

SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP AND RESISTANCE

SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP AND RESISTANCE

By DEBORAH RIMAY

BA, BSW

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Social Work McMaster University

©Copyright by Deborah Rimay, August 2018

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

McMaster University

2018

Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP AND RESISTANCE

AUTHOR: Deborah Rimap, BA, BSW (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Christina Sinding

NUMBER OF PAGES: 66

Acknowledgements

This adventure has been a challenging journey. Although I have walked the path alone, I have been strongly supported by many along the way. I want to thank those individuals who encouraged, cheered and at times took my hand from the grassy areas beside the path.

First, a heartfelt thank you to Christina Sinding. Your unwavering patience, encouragement and mad editing skills transformed this thesis from a hodgepodge of ideas and class papers into a masterpiece. I have learned so much from your wisdom. Thank you to Tara LaRose for the suggestions as my Second Reader, they have enhanced this work.

Second, I would to share my gratitude for the leaders that agreed to be interviewed. Your risk in sharing your experiences is greatly appreciated.

Third, I would like to thank my Brant FACS team, especially Andrea and Shannon. You both encouraged and helped wherever you could. I could not have completed this journey without your evening texts asking if I was working on my thesis.

Finally, a deep thank you to my family. To my children: Sanda (Kevin), Daniel (Sarah), Emily (Ken), Amaris (Anthony), Nathan (Jessi) for your inspiration, patience and understanding. To my granddaughters Hannah, Natalie, Penelope and Elaya for making me smile as I did my “homework”. To my sister Gini and your partner Mary, thank you for making this happen and for the challenging conversations on leadership and resistance. To my sister Meri, thank you for your long distance encouragement. To my Mom, Margaret Cale, thank you for your belief in me that I would be successful on this journey.

Abstract

Identity and resistance in social work leadership is a fairly recent area in the study of leadership. A significant amount of the literature discusses leadership, identity and resistance from the standpoint of managerialism, where the leader's character is defined by their response to managing and eliminating staff workplace resistance. This study offers a contrasting approach to the managerial notions of leadership, identity and resistance. This study examines social work leadership in the context of the justice-oriented resistance work leaders do and how their identities inform the strategies they engage. A small qualitative study was done from a critical perspective to better understand how social work leaders in the social services engage in resistance work when encountering social injustices in their organization.

The findings were organized around three central themes from the interviews. The first theme was how the participants understood resistance or what were they fighting for in their work. Participants were fighting for respectful relationships with service users, and fighting against the implications of social inequalities embedded in policies and directives that are not beneficial to service users. The second theme focused on the strategies the participants engaged in their resistance work. Participants identified the deliberate use of language, awareness and activation of values, and the use of their power and role as leaders. The third theme was how their identities influenced the resistance work they engaged in. The participants drew on their personal histories which have framed their identities to inform the manner in which they resist: to take up certain value positions in their work, to be critical and unafraid in their resistance, and to have strong loyalties to their communities. The results of this study extend the literature on leadership by highlighting resistance not in a passive manner but in the sense of consciously taking actions with consequences. It was apparent the participants engaged in micro political actions and adopted strategies to counter the negative effects of policies and attitudes that promote social inequalities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: AN INTRODUCTION..... 1

CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....4

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....16

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND METHODS23

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS27

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION41

CHAPTER SEVEN: .CONCLUSION.....47

REFERENCES49

APPENDIX A.....53

APPENDIX B.....54

APPENDIX C.....59

APPENDIX D.....60

Chapter One: An Introduction

Leadership in the managing of staff has always been a personal interest. For a part of my career, I was one of three team leaders for the local Children's Aid Society in the Protection Support Services. My career also included positions on the management teams at two long term care homes. I was always keenly aware of the differences in the approaches among my colleagues especially when government and organization policies framed by neoliberalism, resulted in cutbacks and in re-organization of services. For example, some of the team leaders resisted the organizational changes that they viewed as harmful to the services users and to staff. These team leaders met with their staff and service users to discuss options in light of the changes, then presented the options to upper management for consideration. The team leaders also worked with staff quietly offering direction as how to "get around" the policy changes.

These work experiences have driven my interest in leadership in the contemporary times of neoliberal influenced policies. Based on those work experiences, I have wondered how social work leaders in the social services engage in resistance work when encountering social injustices in their organizations. I want to understand the decisions the social work managers make when resisting an organizational policy or practice that may have a negative impact on service users. I am interested in the types of risk managers negotiate when challenging organizational policies and what values inform that resistance. This notion of resistance work by managers informs social work leadership as a key value within the social work profession hence, is very relevant to social work leadership.

As I initially searched for literature on social work leadership, I found a vast number of articles on business leadership or on leadership development in areas of creating organizational

vision and in creating staff compliance to organizational policies. There was a limited amount of research pertaining to social work leadership and even less on social work and resistance.

However, there was an even greater paucity of literature on the notion of social work leadership and resistance work. Lawlor (2007) and Brilliant (1986) examined the notion of social work leadership with the idea that social work leadership is based in the code of ethics and values rooted in professional social work standards but did not discuss the practice resistance social worker leaders engage in when faced with increasing neo-liberal policies that are accompanied by funding restraints, thereby, challenging the work they do with service users.

Social work leadership appears in the literature within the discourse of power differentials and the unequal power relations within the social work profession. Ford and Harding (2007) suggested social work leaders can be trained to identify the inequities of power and control and as result could influence the power discourse with their level of organizational leadership. This discourse of power inequities was also discussed within the literature in the focus on identity. Lawler (2007) examined social work leadership from the perspective of a glamorized notion of leadership whereas, Stanford (2011) discussed social work leadership as a values based identity.

Examining social work leadership and identity in resistance work is crucial to challenging the dominant discourse of neo-liberalism and oppression on which organizational policies are developed and implemented.

In this thesis I draw on critical theory and post-structuralism to frame my approach and analysis. I specifically use Hochschild's concept of emotional labour to explore the way in which leaders in organization manage their identity in the context of their role and their resistance work. I situate my research in the literature on critical approaches to leadership in the

contemporary context in the Literature Review, Chapter Three. My study involved face to face interviews with leaders, supervisors and managers in a social service organization. I elaborate this in Chapter Four: Methodology and Design. Those leaders viewed resistance work across a wide spectrum of their work.

In the discussion I consider how the results of my study about leadership and resistance are reflective of the literature and yet at the same time contradict the literature. In this study all the participants were actively resisting policies or directives. I hope this thesis on leadership and resistance will contribute to understanding and informing the community on the resistance social work leaders engage in when social justice concerns are addressed.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The breadth and scope of the uses, applications and framing of the term leadership in scholarly literature is extremely vast and varied. There is a plethora of theories and articles on the topic of leadership. The concept of leadership is examined within the religious sector, the corporate sector, and the community sector among others. There are many terms to describe leadership and leaders. As Bennis noted in 1959:

Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it ... and still the concept is not sufficiently defined (p. 259).

The majority of leadership literature revolves around the corporate organizational processes and the types of leaders required to enact organizational change. Overall, the literature notes that leadership means different things to different people around the world and different things in different situations.

I have noted five specific themes that recur in the literature on social work and leadership. The first theme offers a wealth of literature on the types of leadership styles in social work contexts, including professional leadership, transformational leadership and managerialism. The second theme that emerges is social work leadership both as a formal leader or manager and as a front-line worker. The third theme offers a critique of developing education in leadership specific to social work. The fourth theme examines resistance leadership and finally, the fifth theme examines the role of identity. This critical review of the literature will examine those five themes.

The notion of leadership is often related to personality qualities, personal values and tied to organizational change performances. Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff (2010) examine

leadership as a discourse and the societal norms constructed about leadership. Their study examines leadership from a social scientific perspective and reconstructs the notion of leadership without the influence of the traditional societal norms on leadership. Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff (2010) briefly touch on the notion of power in leadership. The outcome, the authors sought, is a conceptualization of leadership as a process not as a specific solid entity.

The dominant discourse on styles of leadership include hero leaders, transformational leaders, transactional leaders and situational leaders. Ford (2005) in her examination of leadership in feminist readings notes the movement from management to leadership as a way to expand and achieve the organization's outcomes. She discusses the dominant discourses of leadership suggesting that leadership is viewed as a need for organizations and often it is the heroic innate capabilities of the individual that are considered salient to the notion of leadership. Whereas, Sinclair (2007) notes the notion of leadership is based on the dominant discourse which only enhances the business motivations of the capitalist industry and by classifying leaders as "collaborative or relational" sustains the power of that discourse of leadership. (p. 32).

The literature on leadership also examines how leaders or managers use of their personal traits effects how they lead front line staff and encourages organizational change. Yukl (2010) notes:

Beliefs about heroic leadership may help to justify large salaries for chief executives, but they also foster unrealistic expectations. The heroic leader is expected to be wiser and more courageous than anyone else in the organization and to know everything that is happening in it. Leaders are seldom able to live up to these expectations. Just as they are given too much credit for success, they are also blamed for failure (p. 495).

McDonald and Chenoweth (2009); Bergeron (1989) and Scholtes (1998) note leadership is a professional role that should include a relational approach which encourages front line staff in making decisions and should not include a top down autocratic style of leading. Burns (1978)

study of leadership noted a variance between leaders and leadership noting leadership is more than a leader's personality. Burns (1978) noted:

Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in the context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers (p. 45).

This is the context out of which the notion of transformational leadership developed. This leadership framework is important in developing the relationship between the leader and front-line staff in creating a common vision for the organization. Gellis (2001) in his study on transactional and transformative leadership models explored "social workers' perceptions of the degree to which their managers practice transformational leadership, and of leader attitudes and behaviors that social workers associate with organizational effectiveness." (p. 17). On this basis Gellis (2001) noted that social workers leaders' personal attributes improve positive attitudes of staff and that social work staff preferred a transformational leader.

Building on this concept of transformation leadership, McDonald and Chenoweth (2009) note, that social workers are unlikely to engage in transformative leadership if "it means engaging in competition and conflict." (p.107). The authors further note engaging in conflict is not perceived as inherent in a social worker's character or in their role which at times allows them to be agents of organizational change. Alimo-Metcalf and Alban-Metcalf (2005) argue transformational leadership moves beyond the 'heroic' attitude and focuses on the role of the individual within the organization framework. The authors further examine transactional leadership constructed as a needs based style, reflecting a sensitivity to the agenda of all stakeholder rather than attention to a specific group. Van Maurik (2001) finds the notion of transactional leadership reflects hierarchical relationships between managers and front-line staff. This view of transactional leadership is in contrast to the style of transformative leadership.

Lawler (2007) discusses the notion that leadership is considered an aspect of an individual's characteristics and identifies leadership as a notion that has become glamorized. Lawler further examines the discourses on managerialism and leadership and arguing that social work ethics do not differentiate social work leadership from notions of leadership in other professions. The author suggests that social work values assist in resisting managerialist restructuring. Lawler entertains an interesting notion that the discussion on leadership may shine attention away from other organizational areas of importance and he queries if an emphasis on the importance of leadership is in fact a tactic of managerialism.

The second theme in the literature addresses leadership in social work. The literature addresses the lack of social work leadership and the reasons leadership is not as prominent in social work as it is in other disciplines. McDonald and Chenoweth (2009) noted that “social work has been less proactive and even reluctant in taking on leadership as an issue for theory and practice.” (p.105). Lawler (2007) examines the interest in leadership and explores beyond general leadership skills to social work leadership. He examines the notion that social work skills are foundational to leadership and are already present, yet are discounted by the social work profession.

Michael Holosko (2009) contends social work academics have not defined the concepts of social work leadership attributes. To this end the author offers an analysis of five core elements of social work leadership that support social work skills in the areas of knowledge, personal and skill sets: vision; inspiring others; collaboration; problem solving and “creating positive change.” (p. 454). The author notes these elements fortify all other social work skills and knowledge. He is hopeful that with these core elements as an underpinning that social workers will be able to lead at all levels of their work.

McDonald and Chenoweth (2009) note that “social work managers find themselves precariously balancing a range of competing demands; those normally expected in day to day work, as well as additional pressures created from unstable organisational and policy environments” (p.105), specific to the impact of economic policies on social welfare policies. They note social work managers Rank and Hutchinson (2000) argue that social work leaders face challenges that are different from leaders in other disciplines, identifying social work values as an influencing factor. Brilliant (1986) found

Social workers are inclined to tie leadership to the ability to help agencies and institutions improve the quality of life of clients, the disadvantaged and even the community as a whole, and do it in a manner consistent with the professional code of ethics (p.326).

The literature denotes there is an absence of discussion of social work leadership, possibly as the notions of the interpretation of leadership does not align with the profession’s values and ethics or in social work education. This notion leads into the next theme which examines social work leadership education.

The third theme revealed in the literature scrutinizes schools of social work and the leadership programs offered at the undergraduate/graduate level and within the leadership development programs. The lack of attention of leadership within the professional role of social work was reflected in the literature. Bliss, Pecukonis and Snyder-Vogel (2014) addressed the concern of new social work graduates who are advanced quickly into management positions within their organizations without understanding the impact of macro- level social justice skills learned as students in the schools of social work. The authors identified a void in social work education in leadership on the basis of examining six integrated components the authors saw as fundamental to leadership education: Core Leadership Competencies; Domain-Specific Leadership Competencies; Integrative Practice Opportunities and Mentoring Support; Ongoing

Self-Reflection and Continued Growth; Underlying Ethical Principles and finally Evaluation: Formative and Summative. In turn, these core components are represented in a model designed to assist leaders in creating leadership programs in the post graduate social work academies for social workers in child and maternal healthcare organization.

Call, Owens and Vincent (2013) examined the experience of the university department heads' style of leadership on their faculty members. The authors identify their investigation as integrating feminist and professional social work understandings. The qualitative study concluded transformational collaborative leaders with integrity were positively viewed by faculty. The study results identified there are a substantial quantity of leaders in the schools of social work that are not effective and do not lead from an ethics perspective. This study articulated the importance of developing a social work leadership program strongly based on social work values. McAllan and McRae (2010) discuss leader development studies in the context of a collaborative change management program in Scotland whereas, Fournier and Grey (2000) promote leadership education within critical management studies. They suggest a dialogue that envisions leaders transcending the conflict between the camps of critical theory and post-structuralism in role expectations for leaders within the organizational context.

This notion of leadership within critical management studies is further developed by Ford and Harding (2007) in their examination of the training of leaders. They ask, "Could leadership courses develop leaders who do the opposite of what the organization requires?" (p. 486). The authors suggest trainers could be encouraged to identify notions of power and control inequities and to expose the role leadership training programs have "in co-constructing the realities of leadership and organization" (p.489). This idea is presented with the hope of managers learning

to resist organizational policies that support power imbalances and to recognize their own complicity in those policies.

Rank and Hutchinson (2000) surveyed social work students at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels to define what is required in social work leadership education. They reviewed social work leadership in the context of the professional standards noting, “Most of the participants spoke to the importance of including leadership development content in social work curricula and to the importance of leadership development initiatives by CSWE and NASW.” (p. 499). Interestingly enough, Rank and Hutchinson’s research (2000) in social work leadership development suggests three skills for social work leaders: “building community, communicating orally and in writing, and performing comprehensive analysis of social, political, and cultural events” (p. 499). These areas in the study were identified as leadership skills for social workers leaders and as a way to improved social work leadership.

In contrast, Ward et al (2015) examine the:

...relationship between the macropolitical discourse of neoliberalism and the actions of school leaders in the micropolitical arena of schools, both in terms of how the discourse of neoliberalism permits governments to perform a particular action on the action of school leaders and in terms of how school leaders respond to this action (p.334).

The authors’ approach, informed by Foucault’s notion of power, discusses the notion that school leaders become caught up in meritocracy and market ventures, thereby supporting the neoliberal agenda and no longer engaging in the principle of equity. Their findings support the idea there are school leaders who practice resistance, who then find themselves faced with the strategies of: leaving their position, using their voice to resist, and maintain loyalty.

The discourse of Ward et al (2015) introduces the fourth theme I have found in the literature, that of the notion of leadership and resistance. Social work practice involves working

from a set of competencies and from a set of value positions. As social worker leaders in the social services those competencies and values are often challenged by organizational policies, procedures and budget restraints especially when policies and procedures are developed in response to the provincial government's restructuring of social services. The social worker as manager may face complex dilemmas in managing staff, meeting service user needs, delivering outcomes desired by the organization and in all these areas: resisting the dominant discourse of neoliberalism. Ledbetter (2012); Aronson and Smith (2011); Thomas and Davies (2005) and Zoller and Fairhurst (2007) entertain the notion of resistance by leaders to neoliberal policies in the workplace. Thomas and Davies (2005) examine "resistance found in the critical organizational and Foucauldian literature. It offers an alternative conceptualization of resistance that focuses on the political contest over meanings" (p.699). Thomas and Davies (2005) note resistance is a continuous change process of the dominant discourse within individuals. Ledbetter (2012) proposes peace is the role of leadership. She presents power and resistance not as contraries but as "interrelated constructs". (p.11). Zoller and Fairhurst (2007) situate leadership ascriptions in the advancement of resistance actions. The authors advocate for a consideration:

...from a critical perspective...attributions of leadership themselves are formed and influenced by power/knowledge constructions, such as what is the task at hand and what counts as advancing it. Thus leadership attributions are a complex process, but play a role in the development of resistance efforts (Zoller, Fairhurst, 2007, p.1339).

Harlow et al (2012) note the idea of resistance, particular to Sweden, appears to have been dissipated by the ongoing effects of neoliberalism. However, the authors present hope in the form of solidarity. The authors identify that solidarity within the social work profession has been able to moderate the progression and effect of neo-liberalism in combination with the rise of citizen rights and an increase in the ideology of personal responsibility.

Aronson and Smith (2011) note the critical managers in their study determined risk and resistance when opting to challenge a policy or situation within their organization with the caveat “pick and choose your battles”. (p.437). Carey (2014) identify resistance is presented in cynicism, noting “cynicism may also encourage practitioners to challenge normative practices and consequentially provide better support to users and carers.” (p. 129). Fine and Teram (2013) suggest the idea of resistance by social workers in their research of overt and covert ways practitioners respond to ethical issues of moral injustices in the workplace. They present neoliberal policies as linked to moral injustices and encourage social worker to resist at the micro level.

The idea of resistance at an individual level is further reflected in Zoller and Fairhurst (2007), who highlight, “the interpretation of Foucauldian theory that locates power in diffuse knowledge networks, thereby locating micro-processes of resistance as the individual ability to penetrate dominant meaning systems” (p. 1336). Stanford (2011) offers hope to social workers in this area of resistance. Stanford identifies that resistance offers an active role to social workers rather than a powerless role. The author states:

Despondency and despair, though, are poison to hope. My concern has been that, as hope is eroded and if our profession fatalistically accepts its relative powerlessness to ‘speak back’ to the prevailing conservative moral climate of neo-liberal risk society, then we are ‘at risk’ of further marginalisation and regulation as a profession (Stanford, 2011, p.1516).

Furthermore, Stanford (2011) found social workers did not respond with hopelessness when confronted with “risk-identity dilemmas” instead created a “moral response” in their identity. (p. 1529).

The notion of individual identity and of the use of self that may influence the level of risk social work leaders engage in is developed as my fifth theme. The literature establishes identity

as a key element in the risk and resistance work done by social work leaders. For example, Kondrat (1999) introduced the notion that the individual has a relationship with the macro structures. She refers to Giddens' notion of individuals have a relationship with social structures at a macro level as influencing in their identity, decisions, and practice actions. Similarly, Aronson and Smith (2011) identified the tension the managers' experience when they resist the new re-structuring policies and how their use of self is implicit in their resistance. Their study noted the managers worked to resist the neo-liberal changes in their organizations, yet protect their self-identity in the process a factor that suggests an intuitive understanding of risk was present in this leadership process.

Whereas, Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003) examined the interaction of management, self-identity work, role expectations and discourses within organizations. The study used a one subject methodology, which they called the heroine, examining the notion that individuals are always shaping their identity according to their organization's discourses. Sveningsson and Alvesson further suggest that managers are often changing their identities across time rather than maintaining one constant management identity. The study's results acknowledged identity narratives helped a person to consolidate many identities under the umbrella term of leadership. The authors noted their findings stress the importance of the personal nature of the self-identity narrative and note resistance is created in the heroine role due to the conflict of discourses between her personal identity and her role. Sveningsson and Alvesson suggest the heroine's self-identity narrative is more likely to influence her to act on her own personal convictions and her identity thereby resisting the organizational discourses.

In contrast, Mischenko (2005) identifies that managers fashion multiple opposing leadership identities instead of one fixed identity. She notes the dissonance in managing the

individual sense of self-identity against the sense of work self-identity becomes an agonizing process for a manager. Shanks, Lundstrom and Wiklund (2015) identified that middle managers were not resistant to the New Public Management model but rather adapted to the extra tasks. The study identified that the managers self-identified with their professional role of social work more than the role of manager. This notion of not resisting the New Public Management model and relating in identity to their social work values may be situated in the ways in which the middle managers respond to the increase in their administrative tasks and budgetary restraints.

The idea of a fluid identity is present throughout the literature. Bolton (2005) in her work on nursing managers notes these managers “glide from one performance to another, sometimes sincere, sometimes cynical, but at all times an element of self is present.” (p. 20). Aronson and Smith (2010) note that managers in Healy’s research “found ways to intrude participatory opportunities for service users under cover of official organizational code” (p. 533). The nurse managers in this study were able to use their roles to support their own evaluation of when services were threatened by neoliberal policies within their organizations. Thomas and Davies (2005) also suggest self-identity is influenced by “how power relations are exercised within organizations” (p.687). Baines et al (2015) note “that identity in the workplace is formed, in part, by the micro politics of resistance or everyday individual actions” (p. 439).

The literature offers a picture of social work leaders which ranges from the notion of a professional role, reflecting organizational expectations to the notion of a leader resisting organizational expectations. The literature does not offer a clear idea of what is required from a social worker leader in the area of self-identity or what motivates resistance or how the risk of resistance is understood. It is in this grey area of study that my research will be situated. I have wondered how social work managers negotiate the risk created when the organizational policies

and procedures conflict with the social justice values of the managers/supervisors and how those managers respond in those situations, the strategies they use. I am interested in the risk managers negotiate when challenging organizational policies, what the focus of their resistance is, and what values inform that resistance. Although the literature informs the notion of resistance work by social work leadership, my research will center on resistance and identity at a micro level in the social work profession within the context of the macro structures of their organizations' policies.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

My thesis approach draws from critical theory and post-structuralism: critical theory for its focus on relations of power especially on those that dominate the leadership discourse and post-structuralism for its attention to the relationship between power and identity and how those are conceived in leadership. I also use Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labour to highlight the notion that emotions inform identity in leadership in participants' accounts.

Critical theory examines political and social perspectives and is founded in the historical work of Marx, the Frankfurt School of sociological thought, and Habermas. Adams, Dominelli and Payne (2009) note that Marx would report that present day social work practices support social institutions in their oppressive capitalist practices. The authors further note the Frankfurt theorists presumed that people's cultural heritage is used by the capitalist state as an exercise in domination, whereas individuals in society make assumptions about their culture and heritage as a societal norm. The authors report "Habermas (1984, 1987) distinguishes between the 'system' and the 'lifeworld', which interact and to some extent conflict with each other" (Adams, Dominelli and Payne, 2009, p. 10). Habermas noted that interpretation of texts and symbols in literature is then interpreted again and becomes an exercise in hermeneutics and allows us to question the assumptions we have of our lives. Critical theory has expanded over the years to include feminist theory, critical race theory and post-colonialism. The term critical:

...refers to a particular set of left-of centre theories drawing on Marxism and strongly influenced by Habermas and the Frankfurt School ...this term is often used interchangeably with social justice oriented, anti-oppressive and other transformative approaches aimed at replacing racially stratified, sexist, ablest, hetero-normative capitalism with a system based on equity, fairness, participation and social justice (Smith, 2007: p. 149).

The basic theoretical assumption of Critical Theory is its examination of notions of power and social relationships. Critical Theory challenges and critiques societal considerations in order to change societal ideologies. Campbell and Baikie (2012) note “critical theorists assert that all social relationships, whether at micro, meso or macro levels, are political. The common understanding of the word political, that evokes images of political parties, elections, and governments, is not very useful on our journey” (p. 70). Similarly, Baines (2007) construes politicalizing a person or a system from a critical theoretical perspective “...is to introduce the idea that everything has political elements: that is, nothing is neutral, everything involves struggle over power, resources and affirming identities” (p. 51). Critical theory seeks to contest the norms of the accepted social order so that it may be questioned and action taken to change those norms or assumptions.

It is these definitions that I wish to examine in the context of my thesis work. The critical approach to leadership endeavours to integrate the personal with the political and the professional (Gallop, 2015). This theoretical concept queries: *what do individuals in society know* and the notions of *how do we know the knowledge we know; how do we know what knowledge is true and what is false*. The critical approach examines personal and societal values and how do we know those values. It also examines whether individuals more collective or are individuals distinctive and how are those experiences understood. Campbell and Baikie (2012) note critical social workers do not accept the notion that there is one reality that is the same for everyone. They suggest our understanding of our individual experiences is dependent on where and how we are positioned socially, culturally and politically.

Critical theory has been criticized as being an elitist theory with a dissonance between theory and practice. Alcantara and Valadares (2016) suggest “breaking the dichotomy between

theory and practice becomes feasible when one does not give up on knowing how things are or how things should (or could) be” (p. 20). The critique notes that at times it is difficult for critical theorists to see how social practices should be as they only have a partial understanding of the reality of how social practices could be. In my thesis questions, I seek the understanding of how social work managers negotiate the risk in their resistance work in their roles as manager. I recognize I only have a partial understanding of what that risk may look like in their reality.

I find this frame work compelling as it addresses the relationship between the political and the personal. I would like to examine the questions critical theory seeks to answer within my thesis with emphasis on the risk of resistance for leaders. By examining my participants’ narratives from a critical theory perspective, I may be able to identify the constructs of the role of leadership as well as how risk and resistance factor in identity constructions perhaps, leading to new ways of thinking of risk and resistance in leadership.

Post structuralism emerged out of France in the 1960s. It was a response to structuralism and looked at the notion of the heterogeneity of text and its meanings which are imbued in history, politics and ideologies. “Rather than viewing truth as something that already exists, post-structuralists sees all truths as constructed in the language and discourses available to them. The meaning and power of any discourse, piece of academic work or even case notes shift depending upon who is examining it, and where and when it is examined” (Baines, 2007, p.17). Interpretation of texts in post-structuralism is not only constructed by the author but by the reader’s own personal experience. Leaders in post-structuralism thought such as Foucault, Derrida and Roland Barthe sought to lead discourses on power, meanings in language and how difference or heterogeneity were constructed.

Agger (1991) notes post-structuralism proposes individual text “is a contested terrain in the sense that what it appears to “say” on the surface cannot be understood without reference to the concealments and contextualizations of meaning going on simultaneously to mark the text’s significance” (p. 112). In post-structuralism there is no truth or meaning as everything is constructed and this in and of itself can be a problem.

A criticism of post-structuralism notes that for there to be meaningful discussions of ideas, a starting point of understanding is required. However, if there all notions are constructed then there can be no meaning or truth to those notions. The idea of establishing a solid idea is difficult when all ideas are fluid. Merlingen (2013) in a discussion on post-structuralism as an international relations theory notes:

...that any meaningful discussion of the things one cannot do with poststructuralist IR requires as a baseline an understanding of what a decent IR theory ought to be able to do. And such an understanding is inevitably also about values (p. 4).

I am drawn to a post-structuralist theoretical model for this thesis in the examination of the social work managers’ notion of their identities. A post-structuralist view would note their identities should be fluid and shifting in their resistance work and would ask: *does a fluid self-identity impact the level of risk managers’ experience and do they find their value positions stable?* In post-structuralism, I am also drawn to Foucault’s notions of power. McKee (2009) notes:

Foucault conceives power to be more about the ‘management of possibilities’ and the ability to ‘structure the (possible) actions of others’ than recourse to violence or coercion. Power is exercised only over free subjects, with a capacity for action, and who have a fundamental recalcitrance of will. Therefore subjects have the ability to react to, and resist, governmental ambitions to regulate their conduct (p. 471).

I wonder if the critical managers negotiate the notion of power in their self-identities in order to practice resistance and does the notion of power in their position influence their actions.

I also draw on the newer discourse of Hochschild's Emotional Labour. Hochschild applies Marx's Alienation Theory in examining the notion of emotional labor in employees in how they are or are not able to express of their feelings in the workplace and how the workplace comes to control the expression of those feelings. Emotional labour proposes the process of transmutation of an employee's private feelings into a commodified presentation by management in a way that the employee comes "to belong to the organization and less to the self."

(Hochschild, 1983, p. 198).

Brook (2009) notes:

...management impose codified 'feeling rules' on emotional labourers to ensure delivery of the required service quality. These rules dictate the form, content and appropriateness of workers' emotional displays to customers, thereby separating them from the design and control of the emotional labour process (p. 533).

The public emotional displays of managers whether for service users, community collaterals or for colleagues become managed by the organization's expectations or professional practices.

Hochschild's Emotional Labour theory comes under critique in several areas. Hochschild assumes that organizations' managerial control of the employee's private emotions is intrinsic to all organizations and their practice expectations. Bolton (2009) notes "Emotional labour is appropriate for describing some but not all practices; it should be part of a repertoire of concepts designed to analyse the full range of emotion work enacted in organizations" (p. 550).

Hochschild's term 'emotional labour' is critiqued as the text infers that capitalist organizations have "appropriated all of our feelings so that there is no long any room for sentiments, moods or reactions that have not been shaped and commodified via the 'commercialization of intimate

life” (Bolton, 2005, p. 2). Bolton does not support that all feelings across all organizations are controlled by management.

Despite these critiques I am compelled to use Hochschild’s Emotional Labour theory as my thesis seeks to under the use of risk of critical managers in social work. This theoretical concept seeks to address the transference of private emotions of resistance work in the public workplace. Even though Hochschild applies her theoretical concept to front line workers, I wonder how the critical managers negotiate those private feelings in response to the resistance work they do in the interconnectedness with staff, service users and senior managers. This theoretical concept in my thesis would assist me to understand how managers regulate their own emotions simultaneously managing the emotions of their staff while practicing resistance work and wherein does the level of risk lay and how do they render the ‘right’ emotions.

The three theoretical frameworks/concepts I have chosen to apply to my thesis complement one another. These different epistemologies can be used in conjunction to create a new set of perspectives in the discourse on leadership, risk and resistance. The position of manager or leader implies notions of structure, power and relational work. In many organizations, managers control the resources and shape the practices that arise out of neoliberal policies and procedures, hence critical theory will examine the inequality of the neoliberal constructs. Hochschild’s theory of emotional labour rises out of Marx’s alienation theory and reviews the control over employees’ whether frontline or management emotional labour. I am interested if knowledge of that control of emotional labour contributes to resistance work and does emotional labour enhance the notion of risk. The theoretical concept of emotional labour is born out of critical Marx theories.

For my thesis work these theories will examine the managers' realities in resistance and how those realities are perceived by the managers and how they are expressed. Post-structuralism will examine the language used in their construct of power and in their resistance work by the managers and how the resistance work challenges the normative order in leadership. My hope is new knowledge on leadership will be gained by the interplay of Critical Theory, Post-structuralism and Hochschild's Emotional Labour.

Chapter Four: Methodology, Design and Methods

As my interest was in the resistance response of social service leaders or managers to the issues they identified as social justice concerns I wanted to ask how the participants respond to perceived injustices. The participants would need to be in positions of leadership and hold an understanding of social justice and resistance.

Recruitment and participants

The recruitment process for this study began by obtaining ethical approval from McMaster's Research Ethics Board (MREB) (See appendix D). Once ethical approval was received, I distributed a preapproved email script (See Appendix A) and letter of information (See Appendix B) to potential participants through networks of social work leaders known to practice in critical and justice –oriented ways. The participants were to have at least five years of manager experience

Participants were able to contact me directly if they were interested. The letter of information and consent outlined the purpose of the study, procedures involved with the study, potential risk and discomfort, confidentiality, participant withdrawal, and information about the study results/dissemination. Once participants indicated interest in participating and I had addressed their questions, a date and location most convenient for participants was chosen. Furthermore, since past colleagues may have received my recruitment email and potentially recognized my name; there were some concerns about relationships being present between myself and participants. However, there was no expectation or pressure that my colleagues should respond to my recruitment email. If a potential participant who was a past colleague were to respond, I

would have informed them of this via email, and if they wished to continue then their participation would be included.

With this recruitment process, two participants stepped forward. As this request did not generate sufficient participants, I re-applied to McMaster's Research Ethics Board for permission to change the request in order to widen the request for participation. This change request was approved and the invitation to possible participants were send out again. At this time, there was an interest expressed by five individuals, however, two followed up on the emails requesting a time to meet. In total four participants were interviewed.

The participants were in leadership positions in child welfare agencies in Southern Ontario at the time of the interviews. Most of the participants had been in their current leadership positions less than five years. Three of the participants had prior management experience. All had front line worker experience. All participants held a Master of Social Work Degree although their other degrees varied. All four interviews took place in an office or private meeting room within this agency.

Study Design.

Semi- structured interviews gave myself and participants structure to address the topics at hand, but provided space to discuss relatable and relevant content and for unexpected information to come forward (Mason, 2002, p.62). Semi-structured interviewing was chosen to enhance participation capacity to contribute to research. (Mason, 2002, p.65). Although the semi-structured interview guide asks if there is an understanding of resistance in their work, it is open to the fact that there may be not an understanding of resistance, and asks why participants

believe there is or is not resistance. In order to facilitate discussion during the interview guide (See Appendix C) was provided via email prior to the start of the interview.

Data Collection

Data was collected by means of semi-structured face to face interviews. The interview began with me explaining the study, the Letter of Information and Consent Form and providing the participants the opportunity to review and sign the Letter of Information and Consent Form. Participants were provided with a copy of the Letter of Information and their signed Consent Form for reference should they wish. The originals were kept in a private locked cabinet in my home. Participants were informed the interviews would be audio-recorded and with the participants' signed permission, all interviews were audio-taped. Hand written notes were completed during interviews as needed. Interviews ranged from thirty minutes to an hour.

The interview questions were intended to be exploratory within the notions of resistance and identity. During the interview process the participants were asked to answer a number of questions related to their engagement with resistance and identity.

Some brief questions about your background: How long have you been in your current role as a leader/manager/supervisor? Before this role: what did you do? Did you have previous experience in management? What is your educational background?

Please describe your role in the organization you work for?

What are some of the main challenges/sources of injustice you see for clients and for workers at your agency these days?

What challenges do you encounter in advocating for clients and workers?

Can you tell me about a time when you tried to bring about greater justice or resist an injustice you perceived towards clients or staff?

How did you prepare? What did it feel like for you, anticipating this action? What strategies did you use in the situation? Were there certain ways you thought about presenting yourself- can you discuss this?

How did your identity or history shape how you handled the situation?

Do you understand what you do as ‘resistance’? Why or why not?
Is there anything else you would like to add that we did not speak on today?

Once each interview question was completed all transcripts and letters of consent were securely stored during the data analysis process. The interviews were explored using approaches to thematic analysis such as those outlined by Ryan and Bernard (2003). I initially grouped the participant quotes in relation to the main questions I had asked in the interviews. I then examined their quotes to conceptually connect them to one another. I looked for repeated ideas, similarities and differences in their accounts about leadership and resistance, and also followed ideas from theory (Ryan and Bernard) such as ideas about identity and resistance and emotional labour. The results of my analysis follows in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Findings

All four participants provided meaningful insight into the topic of leadership and resistance. This section will discuss the themes found in the answers to each of the interview questions. While each interview was filled with varied experiences and opinions, I organized the findings into three themes. The themes were:

- Understanding of resistance.
- Strategies taken in the resistance work; and
- Influence of identity or social location on resistance work.

The identifying information for each participant was removed and altered in order to protect the confidentiality of the interview participants, in particular I refer to all participants as ‘she’ in order to protect the confidentiality of the one male participant. Within this findings chapter participants will be referred to as Interviewees 1 to 4.

Theme 1: Understanding of Resistance

All four participants identified as having an understanding of resistance in the work they do as leaders. The participants were able to offer examples of times they advocated for a client or resisted a policy they viewed as unjust. Identifying the nature and focus of the resistance work they do in their leadership role was the major theme that emerge out of all the interviews in response to the question, “Do you understand what you do as ‘resistance’? Why or why not?”

Three of the participants drew attention to injustices in how service providers understood and relate to service users. Interviewee 1 said that, as a leader, she “encounters more ...the broad issues like the way we think of families”. She went on to describe how she hears some staff and

other managers speak about service users, “...like the way we, the judgement we have on people who look different than us.” She is troubled by the judgements and elaborates on this injustice in her example of kin families. Every so often the kin family member who steps forward to offer to care for the child-(ren) at the center of the work has had previous historical involvement with the child welfare agency which leads to expressions of judgements from other staff members. In this context, participant 1 reflected this idea in her statement:

I’ve heard workers and managers say, ‘the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree’. I’ve heard managers say, I predict this will happen and I see all these words come [in] the way we talk about families, we talk about them poorly, we say we’re trying to support them and we do these nice, kind things for them but we really don’t believe that they are equal partners.

As participant 1 suggests in this quote, the history of potential kin caregivers’ involvements with child welfare can be viewed as a barrier to accepting the kin offer of assistance. However, there are many situations where the kin has made changes and recognizes they can assist. Their self-work or changes in situations do not get acknowledged but their past involvements do.

Interviewee 1 recognizes that managers do not always view kin service providers as a viable option due to staff judgements and previously held opinions. She recognizes her role is often to resist the voices of those staff who dissent about the kin placements.

Interviewee 2 identified similar dynamics when describing resistance in their leadership work. She notes the power staff have over clients in the child welfare context, and how clients are treated:

We don’t necessarily treat them as any other field of social work which is that you should have basically a full disclosure of your power at the beginning. You know, we should have meetings to get to know each other, we should get a plan together that we mutually agree we want to work on. Just keep case notes and then adjust the plan and then go through a termination process when the client is ready to leave. Every other field does that with voluntary clients but we don’t.

In this quote, Interviewee 2 drew attention to the power service providers have over service users and how that power is maintained unnecessarily in her view, even with voluntary clients.

Similarly, Interviewee 1 noted that “we really don’t believe (families) are equal partners.”

Likewise, Interviewee 4 noted that social service providers in her community hold power over clients describing that Ontario Work recipients “still line up to get their cheques”. All three identified that the beliefs and actions that reflect a ‘lesser than’ status of clients, was something they tried to resist in their leadership.

Concerns were also expressed by participants about how external organizational systems, such as the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, can influence the work done with service users by imposing “rules”. They find these rules may result in injustices towards service users, and that the injustices created by external organizations’ policies and directives inform their resistance work. Interviewee 2 identified her resistance work within the broader scope of the Ministry and its impact on front line workers as well as service users. She notes:

They talk a lot about helping indigenous people and, you know, dialogue – which is all good on a broad level, they talk about people of colour being overrepresented, equity issues which are really good. But when you get right down to the nitty gritty of how we deal with people in an individual family, they absolutely do not provide any guidance. So the crucial catalyst of social work which is relationship, they don’t have a part in that, and the government doesn’t have experienced people or doesn’t have people who are familiar with the concept of relationship building and so their directives and their regulations, and their other standards don’t accommodate that. In fact there’s still a bit of pressure from government who succumb to police, coroner’s office, the press, to say we should be firmer and give us more rules and everything will be ok. The exact antithesis of what we actually need, which is the freedom to build relationships and do work with people.

Interviewee 2 suggests the rules set by the Ministry based on the ideologies or pressures of external organizations on child welfare negatively impact the relationships front line social workers try to build with service users which in turn influence the justice service users may or

may not receive. Interviewee 2 identified this ‘more rules’ approach by external agencies as an area of focus for her resistance work, she understands how the Ministry allots resources or develops policies that do not align with what service users may require.

Similarly, Interviewee 3 also identified external influences that have negatively impacted service users in her resistance work, noting “resistance underlies a lot of the work we do”. She acknowledged the resistance work she does at the wider Ministry level. The example she offered of her resistance work highlighted the process of transferring services to another new external agency where initially, the voice of the family or child was not heard. The Ministry of Child and Youth Services had issued a directive/policy that an individual’s personal information was to be shared with the new agency regardless if consents for that sharing of information had been signed. Interviewee 3 notes:

So a lot of discussions have come up with our children, youth, families and resource providers whether they have their information shared, whether they have the choice to have their file serviced by either agency. And I guess the complicating factors around having different directives at the Ministry level, at the agency level, at upper management level, and how that can be limiting on families in terms of where their voice is in that.

Interviewee 3 identified that policies from the external organizational systems level can, at times silence the voice of the service users. She noted that the manner in which policies are distributed at the Ministry level and at the organizational level can be oppositional and how both can oppress how the service is provided. For this participant, these policies are where her resistance work is practiced.

As well, Interviewee 4 acknowledged her resistance work within the agencies in her local community which creates trouble for families and children and where she identifies social injustices. She notes her focus is more fully on how resources are distributed in her community.

Interviewee 4 identifies as an Indigenous person. Interviewee 4 identified her resistance work not so much as in her formal workplace but in her community. She identified poverty and the inequitable education system on the reserve as injustices and where she offers resistance in her work and in her community. Interviewee 4 noted:

So the injustices that I've seen for one, is poverty. The second biggest injustice, I believe, is on-reserve education for our kids. We're setting them up for failure, we have an inequitable education system compared to off-reserve. And we're not encouraging kids to learn in the way that they need to learn which then, you know, the poverty cycle continues. So we have poor attendance in our communities, in our schools. We have, sometimes it's due to poverty, no lunches, no childcare, so the older people got to stay home and watch the little kids. And that's one of the biggest social injustices that I see currently.

Interviewee 4 points out she the impact of poverty in her community and how the lack of resources for certain programming impacts the community as a whole. She furthers her conversation around the distribution of resources in her community. She sees the larger systemic problem of services that are not adequately resourced thereby limiting the effectiveness of the programs in her community. Interviewee 4 noted there appears to be an inadequacy of supportive services in the areas of health, counselling and social support in her community. Although she identifies the community as “rich” in the number of services offered in the community, she suggested there are long wait lists for the services.

Interviewee 4 addressed her resistance work to the social injustices she has identified, noting at times it places her in an uncomfortable position. “Now do they dislike me for saying that? Absolutely. Been a target because I've spoke out against a lot of services that are ineffective for people, to me it's a waste of money.”

Three of the participants identified that in their leadership work they resist the decisions in the larger systems. All the participants were clear in what they were fighting for as well as

what they were fighting against. Their concerns around the ways service providers think and talk about service users was noted as an area for resistance. All the participants presented as outspoken in their resistant to the social injustices they identified both in their organization and externally to the community and the Ministry who do not serve families well. The participants spoke of their critical approaches to the policies and directives set by external organizations and how those policies are enacted that create barriers inhibiting the provision of service for service users. More specifically the kinds of policies and approaches they resisted were those that emphasized rules rather than relationships, that denied children and families a voice in their own services, and that perpetuate inequities and inadequacies in on-reserve social services. These themes of the ways service providers think and talk about families and the oppressive policies set by external social welfare structures/organizations were identified as meriting their resistance work.

Theme 2: Strategies in Resistance Work.

Having identified what resistance meant to each interviewee, each participant addressed the strategies they implement in their resistance work in their leadership and their efforts to obtain a desired outcome. Their thoughtful responses when asked the following question reflected how they negotiate the social injustices they encounter in their work and community. Each participant was asked: “How did you prepare? What did it feel like for you, anticipating this action? What strategies did you use in the situation? Were there certain ways you thought about presenting yourself - can you discuss this?”

Two participants were clear in their discussion of their resistance strategy of being aware of and deliberate about the language they use. For example, when attempting to intervene in how staff think and talk about kin care, participant 1 noted: “So we’re going to put kids into a

traditional foster home and I use the term stranger care, even though I know people are really offended by that.” She also referenced the language used in writing the social history of a person and how it is important to see the future impact of the current work. She worried about how staff describe the life story of a service users in writing a social history. She wondered if the story written by staff will be seen by the service user and whether it is a thoughtful honest representation of that person’s life.

We don’t want a push-down box for someone’s social history, we want rich stories saying when you’re writing those words, they don’t belong to you; they belong to someone else. You are writing the story of someone’s life there, that’s going to come back and what will they see? Can you show it to them now? Can you let them see it right now and are you writing what is truth?

Similarly, Interviewee 2 presented a practical approach incorporating the use of language in one of her strategies. Participant 2 referred to the idea of service users that have agreed to work with the child welfare agency on a volunteer basis but the term does not accurately reflect how the service user is working with the agency as it usually means coerced service but not court involved. She noted:

We have a group of clients that go to court and they are required at their peril, I guess, to cooperate with us. We have another group who would be in court but they are collaborative with us. Unfortunately, the system calls them voluntary. They’re not voluntary and [child welfare system] doesn’t use the word collaborative, [child welfare system] uses the term voluntary agreement. So the organization here has changed our forms

The resistance work for Interviewee 2 was to change the forms to encompass the change from a voluntary agreement to a collaborative agreement at the organizational level.

The participants also referred to value-based strategies in their leadership resistance work.

Interviewee 1 referred to value systems both at an organizational level and at a personal level in many of her responses. For her, the value systems in place acted as a strategy to hold individuals to accountability. Interviewee 1 noted:

And these are things philosophically, what do we believe? We believe that families are the experts, I start with that place, and then I say, 'Well, because I don't see that playing out down here.' Then I say, 'ok, what's the next step?' Okay, if we really believe that, then what do we have to do? Well, we have to think of family first, so that means, how do we do that? Ok we have to put things in organizationally and processes in place that will support our real beliefs even though we know that those are contested among social workers and front line staff. It says, organizationally, we entrench those beliefs right into our vision and our mission, so that they will become part of the way we do work. Then we can hold people accountable. Right?

Another example of a value based strategy used by Interviewee 1 related to the context of her own belief system. She spoke of advocating for her own children in the education system and holding that system accountable for its actions. Interviewee 1 reflected:

So my kids went to school in the separate system, and I'm Catholic and I remember, I didn't have lots of problems but through the years, every so often, if I had any problem, I was able to speak to the teacher or principal. I knew that in the separate system, they would have things, like little things that would say, that their work was based on the teachings of Christ, that we believe that every child is a gift from God. So I'm like, 'ok so tell me how that fits with this behaviour that I see right here?' And you can hold a system accountable, and I believe our clients should hold us accountable by what we say we're going to do, do we mean what we say and say what we mean, right?

As part of her reflection on how workers and clients can use value statements to hold agencies accountable, Interviewee 2 also identified making little changes on route to making larger changes in the direction of the values you are committed to. She advised:

That's what I would encourage people. You have to get a kind of a feeling of, how far can I push this? And sometimes you have to be willing to put some things on hold, right? And sometimes to get little changes, but making sure the little changes work towards the big one that you want in the end

She offers an understanding that in negotiating for changes, there are value ideas as a leader that will be pushed through and others that will be parked.

Similarly, Interviewee 3 referenced her commitment to her value of inclusivity. She noted her commitment to including the voices of the youth in the advocacy work she did with the Ministry. She noted that in her leadership role she had to advocate directly for clients against the Ministry directive and to do so she had to “... consciously put aside ‘preconceived ideas or notions’, because it was only my perspective. And that in order to make this decision to impact the process, it has to be inclusive.”

All the interviewees were able to identify strategies in their resistance work where they have intentionally resisted a policy or directive where they felt service users were negatively impacted. The power differential of their positions of leadership assisted these participants in their resistance work. Interviewee 2 noted she strategically practices resistance: “And one of things that I try to do is interpret government policy, what I’ve learnt is that, do what the government wants you to do, make it look like it’s what they want you to do, this is the resistance, and then you can do what you want to do as long as there aren’t any glaring discrepancies.”

Whereas, Interviewee 3 was firm in her strategy of using her leadership position to argue against the larger external system for the rights of the client. She reported the following:

I think that one of the things in our agency is that the children in care, there is a directive that they would be transferred to the new agency despite some of those children and youth voicing concerns that they did not want that to happen. So, some of the things that, that I did in conjunction with the agency, is look at what avenues did they have for their voices to be heard or their rights to be respected.

This participant was concerned for the families and youth that did not want to transfer to the new agency. She previously identified earlier the “preconceived ideas or notions” that everyone in the reserve community but who resided off the reserve would want to be serviced by the new agency. When the Ministry issued its directive noting that no one had a choice, she advocated for

the youth and children to have a voice in the transfer process. She explained that following on the advocacy work she did in conjunction with the agency, all crown wards had an appointed Ontario Children's Lawyer, "so an independent person to talk to them and kind of present in court or to the agencies, what their client's wishes are." It is interesting to note that the resistance for this participant in her leadership role was completed in conjunction with the larger agency's successful push back on a directive from the Ministry to share client information without consent and to not allow choice in the determination of which agency would service their needs.

Similarly, Interviewee 4 also identified using the power of her leadership role in her resistance work within her community. She presented a case example which clearly reflected her resistance work against the social service systems. Interviewee 4 shared:

Now, you might have a single mom. Something happened in her life like whether or not she had to pay the money she was going to use for groceries on something else. And one of the times that I said, you know, it was fair that she did this, and she used the money for this and I understand that as a mom. And so what I did was, I wrote her a food voucher to replace the money. It was like a hundred bucks, nothing major or out of this world, just enough to get by. She had something like, four kids. And then, I had an OW [Ontario Works] worker call me the next week asking me how much I gave to her in a voucher because they were going to claw it back the following month off of her cheque. And I said, 'I'm not releasing any information to you.' She sent me a consent, and again, I told her, 'I'm not releasing any information to you.' I went in and I assessed the situation and I did what I felt necessary.

The participants noted their positions of social work leadership offer them space for resistance, in this case, the space and power to withhold information from another agency. They acknowledged they are able to move beyond the conventional understanding of leadership to resist policies based on a neo-liberal premise. They openly offer the influence of their position as a resistance strategy. Interviewee 1 shared her role as a director of service that also influences her resistance work and factors in the serving of service users within her leadership role.

And so as a leader, one of the challenges is, is actually looking at the conundrum we have that there are many times that sometimes I feel like we are serving our staff more than we are serving our clients... I want to make sure that the marginalized folks, the people who don't have a voice that the balance of power does not go to those of us with power, but to those of us without. And how do I make sure that I don't tip the scales in the wrong way.

Interviewee 4 notes she uses her leadership role to “fight” the government while acknowledging the conundrum that her social work leadership position is financed by the government. She stated: “Even though I am the government and provincial government at that, not even the federal government, you know, operations, you know, you're still doing what you can from inside to kind of help people.”

The three strategies highlighted by participants in this study were the use of language, value based approaches and the use of the power of their leadership position. The deliberate use of language to avoid negatively describing families and to clearly represent the work the family is doing with the agency were strategies identified by two of the participants. Others identified the use of a value system as a guiding principal to engage an accountability with their staff and to advocate for moderating policies or directives. Two of the participants suggested the power in their social work leadership role offered a vehicle for producing useful change and transforming structures. They highlighted how they use their role as a social work leader as a resistance strategy to challenge policies and practices within their organization and with organizations external to their agency.

Theme 3: Influence of identity/social location on resistance work.

In this study each of the participants holds a leadership position. Three of the four interviewees are in positions of upper management while one is in a middle manager role. All the participants spoke of their personal identity in the context of their resistance work. They acknowledged that their life frameworks guide their resistance work in their professional

leadership roles. When asked “How did your identity or history shape how you handled the situation?” their replies were as varied as their individual leadership roles. These variations are explored in their responses.

All four participants identified their personal history as influences on their resistance work. Interviewee 1 identified her personal history as influencing her role. She speaks of her parents and their responses to situations.

I grew up fairly wealthy and I often think how my mom and dad were both farmers and I really think underneath some of that was this idea that we are no better than anybody else. I saw my dad, a businessman be, pick up hitchhikers and bring them home. My mom was a real homemaker. My dad would meet with someone who was an alcoholic and talk to them and say to them, ‘You know what, I know someone who can help.’ He would get them over there and connect people to each other, and even now in their 80’s, they still do some of that stuff, and it’s kind of neat.

This value response that suggests ‘we are no better than anybody else’ is reflected in this participant’s dismay at how staff sometimes talk about families involved with the agency discussed earlier:

... we say we’re trying to support them and we do these nice, kind things for them but we really don’t believe that they are equal partners ... we don’t treat them like the experts in the families that we should.

As well, Interviewee 2 identified her past as influencing her leadership and resistance. She offered:

So I was much more likely to be resistant, I think, because I did have a very difficult --- growing up, in the east end of [my city] where you learned to defend yourself and you do learn to have the street smarts. And so ...so I don’t see myself quite as the way other people see me from the outside.

Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 4 identified as indigenous in their narratives and spoke to the influence of their Indigeneity on their resistance work. Interviewee 3 notes, although not raised in the culture of her ancestors, she is influenced by the history she has heard. She notes it has created in her a passion for working with indigenous service users.

There has been family members that have lost certain rights and gained certain rights because of their background. I wasn't raised traditionally or, or with certain cultural traditions but I think it's given me an interest, I think, in the background and the history and a passion for working with my families.

Interviewee 4 also identified her family life, particularly her mother as a source of her ability to do resistance work. She also touched on the cultural influence of her grandmother and the sense of belonging she has to her community. She shared the influence of her mother on her resistance work noting her mother taught her critical thinking skills.

My mom especially, she would always say to us, don't believe what you read, always question. That's what it's there for, is for you to start thinking about things. And so she, she said that to us since we were little. But then as – you know, it really does shape you to really, you know, question, even the newspaper that you're reading. A simple article and is it a fair reflection of what happened in a situation or is it someone's perception, right? And she would always make us even little, kind of questions around critical thinking, you know, at that time.

Interviewee 1 noted her upbringing and home life influenced her social work leadership position. She defines the relationship between her personal history and her ability to engage in resistance work as a leader.

I was brought up in a very hope filled home and with a philosophical framework, we were brought up quite involved in our faith and for me, being a person that understands the reason why and how we're doing it as opposed to looking where I want to end up, where am I supposed to believe that there was a place for me in this world, that there is a place ---- and I believe that really for everybody, not just for me. And so, it feels like taking my place and carrying out vision mission stuff is really what I'm supposed to do. So I've always, you know, I didn't set out to be a director, in fact, I never would have picked this job, but somehow I feel like I end up here, and right now I feel like I'm supposed to be here.

All four participants approached their social work leadership resistance from a place of commitment of care and service provision to the service users. They spoke of the day to day resistance that informs their work and their resulting actions as they work to acknowledge the influence language, staff judgements and regressive policies negatively have on service users. The participants also identified their personal identities especially their experiences growing up.

They noted their resistance leadership is in part attributable to their own histories and identities. Their identity allows them to apply their social work leadership positions and the power inherent in those roles to their approach to service users and to external power structures and to situations that arise in the course of the day.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Through the development of this thesis work, I had an underlying assumption about the role of leadership in resistance work. I had experienced it both as a front-line worker when my managers had quietly resisted organizational policies and as a manager when I had directed staff how to “get around” policies that were viewed as negative to service users. In both those situations and in the research work of Aronson and Smith (2011) resistance had been “playing the game and seeking to disrupt it” (p. 444), while striving “to protect their senses of self amid the resulting entanglement of compliance and resistance” (p. 444). In other words the resistance appeared to be a quiet resistance. However, the participants in this study did not hide their resistance but were open in the resistance work even when it pertained to the directives of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The participants were transparent in the resistance work they did.

I had also hoped to understand how the leaders understood resistance and how their identities inform their resistance practice. The findings speak to the notions of leadership in resistance and to how identity informed that practice.

The findings were organized around three central themes from the interviews. The first theme was how the participants understood resistance or what were they fighting for in their work. Exploring this theme, I came to understand the participants were fighting for respectful relationships with service users. The participants were also fighting against the implications of social inequalities imbedded in policies and directives that are not beneficial to service users. The second theme focused on the strategies the participants engaged in their resistance work. Participants identified the deliberate use of language (to provoke analysis, or to be more honest), the awareness and activation of values in the work, and the strategic use of their power and role

as leaders. The third theme was how their identities influenced the resistance work they engaged in. It seemed their identities mattered in relation to why they resisted and how they resisted policies or behaviours. Their histories and identities led them to take up certain value positions in their work, to be critical and unafraid in their resistance, and to have strong loyalties to their communities. The commitment to resistance work was common across all the participants despite the differences in gender, age, culture; role in the organization; power in their respective role and upbringing. The

Limitations of Research:

Limitations occurred due to the time constraint needed for the completion of this thesis. This study would have benefited from having a variety of voices from different social locations and practices/organizations. Recruiting from different academic institutions which may hold different value and ideological bases may have given different perspectives on the impact of resistance in leadership. Furthermore, it would have been interesting to do this study with a larger number of male participants, in order to be able to contrast the experiences and inspect gender differences in the experience of resistance work in leadership. It is interesting to note at this point that although the request to participate was sent out to a small group initially and then to a larger group, there was not a high response to this request. I query whether the topic of resistance as it pertains to leadership roles within the organization was a hindrance to participation in this study? Although the study was on leadership and resistance in relation to service users, the participants had to think about that notion in their responses as they no longer have consistent front-line experience in their leadership roles. As well, while emotional labour is an important theme in the literature, this study did not offer a response to how leaders conceptualize emotional labour in their professional role or how emotional regulation is managed

at that level, potentially enhancing sense of risk. Future research might focus specifically on this question. The indigeneity of two of the participants and its relation to resistance was not explored in this work on leadership. As an individual that identifies as white with black heritage, I felt a limited capacity to engage in the significance of Indigenous people's leadership. A further discussion on Indigenous culture in relation to resistance and in relationship to leadership roles could deepen the scholarship in this area.

Discourse with the Literature:

As noted earlier, the literature on leadership offers little guidance about social work ideals and resistance in leadership roles. Carroll and Nicholson (2014) cite Ford and Harding (2007): "... leadership itself is a concept 'freighted with so much meaning' and 'libidinal energy' that it tempts participants, facilitators and organizational champions to appropriate and ring-fence it's meaning to serve their diverse interests" (p. 1414). In this discussion, I consider how themes in my study intersected with themes in the literature on leadership and social work.

Social Work Leadership and Education:

In the course of identifying themes in the literature, the notion of the influence of Schools of Social Work on leadership was discussed. The literature scrutinized the influence on universities to prepare students' skills in social justice at the macro level. Bliss, Pecukonis and Snyder-Vogel (2014) noted this was a void in this area of social work leadership. In this study, although all the participants had Masters of Social Work degrees, those degrees were not all obtained from the same universities. I would not link these participants' resistance work to their education as the participants in this study did not learn under the same educational philosophies.

A larger sample may have supported this notion but this study cannot address that point in the literature.

Social Work and Leadership: Values and Respectful Relationships

Much of the literature suggests that social workers are reluctant to fully embrace leadership as an idea or role. Lawler (2007) notes social work leadership is built on social work skills and yet discounted in the social work profession. However, in this study, the participants did not discount leadership. Rather the participants refer to their social work skills to support that their leadership is value based.

One of the basic value teachings in social work is relationship building with service users. In this study, the notion of relationship was key to the participants. Respectful relationships with service users were consistently valued and fought for, and the bonds that connect workers and service users, and what they have in common, was highlighted.

The literature did not speak to the role of social work leadership and relationships except in the context of type of leaders such as transformational or heroic. In the interviews I did for my study, the concept of relationship between staff, service users or the greater organizations was a piece that informed participants' resistance work. The notion of relationship ranged from holding staff accountable in respecting service users to holding the Ministry accountable to respecting the choice and voice of indigenous service users.

The challenges that come with social work leadership were also very prevalent in the participant's responses. The study would concur with McDonald and Chenoweth (2009) that "social work managers find themselves precariously balancing a range of competing demands, those normally expected in day to day work, as well as additional pressures created from

unstable organisational and policy environments” (p. 105). This notion is particularly supported in Interviewee 3’s response to the Ministry of Child and Youth Services’ directive to not include the voices of the clients in the process of switching services to another agency, in which she describes the situation as “stressful because there’s so many different considerations and complicating factors ...”

Leadership and Resistance:

The notion of leadership and resistance was advanced in this study. In the mainstream leadership literature, the discourse on leadership and resistance was understood, as Zoller and Fairhurst noted, “... leadership in terms of the management of dissent” (p. 1331). However, there is a growing discourse in the literature that identifies resistance in leadership development is changing. Carroll and Nicholson (2014) note “... framing leadership development as a site of ‘resisting work’ and exploring how such work can be productive and generative for leadership and learning” (p. 1433).

All participants in this study noted their work as resistance work. All participants responded affirmatively to the question, “Do you understand what you do as ‘resistance’? As well they were able to articulate why they did it. They also appeared to not fear the consequences for their actions. The participants in this study were forthright about their resistance work. Although they were aware of the risk implications of their resistance, there was sense of satisfaction and purpose in their resistance. They did not seem governed by the risk and fear in their resistance work which seems to not have affected their individual emotional labour. As Interviewee 4 noted: “Now do they dislike me for saying that? Absolutely. Been a target because I’ve spoke out.” However, one participant noted that having the government know you are resisting their policies may not always be a good thing. She suggested an underground resistance,

“what I’ve learnt is that, do what the government wants you to do, make it look like it’s what they want you to do, this is the resistance, and then you can do what you want to do as long as there aren’t any glaring discrepancies.”

The results of this study would support the literature on leadership and resistance and not in a passive manner but in taking actions with consequences. These leaders were not afraid to identify as resisting the social injustices they see in their work. These leaders would challenge the notion that resistance in leadership is managing the dissent around policy change as they worked to direct policy change as shown in Interviewee 3 where the Directive was changed to allow the youth a voice through the Office of the Children’s Lawyer. We cannot know fully the reasons for this apparent fearlessness, but it could be situated in several possibilities, from the type of individuals/personalities they possess to the culture of the agencies for which they work. The notion of organizational support of the participants’ resistance is worthy of future research.

The participants in this study were able to address the pieces of their identity that informed their resistance work. They would agree with Stanford’s (2011) notion that social workers respond with a “moral response” in their identity when faced with “risk –identity dilemmas” in their work (p. 1529). These participants held on to personal values and to organizational values when engaging in their resistance work. Interviewee 1, for example, reflected a length about her hope in the work she does.

Interviewee 4 shared she resists as it is part of her identity, “growing up, my mom and my grandma, they always taught us, use your voice, advocate.” The results of this small study reflect the findings of Aronson and Smith (2011); Aronson and Smith (2010); Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003); Shanks, Lundstrom and Wiklund (2015); and Mischenko (2005) who ascertain identity is a key element in the risk and resistance work done by social work leaders.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The central themes identified by the leadership participants were:

- Understanding of resistance: how the participants understand what they were fighting for in their work.
- Strategies taken in the resistance work: the deliberate use of language, awareness and how values motivated as well as their use of power inherent in their leadership roles.
- Influence of identity or social location on resistance work: the influence of their personal histories; how it framed their identities and how it influenced the resistance work they engaged in.

These strategies offer implications for leadership practice within the notion of professional resistance; how to engage in strategies or actions that oppose policies that negatively influence service users. The strategies offer some answer the question of how policies can be resisted at the leadership level and how a leader uses their authority in their resistance work. For example, the deliberate use of language is the use of power. The strategy of the deliberate use of language by the participants acknowledges the power behind the language both in the language used by the front line workers and by the manager in suggesting a different use of language in their interactions. The implication of power in this specific strategy was also evident in the example of change to policy language from a Volunteer Agreement to a Collaborative Agreement.

While this research project serves as only a conversation on the notion of leadership and resistance, it is hoped that there was some light shed on this discourse. The participants in this study are leaders who engage in resistance work on an almost daily basis. Their shared value systems based on social work values and personal experiences inform this desire to take the risk to resist. Although the participants did not attend the same schools of social work, they shared a

commitment to the values inherent in the Social Work Code of Ethics. This commitment was a commonality between the participants. Their ability to use their voice to advocate for change and to be transparent in that process confronts the dominant ideology that leaders lead only from organizational perspectives and goals. The participants were clear that their resistance was for their communities whether those be a cultural community or the services users in their work community, they resisted behaviours or policies with the hope for better.

“The likelihood that your acts of resistance cannot stop the injustice does not exempt you from acting in what you sincerely and reflectively hold to be the best interests of your community.”

— **Susan Sontag, *At the Same Time: Essays and Speeches***

References

- Adams, R., Domenilli, L., Payne, M. (2009). *Critical Practice in Social Work*, Second Edition. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.
- Agger, B. (1991). Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism: Their Sociological Relevance. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17, 105-131.
- Alcantara de Castro, V., Valadares Lopes, J., Macedo Dos Santos, A., Cappelle Carvalho Alves, M, (2016). A Solution through Praxis? Reflections About the Ivory Tower Metaphor and the Indissociability Between Theory and Practice in Organization Studies. *Mackenzie Management Review*, 17(5), 15-35.
- Alimo-Metcalf, B., & Alban-Metcalf, J. (2005). “Leadership: Time for a new direction?” *Leadership*, 1(1), 51-71.
- Aronson, J. & Smith, K. (2010). Managing Restructured Social Services: Expanding the Social? *The British Journal of Social Work*, 40(2), 530-547.
- Aronson, J., & Smith, K. (2011). Identity Work and Critical Social Service Management: Balancing on a Tightrope? *The British Journal of Social Work*, 41(3), 432-448.
- Baines, D. (2007). *Anti-Oppressive Social Work Practice: Fighting for Space, Fighting for Change*. In Baines, D. (Ed.) *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice Building Transformative Politicized Social Work*. (1-30).
- Baines, D. (2007). *Bridging the Practice-Activism Divide in Mainstream Social Work: Advocacy, Organizing and Social Movements*. In Baines, D. (Ed.) *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice Building Transformative Politicized Social Work*. (50-66).
- Baines, D., Charlesworth, S., Turner, D., O’Neill, L. (2014). Lean social care and worker identity The role of outcomes, supervision and mission. *Critical Social Policy*, 34(4), 433-453.
- Baines, D., Daly, T. (2015). Resisting Regulatory Rigidities: Lessons from Front-line Care Workers. *Studies in Political Economy*, 95, 137-160.
- Bennis, W.G. (1959). Leadership Theory and administrative behavior: The problem of authority. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 4(3), 259-260.
- Bergeron, P.G. (1989). *Modern Management in Canada: Concepts and Practices*. Scarborough: Nelson Canada.
- Bliss, D.L., Pecukonis, E., & Snyder-Vogel, M. (2014). Principled Leadership development Model for Aspiring Social Work Managers and Administrators: Development and Application. *Human Services Organizations Management, Leadership & Governance*, 38(1), 5-15.

- Bolton, S.C. (2005). 'Making up' managers: the case of NHS nurses. *Work, employment and society*, 19(1), 5-23.
- Bolton, S.C. (2009). Getting to the Heart of the Emotional Labour Process: a reply to Brook. *Work Employment and Society*, 23(3), 549-560.
- Brilliant, E.L. (1986). Social Work Leadership: A Missing Ingredient. *Social Work*, 31(5), 325- 331.
- Burns, J.M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Call, C., Owens, L.W., & Vincent, N.J. (2013). Leadership in Social Work Education: Sustaining Collaboration and Mission. *Advances in Social Work*, 14(2), 594-612.
- Campbell, C. & Baikie, G. (2012). Beginning at the Beginning: An exploration of Critical Social Work. *Critical Social Work*, 13(1), 67-81. Retrieved on March 1, 2017 from <http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/2012-volume-13-no-1>
- Carey, M. (2014). Mind the Gaps: Understanding the Rise and Implications of Different Types of Cynicism within Statutory Social Work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 44(1), 17-144.
- Carroll, B. & Nicholson, H. (2014). Resistance and struggle in leadership development. *Human Relations*, 67(11), 1413-1436.
- Crevani, L. Lindgren, M., & Packendorff, J. (2010). Leadership, not leaders: On the study of leadership as practices and interactions. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 26(1), 77-86.
- Fine, M., & Teram, E. (2013). Overt and covert ways of responding to moral injustices in social work practice: Heroes and mild-mannered social work bipeds. *British Journal of Social Work*, 43(7), 1312-1329.
- Ford, J. (2005). Examining leadership through critical feminist readings. *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 19(3), 236-251.
- Ford, J. & Harding, N. (2007). Move Over Management We Are All Leaders Now. *Management Learning*, 38(5), 475-493.
- Fournier, V., & Grey, C. (2000). At the critical moment: Conditions and prospects for critical management studies. *Human Relations*, 53(1), 7-32.
- Gallop, C. (2013). Knowing Nothing: Understanding New Critical Social Work Practice, *Journal Of Applied Hermeneutics*, 1-21. Retrieved on March 1, 2017 from <http://jah.journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/jah/index.php/jah/issue/archive>
- Gellis, Z. (2001). Social work perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership in health care. *Social Work Research*, 25(1), 17-25.

- Harlow, E., Berg, E., Barry, J., Chandler, J. (2012). Neoliberalism, managerialism and the reconfiguring of social work in Sweden and the United Kingdom. *Organization*, 20(4), 534-550.
- Healy, K. (2002). Managing Human Services in a Market Environment: What Role for Social Workers. *British Journal of Social Work*, 32(5), 527-540.
- Hochschild, A. (1983). *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Holosko, M. (2009). Social Work Leadership: Identifying Core Attributes. *Journal of Human Behaviour in the Social Environment*, 19, 448-459.
- Kondrat, M.E. (1999). Who Is the “Self” in Self-Aware: Professional Self-Awareness from a Critical Theory Perspective. *Social Service Review*, 73(4), 451-477.
- Lawlor, J. (2007). Leadership in Social Work: A Case of Caveat Emptor? *British Journal of Social Work*, 37(1), 123-141.
- Ledbetter, B. (2012). Dialectics of Leadership for Peace: Toward a Moral Model of Resistance. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 9(5), 11-24.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching* (2nd Ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Merlingen, M. (2013). Is Poststructuralism a Useful IR Theory? What About Its Relationship to Historical Materialism? Found online March 6, 2017 at <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/05/08/is-poststructuralism-a-useful-ir-theory-and-what-about-its-relationship-to-historical-materialism/>
- Mischenko, J. (2005). Exhausting management work: conflicting identities. *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 19(3), 204-218.
- McAllan, W., & MacRae, R. (2010). Learning to lead: Evaluation of a leadership development programme in a local authority social work service. *Social Work & Social Sciences Review*, 14(2), 55-72.
- McDonald, C. & Chenoweth, L. (2009). Leadership: A Crucial Ingredient in Unstable Times. *Social Work & Society*, 7(1), 102-112.
- McKee, K. (2009). Post-Foucauldian governmentality: What does it offer critical social policy analysis? *Critical Social Policy*, 29(3), 465-486.
- Rank, M.G. and Hutchinson, W.S. (2000). An Analysis of Leadership Within the Social Work Profession. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 36(3), 487-502.

- Ryan, G., Bernard, H.R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1), 85-109.
- Scholtes, P.R. (1998). *The Leader's Handbook: Making things happen, getting things done*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Shanks, E., Lundstrom, T., & Wiklund, S. (2015). Middle Managers in Social Work: Professional Identity and Management in a Marketised Welfare State. *British Journal of Social Work*, 45(6), 1871-1887.
- Sinclair, A. (2007). *Leadership for the Disillusioned: Moving beyond the myths and heroes to leading that liberates*. Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Smith, K. (2007). *Social Work, Restructuring and Everyday Resistance*. In Baines, D. (Ed.) *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice Building Transformative Politicized Social Work*. (145- 159).
- Sontag, S. (2007). *At the Same Time: Essays and Speeches*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Stanford, S. (2011). Constructing Moral Responses to Risk: A Framework for Hopeful Social Work Practice. *British Journal of Social Work*, 41(8), 1514-1531.
- Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations*, 56(10), 1163-1193.
- Thomas, R., & Davies, A. (2005). Theorizing the Micro-politics of Resistance: New Public Management and Managerial Identities in the UK Public Services. *Organization Studies*, 26(5), 638-706.
- Van Maurik, J. (2001). *Writers on Leadership*. London: Penguin Books.
- Ward, S.C., Bagley, C., Lumby, J., Woods, P., Hamilton, T., Roberts, A. (2015). School Leadership for equity: lessons from the literature. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 19(4), 333-346.
- Yukl, G. (2010). *Leadership in Organizations*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education Inc.
- Zoller, H.M., Fairhurst, G.T. (2007). Resistance leadership: The overlooked potential in critical organization and leadership studies. *Human Relations*, 60(9), 1331-1360.

APPENDIX A - 1

**Email Recruitment Script
Sent on Behalf of the Researcher
by the Holder of the Participants' Contact Information**

**Deborah Rimap
Masters Candidate in Social Work
Study Title: Leadership, Risk and Resistance in the Social Services**

E-mail Subject line: McMaster study about social work leadership, risk and resistance.

Deborah Rimap, a MSW student here at McMaster, has contacted the School of Social Work asking us to tell social work leaders and potential leaders about a study she is doing on risk and resistance in leadership. This research is part of her Master of Social Work program at McMaster University.

The following is a brief description of her study.

I am hoping to learn how social work leaders in the social services engage in resistance work when encountering social injustices in their organizations. I am also hoping to understand how leaders perceive and deal with the risk of their actions when resisting policies or practices that negatively influence service users.

If you are interested in getting more information about taking part in Deborah's study please read the brief description below and or **CONTACT DEBORAH RIMAY DIRECTLY** by using her McMaster email address: rimayda@mcmaster.ca . Deborah will not tell me or anyone at the School of Social Work who participated or not. Taking part or not taking part in this study will have no bearing on your relationship with the school.

Deborah Rimap is inviting you to take part in a 60-minute face to face interview that will take place at a convenient time and place for you. She will work out those details with you. She hopes to learn what social work managers like you, think about risk and resistance in your practice.

Deborah has explained that you can stop being in the study at any time during the face to face interview or not answer questions but can still be in the study. She has asked us to attach a copy of her information letter to this email. That letter gives you full details about her study.

In addition, this study has been reviewed and cleared by the McMaster Research Ethics Board. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is being conducted you may contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
Gilmour Hall – Room 305 (ROADS)
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

Sincerely,
Jennie Vengris
Assistant Professor and Field Education Development

DATE: October 17, 2017

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INFORMATION / CONSENT

A Study about social service leadership, resistance and risk

Student Investigator:

Deborah Rimap

School of Social Work

McMaster University

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

(905) 979-0970

E-mail: rimayda@mcmaster.ca

Faculty Supervisor:

Dr. Chris Sinding

School of Social Work

McMaster University

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

(905) 525-9140 ext. 24596

E-mail: sinding@mcmaster.ca

Purpose of the Study:

You are invited to take part in this study on how social work leaders in the social services engage in resistance work when encountering social injustices in their organizations. I want to understand the decisions the social work managers make when resisting an organizational policy or practice that may have a negative impact on service users. I am doing this research for a Master of Social Work Thesis.

Procedures involved in the Research:

If you would like to participate in this study, you will be asked open-ended and semi-structured questions and the length of the interview will be around 60 minutes. This interview will take place at a mutually agreed upon location in which you feel comfortable. With your permission, I will audio-record the interview and take written notes. In order to minimize the risk to confidentiality, if you discuss particular organizational situations with me, when it comes time to writing-up the study, I will disguise the details of those organizational situations so that no one organization is identifiable.

This interview will become part of a study, the results of which can be shared with you at your request. I will be attaching the interview guide, here are some sample questions.

- Please describe your role in the organization you work for?
- How long have you been in your role as a leader/manager/supervisor?
- What are some of the main challenges/sources of injustice you see for clients at your agency these days?
- What challenges do you encounter in advocating for clients and workers?
- Can you tell me about a time when you tried to bring about greater justice or resist an injustice you perceived towards service users?

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. You may feel uncomfortable discussing difficult professional decisions: you may be concerned that, if people in your workplace learn about what you say in the interview, there could be negative repercussions in your workplace.

Risks to your privacy and professional standing will be minimized by keeping confidential your name, profession, institution and city.

You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable. I describe below the steps I am taking to protect your privacy.

Potential Benefits:

The research will not benefit you directly. However, I hope to learn more about the risk social service managers take when they resist or counter organizational injustices or organizational decisions that could negatively impact service users. I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand how leaders' sense of identity assist them in their resistance leadership.

Confidentiality:

You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name, the name of your place of work, the name of the city you live or work in, the names of any co-workers you mention or any other

information that would allow you to be identified. No one but myself will know whether you were in the study unless you choose to tell them.

Any organizational situation you discuss will be represented in the research using pseudonyms to protect them from being identifiable. In addition, in the write-up of the study, I will disguise the details of any individuals or situations discussed, in order that none be identifiable.

While I will take these steps to protect confidentiality, we are sometimes identifiable by the stories we tell, and you should keep this in mind when deciding what to say.

The information you provide will be kept in a locked desk/cabinet where only I will have access to it. Information kept on a computer and/or on a hard drive will be protected by a password. Once the study has been completed approximately by August 2018, the data will be destroyed within two years.

Through my work in the social services in southern Ontario, we may have had contact outside the scope of this research. In order to minimize any potential negative impact of these dual roles, I can confirm that: a) even though we may know one another, there is no obligation to participate in this study. I have other sources available should you decline participation, and b) my research is limited to the interview process itself and does not extend to our potential shared profession or community activities (i.e.) I will not be gathering data during any time other than during the interview you have consented to.

These interviews will be typed up by a transcriber. Your information will be protected as the transcriber will be required to sign an Oath of Confidentiality.

Legally Required Disclosure:

Although I will protect your privacy as outlined above, in certain serious cases, such as if a child is in danger, I could be required by law to reveal information.

Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is your choice to be part of the study or not. If you decide to be part of the study, you can stop (withdraw), from the interview for whatever reason, even after signing the consent form or part-way through the study or up until approximately one month following your interview date, after this date I will have begun my analysis. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless

you indicate otherwise. If you do not want to answer some of the questions you do not have to, but you can still be in the study.

Information about the Study Results:

I expect to have this study completed by approximately August 2018. If you would like a brief summary of the results, please provide me with an email and I will send the results.

Questions about the Study:

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact me at:

Deborah Rimay, rimayda@mcmaster.ca . or 905 979-0970

This study has been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat

Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142

C/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support

E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

- I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Deborah Rimay of McMaster University.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested.
- I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time or up until one month following my interview date.
- I have been given a copy of this form.
- I agree to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Participant (Printed) _____

1. I agree that the interview can be audio recorded.

Yes.

No.

2. I would like to receive a summary of the study's results (approximately August 2018).

Yes, please send them to me at this email address _____

Or to this mailing address: _____

No, I do not want to receive a summary of the study's results.

APPENDIX C

Thanks very much for agreeing to take part in my study on Leadership and resistance. As you know this is a study on how social work leaders in the social services engage in resistance work when encountering social injustices in their organizations. I want to understand the decisions the social work managers make when resisting an organizational policy or practice that may have a negative impact on service users. I am doing this research for a Master of Social Work Thesis.

The interview will be around 60 minutes. With your permission, I will audio-record the interview and take written notes. During this interview I will be asking open-ended questions. You don't have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable or that you don't wish to answer.

The following is a list of the questions I will be asking for the interview and written responses. Sometimes I may ask additional short questions to make sure I understand what you have told me or if I need more information when we are talking such as: "So, you are saying that...?" or "Please tell me more." If you are feeling tired or stressed or need a break for any other reason, please feel free to let me know.

Interview Guide:

1. Some brief questions about your background: How long have you been in your current role as a leader/manager/supervisor? Before this role: what did you do? Did you have previous experience in management? What is your educational background?
2. Please describe your role in the organization you work for?
3. What are some of the main challenges/sources of injustice you see for clients and for workers at your agency these days?
4. What challenges do you encounter in advocating for clients and workers?
5. Can you tell me about a time when you tried to bring about greater justice or resist an injustice you perceived towards clients or staff?
6. How did you prepare? What did it feel like for you, anticipating this action? What strategies did you use in the situation? Were there certain ways you thought about presenting yourself- can you discuss this?
7. How did your identity or history shape how you handled the situation?
8. Do you understand what you do as 'resistance'? Why or why not?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add that we did not speak on today?

Appendix D



Oath of Confidentiality for Assistants Working for the Researcher

(Check the following that apply)

I understand that as an:

interpreter

transcriber

audio assistant

photo or video assistant

research assistant

other (*Please specify*) _____

for a study being conducted by Deborah Rimap of the School of

Social Work, McMaster University, and or under the supervision of

Professor Chris Sinding, confidential information will be made known to me.

I agree to keep all information collected during this study confidential and will not reveal by speaking, communicating or transmitting this information in written, photographic, sound, electronic (disks, tapes, transcripts, email) or in any other way to anyone outside the research team.

I will tell the researchers as soon as I discover that I know any participant either as a family member, friend, or acquaintance or in any other way; so that the researcher can take the appropriate steps to manage or minimize any conflicts of interest that might occur because of any dual roles I may have.

Name: _____ Signature: _____
(Please Print)

Date: _____

Witness Name: _____ Witness Signature: _____
(Please Print)