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Social Work Educators' Perceptions of Their
Leadership and Management Competencies

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Kutztown University | Millersville University of Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

of Doctor of Social Work

By Leah K. Lazzaro

September 17, 2019

This Dissertation for the Doctor of Social Work Degree by

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September 17, 2019

Date

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Social Work Educators' Perceptions of Their Leadership and Management Competencies

By

Leah K. Lazzaro

Kutztown University | Millersville University, 2019

Kutztown, Pennsylvania

Directed by Dr. John Conahan

Higher education, like many industries, is facing a staggering leadership gap as many educators plan to retire (Bailyn, 2014). As a result, social work education is called upon to respond to the need for emerging social workers to help fill the leadership positions as executive leadership retires *en masse* (Stewart, 2016). Leadership and management competencies are two separate and often competing skillsets. Managers plan and complete tasks related to an organization's goals, while leaders inspire people and communicate a vision (Weinbach & Taylor, 2015; Wimpfheimer, 2004). Social work educators need both management and leadership skills to be prepared to face the gap internally, as well as through the delivery of education to social work students. The current situation is compounded by intersectionality. Relatively fewer members of historically marginalized groups are represented in executive leadership positions (Richardson & Loubier, 2008). The purpose of this study was to examine social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies while considering social identity factors, including gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability, and work factors of education, mentorship, training experience, and years of experience. A review of the literature demonstrates the current state of social work, social work education, and leadership and management competency in these settings. An online survey was administered to assess social work educators' perceptions of leadership and management competencies, their related practice experiences, and demographic and work factors. Empirical analysis explored social workers educators' perceived leadership and management competencies. Because of the role power plays in leadership and among social work educators, feminist theory provided a lens for analysis and discussion. This study revealed statistically significant findings that educators perceived their leadership competency to be higher than their management competency. Educators who were older demonstrated significantly higher levels of leadership and management competencies than younger respondents. White respondents also showed significantly higher levels of perceived management competency than respondents who identified as people of color. Finally, individuals with formal leadership and management training showed higher perceived competency scores.

Keywords: Leadership competency, management competency, human services management competencies, social work educators, feminist theory

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Problem

Despite a growing demand for social workers to have organizational management and leadership skills, there is a gap between what is needed in practice and what is being taught in the classroom. For more than four decades, social work educators have acknowledged the unique challenge of preparing social work students for management positions (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004; Gilliam, Chandler, Al-Hajjaj, Mooney, & Vakalahi, 2016; Nesoff, 2007; Patti, 1987). Human service management takes place in the nonprofit, government, and increasingly, for-profit sectors (Austin, 2002). The term *management* refers to a person's ability to plan and complete tasks related to an organization's goals (Wimpfheimer, 2004). Conversely, *leadership* refers to one's ability to inspire people and communicate a vision (Weinbach & Taylor, 2015). *Competencies* are the skills, knowledge, and abilities one acquires through training and experience that are a requirement for being successful on the job (National Association of Colleges and Employers [NACE], 2016). The human service aspect of this work separates it from business or public administration. However, business education has been offering a focus on nonprofit management for more than 30 years (Center for Nonprofit Management [CNP], 2018). These programs may focus on the *skills* needed for organizational management and leadership, but social work is unique as it is grounded in a set of core *values* that drive the work. The management skills necessary to administer a human service agency are complex, and they are compounded because the manager's ultimate responsibility is to provide quality services to individuals and families – services that benefit communities and societies (Austin 2002). As changemakers, social workers require the skills to create a vision for change *and* the ability to make that change happen (Haynes, 2014). There is an urgent need for an investment in increasing social workers' capacity to lead organizations (Gilliam et al., 2016).

To meet the market needs at this critical point, social work education must remain strong in the values of social justice while pivoting its curricula to focus on leadership and management skills. Social work educators are responsible for educating future social workers. An assessment of social work educators' self-efficacy in these areas is needed to understand educators' confidence and experience with leadership and management competencies. To gain a deeper understanding of the state of educators' experience, the author conducted an analysis of social identity factors, including gender identity, race/ethnicity, age, ability, and sexual orientation, which recognize the complex nature of power within leadership.

There are several contributing factors to what has been described as a crisis in the social work profession (Greene, 2010). One is that, like many industries, higher education is facing a leadership gap as many educators plan to retire (Bailyn, 2014). This phenomenon is not unique to social work education. However, as educators, there is a need to ensure social work education programs are sustainable and fulfill the mission of educating future social workers who are prepared to meet the needs of the human services industry. Social work faculty and administrators assess students' competency based upon the knowledge, values, and skills they need to practice social work. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of research regarding social work educators' leadership and management competency to meet the programmatic needs of institutions and teach future social workers the leadership and management skills necessary to fill the leadership gap in the human services sector.

Executive leadership needs are another contributing factor to the crisis in social work. There is continual growth in the human services sector, yet few social workers hold executive leadership positions. According to GuideStar (2015), the nonprofit industry saw more growth among employees and wages in ten years than did business and governmental agencies. The

National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) states that there are about 1,574,674 tax-exempt organizations in the United States (Hansen-Turton & Torres, 2014). Additionally, the number of nonprofit organizations registered by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has grown by 24% over the past ten years (Roeger, Blackwood, & Pettijohn, 2012). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS; 2018), social work jobs are projected to grow by 16% between 2016 and 2026, demonstrating much faster growth than the national average for all fields. Unfortunately, there are not enough social workers to meet this demand, let alone those who are prepared for leadership and management of human services agencies (Gilliam et al., 2016).

The soon-to-retire baby boomer generation is another contributing factor to the crisis in social work. According to the Pew Research Center, the baby boomer generation accounts for 26% of the total U.S. population (Cohn & Taylor, 2010). Demographers and economists have projected the impact of 79 million Americans retiring between 2011 and 2030. In the human services industry, the reality is that executive directors and top management are retiring in record numbers. According to Stewart (2016), 67% of nonprofit executive directors will retire in the next five years. Thus, there is an increased need for social workers with leadership and management skills to fill these roles. Tierney (2006) estimated that 640,000 new executive leaders would be needed between 2007 and 2016. Further, the BLS (2017) reports there are not enough adults in the prime work age group of 18-54 years to fill the projected openings. The estimated need for new executive leaders is 2.4 times the number currently employed.

Despite the need, social workers are not pursuing leadership and management roles (Wilson & Lau, 2011). This trend is consistent with students' concentration in micro-focused areas of study within social work programs (The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, 2017). Greene (2010) discusses the split between clinical and

administrative social work as one of the main contributing factors in the profession's crisis. The shortage of macro-focused social work students may result in social work education programs shifting their focus toward clinical concentrations rather than responding to the needs of the human services workplace (Hill, Erickson, Donaldson, Fogel, & Ferguson, 2017). While enrollments in macro programs remain consistent at about 10% of social work students, only about 3 to 4% of students study in what the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) defines as *administrative concentrations* (Patti, 2003). Furthermore, the imminent retirements of many social work leaders has accelerated the need to increase the pool of capable emerging social work leaders (Gilliam et al., 2016). This increase in open human service positions, coupled with the lack of social workers prepared for leadership roles, has led to many nonprofit leadership jobs being filled by employees with no social work background (Goldkind & Pardasani, 2013). Greene (2010) notes that instead, business and legal professionals are being hired to fill executive leadership roles in human service agencies; these roles who are managing programs and services concerned for the most vulnerable people. Other research backs this assertion up. In 2008, over 30% of business management schools offered a concentration in *social issues* (The Aspen Institute, 2008). While these programs tout financial know-how, business savvy, and efficiency, there is generally no discussion of promoting values related to human rights and social justice, presenting a problem for the social work profession, the mission-driven organizations in which social workers are employed, and the vulnerable clients served (Greene, 2010).

Social Work Values

Six core values are fundamental in the social work profession. The National Association of Social Workers' (NASW; 2017) *Code of Ethics* defines these values as service, social justice,

dignity and worth of the individual, importance and centrality of human relationships, integrity, and competency. Human services organizations are mission-driven agencies working toward social justice for individuals, families, and communities. Social work practice is based upon the core professional values and organizations that exemplify a culture of empowerment for everyone involved. Pine and Healy (2007) express that social workers are ethically obligated to work toward an organizational culture where leaders provide the support and empower their staff to participate in shaping and implementing the organization's vision, with clients' voices and rights driving the work. Leaders who promote a holistic approach to understanding human relationships and the organizational structures that promote wellness and justice exemplify social work values in practice. Preparing social work students with the skills and vision to move their agencies toward realizing their organizational missions enables the social work profession to fulfill its commitment to social justice.

Defining Leadership and Management

Leadership and management are often discussed as interrelated and sometimes overlapping concepts (Weinbach & Taylor, 2015). Management comprises skills that aid organizations in attaining their goals. According to Sullivan (2016), "Management is commonly viewed as entailing the everyday activities, tasks, and routines that are necessary for an organization to remain viable and function smoothly" (p. S51; see also Brilliant, 1986; May, 2005; Plas & Lewis, 2001; Zaleznik, 1977). On the other hand, leadership involves skills that inspire others to help attain an organization's goals (Patti, 2009). In other words, while leaders inspire others to create change, managers organize and control existing processes (McCaffery, 2010). Definitions of the term *leader* typically include the words *vision*, *inspiration*, *innovation*, *creativity*, and *power* (Bargal & Schmid, 1989; Brilliant, 1986; Fisher, 2009; Kelso, 1927;

Lawler, 2007; May, 2005; Rank & Hutchison, 2000; Sullivan, 2016; Zaleznik, 1977). Brilliant (1986) argues that “good” managers are not necessarily good leaders. One can be good at problem-solving and keep an agency functioning, but they may not possess the qualities of creativity and vision required to take risks that promote change and growth. Good organizational governance and performance require employees who are competent leaders *and* managers.

Social Work Leadership

Rank and Hutchison (2000) developed the following definition of leadership that embodies the values of social work after they surveyed social work leaders in the CSWE and the NASW: “Social work leadership is the communication of vision, guided by the NASW Code of Ethics, to create proactive processes that empower individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities” (p. 499). NASW (2017) defines clearly the relevance of leadership to all levels of social work practice. The Network for Social Work Management (NSWM) (2015) also developed *Human Services Management Competencies* for social workers who hold leadership positions. In addition to communication, these competencies highlight “interpersonal skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, professional behavior,” and the ability to maintain stakeholder relationships, possess cross-cultural understanding, advocate for social justice, and facilitate innovative change (p. 4). Thus, all prominent social work organizations (CSWE, NASW, NSWM) have defined clearly leadership for practice. However, the focus of leadership in social work education is not explicit.

Social Work Management

Management practices act as a catalyst for programs and agencies to achieve their goals. Though management skills are defined in many disciplines and are discussed often as business

or administrative tasks, social work values focus on the human aspect of services. Creating and sustaining high-quality, effective services for people who are most vulnerable is a critical aspect of social work. Organizational management skills are required to maintain successful programs in the highly sophisticated and competitive social work industry. The NSWM (2015) defines management skills to include human resource matters, budgeting and finance, operations and information technology, fundraising, marketing, program development and evaluation, legal affairs, and strategic planning. Social work organizations cannot serve people if they are not managing their internal functions.

Social Work Leadership and Resource and Strategic Management Competencies

The NSWM's (2015) competencies define explicitly the skills and experiences social workers need in the areas of executive leadership, resource management, and strategic management. These competencies conceptualize and define social work leadership and management in a clear and concrete way. The competencies were developed as a tool for social workers to assess themselves. The present research study used these competencies to operationalize two dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency. Table 1 shows the two sets of leadership and management competencies utilized in this study.

Table 1

2015 Network for Social Work Management Competencies

Executive Leadership Competencies	Resource and Strategic Management
Establishes, promotes, and anchors the vision, philosophy, goals, objectives, and values of the organization	Effectively manages human resources
Possesses interpersonal skills that support the viability and positive functioning of the organization	Establishes and maintains a system of internal controls to ensure transparency, protection,

	and accountability for the use of organizational resources
Possesses analytical and critical thinking skills that promote organizational growth	Manages all aspects of information technology
Models appropriate professional behavior and encourages other staff members to act in a professional way	Fundraising: Identifies and applies for new and recurring funding while ensuring accountability with existing funding systems
Manages diversity and cross-cultural understanding	Marketing & Public Relations: Engages in proactive communication about the agency's products and services
Develops and manages both internal and external stakeholder relationships	Designs and develops effective programs
Initiates and facilitates innovative change processes	Manages risks and legal affairs
Advocates for public policy changes and social justice at national, state, and local levels	Ensures strategic planning
Demonstrates effective interpersonal and communication skills	
Encourages active involvement of all staff and stakeholders in decision-making processes	
Plans, promotes, and models lifelong learning practices	

Note. The above competencies were taken from the NSWM's (2015) *Human Services Management Competencies*.

CSWE Education Policy and Accreditation Standards

To understand better the broad features of social work education, the CSWE (2015), which accredits social work programs, provides accreditation standards. According to Call, Owens, and Vincent (2013), the CSWE's mission is to develop "competent social work

professionals” (p. 594). Social work education is driven by the standards set forth in the CSWE *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* (EPAS). The EPAS provides overarching regulations against which social work programs are evaluated and addresses focus areas including competency-based social work curricula, field education, and admission processes. Generally, standards for hiring faculty and administrators are also included in the EPAS. Faculty who teach practice classes are required to have a minimum of two years’ post-master’s work experience from a CSWE-accredited program (CSWE, 2015). The EPAS allows individual programs to design hiring practices that determine who is qualified for teaching, scholarship, and service. Historically, hiring practices have focused on academic areas rather than social work experiences. Hiring committees typically focus on a faculty member’s ability to obtain grant funding, which may be congruent with leadership abilities. The NSWM (2015) disseminates suggested questions for hiring faculty to help support social work programs in hiring educators with leadership and management experience. Wimpfheimer (Personal communication, August 8, 2018) expresses concern that hiring committees do not consider leadership or management competency in the selection process. According to Anastas and Videka (2012), social work is a practice profession, not just a discipline. Thus, educators must be “stewards of the enterprise” (Richardson, 2006, as cited in Anastas & Videka, 2012, p. 269). There is a parallel mission in social work education to teach and further the social work mission with a focus on direct practice, service delivery, policy, and research.

Demographics in social work education. The success of social work education is reliant upon the leadership of social work educators. A qualitative study ($n = 53$) of undergraduate science and math instructors found that faculty experience translates into what is being taught and how it is being taught (Oleson & Hora, 2013). Further social work education

research is needed to understand better the impact experience within this discipline has on teaching. Like the hiring needs of the human services field, social work programs have reported concerns regarding faculty employment needs. In 2015, 26.3% of the 529 social work programs across the nation (96.5%) reported at least one unfilled faculty position. Most of these vacant positions (77.8%) were full-time, tenure-track positions. Another 20.2% of programs reported hiring needs that were not funded adequately to meet the programs' needs. The leadership gap and hiring needs will continue to grow as many educators retire in coming years. According to CSWE (2014), "the largest proportion of full-time faculty members was in the age range of 45-54 years (25.0%), followed by 55-64 years (23.9%)" (p. 21). Nine percent of faculty are over the age of 65 years. In sum, almost 60% of faculty are over the age of 45. Hiring new faculty who bring leadership experience or who are trained appropriately for leadership responsibilities in social work education is critical to mind this generational gap as aging educators retire.

In addition to simple demographics in numbers, social work education leadership has more complex problems in gender and racial disparity (CSWE, 2015). In 1978, the term *glass ceiling* was used for the first time to describe the oppressive system that prevents women and people of color from obtaining leadership positions (U.S. Department of Labor [USDOL], 1995). Social work education is not immune to institutional discrimination. Two-thirds of faculty members in social work are women, and 31.1% of full-time faculty members are from historically underrepresented groups (CSWE, 2015). Until recently, the majority of leadership positions was held by white men. Gender discrimination in pay is most prevalent in social work at the PhD level, where women make nearly 30% less than men (George Washington University Health Workforce Institute [HWI], 2017). Thus, it can be inferred that much of this pay

discrimination occurs in social work education programs that educate students about social and economic justice.

Practical experience. Literature on social work educators' practical experience tends to focus on direct practice. Belcher, Pecukonis, and Knight (2011) express dismay over full-time faculty members' practical experience. Although students reported preferences for full-time tenured faculty with this experience, Belcher et al.'s (2011) research findings suggest that little is known about the impact of practical experience on social work education. Assessing social work educators' experience and perceptions of competencies as they relate to leadership and management is an important first step. Further research is needed to understand how practical experience impacts social work educators' teaching social work skills.

Problem Statement

Moran, Frans, and Gibson (1995) state, "There is likely something fundamental to the educational process to account for social work losing ground in the leadership of its own organizations" (p. 104). Research clearly shows the need for social work education to incorporate more leadership and management skills teaching. However, leadership and management competencies are missing from core social work curricula (Fisher, 2009). This study explored the gap in understanding the leadership and management competencies of social work educators responsible for crafting curricula and preparing students. Factors of identity and human relationships are essential to leadership and social work. Social identity factors are central to understanding "both structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination" (Crenshaw, 2000, p. 9).

Other professions like business have responded to the growing need for social work leaders and managers by shifting their curricula to meet market demands. For example, master's

of business administration (MBA) programs have offered degrees in nonprofit management and related concentrations for the last forty or more years (CNM, 2018). They shifted their focus to include the unique skills necessary to lead mission-driven organizations. Though bound by a code of ethics that exemplifies the principles of competency, service, and social justice, social work has not made changes necessary to prepare social work students to lead human services organizations. Assessing current social work faculty members', field educators', and administrators' leadership and management experiences and feelings of competency provides insight into the scope of competency in this area for social work education. Understanding better decision-makers' leadership and management experiences and the relationship of social identity may help identify specific capacities and needs in the field.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze and compare perceptions of social work educators' leadership and management competencies. Faculty, field educators, and other departmental leaders are responsible for the quality and rigor of social work education. Yet, little is known about how they perceive their leadership and management competencies, how they describe their related experiences, and the relationship between these perceptions and social identity factors and work-related factors. A closer look at social work professionals' confidence in their own competency is needed for social work education to respond to the growing need for executive leadership and management skills in human services. CSWE (2015) requires minimal social work practical experience for faculty members; neither are leadership or management experiences a focus of faculty hiring (S. Wimpfheimer, personal communication, August 8, 2018).

An online survey was administered to assess social work educators' self-perceptions of leadership and management competencies. The study utilized the listservs hosted by the Baccalaureate Program Directors (BPD) and the National Association of Dean and Directors (NADD). To include social work educators of color, a second round of recruitment involved emailing the survey to social work programs at northeastern Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) ($n = 8$). This study highlighted an area of social work education that has been discussed as missing for several decades but that is critical for the education of future social workers. Intersectionality theory framed the discussion regarding the relationship of social identity factors on educators' leadership and management competencies and experiences.

Research Questions

1. What are social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?
2. What is the relationship between social work educators' social identity factors and their perceptions of leadership and management competencies?
3. What is the relationship between work-related factors of education, years of work experience, mentorship, and formal training and social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?

The Researcher's Role

The researcher is a social work educator with practical experience in social work administration. The researcher developed the survey based on the NSWM competencies and selected several social identity factors and work-related aspects based on current literature, such as formal training experience and mentor experience. The author's social position and social work education experiences may have biased the instrument's development, so to minimize

bias, content experts were consulted and the survey was piloted before the study began. The correlational research design analyzed quantitative data and qualitative responses of educators' perceived leadership and management competencies through rating themselves on a Likert-scale and answering open-ended questions which asked them to describe their recent leadership and management experiences. The author's social identity as white woman and experiences as a social work educator in field education may have influenced the survey design and analysis of qualitative themes. To minimize bias, the NSWM competencies were utilized initially through a deductive coding process. A second round of coding allowed new codes to emerge through an inductive coding process. The data were quantified and used to explain and expand the quantitative data results.

Organization of Dissertation

A review of the existing literature provided context for the current state of social work practice, leadership and management, and education. JSTOR, EBSCO, and Google Scholar were used as part of a database search to compare leadership and management programs in social work. Various word combinations were used, including *leadership* and *management* in conjunction with *social work*, *social work education*, *social work competence*, and *faculty experience*. The researcher also searched for studies that utilized a variety of methodologies, including *feminist theory*, *social identity*, and *intersectionality*, combined with the dependent variables of *leadership competency* and *management competency*. The study design included an online survey designed for social work educators to share their perceived leadership and management competencies. A self-efficacy survey of executive leadership, human resource management, and strategic management competencies assessed how competent educators felt about their leadership and management skills. An intersectionality approach highlighted social

work educators' diverse social identities, and framed the comparative analysis and discussion of the self-efficacy results and the qualitative discussion about the educators' experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The social work profession has a rich history of social activist leaders whose work laid the foundation for practice as we know it today. Jane Addams was a social policy reformer who began the settlement house movement in the United States (NASW, 2018). Her leadership in the international peace movement was recognized when she became the first American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Mary Richmond developed a model of casework focused on care and partnership that is used in social work today. Her leadership is recognized as social workers continue to work from a strengths-based empowerment perspective. The person-in-environment perspective recognizes both women's contributions (Hopps and Lowe, 2013). Additionally, individuals' strengths are considered within the context of environmental factors (Kondrat, 2013). Social workers are change agents who work in collaboration with persons in client status to empower them to make changes in their own lives; they are also change agents in the context of the broader societal issues within the environment. Most social work occurs within human services organizations as vehicles for making change.

Over the past 20 years, there has been a shift in the focus of human service organizations toward accountability, evidence-based practice in social work, and the application of for-profit business practices (Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011). This environment requires social work managers to practice in an arena that contains conflicting obligations. On one side, there are clients' and staff members' human rights, the organizational mission, and professional values. On the other side are pressures for optimization, efficiency, and organizational growth (Hasenfeld, 2015). With an emphasis on productivity, human service organizations are asked to uphold the myth that they can do more with less. Thus, social workers are faced with contradictions of "effectiveness versus efficiency, organizational autonomy versus government

controls or client choice versus mandated service” (Hasenfeld, 2015, p. 4). Leaders must continually make decisions about organizational practices in relation to ethical standards, stakeholders’ and clients’ interests, and resource management. These conflicts require leadership and management skills and a level of reflection on the social worker’s part that includes staff and clients’ input on organizational policies that shape service delivery.

Leadership Skills

Few studies focus on leadership competencies identified by human service leaders. A systematic review of studies published from January 2006 to December 2016 found 11 studies that defined necessary knowledge, traits, and skills for nonprofit leaders (Walters, 2017). The six most-frequently identified competency areas identified include “change management and vision alignment, commitment to mission and vision, communication skills, organizational planning and development, professionalism, and relationship building and management” (Walters, 2017, p. 1). Noticeably absent from the identified competencies are financial management, fundraising, board development, and other management-related competencies. Milton (2016) surveyed executive nonprofit leaders ($n = 51$) who were asked to describe the leadership competencies necessary in their work. The findings indicated that social workers required training and experience similar to that of business professionals, attorneys, and public administrators. All the studies regarding competency recommend social workers have formal leadership training. Though it is unclear how formal training is conceptualized, one method occurs through social work degree programs. All studies covering leadership competencies in social work focus on practitioners. Social work education and educators are notably absent from the leadership competency research, however.

Leadership skills and training typically include the social and emotional aspects of working with people. Goleman (2000) defines *emotional intelligence* as “the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively” (p. 78). This skill requires an acute understanding of one’s social identity and how one is perceived and received by others. Emotional intelligence competency (EIC) is identified as an area for continued research in leadership development. The EIC areas include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills. People with high levels of emotional intelligence reflect on their thoughts and behaviors and can understand the impact their actions have on others, and they can usually adjust their behaviors accordingly (Goleman, 2000). Emotional intelligence is a crucial aspect of social work practice because practitioners must have the capacity to manage their emotions and show empathy toward others. EIC bridges the skills and traits necessary for both effective social work practice and highly competent leadership. Assessing social work educators’ self-efficacy of leadership and management competencies highlights the level of experience and can assess for strengths and areas for training.

Relevance for Social Work Education

Brilliant (1986) described social work leadership as the missing ingredient of social work education in the late 1980s. Little progress seems to have been made since then in filling the curricular and training gaps in social work education, however. Farrow (2014) articulates the need for meaningful involvement of service users and faculty members to collaborate in the research and development of social work management education. Farrow conducted qualitative interviews ($n = 10$) and two focus groups ($n = 10$) with educators and key stakeholders in England. Findings supported the involvement of service users in the development of management education. Though the study supports the stakeholders and educators working

together, the research does not articulate the educators' leadership and management experience. The present study focuses on the experience and competency that has been described as a missing ingredient in social work education. Though stakeholders were identified by their relationships with the program, social identity and work-place factors were not considered.

There are 750 CSWE-accredited BSW and MSW programs in the United States (CSWE, 2018). The CSWE has supported leadership initiatives by organizing training for faculty, deans, and directors, and it has supported continued curricular research on the subject. In 2006, CSWE commissioned a study that reviewed a content analysis of 74 syllabi from 36 social work programs with a macro concentration. Of the MSW syllabi examined, 22% ($n = 13$) included the term *leadership* in a course title (Lazzari, 2007). Based on this research, Fisher (2009) recommends a further study of leadership in social work curricula and new models of developing leadership skills for social work. Understanding the social work educators' perceptions of competency in areas of leadership and management necessary for macro social work can help identify strengths and needs in the field.

Teaching leadership and management. Social work education recognizes the need to strengthen macro social work education and uses different formats and approaches to do so. One innovative model examined an asynchronous online classroom environment's effectiveness in teaching leadership to social workers. This approach was deemed useful when teaching MSW students in a generalist practice program (Williams-Gray, 2014). This study indicated that students in administration and generalist practice were being overlooked for nonprofit leadership positions. In 2013, the Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work (Special Commission) began as a way to strengthen macro practice in social work education (Rothman & Mizrahi, 2014).

In 2018, the Special Commission published a curricular guide for macro practice to support the rebalancing of macro and micro content (CSWE, 2018). The guide lists “administration and management” as its first strategy for how social workers can achieve their goals in practice settings. CSWE (2018) uses executive leadership skills and strategic management to define administration and management. Reading lists, case studies, and activities are shared to support educators in teaching leadership and management skills, knowledge, values, and cognitive and affective processes. The guide does not address the educator’s perceived competency in leadership and management, however. Thus, the present study may help determine the confidence social work educators have in their leadership and management competencies.

According to Iachini, Cross, and Freedman (2015), there are questions regarding the “specific leadership models and how leadership content should be infused with the social work curriculum” (p. 650). Their research shows significant results when graduate students ($n = 38$) applied a values-based social change model (SCM) of leadership in a program evaluation class. One limitation of the study was its basis on qualitative data from only one course. Higgins, Popple, and Crichton (2014) conducted a case-study review that evaluated social work education and practice reforms in England. The result of their interviews and focus groups ($n = 48$) showed a divide between knowledge and practice. Salcido (2008) also conducted focus groups with social work students ($n = 38$) to better understand the need for evidence-based macro practices that could connect social work practice, research, and field education. Findings from the study concluded that macro practitioners, educators, and researchers must collaborate to develop practical education for social work students. Assessing educators’ perceived

leadership and management competencies is useful to identify the needs and strengths of educators who teach diverse types of social work courses.

The leadership and management competency gap in education. The need for formal training supports the perceived lack of leadership and management competencies being taught and demonstrated by social workers (NSWM, 2015). Many factors may interfere with this content being integrated effectively, however. Social work leadership and management competencies are two different and contradictory skillsets. Wimpfheimer (2004) suggests that staff development for a manager is often overlooked, adding that social workers who are exceptional clinicians and supervisors are promoted into management positions without the proper training to develop new skillsets (Day, 2011).

Additionally, some social work educators may be in denial about their identity and capabilities as a leader. Though there is a perception of leadership and management content as important and necessary, social work programs lack in meeting this charge. In a study of social worker management in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Day (2011) wrote that social work leaders reported “self-doubt and personal insecurities about their ability to lead, manage, and administer a social service agency” (as cited in Gilliam et al., 2016, p. 332). Thus, if social work educators do not identify themselves as leaders, it would be challenging to integrate leadership practices into social work curricula. The misperception that social work educators who are the architects of syllabi are not leaders impacts the amount of leadership content in that syllabi. Haynes (2014) asserts,

There’s a tendency for social workers to downplay the important work that we do, to give credit elsewhere. We must make sure that we are the ones defining social work

practice, and that we are constantly looking for ways to establish and demonstrate our value, raising the bar for social work intervention, collaboration, and leadership. (pp. 14)

Understanding social worker educators' identities and their relationship to leadership and management competencies is a gap in the literature. The present study asked social work educators to share factors related to their social identities to examine the relationship between social identity factors and their perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

Several research studies suggest an emerging trend of recent social work graduates being promoted into leadership roles even though they did not master leadership competencies during their formal social work education (Bliss, Pecukonis, & Snyder-Vogel, 2014; Foster, 2017; Williams-Gray, 2014). A mixed-methods survey conducted by the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Social Work's Center for Maternal and Child Health Social Work assessed graduates of their Post-Graduate Leadership Academy. Respondents ($n = 5$) provided evaluative feedback about the program (Bliss et al., 2014); such training may place new social workers in an untenable position and it also may place an undue burden on the agency. Formal training may take place in an agency because of the educational and training gap in social work higher education. Social care systems like the one in the United Kingdom have recognized the need for additional leadership and management training and have responded by developing structured workforce development plans (Hafford-Letchfield, Leonard, Begum, & Chick, 2008). Day (2011) found that many human service managers lack advanced degrees. Social work practitioners conducted extensive research to develop intervention plans for social workers in the U.K. social care system that aimed to provide leadership training lacking in the students' social work studies. The research demonstrates a need for additional leadership and

management training, but more research is needed to understand the relationship between formal training and perceived leadership and management competencies.

Leadership integration gap in social work education. Much social work education teaches students tools for reflective practice (Fox, 2011). Reflection and self-awareness are drawn from literature asserting that “who you are is how you’ll lead” (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). College is a time for students to recognize and reflect on their values. Fritz and Guthrie (2017) discuss the dynamic process of understanding one’s values as crucial for leadership learning. Self-awareness is necessary for executive leadership functioning, one of the fundamental domains of the NSWM (2015) competencies. One’s identity, reflection, and self-awareness are integral aspects of the professional use of self as social workers, yet there is little evidence that these tools are explicitly discussed as transferable leadership skills in social work coursework or by faculty members as a path for growth.

Social workers who become teachers bring their interpersonal skills and practice experience to the classroom (Anastas, 2010). Social work education is practice. In the higher education arena, most faculty members’ focus is on teaching, scholarship, and service. Depending upon the institutional culture, leadership development may be an integral part of the organization or it may be absent from opportunities for faculty and administration (Vakalahi & Peebles-Wilkins, 2010). In a qualitative study of 233 faculty members from CSWE-accredited programs, 51% ($n = 118$) reported having mixed or negative experiences with their department leaders (Call et al., 2013). Some participants described their leaders as “autocratic decision makers who sometimes engage in unethical behavior” (p. 608). The 49% of participants who reported positive experiences with their unit heads described “collaborative and supportive leadership styles” (p. 608). This study validates the need for formally training unit leaders in

social work programs. According to Call et al. (2013), “There is a need for significantly more emphasis on leadership, ethics, and empowerment – especially in doctoral and masters level programs” (p. 609). Their research articulates clearly the value of formal leadership training for social work educators and students. The current study further investigates the relationship with formal leadership and management training and educators’ perceived leadership and management competencies.

Social workers-turned-educators may have studied or practiced in a niche area of social work focused on a particular social issue or setting. Without proper leadership training or mentorship regarding their roles as social work leaders in the field, faculty may not identify as leaders or teach students with an approach to developing leadership skills (Bass, 1990). Haynes (2014) states that if “we do not step into the fullness of our potential as leaders, others will take the place we have chosen to forfeit, and the gifts that each of us bring to the role of leader in our work, team, community, and society will be sorely missed” (p. 18). This statement is true especially in higher education and perpetuates the cycle of social workers developing verbal and written communication, self-reflection, and other professional skills recognized as imperative to leadership development but not identified as such. In other academic settings, namely business, leadership, and management preparation, these skills are promoted explicitly and vigorously (Call et al., 2013). No research has assessed yet social work educators’ perceived leadership and management competencies, however.

Educational Approaches to Leadership and Management Content

Mid-level theories and models are used to formulate a framework for intervention (Gitlin & Czaja, 2016). These approaches have been articulated based on research-informed paradigms. Teaching the complexities of leadership content requires giving close attention to

models of teaching and learning – both for the educator and the student. Becoming a leader entails understanding one’s abilities to think reflexively and critically to understand a situation (Cunliffe, 2009). Teaching leadership and management requires educators to understand the philosophical aspects of leadership and management, as well as have the requisite experience, skills, or competency.

Competency-based education. The CSWE accredits social work programs and directs both explicit and implicit learning through educational standards. In 2008, a shift to competency-based language in the EPAS further defined the practice’s influence in education. According to CSWE (2015), “Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being” (p. 6). Social work educators create practice opportunities in the classroom that require expert competency in demonstrating social work values and knowledge through skill development, further emphasizing the continuing social work practice of what takes place in an educational environment. Social work leadership, competency, and management skills are important for educators who teach this content. Identifying social work educators’ perceptions of their leadership and management competencies is an important part to strengthening social work education in this content area.

Field education. Social work education utilizes field internships as an integral place for identity and skill development. Field education requires a universal understanding of knowledge, a continual loop of theory and action, and the reflection of thinking. It is the space where social work theories and practical experiences come together. Praxis is fundamental in social work as an apprenticeship-based profession. Field education, the signature pedagogy of

social work, requires that all social work students gain practical experience through internships under the supervision of social workers. In conjunction with the skills social work interns learn in the field, coursework is prescribed to support the application of theoretical knowledge. Educators who teach field classes provide another resource for supervision. Goldstein (1994) explains a feedback loop critical to praxis: “Students and mentors in the field can advise and consult with the curriculum and classroom about the kinds of knowledge and skills required in their particular community of practice” (p. 179). Social work field education is a principal place for students to learn about supervision, leadership, and organizational management experience. As facilitators of this integrative process, social work educators are practitioner-educators who link the practice experiences to theory.

Reflective practice. The process of reflection is critical for instructors to evaluate their own facilitation of learning, as well as their presence in the setting. Praxis is active; it also demonstrates Schon’s theory of “reflection in action” (Anastas, 2010). Educators reframe a problem, holding both the uniqueness of each practice encounter and prior (general) knowledge in kind, making a tentative “experiment” in action in the practice situation, and evaluating what was learned from each practice “move” (Anastas, 2010, p. 30). Effective leadership requires the ability to reflect and act to facilitate change. As preparation for practice, social work education values reflection through journaling, process recording, and supervision as reflective practices for growth. Social work faculty’s perceptions of their leadership and management skills advance the in-class discussions that support students’ reflective practices (Roberts, 2008).

Epistemology and Social Constructivism

Leadership is complex and involves an understanding of one’s self-concept and power relationship with others. Epistemology is the study of knowing. Social work education demands

an analytical understanding of what we know and how we know it. According to Anastas (2010), social work requires

more complex ways of knowing what is needed in reconciling the specifics of a case or situation with general knowledge, in keeping the value dimension of professional practice in view, and in dealing with the complex psychological, interpersonal, organizational, cultural, and social realities that must be taken into account in all social work practice. (p. 18).

Feminist epistemology recognizes the systematic inferiority of oppressed groups' understanding of what we know. Thus, the relationship between identity and social work are inseparable. Privilege influences the power given to what is known and valued. As leaders in the classroom and curriculum developers, social work educators have an influential role in teaching because they convey knowledge while simultaneously acknowledging students' unique experiences and ways of knowing. Social work educators challenge students to question what they know and how they know it so they may continue to develop their self-concept.

Social Work Values and Leadership

Social work principles, values, and skills align with several leadership theories and practice models. Transformational leaders are defined as those who “set out to empower followers and nurture them in change” (Northouse, 2016, p. 142). The tenets of transformational leadership are compatible with social work principles and values for how social workers work in partnership with individuals, whether they are in client status or executive-level colleagues (Fisher, 2009). Holosko (2009) conducted a content analysis of social work literature published in 70 journals from 1999 to 2002. The articles ($n = 51$) distinguished five core attributes of social work leadership, including having a vision, influencing others to act,

teamwork/collaboration, problem-solving capacity, and creating positive change. Rogers (2010) argues there has been a feminization of leadership. Collaboration, rather than command and control, provides an environment in which inclusive decision-making and effective relationship-building are common. Pine and Healy (2007) combine the qualities associated with transformational leadership styles and feminist leadership qualities to describe “participatory leadership.”

All these social work leadership theories, perspectives, and models contribute to the empirical knowledge base of social work. The NSWM competencies integrate seamlessly social work values with the leadership and management skills of contemporary social and public policy issues, advocacy, public/community relations and marketing, governance, planning, program development and management, financial development, human resources management, evaluation, and staff development (Wimpfheimer, 2004). Education and training on social work leadership and management skills have the potential to prepare social work students to become future leaders of human services agencies. Collective engagement at the university level is needed to institutionalize the qualities of the transformational leadership approach. There are direct parallels between social work values and the approaches of institutional and transformation leadership theories.

Leadership identity development theory. Leadership identity development theory was created using grounded theory to identify five stages of identity formation. These steps include gaining awareness, exploring/engaging, identifying a leader, differentiating leadership, exploring generativity, and integrating/synthesizing (Komives & Wagner, 2009). In each stage of leadership identity development, the student includes his or her self-awareness (individual factors) and awareness of others (view of self with others). Leadership identity development

recognizes environmental factors, such as gender and racial discrimination, as impacting everyone's growth and experiences.

Social change model. The social change model of leadership development is used to examine seven dimensions of leadership functions in students. Komives and Wagner (2009) describe leadership development as "a process rather than position" (p. xii). The social change model organizes the dimensions of leadership into individual, group, and community categories, with the goal of improving one's ability to change and adapt to an environment while pursuing the group's central mission. Research using this model to assess leadership development in students across genders found that women tend to use more relational and democratic approaches, while men focus on task-related behaviors (Dugan, 2006). The social change model incorporates the social work values of collaborative decision-making and values-driven change with a practical application for student leadership development.

Transformational theory, leadership identity development theory, and the social change model of leadership development possess qualities that align with social work's core values and create a framework for assessing leadership identities and skill development. The present research study applied feminist intersectionality theory to analyze the problem of a lack of leadership and management in social work education, as well as a framework for the relationship of social identity factors.

Social Identity & Work-Related Factors

Kim and Kunreuther (2012) interviewed younger leaders ($n = 17$) about their experiences in managing social justice-related organizations. Participants expressed the need for mentorship, hands-on management training, and support from supervising personnel. Seventy percent of the leaders interviewed were people of color, and several themes emerged in which

racial discrimination exhibited challenges for participants of color. They categorically faced extra demands because of their leadership roles: They were frequently asked to serve on advisory councils, boards of directors, and other (often-volunteer) leadership positions because of their roles in the community. One respondent expressed the understanding “that she is attending as a ‘token,’ but she also gains valuable information and insight by being exposed as a relatively new leader to higher-level decision-making forums” (Kim & Kunreuther, 2012, p. 4). In addition to issues of tokenism in having extra demands placed on them, leaders of color described challenges in gaining legitimacy. Though they do more, their competency is called into question because of their race. The respondents expressed a desire to mentor and support younger leaders of color to help advance their careers (Kim & Kunreuther, 2012).

In a national survey of nonprofit leaders ($n = 4,055$), Thomas-Breitfeld and Kunreuther (2017a) compared respondents by race to look specifically at issues of race and racism in the nonprofit leadership gap. Thirty-five percent of respondents of color ($n = 380$) reported that race had negatively impacted their career advancement. The qualitative themes highlight that 40% provided reasons related to a “perceived inability to lead, a lack of human resources support, and/or an exclusion from important social networks” (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017a, p. 12). Participants in the survey who were people of color expressed an overwhelming need to have more skills and training than their white counterparts to be considered for the same executive positions. The report recommends that the integration of race and equity into leadership education can help prepare future leaders to recognize implicit bias and barriers in the social work field. Social work educators are poised to address some of the challenges in this racial leadership gap by helping students recognize the “deeply embedded racialized

organizational structures, policies, and practices; and constructing strong and measurable indicators of progress” (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017a, p. 20).

Though Thomas-Breitfeld and Kunreuther’s first study focused on race, they authored a second report that examined experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) leaders. One in five (20%) respondents to their original survey identified as LGBTQ, compared to the 4.1% of adults in the United States who identify as LGBTQ (Gallup, as cited in Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017b). The researchers discuss how this oversampling provides interesting results, considering there is almost no academic research regarding LGBTQ leaders in social work. The authors further state that the oversampling may suggest a larger concentration of LGBTQ staff in the nonprofit sector compared with the general workforce. Twenty-one percent of the respondents who identified as LGBTQ expressed experiencing discrimination in the nonprofit sector. As one may expect, people of color who also identified as LGBTQ faced significantly more challenges due to their sexual identity and race (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017b).

Prior research on factors relating to physical ability/disability and mental health diagnosis and leadership could not be found. Instead, existing literature focused on leaders working with people with different abilities instead of assessing the leaders who have identified as having different abilities. Thus, the current study considers social identity factors when assessing social work educators’ perceived leadership and management competencies and experiences, including strengths and challenges identified by social work educators who self-identify as having different abilities, gender identities, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and sexual orientations.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Pritzker and Applewhite (2015) articulate that when social workers are in leadership positions, they provide a pipeline for social work students and professional social workers to move into those positions. Human relationships are the central tool of the social work profession. Social workers serve in leadership roles in different practice settings but are not always selected for leadership positions. This mission-driven profession is tied to core values that inform social workers' theoretical and practical approaches. Social workers are ideal candidates for executive leadership positions in mission-driven agencies due to their knowledge, values, and skills. The NASW *Code of Ethics* obliges social workers to be in service to vulnerable populations and work toward social justice (Reamer, 1998). Social workers are positioned uniquely in a profession that values working with social issues on all levels and emphasizes skill-based competency and compassion for human rights. Social work education has a responsibility to ensure future social workers obtain competency and practical skills at all levels of intervention, from working with individuals to larger groups and organizations. Research in this area will help guide social work curriculum development that ensures future social workers are also future human service agency leaders.

Gaps in the Research

Leadership and management skills in curricula. While much of the literature review discusses leadership and management practice skills as core needs of social work curricula, several gaps are also identified. The need for curriculum change is well-defined. Despite their long-standing existence, explicit leadership and management competencies are not included in the 2015 CSWE EPAS. Curricular changes are driven and delivered by educators who run

social work programs. The present study aims to assess how social work educators perceive their leadership and management competencies.

Leadership best practices model. There is a need to better understand the demands, challenges, and skills desired by human services industry stakeholders (Gentry, Eckert, Stawiski, & Zhao, 2014). There is also a need for increased theory- and best practice-based knowledge to support social work leadership positions in social service agencies. One major recommendation in the current research is to develop best practice models of teaching leadership in social work curricula. However, educators must be competent in leadership and management skills to be able to teach them effectively (Devlin & Samarawickrema, 2010). An understanding of social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies and the relationship of work-places factors such as formal training may help us strengthen practice-based models.

Curriculum integration. Gilliam et al. (2016) suggest that a direct recruitment approach from agencies to schools of social work is needed. Fisher (2009) claims, "Given the recommendations and findings that managers are more effective when working from a theory base, it seems important that social work managers receive the necessary education to understand models of motivation and leadership" (p. 365). Gilliam et al. (2016) also argue that schools of social work must consider the divide between micro and macro concentrations. Greene (2010) contributes the belief that the divisions in social work perpetuate the present leadership crisis, going on to express that social work skills, both clinical and macro, are necessary for effective leadership. More research on a multi-dimensional, inclusive approach to social work leadership linking both concentrations is necessary to increase the number of students prepared for the human service industry's demands. Unfortunately, no research was

found related to the 2015 CSWE EPAS, which guide competency-based curriculum design and educators' accountability for accreditation. However, in 2018, CSWE published an in-depth curricular guide for macro social work practice that aims to support educators in activities relating to the macro areas of CSWE competencies. This publication highlights the need for educators to be supported in preparing students for macro practices, such as leadership and management skills (CSWE, 2018). Social work education's focus on knowledge, values, and skills must aim to reflect the profession's practical needs.

Leadership and management competencies. CSWE reports many statistics on social work programs, but more research is needed to assess social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies. Though the 2015 CSWE report on student and program demographics is relatively comprehensive, one gap is that a critical look at social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies and practical experiences does not exist.

In the past decade, few studies have reported on leadership competencies in general. According to Walters (2017), only 11 studies were identified that discussed what leaders thought was necessary to be considered competent. Soliciting stakeholders' perspectives on leadership experiences and skills may provide valuable insight about needs, challenges, trends, and solutions in the human services industry. Social work educators can also gain valuable insight from key stakeholders about what the human services industry currently needs. A key implication for social work education is to utilize this knowledge to inform theory, shape curriculum, and prepare competent students. It is imperative for social work educators to perceive themselves as competent in leadership and management skills so they can prepare students with the appropriate social work knowledge, values, and skills in this area.

Conceptual Framework

Feminist theory. Feminist theory, specifically intersectionality, was used as the conceptual framework in the design and discussion of this study's findings. Feminist theory developed in the late 18th century and has continued to be defined by thought leaders through the ages. Several feminists' literature are reviewed here to highlight notable changes in feminist theory over the past two centuries. Founding feminist philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) introduced the idea of feminist theory in her 1792 book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Her central argument was that women were not inferior to men, but they lacked the same education as men. Additionally, bell hooks (1981) continued to bring black women to the forefront of the feminist movement in her 1981 book *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism*, which was named after Sojourner Truth's speech "Ain't I a Woman?" In her book, hook articulates that the feminist movement has been created mostly by and for middle- and upper-class white women. Thus, the movement reinforced sexism, racism, and classism because of its lack of inclusion.

Intersectionality Theory

Crenshaw (1988) coined the term *intersectionality* in describing the need to include more than gender in the recognition of power and privilege in society. Collins (1998) went on to write about black feminist standpoint theory with the premise that black women have a unique perspective because of their race and gender, although their intellectual work and perspectives have been largely marginalized. Subsequently, individuals who hold multiple marginalized social identities in American society have perspectives and experiences that have also been systematically silenced.

Swigonski (1994) applied feminist standpoint theory to research and practice in social work. Standpoint theory brings a level of awareness about one's social position as it relates to others and within systems. To survive when holding a less powerful position, one must understand his or her own positionality as well as that of the dominant class(es). These perspectives and ways of knowing help people recognize privileged worldviews as well as their own (Swigonski, 1994). Swigonski (1994) states, "Life experience structures one's understanding of life. Research must begin from concrete experience, rather than abstract concepts" (p. 390). The present research intended to assess the relationship between social work educators' identity factors and their perceived leadership and management competencies.

Feminist leadership. Models of transformational leadership generally come from the theory of charismatic individuals, who are usually white men (Collinson & Tourish, 2015). Feminist leadership challenges the privileged white male-dominant perspective at the center. Feminist leadership is not simply about placing more women in leadership roles, but it is about leading with feminist values and ideology to increase the capacity of non-feminist women and men (Batliwala, 2010). Many definitions of feminist leadership focus solely on women's leadership or "feminine" attributes. Feminist leadership styles often describe women leaders as "nurturing, caring, sensitive, cooperative, consultative, inclusive, etc." (Batliwala, 2010, p. 8).

Batliwala (2010) conducted an analysis of 18 definitions of feminist leadership. Themes from the descriptions show feminist leadership as "a set of attributes/behaviors, and practices" (p. 14). The following adjectives and verbs were frequently found in these definitions: "inclusive, participatory, collaborative, nurturing, empowering, consensus building, valuing and respecting others, and valuing growth and development" (Batliwala, 2010, p. 14). An important theme among these definitions is that they deal with power and politics. Batliwala (2010)

explains that the descriptions of feminist leadership reveal the challenge of “feminists’ own use and practice of power when they occupy leadership positions” (p.14). The feminist construction of leadership seeks egalitarian relationships. Women’s social diversity and the complex values of feminist theory seek social justice, inclusion of varied life experiences, and the eradication of systematic forms of oppression (Albino & Caldwell-Colbert, 2007).

Feminine attributes of nurturing or showing vulnerability are often rated negatively when it comes to leadership (Chin, Lott, Rice, & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007). However, when women adopt stereotypically masculine traits, such as aggressiveness and direct communication, they are perceived as angry or domineering. Batliwala (2010) defines feminist leadership specific to *women* as,

with a feminist perspective and vision for social justice, individually and collectively transforming themselves to use their power, resources and skills in non-oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilize others – especially other women – around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic and political transformation for equality and realization of human rights for all. (p. 14)

One criticism of this definition is the limitation to define feminist leadership as being specific to women. Batliwala’s (2010) definition of feminist leadership could be considered a *social work* leadership perspective; limiting feminist leadership only to those who identify as women is antithetical to the inclusive values she seeks. This definition affirms social work practice as applying feminist values. Though the social work profession is primarily made up of women, there are social work leaders who do not identify as women but still practice from a feminist perspective.

Application of intersectionality framework. Intersectionality was chosen as the conceptual model to frame research about social work educators' leadership and management experiences. Feminist theory has evolved to include more than simply an understanding of gender-related power and oppression. Rather, intersectionality is a framework within feminist theory that considers the interactions among race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability, and education important to understanding better educators' experiences with leadership and management (Crenshaw, 1998). Leadership and management competency involve relationships between people. When applied to leadership and management activities, intersectionality goes beyond individualism and can be applied to interactions within an organizational structure (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2010). The present study sought to integrate the common themes necessary to promote social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. Concerned with the notion that social work education is dominated by women, as both faculty members and students (CSWE, 2015a), the author considered the lack of leadership and management practice focus to be a possible implication that social work helpers are women. Feminist theory may point to the cause and consequence of the lack of literature on social work educators' leadership and management competencies.

Summary

Based on a review of the current literature, the current study used a correlational research design to assess the relationship between social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies and social identity and work-place factors. As curricular architects and educators of future generations of social workers, it is imperative to understand social work educators' confidence levels in their own leadership and management competencies. Their knowledge, values, and practical experiences are foundational to their

capacity to teach leadership skills. Understanding social work educators' leadership and management experiences and self-efficacy around competency is the first step. An analysis of the findings utilized feminist theory to discuss the integral factors of identity and the workplace. Future research is needed to explore how social work educators' perceptions of leadership and management competencies may influence their classroom teaching of these skills.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This chapter describes the current study's methodology, which included an online survey of closed- and open-ended questions to assess social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. The study's independent and dependent variables are defined and operationalized. Operationalization is the process of describing how concepts will be measured (Creswell, 2015); in this case, it included establishing a plan for survey development and a draft of the survey tool. Finally, this chapter discusses analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, including strengths and limitations, as well as ethical considerations for human subjects' participation and the potential risks and benefits involved.

Research Design

A quantitative correlational research design was used to analyze the relationships between independent and dependent variables. Much of the leadership and management research is quantitative in nature (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004). As concepts, "leadership" and "management" have multiple meanings and approaches. To operationalize these concepts for participants, the Network for Social Work Management's (NSWM) *Human Services Management Competencies* and corresponding Likert-scale were utilized to define the two dependent variables of "perceived leadership competency" and "perceived management competency" (2015). To further explore the concepts of leadership and management in social work education, open-ended questions regarding educators' related experiences were analyzed to triangulate the empirical data from participants' perceived competencies. A quantitative research design was utilized to assess for relationships between independent variables of social identity factors and work-related factors with the dependent variables of perceived leadership

competency and perceived management competency. Nonparametric statistical tests were used to assess mean rank differences between each independent variable with the two dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

Objectives

The study maintained the following objectives: 1. Compare the perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies of social educators, 2. Assess the relationship of social identities and work-related factors and educators' perceived leadership and management competencies, and 3. Offer recommendations for strengthening leadership and management competencies among social work educators.

Research Questions

The overarching research question for this study was, "What are social work educators' perceptions of their leadership competencies and management competencies?" In assessing leadership and management competencies, special attention was paid to social identity factors and work-related factors. Specifically, what is the relationship between social work educators' social identity factors and their perceptions of their leadership and management competencies? Additionally, what is the relationship between work-related factors of education, years of work experience, mentorship, and formal training and social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?

Methodological Process

An online survey instrument was developed utilizing the NSWM competencies and Likert-scale and reviewed by a panel of content experts. The quantitative approach was utilized to analyze differences in social work educators' perceptions of their leadership competency versus their perceptions of the management competency. To validate and expand upon the

complex concepts of leadership and management, participants were asked to explain recent experiences to triangulate the data. The author conducted a pilot study of the survey with a convenience sample of faculty and administrators who work in social work education. The pilot participants completed the survey and provided feedback to the author regarding the ease of use and suggested changes. The Kutztown University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the initial study in December 2018 and the amended post-pilot survey in January 2019. Once approved, a link to the online survey was emailed to a convenience sample of social work educators via two email listservs. A second, purposive sample of educators at eight historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) was also emailed with the survey link. Resulting data were exported into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for quantitative analysis and NVivo for qualitative analysis. The author reported descriptive statistics and correlations between variables.

Institutional Review Board Approval

The Kutztown University of Pennsylvania IRB Application was approved in December 2018 prior to beginning data collection. The author received IRB approval for the study through an affiliated university where she is employed, as well. The IRB approval number was included explicitly in the email invitations for participation.

Informed consent. Participants read and agreed to the electronic informed consent on the welcome screen of the survey (Appendix A). The participant could not proceed with the survey if he or she declined to consent. The consent discussed the study's goals and the potential for risks and benefits to participants. The survey was defined as voluntary, and the consent expressed that participants could withdraw from the survey at any time. Because of the nature of the study, there were no foreseeable risks to participants.

Survey. An online questionnaire (Appendix A) to assess social work educators' perceived competencies in leadership and management was administered. According to Wimpfheimer (Personal communication, August 8, 2018), no instrument exists currently to assess social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies. Wimpfheimer, who is one of the main architects of the NSW Human Service Management Competencies and was the NSW's current board president at the time of the study, recommended including the NSW leadership- and management-related competencies in the survey instrument. According to the NSW, the competencies were written by a team of senior social workers who work in higher education and human service management (2015).

The NSW's (2015) competencies provide a tool for professionals to assess their perceived leadership and management competencies. They identify the four domains of executive leadership, resource management, strategic management, and community collaboration. This study's focus on leadership and management utilized the domains of executive leadership, resource management, and strategic management. For the current study, participants completed competency ratings for each of the leadership and management questions and described their recent related experiences.

The two dependent variables of perceptions of leadership competency and perceptions of management competency were measured as ordinal variables based on the participants' self-efficacy scores on a 4-point Likert-scale. Self-efficacy is defined as the "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Self-efficacy is further described as one's confidence in one's own competence. Bandura (1997) describes the sources of a person's self-efficacy beliefs as mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and psychological stress.

Direct performance experience in mastering a skill (or failing at a skill) builds (or diminishes) one's efficacy belief. Feelings related to experiences influence our confidence in our capabilities. The online survey designed to assess social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies used self-efficacy section containing the NSWM 11 executive leadership competencies and nine management competencies (2015). Educators rated themselves as having *no opportunity* or as being *knowledgeable, skilled, or mastered* in each of the competency areas.

The complex nature of identity and power and their interrelated factors of leadership and management competencies were considered by assessing independent variables related to social identity factors. In addition, the participants completed questions regarding their work-related factors of educational backgrounds, formal leadership and management training, mentor relationships, and years of experience as social workers and educators. Nonparametric statistical tests were used to analyze relationships between independent variables of social identity factors and work-related factors and dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

Independent Variables

Several independent variables were included and categorized as social identity factors. Feminist theory, utilizing an intersectionality framework, drove the inclusion of social identity factors in addition to gender identity. Though social work is dominated by white women, positions of power in social work education are controlled by white men (The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, 2017). Based on gaps in the literature and utilizing feminist theory, the author sought to analyze independent variables of gender, race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and ability to learn more about their relationships with

the dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

In addition, the literature discussed factors of practical work experience, formal training, mentorship as possible factors for competency. These independent variables were analyzed and discussed as work-place factors. Their relationships to the dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency could help to offer recommendations to strengthen competency in this area for social work educators.

A rationale and operationalization for each independent variable is below. In addition, Figures 1 and 2 provide an overview of the independent variables, the categories of data, how variables were measured, and the corresponding theory or model.

Gender. The respondent was asked first to write the gender with which he or she most closely identified. The question was intentionally open-ended to allow for inclusion of all gender identities. Gender is one of the few social identities discussed frequently in leadership and management literature, and gender discrimination is recognized as a contributing factor that keeps women from executive leadership positions (HWI, 2017). Though social work is a female-dominated field, men hold the top leadership positions (CSWE, 2015). Further, the literature suggests men will demonstrate higher ratings of leadership and management competencies.

Race/ethnicity. Respondents were asked to select their race, races, and ethnic identities. Race is the social construction of the color of one's skin. In this study, ethnicity referred to Hispanic respondents who identified as Spanish-speaking or of Spanish origin but may also have identified with a racial category. Race and ethnicity are dominant social identities and using intersectionality as a theoretical framework emphasizes the inclusion of multiple identity

factors, not simply gender (Crenshaw, 2000). People of color often face racial discrimination in higher education (Kim and Kunreuther, 2012). Race is a key factor that may contribute to educators of color having lower ratings of leadership and management competencies.

Nonetheless, Kim and Kunreuther (2012) describe “tokenism” as a factor that contributes to people of color being asked to take on more leadership and management roles.

Age. Respondents were asked to provide their age in years. The aging workforce suggests that older educators have more leadership and management experience. For the purposes of this study, it was hypothesized that younger educators would have less leadership and management experience and would thus rate themselves lower for leadership and management competencies.

Sexual orientation and transgender identity. Participants were asked to share their sexual orientation and transgender identities. Because of the sensitive nature of these questions, an option of *prefer not to answer* was provided. Research demonstrates that discrimination against LGBTQ educators may prevent them from attaining leadership and management experience (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017b). Thus, the author developed a directional hypothesis that educators who identified as LGBTQ would rate themselves lower in leadership and management competencies.

Ability. Respondents were asked to identify whether they had physical or mental health disabilities. The option of *prefer not to answer* was also provided for this question. Because no literature about leaders with a disability was found, there appears to be a gap in the field of leadership and management for people with disabilities. Subsequently, the author developed a directional hypothesis that people identifying with a physical or mental health disability would rate themselves lower in leadership and management competencies.

Independent Variables Related to Social Identity Factors				
Variable Description	Operationalization	Category of Data	Measurement	References
Age	Educators select their age range.	Ordinal	25-29 years old 30-34 years old 35-39 years old 40-44 years old 45-49 years old 50-54 years old 55-59 years old 60-64 years old 65-69 years old 70-74 years old 75 years or older Prefer not to answer	Crenshaw, 2000; Kim & Kunreuther, 2012
Race/Ethnicity	Educators select their racial/ethnic identity.	Nominal	Caucasian African American Hispanic/Latino Asian South East Asian Pacific Islander Native American Biracial or Multiracial Prefer not to Identify	Crenshaw, 2000; Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017a
Gender	Educators write their gender identity.	Nominal	Male Female	Crenshaw, 2000; Batliwala, 2010
Sexual Orientation	Educators select their sexual orientation.	Nominal	Heterosexual or straight Homosexual Bisexual Prefer not to answer	Crenshaw, 2000; Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017b
Ability	Educators indicate if they identify as able-bodied or as a person with a disability.	Nominal	Able-bodied Person with a physical disability Person with a learning disability	Crenshaw, 2000

			Person with a mental health diagnosis Prefer not to answer	
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Figure 1. Overview of independent variables related to social identity factors.

Total years of social work education experience. Respondents were asked to select the total number of years they had worked as a social work educator. It was hypothesized that participants with more years of experience would rate themselves higher on leadership and management competencies.

Mentor relationships. Collegial mentoring relationships are important to leadership development (NSWM, 2015). Mentors are people who provide support and professional guidance. Respondents were asked to say whether they had ever identified a mentor or mentee in their work. Participants who answered *yes* were asked to describe their relationship with a mentor, mentee, or both. Themes were derived to further operationalize mentorship as a variable. It was hypothesized that being a mentor or mentee would suggest higher ratings of leadership and management competencies.

Formal leadership training. Respondents answered *yes* or *no* to questions regarding whether they had ever presented or received formal leadership training, or both. It was hypothesized that participants who had facilitated or received formal leadership training would demonstrate higher ratings of leadership competency than those who had not participated in formal training.

Formal management training. Respondents answered *yes* or *no* to questions regarding whether they had ever presented or received formal management training, or both. It was hypothesized that participants who had facilitated or received formal management training

would demonstrate higher ratings of management competency than those who had not participated in formal training.

Independent Variables Related to Work-Place Factors				
Variable Description	Operationalization	Category of Data	Measurement	Theory/References
Education	Educators indicate degree(s) completed	Nominal	MSW, MA, PhD in Social Work, PhD in another discipline, DSW, Other	Crenshaw, 2000; CSWE, 2015
Years' Experience in Academia	Educators select range of years' experience as social work educators.	Ordinal	0 years Less than 5 years 5-9 years 10-14 years 15-19 years 20-24 years 25-29 years 30+ years	Anastas, 2013; CSWE, 2015
Years' Experience as social work practitioner	Educators select range of years' experience as a social worker.	Ordinal	0 years Less than 5 years 5-9 years 10-14 years 15-19 years 20-24 years 25-29 years 30+ years	Anastas, 2013; CSWE, 2015
Formal Leadership Training	Participants indicate if they have participated in a formal training for leadership as a presenter or participant. Formal training is defined as a workshop, class, or course.	Nominal	Received training (Yes or No) Presented training (Yes or No)	Call et al., 2013; Vakalahi & Peebles-Wilkins, 2010; Farrow, 2014; Milton, 2016
Formal Management Training	Participants indicate if they have participated in a formal training for management as a presenter or participant. Formal training is defined as a workshop, class, or course.	Nominal	Received training (Yes or No) Presented training (Yes or No)	Call et al., 2013; Vakalahi & Peebles-Wilkins, 2010; Farrow, 2014; Milton, 2016

Mentorship	Participants indicate if they have a colleague who is a mentor or mentee. Mentoring is defined as a mutual relationship where the goal is professional and personal development.	Nominal	Mentor (Yes or No) Mentee (Yes or No)	NSWM, 2015; Kim & Kunreuther, 2012
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Figure 2. Overview of independent variables related to work-place factors.

Dependent Variables

The two dependent variables of perceptions of leadership competency and perceptions of management competency were measured as ordinal variables based on the participants' self-efficacy ratings on a 4-point Likert-scale. A rationale and operationalization for each dependent variable is below. In addition, Figure 3 provide an overview of the dependent variables, the categories of data, how variables were measured, and the corresponding theory or model.

Perceived leadership competency. Leadership competency is conceptualized as leadership skills and behaviors that promote superior performance. The survey asked respondents to rate their leadership competency using a self-efficacy survey consisting of 11 executive leadership competencies. Both the competencies and rating scale were integrated from the NSWAM (2015) *Human Services Management Competencies*. The respondents selected from a four-point Likert-scale ranging from *no opportunity* to *knowledgeable* to *skilled* to *mastered*. The *no opportunity* category was added to the original NSWAM scale. The semantic difference between consecutive levels was kept constant to help gauge differences in perceived competencies. The dependent variable of perceived leadership competency was operationalized through the NSWAM executive leadership competencies (2015), which act as indicators for defining “leadership competency.” Respondents assessed their competency levels in the following areas:

- Competency 1: Establishes, promotes, and anchors the vision, philosophy, goals, objectives, and values of the organization.
- Competency 2: Possesses interpersonal skills that support the viability and positive functioning of the organization.
- Competency 3: Possesses analytical and critical thinking skills that promote organizational growth.
- Competency 4: Models appropriate professional behavior and encourages other staff members to act in a professional manner.
- Competency 5: Manages diversity and cross-cultural understanding.
- Competency 6: Develops and manages both internal and external stakeholder relationships.

- Competency 7: Initiates and facilitates innovative change processes.
- Competency 8: Advocates for public policy change and social justice at national, state, and local levels.
- Competency 9: Demonstrates effective interpersonal and communication skills.
- Competency 10: Encourages active involvement of all staff and stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- Competency 11: Plans, promotes, and models lifelong learning practices.

Leadership experience. Immediately following the competency ratings for executive leadership, participants were asked to list a few of their recent leadership experiences based on the competencies identified. The author's intention was to use this data to triangulate data with perceived leadership competency data to validate and expand on these competencies.

Perceived management competency. The survey asked respondents to rate their management competency using a self-efficacy survey consisting of nine resource and strategic management competencies from the NSW's (2015) *Human Services Management Competencies*. The dependent variable of perceived management competency was operationalized through indicators dictated by the competencies and rating scale used directly from the NSW Competencies (2015). The respondents selected from a four-point Likert-scale ranging from *no opportunity* to *knowledgeable* to *skilled* to *mastered*. The following human resource and strategic management competencies were included:

- Competency 12: Effectively manages human resources.
- Competency 13: Effectively manages and oversees the budget and other financial resources to support the organization's/program's mission and goals and to foster continuous program improvement and accountability.

- Competency 14: Establishes and maintains a system of internal controls to ensure transparency, protection, and accountability for the use of organizational resources.
- Competency 15: Manages all aspects of information technology.
- Competency 16: Fundraising. Identifies and applies for new and recurring funding while ensuring accountability with existing funding systems.
- Competency 17: Marketing & Public Relations. Engages in proactive communication about the agency's products and services.
- Competency 18: Designs and develops effective programs.
- Competency 19: Manages risk and legal affairs.
- Competency 20: Ensures strategic planning.

Management experience. Respondents were asked to list a few of their recent management experiences based on the competencies identified. The author's intention was to use this data to triangulate data with perceived management competency data.

Overview of Dependent Variables				
Variable Description	Operationalization	Category of Data	Measurement	References
Perceived Leadership Competency	Defined through NSWCM (2015) 11 competencies of: Establishes vision, possesses interpersonal skills, possesses analytical and critical thinking skills, models appropriate professional behavior, manages diversity and cross cultural understanding, develops stakeholder relationships, facilitates innovative change processes, advocates for public policy and social justice, demonstrates interpersonal	Ordinal	Likert-Scale: (1) No Opportunity (2) Knowledgeable: Exposed to competency through education, training, observation (3) Skilled: Operational experience at team/unit level	Network for Social Work Management <i>Human Services Management Competencies</i> , 2015

	communication skills, encourages staff/stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes, promotes life-long learning		(4) Mastered: Operational Experience at organizational level	
Perceived Management Competency	Defined through NSW (2015) 9 competencies of: Effectively manages human resources, effectively manages budget and other financial resources, maintains systems of internal controls for accountability of organizational resources, manages information technology, fundraises for new and recurring funding, engages in proactive communication, designs and develops effective programs, manages risks and legal affairs, ensures strategic planning.	Ordinal	Likert-Scale: (1) No Opportunity (2) Knowledgeable: Exposed to competency through education, training, observation (3) Skilled: Operational experience at team/unit level (4) Mastered: Operational Experience at organizational level	Network for Social Work Management <i>Human Services Management Competencies</i> , 2015
Leadership Experience	Educators describe recent leadership experiences based on competencies.	Qualitative	Open-ended question	Network for Social Work Management <i>Human Services Management Competencies</i> , 2015; Anastas, 2010
Management Experience	Educators describe recent management experience based on competencies.	Qualitative	Open-ended question	Network for Social Work Management <i>Human Services Management Competencies</i> ,

				2015; Anastas, 2010
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Figure 3. Overview of dependent variables.

Relationship between Variables

A quantitative correlational research design analyzed relationships between independent variables and their relationship to two dependent variables of perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. The two dependent variables were compared to analyze differences in social work educators' perceptions of their competencies. To further validate and expand on the leadership and management competencies, qualitative data were triangulated to explain and provide narrative examples of educators' experiences (Creswell, 2015). The open-ended questions asked participants to explain their related experiences so this data could be analyzed and compared with the quantitative data results. This approach of triangulation seeks different, yet complementary data to expand, compare, or validate quantitative results (Creswell, 2015).

Population and Sampling

The correlational design sought to assess social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies and the relationships of social identity factors and work-related factors. The research study sought a nonrandom sample of convenience with broad inclusion criteria. The study population inclusion criteria included social work educators who worked at accredited colleges and universities in the United States. According to CSWE's 2015 Annual Survey, there are approximately 5,603 full-time faculty members and 7,387 part-time or contract faculty members in social work in the United States (CSWE, 2015). Depending upon each college and university's designation, these numbers may include administrative positions

such as field education personnel, deans, and program directors. The survey reported 1,942 faculty members with an administrative title (CSWE, 2015). The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD, 2018) listserv contained approximately 1,500 members. Faculty, administrators, and staff with more than one year of experience within all titles and responsibilities who were decision-makers, advisors, and curriculum designers in CSWE-accredited programs were included in the study. BSW, MSW, and doctoral program educators were also included. A targeted recruitment of educators at eight HBCUs with MSW programs was completed to increase respondents' racial diversity. The author conducted a statistical power analysis to determine the strength of the sample size.

Recruitment. First, the author invited stakeholders by accessing two large social work education listservs. A second targeted round of recruitment efforts invited individuals from historically black colleges and universities to include educators from marginalized social identities to participate. The purpose of this targeted recruitment was to ensure stronger participation from educators with diverse backgrounds, as their leadership experiences may have been viewed historically as systematically subordinate. Specifically, after emailing the survey to the general social work education listservs (BPD and National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work [NADD]), the author targeted recruitment of participants from eight HBCUs. The author chose these listservs because she is a member of the BPD listserv and her dean is a member of the NADD listserv. Recruiting as an insider helped to give access to the social work educators who are members of the listservs (Rubin & Babbie, 2017).

Demographics in data-gathering. Continuing to utilize feminist theory in the design of the study, the author considered intersectionality and diverse social identities, as well as educational background, years of practice experience in and outside academia, leadership and management training, and mentorship relationships. A non-probability multi-stage data-gathering process was used to include educators who represented historically marginalized social positions. Social work educators who are members of the BPD or NADD listservs or who are employed at one of the eight HBCUs received the survey. This is not a random sample of social work educators (Rubin & Babbie, 2017).

Survey Instrument Development

An online survey (Appendix A) was used to gather data from social work educators. The survey asked questions about respondents' employment and education, leadership experiences in and outside of academia, mentor identity, and demographic information. Respondents were asked to rate how competent they felt in 20 areas of executive leadership and strategic and resource management (NSWM, 2015).

An expert panel was consulted to review the survey development. Content experts and other social work leadership experts reviewed the survey and suggested changes. A pilot of the survey was conducted in December 2018 to reduce errors and identify problem areas before the study began (Converse & Presser, 1986).

Establishing Reliability and Validity

It was important to establish validity and reliability with the measurement tool. Validity refers to the questions measuring what they claim to measure (Rubin & Babbie, 2017). The variables require strong operationalization. Reliability seeks to ensure the measures are consistent over time (Rubin & Babbie, 2017). To establish face validity prior to pre-studying the

questionnaire, the author consulted with three content experts to review the survey questions together (Converse & Presser, 1986). The self-efficacy portion of the survey was taken directly from the NSWM competencies. According to the NSWM (2015), to develop the competencies, social work leaders and educators had vetted extensively the *Human Services Management Competencies*, including at a two-day summit convened to finalize the 2015 version. The purpose of the competencies is for social workers to use them as a self-assessment tool to rate their level of perceived competencies on the defined measures. As such, the NSWM operationalized leadership competencies and management competencies in a comprehensive, clear, and practical way.

A pilot study of the survey was conducted in December 2018. Literature about the ideal pilot sample size varies (Gitlin & Czaja, 2016); in this case, a group of 11 participants took the survey and provided feedback. The goal of pilot testing was to refine the study's components through a process of engaging stakeholders, both faculty and administrators, in research questions related to the study's intended outcomes (Gitlin & Czaja, 2016). In addition to inviting participants to complete the survey, the author and pilot testers discussed the flow, content, and process of completing the survey.

The survey included 20 Likert-scale questions about leadership and management competencies. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient measures a scale's reliability (Cronbach, 1970). The range measures an alpha value between 0 and 1. A score of 0.70 or higher is deemed an acceptable level of reliability. The author calculated a Cronbach alpha score of 0.914, which exceeds the target level of 0.70 or higher. Thus, the Likert-scale used in this study had acceptable reliability, though the high Cronbach alpha score could have been the result of a small sample size (Field, 2013).

Software for Survey and Data Analysis

The questionnaire was administered through an online survey using Qualtrics®. The benefits of using an online survey tool were that it was cost-free, convenient for participants to complete, and scalable to a large sample size (Rubin & Babbie, 2017). Utilizing this technology also minimized the need to manually transcribe and input data. File submissions were exported to one report in Microsoft Excel, and that report was cleaned to prepare for appropriate analysis. Quantitative analyses were run through SPSS, and qualitative data were coded using NVivo software.

Data Collection

An email invitation was crafted, including the link to an online survey, and was emailed directly to social work educators through the listservs representing BSW program directors, deans, and directors. A second targeted email was sent to social work faculty and directors at eight HBCUs with social work education programs in the northeastern United States (Appendix E). This purposive sample aimed to include educators from diverse backgrounds. The email followed strictly the listservs' recommended information for an invitation, including the study's full title, researcher's contact information, IRB approval number, and IRB director's contact information. The author sent one follow-up email one week after the survey was distributed. The survey remained accessible for two weeks in February 2019.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis used descriptive statistics to illustrate social work educators' demographics, executive leadership and resource management self-efficacy, and related independent variables. Means, modes, medians, and standard deviations were expressed. SPSS was used to conduct a multivariate analysis related to the main research questions. Finally,

correlation and Mann-Whitney *U* and Kruskal-Wallis *H* tests were used to analyze nominal and ordinal independent variables of social identity and work-related factors' relationship with ordinal Likert-scale items of self-efficacy on executive leadership and management questions.

Qualitative data from open-ended questions were organized and analyzed to highlight themes based on respondents' leadership and management experiences. Taxonomy development uses a combination of *a priori* and emergent codes (Creswell, 2007). Codes for leadership and management experience were derived from the NSW *Human Services Management Competencies* (2015). Emergent codes were created through an iterative process of line-by-line coding using NVivo software. After the data were coded, the author validated data for accuracy and reliability in NVivo to assess patterns and themes. Themes were integrated into quantitative variables and quotes were used to illustrate social work educators' leadership and management experiences.

Ethical Considerations

Potential risks to participants were outlined in the consent section at the beginning of the survey (Appendix A). The electronic informed consent was completed on the welcome screen of the survey. Participants could not proceed with the survey if they declined the consent. One respondent ($n = 1$) declined to consent.

There were minimal foreseeable risks or discomforts – physical, psychological, social, legal, or otherwise – associated with participating in the study. The possible risks and benefits included the participant reflecting upon his or her leadership and management experiences and assessing his or her confidence in leadership and management competencies. Thus, one risk was that the survey could elicit negative feelings regarding participants' leadership and management experiences. On the other hand, a possible benefit was positive feelings participants might

obtain from reflecting on their experiences. It is also possible there was be no benefit to participants.

Qualitative themes from participants' answers are reported in the findings section to protect participants' confidentiality. The participants are described generally as social work educators, and no identifying names are used. Direct quotations were reported to highlight themes, but participants' leadership and management competencies were expressed only in aggregate form. Social identity factors of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability were analyzed in combined groups where there was a limited number of respondents. The author intends to destroy the survey data files at the end of the study. The study was projected to take six to nine months.

Rigor

Special consideration of key elements of the correlational research design were instrumental in ensuring rigorous research (Rubin & Babbie, 2017). The author's survey development in collaboration with content experts and a survey pilot helped ensure the measures were reliable and valid. The research study sought a nonrandom sample of convenience with broad inclusion criteria to assist the author in gaining access to social work educators ($N = 119$) in accredited social work programs. The data collected via the online survey were organized and cleaned as a first step in the data-analysis process. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS and qualitative themes were derived using NVivo software. The triangulation design was used to further explain the concepts of "leadership" and "management" using qualitative themes to validate the quantitative data (Creswell, 2015).

Research Timeline

The dissertation study followed the proposed timeline of December 2018 through

September 2019 (Appendix D).

Summary

The purpose of the present study was to examine social work educators' perceptions of their leadership competencies and their perceived management competencies. The independent variables relating to social identity factors and work-related factors were analyzed to see if there were relationships with the dependent variables of social work educators' perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. An online survey was administered to social work educators across the United States. A correlational research design approach analyzed the relationships between variables. Themes from qualitative responses regarding leadership and management experience were triangulated with quantitative data to provide complementary explanations on the same topic (Creswell, 2015). SPSS and NVivo were used to analyze data. Empirical data were reported using descriptive and correlational tests with independent variables. Feminist theory provided the overarching conceptual framework for the study because of the context of social work being dominated by women, its alignment with social work values, and its emphasis on power related to intersectional identities.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of the present study was to determine social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. The author emailed a link to an online survey created in Qualtrics to social work educators that asked about their perceived leadership and management competencies. The web-based questionnaire was completed by social work faculty and administrators ($N = 119$) in the United States. The study's objectives were to understand educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies and assess for relationships of social identity and work-related factors. The leadership and management competencies were derived from the NSWM's (2015) *Executive Leadership and Strategic and Resource Management Competencies for Social Workers*. Social identity factors included five independent variables of age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability. In addition, work-related factors of education, years of social work education experience, years of social work practice experience, formal training, and mentorship roles were assessed. The survey included open-ended questions that asked respondents to describe their experiences with formal training, mentor roles, and leadership and management related to the competencies.

The purpose of this chapter is to share the data analysis based on social work educators' online survey results. The frequencies, mean Likert-scale rankings, and relationships between variables are discussed. The variables were analyzed individually using independent Mann-Whitney U tests, Spearman's rho correlations, and Kuskal-Wallis H tests. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed using NVivo software and the prevalent themes are presented here.

An *a priori* power analysis was conducted using G*Power software to determine the sample size needed for an effect size d of .5 and a $1 - \beta$ power of 0.80 for independent means

(Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). A total sample size of approximately 126 was determined to achieve this level of power. Thus, the study's sample size of 119 approaches this level.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?
2. What is the relationship between social work educators' social identity factors and their perceptions of leadership and management competencies?
3. What is the relationship between work-related factors of education, years of work experience, mentorship, and formal training and social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?

In addition, the following hypotheses were developed for this study:

- H1: Social work educators' perceptions of leadership competencies are higher than their perceptions of management competencies.
- H2: There is a positive relationship between dominant identities of gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, and social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies.
- H3: There is a positive relationship with age and social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies.
- H4: There is a positive relationship with social work educators' years of experience and perceived leadership and management competencies.

- H5: There is a positive relationship between social work education background (MSW, PhD, DSW) and perceived leadership and management competencies.
- H6: There is a positive relationship between mentorship relationships (as a mentor or mentee) and perceived leadership and management competencies.
- H7: There is a positive relationship between presenting or receiving formal leadership training and perceived leadership competencies.
- H8: There is a positive relationship between presenting or receiving formal management training and perceived management competencies.

The survey (Appendix A) was designed by using competency scales developed by the NSWM (2015). The questionnaire grouped the executive leadership competencies in one section and the strategic and resource management competencies in another section.

Respondents were asked to rate their experiences on a four-point Likert-scale, where 1 connotes *no opportunity*, 2 connotes *knowledgeable*, 3 connotes *skilled*, and 4 connotes *mastered*. The Qualtrics survey was emailed to the BPD and NADD listservs on February 14, 2019. The author sent one reminder email to the BPD listserv on February 21, 2019. The survey was closed on February 28, 2019, after remaining available for two weeks.

Survey Reliability

The survey included 20 Likert-scale questions about leadership and management competencies. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient measures a scale's reliability (Cronbach, 1970). The range measures an alpha value between 0 and 1. A score of 0.70 or higher is deemed an acceptable level of reliability. The author calculated a Cronbach alpha score of 0.914, which exceeds the target level of 0.70 or higher. Thus, the Likert-scale used in

this study had acceptable reliability, though the high score could have been the result of a small sample size (Field, 2013).

Sample Demographics

The survey was distributed to two social work education listservs with an estimated total of 1,500 members. A targeted email to social work faculty and administrators at eight historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) increased the potential participation to approximately 1,600. The author anticipated a response rate of 10%; however, the study received participation from 8.5%. Online surveys often yield low response rates (Pan, 2010). Table 2 summarizes participants' demographics. Most survey participants were women (80.7%) over the age of 40 (89.9%) who identified as white (74.8%), straight (85.7%), and a person without a disability (86.6%). These demographics were consistent with the general population of social work academicians.

Table 2

Social Work Educators' Demographics

Question	Choices	<i>n</i>	%
What is your gender identity?	Female	96	80.7
	Male	20	16.8
	Prefer not to Answer	3	2.5
	Total	119	100.0
Select your age range.	25-29	1	0.8
	30-34	4	3.4
	35-39	7	5.9
	40-44	19	16.0
	45-49	20	16.8
	50-54	14	11.8
	55-59	21	17.6
	60-64	15	12.6
	65-69	14	11.8
	70-74	2	1.7
	75 or older	1	0.8
Total	119	100.0	
What is your race/ethnicity?	White	89	74.8
	Person of color	29	24.4
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.8
	Total	119	100.0
Do you consider yourself to be...?	Straight	102	85.7
	Gay	9	7.6
	Bisexual	3	2.5
	Transgender	0	0.0
	Prefer not to answer	5	4.2
	Total	119	100.0
Do you consider yourself to be...?	Person without a disability	103	86.6
	Person with a disability	13	10.9
	Prefer not to answer	3	2.5
	Total	119	100.0

Table 3 summarizes work-related demographic information pertaining to participants' positions, educational backgrounds, and work experiences. Seventy-one percent of participants ($n = 85$) were in full-time faculty positions. A substantial percentage of educators held MSW degrees (84.8%, $n = 101$). Educators reported an average of 10-14 years of social work education experience. Over half the respondents (52%) reported having 15-29 years of social work practical experience.

Table 3

Social Work Educators' Work-Related Information

Question	Choices	<i>n</i>	%
What is the status of your position?	Full-time faculty	85	71.4
	Full-time administrator	16	13.4
	Part-time faculty	17	14.3
	Part-time administrator	13	10.9
		131	100.0
What is your educational background?	MSW degree	101	84.8
	PhD in Social Work	53	44.5
	Doctor of Social Work	7	5.8
	MBA	1	0.8
	MA degree	7	5.9
	Other degree	17	14.3
	Total	186	100.0
How many years' experience do you have as a social work educator?	0 years	4	3.4
	Less than 5 years	19	16.0
	5-9 years	22	18.5
	10-14 years	31	26.1
	15-19 years	14	11.8
	20-24 years	9	7.6
	25-29 years	12	10.1
	30+ years	8	6.7
	Total	119	100.0
How many years' experience do you have as a social work practitioner?	0 years	2	1.7
	Less than 5 years	12	10.1
	5-9 years	18	15.1
	10-14 years	20	16.8
	15-19 years	20	16.8
	20-24 years	21	17.6
	25-29 years	11	9.2
	30+ years	15	12.6
Total	119	100.0	

Table 4 summarizes participants' responses relating to formal leadership and management training. Most respondents ($n = 82$, 68.9%) indicated they had received formal leadership training, and more than half ($n = 71$, 59.7%) had received formal management

training. A smaller number ($n = 44$, 37%) reported presenting formal leadership training and approximately one-quarter ($n = 30$, 25.2%) of respondents presented formal management training.

Table 4

Social Work Educators' Formal Training

Question	Choices	<i>n</i>	%
Received formal leadership training?	Yes	82	68.9
	No	37	31.9
	Total	119	100.0
Presented formal leadership training?	Yes	44	37.0
	No	75	63.0
	Total	119	100.0
Received formal management training?	Yes	71	59.7
	No	48	40.3
	Total	119	100.0
Presented formal management training?	Yes	30	25.2
	No	89	74.8
	Total	119	100.0

Table 5 summarizes responses regarding social work educators' mentor relationships. Sixty-eight percent ($n = 81$) of participants had served as a mentor to others. Approximately 78% ($n = 93$) of respondents stated they had served in a mentee role.

Table 5

Social Work Educators' Mentor/Mentee Roles

Question	Choices	<i>n</i>	%
Are you a mentor?	Yes	81	68.1
	No	38	31.9
	Total	119	100.0
Are you a mentee?	Yes	93	78.2
	No	26	21.8
	Total	119	100.0

Research Question 1

The first research question was used to determine social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. The respondents provided scores of 1 to 4 on 11 questions related to leadership competency and nine questions related to strategic and resource management competency. Participants were asked to describe their recent leadership experiences after completing the 11 leadership competency ratings, and they were asked to describe their recent management experiences after rating themselves on management competencies.

Descriptive analysis. Descriptive statistics for 11 leadership competency questions are presented in Table 6. The NSWMC (2015) competencies conceptualize leadership as including vision and philosophy, interpersonal skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, professional behavior, diversity and cross-cultural understanding, stakeholder relationships, change processes, advocacy for public policy changes, interpersonal and communication skills, decision-making processes, and lifelong learning. Educators perceived their leadership competency with professional behavior highest with 68% of responses of *mastered*, followed by interpersonal and communication skills with 63% of responses of *mastered*, lifelong learning at 58% at *mastered*, and interpersonal skills at 55% of responses of *mastered*. Educators perceived their leadership competency related to advocacy for public policy changes lowest with only 22% of responses of *mastered*.

Table 6
Perceived Leadership Competencies Frequencies

Competencies	Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Vision, Philosophy	Mastered	50	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Skilled	52	43.7	43.7	85.7
	Knowledgeable	16	13.4	13.4	99.2

	No Opportunity	1	0.8	0.8	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Interpersonal Skills	Mastered	66	55.5	55.5	55.5
	Skilled	43	36.1	36.1	91.6
	Knowledgeable	10	8.4	8.4	100.0
	No Opportunity	0	0.0	0.0	
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Analytical and Critical Thinking Skills	Mastered	62	52.1	52.1	52.1
	Skilled	42	35.3	35.3	87.4
	Knowledgeable	15	12.6	12.6	100.0
	No Opportunity	0	0.0	0.0	
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Professional Behavior	Mastered	81	68.1	68.1	68.1
	Skilled	27	22.7	22.7	90.8
	Knowledgeable	11	9.2	9.2	100.00
	No Opportunity	0	0.0	0.0	
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Manages Diversity and Cross-Cultural Understanding	Mastered	54	45.4	45.4	45.4
	Skilled	52	43.7	43.7	89.1
	Knowledgeable	13	10.9	10.9	100.0
	No Opportunity	0	0.0	0.0	
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Stakeholder Relationships	Mastered	55	46.2	46.2	46.2
	Skilled	45	37.8	37.8	84.0
	Knowledgeable	17	14.3	14.3	98.3
	No Opportunity	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Change Processes	Mastered	47	39.5	39.5	39.5
	Skilled	50	42.0	42.0	81.5
	Knowledgeable	18	15.1	15.1	96.6
	No Opportunity	4	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Advocates for Public Policy Changes	Mastered	27	22.7	22.7	27.7
	Skilled	49	41.2	41.2	63.9
	Knowledgeable	38	31.9	31.9	96.8
	No Opportunity	5	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
	Mastered	75	63.0	63.0	63.0

Interpersonal and Communication Skills	Skilled	38	31.9	31.9	95.0
	Knowledgeable	5	4.2	4.2	99.2
	No Opportunity	1	0.8	0.8	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Decision-Making Processes	Mastered	61	51.3	51.3	51.3
	Skilled	44	37.0	37.0	88.2
	Knowledgeable	9	7.6	7.6	95.8
	No Opportunity	5	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Life-Long Learning	Mastered	69	58.0	58.0	58.0
	Skilled	41	34.5	34.5	92.4
	Knowledgeable	7	5.9	5.9	98.3
	No Opportunity	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive statistics for nine management competency questions are presented in Table 7. The NSWAM (2015) competencies conceptualize management as including experience with human resources, program improvement and accountability, use of organizational resources, information technology, fundraising, marketing and public relations, effective program design and development, risk and legal affairs management, and strategic planning. Educators perceived their management competency related to designing and developing effective programs highest with 44.5% of responses of *mastered*, followed by strategic planning with 32% of responses of *mastered*, and human resources with 25% of responses of *mastered*. Educators perceived their management competency with information technology and fundraising lowest with under 12% and 18% of responses at the *mastered* level respectively. Twenty-eight participants responded with *no opportunity* for the fundraising competency.

Table 7
Perceived Management Competencies Frequencies

Competencies	Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Human Resources	Mastered	30	25.2	25.2	25.2
	Skilled	53	44.5	44.5	69.7
	Knowledgeable	20	16.8	16.8	86.6
	No Opportunity	16	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Program Improvement and Accountability	Mastered	28	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Skilled	43	36.1	36.1	59.7
	Knowledgeable	26	21.8	21.8	81.5
	No Opportunity	22	18.5	18.5	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Accountability for the Use of Organizational Resources	Mastered	33	27.7	27.7	27.7
	Skilled	48	40.3	40.3	68.1
	Knowledgeable	18	15.1	15.1	83.2
	No Opportunity	20	16.8	16.8	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Information Technology	Mastered	14	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Skilled	49	41.2	41.2	52.9
	Knowledgeable	33	27.7	27.7	80.7
	No Opportunity	23	19.3	19.3	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Fundraising	Mastered	22	18.5	18.5	18.5
	Skilled	33	27.7	27.7	46.2
	Knowledgeable	36	30.3	30.3	76.5
	No Opportunity	28	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Marketing and Public Relations	Mastered	23	19.3	19.3	19.3
	Skilled	49	41.2	41.2	60.5
	Knowledgeable	35	29.4	29.4	89.9
	No Opportunity	12	10.1	10.1	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Designs and Develops Effective Programs	Mastered	53	44.5	44.5	44.5
	Skilled	43	36.1	36.1	80.7
	Knowledgeable	15	12.6	12.6	93.3
	No Opportunity	8	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	
Manages Risks and Legal Affairs	Mastered	23	19.3	19.3	19.3
	Skilled	44	37.0	37.0	56.3
	Knowledgeable	33	27.7	27.7	84.0
	No Opportunity	19	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Strategic Planning	Mastered	38	31.9	31.9	31.9
	Skilled	43	36.1	36.1	68.1
	Knowledgeable	30	25.2	25.2	93.3
	No Opportunity	8	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Combining leadership and management competencies. The 11 leadership competency scores were combined to create the dependent variable of *perceived leadership competency* and the 9 management competency scores were combined to create the dependent variable of *perceived management competency*. Table 8 displays descriptive statistics for the combined variables. Social work educators perceived that their management competency averaged in the *knowledgeable* range ($M = 2.75$), while leadership competency averaged as *skilled* ($M = 3.34$).

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Combined Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
MANAGEMENT	2.7404	0.72302	119
LEADERSHIP	3.3453	0.49560	119

Note. Perceived competency ranged from 1 (No opportunity) to 4 (Mastered).

A Spearman correlation analysis was used to determine the correlation between leadership and management competencies. Table 9 demonstrates that the correlation was positive, moderately strong, and statistically significant ($r = 0.53, p > .001$). The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.281$) revealed that 28% of the variance in leadership competency was explained by management competency. Hypothesis 1 is supported, as there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores comparing educators' perceived leadership

competency and management competency. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Social work educators perceive their leadership competencies significantly higher than their management competencies. Social work educators scored themselves lower on all the management competencies compared to leadership competencies with the exception of one.

Table 9

Correlations between Management and Leadership Competencies

		MANAGEMENT	LEADERSHIP
MANAGEMENT	Spearman's rho correlation	1	0.527**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	<i>N</i>	119	119
LEADERSHIP	Spearman's rho correlation	0.527**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	<i>N</i>	119	119

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

Qualitative responses. The qualitative questions related to research question 1 were intended to allow respondents to describe their experiences related to leadership and management competencies. After scoring themselves on 11 leadership competency questions, survey participants were asked, “Thinking about the leadership competencies, please list a few of your most recent leadership experiences.” Comparably, after scoring themselves on 9 resource and strategic management competencies, participants were asked, “Thinking about the management competencies, please list a few of your most recent management experiences.” The mixed-methods design for this research question allowed participants to describe their experiences in their own words. The qualitative themes derived from open-ended responses provided nuances to educators’ perceptions of their competency that could not be captured by numerical data alone. The triangulation design was used to further explain and validate the quantitative data (Creswell, 2015).

The leadership experience question resulted in 97 responses and 1 *N/A* (81.5%) out of 119 possible surveys. A total of 80 (67.2%) responses to the management experience question were provided. The qualitative data were imported into NVivo software, and responses were coded line by line using a method of deductive coding initially based on the 20 competencies and inductive coding as new themes emerged. Forty-nine codes were identified for the leadership and management experience questions. Figure 4 displays the top 10 codes.

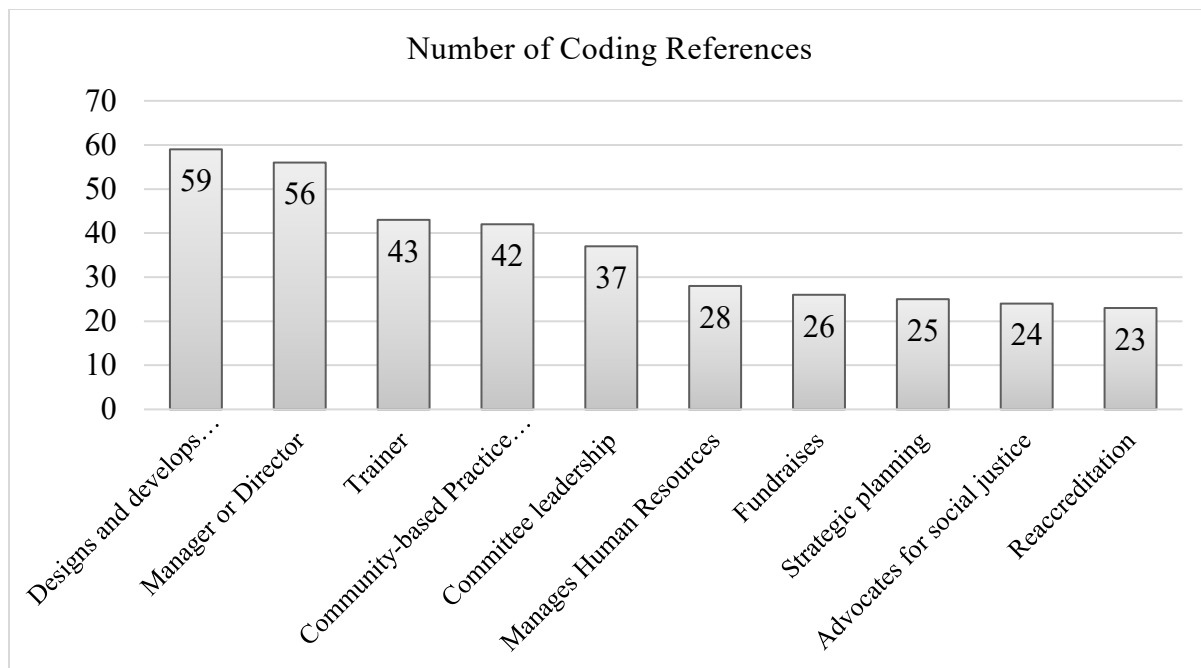


Figure 4. Top 10 codes for leadership and management experiences.

The code of *designs and develops effective programs* was discussed 59 times. While this code is technically categorized as a strategic management competency, participants ($n = 24$) shared this experience as an example of leadership experience. For example, one respondent reported, “I have recently facilitated the establishment of two new MSW Programs.” Others shared leadership experiences related to program improvements at the university level:

I am currently on 2 committees for the university that relies on leadership abilities. The Program Review Committee, which is responsible for evaluating the viability and continued existence for programs at our university and the University Compliance Committee, that is responsible to see if programs are meeting compliance standards of the university and the accrediting professional bodies.

Other respondents discussed changes in their organizational models or curricula that elicited their leadership skills. One participant wrote, “Program development, growing a

department that became an integral part of the organizational model.” Several respondents wrote about developing online or hybrid programming. Though *information technology* demonstrated one of the lowest mean scores in educators’ self-assessment of their competency, it was mentioned 14 times as an example of leadership or management experience.

One theme that emerged in the coding was the reference to position or title as an example of leadership or management. Respondents identified themselves as being a manager or director ($n = 56$), part of committee leadership ($n = 37$), or as members of a leadership team ($n = 12$). One statement clearly articulated the difference between title and experience:

As I have only joined academia in the past year and was made the MSSW field director in the past 6 months, I will admit that I have been more focused on learning the job rather than leading. However, in the past month I have found myself “naturally” stepping into roles of leadership when I see them.

The theme of leadership in relation to other roles was discussed in the codes *collaboration* ($n = 14$), *committee leadership* ($n = 37$), *leadership team* ($n = 12$), and *supervision* ($n = 12$). One respondent expressed his or her leadership experience as “collaborat[ing] with community resources and agency-based services to link university and community programs.”

Several respondents expressed leadership challenges ($n = 2$) and management challenges ($n = 12$) or a need for training ($n = 23$) when sharing their experiences. One survey participant wrote about his or her leadership experience,

I have been able to advocate to have the VP of academic affairs offer professional development workshops for department chairs as most have no personnel management

skills or training. This has included pushing for a mediation workshop for department chairs to learn mediation skills.

Another respondent shared an example of his or her management experience: “We have students that were not suited to the profession and challenged our decisions to the highest levels. It was very stressful for faculty and other students.” One final example of a management experience was expressed as, “I have recently stepped down as the chair of a department outside my own. I assisted this department where wonderful persons could not get along as a group.”

Overall, there is a statistically significant difference ($p > .001$) in how survey respondents perceived their leadership competency versus their management competency. The mean differences of leadership competencies were scored higher in every instance except for *designs and develops effective programs*. This theme emerged as the most frequently coded item ($n = 59$) in the leadership and management experiences. Management experience was shared less frequently (59.3%) and included more comments related to challenges ($n = 12$). The qualitative findings are consistent with the significantly lower mean rankings of all management competencies with the exception of the competency *designs and develops effective programs*.

Research Question 2

The second question was, “What is the relationship between social work educators’ social identity factors and their perceptions of leadership and management competencies?” Participants’ demographic information was collected to assess if there were differences between groups. Social identity factors included age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and education. Nonparametric statistical tests were used to assess mean rank differences between each independent variable of age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability,

with the two dependent variables of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

Age. The author performed a Kruskal-Wallis H test to compare the 11 age groups ranging from 25-29 years to 75 years and older to and their mean rank scores of perceived leadership competency. Table 10 summarizes the results. This analysis produced a statistically significant result [$\chi^2_{(10, N=119)} = 18.79, p = .043$]. The Kruskal-Wallis H test comparing age groups' perceived management competency results were not significant [$\chi^2_{(10, N=119)} = 10.74, p = .456$]. Table 11 summarizes the results. There is a statistically significant difference between the perceived leadership competency scores and age, however there is no relationship between age and perceived management competency scores.

Table 10

Perceived Leadership Competency by Age

	Age in Years	N	Mean Rank
LEADERSHIP	25-29 years old	1	12.00
	30-34 years old	4	32.38
	35-39 years old	7	56.93
	40-44 years old	19	54.21
	45-49 years old	20	49.15
	50-54 years old	14	52.86
	55-59 years old	21	76.10
	60-64 years old	15	62.63
	65-69 years old	14	71.79
	70-74 years old	2	91.50
	75 years or older	1	2.50
	Total	118	

Table 11
Perceived Management Competency by Age

	Age in Years	N	Mean Rank
MANAGEMENT	25-29 years old	1	21.00
	30-34 years old	4	46.00
	35-39 years old	7	36.50
	40-44 years old	19	53.50
	45-49 years old	20	58.15
	50-54 years old	14	63.46
	55-59 years old	21	60.17
	60-64 years old	15	63.77
	65-69 years old	14	78.11
	70-74 years old	2	69.25
	75 years or older	1	40.50
	Total	118	

Race and ethnicity. Survey question 18 asked participants to identify their race/ethnic identities. Responses of African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, South East Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and Biracial or Multiracial were combined to make the variable of *person of color*. There were no significant mean differences in leadership competencies between groups based on race/ethnic identity. A Mann-Whitney *U* test indicated the perceived leadership competency was only slightly greater for white educators (Mean rank = 61.47) than for educators of color (Mean rank = 53.45), ($U = 1115$, $p = .271$, $r = .10$) suggest that one's race does not have a significant relationship with perceived leadership competency scores. Thus, for hypothesis 2, we fail to reject the null hypothesis relating to race/ethnicity's relationship with perceived leadership competency.

A Mann-Whitney *U* test was conducted to compare perceived management competency for people who identified as white and people of color. This test indicated there was a significantly higher perceived management score for those who identified as white (Mean rank

= 63.92) than those who identified as people of color (Mean rank = 45.93), ($U = 897, p = .014, r = .23$). For the survey respondents, there was a relationship between one's race and their perceived management competency. We reject null hypothesis 2 for the relationship of race and perceived management competency.

Gender. Survey respondents were asked to write in their gender identities. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare perceived management competency for women ($n = 96$) and men ($n = 20$). There was no significant difference in the rank scores for participants who identified as women (56.91) and men (66.15), ($U = 807, p = .263, r = .10$). Similarly, there were no significant mean rank differences in perceived leadership competency between women and men. The mean leadership competency scores for women (57.90) and men (61.38), ($U = 902.50, p = .674, r = .04$) suggest one's gender does not have a significant effect on leadership competency scores. Thus, we fail to reject null hypotheses 2 relating to the social identity factor of gender in relationship to perceived leadership and management competencies.

Sexual orientation. Survey respondents were also asked about their sexual orientation. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to explore the perceived management competency ratings for four sexual orientation identities. This analysis produced a non-significant result [$\chi^2_{(3, N = 119)}, p = .976$]. The analysis for the four groups' average leadership competency scores also resulted in a non-significant finding [$\chi^2_{(3, N = 119)}, p = .825$]. Thus, we fail to reject null hypotheses relating to respondents' sexual orientation and their perceived leadership and management competencies. Among survey participants, there was no relationship between one's sexual orientation and perceived management or leadership competencies.

Ability. Survey participants were also asked about their abilities. They were asked to identify if they considered themselves to be able-bodied, a person with a physical disability, a person with a learning disability, or a person with a mental health diagnosis. The factors of mental health diagnosis, learning differences, and ability were recoded to make the variable *ability*.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare management competency scores for those who identified as not having a disability ($n = 103$) and those who identified as having a disability ($n = 13$). There was no significant difference in the scores for those who identified as not having a disability (57.10) and those who identified as having a disability ($U = 525.50, p = .207, r = .12$). These results suggest there was no relationship between ability and perceived management competency. Thus, we fail to reject null hypothesis 3 for ability's relationship with perceived management competency.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare leadership competence scores for those who identified as not having a disability ($n = 103$) and those who identified as having a disability ($n = 13$). There was a no significant difference in the ranked mean scores for those who identified as not having a disability (58.19) and those who identified as having a disability (60.92), ($U = 638.00, p = .782, r = .03$). These results suggest there was no relationship between ability and perceived leadership competency. Thus, we fail to reject null hypothesis 2 relating to the social identity factor of ability in relationship to perceived leadership competency.

In summary, the results of the nonparametric test analysis supported hypothesis regarding the statistically significant difference in mean scores of perceived leadership competency based on age but not based on factors of gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test for age and perceived management

competency and the Mann-Whitney U analysis for race/ethnicity and perceived management competency rejected the null hypothesis and supported hypotheses 2 and 3. There was a statistically significant difference in mean scores of perceived management competency based on age and race/ethnicity but not based on factors of gender, sexual orientation, or ability. There was a relationship between respondents' age and race/ethnicity with their perceived management competency. Older educators scored higher on perceived management competencies and white educators scored higher on perceived management competencies.

Research Question 3

Research question three asked, "What is the relationship between work-related factors and social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?" Participants were asked about their social work educational backgrounds, years of practical social work experience, years of social work education experience, mentor and/or mentee roles, formal leadership training as a presenter and/or participant, and formal management training as a presenter and/or participant. Nonparametric statistical tests were used to assess mean rank differences between categorical and ordinal independent variables and the two ordinal dependent variables of perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies.

Leadership competency and the MSW degree. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the perceived leadership competency of those who held an MSW and those who did not hold an MSW. There was a significant difference in the mean ranked scores for the MSW degree (68.97) and no MSW degree (58.40), ($U = 747.50$, $p = .230$, $r = .11$). These results suggest there is no relationship between having an MSW degree and one's

perceived leadership competency. Specifically, the research suggests those who did not hold MSW degrees reported slightly higher levels of perceived leadership competency.

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare leadership competency scores for those who held a PhD in social work and those who did not hold a PhD in social work. There was no significant difference in the mean ranked scores for the PhD in social work degree (60.62) and no PhD in social work (59.50), ($U= 1716, p = .860, r = .02$). These results suggest almost precisely the same mean ranked scores for perceived leadership competency regardless of holding a PhD in social work. Similar results were found for educators who held a DSW degree (59.71) compared with those who did not hold a DSW degree (60.02), ($U= 390, p = .982, r = .02$). Based on the survey responses, neither MSW nor doctoral social work education appear to have a relationship with perceived leadership competency.

Management competency and the MSW degree. Comparatively, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare management competency scores for those who held an MSW degree and those who did not hold an MSW degree. There was no significant difference in the ranked mean scores for the MSW degree (60.54) and no MSW degree (56.97), ($U= 854.5, p = .686, r = .04$). These results suggest there is no relationship between having an MSW degree and one's perceived management competency.

The results were similar when considering the perceived management competencies ratings for educators with a PhD in social work. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare perceived management competency scores for those who held a PhD in social work and those who did not hold a PhD in social work. There was no significant difference in the mean ranked scores for those who held a PhD (59.32) and respondents who did not hold a PhD (60.55), ($U= 1713, p = .847, r = .02$). These results suggest almost the same mean ranked scores

of perceived management competency regardless of holding a PhD in social work. Similar results were found for educators who held a DSW degree (53.14) compared with those who did not hold a DSW (60.43), ($U= 344, p = .587, r = .05$).

Neither MSW education nor doctoral social work education were found to have a relationship with perceived management competencies. Thus, the we fail to reject the null hypothesis 5 regarding social work educational background's relationship with perceived management competency.

Years of social work practical experience. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to analyze the relationship between the independent variable of years of practical experience ranging from *0 years* to *30+ years* and their mean rank scores of perceived leadership competency. Table 12 summarizes the results. There was no relationship between years of practice experience and perceived leadership competencies [$\chi^2_{(7, N=119)} = 7.39, p = .390$].

Table 12

<i>Perceived Leadership Competency based on Years of Practical Experience</i>			
	Years of Practice Experience	N	Mean Rank
LEADERSHIP	0 Years	2	35.00
	Less Than 5 Years	12	54.13
	5-9 Years	18	53.67
	10-14 Years	20	50.23
	15-19 Years	20	62.53
	20-24 Years	21	62.57
	25-29 Years	11	70.09
	30+ Years	15	74.30
	Total	119	

A Kruskal-Wallis H test was performed to explore the perceived management competency scores based on educators' years of social work practical experience. Table 13

summarizes the results of the ranked means. There was no relationship between years of practice experience and perceived management competencies [$\chi^2_{(7, N=119)} = 11.21, p = .130$].

Table 13

Perceived Management Competency based on Years of Practical Experience

	Years of Practice Experience	N	Mean Rank
MANAGEMENT	0 Years	2	37.50
	Less Than 5 Years	12	51.58
	5-9 Years	18	62.92
	10-14 Years	20	46.25
	15-19 Years	20	54.63
	20-24 Years	21	63.93
	25-29 Years	11	81.00
	30+ Years	15	70.83
	Total	119	

Years of social work education experience. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to analyze the relationship between the independent variable of years of social work education experience ranging from 0 years to 30+ years and their mean rank scores of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency. Table 14 summarizes the results. There was a statistically significant relationship between years of social work education experience and perceived leadership competency [$\chi^2_{(7, N=119)} = 14.52, p = .043$], but no relationship between years of social work education experience and perceived management competency [$\chi^2_{(7, N=119)} = 10.753, p = .150$].

Table 14

Perceived Leadership Competency based on Yrs of Social Work Ed Experience

	Years' Experience as Social Work Educator	N	Mean Rank
LEADERSHIP	0 Years	4	56.88
	Less Than 5 Years	19	46.18
	5-9 Years	22	48.86
	10-14 Years	31	57.35
	15-19 Years	14	70.43
	20-24 Years	9	81.11
	25-29 Years	12	66.21
	30+ Years	8	83.94
	Total	119	

Based on the results of the Kruskal-Wallis H tests for years of social work education and practical experience, we reject the null hypothesis for perceived leadership competencies, but we fail to reject the null hypothesis for perceived management competencies. Years of experience as a social work educator has a relationship with perceived leadership competencies. However, years of experience as a social work educator has no relationship with one's perceived management competencies. Based on the survey responses, years of social work practical experience has no relationship with perceived leadership or perceived management competencies.

Mentorship. The Mann-Whitney U tests were used to test the independent variables of being a mentor or not being a mentor and being a mentee or not being a mentee with the ordinal dependent variables of perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. The analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that there would be a relationship between mentorship roles and perceived competencies. There was a non-statistically significant relationship of being a mentor (63.98) or not being a mentor (51.53) on perceived leadership competencies, ($U= 1217, p = .066, r = .17$). Similarly, when analyzing rank means for perceived management competency, there was a non-statistically significant relationship of being a mentor (62.06) or not being a mentor (55.61), ($U= 1372, p = .341, r = .09$). We fail to reject null hypothesis 6 that mentorship has a relationship with one's perceived leadership competencies or perceived management competencies.

The Mann-Whitney U tests were used to test the independent variables of being a mentee or not being a mentee with the ordinal dependent variables of perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. The analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that there would be a relationship between menteeship roles and perceived competencies. There was a non-statistically significant relationship of being a mentee (58.85) or not being a mentee (64.10) on perceived leadership competencies, $U= 1102.5$, $p = .492$, $r = .06$. Similarly, when analyzing rank means for perceived management competency, there was a non-statistically significant relationship of being a mentee (59.85) or not being a mentee (60.52), $U= 1195.5$, $p = .931$, $r = .01$. We fail to reject null hypothesis 6 that menteeship has a relationship with one's perceived leadership competencies or perceived management competencies.

Qualitative responses for mentorship. Respondents were asked to describe their experiences as a mentor, mentee, or both. A total of 114 responses (84%), including 5 responses of N/A or none, discussed participants' roles as mentors ($n = 76$) and mentees ($n = 71$). Both mentor and mentee roles incorporated skill development ($n = 67$) as a main theme of the mentorship experience.

Formal leadership and management training.

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to compare perceived leadership competency for those who had presented formal leadership training and those who had not presented formal leadership training. There was a statistically significant relationship between the rank mean scores for those who had presented formal leadership training (70.20) and those who had not presented formal leadership training (54.01), ($U= 1201$, $p = .013$, $r = .23$). These results suggest that presenting leadership training had statistically significant higher perceived leadership competency scores. Similarly, social work educators who had received formal leadership

training scored significantly higher on perceived leadership competency (65.15) than those who had not received formal leadership training (48.58), ($U = 1094.5, p = .015, r = .23$). We reject null hypothesis 7 by suggesting that social work educators who had presented or received formal leadership training scored significantly higher on perceived leadership competency.

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to compare perceived management competency for those who had presented formal management training and those who had not presented formal management training. There was a statistically significant relationship between the rank mean scores for those who had presented formal management training (81.10) and those who had not presented formal management training (52.89), ($U = 702, p < .001, r = .36$). These results suggest that social work educators' who had presented management training had statistically significant higher perceived management competency scores. Similarly, social work educators who had received management training scored significantly higher on perceived management competency (66.95) than those who had not received formal management training (49.72), ($U = 1210.5, p = .007, r = .25$). We reject null hypothesis 8 by suggesting that social work educators who had presented or received formal management training scored significantly higher on perceived management competency.

Qualitative responses for training. Survey respondents were asked to explain their formal training experiences as a presenter or participant or both ($n = 113$). Themes regarding several types of training and no training ($n = 20$) emerged.

Summary

In summary, the results of the nonparametric tests indicated non-significant relationships for social work educational background (MSW, PhD in Social Work, DSW), years of social work practical experience, and mentorship on perceived leadership and management

competencies. However, a Kruskal-Wallis H test resulted in a statistically significant relationship between the years of social work education experience and perceived leadership competency. The more years of experience social work educators had the higher their perceived leadership competency scores.

For perceived management competency, there was no relationship between years of social work education experience and perceived management competency. However, Mann-Whitney *U* tests resulted in significant relationships with formal leadership training and perceived leadership competency and statistically significant relationships with formal management training and perceived management competency. Social work educators who presented formal training or received formal training had higher rank mean scores of perceived leadership competency and perceived management competency.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The following objectives were established for this study: 1. Compare social work educators' perceived leadership and management competencies, 2. Assess the relationship between social identities and work-related factors in educators' leadership and management competencies, and 3. Offer recommendations for strengthening leadership and management competencies among social work educators. This study's aim was to determine the levels of leadership and management competencies perceived by social work educators in the United States.

Executive Summary

The need for this study arose from the staggering gap between the number of social workers needed to fill executive leadership roles in human service agencies and the fact that only about 10% of students study macro concentrations within social work. The need for social workers to be prepared for these roles and the gaps in social work education on leadership and management content are well-documented. An understanding of educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies was critical, since these instructors are preparing future social workers for practice. Educators' perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies were identified as a gap in the literature. An online survey was emailed to two social work education listservs, and a follow-up email was sent to faculty and administrators at eight historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) to ensure a racially inclusive sample. The correlational design asked social work educators to score themselves on the National Network for Social Work Management's ([NSWM], 2015) 11 executive leadership competencies and nine strategic and resource management competencies. Demographic information and questions related to prior formal training, mentorship roles, and years of

experience were included. Open-ended questions asked educators to explain their recent leadership and management experiences. Mann-Whitney U tests and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were performed to analyze 119 educators' responses to the online survey instrument. This chapter provides an analysis and interpretation of the research questions and conclusions based on the study's findings. Study limitations, practical implications, and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

Summary of Findings

Question 1. The first research question was used to determine social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. Based on literature focusing on leadership-related skills and the sparse focus on management in the social work field, the author expected a higher level of perceived competency with leadership skills than of management skills. Respondents rated themselves on a scale of 1 (no opportunity), 2 (knowledgeable through training and observation), 3 (skilled at a team level), to 4 (mastered at an organizational level) on 11 questions related to leadership competency and nine questions related to strategic and resource management competencies. Participants were asked to describe their recent leadership experiences after the 11 leadership competency ratings and regarding their recent management experiences after rating themselves on the management competencies.

Overall, social work educators' perceptions of their leadership competencies were significantly higher than management competencies ($p > .001$). The rank mean differences of the 11 executive leadership competencies were higher than management competencies in every instance except for one management competency: that of *designs and develops effective programs*. Social work educators feel more competent in leadership than they do in management. With respect to this area, no prior research was found regarding social work

educators' perceptions of their leadership or management competencies. However, a recent study by Applewhite, Kao, and Pritzker (2018) asked social work practitioners and educators about macro practice competencies they found *important*. They determined that leadership competency, including interpersonal skills, were rated highest among both groups (Applewhite et al., 2018). Interpersonal skills and other leadership competencies highlight areas of strength for social work educators. Applewhite et al. (2018) also found that program management was of high interest among both practitioners and educators. The present study was consistent with these findings but moved beyond *importance* to *perceived competency* of skills. Clearly, the focus has been on social work leadership and not social work management. More attention and research need to focus on management competencies in social work education to be able to meet the growing demand for social workers who have the skills to manage organizations and programs. In addition, further research is needed to understand better the impact of educators' perceived competencies on their teaching.

Question 2. The second question was, "What relationship do social identity factors have on social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?" In summary, the results of the nonparametric statistical tests indicated the statistically significant difference in mean scores of perceived leadership competency was based on age but not on factors of gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability. It was expected that older respondents may have had more experience in leadership roles, and thus demonstrate higher ratings on self-perceived leadership competency. It was unexpected that this would be the only significant difference when considering social identity factors' relationship with perceived leadership competency. A larger, more diverse sample may have provided more comparisons between groups of self-perceived leadership competency.

The results of the Mann-Whitney *U* and Kruskal-Wallis *H* tests found a statistically significant difference in mean scores of perceived management competency based on age and race/ethnicity but not based on factors of gender, sexual orientation, or ability. Older respondents and white educators had higher perceived management competency. The independent variables are discussed individually in relationship to the dependent variables of perceived leadership and management competencies in the context of the current literature.

Gender. Gender differences were expected based on the literature regarding social work education leadership and feminist theory. Finding no difference between men and women's perceived leadership and management competencies was contrary to the literature on the gender leadership gap (CSWE, 2015a). However, social work education is a profession dominated by women, as two-thirds of faculty are women (CSWE, 2015). Almost 83% of participants in the present study identified as women, and their perceived competency mirrored men's scores consistently for both leadership and management. Social workers seeking gender equity in the workplace and beyond may provide a more inclusive environment, allowing for women to share the same opportunities for gaining leadership and management experiences (Mallinger, Starks, & Tarter, 2017). However, the consistently lower perceived management scores for all social work educators, regardless of gender, means that the entire profession needs to address the gap. Several participants mentioned participating in formal leadership and management training directed toward women.

Race/ethnicity. Differences in leadership and management competencies based on race and ethnicity were consistent with the literature. Issues of race and racism contribute to the nonprofit leadership gap (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017a). White respondents showed statistically higher perceived management competency and clinically higher leadership competency than people of color. These findings demonstrate that race and racism are still present in social work education. Based on the literature, people of color have more demands placed on them to be in leadership roles, but their competency may be questioned when they are challenged to gain legitimacy (Kim & Kunreuther, 2012).

Age. Age was a contributing factor to participants' perceived leadership and management competencies. Older participants had higher levels of perceived competency than younger cohorts, which is consistent with the literature in which younger participants in management positions expressed a need for more formal training, supervision, and mentorship (Kim & Kunreuther, 2012). Likewise, social work education will face a leadership crisis as older educators retire because they express higher levels of competency in both leadership and management skills (Gilliam et al., 2016).

Sexual orientation. There were no statistically significant differences in perceived leadership or management competencies based on participants' sexual orientation. There is almost no academic literature regarding LGBTQ leadership, and in this study, ten percent of participants identified as LGBTQ, as compared with the national average of 4.1% of adults (Thomas-Breitfeld & Kunreuther, 2017b).

Ability. There were no statistically significant differences in leadership or management competencies based on participants' identified abilities. There is no academic literature regarding social work educators who have identified their physical, mental, and learning

disabilities with their perceived leadership and management competencies. This area requires more study.

Question 3. Research question 3 asked, “What is the relationship between work-related factors and social work educators’ perceptions of their leadership and management competencies?” Participants were asked about their educational backgrounds, years of practical social work experience, years of social work education, mentor and mentee roles, formal leadership training as a presenter and/or participant, and formal management training as a presenter and/or participant. In summary, the results of the nonparametric statistical tests indicated non-significant effects for having a social work educational background, years of social work education or practical experience, and mentorship on perceived leadership and management competencies. Nonparametric statistical tests resulted in significant relationships with formal training and perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. Social work educators who had presented or received formal leadership training scored themselves significantly higher on leadership competencies compared with those who indicated they had no training. Similarly, there were statistically significant relationships with higher perceived management competency with those who presented or received formal management training.

Educational background. Based on this study, social work educators scored themselves significantly higher on leadership competencies than on management competencies. Having an MSW, PhD in social work, or DSW had no relationship with respondents’ perceived leadership or management competency. These data are consistent with the literature that most social workers’ educational preparation is focused on direct practice, while currently only 3-4% of students study in administrative concentrations (Patti, 2003). From these findings, it can be

inferred that leadership and management preparation have been lacking in social work education for several decades, since education was not a factor across any age demographic. This result is consistent with the literature that has recognized leadership as the missing ingredient in social work education for more than 30 years (Brilliant, 1986; Fisher, 2009; Moran et al., 1995).

Years of experience. Though age was found to be the most statistically significant factor in social workers' confidence in leadership and management competencies, years of experience as a social worker or as an educator did not indicate a difference in participants' perceptions of their management competencies. CSWE (2015) requires two years of post-MSW experience for its hiring standards. These findings support that years of social work practical experience do not have an impact on one's perception of his or her leadership and management competencies. However, there was a positive relationship between years of social work education experience and perceived leadership competency. Social work educators have more confidence in their leadership competency with more years of social work education experience. Another interpretation is that social work educators who have many years of experience, either in agencies or higher education, do not gain on-the-job experience that would give them more confidence in their management competencies.

Mentorship. Social work educators who were mentors or mentees were not found to have any statistically significant differences in their perceptions of leadership and management competencies. This result is contrary to the literature that promotes the benefits of faculty mentor relationships (Trower, 2012). Social work educator respondents to this study shared positive qualitative responses regarding mentorship relationships as both mentors and mentees, which is consistent with the literature regarding faculty success and satisfaction (Trower, 2012).

Formal training. Social work educators who presented or received formal leadership training indicated statistically more confidence in their leadership competency than those who did not have formal leadership training. Similarly, those who presented or received formal management training scored themselves significantly higher on management competencies. This result is consistent with the literature that promotes leadership and management training (Farrow, 2014; Milton, 2016).

Implications for Social Work Education

Leadership and management competencies are two separate and often competing skillsets. Managers plan and complete tasks related to an organization's goals, while leaders inspire people, collaborate to make change, and communicate a vision (Weinbach & Taylor, 2015; Wimpfheimer, 2004). Though the literature points to *leadership* as missing from social work education, this study's findings indicated a significant *management* gap in how educators perceive their own competency. Leadership approaches and skills, though not called *leadership*, seem to be fundamental to social work education. Social work educators need to reconceptualize social work skills such as advocacy, visioning, active listening, engagement, and empathy to be identified as *leadership* in social work. This study's findings indicate social work educators are confident in their leadership competencies. Social work and leadership both focus on relationships with others as the means to bring about change. However, the CSWE EPAS do not use *leadership* in the language that operationalizes the very behaviors that are widely and consistently used to define *leadership*. Making basic shifts in the CSWE EPAS language to identify leadership behaviors as such would change how social work skills are identified as leadership skills without changing curricula.

Social work educators are a part of two professions: social work and academia. Social workers and social work educators have complementary characteristics “in their ideals of service to others, competence, ethical conduct, and commitment to the work” (Anastas, 2013, p. 187). As such, social work educators are responsible for preparing future social workers for competent, ethical practice with the values of social work. As Boyer (1990) points out, “Teaching begins with what the teacher knows” (as cited in Anastas, 2013, p. 193). Continual assessment of what educators know is an important first step. When gaps in perceived competency are recognized, it is important to close them. The present study found that social work educators rated themselves significantly higher on leadership competencies than on management competencies. Receiving formal leadership and management training had a significant impact on participants’ perceived leadership and management competencies. Social work educators can exemplify the values of lifelong learning placed on students through social work accreditation standards with continued training in the areas of leadership and management competencies. It is a natural fit for social workers who are educators.

One recommendation to strengthen the connection between educators’ competency and what is taught in the classroom is for CSWE to include language from the NSWM competencies in the next EPAS. The outcomes-oriented design of these competencies provides educators with a framework for curricular and field internship expectations. A shift in the language to include explicit terminology of *leadership* and *organizational management* skills in the foundation year could shift the focus in coursework and field experiences to these areas. Requiring specific field experiences in leadership and organizational management skills for all social work students in the foundation year, not only those studying macro concentrations, would better prepare social workers to fulfill the needs of social work agencies.

Implications for Social Work

The core values of social work are fundamental to practice, regardless of the practice setting. These values of service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the individual, the importance and centrality of human relationships, integrity, and competency set social workers apart from other professions and it is core to their work. Social work educators are a critical force in meeting the grand challenges of modern society, as they are preparing the next generation of social workers. There are many approaches to being in service to others and intervening in social justice issues. However, most social work takes place through organizations. As leaders continue to retire in record number, social workers who are competent in leadership and management are necessary to fill the void (Stewart, 2016). The present study indicates that social work educators have higher levels of perceived leadership competency than management competency. Recognizing the higher perception of leadership competency is an important part of one's identity. Continuing formal management training may be one way to improve educators' perceptions of their management skills needed to run successful programs in higher education and in social work organizations. This issue may be of critical importance to younger educators, and those with fewer years of education experience, and educators of color who scored lower on their perceived management competency in this study. It is important for social workers to continue to work for racial justice and against interpersonal and institutional racism that may be a contributing factor to educators of color having significantly lower perceptions of their management competencies compared with their white colleagues.

Theoretical Application

This study utilized feminist theory to consider the intersectionality of social work educators' social identity factors to see if there is a relationship with their perceptions of their

leadership and management competencies. Feminist theory also highlights the main findings that social work educators, regardless of gender, are not as confident in their management skills. Social work is traditionally viewed as “feminine work” (Khunou, Pillay, & Nethononda, 2012). This is due in part to the majority women demographic in the field and the societal norms about women as nurturers in this “helping profession.” Leaders and managers are historically older, white men—even in social work that is dominated by women and values social justice at its core (The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, 2017). Feminist theory provides a context to understand the power dynamics and oppression within society, within organizations, and interpersonal relationships—even within our profession. First, based on the literature, older white men continue to hold leadership positions in social work education over any other demographic (CSWE, 2015a). In the present study, gender was not a factor, but older white participants did demonstrate significantly higher levels of perceived management competency than their younger colleagues of color. Finding younger educators having lower scores of perceived management competencies could be understood because they have fewer years of experience, though there were no significant findings with the variables considering *years of practical experience*. The findings of racial difference in perceived management competencies is consistent with the literature regarding the racism and racial disparity in social work executive management (The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, 2017). The lack of promotion of social work educators of color in the executive management of programs could be a contributing factor of their lower scores in perceived management competence.

Despite the gender disparities in executive leadership positions in social work education, it was not a factor in the perceptions of leadership or management competencies. Both men and

women perceived their management competencies to be significantly lower than their leadership competencies. Though this may be the result of selection bias, one may consider problems in addition to gender disparity such as the overarching social work preparation, training, and experience with management knowledge, skills, and abilities. All social work educators, regardless of gender, show a need to improve their confidence in their management competencies.

An explanation for the significant difference between the higher levels of perceived leadership competencies than of management competencies could be there is an incongruence between social work core values and the business management skills necessary to run an organization (Batliwala, 2010). Leadership competencies, many reflecting interpersonal communication skills that are integral to social work skills, are different and sometimes divergent from management competencies. Consistent with the literature, social work educators perceived higher levels of leadership competency, which are described as “soft skills or feminine,” and perceived lower levels of management competency, or “concrete skills or masculine.” Social work education may be perpetuating the societal gender norms that women are “helpers” not leaders or managers by not seeking the organizational management experiences and as a result not teaching social work students the skills needed to manage social work organizations. For a profession that actively strives for social justice and all social work values, we must be able to identify as leaders and have the management skills to run social work organizations effectively to ensure positive client or student outcomes.

Evaluation of Study

There were several limitations of this study. First, the survey was distributed online to social work educators largely via two listservs. This method of distribution yielded a small,

relatively homogeneous sample. Though the survey's Cronbach alpha score met reliability, this may have been the result of the small sample size. Data collection through an online survey may not achieve a sample representative of the total population. The results are not generalizable because the online recruitment of social work educators through these listservs provided a convenience sample and targeted emails to educators at the historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) provided only a small number of participants. Online surveys are inherently biased because they are accessible only to the population who was included on the listserv. The low number of respondents of color necessitated the combining of cells for all racially marginalized groups. This process limited differentiating between races to white versus people of color. Second, the survey used a 1-4 scale to measure competency levels. Using a scale that offered more variety in scores could have resulted in different outcomes. Third, when asking about competency, respondents may have rated themselves higher due to a social desirability bias. As educators and administrators, they are considered experts in the field. Using a different method for data collection – for instance, gathering curricula vitae or asking deans, directors, and faculty to rate their colleagues – may have yielded different results in levels of competency. Fourth, when asking about competency, a limitation was that only leadership and management competencies were used. A more holistic measure of competency could also include the CSWE competencies. Further research is needed to ascertain the application of the study results.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several recommendations for future research. First, based on this new knowledge about social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies, it is important to consider social work education curricula. The CSWE (2015)

EPAS competencies related to ethical and professional behavior, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at every level of practice—micro, mezzo, macro. The present study suggests social work educators' lack of confidence in their organizational management competencies. This may be a cause and consequence of not teaching social workers organizational management skills. More research on curricula's application of the mezzo and macro skills is needed to know how educators' perceptions of leadership and management competencies translates into preparing social workers for practice. Second, what do social work educators identify as leadership and management strengths and challenges? This study was focused on perceptions of competencies, but it would be useful to know where educators feel their strengths and weaknesses are so more resources can be identified. Third, is there an interest in social work educators receiving formal leadership or management training? Formal training was found to have a positive relationship with perceived leadership competencies and perceived management competencies. Social work educators need to be interested and open to formal training opportunities in this area. More research is needed to know what training social workers want and how best to deliver skill-based, social work management and leadership training. These questions can help to improve social work education's focus on the vital, yet lacking practice in the areas of organizational leadership and management competency. Finally, future research is needed to further develop the survey instrument to strengthen reliability and validity of the questions that assess social work educators' perceptions of the leadership and management competencies.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to explore social work educators' perceptions of their leadership and management competencies. There were statistically significant findings that educators perceived their leadership competency higher than their management competency.

Social work education aligns with leadership competencies, though the word *leadership* is not used to describe the skills. This is problematic when social workers have the skills but do not make the connection and identify as leaders. As a profession dominated by women, social workers may identify as helpers and not leaders due to the absence of women—and especially women of color in leadership positions (Kim & Kunreuther, 2012).

In addition, older educators had significantly higher levels of leadership and management competencies than younger respondents. Respondents who were white had significantly higher levels of management competency than respondents who identified as people of color. Individuals who had formal leadership and management training also showed higher perceived competency scores. As social work educators are responsible for imparting knowledge, values, and skills through the education of future social workers, they can embrace formal management training or strive to gain more experience in management to improve their competency in this area. If social workers want to be leaders and managers of social work organizations, educational preparation must include the skills for organizational management competencies. More research is needed to examine how educators' perceived competency translates in the classroom experiences, but field education expectations could provide opportunities for all students to practice organizational leadership and management skills. Social work educators have a responsibility to prepare social work students to meet the growing needs of social work agencies. Identifying social work skills as synonymous with leadership skills and improving perceived management competencies in social work education are areas that need to be addressed or social workers will be passed over for executive leadership positions who are making decisions about our clients, our organizations, and our communities.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Social Work Educators' Leadership & Management Experience Survey

Please follow the link below to access the survey.

https://monmouthpolling.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bE4zy5Mvkd5fLhz

Leadership and Management Experience

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Social Work Educators' Leadership and Management Experience Survey

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted through Kutztown University because you either teach or work directly with students in social work education.

Title of the Study: A Study Examining Social Work Educators' Social Identity Factors and Self-Efficacy in Leadership and Management Competency.

Researcher: Leah Lazzaro, LSW, Doctoral Candidate at Kutztown University Purpose of the

Study: The purpose of this research project is to examine social work educators' social identity factors as they relate to self-efficacy in leadership and management competency. Procedures: If you agree to participate in this study, we would ask you to complete the National Network for Social Work Management Competencies, describe recent leadership and management experiences, and complete demographic questions. The procedure involves filling an online survey that will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Confidentiality: All information will be handled in a confidential manner to the extent provided by law so that no one will be able to identify you when results are recorded. Your responses will be confidential, and we do not collect identifying information such as your name or email address. Our survey will be conducted through a University sponsored Qualtrics account and all provided information will be stored and secured within university parameters through the use of password protection within Qualtrics and Kutztown University. Qualtrics uses a data

encryption software and all account access is logged.

The final results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only and may be shared with Kutztown University representatives. Since only aggregated themes will be references, not individual outcomes, minimal risk of confidentiality breach upon dissemination should occur.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study: No foreseeable risks are anticipated with this study. You may stop at any time within the survey. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalized.

The benefits to participation in the study include the opportunity to share your leadership and management experiences. It is our hope that you will feel as if your experiences are important as findings from this study will provide an understanding for who we are as social work educators and our leadership and management experiences.

Contacts and Questions: If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact: Leah Lazzaro (principal investigator), Doctoral Candidate, Kutztown University at 732-713-8079 (mobile) or at llazz697@live.kutztown.edu or Dr. John Conahan, Supervising Professor, at 610-683-1560 (office) or conahan@kutztown.edu. This research has been reviewed and approved according to Kutztown University IRB procedures for research involving human subjects. If you have questions or would like to speak with someone other than the research team, contact Jeff Werner, Director of Institutional Review Board, Kutztown University at 484-646-4167.

Statement of Consent: By continuing with this survey, I am indicating that I am a social work faculty or administrator. I have read the informed description above. Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- you have read the above information
- you voluntarily agree to participate
- you are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

- Agree
- Disagree

Skip To: End of Survey If Statement of Consent: By continuing with this survey, I am indicating that I am a social work fac... = Disagree

Education & Current Employment Information

Q1 Education (Please select all that apply.)

- MSW
- MBA
- MA _____
- PhD in Social Work
- PhD in another discipline
- DSW
- Other _____

Q2 Do you hold any professional licenses or certifications?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q4 If Do you hold any professional licenses or certifications? = No

Q3 Please list your licenses or certifications.

Q4 Job Position/Title

Q5 Regarding your current position, please check all that apply.

- Tenured
 - Tenure-Track
 - Non-Tenured
 - Not Tenure Eligible
-

Q6 Please select all that apply.

- Full-Time Faculty
 - Part-Time Faculty
 - Full-Time Administrator
 - Part-Time Administrator
 - Other _____
-

Q7 What courses do you teach regularly?

Q8 How many years of experience total do you have as a *social work educator*?

- 0 years
 - Less than 5 years
 - 5-9 years
 - 10-14 years
 - 15-19 years
 - 20-24 years
 - 25-29 years
 - 30+ years
-

Q9 How many years of experience total do you have as a *social work practitioner (social work experience outside of academia)*?

- 0 years
- Less than 5 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 20-24 years
- 25-29 years
- 30+ years

Formal Training & Mentorship Experiences

Formal training is defined as a structured learning environment as in a course or class.

Q10 Please respond to the following questions.

	Yes	No
Have you <i>presented</i> formal leadership training?	•	•
Have you <i>received</i> formal leadership training?	•	•
Have you <i>presented</i> formal management training?	•	•
Have you <i>received</i> formal management training?	•	•
Do you have a colleague or colleagues you consider to be your <i>mentor(s)</i> ?	•	•
Do you have a colleague or colleagues you consider to be your <i>mentee(s)</i> ?	•	•

Q11 Please describe your formal leadership/management training experience as a presenter and/or participant.

Q12 Please describe your experience as a mentor, mentee, or both.

Q13 **Executive Leadership Competency**

The Network for Social Work Management's (2015) Human Services Management Competencies define the Domain of Executive Leadership through 11 competencies. Please rate your skill level for each competency.

	<u>Knowledgeable</u> Exposed to the competency through education, training, observation.	<u>Skilled</u> Operational experience with competency at a team, unit level.	<u>Mastered</u> Operational experience with competency at the organizational level.	<u>No Opportunity</u> No knowledge or experience with this competency.
Establishes, promotes, and anchors the vision, philosophy, goals, objectives, and values of the organization	•	•	•	•
Possesses interpersonal skills that support the viability and positive functioning of the organization	•	•	•	•
Possesses analytical and critical thinking skills that promote organizational growth	•	•	•	•
Models appropriate professional behavior and encourages other staff members to act in a professional way	•	•	•	•
Manages diversity and cross-cultural understanding	•	•	•	•

Develops and manages both internal and external stakeholder relationships	•	•	•	•
Initiates and facilitates innovation change processes	•	•	•	•
Advocates for public policy changes and social justice at national, state, and local levels	•	•	•	•
Demonstrates effective interpersonal and communication skills	•	•	•	•
Encourages active involvement of all staff and stakeholders in decision-making processes	•	•	•	•
Plans, promotes, and models life-long learning practices.	•	•	•	•

Q14 Thinking about the leadership competencies, please list a few of your most recent leadership experiences.

Q15 **Resource Management & Strategic Management Competency**

The Network for Social Work Management's (2015) Human Services Management Competencies define the Domains of Resource Management and Strategic Management through 9 competencies. Please rate your skill level for each competency

	<u>Knowledgeable</u> Exposed to the competency through education, training, observation.	<u>Skilled</u> Operational experience with competency at a team, unit level.	<u>Mastered</u> Operational experience with competency at the organizational level.	<u>No Opportunity</u> No knowledge or experience with this competency.
Effectively manages human resources	•	•	•	•
Effectively manages and oversees the budget and other financial resources to support the organization's/program mission and goals and to foster continuous program improvement and accountability	•	•	•	•
Establishes and maintains a system of internal controls to ensure transparency, protection, and accountability for the use of organizational resources	•	•	•	•
Manages all aspects of information technology	•	•	•	•
Fundraising. Identifies and applies for new and recurring funding while ensuring accountability with existing funding systems	•	•	•	•
Marketing & Public Relations. Engages in proactive communication about the agencies products and services	•	•	•	•

Designs and develops effective programs	•	•	•	•
Manages risks and legal affairs	•	•	•	•
Ensures strategic planning	•	•	•	•

Q16 Thinking about the management competencies, please list a few of your most recent management experiences.

Demographic Information

To understand better the relationship between social identity factors and leadership and management experience, please answer the following questions.

Q17 How old are you?

- 25-29 years old
 - 30-34 years old
 - 35-39 years old
 - 40-44 years old
 - 45-49 years old
 - 50-54 years old
 - 55-59 years old
 - 60-64 years old
 - 65-69 years old
 - 70-74 years old
 - 75 years or older
 - Prefer not to answer
-

Q18 What is your gender identity?

Q19 What is your racial/ethnic identity? (Please check all that apply)

- Caucasian
 - African American
 - Hispanic/Latino
 - Asian
 - South East Asian
 - Pacific Islander
 - Native American
 - Biracial or multiracial
 - Prefer not to identify
 - Other _____
-

Q20 Do you consider yourself to be:

- Heterosexual or straight
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Prefer not to answer

Q21 Do you consider yourself to be transgender?

- Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to answer
-

Q22 Do you consider yourself to be: (please select all that apply)

- Able-bodied
 - a person with a physical disability
 - a person with a learning disability
 - a person with a mental health diagnosis
 - Prefer not to answer
-

Thank you for completing the survey. I appreciate your time. The purpose of this study is to examine social work educators' social identity factors as they relate to leadership and management competence. If you have questions, please contact me at 732-713-8079 or llazz697@live.kutztown.edu.

Appendix B: Recruitment Email for Listservs

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to request your participation in a short, self-efficacy survey about social work educators' leadership and management competency. The goal is to learn more about social work educators' experiences and feelings of competency relating to leadership and management skills. I am a DSW candidate at Kutztown | Millersville Universities where the focus is on Education and Leadership. The research study is called, "A comparison of social work educators' self-efficacy in leadership versus management competencies." The survey is confidential and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at llazz697@live.kutztown.edu.

[SURVEY LINK](#)

Thank you for your participation!

Leah K. Lazzaro, LSW
DSW Candidate
Kutztown University
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732-263-5764

Supervising Professor: Dr. John Conahan
Associate Professor
Kutztown University
conahan@kutztown.edu

IRB Approval #: IRB04112018 (December 11, 2018)
IRB Application Approved by: Jeffrey Werner, Director of Institutional Review Board,
Kutztown University at 484-646-4167
Official Title: A comparison of social work educators' self-efficacy in leadership versus
management competencies

Appendix C: Follow-up Recruitment Email for Direct Contact

Dear (Insert Name),

I am writing to request your participation in a short, self-efficacy survey about social work educators' leadership and management competence. The goal is to learn more about social work educators' experiences and feelings of competence relating to leadership and management skills. I am a DSW candidate at Kutztown | Millersville Universities where the focus is on Education and Leadership. The research study is called, "A comparison of social work educators' self-efficacy in leadership versus management competencies." The survey is confidential and will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at llazz697@live.kutztown.edu.

[SURVEY LINK](#)

Thank you for your participation!

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Supervising Professor: Dr. John Conahan
Associate Professor
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Kutztown University at 484-646-4167
Official Title: A comparison of social work educators' self-efficacy in leadership versus
management competencies

Appendix D: Proposed Dissertation Timeline

Dissertation Timeline

Defend Dissertation Proposal	August 2018
Submit IRB Application to Kutztown University	October 2019
Conduct pilot of survey & analyze data	December 2018
Revise survey and submit amended measure to IRB	January 2019
Disseminate Survey	February 2019
Analyze Data	March - May 2019
Write Findings & Discussion	June - July 2019
Submit Draft of Dissertation to Committee	August 2019
Defend Dissertation	September 2019

Appendix E: HBCU Social Work Master's Degree Schools in Northeastern United States

Alabama A & M University
Alabama State University
Albany State University
Bowie State University
Cheyney University of Pennsylvania
Clark Atlanta University
Delaware State University
Fayetteville State University
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical
University
Grambling State University
Howard University
Jackson State University
Johnson C Smith University
Kentucky State University
Lincoln University Pennsylvania
Mississippi Valley State University
Morgan State University
Norfolk State University
North Carolina A & T State University
North Carolina Central University
Savannah State University
Southern University
Southern University and A & M College
Tennessee State University
Texas Southern University
University of the District of Columbia