 2014).

Appendix A provides a complete list of parent and child codes, with the codes consisting of prevention, stable, permanent placements of adoption, emancipation, family preservation/reunification, guardianship, and visitation; temporary placements of congregate/group/respite care, foster care, kinship care, and long-term foster care; treatment and intensive wrap-around program; federal priorities of permanency, safety, and well-being; focus included children, family, money, and service; policy constructs of incentives include enticements and punishments, facts, fixed and flexible powers, rights included children's rights, parental rights, termination of parental rights, and provider rights; and rules included judicial/law decisions and mandates. The codes were used to

explore the research documents using the theoretical lens and to determine patterns, developing ideas, and themes from the data.

I broke down the textual data by coding the text into manageable categories. The ability to use coding stripes to highlight texts in the computerized data management software will visually display patterns, themes, and developing ideas within the documents (QRS International, 2015). Coding in an inductive manner assisted with the reduction of data and detecting inferences, patterns, and themes embedded into the data. After coding all documents, the next step was to review all code references and determine if there were any new emerging codes and their properties. The project journal maintained records of all new emerging codes and the justification to add them to the codebook. As new codes emerged, the next step was recoding all documents for the new codes. This type of review process created a data audit, in addition to recording all actions in a journal regarding the processes, thoughts, and judgments made during the research created confirmability. According to Salmona and Kaczynski (2016), transparency of all actions and processes of a study improves confirmability. After the coding was complete, the next phase was to analyze the data.

The process started with an examination of the data using cluster analysis. Cluster analysis uses visualized patterns by grouping similar and dissimilar attributes, grouping variables together, and revealing relationship between categories, themes, and patterns (QRS International, 2015). This process allowed for managing and working with the categories, which ultimately assisted in formulating and developing general conclusions. After the completion of analyzing both states separately, the final phase was to compare

and contrast the findings of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to determine what similarities and differences exist that may promote or negate permanency for foster care children. Due to the number of years this phenomenon has eluded resolution, there were a limited number of current articles that were 5 years or less regarding the states' role in the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children via the examination of their CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. Why states continue to struggle with addressing the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children issues indicate a gap. I am laying the foundation for future research to answer that question. I discuss the participant selection logic in the next section.

Participant Selection Logic

I acknowledge that the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were not philosophically and structurally set up the same, nor do they completely mirror each other. States interpret the federal laws differently and create their statutes and policies according to their jurisdictional needs. Because the statutes, policies, and publications are not set up in the same fashion, this might be a limitation of this study. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications on the states' CPSA by adding to the body of knowledge that may lead or contribute to social change affecting one of the most vulnerable populations in our society, foster care children.

Ranking each state by their change in foster care population determined the selection of the twelve states that had the most and least improved foster care population. As a secondary criterion, a review of the foster care stay rates of the twelve states determined the selected two states. In 2014, the national foster care stay rate was

approximately 21 months, with 7 percent of the foster care children for 5 years or more (HHS, 2016c). From the most improved list, New York ranked first overall with a substantial reduction in foster care population for the federal fiscal year 2011 and 2012 (see Appendix C). New York's foster care stay rate was more than 54.1 months (James, 2015).

Even though New York decreased their foster care population in federal fiscal years 2011 to 2014, in 2015, the foster care stay rates level was too high, which was not an acceptable level to designate New York as successful. After reviewing the top most improved 10 states' foster care populations for the most recently available years, the data revealed that South Carolina ranked in the top 10 of the most improved and their ranking improved from the federal fiscal year 2011 to 2012 as indicated in Appendix C. In federal fiscal years 2013 to 2014, over 71% of states had increases in their foster care populations attributed these increases to parental drug abuse (HHS, 2017). In federal fiscal years 2013 and 2014, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population increased. After reviewing the least improved 10 states' foster care populations for the most recently available years, the data revealed that Missouri ranked in the bottom 10 of the least improved and their ranking decreased from the federal fiscal year 2011 to 2014 as indicated in Appendix C. (HHS, 2016a). After reviewing the remaining top 10 states' with the most improved foster care populations and their foster care stay rate for federal fiscal years 2011 to 2014, South Carolina emerged with a low foster care stay rate of 11.2 months in 2013 (HHS, 2014c), and their foster care population has steadily declined from

2007 to 2012 (HHS 2016). As of 2013, Missouri's foster care stay rate was 28 months (Missouri, 2014i).

The criteria used to select the two states were the most current available foster population data, and other factors; Missouri and South Carolina. In 2013 and 2014, South Carolina's foster care population increased taking them out of the top most improved foster care populations. I selected South Carolina due to their overall decrease in foster care population from 2007 to 2012. In contrast, Missouri foster care population steadily increased from 2010 to 2014, and they ranked in the bottom 10 least improved foster care population for four years (HHS, 2016a). I discuss the selection of South Carolina as a participant in the next section.

South Carolina. For the most part, South Carolina appears to be making progress at reducing their foster care populations and establishing stable, permanent placements, however, it is unknown at what cost. In the federal fiscal year 2011, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population was 3,821. The number of children that entered into foster care was 2,938, and 3,533 children exited from foster care (HHS, 2016a). The foster care population growth was calculated by foster care entries to subtract foster care exits equal growth (2,938 – 3,533 = -666). In the federal fiscal year 2011, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population decreased by -666 children. More children exited South Carolina's CPSA than entered in this federal fiscal year.

In this study, I used the rate of change in population formula to calculate the rate of change for South Carolina's CPSA; foster care growth rate divided by foster care population equals the rate of change (-666 / 3,821 = -0.17430). According to the results,

South Carolina's CPSA ranked 47 most improved ranking overall for the rate of change in the foster care population calculation for the 2011 federal fiscal year compared to the other 49 states, plus District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. South Carolina's foster care populations appeared to make positive progress in decreasing their foster care population in the federal fiscal year 2011.

In the federal fiscal year 2012, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population was 3,113. The number of children that entered into foster care was 2,796, and 3,409 children exited from foster care (HHS, 2016a). The foster care population growth was calculated by foster care entries to subtract foster care exits equal growth (2,796 – 3,409 = -708). In the federal fiscal year 2012, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population decreased by - 708 children. More children exited the state of South Carolina's CPSA than entered in this federal fiscal year. In the fiscal year 2012, South Carolina's CPSA foster care population was 3,113. The rate of change in population formula was used to calculate the rate of change for South Carolina's CPSA; foster care growth rate divided by foster care population equals the rate of change (-708 / 3,113 = -0.22743).

For the second year, South Carolina's CPSA ranked in the top 10 most improved foster care populations. The ranking of the states was from 1 being the least improved, and 52 being the most improved. South Carolina ranked 47th most improved rate of change in foster care population calculation for the 2011 federal fiscal year compared to the other 49 states, plus District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In comparison to the federal fiscal year 2011, South Carolina improved their foster care population and passed

two states to place in the 50th position out of 52 (HHS, 2016a). All publicly available documents analyzed and used for South Carolina's CPSA can found in Appendix D.

According to HHS (2013b), since 2007, South Carolina's foster care population has steadily decreased from 2007 to 2012, however, congregate care remained at a constant 24% through the federal fiscal year 2012. Congregate care is a classification for group homes. In 2013-15, foster care populations increased nationwide by 71%, and South Carolina also experienced increases in 2013 and 2014 (HHS, 2016a). According to HHS, the contributed factors for children in foster care was parental substance abuse 30%, neglect circumstances 60%, and 10% other reasons.

Children's Rights (2015) has sued South Carolina's CPSA in a class action lawsuit, M. H. v. Haley. The lawsuit cited lack of foster homes, excessive caseloads, and lack medical treatment. In addition, there was a lawsuit from an individual plaintiff. On April 1, 2013, an individual plaintiff, aka John Doe, filed a lawsuit against South Carolina Department of Social Services, Boys Home of South, and the South Carolina Governor for the lax of supervision, inadequate care, and failure to act in the sexual assault of an 11-year-old foster care boy, John Doe. The complaint alleged that South Carolina's CPSA placed John Doe in a high-risk congregate care due to the lack of foster care homes available (Children's Rights, 2013).

Congregate care group homes were not long-term stable, permanent placements for foster care children. According to the lawsuit, on March 28, 2011, another older boy, with a history of sexual assaults, attacked John Doe. The complaint alleged that medical neglect followed the incident even after John Doe attempted suicide. The plaintiff

amended the lawsuit on May 30, 2013, to allege federal civil rights violations against South Carolina's CPSA, Boys Home of South, and South Carolina Governor (Children's Rights, 2013).

The lawsuits against South Carolina demonstrated the importance of finding stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Even though South Carolina was making tremendous progress in reducing their foster care populations, the lawsuit alleged South Carolina fell short in recruiting suitable temporary foster care placements (Children's Rights, 2013). I did not look in-depth at temporary foster care placements but instead at the stable, permanent placements. Issues surrounding temporary foster care placements can have the potential and possibility of additional research in the future. I discuss the selection of Missouri as a participant in the next section,

Missouri. Missouri appears to be failing at reducing their foster care populations and establishing stable, permanent placements. According to HHS (2016a), in the federal fiscal year 2011, Missouri's CPSA had 9,220 children entered into foster care, and 5,420 children exited from foster care. The foster care population growth was calculated by foster care entries to subtract foster care exits equal growth (9,220 − 5,420 = 533). In the federal fiscal year 2011, Missouri's CPSA foster care population increased by 533 children. More children entered Missouri's CPSA than exited in this federal fiscal year (HHS).

This study used the rate of change in population formula to calculate the rate of change for Missouri's CPSA for the federal fiscal year 2011; foster care growth rate divided by foster care population equals the rate of change (533 / 9,220 = 0.057809). The

ranking of the states was from number 1 as the least improved through number 52 as the

most improved foster care populations. According to HHS (2016a), Appendix C

indicated in the federal fiscal year 2011; Missouri's CPSA ranked number 6 was the least

improved rate of change in the foster care population calculation compared to the other

49 states, plus District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Missouri's foster care populations appeared to make negative progress in

decreasing their foster care population in the federal fiscal year 2011. According to HHS

(2016a), in the federal fiscal year 2012, Missouri's CPSA foster care population was

9,978. Approximately, 6,189 children entered into foster care, and 5,477 children exited

from foster care. The foster care population growth was calculated by foster care entries

to subtract foster care exits equal growth (6,189 – 5,477 = 758). In the federal fiscal year

2012, Missouri's CPSA foster care population increased by 758 children. More children

entered Missouri's CPSA than exited in this federal fiscal year (HHS).

The rate of change population formula used to calculate the rate of change for

Missouri's CPSA was foster care growth rate divided by foster care population equals the

rate of change (758 / 9,978 = 0.075967). According to HHS (2016a), Appendix C results

indicated for the second federal fiscal year that Missouri's CPSA ranked in the bottom 10

least improved foster care population calculation compared to the other 49 states, plus

District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In fact, Missouri's CPSA ranking continued to

remain in the worse rankings from the federal fiscal year 2011 to 2014. Appendix C listed

all the calculations for the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico

(HHS). The ranking of the states was from 1 being the least improved, and 52 being the

most improved. Missouri ranked sixth in the least improved rate of change in foster care population calculation for the 2011 federal fiscal year compared to the other 49 states, plus District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In comparison to the federal fiscal year 2011, Missouri's foster care population increased and passed two states to place in the 3rd position out of 52 in the least improved foster care population (HHS).

Children's Rights sued the state of Missouri's CPSA three times. The first lawsuit was G.L. v. Sherman (Children's Rights, 2006b). This class action lawsuit aimed at reforming the inadequate CPSA in Jackson County, Missouri for failing to investigate properly and monitor foster homes, which resulted in foster care parents abusing foster care children. The settlement agreement reached mandated reform, however, in 1992, Children's Rights filed a contempt motion against the state. In 1994, Children's Rights and Missouri reached a new settlement, which mandated foster parent training, and criminal and abuse background checks for all foster care parents. In February 2006, the court conditionally dismissed the case (Children's Rights, 2006b, 2014).

Children's Rights filed a second lawsuit a year before the settlement of the first lawsuit. The second lawsuit was E.C. v. Sherman (Children's Rights, 2006a). Children's Rights (2014, 2006a) collaborated with local advocate agencies in filing a class action suit against Missouri's Senate created Senate Bill 539, which cut funding for adoption subsidies for children with special needs. Children's Rights was able to obtain an injunction against the bill and later won a permanent banned. The director of Missouri's CPSA filed an appeal but later withdrew it. The ban against Senate Bill 539 remains (Children's Rights).This lawsuit decision and settlement reaffirmed the constitutional

rights of foster care children to have legal representation while in state custody
(Children's Rights, 2014, 2006a). Two of the required changes in this settlement dealt
directly with permanency and the lack of stable, permanent foster care placements.

The third lawsuit filed against Missouri was M. B. v. Tidball (Children's Rights,
2017). The lawsuit cited failure to monitor prescription and administration of a
psychotropic medication to foster care children, failure to maintain complete and current
medical records, failure to obtain proper oversight and review, and failure to receive
proper informed consent to administrate the drugs without safeguards in place to protect
the children (Children's Rights).

It appears that Missouri's CPSA continues to have difficulties meeting the needs
of abused and neglected children and their families. According to the Missouri Annual
Progress and Service Report (2012c), attributed the reduction of funding and staff as a
reason for Missouri's CPSA failure to meet the needs of foster care children and their
families. Since 2010-13, the State of Missouri eliminated 170.5 CPSA positions.
Missouri reallocated funding for 28 of the eliminated positions to the development of a
privatization pilot for resource development. The annual report indicated this was a 7%
reduction in staffing, however, the report omitted the overall number of available staff,
and field positions (Missouri). All publicly available documents analyzed and used for
Missouri's CPSA can found in Appendix E.

Foster care populations are excessive in the majority of the states, and it is
unknown why some states are successful while others struggle to decrease their foster
care populations, which indicates a knowledge gap. I discuss the findings of this study in

Chapters 4 and 5. This study's findings may create opportunities for legislators' and advocates' to create social change for state's CPSA that are struggling with achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I present the instruments, research materials, and data collection in the next section.

Instrumentation

I used a content analysis approach which consisted of documenting, analyzing, and comparing Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications for the recent available federal fiscal years 2011 and 2014 in this study. The two states ranked within the top or bottom 10 positions of the most and least improved foster care populations for federal fiscal years, 2011 and 2012 (HHS, 2016a; see Appendix C). Missouri continued to remain in the top 10 positions of the least improved foster care populations for federal fiscal years, 2013 and 2014 (HHS). South Carolina did not appear in the most improved foster care population for the federal fiscal years, 2013 and 2014 (HHS). South Carolina ranked number 27 in the federal fiscal year 2013 and number 22 in the federal fiscal year 2014 (HHS). All materials for this study were available to the public via the internet or public library. The materials for this study included the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

In addition, the computerized data management software minimized the uncertainty and reliability issues of my analysis of classifying the data and eliminating biases. Coding the text of the two states' CPSA documents allowed for the exploration of patterns, themes, and emerging ideas. The research design was to analyze each state separately then to compare their findings. The objective was to determine how policy

constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. To do this, I examined the policy constructs similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency for foster care children. I present the data collection approach in the next paragraph.

The data collection process was twofold. First, I collected the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. All of these datasets were data in the form of public records. The public records were available by ordering from the states, public libraries, or downloading the data from the federal or state's website. If the data sets were not in electronic format, then it was necessary to scan the documents and upload them to the computerized data management software via a computer and the internet. I stored the documents on my laptop, backup flash drive, and I kept a hard copy stored in a file cabinet in my home. The websites that I downloaded the information from were HHS, State of Missouri, Missouri's CPSA, State of South Carolina, and South Carolina's CPSA. The two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications do not mirror each other due to their interpretation of the federal laws and constructing of policy to meet their jurisdictional needs. The publicly available documents determine the factors that seem to be facilitating, debilitating, or contributes to the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I present the data analysis and interpretation of the data in the next section.

Data Analysis Plan

It was necessary to conduct a systematic process to select the two states' CPSA using the foster care population growth rates. This approach explored the rates of foster care entries and exits from each of the states, plus the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, for the most recent available 4 years. I present an analysis of each state, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, for the federal fiscal years between 2011 and 2014 in Appendix C. The states' ranking was according to their rate of change in the foster care population calculation with the most and least improved foster care population. Number 1 being the least improved, and number 52 being the most improved.

I examined the research data via the theoretical framework using a content analysis inductive approach of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications in the second part of this study. My research design analyzed each state separately and then compared the findings. The two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were different from each other due to their interpretation of the federal laws and constructing of policy to meet their jurisdictional needs. The computerized data management software assisted me with managing and organizing the data.

The interpretation analysis of the publicly available data collection started with basic coding ideas, coding frequencies and developing themes to corroborate data in understanding the role of each state's CPSA documents that contributed to the foster care drift. Data comparison of the two states' findings determined how it contributes to policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers and the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children.

To do this, I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that may promote or negate permanency for foster care children. I present the findings of this study in Chapters 4 and 5. I discuss the document and archival data for this study in the next section.

Document and archival data. To preserve the transparency of this study, it is necessary to archival all research materials for a retention period of 5 years. The archival of the research materials used several devices: laptop, flash drive, and hardcopy materials. First, electronic data and publicly available documents saved on a laptop computer's hard drive will remain on it for easy retrieval. Second, a backup of the laptop computer hard drive using a flash drive. I stored the flash drive and research materials in a locked two-drawer metal filing cabinet located in my home.

The key to the two-drawer metal filing cabinet will be in a safe in my home. Likewise, stored in a two-drawer metal filing cabinet in my home will be all the hardcopy documents, books, and journals used in this study. Retention of all research materials will be at least 5 years. I present the issues of trustworthiness from this study in the next section.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

I used a triangulation approach, which created credibility for this study (QRS International, 2015; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2016; Stuart et al., 2014; Xiao et al., 2016). The research data consisted of two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications

obtained from federal and states publicly available public records and publications. The three phases of the research were as follows:

- Phase I: Data collection.

- Phase II: Data analysis.

- Phase III: Comparison of results.

Phase I was the collection of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. The next step was to scan and upload all documents into the computerized data management software, which assisted in managing and organizing the documents. Phase II consisted of coding and analyzing the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using the content analysis approach.

Phase III started with comparing the findings from the analyses of both states to determine how policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. I examined the policy constructs similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency for foster care children. The triangulation process created credibility for this study. I discuss how transferability plays an important part of possibly sharing the findings with other CPSA the need to address the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children in the next section. Also, I discuss the ability to transfer the findings from my study in the next section.

Transferability

According to Salmona and Kaczynski (2016), the ability to transfer the findings to others is transferability, such as sharing the findings of this study may assist other states' CPSA that are struggling to address the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I used publicly available documents. There was no transferability to any live human participants. The ability of the findings to transfer will depend on the similarities between the selected two states' CPSA and similar organizations.

The ability to create transferability of the findings of this study to other CPSA that may need to address the lack of stable, permanent placements within their jurisdictions may create momentum in reducing foster care populations. I discuss dependability of this study in the next section.

Dependability

My role as the researcher included journal logging all steps, processes, actions, interpretations, and results during the research. The journal created an audit trail and established dependability. By creating a triangular process, I was able to create dependability. This triangular process included documenting the entire process in a journal and automatic logging of activities using a computerized data management software created transparency and dependability.

The journal created audit trails and established dependability, while the computerized data management software minimizes the uncertainty, biases, and reliability issues. By using the computerized data management software to assist with the management and organization of the publicly available data, I minimized personal biases,

and the established dependability with the nature of data collection, coding, and analysis (QRS International, 2015). I discuss confirmability for my study in the next section.

Confirmability

After coding all documents, the next step I used was to review all code references and determine if there were any new emerging codes and their properties. The project journal maintained records of all new emerging codes and the justification to add them to the codebook. As new codes emerged, the next step was recoding all documents for the new codes. This type of review process created a data audit, in addition to recording all actions in a journal regarding the processes, thoughts, and judgments made during the research created confirmability.

According to Salmona and Kaczynski (2016), transparency of all actions and processes of a study improves confirmability. After the coding was complete, the next phase was to analyze the data. The project logs created automatically by the computerized data management software created transparency by recording each step during the coding process, and the triangulation approach created confirmability in this study. I discuss the ethical procedures I used in this study in the next section.

Ethical Procedures

This study consisted of two states' CPS statutes, policies, and publications. There were no direct contacts with any live human participants for this study. All materials for this study were data in the form of public records and documents. This study did not use any confidential documents. All public records and documents were available via the public library and the internet from the two states' CPS. This research had no risk of

disclosure of confidential information. All data and policy documents collected for this study were open, publically available records.

The data collected for this study were relevant to the research question. NVivo 11 Pro, computerized data management software assisted with managing and organizing the publically available documents for this research. Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) received an application requesting to conduct this study. IRB reviewed and approved the request to conduct this research. The IRB approval number is 06-23-15-0115743. Detention of all research records for a minimum of 5 years and destroyed after that in accordance with Walden University's IRB guidelines. I discuss the summary of Chapter in the next section.

Summary

The lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children can adversely affect their well-being (Pasalich et al., 2016; Villodas et al., 2016). I used content analysis method with a theoretical inductive approach to collect, code, categorize, recode, analyze, and compare two states' CPSA materials. Stone (2012) policy constructs were the lens through which I explored this phenomenon. The key theoretical constructs underlying the exploration of this study were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers.

I used a triangulation approach in conducting the research for this study. The triangulation approach was to analyze Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications, analyze South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications, and finally, compared the findings of the two states. A computerized data management software assisted with the exploration of the research materials from the selected two

states in a systematic manner and creating dependability. All of the research materials and data were publicly available documents. There were no live human participants or confidential documents in this study. I used content analysis method to answer the central research question: How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? In order to answer this question, I analyzed Missouri's and South Carolina's CPS statutes, policies, and publications to assess their similarities and differences and their implications on permanency for foster care children. The two states that I selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. The lack of knowledge as to why the two states success rates differ in achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children especially when all states try to adhere to federal laws to obtain federal funds indicated a knowledge gap.

This study's findings may open new avenues and opportunities for legislators' and advocates' in states' CPSA that are struggling with stable, permanent placements for foster care children by creating awareness for social change in reducing the foster care population. I discuss the data collection processes, records of all actions, issues, challenges, and my experiences as the researcher in Chapters 4. Also, I present an overview of this study, interpretation of the findings, implications for possible social change, recommended action, and reflection of my experiences in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

I present the data analysis and research findings of this study in this chapter. I explored the patterns and themes found in Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using qualitative content analysis. The purpose of this study was to determine how Stone's (2012) policy constructs contributed to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. In order to answer this question, I analyzed Missouri's and South Carolina's CPS statutes, policies, and publications to assess their similarities and differences and their implications on permanency for foster care children. The two states that I selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. I did not experience any unexpected changes or special circumstances that influenced the interpretation of this study. I discuss the participants of the study in the next section.

Participants

In this study, I assessed publicly available documents for Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA; documents consisted of statutes, policies, and publications. I did not include human participants in my research. Because I analyzed publicly available documents for the two selected states' CPSA, and foster care population counts to determine stable, permanent placements, I found it unnecessary for my study to use for other types of demographics. I did not consider gender, race, ethnicity, income, and other types of demographics. I selected Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA because one state had increased their foster care population and the other had decreased it for federal

fiscal years 2011 to 2014 (HHS, 2016a; see Appendix C). There were no changes in the

publicly available documents of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

All public documents were readily available from HHS, the State of Missouri, Missouri's

CPSA, the State of South Carolina, and South Carolina's CPSA. I present the data

collection and organization of the publicly available documents used in this study in the

next section. In addition, I review my data analysis procedures, provide evidence of

trustworthiness, and present results of this study.

Data Collection

I used computerized data management software, NVivo 11 Pro, to assist in

managing the documents used in this study. My research question was, How do the

policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success

or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster

care children? The data collected for this study were relevant to the research question.

In preparation for the data collection process, established the following three

internal directories for each state: Code of State Regulations and Revised Statutes,

Department of Social Services CPSA, and publications. I organized the folders into two-

tier folders to assist with query creation and comparisons; the first tier was the parent

code, and second tier was the child code. I use a codebook to outline the setup of the

parent and child codes in NVivoPro11 in Appendix A. The computerized data

management software referred to codes as nodes. There were no changes from the

original proposal of the publicly available documents used for this research listed in

Appendix D and E.

The two states' CPSA documents were available via the Internet and public library. This research involved no risk of disclosure of confidential information because I only used publicly available documents. Collecting Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications was time-consuming because the data were accessible one page and section at a time. It took me more than 6 weeks to collect, prepare, and format these data. South Carolina's document collection took less than 2 weeks to collect, prepare, and format. South Carolina's CPSA documents were easily accessible. I present the data analysis in the next section.

Data Analysis

I used a qualitative inductive content analysis approach to determine how the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the possible success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. I analyzed the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications separately, and worked inductively on the research data detecting inferences, patterns, and themes embedded in the data and formulating and developing general conclusions for the two states (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2016; Stuart et al., 2014). I used content analysis to explore the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to determine patterns and themes, which provided for a meaningful review of contents under scrutiny. I adopted the coding approach used for this study from Creswell (2012), Krippendorff (2012), Schreier (2012), and QRS International (2015). I organized and compared the data by categories; statutes, policies, and publications.

Coding in an inductive manner assisted in the reduction of data and detecting inferences, patterns, and themes embedded into the data. The research approach used different types of coding methods. The different types of coding were manual, similar meanings and synonymous queries, cross coding, and group and compound queries. I uploaded the data into the computerized management software and then went line by line manually coding the data. The codebook is a code guide of the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications for my study in Appendix A. I used a continuous iterative and cross coding process to explore and code the text of emerged codes by constantly reviewing previously coded text to the emerged codes. The emerging codes created revisions to the codebook. As codes emerged, I would recode the coded data, and then continued with the reviewing and comparing of text.

Initially, the codebook identified a combined 22 parent and child codes. Emerging codes created revisions, and additions to the codebook by adding 18 parent and child codes to the codebook. Appendix A represents the preliminary and end-code list of the 40 parent and child codes. An example of an emerged child code to the codebook was *Rights* parent code *(f = 108),* I added *Termination of Parental Rights* child code *((f = 882);* see Appendix A). The new child code assisted with a meaningful understanding of the categories and understanding the transformation focus on the availability of adoption and permanent placements.

As the data analysis continued, the data did not identify when funding was exclusively restricted for a mandate because all of the statutes and policies focused on restrictive conditional funding. Federal government earmarks all funds for CPSA

programs, therefore, I renamed *restricted conditional funding* to *money*. I coded all data about *money* under *focus* parent code *(f = 98,204)*, *money* child code *(f = 16,013)*, which appeared to indicate a better conceptual match. According to Schreier (2012), codes are mostly data and concept focused. As I continued, it became apparent that the concept-driven codes revealed the need to modify the codes.

After modifying the codes, the next step was to repeat the document review and recode the data. Appendix A provided a revised list of parent and child codes. Appendix F provided the frequency occurrences of all codes. The coded text broke the data into manageable categories. The computerized data management software allowed coding stripes to highlight texts and visually display patterns, themes, and developing ideas within the documents (QRS International, 2015). In addition, the computerized data management software had the capability of automatically logging all actions and processes.

Using the parent and child codes to captured data in the form of words, sentences, and paragraphs in the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications allowed for the meaning of the text to reveal their true focus. While I was capturing the data of the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publication using the coding process, I realized an issue with titles, headers, and footers placed on every page. I discovered an issue during the coding of Missouri's CPSA *Child Welfare Manual*. The manually placed titles, headers, and footers on the majority of the pages that would inflate the child and parent codes, which would result in over-inflation and misinterpretation of the data, therefore, it was necessary not to code these discrepant

words. An example was *Child Welfare Manual* headers. The words *child* and *welfare* did not mean a human being or well-being of a person, but a document.

There were no changes to the research design protocol. This study followed the design protocol approved by Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for this study per IRB number 06-23-15-0115743. There was a learning curve with the use of the computerized data management software. I attended and reviewed five computerized data management software training videoes and webinars to learn the functionalities of the computerized data management software from June 2015 through September 2015.

The coding process revealed patterns and themes about the central research question: How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? In order to answer this question, I analyzed Missouri's and South Carolina's CPS statutes, policies, and publications to assess their similarities and differences and their implications on permanency for foster care children. The states selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. I present the patterns and themes embedded and revealed in this study as they pertained to the central research question in the results section in this chapter.

Two developed permanency themes emerged from the data in response to the research question. The two developed permanency themes were as follows:

Theme 1. By using concurrent and paradoxical plans to motivate or force

parents/caregivers into compliance by focusing on their needs, and at the same

time, start the process to terminate their parental rights to establish stable,

permanent placements for foster care children; and

Theme 2. By using available outside resources to assist with creating permanency for the

foster care children.

The results from the study revealed the application of the developed two themes

by the selected two states' CPSA by exploring the similarities and differences of the

research documents. The application of the developed two themes and the policy

constructs deconstruction of the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and

publications appeared to indicate their ability to succeed or fail at establishing stable,

permanent placements for foster care children outcomes. I discuss the findings of this

study later in this chapter. I discuss the transferability, credibility, dependability, and

confirmability strategies used in this study in the next section.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I describe how I demonstrated evidence of trustworthiness using transferability,

credibility, dependability, and confirmability in this section. I used publicly available

documents. There was no transferability to any live human participants. There was a

transferability opportunity for similar organizations from the selected two states' CPSA

by sharing the findings of this study to enhance their organization in addressing the lack

of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Schreier (2012) maintained that

the ability to share and transfer the findings to others is transferability. This type of

transferability to other similar organizations may contribute to social change by adding

clarification, knowledge, and awareness of two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and

publications by opening new avenues of understanding among states' CPSA that may contribute to reducing foster care populations and create stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

There were no changes in the selected participants for this study. There were no live human participants in this study. The project logs created automatically by the computerized data management software created transparency by recording each step during the coding process, and the triangulation approach created confirmability in this study. The computerized data management software created project logs that recorded all actions taken, thereby reinforcing transparency and dependability. My journal created audit trails that established dependability, while the computerized data management software minimized the uncertainty, biases, and reliability issues. Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012) and Schreier (2012), stress the importance on focusing and creating trustworthiness by creating transparency of all actions and processes of a study improves confirmability. The project logs documented the entire process automatically for each state and the comparison of the states using the computerized data management software creating transparency, dependability, and confirmability.

I used a triangulation approach adapted from Creswell (2012), Krippendorff (2012), Schreier (2012), and QRS International (2015) in this study. The triangulation process created credibility for this study. The triangulation approach was in three phases; document collection of the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications; analyze collected data separately, and compare the selected two states' CPSA findings. There was no change in the triangulation approach as originally planned. The findings of

this study included the similarities and differences of the selected two states' CPSA research documents, cluster analyses, policy constructs in relation to the research question and developed themes regarding stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I present the research findings of the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications in the next section.

Results

I present the qualitative content analysis of the data used to explore the selected two state's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications in this section. I used computerized data management software to assist me with the management and organization of the data. The cluster analyses allowed for the discovery of new insights and patterns by comparing the similarity and differences using the computerized data management software queries (QRS International, 2015). The policy constructs used in this study were code categories identified during the content analysis examination. I compared the findings of the selected two states' CPSA research documents to determine their similarities and differences in relation to the research question and developed themes. The findings of the study included cluster analyses, policy constructs about the research question, and developed themes regarding stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I discuss the developed themes for my study in the next section.

Developed Themes

Using Stone's (2012) policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers as its theoretical lens to examine Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to identify themes in response to the central research question:

How does Stone's (2012) policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? To do this, I examined the similarities and differences between the selected two states' CPSA research documents to explore the impact of permanency for foster care children. The states selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. The similarities and differences in both states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were content analyzed to assess for impacts on permanent placements.

Two themes emerged in response to the research question for this study. The two themes contributed to the two states' CPSA possible outcomes in creating permanency for foster care children. The two themes were as follows:

Theme 1. By using concurrent and paradoxical plans to motivate or force

parents/caregivers into compliance by focusing on their needs, and at the same

time, start the process to terminate their parental rights in order to establish stable,

permanent placements for foster care children; and

Theme 2. By using available outside resources to assist with creating permanency for the

foster care children.

The selected two states' CPSA similarities and differences in their application of the two themes appeared to indicate their impact at establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The developed themes emerged from using Stone's (2012) policy constructs, coding process, data analysis, and identification of patterns in

the research data related to permanency. Table 1 compares the selected two states' CPSA

statutes, policies, and publications emerged two themes' frequencies and percentage of

occurrences. I discuss the results of Theme 1 in the next section.

Theme 1. Theme 1 results indicated that Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA

statutes, policies, and publications occurrences were nearly a 2 to 1 ratios (Missouri *(f =*

861); South Carolina *(f = 1,589))*, a difference of *728* frequency occurrences (see Table

1). These frequency occurrences appeared to indicate that South Carolina focused twice

as much on Theme 1 than Missouri. The statutes *(Missouri (f = 92)*; *South Carolina (f =*

63) and policies *(Missouri (f = 706)*; *South Carolina (f = 630))* occurrences were in close

proximity to each other in Theme 1. The use of publications *(Missouri (f = 63)*; *South*

Carolina (f = 896)) was a significant difference between Missouri's and South Carolina's

CPSA research documents in Theme 1. South Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 896)*

occurrences were more than 14 times higher compared to Missouri's CPSA publications

(f = 63) occurrences. It appeared to indicate that South Carolina was doing a better job at

creating permanency for foster care children in Theme 1 (see Table 1). South Carolina's

CPSA workers were responsible for implementing and achieving the purpose of the

concurrent plan within a specified timeframe.

> Within 60 days of the child entering care, if the primary plan is not
>
> working, the agency will pursue the alternative or concurrent plan for the
>
> foster child; and no later than 12 months of the child entering foster care,
>
> if grounds exist, the agency will pursue termination of parental rights if in
>
> the best interests of the child (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 41).

Where Missouri's CPSA approached to establish permanency for foster care children was a little different compared to South Carolina's CPSA. Even though ASFA, Public Law 105-89 (HHS, 2014) specifically stated 12 months was the limited amount of time, it appears the exception rule in Missouri's CPSA was the norm.

> Seek a court permanency hearing no later than 12 months after the date the child is considered to have entered foster care and not less frequently than every 12 months thereafter during the continuation of care. The permanency hearing shall be for the purpose of determining whether the child should be continued in foster care; return to a parent, guardian, relative, or kinship; or proceedings should be instituted to terminate parental rights and legally free such child for adoption (Missouri, 2014e, p. 24).

I present how the selected two states' publications and policy constructs joined forces to influence, promote, and create behavior changes in people to create permanency for foster care children in the policy construction section. Also, I discuss the results of Theme 2 in the next section.

Theme 2. Theme 2 results indicated that Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were almost equal in overall occurrences (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494)*), a difference of one (see Table 1). Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes in Theme 2 were in proximity to each other, *(Missouri (f = 228)*; South Carolina *(f = 272))* respectively. Theme 2 appeared to indicate differences between the two states' CPSA in their policies and publications. Theme 2 results

indicated that Missouri's CPSA policies *(f = 1,179)* occurrences were a 3 to 1 ratios

higher compared to South Carolina's CPSA policies *(f = 373).*

The opposite appeared to happen with the publications occurrences. South

Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 849)* occurrences were a 9 to 1 ratio higher compared

to Missouri's CPSA publications *(f = 86)* occurrences for Theme 2 (see Table 1). The

differences between the two states' CPSA policies and publications indicated a pattern

relevant to both themes. I present in the policy constructs section how both states

promote their programs to create outside resources in establishing permanency for foster

care children.

In response to the central research question, South Carolina's CPSA creates

benchmarked concurrent plans and permanency plans that hold parents accountable

demonstrating its importance by the number of occurrences in the two themes (see Table

1). The findings of this study indicated that South Carolina's CPSA research documents

used a balanced approach in establishing concurrent and paradoxical permanency plans

and outside resources for foster care children. South Carolina's CPSA put great

importance on the publications to promote permanency and bring awareness to their

programs.

Compared to South Carolina's CPSA focusing on publications, Missouri's CPSA

focused their importance on policies and did not reflect the importance of publications to

promote permanency for foster care children and bring awareness to recruit outside

resources for their program. Missouri's CPSA primary permanency focused for Themes 1

and 2 were *policies* at *80% (f = 1,885)* of the frequencies (see Table 1).

Table 1

Developed Themes Related to the Central Research Question

Theme 1. Using concurrent and paradoxical plans to motivate or force parents/caregivers into compliance by focusing on their needs, and at the same time, starting the process to terminate their parental rights in order to establish stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

Invariant constituents	# of occurrences	% of occurrences by theme	# of occurrences	% of occurrences by theme	% of both states' themes by overall occurrences	
	Missouri's CPSA		South Carolina's CPSA		MO	SC
Statutes	92	11%	63	4%	4%	2%
Policies	706	82%	630	40%	30%	20%
Publications	63	7%	896	56%	3%	29%
Subtotals	861	100%	1,589	100%	37%	52%

Theme 2. Using available community and government resources to assist with creating permanency for foster care children.

Invariant constituents	# of occurrences	% of occurrences by theme	# of occurrences	% of occurrences by theme	% of both states themes by overall occurrences	
	Missouri's CPSA		South Carolina's CPSA		MO	SC
Statutes	228	15%	272	18%	10%	9%
Policies	1,179	79%	373	25%	50%	12%
Publications	86	6%	849	57%	4%	28%
Subtotals	1,493	100%	1,494	100%	63%	48%
Grand Total	2,354		3,083		100%	100%

When breaking down the primary permanency themes, Theme 1 focused on creating concurrent permanency plans was *30% (f = 706)*, while Theme 2 focused on creating resources to assist with permanency was *50% (f = 1,179)*. Missouri's CPSA policies appeared to focus more on resources in their policies to assist with establishing permanency than the concurrent permanency plans to establish stable, permanency placements (see Table 1). Missouri's CPSA publications (Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; Theme 2 *(f = 86)*) was low in comparison the statutes (Theme 1 *(f = 92)*; Theme 2 *(f = 228)*) and policies (Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*).

Missouri's CPSA research documents stated that it recognizes the importance of bringing awareness so the resources can develop to assist with creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Missouri's CPSA outside resources dominated the policies focusing on social workers as the primary developer of these outside resources. It implies that once the community realizes their importance, then outside resources would be plentiful. The issue with this premise was the lack of promoting permanency and bring awareness to recruit outside resources for their program in their publications (see Table 1).

> Community partnerships are made up of members or agencies from diverse disciplines that regularly assemble and address issues relevant to family well-being and child protection. When the community begins to see child protection as a community issue and not just a Children's Division issue, families will be identified sooner, and resources can be made available more readily, sometimes before the family comes to the attention

of the Division. Staff will see greater participation from the community in

the family support team process, which means more resources at the table

during plan development; less duplication of services from agencies not

communicating; and more concise and individualized treatment plans

designed to meet the particular needs of that family (Missouri, 2014b, p.

32).

In addition, Missouri's CPSA requires their workers to develop and maintain

outside resources to address and meet the needs of abused and neglected children.

The Children's Service Worker is to identify community resources

available to meet the family's needs when assisting the family in

maintaining employment or schooling. Providing information on

community resources (i.e., literacy programs, Futures, school-based

programs) provides the family with information regarding their

community and helps develop skills to access those resources (Missouri,

2014b, p. 23).

Missouri's CPSA social workers established or enlisted new resources as part of

the assigned duties. "Develop and sustain collaborative relationships with other members

of the community to promote and support a community-based response to the protection

of children" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 15). Missouri appeared to put a higher importance on

policies requiring social workers to establish their outside resources.

Compared to Missouri's CPSA focus on policies to create outside resources,

South Carolina's CPSA approaches used collaborated efforts in the development of

community resources. South Carolina's CPSA appeared to put a balanced approach to establishing *permanency* plans as well as resources to assist in establishing *permanency* for foster care children. South Carolina's CPSA research documents had *52% (f = 1,589) permanency plan* occurrences (statutes *(f = 63)*, policies *(f = 630)*, and publications *(f = 896)*) in Theme 1 compared to *48% (f = 1,494) permanency* frequency occurrences (statutes *(f = 272)*, policies *(f = 373)*, and publications *(f = 849)*) in Theme 2 for creating outside resources to assist with establishing *permanency* (see Table 1). According to Theme 2, South Carolina's CPSA publications put a high importance on promoting permanency and bringing awareness to their programs. "The [South Carolina's CPSA] department may proceed with efforts to place a child for adoption or with a legal guardian concurrently with making efforts to prevent removal or to make it possible for the child to return safely to the home" (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 225).

South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications focused on establishing concurrent *permanency* plans and community resources aligning and using a balanced approach implementing the two themes. South Carolina's CPSA research documents promoted and advocated *permanency* by incorporating all stakeholders into the decision-making process.

> Each of South Carolina's sixteen judicial circuits has at least one local review board. Each local review board is made up of five volunteers from the community who are appointed by the Governor. A professional staff person from the Division of Foster Care Review coordinates the monthly review meetings of each local board. The purpose of the Foster Care

Review Board (FCRB) is to ensure each child is given a third party review of the circumstances which caused their removal from their biological homes and to ensure steps toward progress for *permanency* and *safety* for this child are being met. The foster care worker prepares documentation and presents the review, but is not a voting member as to the FCRB recommendations for the child's plan. The FCRB is a case review system which meets the requirements of sections 475(5) and 475(6) of the Social Security Act and assures that a review of each child's status is made no less frequently than once every six months…" (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 30-31).

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA used publication as tools to attract foster care parents, adoptive parents, and possibly develop community resources, which are all key elements of creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that promoted or negated permanency for foster care children. The selected two states used different types of concurrent plans that focus on *stable, permanent placements* (Missouri *(f = 587)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,401)*) and *termination of parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 603)*) to motivate or force caregivers into compliance by focusing on the parents' needs, and at the same time, start the process to terminate their parental rights to establish for foster care children (see Appendix F).

Appendix F appeared to indicated that Missouri's CPSA was more lenient toward parents regarding *termination of parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 603)*) compared to South Carolina's CPSA. Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA was focused on creating *stable, permanent placements* (Missouri *(f = 587)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,401)*) compared to Missouri's CPSA. When comparing the findings of Appendix F, it appeared that Missouri's CPSA focus was *money* (Missouri *(f = 8,370)*; South Carolina *(f = 7,643)*); *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,391)*; South Carolina *(f = 643)*); *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674)*); *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989)*).

Four of these areas that Missouri's CPSA focused on were policy constructs which I discuss in the next section. Missouri's CPSA *money* (Missouri *(f = 8,370)*; South Carolina *(f = 7,643)*) focus was not a policy construct; however, money can be a form of *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,391)*; South Carolina *(f = 643)*) used to manipulate or control others (see Appendix F). I examined the policy construct frequencies of the two selected states' CPSA research documents in the next section.

Frequencies of Policy Constructs

I examined two states' CPSA publicly available documents in this study. Stone (2012) recommended deconstruction of current policies to determine their focus as the first step in analyzing current policies. Stone advocated her five-policy constructs as strategies to change behavior, gain collaboration, and resolve policy issues. Stone's policy constructs were used to deconstruct current CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis approach. The key policy constructs of the theory

underlying this study were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. Stone's policy

constructs provided the theoretical lens through which I focused and explored the

selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. I present Missouri's and

South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications via the policy constructs'

frequencies in this study. I discuss policy construct incentives in the next section.

   Incentives. Stone's (2012) policy constructs provided the theoretical lens for this

study. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications first

policy construct explored was *incentives*. The policy construct *incentives* (Missouri *(f =*

1,196); South Carolina *(f = 1,201))* parent code has two child codes: *enticements*

(Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* and *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*;

South Carolina *(f = 527)*; see Table 2). The Missouri's CPSA *enticements (f = 1,022)*

occurrences were six times higher than *punishments (f = 174) occurrences* (see Table 2).

South Carolina's CPSA *enticements (f = 674)* occurrences were slightly higher than

punishments (f = 527) occurrences (see Table 2). Comparing Missouri's CPSA to South

Carolina's CPSA, it appeared that Missouri's CPSA depended more on *enticements (f =*

1,022) than *punishments (f = 174)* to achieve permanency compared to South Carolina's

CPSA balanced approach between enticements *(f = 674)* and punishments *(f = 527)*.

Table 2 results indicated a *85% (f = 848)* frequency occurrences difference between

Missouri's CPSA *enticements (f = 1,022) occurrences compared to punishment (f = 174)*

occurrences (see Table 2).

Table 2

Policy Construct Incentives Frequency Occurrences

	Enticements		Punishments	
	MO	SC	MO	SC
Statutes	252	256	88	365
Policies	746	216	82	155
Publications	24	202	4	7
Total	1,022	674	174	527

According to Missouri (2014b), the supervisor is to assist social workers "…in determining when the judicious use of an authoritative approach may be appropriate to motivate the family in a positive way" (p. 7). To motivate a family positively appeared to indicated Missouri's CPSA preference usage of *enticements (f = 1,022)* instead of *punishments (f = 174). Punishments (f = 174)* indicated consequences for omitted or unacceptable behavior, and trying to spin punishment into a positive experience seems delusional. *Punishments (f = 174)* hold the parents accountable, and sometimes, it means a negative event, such as dismantling a dysfunctional family unit or *termination of parental rights ((f = 279)*; see Table 2). Parental accountability appeared to be an afterthought for Missouri's CPSA.

The results of this study demonstrated that Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications encouraged the use of *enticements* to motivate families into compliance by *85% (f = 1,022)* compared to holding families accountable via *punishment 15% (f = 174)* of the time (see Table 2). According to Missouri (2014b), CPSA workers are to "monitor services and interventions to ensure that the family is not negatively impacted,

treatment plan objectives and goals met, and services and interventions acceptable by

best practice standards" (p. 6). Missouri CPSA "worker shall initiate the Family-Centered

Services assessment process by attempting to establish rapport and convey that the

[social] worker is there to help the family help itself" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 16).

In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used

enticements by 56% (f = 674) occurrences compared to *punishments* occurrences *of 44%*

(f = 527) to create permanency for foster care children (see Table 2). This 56% *(f = 674)*

to 44% *(f = 527)* occurrences appeared to imply to a slightly off balanced approached for

incentives a difference of 12% *((f = 147)*; see Table 2). Missouri's CPSA statutes,

policies, and publications used *enticements* by 85% *(f = 1,022)* compared to South

Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications 56% *(f = 674)*, a difference of *29%*

((f = 348); see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA research documents slightly off balanced

approach of *enticements* 56% *(f = 674)* and *punishment* 44% *(f = 527)* was an important

parameter in South Carolina's CPSA success at establishing permanency for foster care

children (see Table 2). Missouri's CPSA research documents explored *permanent*

placements (f = 6,193) occurrences were lower compared to South Carolina's CPSA *(f =*

8,237). Missouri's CPSA *permanent placements* parent code *(f = 6,193)* had seven child

codes; *stable, permanent placements (f = 587), adoptions (f = 2,967), emancipation (f =*

424), family preservation-reunification (f = 295), guardianship (f = 1,191), and *visitation*

program ((f = 729); see Table 3). Missouri's CPSA focused primarily on *permanent*

placements in their policies *((f = 1,352)*; see Table 3).

South Carolina's CPSA *permanent placements (f = 8,237)* occurrences had seven

child codes; *stable, permanent placements (f = 1,401)*, *adoptions (f = 4,221)*,

emancipation (f = 577), *family preservation-reunification (f = 473)*, *guardianship (f =*

646), and *visitation program ((f = 919)*; see Table 3). Table 3 appeared to indicate that

South Carolina's CPSA either focused on permanency in their publications or had a

balanced approach between policies and publications. The only child code exception was

South Carolina's CPSA *guardianship (f = 646)* occurrences the balance was between

statutes *(f = 235)* and policies *((f = 299)*; see Table 3). Overall, South Carolina's CPSA

used publications to promote permanency and bring awareness to recruit outside

resources primarily in Theme 2.

Table 3

Permanent Placements Frequency Occurrences

	Stable Permanent Placements		Adoptions		Emancipation		Family Preservation-reunification		Guardianship		Visitation Program	
	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC
Statutes	108	59	818	614	28	95	24	16	316	235	58	98
Policies	430	4	2,052	2,177	321	159	251	269	861	299	625	469
Publications	491	1,338	97	1,430	75	323	20	188	14	112	46	352
Total	587	1,401	2,967	4,221	424	577	295	473	1,191	646	729	919

South Carolina's CPSA grants full disclosure of expectations and benchmarks

expected by the parents or caregivers to establish stable, permanent placements:

During contacts with the parents at family meetings, team decision

meetings, etc. it is explained to parents: That after the plan is developed,

the parent may discuss objections with the [social] worker. The parents are

advised that the removal hearing is when the parent must raise any

objections about the plan; and that if the objection is not raised at the

hearing, then the plan cannot be changed. That failure to support, visit and

substantially accomplish the objectives in the case plan within the

timeframes provided by the court may result in termination of parental

rights, subject to notice and a hearing. The established timelines for timely

permanency are reunification with 12 months of entry or a finalized

adoption within 24 months of entry. There is full disclosure to the parents

of the behavioral changes needed for the reunification of the child and the

timeframe for achieving the changes. At the removal hearing, the court

will address the amount of support and redirecting support currently

ordered (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 49-50).

The results of Table 3 indicated that South Carolina's CPSA put greater emphasis on a

slightly off-balanced approach between *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)*,

while Missouri's CPSA placed greater emphasis on *enticements (f = 1,022)* compared to

punishments (f = 174). I present the policy construct rules in the next section.

    Rules. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications

second policy construct explored was *rules*. The *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South

Carolina *(f = 19,720))* occurrences has three child codes: *general rules* (Missouri *(f =*

12,587); South Carolina *(f = 13,599))*, *judicial or law* (Missouri *(f = 4,468)*; South

Carolina *(f = 5,950))*, and *mandates* (Missouri *(f = 144)*; South Carolina *(f = 171)*; see

Table 4). Table 4 results indicated Missouri's CPSA *general rules* (f = *12,587)*

occurrences were two and a half times higher than *judicial or law (f = 4,468)*

occurrences. Table 4 results indicated South Carolina's CPSA *general rules (f = 13,599)*

occurrences were almost three and a half times higher than *judicial or law (f = 5,950)*

occurrences in South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications.

Overall, Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used *general rules*

by *73% (f = 12,587)* compared to *judicial or law 26% (f = 4,468)* and *mandates* 1% *(f =*

144); see Table 4). "If the family is occupied with basic survival needs, other needs will

not be a priority" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 16). Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA statutes,

policies, and publications used *general rules* by 69% *(f = 13,599)* compared to *judicial or*

law by 30% *(f = 5,950)* and mandates 1% *((f = 171)*; see Table 4). "Referring agencies

support family groups by providing the services and resources necessary to implement

the agreed upon plans" (South Carolina, 2014a, p. 47).

Table 4

Policy Construct Rules Frequency Occurrences

	General Rules		Judicial or Law		Mandates	
	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC
Statutes	1,738	3,384	828	1,809	14	13
Policies	10,083	5,877	3,404	2,746	102	49
Publications	766	4,338	236	1,395	28	109
Total	12,587	13,599	4,468	5,950	144	171

Mandates (Missouri *(f = 144)*; South Carolina *(f = 171))* were difficult to identify

because most rules or guidelines were allegedly not optional. The analysis demonstrated

that both Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications

supported the use of *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* to

motivate or force families into compliance. South Carolina's CPSA placed a higher

emphases on *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* occurrences than

Missouri's CPSA, a difference of *((f = 2,521)*; see Table 4). For the most part, *rules* were

important aspects of Missouri's CPSA policies *(f = 10,083)* compared to their statutes *(f*

= 1,738) and publications *(f = 766)*. Where South Carolina's CPSA rules (Missouri *(f =*

17,199); South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* were balanced compared to Missouri's CPSA.

South Carolina's CPSA rules were higher in policies *(f = 5,877)* compared to statutes *(f =*

3,384) and publications *(f = 4,338)*. I present policy construct facts in the next section.

     Facts. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications

third policy construct was *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989)*; see

Table 5). The *facts* parent code did not have any child codes. Missouri's CPSA statutes

used *facts 78% (f = 979)* compared to their policies by *13% (f = 169)* and *publications*

9% (f = 107; see Table 5). Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA differed in their use of

facts. South Carolina's CPSA statutes used *facts* 48% *(f = 474)* compared to their policies

by 29% *(f = 283)* and publications 23% *((f = 232)*; see Table 5).

Table 5

Policy Construct Facts Frequency Occurrences

	Facts	
	MO	SC
Statutes	979	474
Policies	169	283
Publications	107	232
Total	1,255	989

South Carolina's CPSA research documents used *facts (f = 989)* to justify actions, including removal of children from their caregivers.

> The petition shall contain a full description of the basis for the
>
> department's belief that the child cannot be protected adequately without
>
> department intervention, including a description of the condition of the
>
> child, any previous efforts by the department to work with the parent or
>
> guardian, treatment programs which have been offered and proven
>
> inadequate, and the attitude of the parent or guardian towards intervention
>
> and protective services (South Carolina, 2013d, p. 27).

Facts (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))* policy constructs most significant difference in comparing the selected two states' CPSA was their statutes. Missouri's CPSA statutes used *facts* by *(f = 979)* occurrences compared to South Carolina's CPSA *(f = 474)*, a difference of more than a 2 to 1 ratio *(f = 505)*. Missouri used *facts* more in their statutes *(f = 979)* compared to their policies *(f = 169)* and publications *(f = 107)*. Missouri's CPSA social workers used *facts (f = 1,255)* during their investigations and justification with moving forward with a case:

> In reviewing prior reports, staff shall examine what events were reported
>
> in the past, what response the agency had (Was the report found "Probable
>
> Cause" or "Preponderance of Evidence?" Were Family-Centered Services
>
> provided? What was the outcome of these services? etc.), as well as who
>
> was involved in prior reports (Missouri, 2013c, p. 7).

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA used facts (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))* to justify rules, actions, gain compliance, analyze, and draw conclusions in attempting to create permanency for foster care children. I present policy construct rights in the next section.

      Rights. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications fourth policy construct explored was *rights.* The *rights* (Missouri *(f = 3,610)*; South Carolina *(f = 4,198))* parent code category had four child codes: *provider rights* (Missouri *(f = 350)*; South Carolina *(f = 448))*, *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))*, *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))*, and *termination of parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 303)*; see Table 6). Table 6 results indicated Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications *parental rights (f = 2,465)* occurrences were almost 5 times higher than *children's rights (f = 516)* occurrences, seven times higher than *provider rights (f = 350)*, and more than eight and a half times higher than *termination of parental rights (f = 279)*. "Birth parent(s) have the right to services from the agency directed toward preservation of the family as a unit and avoidance of foster care if at all possible" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 3).

      While South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications indicated *parental rights (f = 2,425)* occurrences were more than two times higher than *children's rights (f = 1,022)* occurrences, four times higher than *termination of parental rights (f = 603)*, and more than 5 times higher than *provider rights ((f = 448)*; see Table 6).

Children have the right to permanency through adoption on a timely basis.

The Department will not delay or deny a decision to seek termination of

parental rights or otherwise to free a child for adoption on the basis of

race, color, or national origin nor delay or deny an adoptive placement on

the basis of race, color, or national origin of the foster/adoptive parent or

the child." (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 7).

In addition to children and parental rights codes, I coded for the family. I did this because the child and parents combined make the family unit. Missouri's CPSA (family *(f = 14,317)*; statutes *(f = 1,452)*; policies *(f = 11,989)*; publications *(f = 876)*) occurrences overall were similar to South Carolina's CPSA (family *(f = 14,469)*; statutes *(f = 2,100)*; policies *(f = 6,953)*; publications *(f = 5,416)*; see Appendix F). Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research documents focused primarily on the parental rights (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425)*)) and the family unit (Missouri *(f = 14,317)*; South Carolina *(f = 14,469)*)) versus children's rights (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)*)). Allegedly the states' CPSA focus was the safety, well-being, and permanency of the abused and neglected children, but the results of this study indicated the focus was their abusive and neglectful parents and keeping the family unit together, not the rights of the abused and neglected children.

Table 6 results indicated Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications focused more on *parental rights (f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights (f = 516)*; *provider rights (f = 350)* and *termination of parental rights (f = 279)*. Similarly, South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications focused more on *parental rights*

child code *(f=2,425)* compared to *children's rights (f = 1,022), provider rights (f = 448)* and *termination of parental rights (f = 603)*.

Table 6

Policy Construct Rights Frequency Occurrences

	Parental Rights		Children's Rights		Provider Rights		Termination of Parental Rights	
	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC
Statutes	318	597	79	195	61	147	46	137
Policies	2,028	574	348	330	255	191	226	378
Publications	119	1,254	89	497	34	110	7	88
Total	2,465	2,425	516	1,022	350	448	279	303

When reviewing the literature before coding it, the literature alluded that *children's rights* or the best interest of the children trumped *parental rights*; like a smoking mirror.

The purpose of this article is to establish fair and reasonable procedures for the adoption of children and to provide for the well-being of the child, with full recognition of the interdependent needs and interests of the biological parents and the adoptive parents, however, when the interests of a child and an adult are in conflict, the conflict must be resolved in favor of the child. Children may be adopted by or placed for adoption with residents of South Carolina only, except in unusual or exceptional circumstances (South Carolina 2013d, p. 1).

Missouri's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 68% *(f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights* by 14% *(f = 516)*, while South Carolina's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 54%

(f = 2,425) than children's rights by 23% *((f = 1,022)*; see Table 6). I present policy construct powers in the next section.

Powers. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications fifth policy construct explored was *powers*. Table 7 results indicated *powers* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021))* parent code occurrences had three child codes: [general] *powers* (Missouri *(f = 1,128)*; South Carolina *(f = 575))*, *fixed powers* (Missouri *(f = 263)*; South Carolina *(f = 68))*, and *flexible powers* (Missouri *(f = 488)*; South Carolina *(f = 378))*. Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications indicated [general] *powers (f = 1,128)* occurrences were more than two times higher than *flexible powers (f = 488)*, and four times higher than *fixed powers ((f = 263)*; see Table 7). While South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications indicated [general] *powers (f = 575)* occurrences were one and a half times higher than *flexible powers (f = 378)*, and more than eight times higher than *fixed powers ((f = 68)*; see Table 7).

Table 7

Policy Construct Powers Frequency Occurrences

	Powers		Fixed Powers		Flexible Powers	
	MO	SC	MO	SC	MO	SC
Statutes	289	209	72	33	192	131
Policies	777	131	178	16	271	115
Publications	62	235	13	19	25	132
Total	1,128	575	263	68	488	378

Overall, Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used [general] *powers (f = 1,128)* occurrences compared to *flexible powers 26% (f = 488)* and *fixed powers 14% ((f = 263)*; see Table 7). Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies,

and publications used [general] *powers* child code by *56 % (f = 575)* compared to *flexible powers 37% (f = 378)* and *fixed powers 7% ((f = 68)*; see Table 7). Missouri's CPSA *money* (Missouri *(f = 8,370)*; South Carolina *(f = 7,643))* focus was not a policy construct but appeared to contribute to Missouri's CPSA power (see Appendix F). Money can be a form of *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,391)*; South Carolina *(f = 643))* used to manipulate or control others (see Appendix F). Authority and decision-making is another form of power (Stone, 2012). South Carolina used third parties in the decision-making process.

> Family involvement and shared or team decision-making is absolutely
>
> vital in evaluating the need to place a child in foster care, planning with
>
> families for a child's placement, the decision to return a child to the
>
> child's family; and implementing and achieving a permanent plan other
>
> than return home (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 8).

Missouri's CPSA used [general] *powers 60% (f = 1,128)* compared to South Carolina's CPSA *56% (f = 575)*, a difference of *(f = 553), a 2 to 1 ratio* (see Table 7).

> The nature of the investigation and intervention in family life can create an
>
> adversary relationship between the worker and the family. The worker
>
> must be mindful that attempts to discuss problems and concerns with the
>
> family will be difficult and will be met with some resistance (Missouri,
>
> 2014b, p. 159).

> ***Policy Constructs Overviews.*** This study examined two states' CPSA publicly

available documents using Stone's (2012) policy constructs as the theoretical lens. The policy constructs were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. Stone recommended

deconstruction of policies using her five-policy constructs as strategies to identify the subliminal focus of the public documents. Stone's policy constructs were used to deconstruct the two selected states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis approach.

Stone's (2012) policy constructs indicated that the selected two states' CPSA research documents had a similar agreement in four areas: *rules*, *facts*, *rights, and powers*. The two states differed in *incentives* and *permanency* focus in statues, policies, and publications categories. Two states differed in their application of the policy constructs. Missouri's CPSA permanency focused primarily on their policies and very little in publications. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA focused on a balanced approach in all three areas, with a greater emphasis on publications.

Incentives are powerful policy strategy in creating change via the use of enticements, punishments, rules, and powers. Policy construct incentives used enticements or punishment to change behaviors or exert power over others for the purpose of enforcement using rules and powers (Stone, 2012) Table 3 results indicated that South Carolina's CPSA used a slightly off-balanced approach between *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)*, while Missouri's CPSA used an overwhelming amount of *enticements (f = 1,022)* compared to *punishments (f = 174)*.

The analysis demonstrated that both Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications supported and used *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* to motivate or force families into compliance via incentives and powers. South Carolina's CPSA placed a higher emphases on *rules* (Missouri *(f =*

17,199); South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* occurrences than Missouri's CPSA, a difference of *((f = 2,521)*; see Table 4). *Rules* dominated Missouri's CPSA policies *(f = 10,083)* compared to their statutes *(f = 1,738)* and publications *(f = 766)*. Where South Carolina's CPSA took a slightly off balanced approach using rules in their policies (f = 5,877) compared to statutes (f = 3,384) and publications (f = 4,338).

To gain voluntary compliance, acceptance, or support, the two states' CPSA used facts to target their audiences. Table 4 results indicated the two selected states' CPSA used *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))* policy constructs differed in their statutes. Missouri's CPSA policies used *facts 78% (f = 979)* of the time compared to South Carolina's CPSA *48%* facts *((f = 474)*; *see Table 4).* Missouri's CPSA statutes used *facts* by *(f = 979)* occurrences compared to South Carolina's CPSA *(f = 474)*, a difference of more than a 2 to 1 ratio *(f = 505)*. Missouri's CPSA social workers used *facts (f = 1,255)* to substantiate their findings and justifications for their actions (see Table 4). Governments use facts and rights to invoke the power of others on behalf of enforcing the rules (Stone, 2012).

Stone (2012) asserted that rights establish rules to influence or change behavior to resolve conflicts or challenges. Parental and children's rights are challenges that social workers have to find some balanced approach in their duties. Table 5 results indicated Missouri's CPSA research documents focused on *parental rights (f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights (f = 516), provider rights (f = 350),* and *termination of parental rights (f = 279).* Where South Carolina's CPSA research documents focused more on *parental*

rights child code (*f=2,425*) compared to *children's rights (f = 1,022), provider rights (f = 448),* and *termination of parental rights (f = 603)*.

When reviewing the research documents, it suggested that *children's rights* or the best interest of the children trumped *parental rights*; like a smoking mirror. Missouri's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 68% *(f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights* by 14% *(f = 516)*, while South Carolina's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 54% *(f = 2,425) than children's rights* by 23% *((f = 1,022)*; see Table 5). The states' CPSA used rights to exert the power of parental rights over children's rights to influence or change behaviors of the parents via incentives and rules was a form of control (Stone, 2012).

Missouri's CPSA research documents used [general] *powers (f = 1,128)* occurrences compared to *flexible powers 26% (f = 488)* and *fixed powers 14% ((f = 263)*; see Table 6). Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used [general] *powers* occurrences by *56 % (f = 575)* compared to *flexible powers 37% (f = 378)* and *fixed powers 7% ((f = 68)*; see Table 6). South Carolina used third parties in the decision-making process removing authoritative power from them (South Carolina, 2011b). While Missouri's CPSA used [general] *powers 60% (f = 1,128)* compared to South Carolina's CPSA *56% (f = 575)*, a difference of *(f = 553), a 2 to 1 ratio* (see Table 6).

South Carolina's CPSA statues, policies, and publications used a slightly off-balanced approach in the policy constructs application, including the use of enticements and punishments (see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA research documents used enticements at *56% (f = 674)* occurrences compared to punishments *44% (f = 527)*

occurrences results indicated the importance of a balanced approach (see Table 2). South

Carolina's CPSA research documents were not lenient with the use of punishment *(f =*

527) in holding parents or caregivers accountable in contrast to Missouri's CPSA *(f =*

174). Missouri tried to soften punishment *(f = 174)* impacts by lessening the negative

aspect. I present the two selected states' CPSA cluster analyses in the next section. The

cluster analysis allows for visualization of alignment and connections or misalignments

and disconnections between the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publication. I

present the cluster analysis for both states in the next section.

Cluster Analysis

I used a computerized data management software to manage and organize

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research documents in this study. I created cluster

analysis circle graphs to reveal similarities and differences between code categories.

Missouri's CPSA cluster analysis circle graph (see Figure 1) revealed disconnects. The

cluster analysis in Figure 1 depicted a circle graph that visualized Missouri's codes based

on the degree of similarities between selected points on the graph using connection lines.

The circle graph depicted dissimilarities between code categories set apart from the rest

of the code categories (QRS International, 2015).

Missouri's CPSA research documents cluster analysis implied a high amount of

disconnects between code categories throughout the spectrum (see Figure 1). The left

side of the spectrum depicted a semi-saturation of connections between code categories.

The right side of the spectrum depicted disconnections between code categories, such as

congregate, group or respite care (f = 1,341), *emancipation enticement (f = 424)*, *facts (f*

= 1,255), family preservation-reunification (f = 295), fixed power (f = 263), flexible

power (f = 488), guardianship (f = 1,191), incentives (f = 1,196), intensive wraparound

(f = 175), kinship care (f = 254), long-term foster care (f = 39), power (f = 1,128),

punishments (f = 174), provider rights (f = 350), and *mandates ((f = 144)*; see Appendix

F). Figure 1 results indicated a higher proportion of disconnects between code categories

on the right side of the spectrum compared to the left side. Comparing Missouri's CPSA

circle graph (see Figure 1) to South Carolina's CPSA circle graph (see Figure 2), it

showed a significant difference in connections and saturation of the graph between code

categories.
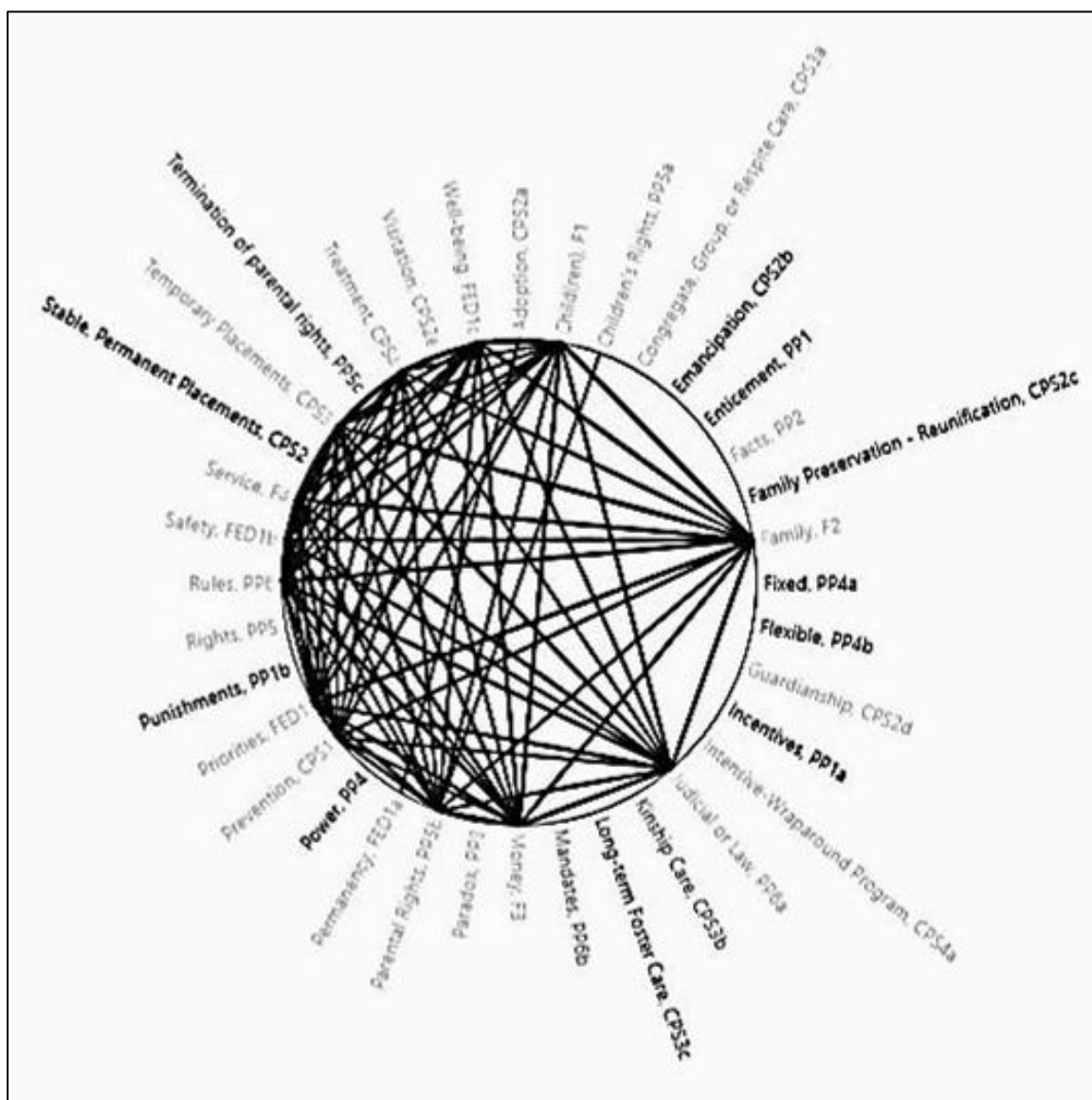
Figure 1. Circle graph cluster analysis of Missouri CPSA coding categories.

South Carolina's CPSA research documents developed cluster analysis circle graph appeared to indicate an alignment between most code categories (see Figure 2). Figure 2 depicted a circle graph that visualized South Carolina's code categories based on the degree of similarities and connections between selected points on the graph using connection lines. The circle graph depicted dissimilar categories set apart from the rest of the code categories as represented in Missouri's CPSA Figure 1 (QRS International, 2015). Figure 2 implied South Carolina's CPSA had strong connections between most categories throughout the spectrum. There were four categories with disconnections on the circle graph, such as *enticements (f = 676)*, *kinship care (f = 149)*, *long-term care (f = 54)* and *mandates ((f = 171)*; see Appendix F). The circle graph connections between categories appeared to imply connections and alignments between South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications (see Figure 2).

The fullness of the spectrum implied a system that was working, although not perfect. Comparing Missouri's CPSA circle graph (see Figure 1) to South Carolina's CPSA circle graph (see Figure 2) indicated differences in connections indicating South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications connections were similar and aligned for the most part compared to Missouri's CPSA indicated fewer connections and similarities. South Carolina's CPSA cluster analyses depicted connections and similarities between their statutes, policies, and publications. South Carolina's CPSA cluster analysis circle graph represents a heavily saturated circle graph (see Figure 2).
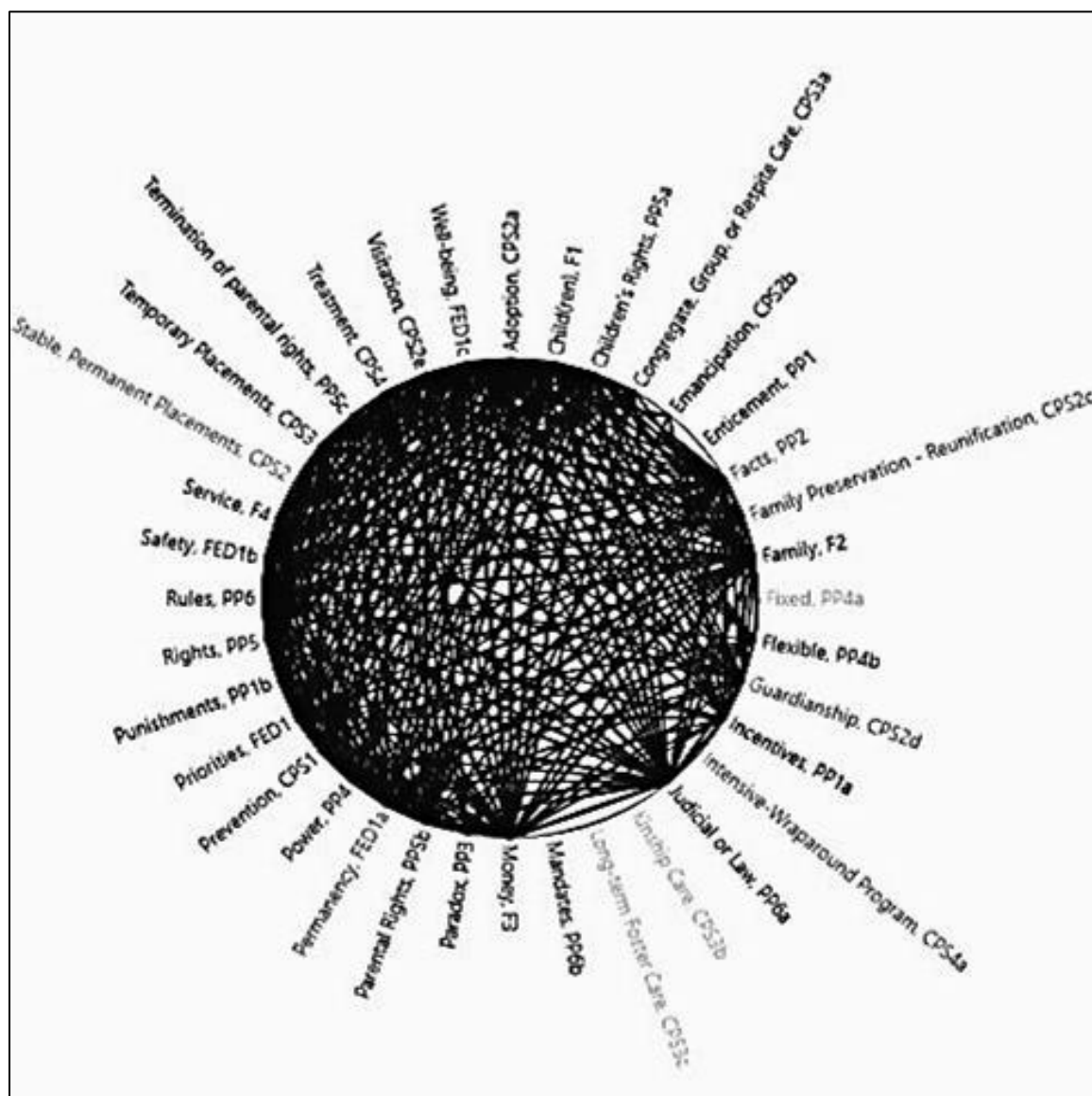
Figure 2. Circle graph cluster analysis of South Carolina CPSA coding categories.

When comparing Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA circle graphs, the graphs appeared to imply significant differences in permanency alignments and connections between code categories. Missouri's CPSA circle graph indicated permanency misalignments and disconnections within the code categories (see Figure 1). In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA circle graph indicated permanency alignment and connections within their code categories (see Figure 2). Missouri's CPSA circle graph indicated emerge patterns that implied to an environment of permanency disconnections between categories. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA circle graph depicted similarities and patterns that appeared to imply an environment of permanency connections and alignments in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. I summarize the results of my study in the next section.

Summary

The results of this study brought knowledge, clarification, and awareness of the challenges surrounding the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The central research question addressed by this study was: How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the success or failure of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? In order to answer this question, I analyzed Missouri's and South Carolina's CPS statutes, policies, and publications to assess their similarities and differences and their implications on permanency for foster care children. The states selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. The emerged patterns and themes that

evolved from the theoretical lens exploration using Stone's (2012) policy constructs and cluster analyses agreed that achievable permanency occurs when there is a balanced and aligned approach between policy constructs and research documents to establish permanency for foster care children and promoting their program to establish outside resources.

This study used computerized data management software to assist in the managing, organizing, and coding process. I prepared and analyzed the selected two states' CPSA research documents using developed themes, policy construct frequencies, and cluster analyses of the data. The cluster analyses appeared to visualize the selected two states' CPSA research documents similarities and differences suggesting to overall outcomes and success of their programs (see Figures 1 & 2). Missouri's CPSA research documents appeared to demonstrate their inability via disconnections to create stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Figure 1).

In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA research documents appeared to demonstrate success at promoting stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Figure 2). The selected two states' CPSA circle graphs visualized their alignment indicating the success or failure at achieving stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Figure 1 appeared to indicate that Missouri's CPSA research documents disconnections and struggles in creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Figures 1 and 2 cluster analyses agreed with the preliminary findings that South Carolina was successful in reducing their foster cost population, while Missouri was not (see Appendix

C). The deconstruction of the selected two states' CPSA research documents used the policy constructs to assist in determining the true focus of the documents.

I used Stone's (2012) policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers as its theoretical lens to examine Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications for this study. Using Stone'S policy constructs and cluster analysis to examine the research data, two themes emerged in response to the central research question: How do the policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contribute to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children? To answer the research questions, I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that may promote or negate permanency for foster care children. The states selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014.

In the results of Table 1, I discuss how it indicated that Theme 1 *permanency* was achievable by using concurrent and paradoxical plans to motivate or force parents/caregivers into compliance by focusing on their needs, and at the same time, started the process to *terminate their parental rights* in order to establish stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Where Theme 2 indicated that *permanency* for foster care children was achievable by using available outside resources to assist with creating stable, permanent placements for the foster care children. The two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications approach on achieving *permanency* occurrences varied (see Table 1).

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications in

Theme 1 indicated the frequency occurrences were nearly a 2 to 1 difference. Missouri's

CPSA statutes, policies, and publications indicated Theme 1 *(f = 861)* occurrences were

almost half compared to South Carolina's CPSA Theme 1 *(f = 1,589)* occurrences, a

difference of (f = *728)* occurrences. Statutes and policies showed a slight advantage in

Missouri's CPSA *(f = 798)* occurrences compared to South Carolina's CPSA *(f = 693*)

occurrences. South Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 896)* occurrences were more than

14 times higher in growth compared to Missouri's CPSA publication *(f = 63)* occurrences

(see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA research documents put a greater emphasis on

permanency occurrences in their publications possibly due to promoting and attempting

to bring awareness to their CPSA program to develop new outside resources.

In addition, Table 1 indicated that Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA

statutes, policies, and publications Theme 2 outside resources occurrence were almost

equal in occurrences *(f = 1,493)* to *(f = 1,494)* a difference of one.

> [The] Policy stresses that collaborative efforts with community-based
>
> prevention services have been shown to increase the families' engagement
>
> with services. This method also involves the community's assistance in
>
> meeting families' service needs resulting in long-term improvements in
>
> the safety, stability, and well-being of children (South Carolina, 2010a, p.
>
> 9).

According to Missouri's CPSA *Child Welfare Manual*, their focus was to "develop and

sustain collaborative relationships with other members of the community to promote and

support a community-based response to the protection of children" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 15). After reviewing the research documents similarities and differences, Missouri's CPSA research documents put more importance on policies. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA research documents put a higher importance on a balanced approach between categories. Both themes indicated that South Carolina's CPSA puts importance on publications, while Missouri importance was on policies (see Table 1).

Stone's (2012) policy constructs indicated that the selected two states' CPSA research documents, for the most part, agreed in four areas: *rules*, *facts, rights, and powers*. The two states' CPSA research documents differed in *incentives* child codes enticements (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* and *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527))* and Theme 1 (Missouri *(f = 861)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,589))* and Theme 2 (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494))*. Missouri's CPSA focused on policies, while South Carolina's CPSA focused on a balanced approach, with heightened emphases on publications. A major difference between the selected two states was incentives. Table 3 results indicated that South Carolina's CPSA research documents used a balanced approach between *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)*, while Missouri's CPSA used *enticements (f = 1,022)* at higher ratio compared to *punishments (f = 174)*. The two selected states' CPSA research documents appeared to suggest that they supported and used *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* to motivate or force compliance via incentives and powers (see Table 4). *Rules* dominated Missouri's CPSA policies *(f = 10,083)* compared to their statutes *(f = 1,738)* and publications *(f = 766)*. Where South Carolina's CPSA took a

slightly off balanced approach using rules in their policies *(f = 5,877)* compared to statutes *(f = 3,384)* and publications *(f = 4,338)*.

To gain voluntary compliance, acceptance, or support from parents or caregivers, the two states' CPSA used facts to target their audiences. Table 4 results indicated the two selected states' CPSA used *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))* policy constructs differed in their statutes *(see Table 4)*. Missouri's CPSA social workers used *facts (f = 1,255)* to substantiate their findings and justifications for their actions (see Table 4). Facts and rights invoke power onto others by enforcing the rules (Stone, 2012). Parental rights and children's rights are challenges that social workers have to resolve in order to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The results of Table 5 indicated Missouri's CPSA research documents focused on *parental rights (f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights (f = 516)*. Where South Carolina's CPSA research documents focused on *parental rights (f = 2,425)* compared to *children's rights (f = 1,022)*.

The research documents appeared to indicate that *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)* were more important than *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))*); however, after using Stone's (2012) policy constructs to determine the unintentional focus of the selected two states' CPSA research documents, the findings indicated that parental rights were dominate. Missouri's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 68% *(f = 2,465)* compared to *children's rights* by 14% *(f = 516)*, while South Carolina's CPSA supported *parental rights* by 54% *(f = 2,425) than*

children's rights by 23% *((f = 1,022)*; see Table 5). The states' CPSA used rights to exert the power of parental rights over children's rights.

Missouri's CPSA research documents used [general] *powers* 60% *(f = 1,128)* occurrences compared to *flexible powers 26% (f = 488)* and *fixed powers 14% ((f = 263)*; see Table 6). Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used [general] *powers* occurrences by *56 % (f = 575)* compared to *flexible powers 37% (f = 378)* and *fixed powers 7% ((f = 68)*; see Table 6). South Carolina used third parties in the decision-making process regarding stable, permanent placements and other matters to remove the power from one person or organization instead granting the authority to a group of diverse individuals with different expertise (South Carolina, 2011b).

Overall, South Carolina's CPSA research documents results indicated the use of enticements at *56% (f = 674)* occurrences compared to *punishments* 44% *(f = 527),* a balanced approach (see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA research documents were not lenient with the use of *punishment (f = 527)* in holding parents or caregivers accountable in contrast to Missouri's CPSA. Missouri's CPSA tried to soften *punishment (f = 174)* impacts by lessening the negative aspect of parental accountability. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA cluster analyses allowed for visualization of alignments and connections between code categories within the statutes, policies, and publications (see Figures 1 & 2). The results of Figure 1 implied permanency misalignments or disconnections between Missouri's CPSA categories. In contrast to Missouri's CPSA Figure 1, the results of Figure 2 implied permanency alignments and connections between South Carolina's CPSA categories.

The application of the developed two themes, cluster analyses, and the policy constructs deconstruction of the selected two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications appeared to indicate their ability to promote or negate at establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children outcomes. The policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers deconstruction indicated a possible contribution to the challenges for Missouri's CPSA and the successes of South Carolina's CPSA in establishing and promoting permanency for foster care children. The cluster analyses alluded to Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications struggle with creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA research documents cluster analyses alluded to their success at creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Figures 1 & 2).

Missouri's CPSA research documents indicated a struggle that contributes to a high emphasis on using enticements *(f = 1,022)* compared to punishments *(f = 174)* that hold parents/caregivers accountable (see Table 2). In addition, Theme 1 *(f = 861)* all categories, and Theme 2 *(f = 86)* publications results appeared to indicate that Missouri's CPSA publications lack of promoting permanency in their program appeared to contribute to their challenges of establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children and establishing outside resources. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA research documents indicated connectives that contribute to a balanced emphasis using *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)* in creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Table 2). In addition, South Carolina's CPSA Theme 2 publications *(f = 849)* appeared to indicate a high emphasis in promoting their program to

develop outside resources. The results of Table 1 indicated Theme 1 (Missouri *(f = 861)*;

South Carolina *(f = 1,589))* was almost a 2 to 1 ratio difference between the two states'

CPSA permanency focus. Likewise, the use of publications in Theme 2 (Missouri *(f =*

86); South Carolina *(f = 849))* were significant differences between Missouri's and South

Carolina's CPSA research documents (see Table 1). Missouri's and South Carolina's

CPSA used publications to attract foster care parents, adoptive parents, and develop

community resources, which were key elements of creating stable, permanent placements

for foster care children.

    This research brings clarification and knowledge of two states' CPSA statutes,

policies, and publications. The study's findings may open new opportunities for

legislators' and advocates' to assist states' CPSA that are struggling with stable,

permanent placements for foster care children by creating awareness for social change in

reducing the foster care population. I present an overview, interpretation of the findings,

implications for possible social change, recommended action, and reflection of my

experiences as a researcher of this study in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose that I selected for this study was to determine how policy constructs of incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers contributed to the possible outcomes of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA in promoting permanency for foster care children. To answer the research question, I examined the similarities and differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications that impacted permanency for foster care children. Based on HHS's (2016) most and least improved foster care population rankings for states' CPSA, historical data, and other factors detained in Chapter 3, I selected Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA for inclusion in my study. The foster care population data I used (see Appendix C) was for the most available recent years, 2011 to 2014.

I analyzed the two states' CPSA research documents by working inductively on the research data to detect inferences, patterns, and themes embedded within the data to formulate and develop general conclusions for the two states in this study (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2016; Stuart et al., 2014). Analysis of Missouri's CPSA research documents indicated that challenges in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children were twofold. First, Missouri's CPSA research documents indicated challenges with the use of *incentives (f = 1,196)* that contributed to the high use of *enticements (f = 1,022)* to gain influence over parents/caregivers.

Comparing Missouri's CPSA incentives (f = 1,196) to *punishments (f = 174)* that held parents/caregivers accountable in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children indicated additional accountability challenges (see Table 2). Second,

Missouri's CPSA Theme 2 publications *(f = 86)* indicated that the lack of promoting its

foster care program contributed to challenges in establishing stable, permanent

placements for foster care children (see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA research

documents indicated success with agency's balanced approach use of *incentives (f =*

1,203) to influence compliance and *punishments (f = 527)* that held parents/caregivers

accountable (see Table 2). Also, the results of South Carolina's CPSA Theme 2

publications *(f = 849)* appeared to indicate a high emphasis on permanency in promoting

its program.

      Stone (2012) suggested that lobbying a target audience by using facts to promote

its focal cause is strategically astute. The results of Theme 2 indicate that South

Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 849)* targeted audiences through a focus on

recruitment of foster care and adoptive parents and acquiring outside resources to assist

with establishing permanency, which was in agreement with Stone's (2012) policy

paradox theoretical theory. In contrast, I found that Missouri's CPSA research documents

used *facts (f = 979)* primarily in policies related to the use of *enticements (f = 1,022)*

intended to change the behaviors of parents, caregivers, foster care parents, and social

workers (see Tables 2 & 5). According to Stone (2012), the overuse of *enticements* or

punishment does not produce long-term changes. Stone's facts are powerful strategy tools

used to influence and manipulate the targeted audience to resolve challenges. According

to Stone, facts influence the target audience's mind and perception gaining their

voluntary compliance or acceptance. The use of Stone's policy constructs by the selected

two states' CPSA research documents correlates to the theoretical framework as described in this section.

The results of this study indicated that the use of *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* and the publications of Theme 2 (Missouri *(f = 86)*; South Carolina *(f = 849))* were significant differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research documents in establishing permanency (see Tables 1 & 2). Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA uses publications tools to attract foster care parents, adoptive parents, and possibly community resources and are key elements of creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Both states' CPSA were similar in occurrences.

South Carolina's CPSA research documents put a higher importance on permanency as evidence in Theme 1 *(f = 1,589)* and Theme 2 *(f = 1,494)* using an overall balanced approach (see Table 1). When holding parents accountable, an importance balanced between enticements *(f = 674)* and punishments *(f = 527)* was placed on South Carolina's CPSA research documents (see Table 2). In contrast, Missouri's CPSA placed the importance on permanency in Themes 1 and 2 (Theme 1 *(f = 861)*; Theme 2 *(f = 1,493))*, the primary importance for Themes 1 and 2 were policy (Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Theme 2 *(f = 1,179))* categories (see Table 1). The importance on holding parents accountable differed from South Carolina's CPSA's balanced approach the research documents of Missouri's CPSA put the importance on enticements *(f = 1,022)* rather than punishments *((f = 174)*; see Table 2). I present the interpretation of the findings in the

next section. Also, I compare my findings to Stone's (2012) theoretical framework and peer-reviewed literature.

Interpretation of the Findings

The permanency findings that emerged from my anlysis of this study correlates to the relevant theoretical framework and literature identified and discussed in Chapter 2. I used Stone's (2012) policy constructs to examine Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis approach in this study. The key policy constructs of the theory were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. The two states' differed in four areas: *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* versus *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527))*, *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))*, *powers* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021))* and permanency focus in policies (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179))* versus publications (South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849)*; see Tables 1, 2, 5 & 7). These findings indicated the importance of a balanced approach using *incentives* (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201))*, and Theme 1 (Missouri *(f = 861)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,589))* focus on concurrent paradoxical permanency plans and Theme 2 (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494))* focus on permanency in their publications (Missouri *(f = 86)*; South Carolina *(f = 849))* to promote their program to recruit foster care families, adoptive parents, and outside resources (see Tables 1 & 2).

When comparing the developed two themes in response to the research question, there were differences in the research documents focus. Table 1 results indicated that

Missouri's CPSA research documents Theme 1 permanency occurrences focused on *11% (f = 92)* statutes, *82% (f = 706)* policies, and *7% (f = 63)* publications. In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA research documents Theme 1 concurrent permanency plans focused on *4% (f = 63)* statutes, *40% (f = 630)* policies, and *56% (f = 896)* publications (see Table 1). Table 1 results indicated Missouri's CPSA research documents Theme 2 permanency occurrences focused on *15% (f = 228)* statutes, *79% (f = 1,179)* policies, and *6% (f = 86)* publications. While South Carolina's CPSA research documents Theme 2 permanency occurrences focused on *18% (f = 272)* statutes, *25% (f = 373)* policies, and *57% (f = 849)* publications (see Table 1). In both comparisons, South Carolina's CPSA research documents permanency focused *57% (f = 849)* of their occurrences on publications, while Missouri focused more than *79% (f = 1,179)* of their permanency occurrences on policies (see Table 1). This finding alluded to the challenges faced by Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publication in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

Stone's (2012) policy paradox elaborated that an environment that consistently rewards or forces behavior change via incentives will only work as long as the incentives are available. She explained *that incentives* change behaviors or exert power over others to force behavioral changes (Stone). Missouri's CPSA research documents overused *incentives (f = 1,196)* in the form of enticements *(f = 1,022)* created challenges in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. If CPSA social workers predominately used *enticements* or *punishments* to gain influence or compliance, challenges would arise in creating permanent, positive changes (Stone). The findings of

this study confirmed that Missouri's CPSA research documents overuse of *enticements (f = 1,022)* was not working in sustaining lasting and permanent change for foster care children. Missouri's CPSA hindered their efforts in creating stable, permanent placements with an overuse of *enticements (f = 1,022)* compared to *punishments (f = 174)*. Whereas, South Carolina's CPSA slightly off-balanced approach with the use of *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)* has successfully improved their foster care population rates for the most recent available years (see Table 2).

After reviewing Missouri's CPSA policies, it became apparent that there were errors and duplications, which could lead to confusion (Missouri, 2014b). This confusion may lead to disconnects as reflected in the cluster analyses (see Figure 1). The second reason Missouri's CPSA Theme 2 publications indicated challenges was the lack of promoting permanency in their program appeared to contribute to issues in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Publications used by governments to promote their program successes and benefits to their targeted audience to gain acceptance and attracted outside resources (Stone, 2012). While Missouri's CPSA indicated challenges, South Carolina's CPSA research documents indicated their ability to achieve permanency using a balanced approach of *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527)* and a high emphasis on promoting permanency in their program through publications (see Table 2). In comparison of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research documents, the use of *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* compared to *punishment* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527))*, Theme 1 (Missouri (f = 861); South Carolina (f = 1,589)) concurrent permanency plans,

and Theme 2 (Missouri (f = 86); South Carolina (f = 849)) publications promoting

permanency in their CPSA program were the significant differences in creating stable,

permanent placement for foster care children (see Tables 1 & 2).

As I discussed in Chapter 2, Cross et al. (2013) study of 61 welfare cases

involving 184 foster care children to determine the reasons for instability in foster care

placements. Cross et al. found 20% of case files indicated unnecessary moves by Illinois'

CPSA and an additional 38% of the placements were temporary movements. Also, the

authors concluded that Illinois' CPSA foster care moves created instabilities especially

placing children in initial temporary placements (Cross et al.). The use of initial

temporary placements is a common practice amongst CPSA when children enter into

foster care. After the initial emergency placement, CPSA moved the children to a

different foster care placement (HHS, 2012). The findings of this study confirmed the use

of *temporary placements* for children (Missouri *(f = 9,867)*; South Carolina *(f = 13,219))*

as a common practice (see Appendix F). Cross et al. indicated the instabilities of

temporary and disruptions in placements were creating instabilities for foster care

children. The selected two states' CPSA appeared to confirm the Cross et al. study on the

prominent use of *temporary placement* (Missouri *(f = 9,867)*; South Carolina *(f =*

13,219)) practices (see Appendix F).

Furthermore, Theme 1 (Missouri *(f = 861)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,589))* confirmed

the selected two state's CPSA research documents continued to use paradoxical solutions

in resolving child abuse and neglect issues, which create conflicts, such as concurrent

permanency plans and the abuser as a means of resolving abuse (see Table 1). South

Carolina's CPSA research documents Theme 1 concurrent permanency plans was almost a 2 to 1 ratio compared to Missouri's CPSA (see Table 1). The results of this agreed with Stone (2012) paradoxical theory that policies solutions focused on two different things simultaneously would create conflicts. Arbeiter and Toros (2017) and Platt (2012) found the application of treatments, recovery efforts, permanent placements, and reunification were complex issues. The Arbeiter and Toros and Platt studies indicated that the lack of recovery focus of abused or neglected children, whether at home or in foster care, was disappointing.

Arbeiter and Toros (2017) qualitative, mixed method study on the extent to how well CPSA social workers work with parents of abused children in foster care, as described in Chapter 2. The exploratory design study analyzed data from interviews for themes. The participants were 11 parents and 11 CPSA social workers. The findings of the study revealed CPSA' policy paradoxes, such as mandated to work and rehabilitation of abusive parents, parent-centered focus, establishing stable, permanent placements, protecting the children, and meet all criteria within 12 months as set forth by federal mandates (Arbeiter and Toros).

The Arbeiter and Toros (2017) and Platt (2012) studies revealed the need for improvements in regards to the primary theme being the parents instead of being the abused children. Social workers resented the fact they were supposed to become the parents' best friend while protecting the abused children from their abusive parents (Arbeiter & Toros). The focus on parental rights dominating Missouri's and South Carolina's research documents. Missouri's CPSA policies had a section on preventing

social workers burn out that focuses on changing attitudes and perspectives of social workers in dealing with abusive and neglectful parents (Missouri, 2014b).

> How And When To Dig An Emotional "Foxhole." Sometimes we are hit from so many pressures and negativity that we need the adult equivalent of Linus' blanket. Here are some suggestions for what to do when the world is coming down on you: 1) imagine yourself in a calm and peaceful place, a mental "Shangri-La." Stay in that place for a while. Imagining a quiet natural scene will reduce your stress significantly; and 2) when it is time to face the real world, do so with affirmations. Say positive things to yourself and about yourself, such as "I can stay calm during stressful situations" (Missouri, 2014b, p. 214).

It appeared that policy paradoxes were the norm within CPSA, which created issues. Arbeiter and Toros (2017) revealed that parents did not want CPSA involved in their lives, which included any resources they had to offer them. Parents felt that social workers were intrusive, controlling, and were not forthright in telling them how to get their children back, while social workers were reluctant in providing this information for fear of manipulations or noncooperation by the parents (Arbeiter & Toros). The Child Welfare Manual of Missouri's CPSA seems to mimic this practice overly using enticements to influence parents to change behaviors; conversely (Missouri, 2014b). While the Child Welfare Manual of South Carolina's CPSA indicates transparency of responsibilities, actions, and benchmarks. Missouri's CPSA attempts to motivate their

social workers negatively. Instead of using positive and successful language like South

Carolina's CPSA, Missouri' CPSA uses negative and defeating language.

> Providing Family-Centered Service is a difficult job. We will never know
>
> everything we would like to know. We will never be able to implement
>
> everything we do know. Although it does get better, there is always the
>
> element of surprise and the risk of the unexpected. The same factors,
>
> which make Family-Centered Service exciting and meaningful also make
>
> it demanding (Missouri, 2014b, p. 212).

According to Missouri's CPSA Child Welfare Manual, it motivates their workers

with the inability to succeed references and "it's okay," support, in contrast

(Missouri, 2014b), South Carolina's CPSA encourages and motivates their

workers to reach new heights of success, (South Carolina, 2013c).

South Carolina's CPSA publications indicate a continuous effort to create

positive, supportive, innovative, and best practices, as well as improvement strategies to

develop outside resources to assist with establishing stable, permanent placements for

foster care children (South Carolina, 2013c). The state's CPSA holds weekly meetings

that focus on creating an environment that promotes improvements by reviewing

permanency data, goals, leadership, and accountability. In addition, the South Carolina's

CPSA holds monthly meetings focus on values, setting goals, conversations about lessons

learned, and best practices to share these ideas and prevent unacceptable practices

throughout the state. This culture change strategy requires participants to look outside the

norm and encourage them to make positive changes (South Carolina).

The meeting recognizes the community of child welfare practitioners for

the following contributions: 1) Create - Aha moments! 2) use your

presence to coax new potentialities from the willing as well as the

unwilling, 3) sign up for homework: learn by trying, 4) make the data

transparent and the process accountable for results. Practitioners can

expect to work to create joint understanding and meaning through

presenting data and information on specific outcomes, develop hypotheses

and strategies, and action steps to affect the specific outcomes and desired

results. Leaders will implement strategies, follow-up on the strategies and

then report back to the participants on the outcomes of those strategies

(South Carolina, 2013c, p. 11).

This study's results appeared to confirm that the selected two states' CPSA

provided treatments for revealed issues only. Research indicated that foster care children

have developmental, educational, emotional, mental, and physical issues related to abuse

and neglect (Pasalich et al., 2016; Villodas et al., 2016). Research indicated that foster

care children appear to recover from abuse and neglect with treatment and stable,

permanent placements. Fawley-King, Trask, and Zhang (2017) acknowledged that

children placed with permanent, stable caregivers would adapt, and the caregivers then

become their new families as if they were kin.

The results of this study confirmed that the selected two states' CPSA had

numerous policy paradoxes that created conflicts and challenges for social workers.

Research indicated that policy paradoxes created battles within CPSA causing struggles

and conflicts (Camasso & Jagannathan, 2013). Social workers struggled with policy

paradoxes, such as concurrent permanency plans, children's rights versus parental rights,

addressing abuse and neglect issues while the children remained with their abusive

custodial or parental caregivers, and protecting children from their abusive custodial or

parental caregivers by removing them from their care and placing them in foster care.

This struggle was a type of power paradox between CPSA and the

parents/caregivers. Stone's (2012) policy paradox power agreed with the findings. Social

workers are those public servants that have oversight of child abuse cases. The social

workers used *incentives* (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201)*) in the form of

enticements (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674)*) and *punishments* (Missouri

(f = 174); South Carolina *(f = 527)*) to influence families to achieve stable, permanent

placements for foster care children (see Table 2). Social workers used *incentives*

(Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201)*) as a form of *power* (Missouri *(f =*

1,879); South Carolina *(f = 1,021)*) that influences parental behavior (Stone; see Tables 1

& 7). If parents adhere, there are positive enticements (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South

Carolina *(f = 674)*), such as visits (Missouri *(f = 729)*; South Carolina *(f = 919)*), and

reunification (Missouri *(f = 295)*; South Carolina *(f = 473)*; see Tables 2 & 3). If parents

refuse or cannot follow the program, there are negative consequences in the form of

punishments (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527)*), such as no visits, supervised

visits, and *parental termination* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 303)*; see Tables

2 & 6).

Stone (2012) indicated policy constructs influence was a type of persuasion tool to gain acceptance and compliance. When children have healthy stable, permanent caregivers, it creates a chain reaction in establishing stable, permanent placements (Pasalich et al., 2016; Villodas et al., 2016). CPSA has to deal with *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* versus *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))*), which creates paradoxes that further aggravates issues and conflicts (see Table 6). The social workers have to find some balance between *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* and *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))* in order to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Table 6). Missouri's CPSA research documents focus rights policy constructs in four areas: provider rights (Missouri *(f = 350)*; South Carolina *(f = 448))*, children's rights (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))*, parental rights (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))*, and termination of parental rights (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 303)*; see Table 6). Stone defined these constructs as policy strategies. CPSA uses policy strategies to find solutions and motivate parents to change negative behaviors. The results indicated that the two states' CPSA research documents actually focus more on *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* compared to *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))* even though the research documents actually state differently (see Table 6).

Social workers dealt with *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* and *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))* policy

paradoxes as they attempted to protect abused children from their abusive parents and at the same time tried to reunite the abused children with their abusive parents (HHS, 2013f; Table 6). *Rights* (Missouri *(f = 3,610)*; South Carolina *(f = 4,198)*) invoked the *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021)*) of an individual, group, or organization by enforcing the *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720)*; Stone, 2012; Tables 4, 6 & 7). The author asserted that *rights* (Missouri *(f = 3,610)*; South Carolina *(f = 4,198)*) establish standards of behavior to resolve conflicts or challenges (see Table 6).

Social workers have to find a balanced approach using *parental* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425)*) and *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)*) policy paradoxes to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Table 6). This research indicated that if parents were incapable or unwilling to take care of or protect their children, states' CPSA have the authority and *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021)*) to intervene and take action to protect the children, which included taking custody of the children (HHS, 2013f; Steinke, 2014; see Table 7). CPSA removed children from parental care due to abandonment, abuse, alcohol, death, drugs, illness, incarceration, mental health, neglect, and physical health (Jackson, Kissoon, & Greene, 2015). When CPSA removed children from their caregivers, displacement occurred by removing them from all social networks and friends, placing them into new, strange environments, such as foster care (DeGarmo et al., 2013). When foster care children experienced the lack of stable, permanent

placements within their lives, it created ongoing development and emotional issues. It is essential that the states' CPSA limited the number of displacements.

Cassidy et al. (2013) study analyzed research reports that studied incarcerated women and their newborn babies. Cassidy et al. study examined the impact on babies bonding with their incarcerated mothers. The authors concluded that initially, the six months bonding between the mothers and their babies were beneficial, however, after six months, CPSA removed the babies creating displacements. According to Stone (2012), this paradox is a dilemma of self-interest versus public interest. Mothers bonding with their babies created positive attachments, which promoted the development and emotional well-being of their babies, however, placing babies with mothers who are unable to keep them long-term created unnecessary displacements and detachment issues for the babies.

The results of the study were policy paradox of *rights* (Missouri *(f = 3,610)*; South Carolina *(f = 4,198)*), *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425)*) versus *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina (*(f = 1,022)*; see Table 6). Coincide with Cassidy et al. (2013) study. The displacement causes developmental and emotional issues for the babies. It appeared that the self-interests of the mothers' relationships with their babies were more important than creating stable, permanent placements for the babies. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research findings agree and coincide with the findings of Cassidy et al. *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425)*) trumps *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)*; see Table 6). By CPSA allowing the Cassidy et al. study to occur,

the agency violated the rights of the babies' (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))*) because the incarcerated mothers were unable to establish permanency promptly, nevertheless, they allowed the babies to participate in the study (see Table 6). Stone (2012) identified paradoxes as two different rights advocating the same right as conflicting ideologies. Cassidy et al study is an example of conflicting ideologies, *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* and *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022))*, which illustrate how *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* are conflicting (see Tables 4 & 6).

As I explained earlier in Chapter 2, the U.S. Constitution does not clearly address *parental* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* or *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)*; see Table 6). The judicial system recognized both *parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 2,465)*; South Carolina *(f = 2,425))* and *children's rights* (Missouri *(f = 516)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,022)*; see Table 6). The judicial system has created paradoxes that can be conflicting at times: parental protection and rights, (Meyer v. State of Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390, (1923); Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510, (1925)), and child protection and rights, *parens patriae* doctrine (Levesque, 2014). The babies in the Cassidy et al. (2013) study experienced displacements, and the best interest of the babies did not trump parental rights, which appeared to be an agreement with the findings of this study that parental rights were a high priority compared to children's rights.

By creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children, the states' CPSA can minimalize the effects that disruption and displacement have on the children.

Research has shown that stable, permanent placements with stable, permanent caregivers can diminish behavioral disorders and attachment difficulties for the foster care children (DeGarmo et al., 2013). When foster care children receive treatments, research has shown that the treatments can have a positive impact on their recovery (Biehal et al., 2015). This Biehal et al. study may indicate that Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA lacks the focus on the recovery of abused and neglected children.

The results of this study indicated an omission of abused and neglected children's recovery efforts from the selected two states' CPSA research documents. Even though treatment efforts affected recovery of the abused and neglected children, the selected two states' CPSA research documents placed little emphases on their recovery. In fact, Missouri's CPSA policies went as far to indicate that treatments were to address the current issues, not the cure (Missouri, 2014b). Research has shown that treatments effectiveness was a means to recovery for abused and neglected children (Biehal et al., 2015). Research showed that creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children was more than just biological connections (Fawley-King et al., 2017). Creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children and focusing on their recovery needs to be a high priority.

Stone's (2012) policy constructs Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications used content analysis to assess the key policy constructs of the theory underlying this study were incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers. Four of Stone's policy constructs indicated similarities when comparing the selected two states' CPSA research documents were rules, facts, rights, and powers as defined in Chapter 4.

The findings that emerged from this study correlates to the relevant literature and

theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2. The two states' CPSA research documents

differed in four areas: *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* versus

punishments (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527))*, *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*;

South Carolina *(f = 989))*, *powers* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021))* and

permanency focus in policies (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f =*

1,179)) versus publications (South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; South Carolina Theme 2

(f = 849); see Tables 1, 2, 5 & 7).

     The developed two themes in response to the central research question continued

to appear in two different categories for the selected two states' CPSA research

documents (see Table 1). The examination of the data revealed that Missouri's CPSA

research documents focused the two themes primarily in their policies (Theme 1 *(f =*

706); Theme 2 *(f = 1,179))*, while South Carolina's research documents focused the two

themes primarily in their publications (Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Theme 2 *(f = 849)*; see Table

1). Theme 2 appeared to indicate Missouri's CPSA publications (Theme 1 *(f = 63)*;

Theme 2 *(f = 86))* lack of promoting permanency in their program as a contributing

factor to their challenges in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care

children (see Table 1). CPSA publications tools attract key stockholders in creating

stable, permanent placements for foster care children, such as potential foster care

parents, adoptive parents, and possibly outside resources.

     Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications identified challenges in

creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children may not be the same as

other states' CPSA. Because of the differences in CPSA nationwide, this may open

opportunities for future research. Nevertheless, Stone's (2012) policy paradox theory and

the literature support the notion that achieving stable, permanent placements for foster

care children is possible. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications

on the states' CPSA by adding to the body of knowledge that may lead or contribute to

social change affecting one of the most vulnerable populations in our society, foster care

children. The findings of this study appeared to indicate that the use of enticements and

publications were the significant differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's

CPSA research documents in establishing permanency. The findings of this study

indicated the challenges of Missouri's CPSA research documents in creating stable,

permanent placements could achieve permanency if they were open to the knowledge

learned from South Carolina's CPSA success at establishing stable, permanent

placements for foster care children.

Limitations of the Study

In this study, I disclosed three limitations. The limitations were my personal

experiences, the research participants were different, and I only researched two states'

CPSA statutes, policies, and publications. The limitations of this study did not change

after the research; there were no surprises. The first limitation was my personal

experience as a foster care child, foster care mother, CASA Advocate, foster care crisis

nursery advocate, and teenage shelter advocate for a non-profit agency. I used reliable,

computerized data management software to minimize biases via the nature of the data

collection and analysis. I used NVivo 11 Pro software to assist me in eliminating biases and following the preset research protocol outlined in Chapter 3.

The second limitation was the research participants were different. The setup of Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications differed, nor did they replicate each other. South Carolina's CPSA research documents appeared to indicate their outcomes by promoting their successes and recognizing their challenges within their programs, which exhibited transparency. While Missouri's CPSA research documents appeared to indicate challenges, the permanency results were limited and not at the level of South Carolina. South Carolina's statutes, policies, and publications were organized and did not duplicate themselves, whereas, Missouri's statutes, policies, and publications were somewhat disorganized and tended to repeat themselves stating the same thing but in different sections.

The Missouri's CPSA *Child Welfare Manual* even indicated previous changes to the data with strikeouts edits as part of their publicly available policies. Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA both self-report to the Federal government and CPSA publications. There was no outside agency to verify the data. If the states were not accurately reporting their data to the federal government or in the CPSA publications, this might alter their outcome data. Also, the states do not share best practices or data with each other, which includes maltreatment that results in fatalities (GAO, 2011b; Falk & Spar, 2014).

The third limitation was the number of research participants. The participates of this study were two states' CPSA. The selected two states' CPSA does not reflect the

entire nation in its research, findings, and conclusions. By looking in depth qualitatively at two states' CPSA research documents via content analysis approach, the findings of this study may create momentum in making changes in states' CPSA struggling with the lack of stable, permanent placements.

In summary, I recognized three limitations to this study; my personal experiences, only examined two research participates, and the research participants were different. If future research selects different states' CPSA, the results may vary. The two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications do not mirror each other due to their interpretation of the federal laws and constructing of policy to meet their jurisdictional needs. Consequently, Missouri's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications identified challenges in creating *stable, permanent placements* for foster care children might not be the same as other states' CPSA. Because of the differences in CPSA nationwide, this may open opportunities for future research. Nevertheless, Stone's (2012) policy paradox theory and the literature support the notion that achieving *stable, permanent placements* for foster care children is possible. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications on the states' CPSA by adding to the body of knowledge that may lead or contribute to social change affecting one of the most vulnerable populations in our society, foster care children.

Recommendations

The scope of the research can be extended to other states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to determine the cause of their lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. The findings of this study were to determine if the selected two

states true focus of its statutes, policies, and publications. I recommend additional

research to look in-depth at other issues, such as abused and neglected children

treatments and recovery efforts. Research indicated limited studies focus on the treatment

and recovery of the abused and neglected children. Research showed detachment

treatments and stable, permanent placements with healthy, positive caregivers were

essential to the well-being of foster care children (Lee, Courtney, & Tajima, 2014).

Foster care children and their families receive limited treatments to recover from abuse

and neglect because of limited and restricted resources. States are financially strapped

and have difficulties in meeting the needs of foster care children and their families' needs

(Godsoe, 2013).

If children exhibit mental, developmental, educational, social, or physical issues,

then children are assessed and possibly receive treatments. There was overwhelming

evidence that indicated abused and neglected children had issues that continued well into

their adulthood, which may be present even if they do not exhibit issues during their

foster care stay. Some states used the intensive/wrap around program to create stable,

permanent placements for foster care children with difficult cases. Research indicated

multiple foster care placements could contribute to the development, mental, social,

educational, and physical well-being of foster care children (Fawley-King, Trask, &

Zhang, 2017). Research indicated CPSA primary focus was the parents and not the

recovery of the abused and neglected children (Arbeiter & Toros, 2017). I recommend

that the process of when abused and neglect children enter the system undergo a

transformation. Instead of placing foster care children with an initial temporary foster

family when they enter the system, and then later move them to multiple temporary foster care placements, why not send them to C.A.M.P.

Children's Assessment and Modification Program (C.A.M.P.) would be an entry-level assessment and modification program that assesses all abused and neglected children for their mental, physical, social, educational, and medical needs by experts in those fields when they enter into the foster care system. C.A.M.P. would then start the treatment process by placing foster care children on the road to recovery and matching them up with a foster care family equipped to handle the needs of the children creating permanency. By matching the children up with families and assessing the needs of the children, this may prevent disruptions in foster care placements creating stability. Stable, permanent placements are important to the well-being of abused and neglected children. When the children are ready to leave C.A.M.P. for a foster care placement, foster care families would be aware and equipped to handle their issues. Assessing the children and matching the children with foster care families, this may assist in reducing disruptions and preventing multiple foster care placements. The foster family can meet the children while at C.A.M.P. and start to build a relationship and repoir with them before their placement.

C.A.M.P. would not be an orphanage, but similar to a real camp atmosphere so the children can receive treatments, and learn how to be children again. Parents could assist with the cost by paying child support to C.A.M.P., or volunteer work to assist with keeping the cost low. The state could redirect the funds for emergency foster care to C.A.M.P. to help pay for the program. Community resources, sponsorships, and

donations can assist with the costs of the program. Research indicated if abused and neglected children receive treatments, it improved their issues and put them on the road to recovery (Lee et al., 2014). C.A.M.P. can assist children in their recovery from abuse and neglect and prevent disruptions in temporary foster care placements creating stability.

Implications

The similarities and differences in both states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were content analyzed to assess for impacts on permanent placements. A computerized data management software was used to manage and organize the data. The two states' differed in 3 policy construct areas of incentives, facts, and powers and their permanency focus in policies and publications. This research may contribute to positive social change by clarifying and increasing stakeholders' and advocates' knowledge of permanency policy implications for foster care placement. With this knowledge, these stakeholders and advocates may be compelled to make policy changes, which may contribute to reducing foster care populations and creating more stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

The clarification and knowledge gained from this study may be the tilting point that creates momentum and social changes in states' CPSA struggling to reduce their foster care populations especially when all states try to adhere to federal laws to obtain federal funds indicated a knowledge gap. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications on the states' CPSA by adding to the body of knowledge that may lead or contribute to social change affecting one of the most vulnerable populations in our society, foster care children. According to Salmona and Kaczynski (2016) and Schreier

(2012), the ability to share and transfer the findings to others is transferability. This type of transferability to other similar organizations may contribute to social change by adding clarification and knowledge of two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications by opening new avenues of understanding among states' CPSA.

The two states' CPSA policy constructs appeared to differ in four areas: *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674)*) versus *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527)*), *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989)*), *powers* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021)*) and permanency focus in policies (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*) versus publications (South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849)*) for Themes 1 and 2 (see Tables 1, 2, 5 & 7). The findings of this study indicated possible reasons for Missouri's CPSA challenges in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Missouri's CPSA research documents indicated a high emphasis on using *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674)*) compared to *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527)*) that hold parents/caregivers accountable, which creates a challenge when attempting to create permanency for foster care children (see Table 2). Stone's (2012) policy paradox elaborated that consistently rewarding or focusing behavior change via *incentives* (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201)*), will only work until the *incentives* cease to exist (see Table 2). *Incentives* (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201)*) change behaviors or exert *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021)*) over others to force behavioral changes via *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina

(f = 674)) or *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527)*; Stone; see

Tables 2 & 7).

An over-emphasis on *incentives* (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f =*

1,201)) negates in establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children. If

CPSA workers use *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* or

punishments (Missouri *(f = 174)*; South Carolina *(f = 527))* only, they will not be

successful in creating long-term positive changes (Stone, 2012; see Table 2). South

Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications allude to a balanced approach using

enticements (f = 674), and *punishment ((f = 527)*; see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA

uses a *56% (f = 674)* to *44% (f = 527)* balanced approach using both *enticements* and

punishment to achieve stable, permanent placements for foster care children appeared to

be an important parameter in South Carolina's CPSA success at establishing permanency

for foster care children (see Table 2). It is necessary for the parents to agree to comply or

accept the changes with an understanding of the facts in order to create lasting change for

abused children.

Table 4 results indicated the two selected states' CPSA used *facts* (Missouri *(f =*

1,255); South Carolina *(f = 989))* policy constructs differed in their statutes. Stone's

(2012) indicated that for government officials to gain voluntary compliance, acceptance,

or support their targeted audience they will need to use facts. By using *facts* (Missouri *(f*

= 1,255); South Carolina *(f = 989))*, and *rights* (Missouri *(f = 3,610)*; South Carolina *(f =*

4,198)) to invoke *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021))* of others on

behalf of enforcing the *rules* (Missouri *(f = 17,199)*; South Carolina *(f = 19,720))* and

changing behaviors (Stone; see Tables 4, 5, 6 & 7). Missouri's CPSA policies used *facts 78% (f = 979)* of the time compared to South Carolina's CPSA *48%* facts ((*f = 474)*; *see Table 4).* Missouri's CPSA statutes used *facts* by *(f = 979)* permanency occurrences compared to South Carolina's CPSA *(f = 474)*, a difference of more than a 2 to 1 ratio ((*f = 505)*; see Table 4). Missouri's CPSA publications (Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; Theme 2 *(f = 86))* appeared to indicate a lack of promoting permanency in their publication that appeared to contribute to their challenges of establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children compared to South Carolina's publications (Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Theme 2 *(f = 849)*; see Table 1). The selected two states' CPSA publications (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849))* were permanency tools used to attract foster care parents, adoptive parents, and outside resources, which were key elements of creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Table 1).

The findings of this study indicated that the research documents for South Carolina's CPSA cluster analysis alignments and saturation between categories, balanced emphasis using *enticements (f = 674)* and *punishments (f = 527),* and Themes 1 and 2 (Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Theme 2 *(f = 849))* focus on concurrent permanency plans and focus on recruiting outside resources in creating permanency for foster care children demonstrated their alleged success (see Figure 1; see Tables 1 & 2). In contrast, Missouri's CPSA challenges appear in their cluster analysis misalignments and lack of connections between categories, focus on using *punishments (f = 174)* versus *enticements (f = 1,022),* and Themes 1 and 2 permanency focus in their publications (Theme 1 *(f =*

63); Theme 2 *(f = 86))* concerning concurrent permanency plans and recruiting outside

resources in creating permanency for foster care children (see Figure 1; see Tables 1 &

2). I review the conclusion of the findings of this study in the next section.

Conclusion

In this study, I focused on the lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care

children. The purpose of this study was to use Stone's (2012) policy constructs of

incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers as its theoretical lens to examine Missouri's

and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to identify themes in

response to the central research question: How does Stone's (2012) policy constructs of

incentives, rules, facts, rights, and powers may have contributed to the two states' CPSA

possible outcomes in creating permanency for foster care children? To answer the

research question, I examined the similarities and differences between the selected two

states' CPSA research documents to explore the impact of permanency for foster care

children. The states selected for analysis regularly increased or decreased their foster care

populations for the most recently available federal fiscal years of 2011 to 2014. The

similarities and differences in both states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications were

content analyzed to assess for impacts on permanent placements. From the exploration of

this study, two themes emerged in response to the research question. The two themes

were as follows:

Theme 1. By using concurrent and paradoxical plans to motivate or force

parents/caregivers into compliance by focusing on their needs, and at the same

time, start the process to terminate their parental rights in order to establish stable,

permanent placements for foster care children (Missouri *(f = 861)*; South Carolina

(f = 1,589)) and

Theme 2. By using available outside resources to assist with creating permanency for the

foster care children (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494)*; see Table

1).

The developed themes emerged from using Stone's (2012) policy constructs, coding

process, and identification of patterns.

Theme 1. Theme 1 results appeared to indicate that South Carolina's CPSA

research documents focused twice as much on concurrent permanency plans in Theme 1

than Missouri's CPSA research documents (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 861)*; South Carolina

Theme 1 *(f = 1,589)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f =

1,494))*. The two states' CPSA Theme 1 statutes *(Missouri (f = 92)*; *South Carolina (f =

63))* and policies *(Missouri (f = 706)*; *South Carolina (f = 630))* concurrent permanent

plan occurrences were somewhat similar (see Table 1). Missouri's and South Carolina's

CPSA Theme 1 concurrent permanent plan occurrences in their publications *(Missouri (f

= 63)*; *South Carolina (f = 896))* were strikingly different (see Table 1). It appeared to

indicate that South Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 896)* focused on promoting

permanency for foster care children in Theme 1 by a 14 to 1 ratio compared to Missouri's

CPSA publication (Missouri *(f = 63)*; see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA workers were

required within the first sixty days to determine if the concurrent permanency plans were

not working and if not working, to create and enact on different permanency plans (South

Carolina, 2011b).

If the parents failed to establish stable, permanency for their children, the social workers were to pursue termination of parental rights within 12 months (South Carolina, 2011b). ASFA, Public Law 105-89 (HHS, 2014) specifically stated 12 months was the limited amount of time before pursuing termination of parental rights. Missouri's CPSA approached in establishing concurrent permanency plans used the exception rule as the norm and even contradicted the ASFA law that the exception rule would be used for years on end to preserve the family unit (Missouri, 2014e).

Theme 2. Theme 2 results indicated that on the surface that Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA research documents appeared almost equal in permanency occurrences (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494)*; see Table 1). Theme 2 appeared to indicate differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA policies (Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 373))* and publications (Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849)*; see Table 1). Theme 2 results indicated that Missouri's CPSA policies *(f = 1,179)* permanency occurrences were three times higher than South Carolina's CPSA policies (*(f = 373)*; see Table 1). In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA publications *(f = 849)* permanency occurrences were nine times higher than Missouri's CPSA publications *(f = 86)* permanency occurrences for Theme 2 (see Table 1). The differences between Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA Theme 2 policies (Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 373))* and publications (Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849))* indicated a pattern pertinent in establishing permanency for foster care children (see Table 1).

The two states' CPSA research documents Theme 1 focused on concurrent permanency plans (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 861)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 1,589))* to establish concurrent permanent plans, while Theme 2 focused on establishing outside resources (Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 1,494))* to assist in creating permanency (see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA held parents accountable with the use of punishments *(f = 527)* compared to Missouri's CPSA punishments *(f = 174)*; see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA research documents put great importance on the publications (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849))* compared to Missouri's CPSA research documents in promoting permanency in their programs (see Table 1). Missouri's CPSA policies (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 630)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 373))* appeared to focus more on requiring social workers to create and maintain outside resources in their policies than assisting with establishing permanency by promoting and recruiting outside resources to assist with the establishment of stable, permanent placements for foster care children compared to South Carolina's CPSA research documents (see Table 1).

Missouri's CPSA research documents Theme 1 recognized the importance of developing and promoting outside resources *(f = 1,493)* to assist with creating stable, permanent placements for foster care children (Missouri, 2014b). Missouri's CPSA outside resources dominated the policies (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 630)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 373))* category but barely used publications (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; South Carolina Theme

1 *(f = 896)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849))* category to assist in creating outside resources for permanency compared to South Carolina's CPSA research documents (see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA research documents had *52% (f = 1,589)* concurrent permanency plan occurrences (statutes *(f = 63)*; policies *(f = 630)*; publications *(f = 896))* in Theme 1 compared to Theme 2 *48% (f = 1,494)* concurrent permanency plan occurrences (statutes *(f = 272)*; policies *(f = 373)*; publications *(f = 849))* to create outside resources to assist with establishing permanency (see Table 1). South Carolina's CPSA research documents promoted and advocated permanency by incorporating all stakeholders into the decision-making permanency process (South Carolina, 2011b, p. 30-31).

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA used publication (Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 63)*; South Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 86)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849))* as tools to recruit foster care parents, adoptive parents, and develop community resources (see Table 1). The selected two states' CPSA research documents used different types of concurrent permanency plans that focus on *stable, permanent placements* (Missouri *(f = 587)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,401))* and *termination of parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 603))* to motivate or force caregivers into compliance to establish permanency for foster care children (see Tables 3 & 6). Table 3 appeared to indicated that Missouri's CPSA research documents were not really focused on *termination of parental rights* (Missouri *(f = 279)*; South Carolina *(f = 603))* compared to South Carolina's CPSA. Likewise, South Carolina's CPSA focused on creating *stable, permanent placements* (Missouri *(f = 587)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,401))*

compared to Missouri's CPSA (see Table 3). When comparing the findings of Tables 2 and 7, it appeared that Missouri's CPSA focus was two policy constructs *power* (Missouri *(f = 1,391)*; South Carolina *(f = 643)*); and *enticements* (Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674)*).

I examined two states' CPSA publicly available documents in this study. Stone (2012) recommended deconstruction of policies to determine their focus. Stone advocated her five-policy constructs as strategies to resolve policy issues. Stone's policy constructs were used to deconstruct Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA statutes, policies, and publications using content analysis approach. The findings of this study indicated that South Carolina's CPSA statues, policies, and publications used a slightly off-balanced approach in the application of Stone's (2012) incentives policy construct, *enticements 56% (f = 674)* and *punishments 44% ((f = 527)*; see Table 2). South Carolina's CPSA research documents held parents or caregivers accountable via punishments *(f = 527)* in contrast to Missouri's CPSA. Missouri tried to soften *punishment* 15% *(f = 174)* impacts by lessening the negative aspect (see Table 2). To visualize the success or failure of the selected states' CPSA, I used cluster analyses. The cluster analysis allowed for visualization of alignments and connections between the two states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publication.

Missouri's and South Carolina's CPSA cluster analysis circle graphs indicated significant differences in alignments and connections (see Figures 1 & 2). Missouri's CPSA cluster analysis circle graph indicated challenges and patterns of disconnections that implied to an environment with lots of challenges in creating permanency for foster

care children (see Figure 1). In contrast, South Carolina's CPSA circle graph indicated

permanency success and connections within their statutes, policies, and publications (see

Figure 2). South Carolina's CPSA cluster analysis circle graphs indicated similarities and

patterns that appeared to imply an environment of connections and alignments in

establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children (see Figure 2).

South Carolina's CPSA seems to be succeeding at reducing their foster care

population while Missouri's CPSA appeared to be struggling in establishing permanency

for foster care children (see Appendix C). The lack of stable, permanent placements for

foster care children could adversely affect their overall well-being (Pasalich et al., 2016).

This study's findings indicated that the two states' differed in four areas: *enticements*

(Missouri *(f = 1,022)*; South Carolina *(f = 674))* versus *punishments* (Missouri *(f = 174)*;

South Carolina *(f = 527))*, *facts* (Missouri *(f = 1,255)*; South Carolina *(f = 989))*, *powers*

(Missouri *(f = 1,879)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,021))* and permanency focus in policies

(Missouri Theme 1 *(f = 706)*; Missouri Theme 2 *(f = 1,179))* versus publications (South

Carolina Theme 1 *(f = 896)*; South Carolina Theme 2 *(f = 849)*; see Tables 1, 2, 5 & 7).

These findings of the study indicated the importance of a balanced approach using

incentives (Missouri *(f = 1,196)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,201))*, and Theme 1 (Missouri *(f =*

861); South Carolina *(f = 1,589))* focus on concurrent paradoxical permanency plans and

Theme 2 (Missouri *(f = 1,493)*; South Carolina *(f = 1,494))* focus on permanency in their

publications (Missouri *(f = 86)*; South Carolina *(f = 849)*) to promote their program to

recruit foster care families, adoptive parents, and outside resources (see Tables 1 & 2).

The scope of this research could be extended to other states' CPSA statutes, policies, and publications to determine the cause of their lack of stable, permanent placements for foster care children. Research indicated limited studies focus on the treatment and recovery of the abused and neglected children. The facts of this study confirmed the lack of focus on recovery within the selected two states' CPSA research documents. Research showed detachment treatments and stable, permanent placements with healthy, positive caregivers were essential to the well-being of foster care children (Lee et al., 2014).

When children initially enter into foster care placement, instead of placing them with an initial temporary foster care family, why not send them to Children's Assessment and Modification Program (C.A.M.P.). C.A.M.P. would be an entry-level assessment and modification program that assesses all abused and neglected children for their mental, physical, social, educational, and medical needs by experts in those fields when they enter into the foster care system.

Sometimes disruptions in foster care placements occur due to the foster care children's issues or foster care family ill-equipped to handle the issues (Pasalich et al., 2016). C.A.M.P. would assess the abused and neglected children needs, and place them with a foster care family equipped to handle and meet their needs. Also, the foster care family would visit the children during C.A.M.P. to start to build a repoir with them before their placement. By matching the children up with families and assessing the needs of the children, this may prevent disruptions in foster care placements creating stability. Stable, permanent placements are important to the well-being of abused and

neglected children. I present in details my C.A.M.P. recommendation in the next section of this chapter. Abused and neglected children experiences may be horrendous. Creating a healthy, stable environment with stable caregivers for the abused and neglected children by matching them up with a foster care family equipped to handle their needs may assist in changing their focus to abused children's rights, recovery efforts, preventing disruptions in placements, and establishing stable, permanent placements for foster care children.

The study's findings appeared to indicate that South Carolina's CPSA alleged success was due to their balanced permanency approach in the use of policy constructs including incentives by holding parents accountable, the alignments between their statutes, policies, and publications focusing on permanency to recruit foster care families, adoptive parents, and develop outside resources for their programs. The results indicated that Missouri's CPSA challenges were due to their permanency focus on policies, over usage of enticements, not holding parents accountable, lack of permanency alignment between their statutes, policies, and publications, and not promoting their programs in publications to recruit foster care families, adoptive parents, and develop outside resources for their programs. The findings of this study may open new avenues of knowledge for CPSA agencies who are struggling with the lack of stable, permanent placements. This research has legal, legislative, and advocacy implications on the states' CPSA by adding to the body of knowledge that may lead or contribute to social change affecting one of the most vulnerable populations in our society, foster care children.

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Appendix A: Hierarchical Coding (Tree Coding)

- Child Protective Services, CPS*

    – Prevention, CPS1

    – Stable, Permanent Placements, CPS2*

        - Adoption, CPS2a

        - Emancipation, CPS2b

        - Family Preservation / Reunification, CPS2c*

        - Guardianship, CPS2d

        - Visitation, CPS2e*

    – Temporary Placements, CPS3*

        - Congregate / Group / Respite Care, CPS3a*

        - Foster Care, CPS3b*

        - Kinship Care, CPS3c

        - Long-term Foster Care, CPS3d

    – Treatment, CPS4*

        - Intensive Wrap-Around Program, CPS4a*

- Federal Priorities, FED*

    – Permanency, FED1

    – Safety, FED2

    – Well-being, FED3

- Focus, FOC*

    – Children, FOC1

- – Family, FOC2

- – Money, FOC3

- – Service, FOC4

- Policy constructs, PC*

  - – Incentives, PC1*

    - Enticements, PC1a*

    - Punishments, PC1b

  - – Facts, PC2

  - – Power, PC4

    - Fixed, PC4a

    - Flexible, PC4b

  - – Rights, PC5*

    - Children's Rights, PC5a

    - Parental Rights, PC5b

    - Termination of Parental Rights, PC5c

    - Provider Rights, PC5d*

  Rules, PC6*

    - Judicial / Law decisions, PC6a*

    - Mandates, PC6b*

*Indicated codes emerged from, or were modified based on, findings from my data

analysis.

Appendix B: U.S. Federal Laws Regarding Child Welfare Services

Following is a list of U.S. federal laws pertaining to child welfare:

<u>2010 to Present</u>

P.L. 112-34   - Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act

P.L. 111-320 - CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010

P.L. 111-148 - Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

<u>2000 to 2009</u>

P.L. 110-351 - Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

P.L. 109-432 - Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006

P.L. 109-288 - Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006

P.L. 109-248 - Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006

P.L. 109-239 - Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006

P.L. 109-171 - Deficit Reduction Act of 2005

P.L. 109-113 - Fair Access Foster Care Act of 2005

P.L. 108-145 - Adoption Promotion Act of 2003

P.L. 108-36   - Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003

P.L. 107-133 - Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001

P.L. 106-279 - Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000

P.L. 106-177 - Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement Act of 2000

<u>1990 to 1999</u>

P.L. 106-169 - Foster Care Independence Act of 1999

P.L. 105-89   - Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997

P.L. 104-235 - Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Amendments of 1996

P.L. 104-188 - The Interethnic Provisions of 1996

P.L. 103-382 - Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994

P.L. 103-66   - Family Preservation and Support Services Program Act of 1993

P.L. 102-295 - Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Adoption, and Family Services Act of 1992

1980 to 1989

P.L. 100-294 - Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act of 1988

P.L. 98-457   - Child Abuse Amendments of 1984

P.L. 96-272   - Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980

1970 to 1979

P.L. 95-608 - Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978

P.L. 95-266 - Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act of 1978

P.L. 93-247 - Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 1974

The data retrieved from HHS's (2016a) database indicates the rankings of the states'

CPSA most improved and least improved for Federal Fiscal Year 2011-14.

Appendix C: State Foster Care Populations for Federal Fiscal Years 2011-2014

Numbers of Children					
	Entering Foster Care during the Federal Fiscal Year	Exiting Care during the Federal Fiscal Year	In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year (September 30, 2010)	In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year (September 30, 2011)	Change in Foster Care Population (In care FY 2011 - In care FY 2010)	Ranking (Lower Numbers = Least Improved and Higher Numbers = Most Improved)
State	FY 2011	FY 2011	FY 2010	FY 2011	Δ = Change	Ranking
Alabama	3,257	3,143	5,350	5,253	-97	24
Alaska	924	785	1,828	1,871	43	15
Arizona	8,488	7,259	9,930	10,883	953	3
Arkansas	3,856	3,774	3,756	3,732	-24	19
California	32,171	31,810	56,202	54,754	-1,448	50
Colorado	5,300	5,502	6,980	6,488	-492	43
Connecticut	2,320	2,099	4,456	4,926	470	7
Delaware	537	421	739	845	106	11
District of Columbia	563	803	2,066	1,797	-269	37
Florida	15,846	14,253	18,743	19,760	1,017	2
Georgia	6,419	5,612	6,895	7,591	696	5
Hawaii	1,025	1,118	1,234	1,122	-112	27
Idaho	1,230	1,297	1,462	1,354	-108	26
Illinois	4,850	4,506	17,730	17,641	-89	23
Indiana	7,522	8,600	12,276	10,779	-1,497	51
Iowa	4,423	4,365	6,533	6,344	-189	33
Kansas	3,439	3,467	5,979	5,852	-127	30
Kentucky	5,120	5,108	6,983	6,659	-324	39
Louisiana	3,731	3,538	4,453	4,531	78	12
Maine	552	785	1,546	1,296	-250	36
Maryland	2,806	3,167	6,098	5,460	-638	46
Massachusetts	5,371	5,464	8,958	8,619	-339	40
Michigan	7,392	8,502	16,424	15,091	-1,333	49
Minnesota	5,946	5,709	5,050	4,995	-55	21
Mississippi	2,368	2,358	3,582	3,597	15	16
Missouri	5,911	5,420	8,687	9,220	533	6
Montana	1,041	977	1,723	1,794	71	14
Nebraska	3,151	3,245	5,358	5,117	-241	35
Nevada	2,778	2,887	4,807	4,638	-169	31
New Hampshire	495	474	839	742	-97	24
New Jersey	4,535	4,811	6,892	6,440	-452	41
New Mexico	1,779	1,778	1,869	1,859	-10	17
New York	11,122	12,382	26,783	24,962	-1,821	52
North Carolina	5,110	4,803	8,828	8,601	-227	34
North Dakota	789	703	1,078	1,066	-12	18
Ohio	9,934	9,471	11,940	12,069	129	10
Oklahoma	4,829	4,352	7,857	8,280	423	8
Oregon	4,250	4,460	9,001	8,531	-470	42
Pennsylvania	10,059	9,584	15,179	14,175	-1,004	48
Rhode Island	1,219	1,403	2,086	1,806	-280	38
South Carolina	2,938	3,533	4,487	3,821	-666	47
South Dakota	1,407	1,429	1,485	1,407	-78	22
Tennessee	6,573	5,363	6,695	7,647	952	4
Texas	16,903	15,717	28,947	30,109	1,162	1
Utah	2,034	2,154	2,886	2,701	-185	32
Vermont	664	542	933	1,010	77	13
Virginia	2,614	2,991	5,414	4,846	-568	44
Washington	5,643	5,522	10,136	9,533	-603	45
West Virginia	3,486	3,030	4,112	4,475	363	9
Wisconsin	4,442	4,292	6,575	6,547	-28	20
Wyoming	996	1,014	1,004	886	-118	29
Puerto Rico	1,230	642	4,476	4,363	-113	28

(see Table *continues*)

	Numbers of Children					
	Entering Foster Care during the Federal Fiscal Year	**Exiting Care during the Federal Fiscal Year**	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2011)	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2012)	**Change in Foster Care Population** (In care FY 2012 - In care FY 2011)	**Ranking** (Lower Numbers = Least Improved and Higher Numbers = Most Improved)
State	**FY 2012**	**FY 2012**	**FY 2011**	**FY 2012**	**Δ = Change**	**Ranking**
Alabama	2,763	3,346	5,253	4,561	-692	49
Alaska	929	821	1,871	1,889	18	24
Arizona	10,663	7,806	10,883	13,461	2,578	1
Arkansas	3,846	3,802	3,732	3,711	-21	27
California	31,695	30,281	54,754	54,288	-466	43
Colorado	5,042	5,181	6,488	6,003	-485	44
Connecticut	1,693	1,505	4,926	4,563	-363	42
Delaware	484	487	845	799	-46	30
District of Columbia	486	725	1,797	1,551	-246	40
Florida	15,674	15,332	19,760	19,536	-224	39
Georgia	6,243	5,954	7,591	7,671	80	17
Hawaii	1,071	1,099	1,122	1,079	-43	29
Idaho	1,084	1,176	1,354	1,234	-120	35
Illinois	5,126	5,951	17,641	16,637	-1,004	51
Indiana	7,908	7,170	10,779	11,334	555	4
Iowa	4,324	4,179	6,344	6,262	-82	32
Kansas	3,724	3,471	5,852	6,002	150	12
Kentucky	5,627	4,885	6,659	6,979	320	9
Louisiana	3,131	3,470	4,531	4,044	-487	45
Maine	911	667	1,296	1,512	216	10
Maryland	2,653	3,047	5,460	4,884	-576	48
Massachusetts	5,301	5,120	8,619	8,522	-97	33
Michigan	7,145	7,869	15,091	14,522	-569	47
Minnesota	5,974	5,276	4,995	5,436	441	5
Mississippi	2,412	2,300	3,597	3,689	92	15
Missouri	6,189	5,477	9,220	9,978	758	3
Montana	1,298	1,131	1,794	1,937	143	13
Nebraska	2,806	2,939	5,117	5,116	-1	25
Nevada	3,126	2,960	4,638	4,746	108	14
New Hampshire	535	398	742	768	26	23
New Jersey	5,253	4,767	6,440	6,848	408	6
New Mexico	1,721	1,638	1,859	1,918	59	21
New York	10,594	10,617	24,962	23,924	-1,038	52
North Carolina	5,026	4,702	8,601	8,461	-140	36
North Dakota	856	778	1,066	1,109	43	22
Ohio	9,551	9,356	12,069	11,877	-192	38
Oklahoma	5,399	4,502	8,280	9,134	854	2
Oregon	4,215	3,829	8,531	8,686	155	11
Pennsylvania	10,271	9,009	14,175	14,496	321	8
Rhode Island	1,234	1,228	1,806	1,707	-99	34
South Carolina	2,796	3,409	3,821	3,113	-708	50
South Dakota	1,190	1,144	1,407	1,399	-8	26
Tennessee	6,610	5,982	7,647	7,978	331	7
Texas	16,619	16,892	30,109	29,613	-496	46
Utah	2,212	2,079	2,701	2,766	65	20
Vermont	606	596	1,010	975	-35	28
Virginia	2,653	2,928	4,846	4,579	-267	41
Washington	5,299	5,079	9,533	9,606	73	19
West Virginia	3,460	2,832	4,475	4,562	87	16
Wisconsin	4,432	4,403	6,547	6,384	-163	37
Wyoming	982	866	886	963	77	18
Puerto Rico	922	462	4,363	4,310	-53	31

(see Table *continues*)

	Numbers of Children					
	Entering Foster Care during the Federal Fiscal Year	**Exiting Care during the Federal Fiscal Year**	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2012)	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2013)	**Change in Foster Care Population** (In care FY 2013 - In care FY 2012)	**Ranking** (Lower Numbers = Least Improved and Higher Numbers = Most Improved)
State	**FY 2013**	**FY 2013**	**FY 2012**	**FY 2013**	**Δ = Change**	**Ranking**
Alabama	3,078	2,929	4,561	4,515	-46	35
Alaska	1,018	860	1,889	1,982	93	20
Arizona	10,790	9,455	13,461	14,399	938	4
Arkansas	3,798	3,614	3,711	3,797	86	23
California	33,757	30,872	54,288	55,383	1,095	2
Colorado	4,820	4,691	6,003	5,851	-152	42
Connecticut	1,792	1,558	4,563	4,245	-318	47
Delaware	379	458	799	702	-97	39
District of Columbia	400	627	1,551	1,311	-240	44
Florida	14,310	15,250	19,536	18,040	-1,496	52
Georgia	6,005	5,935	7,671	7,607	-64	37
Hawaii	1,022	980	1,079	1,085	6	33
Idaho	1,226	1,096	1,234	1,342	108	18
Illinois	5,052	5,264	16,637	16,706	69	28
Indiana	7,893	6,459	11,334	12,382	1,048	3
Iowa	4,500	4,229	6,262	6,341	79	26
Kansas	3,963	3,404	6,002	6,441	439	8
Kentucky	5,540	5,011	6,979	7,162	183	14
Louisiana	3,475	3,429	4,044	3,955	-89	38
Maine	962	666	1,512	1,787	275	11
Maryland	2,302	2,594	4,884	4,467	-417	48
Massachusetts	5,425	5,115	8,522	8,537	15	31
Michigan	7,716	7,646	14,522	14,615	93	20
Minnesota	6,059	5,473	5,436	5,641	205	12
Mississippi	2,509	2,340	3,689	3,779	90	22
Missouri	6,401	5,567	9,978	10,624	646	5
Montana	1,434	1,165	1,937	2,232	295	10
Nebraska	2,697	3,167	5,116	4,586	-530	50
Nevada	3,382	3,253	4,746	4,776	30	29
New Hampshire	600	432	768	850	82	24
New Jersey	5,361	5,136	6,848	6,946	98	19
New Mexico	1,858	1,669	1,918	2,077	159	15
New York	9,345	10,551	23,924	22,975	-949	51
North Carolina	5,300	4,365	8,461	9,036	575	7
North Dakota	951	785	1,109	1,227	118	17
Ohio	9,875	9,212	11,877	12,223	346	9
Oklahoma	6,051	4,542	9,134	10,555	1,421	1
Oregon	3,797	4,024	8,686	8,202	-484	49
Pennsylvania	9,770	8,686	14,496	14,252	-244	45
Rhode Island	1,254	1,113	1,707	1,789	82	24
South Carolina	2,939	2,801	3,113	3,188	75	27
South Dakota	930	1,043	1,399	1,253	-146	41
Tennessee	6,742	6,211	7,978	8,180	202	13
Texas	16,920	16,661	29,613	29,625	12	32
Utah	2,182	2,172	2,766	2,709	-57	36
Vermont	677	634	975	971	-4	34
Virginia	2,583	2,856	4,579	4,327	-252	46
Washington	5,756	5,014	9,606	10,208	602	6
West Virginia	3,467	3,517	4,562	4,389	-173	43
Wisconsin	4,668	4,315	6,384	6,539	155	16
Wyoming	1,005	909	963	981	18	30
Puerto Rico	1,344	637	4,310	4,197	-113	40

	Numbers of Children					
	Entering Foster Care during the Federal Fiscal Year	**Exiting Care during the Federal Fiscal Year**	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2013)	**In Foster Care on Last Day of Federal Fiscal Year** (September 30, 2014)	**Change in Foster Care Population** (In care FY 2014 - In care FY 2013)	**Ranking** (Lower Numbers = Least Improved and Higher Numbers = Most Improved)
State	**FY 2014**	**FY 2014**	**FY 2013**	**FY 2014**	**Δ = Change**	**Ranking**
Alabama	3,243	3,035	4,515	4,556	41	34
Alaska	1,162	919	1,982	2,190	208	25
Arizona	12,209	10,007	14,399	16,246	1,847	2
Arkansas	3,542	3,405	3,797	3,806	9	36
California	33,696	30,317	55,383	56,771	1,388	6
Colorado	4,686	4,522	5,851	5,787	-64	38
Connecticut	1,891	1,481	4,245	4,069	-176	42
Delaware	314	345	702	635	-67	39
District of Columbia	382	550	1,311	981	-330	44
Florida	15,804	13,533	18,040	19,712	1,672	3
Georgia	7,519	6,006	7,607	9,005	1,398	5
Hawaii	1,076	919	1,085	1,221	136	30
Idaho	1,138	1,227	1,342	1,208	-134	41
Illinois	5,166	4,936	16,706	17,140	434	14
Indiana	9,107	6,813	12,382	14,452	2,070	1
Iowa	3,908	4,054	6,341	5,978	-363	45
Kansas	3,844	3,333	6,441	6,762	321	19
Kentucky	5,766	5,125	7,162	7,506	344	18
Louisiana	4,080	3,613	3,955	4,329	374	17
Maine	916	788	1,787	1,864	77	32
Maryland	2,097	2,397	4,467	4,032	-435	46
Massachusetts	6,687	5,059	8,537	9,940	1,403	4
Michigan	7,581	7,489	14,615	13,452	-1,163	52
Minnesota	6,212	5,240	5,641	6,324	683	11
Mississippi	3,054	2,386	3,779	4,380	601	12
Missouri	7,121	5,927	10,624	11,834	1,210	7
Montana	1,392	1,257	2,232	2,345	113	31
Nebraska	2,317	2,961	4,586	3,863	-723	50
Nevada	3,343	3,250	4,776	4,543	-233	43
New Hampshire	478	580	850	885	35	35
New Jersey	5,056	4,742	6,946	7,138	192	26
New Mexico	2,120	1,808	2,077	2,366	289	21
New York	9,691	9,854	22,975	22,422	-553	48
North Carolina	5,799	4,487	9,036	9,859	823	9
North Dakota	999	813	1,227	1,365	138	29
Ohio	9,924	9,340	12,223	12,519	296	20
Oklahoma	5,867	4,889	10,555	11,463	908	8
Oregon	3,593	3,906	8,202	7,444	-758	51
Pennsylvania	10,948	9,455	14,252	14,840	588	13
Rhode Island	1,272	1,096	1,789	1,832	43	33
South Carolina	3,407	3,059	3,188	3,461	273	22
South Dakota	956	1,013	1,253	1,174	-79	40
Tennessee	5,352	5,689	8,180	7,607	-573	49
Texas	17,357	16,420	29,625	30,358	733	10
Utah	2,393	2,071	2,709	2,960	251	24
Vermont	788	600	971	1,123	152	28
Virginia	3,040	2,796	4,327	4,597	270	23
Washington	6,070	5,524	10,208	10,630	422	15
West Virginia	3,825	3,513	4,389	4,556	167	27
Wisconsin	4,819	4,242	6,539	6,918	379	16
Wyoming	979	894	981	985	4	37
Puerto Rico	760	545	4,197	3,696	-501	47

The data retrieved from HHS's (2016a) database indicates the rankings of the states'

CPSA most improved and least improved for Federal Fiscal Year 2011.

Rankings of States' CPSA for Federal Fiscal Year 2011*

1. Texas	43. Colorado
2. Florida	44. Virginia
3. Arizona	45. Washington
4. Tennessee	46. Maryland
5. Georgia	47. South Carolina
6. Missouri	48. Pennsylvania
7. Connecticut	49. Michigan
8. Oklahoma	50. California
9. West Virginia	51. Indiana
10. Ohio	52. New York

Note. Number 1 indicates the least improved foster care populations, while number 52

indicates the most improved foster care populations.

The data retrieved from HHS's (2016a) database indicates the rankings of the states'

CPSA most improved and least improved for Federal Fiscal Year 2012.

Rankings of States' CPSA for the federal fiscal year 2012*

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1. Arizona	43. California
2. Oklahoma	44. Colorado
3. Missouri	45. Louisiana
4. Indiana	46. Texas
5. Minnesota	47. Michigan
6. New Jersey	48. Maryland
7. Tennessee	49. Alabama
8. Pennsylvania	50. South Carolina
9. Kentucky	51. Illinois
10. Maine	52. New York

Note: Number 1 indicated the least improved foster care populations, and number 52

indicated the most improved.

The data retrieved from HHS's (2016a) database indicates the rankings of the states'

CPSA most improved and least improved for Federal Fiscal Year 2013.

Rankings of States' CPSA for the federal fiscal year 2013*

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1. Oklahoma	43. West Virginia
2. California	44. District of Columbia
3. Indiana	45. Pennsylvania
4. Arizona	46. Virginia
5. Missouri	47. Connecticut
6. Washington	48. Maryland
7. North Carolina	49. Oregon
8. Kansas	50. Nebraska
9. Ohio	51. New York
10. Montana	52. Florida

Note: Number 1 indicated the least improved foster care populations, and number 52

indicated the most improved.

The data retrieved from HHS's (2016a) database indicates the rankings of the states'

CPSA most improved and least improved for Federal Fiscal Year 2014.

Rankings of States' CPSA for the federal fiscal year 2014*

1. Arizona	43. California
2. Oklahoma	44. Colorado
3. Missouri	45. Louisiana
4. Indiana	46. Texas
5. Minnesota	47. Michigan
6. New Jersey	48. Maryland
7. Tennessee	49. Alabama
8. Pennsylvania	50. South Carolina
9. Kentucky	51. Illinois
10. Maine	52. New York

Note: Number 1 indicated the least improved foster care populations, and number 52

indicated the most improved.

Appendix D: South Carolina CPSA-Related Public Documents

I analyzed the following South Carolina's CPSA-related statutes, policies, and publications in this study:

- South Carolina Code of Laws (2013d)

  - Title 44 – Health

  - Chapter 53 – Poisons, drugs, and other controlled substances,

    - Section 378 – Exposing a child to methamphetamine

- Title 63 - Children's Code

  - Chapter 1 – State policy and general provisions

  - Chapter 3 – Family court

  - Chapter 5 – Legal status of children

  - Chapter 7 – Child protection and permanency

  - Chapter 9 – Adoptions

  - Chapter 11 – Children's services agencies

- South Carolina Code of Regulations, Chapter 114 – Department of Social Services (2013e)

  - Article 1 – Fair hearings

    - Section 114-140 – Foster care

    - Section 114-150 – Adoptions

    - Section 114-170 – Child protective services

  - Article 5 – Licensing

    - Subarticle 5 - Foster care, Section 114-550 – Licensure for foster care

- Subarticle 9 – Residential group care facilities for children

- Article 45 – Child protective services involving institutions generally

- South Carolina's CPSA documents and publications

  - *Caring for children…Caring for Families…Caring for the Future* (2008)

  - *Child abuse prevention and treatment act plan* (2010a)

  - *Child abuse, child neglect: What out-of-home caregivers should know if they are investigated* (2010b).

  - *Child abuse, child neglect: What parents should know if they are investigated* (2006b)

  - *Child Protective Services: A guide for caregivers in out-of-home settings* (2011a)

  - *Child Protective Services: A guide for parents* (2006a)

  - *Foster and adoptive parent diligent recruitment plan 2015 – 2019* (2014b)

  - *Foster or adopt a child* (2009a)

  - *Human services policy and procedure manual* (2011b)

  - *Important information about reimbursement for nonrecurring costs for parents who are adopting a child with special needs* (2009b)

  - *South Carolina's child and family services annual progress and services report* (2013c)

  - *South Carolina's child and family services plan FFY 2015-2019* (2014a)

  - *South Carolina's Department of Social Services, annual accountability report, Fiscal Year 2012* (2012, Dec)

- ▪ *South Carolina's guidelines for services: Chafee independent living program and educational and training voucher program* (2013b)

Appendix E: Missouri CPSA-Related Public Documents

I analyzed the following Missouri CPSA-related statutes, policies, and

publications in this study:

- Missouri Revised Statutes (2013c)

    - Title XII – Public health and welfare

        · Chapter 193 – Vital statistics

            – Section 193.125 – Debbi Daniel law—adoption

            – Section 193.135 – New certificate of birth established or an old

              one amended

        · Chapter 210 – Child protection and reformation

    - Title XXX – Domestic relations

        · Chapter 453 – Adoption and foster care

    - Title XXXII – Courts

        · Chapter 487 – Family courts

- Missouri Code of State Regulations, Title 13 – Department of Social Services

  (2014b)

    - Division 35 – Children's Division

    - Division 40 – Family Support Division

        · Chapter 30 – Permanency planning for children

        · Chapter 31 – Child abuse

        · Chapter 34 – Homeless, dependent and neglected children

        · Chapter 38 – Adoption

- · Chapter 50 – Licensing of foster/adoption homes

- · Chapter 60 – Licensing of foster family homes

- · Chapter 62 – Licensing rules for group day care home and child day care centers

- · Chapter 71 – Licensing rules for residential care agencies

- · Chapter 72 – Group homes facilities

- · Chapter 73 – Licensing of child placing agencies

- Missouri Department of Social Services' CPSA documents and publications

  - *Adoption heart gallery program booklet* (2011a)

  - *Child abuse and neglect fiscal year 2013 annual report* (2013a)

  - *Child welfare manual* (2014b)

  - *Executive summary final report: Missouri's child and family services review* (2010b)

  - *Family connections, the foster/adopt newsletter* (2014c)

  - *Foster care statistical information* (2011b)

  - *Guidelines for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect* (2013b)

  - *Handbook for parents of children in alternative care* (2010a)

  - *Missouri's adoption subsidy and subsidized guardianship programs* (2003)

  - *Philosophical base of child welfare practice* (2014c)

  - *Recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families workgroup* (2012a)

- *Reporting child abuse & neglect is everyone's responsibility* (2014f)

- *Resource parent handbook* (2012b)

- *Task Force on recruitment, licensing, and retention of foster and adoptive homes* (2011c)

- *Title IVB child and family services plan, annual progress and service report* (2012c)

- *What's it all about? A guidebook for youth in out-of-home-care* (2014d)

Appendix F: Frequency of Codes, Counts, and Rankings Used in the Study

| | Child Protection Services, CPS | | | | | | | | | |
| | Stable, Permanent Placements, CPS2 | | | | | | Placements, CPS3 | | | |
Count by Type of Data	Stable, Permanent Placements CPS2	Adoption CPS2a	Emancipation CPS2b	Family Preservation ReunificationCPS2c	Guardianship, CPS2d	Visitation, CPS2e	Foster Care, CPS3	Congregate Group and Respite Care, CPS3a	Kinship Care CPS3b	Long-Term Foster Care, CPS3c
Missouri Statutes	108	818	28	24	316	58	1576	400	6	6
Missouri Policies	430	2052	321	251	861	625	7602	871	242	31
Missouri Publications	49	97	75	20	14	46	689	70	6	2
Missouri Overall	587	2967	424	295	1191	729	9867	1341	254	39
South Carolina Statutes	59	614	95	16	235	98	784	79	27	1
South Carolina Policies	4	2177	159	269	299	469	7213	55	31	35
South Carolina Publications	1338	1430	323	188	112	352	5222	939	91	18
South Carolina Overall	1401	4221	577	473	646	919	13219	1073	149	54
Combined by States										
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Total	1988	7188	1001	768	1837	1648	23086	2414	403	93
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Ranking	17	10	23	27	18	21	4	15	30	34

(see Table *continues*)

| | Treatments, CPS4 | | Federal Priorities, FED | | | | Focus, F | | | | Prevention |
| | | | Types of Priorities | | | | Types of Focus | | | | |
Count by Type of Data	Treatment CPS4	Intensive-Wraparound Program, CPS4a	Priorities FED1	Permanency FED1a	Safety FED1b	Well-being FED1c	Child(ren) F1	Family F2	Money F3	Service F4	Prevention - CPS1
Missouri Statutes	257	40	792	85	249	492	2694	1452	1601	801	263
Missouri Policies	1224	132	6052	627	2164	3246	13336	11989	6305	5563	1325
Missouri Publications	46	3	505	74	124	311	877	876	464	466	105
Missouri Overall	1527	175	7349	786	2537	4049	16907	14317	8370	6830	1693
South Carolina Statutes	139	1	878	83	435	356	4316	2100	2849	1317	396
South Carolina Policies	468	15	3632	674	1310	1638	9472	6953	2201	2793	507
South Carolina Publications	306	113	3851	910	1464	1461	7627	5416	2593	4143	2829
South Carolina Overall	913	129	8361	1667	3209	3455	21415	14469	7643	8253	3732
Combined by States											
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Total	2440	304	15710	2453	5746	7504	38322	28786	16013	15083	5425
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Ranking	15	34	6	14	11	9	1	2	5	7	13

(see Table *continues*)

	Policy, PP												
	Incentives, PP1		Facts PP2	Power, PP4			Rights, PP5				Rules, PP6		
Count by Type of Data	Enticements PP1a	Punishments PP1b	Facts PP2	Power PP4	Fixed PP4a	Flexible PP4b	Rights PP5	Children's Rights PP5a	Parental Rights PP5b	Termination of Parental Rights PP5c	Rules PP6	Judicial or Law PP6a	Mandates PP6b
Missouri Statutes	252	88	169	289	72	192	61	79	318	46	1738	828	14
Missouri Policies	746	82	979	777	178	271	255	348	2028	226	10083	3404	102
Missouri Publications	24	4	107	62	13	25	34	89	119	7	766	236	28
Missouri Overall	1022	174	1255	1128	263	488	350	516	2465	279	12587	4468	144
South Carolina Statutes	256	365	283	209	33	131	147	195	597	137	3384	1809	13
South Carolina Policies	216	155	474	131	16	115	191	330	574	378	5877	2746	49
South Carolina Publications	202	7	232	235	19	132	110	497	1254	88	4338	1395	109
South Carolina Overall	674	527	989	575	68	378	448	1022	2425	603	13599	5950	171
Combined by States													
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Total	1696	701	2244	1703	331	866	798	1538	4890	882	26186	10418	315
Missouri and South Carolina Grand Ranking	21	29	17	20	32	26	27	23	13	25	3	8	33