



Specialized Education & Training

Franke, T., Bagdasaryan, S., & Furman, W. (2009). A multivariate analysis of training, education, and readiness for public child welfare practice. *Children and Youth Services Review, 31*(12), 1330-1336.

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

This article discusses the results and implications of a large-scale study to measure job readiness of newly hired public child welfare workers. Each worker was given a comprehensive pre- and post-training test, which evaluated their child welfare knowledge and skills.

WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL FINDINGS?

Child welfare workers require knowledge and skills in areas such as policy, assessment, case management, and cultural competency to work effectively with vulnerable populations.

Results of this study indicate that level of education (master's level) and Title IV-E participation predict a better performance on the pre and post-training evaluations.

Those in Title IV-E funded programs performed significantly better on both pre and post-tests, and expressed more confidence in child welfare work than did other participants.

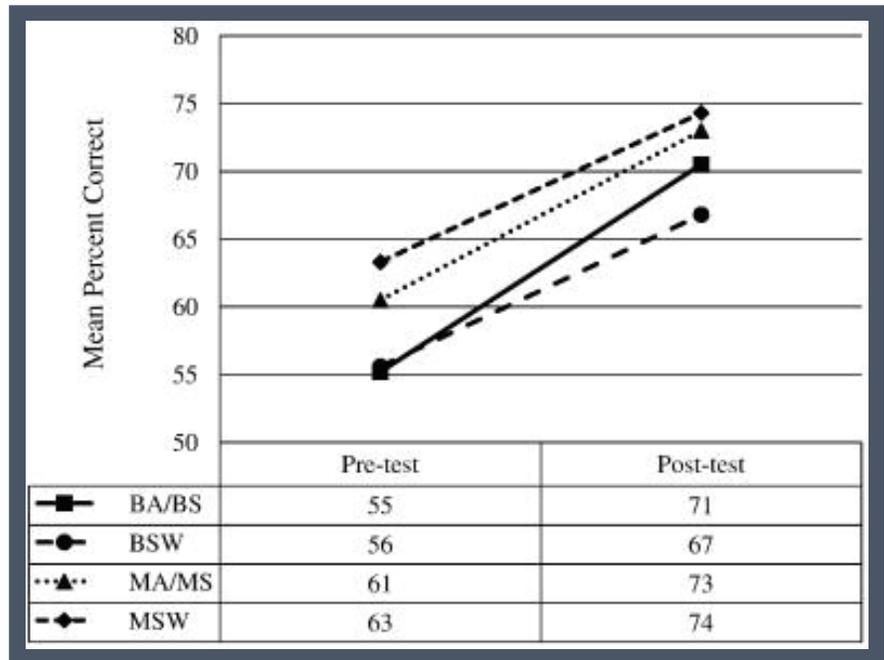
Those with a BSW or MSW were more effective in successful permanency plan development.

The figure on the right shows the relationship between education and test performance:

All education levels benefited from the training, but having an MSW degree predicted better overall performance. Training helped close the knowledge gap between those without previous specialized education and those with advanced degrees.

Training seemed more beneficial for non-title IV participants, as they demonstrated the greatest improvements in performance after training. MSW and Title IV-E participants did not gain as much knowledge through the training.

*Limitations exist in sampling and data collection, including a small sample (representative of only one state program); limited research; unreliable testing instrument; and insufficient data.



WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK?

- There are many benefits to specialized child welfare training and educational programs.
- Training is a crucial component of child welfare organizational development, as it can create a more homogeneous group of workers with regard to child welfare knowledge and skills.
- It is important to acknowledge the need for more rigorous training for those with advanced social work degrees or specialized education, so they can continue to increase their knowledge base and skill development.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on creating a holistic approach to teaching and learning.