

Do Poverty Attitudes of Social Service Agency Directors Influence Organizational Behavior?

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Abstract: This paper explores why people are poor and on welfare according to social service agency directors who administer programs that serve current and former welfare recipients. Three primary research questions are explored: 1) Why do local human service agency directors believe their clients are poor and on welfare? 2) Do these perceptions vary by director characteristics and organizational type? And, 3) do these attitudinal differences explain programmatic and policy decisions within social service agencies? To answer these questions, data was collected and analyzed from 295 Indiana local social service agency directors. The results suggest that 75 percent of senior social service agency staff believe educational and labor market barriers are important causes of long-term poverty and welfare dependency; 44 percent believe cultural transmission or learned lifestyles are important causes of poverty and welfare; 23 percent believe a poor attitude, work ethic, laziness or lack of motivation among the poor are important causes of poverty and welfare; and 8 percent believe welfare causes dependency among recipients and makes them poor. These sentiments are not strongly associated with observed agency- or director-level characteristics. However, social service agency directors who express support for the attitudes and behavior of the poor as primary causes of poverty and welfare are more likely to be in organizations that did not ration services since welfare reform and did not engage in political activity designed to support these changes. In contrast, social service agency directors who express support for educational and labor market barriers as primary causes of poverty and welfare are more likely to be in organizations that have adopted new programs and developed collaborative strategies with other organizations since welfare reform.

Introduction

In the United States, local human service organizations are largely responsible for delivering anti-poverty assistance to the poor. Whether this is for assistance with food, housing, clothing, transportation, health, personal health or income support, a substantial proportion of poor Americans depend on these local agencies to help meet basic human needs.¹ These organizations, along with government sanctioned social welfare policy, represent what is frequently described as a social safety net, designed to help low-income segments of society.

Individuals who administer these local human service organizations occupy an important place in the social policy sphere. Even though their actions and behaviors are frequently shaped by governmental directives, it is widely accepted these local social service agency directors have substantial discretion in how they actually implement programs and interpret policy (Lipsky, 1980). The potential importance of these actors in

anti-poverty assistance is thought to have increased with the wide-spread outsourcing of social services to third-party organizations (Smith and Lipsky, 1993), as well as the adoption of sweeping changes to welfare laws, establishing time-limits and work-requirements for recipients (Jewell and Glaser, 2006).

In this environment, local administrators of human service agencies confront a great deal of uncertainty. It is unknown whether or how they will respond to welfare reform related policy shifts that may change demand for anti-poverty services, alter existing funding patterns, or generate new expectations and goals for local organizations that may conflict with their existing mission. Local social service agency directors may respond by tightening eligibility criteria and/or limiting the number of clients served to ensure the most disadvantaged are helped. Similarly, they may respond by joining networks of service providers to help identify new funding opportunities or challenge threats to existing funding streams. Lastly, they may disagree with the underlying rationale for welfare reform, given their understanding of their clients' problems, and purposefully do their best to undermine its goals.

This final point highlights a more basic issue that local social service administrators, like professionals in other fields, have beliefs about the causes of their clients' problems. These beliefs may shape how organizations respond to changes in the external environment, producing different implementation paths and outcomes for clients.

Unfortunately, little is known about the belief-systems of local social service providers and how they view the causes of their clients' problems (outside of some research on social workers discussed below). It is unknown whether these professionals share the commonly held American sentiment about poverty that "it is the moral fabric of

individuals, not the social and economic structure of society that is taken to be the root cause of the [poverty] problem” (Wilson, 1996:164). Similarly, it is unknown whether these professionals share the commonly held sentiment that welfare benefits make poor people dependent and encourage them to remain poor (Gilens, 1999:56). More important, it is unknown whether these commonly held American beliefs about poverty, when supported by senior social service agency staff, influence the organizational behavior of the organizations they administer.

To address this gap in the literature, this paper analyzes data from interviews conducted with executive directors of 295 Indiana social service agencies. These face-to-face interviews collected detailed attitudinal questions on the causes of poverty and long-term welfare receipt, as well as background information from each local social service agency director. In addition, these data assembled a wide-range of information on the characteristics of each agency, its staff (including the respondent) and programs.

Together, they provide an opportunity to explore answers to the following research questions: 1) Why do local human service agency directors believe their clients are poor and on welfare? 2) Do these perceptions vary by director characteristics and organizational type? And, 3) do these attitudinal differences explain programmatic and policy decisions within social service agencies?

To address these research questions, the paper is organized into four sections. The first part of the paper attempts to place this analysis within several streams of social science literature. This is followed by a description of the data sources, variable definitions, and research strategy. The third section presents the findings of the analysis. The paper concludes by considering the implications of these findings.

Literature Review

A number of social science literatures shed light on the issue of how anti-poverty social service agency directors might perceive the causes of their clients poverty and welfare receipt, and whether these normative positions shape organizational behavior. These include sociological studies of professions and the pedagogical training of social workers, public opinion research on the causes of poverty, an emerging literature on differences in faith-based and secular social service agencies, and a long-standing literature on the role beliefs play in the decision-making of public administrators. Each is discussed in turn.

For the most part, the management of social service organizations responsible for helping current and former welfare recipients has been professionalized. A consistent finding in the study of professionals, professions, and professionalization – the process by which an occupational group takes on the characteristics of a profession, including systematic training, highly specialized roles, exclusive possession of competence in certain types of knowledge and skills – is the tendency for professionals to develop negative sentiments towards those they serve. Examples of this tendency are numerous – college professors’ views of students, lawyers’ views of defendants, and physicians’ views of patients, among others – and frequently stem from perceptions that students, clients or patients do not behave in their best interest. For instance, a study of 40 nurses and 8 junior doctors working on general medical wards in London, England found that “staff had significantly more negative attitudes towards patients who had not undertaken health actions associated with a reduced likelihood of developing their medical

condition” (Marteau and Riordan, 1992). However, it is unknown whether these attitudes translated into differences in quality of care.

This sentiment, according to Everett C. Hughes, is rooted in the very meaning of the term professional. “Professionals profess. They profess to know better than others the nature of certain matters, and to know better than their clients what ails them or their affairs” (1963: 656).

Therefore, the sociological study of professions suggests social service professionals, like other experts, will likely express negative attitudes regarding clients. However, it remains unclear whether or how these sentiments will translate into explanations for understanding the cause of their clients’ poverty and long-term welfare receipt. Moreover, it is possible that social service agency directors possess distinct characteristics and shared experiences that would cause them to have a different orientation towards those they serve as compared to experts in other fields. For instance, no profession has a monopoly on training directors of social service agencies. Some may be social workers, others business executives, while others may have a liberal arts college degree. Moreover, agency directors may have different levels of education, ranging from advanced graduate degrees to associates degrees. This heterogeneity may produce substantial variation in how these professionals view the causes of their clients’ poverty.

While the social services field may not be organized around a particular profession, social work deserves special attention given its historic relationship with the anti-poverty human services sub-sector. Some have speculated that contemporary social service professionals, particularly social workers, are trained to downplay the role of personal responsibility and welfare dependence, while embracing explanations of poverty

that are beyond an individual's control, such as changes in the labor market, inadequate educational opportunities or discrimination.

For instance, the *Handbook of Social Work Practice* (1992) states that the “social worker should not judge clients' behavior by imposing a moral value on it” (Brown, 1992). Similarly, the introductory text *The Practice of Social Work* criticizes the layperson's view that a social worker seeks to ‘remold’ clients into a person chosen by the social worker” (Zastrow, 1985). The professional view is that clients “should be permitted to determine their own lifestyles as far as possible” (Zastrow, 1985).

These views have been a concern for some observers of recent federal welfare policy who believe that “[t]oday's social workers [and social service professionals] hold views about poverty – what causes it and what they should do about it – that refute the spirit of welfare reform” (Payne, 1996). Specifically, they suspect social service professionals frequently work to undermine the new work requirement for welfare recipients, since it is perceived as communicating a moral tone to clients, suggesting that they do not value work.

Some social science empirical research literature suggests social workers tend to favor personal problems at the expense of interpersonal and environmental causes to explain their clients' problems (Rosen and Livne, 1992). Other studies of social workers' attitudes towards the poor suggest these professionals express mostly positive views (Rehner, Ishee, Salloum, and Velasquez, 1997), and the endorsement of more structural explanations of poverty have become more common place since the late-1960s (Reeser and Epstein, 1987).

Therefore, to the extent that critics of the social work profession are correct, as well as some of the patterns established in prior social science research on how social workers view their clients' poverty, we expect social service professionals, particularly social workers, to embrace structural (or class) based explanation of poverty, while indicating less support for individualistic or normative causes.

It is worth noting that social service agency directors are also members of the public, and public opinion research has shown the presence and persistence of public sentiments that locate the poverty problem as a result of loose morals and an over-generous welfare state. Public opinion research shows that approximately 91 percent of the public believes lack of effort by the poor themselves is an important cause of poverty; 79 percent of the public believes the failure of industry to provide enough jobs is an important cause of poverty; and 77 percent of the American public believes failure of society to provide good schools for many Americans is an important cause of poverty, and (Bobo and Smith, 1994:375). To the extent that social service agency directors are representative of the American public, we would expect to see similar rates of support for these various beliefs about the cause of poverty within this sub-group.

Moreover, the same empirical research has shown a relationship between structural and cultural beliefs about why people are poor and willingness to spend public resources on fighting poverty (Bobo and Smith, 1994; Gilens, 1999). Assuming these public opinion attitudinal patterns exist among local social service agency directors, we should expect to observe a relationship between their poverty attitudes and how their organizations respond to the needs of the clients they serve.

While the characteristics of those who manage local anti-poverty social service agencies may shape beliefs about the causes of their clients' problems, empirical research on the differences between faith-based social service providers and their non-religious counterparts suggests these beliefs may be linked to organizational type (Carlson-Thies, 1997; Minow, 1999; Sider and Unruh, 1999). Advocates of the faith-based social services movement argue that faith-based organizations (FBOs) are better at providing personal and intensive face-to-face interaction with clients. They also argue these organizations may be in a better position than non-religious organizations to transform individuals and change behavior, in part, because they recognize the importance of individual character and morality as causes of poverty.

It is important to note, the assumption about FBO service and face-to-face interaction is inconsistent with recent research that indicates congregations are no more likely to participate in or support programs that involve personal and intensive face-to-face interaction than NROs (Chaves and Tsitsos, 2001). However, the empirical literature suggests religious social services are more likely to be involved in meeting emergency needs, and FBOs serve a more disadvantaged client population than non-religious social service organizations (Chaves and Tsitsos, 2001; Reingold, Pirog, and Brady, 2007). Perhaps the tendency of FBOs to serve the most disadvantaged shapes how professional staff in these organizations views their clients and the nature of their problems.

A final stream of research that deserves attention comes from the politics of public administration literature and deals with the role attitudes (or beliefs) may play in shaping decision-making (particularly in public organizations). There is a view among

some public administration and civil society scholars that there is a weak link between attitudes and behavior among bureaucrats. As Wilson states, “[w]hen we realize that attitudes must compete with incentives for influence over our behavior, it is not surprising that attitudes often lose out to the rewards we seek or the penalties we try to avoid” (1989:51). This view stems, in part, from some dated psychological literature which shows that, in general, there is a weak link between attitudes and behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977; Wicker, 1969). This evidence is used to confirm Herbert Simon’s earlier understanding of bureaucratic behavior where “[i]t is doubtful whether decisions are generally directed toward achieving a goal. It is easier, and clearer, to view decisions as being concerned with discovering courses of action that satisfy a whole set of constraints. It is this set [of constraints], and not any one of its members, that is most accurately viewed as the goal of the action” (Simon, 1964; cited by Lynn, 1987:29). However, these observations were made within the context of traditional governmental organizations. It is unclear whether the normative realm shapes behaviors similarly when public action is devolved (directly or indirectly) to non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, the public management and decision-making literature would predict a weak or no relationship between these poverty attitudes and the behavior of public administrators in positions of authority.

In sum, the sociological study of professions and professionals suggest agency directors may possess negative attitudes towards the clients they serve, including the belief that client behavior is responsible for low-socio-economic status attainment. However, critics of social work training and prior studies of poverty attitudes among social service agency staff suggest those who have been trained in social work and run

local anti-poverty agencies may be more likely to embrace more structural explanations of poverty, including the role of limited educational and labor market opportunities. Moreover, public opinion research suggests beliefs about the cause of poverty influence support for different types of anti-poverty strategies, suggesting social service agency directors may respond differently to shifts in client needs and demand depending on how they perceive the causes of their clients' problems. In addition, research on faith-based social service providers suggest staff in these organizations serve a more disadvantaged population and this may translate into different perceptions of why their clients are poor and on welfare. Lastly, the public administration literature tends to downplay the role of attitudes and beliefs as shaping behavior and would predict that any variation in poverty attitudes will be unrelated to organizational responses to policy changes, such as welfare reform.

Data Sources, Variables & Research Strategy

In order to investigate these research questions and hypotheses, data is analyzed from a community agency study that conducted in-depth, face-to-face interviews with 295 executive directors of social service agencies in seven Indiana counties.² Data collection focused on the executive director, CEO or president since our study is focused on measuring organizational change and these individuals are in positions that enable them to shape organizational goals, administrative policy, and programmatic direction.³ The collection of interviews was organized around a network of field researchers (or associates) in each county. The field network design is an established research strategy that takes advantage of indigenous researchers to utilize their experience and expert

knowledge to provide first-hand, in-depth analysis of the subject under investigation. Field associates were responsible for conducting interviews, as well as writing a structured case study, to provide additional context for understanding the survey results. All but one of the field associates is a professor at an Indiana University campus.

The selection of counties was based on two factors. First, a range of urban, suburban, and rural counties was sought, so as to reflect possible differences in welfare reform's impact on local social service providers who operate within different geographic contexts. Second, the selection was influenced by the need to study counties that could be accessed by local field associates who had prior knowledge of the social service landscape. As a result, each of the counties included in this study are located close to a campus of Indiana University.

The counties selected for investigation are fairly representative of the mix of communities in the state of Indiana. Marion and Lake are the two most urban counties in the state – as measured by the density of population per square mile. As is typical in urban areas, these counties have larger African-American populations, slightly higher poverty rates, and lower home ownership rates compared to the state averages. In contrast, Howard County is less dense and is best described as a suburban county with many links to the greater metropolitan Indianapolis area. The counties of Bartholomew, Greene, Floyd, and Harrison have population densities closer to the state's average, reflecting the presence of small cities and towns adjacent to rural areas. Despite these differences, these counties have similar age distributions and per capita income, and are fairly similar to the State averages for these two indicators.⁴

In each case-study area, field associates conducted structured interviews with directors (or executive staff) of social service agencies. The 60 to 90 minute, face-to-face interviews were conducted between February and August of 1999. Responses were recorded by hand, as well as by audiotape – with respondents’ permission. The response rate was 86 percent.

Interviews were conducted with executive directors or person most responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organization. When this person was unavailable or deferred the interview to a subordinate, the interview was still conducted. Overall, 207 interviews were conducted with the organization’s executive director, presidents, director, or the person occupying the chief executive position in the organization; 19 interviews were conducted with respondents who occupied a senior administrative post, such as an associate director or vice president; 32 interviews were conducted with respondents who occupied less senior posts, including program director, general administrator, or legal counsel; 12 interviews were conducted with a minister or pastor; and 25 interviews were conducted with direct service providers, including counselor, therapist, or program coordinator.⁵

Interviews were structured through the use of a questionnaire. The first half of the questionnaire contained closed-ended questions that were designed to record basic descriptive characteristics of the organization, including its financing, staffing patterns, and service activities. The second half of the questionnaire was largely open-ended, tapping respondents’ perceptions of welfare reform, and documenting collaborative and innovative programs.

Selection of agencies was based on a modified (soft) quota snowball sampling technique. Organizations were identified through public documents, such as telephone directories and United Way service directory listings. Agencies were also identified through the interview process. All respondents were asked to name up to ten social service agencies that they work with.

Potential respondents were screened according to the following two criteria: (1) the organization provided or coordinated services for current or former welfare recipients; and (2) the organization operated within the targeted county area. The sample included a wide range of social service providers as organizations were selected by both organizational type and activity.⁶

Within each case-study area, field associates were instructed to interview no more than five agencies within any one category of organizational or primary service type. This quota guaranteed a relatively even sample by organizational type and activity. Each field associate was charged with conducting at least 40 interviews. Since Marion and Lake Counties have the largest populations among the targeted counties, the field associates in these two counties were instructed to conduct at least 60 interviews.

Field associates were allowed to exceed the quota of five respondents within any one category of organizational type and activity only when faced with the following two conditions. First, the quota could be exceeded if it would exclude an organization within the county that was considered to be a very important agency in serving current and former welfare recipients. Second, the quota could be exceeded if it would prevent the field associate from reaching his/her target goal of completed interviews. As a result, more interviews were conducted with not-for-profit, non-religious organizations that

provide humans services – specifically food and nutrition programs – than would have expected had the sampling quota been fixed without these exceptions. Table 1 presents the distribution of cases by type of organization and county.

[Table 1 about here]

Approximately 72 percent of the sample was identified as a not-for-profit organization, and roughly one quarter of these were FBOs. Public or government organizations accounted for 17 percent of the sample. The remaining 20 cases were for-profit firms.⁷

Measures of poverty attitudes in the analysis are derived from the following open-ended question: “In your opinion, what are the three factors that are most likely to explain welfare dependency and long-term poverty?” Responses were recorded and coded in order to group answers with similar meanings. For the most part, the codes flow from the actual language used by the respondents. A small number of respondents offered more than three factors. For these cases, up to five factors were recorded, coded, and included in this analysis.

Table 2 presents the final distribution of responses for this question. Four dependent variables are constructed from this list of responses, and are designed to mirror the public opinion research literature on the causes of poverty, as well as the theoretical literature on the “root” causes of poverty. The four dichotomous variables are designed to measure whether a respondent identified the following factors as a cause of poverty and welfare receipt: (1) Education and labor market causes (equals 1 if respondent mentions lack of education, including poor educational system, unemployment/lack of job opportunities, skills deficit, or low or inadequate wages, 0 otherwise); (2) Cultural

causes (equals 1 if respondent mentions cultural transmission or learned lifestyles, 0 otherwise); (3) Individual failings (equals one if respondent mentioned poor attitude, bad work ethic, or laziness or lack of motivation as a cause, 0 otherwise); and, (4) Welfare dependency (equals 1 if respondent mentions social service programs are too generous and promote dependency, 0 otherwise). In other words, the value of 1 is given if the respondent in any of his/her responses to this question did mention the respective key words contained in the language of the variable definitions above, and the value of 0 is given if the respondent in any of his/her responses to this question did not mention the respective key words contained in the language of the variable definitions above.

[Table 2 about here]

A second set of dependent variables is used in the analysis to capture changes in agency-level policy and program content since Indiana's welfare reform began in 1995. These include a series of measures designed to capture (1) changes in service provision and rationing, (2) adoption of strategies for inter-organizational innovation and collaboration, and (3) political engagement designed to shape welfare policy. All measures come from the same question stem ("Since Indiana's welfare reform in 1995 has your organization..."), and are recorded as yes/no questions. Measures of service provision and rationing are designed to capture whether an organization has reduced or expanded the number of clients served, tightened or expanded eligibility criteria, reduced or expanded the level of service provided to individual clients, and eliminated specific programs or services. Measures of inter-organizational collaboration are designed to capture whether an organization has developed a new service or program, joined or established a network of other organizations, developed mutual board membership with

other organizations, increased joint activities with other organizations, and increased referrals and information sharing with other organizations. Measures of political engagement designed to shape welfare policy are designed to capture whether an organization has sponsored forums on government budget cuts or policy changes, participated in protests against public policy changes, and participated in rallies or protests supporting policy changes. Together, these indicators are designed to measure organizational-level responses to welfare reform.

These indicators were selected in order to measure changes in agency-level policy and program content, capturing a range of possible responses to changes in the external environment (specifically welfare reform). In general, measures of service provision are selected to capture changes between the organization and its client population. Measures of organizational innovation and collaboration are selected to capture changes within the organization. Measures of political engagement are designed to capture an organization's effort to alter its external environment. Together these indicators attempt to measure the multiple paths by which changes in public policy (in this case welfare reform) may foster changes in the behavior and organization of local social service agency directors who are frequently the instrument for implementing these policy changes.

The independent variables used in the analysis were selected to capture those dimensions of social service organizations and the individuals who administer them thought to potentially influence beliefs about the causes of their clients' poverty and welfare receipt, as well as correlates thought to influence organizational responses to welfare reform. The organizational characteristics include organizational type (self-identified by the respondent as a non-profit, nonreligious organization (NRO), a

nonprofit, faith-based organization (FBO), a public organization (government), or a private, for-profit organization), organizational service area (defined as being counseling, job training, childcare, food and health, housing, legal aid, transportation, and intermediary services), organizational size (measured by continuous variables defined as the number of full- and part-time staff in the organization in 1998, as well as the total operating budget for the organization in 1998), and organizational age (measured by a continuous variable defines as the number of years the organization has been in operation).

The administrator characteristics used in the analysis include sex (male/female), race (white/black), educational attainment, number of years working for current employer (a continuous variable measuring the number of years the respondent has worked for his/her current employer), number of years working in current position (a continuous variable measuring the number of years the respondent has worked in his/her current job). Control variables are used for respondent's sex, race, and educational attainment since the public opinion data on the causes of poverty has been shown to vary by these three characteristics (Gilens, 1999). Measures for employment stability and position (job title) are used since it is presumed there may be a relationship between the length of time a professional has worked for a particular organization and in a specific position, as well as the position itself, and his/her beliefs about clients. In addition, employment stability is likely related to the decisions made by directors of local social service agencies when managing issues of service provision and rationing, adopting strategies for inter-organizational innovation and collaboration, and engaging in political activity designed to shape policy. Lastly, the analysis controls for the potential influence of professional

training among administrators, such as social work, to capture the respondent's field of study in the highest degree earned.

The first step in the analysis is to compare the attitudinal measures described above by the organizational-level and director-level characteristics. The second step in the analysis is to test the effect of these attitudinal measures on changes in agency-level behavior, controlling for the characteristics of organizations and their directors.

Findings

Overall, three out of four social service agency personnel in this sample invoked education and the economy as a cause of welfare dependency and long-term poverty, 43.6 percent attributed these social problems to cultural transmission or learned lifestyles, 23.0 percent believed the attitudes and motivation of the poor are to blame, and 8.2 percent reported welfare is the cause of poverty (see Table 3). Even though there is a strong appreciation for the role of human capital, a substantial portion of local social service agency personnel in this sample believe poverty and welfare receipt are rooted in the cultural sphere and individual character flaws of the poor. A much smaller, but sizable percent, believe an overgenerous welfare state is trapping individuals in poverty.

It is worth noting these respondents have similar attitudes about the role of education and the economy as the general public. As was noted below, approximately 77 percent of the public believes failure of society to provide good schools for many Americans is an important cause of poverty, and 79 percent of the public believes the failure of industry to provide enough jobs is an important cause of poverty (Bobo and Smith, 1994:375). Even though a substantial portion of the respondents in this sample

believe culture and welfare are the cause of poverty, the relative size of this group is much smaller than the general population (where approximately 91 percent of the public believes lack of effort by the poor themselves is an important cause of poverty).

[Table 3 about here]

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for agency-level characteristics by these selected poverty attitudes. In general, there are few statistically significant bi-variate differences in poverty attitudes by organizational type, size, age, and service area. This may be the result of the relatively small sample size or it may reflect the lack of a strong relationship between observed organizational differences and director poverty attitudes. Nevertheless, there are some interesting patterns that should be highlighted.

- Approximately 52 percent of directors from faith-based organizations (FBO) report cultural transmission or learned lifestyles as a cause of poverty, compared to 35 percent of directors of for-profit organizations, 42 percent of directors from government and non-profit, non-religious organizations (NRO).
- Approximately 15 percent of for-profit social service directors report social service programs and welfare as a cause of poverty, compared to 13 percent for FBO directors, 10 percent of public-sector directors, and 6 percent of NRO directors.
- Low-income housing directors are significantly more likely to report education and labor market causes of poverty and welfare compared to directors who run organizations that deliver other types of social services.
- Directors of child-care organizations have the highest rate of believing cultural transmission and learned lifestyles are the most important cause of poverty and

welfare receipt (50.6 percent), whereas directors of food and health related organizations and legal aid clinics report the highest rate of believing the lack of effort by the poor themselves are the primary causes of poverty and welfare receipt.

- Directors of smaller organizations, as measured by average staff size and annual operating budget, have higher rates of attributing poverty to cultural transmission and lifestyles, as well as the behavior of the poor themselves.

[Table 5 about here]

Table 5 presents director-level characteristics by selected poverty attitudes. Two patterns emerge from these figures. First, the longer a respondent has worked in his/her position, the more likely s/he is to attribute poverty and welfare to cultural transmission and an overgenerous welfare state. Approximately 35 percent of respondents who have worked in their current position for two years or less identified culture as the cause of poverty and welfare, compared to 50 percent and 46 percent of those who have worked in their current position for three to eight years or 9 or more years, respectively. Second, attitudes towards the causes of poverty among local social service agency staff are sensitive to the position held in an organization. In general, front-line service workers (therapists, counselors, program coordinators, direct service providers) tend to share similar views on the causes of poverty as those responsible for leading these organizations (executive directors, CEOs, and presidents). Both groups tend to favor explanations of poverty rooted in the lack of education, skills, jobs, and adequate wages and less support for explanations of poverty based in culture, the attitudes and behavior of the poor, or an overgenerous welfare state. In contrast, senior administrators (other

than the most senior official) and those occupying a position with a religious function (pastor, assistant pastor, minister) are more likely to view poverty as a manifestation of culture, the attitudes and behavior of the poor and an overgenerous welfare state.

While the differences were not statistically significant, there is a tendency for respondents who are white or lack a college degree to report culture as a cause of poverty at higher rates than blacks or respondents with a graduate degree. These patterns are consistent with some of the public opinion research which has shown a strong relationship between race and education and explanations of what causes poverty (Gilens, 1999).

[Table 6 about here]

Table 6 presents several indicators of agency-level policy and programmatic changes since Indiana's welfare reform in 1995 by selected poverty attitudes. Several important patterns emerge. Most notably, organizations that have rationed services since welfare reform are significantly less likely to attribute poverty to the attitudes and behavior of the poor. Conversely, organizations that have expanded the number of applicants served, expanded eligibility criteria, and increased the level of service provided to individual clients are significantly more likely to attribute poverty and welfare receipt to the attitudes and behavior of the poor. Moreover, organizations that report inter-organizational innovation and coordination, such as introducing a new program, joining or establishing a network of other organizations, and developing mutual board members with other organizations are significantly more likely to attribute poverty and welfare reform to lack of education and labor market opportunities, and are less likely to attribute poverty and welfare receipt to cultural transmission and learned life-

styles. No statistical differences were found in these inter-organizational innovation and coordination indicators for the percentage of respondents attributing poverty and welfare receipt to the attitudes and behavior of the poor, or an overgenerous welfare state.

Lastly, there seems to be a strong relationship between organizational political engagement following welfare reform and these selected poverty attitudes. According to these data, political engagement and behavior following welfare reform is more likely in those organizations with directors who do not believe in cultural explanations of poverty or in explanations of poverty based in the attitudes and behavior of the poor.

In order to investigate further the effects of these agency- and director-level characteristics on the presence of these selected poverty attitudes, Table 7 presents a series of logit regressions where each poverty attitude is the dependent variable. To explain variation in whether or not a respondent invokes a measured poverty attitude, a series of independent variables are used to measure the effects of those individual- and agency-level characteristics thought to be associated with these poverty attitudes. Respondent's sex, race, and educational attainment are included since the public opinion research indicates that these demographic characteristics matter in explaining public attitudes about the causes of poverty. Similarly, at the agency-level we include a measure for the type of agency (non-religious nonprofit, faith-based nonprofit, and government), and at the individual-level we measure whether the respondent is a minister, pastor, or assistant pastor, since the literature suggests that faith-based organizations may be more inclined to utilize service strategies that presume more individualistic causes of poverty. We also include a measure of whether the respondent is an executive director, CEO, or president was included, since the bi-variate results suggest it may be related to the

dependent variable. A measure of whether a respondent is a social worker, counselor or clinical psychologist is included as an independent variable to capture the potential effect of being responsible for front-line service work (as well as the effects of professional training) in social work and related fields. Two measures were included to capture the potential effect of employment tenure on these dependent variables. These include a continuous measure of the number of years a respondent has worked in his/her position, as well as another measure for the number of years the respondent has worked in the organization.

Overall, these agency- and director-level characteristics have weak or no effects on the presence of these poverty attitudes. The only exceptions are the size of the organization, the respondent's level of educational attainment, and the position held by the respondent. Larger organizations (as measured by staff size) are significantly less likely to have representatives who identify education and labor market barriers as causes of poverty controlling for the observed agency- and director-level characteristics. Respondents with a post-graduate degree are significantly less likely to believe the attitudes and behavior of the poor is the cause of poverty and welfare receipt, whereas those holding the position of executive director, CEO, or President of their organization are significantly less likely to identify cultural transmission or lifestyles as a cause of poverty.

[Tables 7, 8a, 8b & 8c about here]

Table 8 presents a series of logit regression equations to measure the impact of each selected poverty attitude, controlling for agency- and director-level characteristics, on recent organization-level programmatic and policy changes. Part A presents our

findings for measures of service provision; Part B presents our findings for measures of organizational change; and Part C presents our findings for measures of organizational political engagement. The dependent variables used in this analysis represent those indicators with statistically significant differences in the bi-variate relationships between measures of poverty attitudes and measures of organizational change (see Table 7). The independent variables used in the prior analysis of the individual- and agency level determinants of these poverty attitudes are also used in these equations to control for these potential agency- and director-level effects. In addition, dichotomous variables are included to measure poverty attitudes and test the effect of each of the four selected attitudes about the causes of poverty and welfare receipt on various measures of organizational behavior designed to capture changes since welfare reform in service provision, inter-organizational innovation and coordination, and political engagement – the dependent variables in the analysis (presented previously in Table 6).

According to this analysis, respondents who attributed poverty and welfare to the attitudes and behavior of the poor were significantly less likely to report reducing the number of clients served or reducing the level of service provided. Moreover, these respondents were significantly more likely to expand the number of clients served since welfare reform, independent of observed agency- and director-level characteristics. However, respondents who attributed poverty to a lack of education, employment skills, jobs, or an adequate wage were significantly more likely to introduce a new program or service, join or establish a service network, and increase joint activities or programs with other organizations. Belief in the importance of cultural transmission and learned lifestyles as causes of poverty significantly reduced the likelihood that an organization

engaged in political advocacy in public forums or protests to voice concern over budget and policy changes related to welfare reform. Whereas belief in the importance of the attitudes and behavior of the poor themselves significantly reduces the likelihood an organization reported participating in rallies or protests in support of changes in welfare policy.

Overall, these findings suggest there is not a strong relationship between agency- and director-level characteristics and the explanations for why local social service agency officials believe their clients are poor and on welfare. However, these selected attitudes about the causes of poverty and welfare are associated with organizational behavior following welfare reform.

Discussion & Implications

Substantial variation exists among social service agency directors in their views on what causes poverty and welfare receipt. Even though many respondents locate the causes of this social problem as a product of inadequate educational opportunities and labor market barriers, a substantial portion of respondents seem to fit a more general pattern found in public opinion which locates poverty and welfare in the flaws of individuals. That is, a plurality believes these problems arise from individual failings, including the inability to overcome cultural constraints. While these views tend to conform to the more general finding in the literature on professions that professionals tend to harbor negative views about the clients they serve, social service agency personnel are much less likely than the general public to believe poverty is the result of individual character flaws.

The heterogeneity of views about poverty within this sample makes it difficult to determine whether this group possesses' views about poverty and welfare that run counter to the spirit of recent welfare reform. Clearly, there are small sub-groups whose views on the causes of poverty neatly fall into two categories: an education and labor market group and a culture, character flaw, welfare benefits too generous group; but most directors' fall somewhere in-between. However, the lack of a strong relationship between those respondents who are trained in the social work profession and variation in attitudes among social service agency personnel suggests that early concerns about social workers undermining welfare reform were overstated.

The finding that social service personnel in faith-based organizations possess similar views to staff in non-religious social service agencies about the nature and causes of what ails their clients seems to run counter to the Bush Administration's initiative to increase support for FBOs, in part, on the premise that these organizations are more likely to emphasize the cultural and individual character flaws thought to cause poverty and welfare receipt. Senior personnel in FBOs appear to possess a variety of views on the causes of poverty and these views are not much different from secular non-profits. Attempts to target funds to those agencies that emphasize the cultural and character flaws thought to cause poverty only on the basis of their status as a religious or religiously affiliated non-profit will likely support many organizations that do not share these views.

However, it is important to note that views about poverty do not appear systematically linked to the observed agency- or director-level characteristics. The heterogeneity in attitudes about the causes of poverty found among social service agency personnel highlights the need to avoid characterizations about social service providers

and those who run nonprofit organizations to help the poor as a monolithic group with a common normative orientation towards those they serve.

Even though this analysis was not able to shed much light on what explains variation in views about what causes poverty and welfare receipt among local social service providers, our results confirm these attitudes are related to organizational-level behavior. Most notably, social service agency personnel who express support for causes of poverty rooted in the attitudes and behavior of the poor appear to have responded to welfare reform by maintaining and expanding service provision (and not rationing services) in their organizations. The increase in demand for services from these organizations could be caused by the push of welfare reform efforts to move recipients into the labor market without much training where these organizations are more likely to support work-first strategies and be involved in welfare reform implementation; however, these organizations were significantly less likely to participate in rallies or protests in support of these public policy changes, raising doubt about whether these organizations are experiencing an increase in demand for services simply because of their potential involvement in implementing welfare reform. Perhaps these beliefs about poverty translate into administrative practices which uphold the value of serving everyone in need (in particular those who are perceived to be to blame for their own misfortune). While these data are unable to explain fully the meaning of this relationship, it does appear that understanding poverty and welfare as the result of individual character flaws does translate into different organizational responses to service provision.

Beliefs about poverty also appear to shape patterns of organizational change, and are associated with different patterns of interaction between an organization and its

environment. Social service agency personnel who express support for causes of poverty rooted in educational and labor market barriers are significantly more likely to have introduced a new service or program, joined or established a service network, and increased joint activities or programs with other social service agencies. These organizations have a level of intra- and inter-organizational activity unlike organizations that attribute poverty to culture, individual character flaws, or welfare. Perhaps organizations which view their clients' problems as a product of external events beyond their client's control orient their organizations outward (and towards those organizations thought to be responsible for their clients' problems). Interestingly, this externally oriented organizational action associated with poverty beliefs rooted in educational and labor market barriers does not carry over into more overt political engagement (as measured by whether organizations participated in a forum on government budget cuts or policy changes, participated in protests against public policy changes, or participated in rallies or protests in support of public policy changes). These types of political engagement are much more closely associated with larger social service agencies that are non-governmental and have a director with a post-graduate degree.

In general, these findings support the basic premise that local social service agency directors are autonomous actors who have their own ideas about the causes of their clients' problems, and these views are related to organizational behavior. It is unclear whether these views shape organizational behavior and/or whether organizational experiences and interactions shape these views. Nevertheless, the normative sphere in which organizational goals are identified, defined and understood (such as the cause of a particular problem an organization is working to combat, such as poverty) seem to play

an important role in organizing the behavior of social service agencies that serve current and former welfare recipients.

Before concluding, it is important to place these findings in context and highlight several limitations of this analysis. First, these data were collected in seven Indiana counties without random sampling, and it is unclear whether they accurately capture the diversity and composition of all Indiana social service agencies, not to mention all social service agencies across the nation. While the data's strength resides in the depth and detail of information collected, the findings from these data should not be considered definitive; rather, they are exploratory and suggestive. As a result, it is possible that some of the observed patterns reflect sampling bias of organizations, rather than some systematic differences that are truly characteristic. Second, the amount of time that elapsed between the implementation of welfare reform and the collection of these data (about 4 years) limits what we can say about how these relationships unfold over a longer time period. Third, many of the dependent variables designed to measure organizational behavior depend on retrospective memory. While there is no evidence to suggest respondents had problems answering these questions, it is unclear how accurate their recollections are about organizational change over a 4 year time period. Lastly, the relatively small sample size limits our ability to detect statistically significant differences between sub-groups. So, it is possible differences between sub-groups in the data that were not statistically significant may actually reflect real differences that can only be detected with more observations.

Nevertheless, these findings suggest a connection between the beliefs of social service agency directors and organizational responses to changes in public policy. While

there is substantial heterogeneity in the beliefs of what material hardship among the poor by social service agency directors, these normative sentiments appear to mediate responses to changes in the policy environment (specifically time-limits and work requirements associated with welfare reform). As a result, the implementation of public policy which depends, in part, on a decentralized service delivery system, will likely be shaped by the beliefs of those responsible for service provision.

In closing, the link between the attitudes and beliefs of local social service administrators and their organization's behavior remains an area largely untouched by systematic social science inquiry. This is unfortunate given the wide-spread practice of out-sourcing such services to a mix of organizations serving the public good. Efforts designed to develop and integrate the normative dimensions of human services into the systematic study and analysis of such organizations will bring us closer to a more complete understanding of how the helping sector is organized.

Table 1: Distribution of social service provider interviews by type of organization and county

County	<i>Organizational Type</i>				Total
	Non-Profit, Non-Religious (NRO)	Non-Profit, Religious (FBO)	For- Profit (For-profit)	Public Agency (Government)	
Bartholomew	18	2	2	12	34
Greene	22	15	7	16	60
Harrison/Floyd	13	6	1	8	28
Howard	19	10	1	5	35
Lake	40	7	3	11	61
Marion	52	11	6	8	77
Total	164	51	20	60	295

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Table 2: Frequency distributions of attitudes from social service agency directors on the causes of welfare dependency and long-term poverty

Causes of Welfare/Poverty	Percent Citing Cause		
	First Cause	Second Cause	Third Cause
Cultural Transmission/Learned Life-Styles	24.3	6.9	11.0
Lack of Education	18.8	11.8	8.5
Unemployment/lack of job opportunities	7.9	5.9	4.9
Attitude/Work Ethic/Laziness/Motivation	6.5	8.3	6.4
Skills Deficit/Life & Vocational	5.8	14.9	12.0
Low or Inadequate Wages or Income	4.8	4.5	4.9
Family Composition	4.5	4.8	4.2
Social Service Programs Too Generous	3.1	3.5	1.8
Low Morale & Self-Esteem	2.4	4.2	3.2
Lack of Childcare	2.4	4.5	7.8
Transitions off of Welfare Too Difficult	2.4	1.7	3.2
Other	2.1	2.8	5.7
Stigma/Societal Attitudes/Discrimination	1.7	2.1	2.5
Transportation Barriers	1.7	4.5	6.0
Lack of Information about Social Services	1.7	4.5	3.2
Genetics or Hereditary	1.4	0.0	0.0
Chemical Dependency	1.4	2.8	3.5
Teen Pregnancy	1.4	1.0	1.1
Lack of Education/Poor Education System	1.4	1.4	1.4
Single Parenthood	0.7	2.1	1.1
Inadequate Health/Medical Care	0.7	1.4	0.7
Economic and Financial Choices	0.3	0.0	0.0
Physical Health Problems	0.3	1.7	1.8
Divorce/Abandonment/Death of Spouse or Wage Earner	0.3	0.7	0.0
Lack of Affordable Housing	0.3	0.3	1.4
Mental Illness	0.0	2.4	0.4
Lack of Support Networks	0.0	1.4	3.2
Old Age	0.0	0.0	0.4
N	292	289	283

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana (1999)*

Note: Categories in bold are used to construct variables to capture whether respondents expressed these attitudes, and these variables are used in subsequent parts of the analysis.

Table 3: Frequency distributions of selected poverty attitudes

Causes of Welfare/Poverty	Percent Citing Cause	
	Percent	N
Education and the Economy	75.0	292
Cultural Transmission/Learned Life-Styles	43.6	295
Attitude/Work Ethic/Laziness/Motivation	23.0	295
Social Service Programs Too Generous	8.2	291

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: The “education and the economy” category includes responses with the following code words: Lack of education; poor educational system; unemployment, lack of job opportunities; skills deficit (life or vocational); low or inadequate wages or income. In all subsequent tables, the category “education and the economy” is labeled “Lack of education, skills, jobs, or an adequate wage.”

Table 4: Agency-level characteristics by selected poverty attitudes

	Lack of Education/ Skills/Jobs/ Adequate Wage	Cultural Transmission/ Learned Lifestyle	Attitude/ Work Ethic/ Laziness/ Motivation	Social Service Programs Too Generous
Organizational type				
NRO	74.1	41.9	20.6	5.6
FBO	76.5	52.8	26.4	13.2
Government	74.6	41.7	26.7	10.0
For-Profit	80.0	35.0	20.0	15.0
Type of service provided				
Counseling	79.2	41.7	18.1	6.9
Job Training	77.2	37.6	17.8	5.0
Childcare	70.2	50.6	22.9	8.4
Food & Health	78.1	46.9	27.1	8.3
Housing	84.1**	47.8	15.9	7.2
Legal Aid	73.3	33.0	26.7	6.7
Transportation	64.3	42.9	7.1	0.0
Intermediary	66.7	44.4	22.2	5.6
Staff size (1998)				
Small (0-7 employees)	76.6	46.2	26.9	9.7
Medium (8-26 employees)	74.7	42.1	22.1	6.3
Large (27+ employees)	75.5	41.5	19.1	7.4
Mean operating budget (1998)				
Small (\$0-\$237,000)	77.3	44.6	28.4	10.8
Medium (\$237,001-1.4m)	82.2	38.4	16.4	5.5
Large (\$1.4m+)	71.2	39.7	19.2	4.1
Age of the organization				
Young (0-14 yrs)	79.0	43.4	19.2	6.1
Middle-aged (15-31 yrs)	70.5	43.2	21.1	9.5
Established (32+ yrs)	77.2	44.6	27.2	8.7

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: Chi-square test of association; *p<.10; **p<.05. All b-variate tests of significance in this table and subsequent descriptive tables are based on comparisons within each column and row.

Note: NRO=Non-religious, nonprofit organization; FBO=Faith-based, nonprofit organizations

Table 5: Director-level characteristics by selected poverty attitudes

	Lack of Education/ Skills/Jobs/ Adequate Wage	Cultural Transmission/ Learned Lifestyle	Attitude/ Work Ethic/ Laziness/ Motivation	Social Service Programs Too Generous
Sex				
Male	73.8	46.7	24.3	11.2
Female	75.8	41.4	21.5	6.6
Race				
White	75.7	45.9	23.6	8.7
Black	70.0	36.0	20.0	8.0
Years working for current employer				
Low (0-5 years)	75.7	36.4	22.7	10.0
Medium (6-13 years)	77.9	46.5	20.9	7.0
High (14+ years)	72.0	49.5	24.7	7.5
Years working in current position				
Low (0-2 years)	75.8	34.7*	21.1	9.5*
Medium (3-8 years)	78.1	50.0*	25.0	3.8*
High (9+ years)	71.1	45.6*	22.2	12.2*
Educational Attainment				
Some College, High School Degree, GED or less	66.7	48.3	28.3	10.0
Four-Year College Degree, Some Post-Graduate Training	76.8	40.0	28.7	7.4
Post-Graduate Degree	78.4	44.0	15.7	8.2
Field of Study				
Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology	81.3	49.2	19.0	11.1
Public & Health Administration, Recreation, Planning, Development	69.7	33.3	18.2	6.1
Education, Child Development	84.4	43.8	28.1	3.1
Business, Management, Accounting	56.7	36.7	30.0	13.3
Nursing, Rehabilitation, Nutrition	83.3	45.8	12.5	8.3
Theology, Ministry, Bible	68.8	62.5	12.5	12.5
Position				
Executive Director, CEO, President	76.0	39.9*	22.7	6.9*
Administrator, Supervisor, Program Director, Office Manager, Attorney	59.4	65.6*	28.1	15.6*
Therapist, Counselor, Coordinator, Direct Service Provider	80.0	40.0*	24.0	8.0*
Vice President, Associate Director	78.9	36.8*	5.3	0.0*
Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Minister	83.3	66.7*	41.7	25.0*

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: Chi-square tests of association; * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$. All tests of significance are based on comparisons within each column and row. Figures are not reported for certain fields of study, including criminal justice and law, social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and general studies, because the number of cases is very small. The category of theology, ministry, and bible is included even though there are only 16 cases. Moreover, 204 respondents' occupy a position of director, chair, president, etc., leaving a small number of cases in the other categories under position. n/s indicates that chi-square tests were not statistically significant at conventional levels.

Table 6: Selected policy & organizational changes since Indiana's welfare reform in 1995 by selected poverty attitudes

	Lack of Education/ Skills/Jobs/ Adequate Wage	Cultural Transmission/ Learned Lifestyle	Attitude/ Work Ethic/ Laziness/ Motivation	Social Service Programs Too Generous
Provision of service indicators				
Reduced number of clients served				
Yes	80.0	37.1	5.7**	2.9
No	74.9	44.3	25.6**	8.9
Tightened eligibility criteria				
Yes	72.6	50.0	27.4	11.3
No	76.4	41.6	21.9	7.3
Reduced the level of service provided to individual clients				
Yes	79.4	50.0	11.8*	11.8
No	75.0	42.5	24.7*	7.7
Eliminated specific programs or services				
Yes	75.4	40.4	14.0*	8.8
No	75.4	44.4	25.1*	8.1
Expanded the number of clients served				
Yes	77.4	43.2	27.4**	7.4
No	71.4	44.4	14.4**	10.0
Expanded eligibility requirements for service				
Yes	73.3	53.3	29.3	9.3
No	76.3	39.8	20.9	7.8
Increased the level of service provided to individual clients				
Yes	77.8	38.3	24.0	9.6
No	72.2	50.9	21.9	6.1
Inter-organizational innovation and coordinator indicators				
Introduced a new service or program				
Yes	79.4**	41.9	22.2	6.9
No	65.4**	47.4	25.6	11.5
Joined/Established a Network of other organizations				
Yes	79.7*	41.3	19.6	7.2
No	70.4*	46.4	26.5	9.3
Developed mutual board membership with other nonprofits				
Yes	81.7**	38.8	23.3	8.7
No	70.8**	46.5	22.7	8.1
Increased joint activities or programs with other nonprofits				
Yes	76.4	41.6	23.3	7.3
No	70.0	51.4	22.9	11.4
Increased referrals and information sharing with other nonprofits				
Yes	75.9	41.5**	23.4	8.5
No	68.3	58.5**	22.0	7.3
Organizational political engagement indicators				
Sponsored forums on government budget cuts or policy changes				
Yes	76.5	38.6*	20.5	6.8
No	73.4	48.4*	25.5	9.6
Participated in protests against public policy changes				
Yes	81.7	33.3*	11.7**	6.7
No	73.0	46.7*	26.2**	8.7
Participated in rallies or protests supporting policy changes				
Yes	84.8**	39.2	11.4**	6.3

No	71.1**	45.7	27.6**	9.0
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Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: Chi-square tests of association; * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; All tests of significance are based on comparisons within each column and row. The common question stem for all policy and organizational change measures is: "Since welfare reform, has your organization...?"; Percentages do not add up to 100 percent because we are comparing rates between those who express support for a poverty attitude and whether or not a particular organizational change took place.

Table 7: Logit equations for agency- and director-level determinants of selected poverty attitudes (standard errors in parentheses)

	Lack of Education/ Skills/Jobs/ Adequate Wage	Cultural Transmission/ Learned Lifestyle	Attitude/ Work Ethic/ Laziness/ Motivation	Social Service Programs Too Generous
Agency-Level Characteristics				
NRO	-0.785 (0.725)	0.080 (0.535)	0.384 (0.737)	-0.060 (1.021)
FBO	-0.842 (0.817)	0.284 (0.618)	0.677 (0.835)	0.375 (1.165)
Government	-0.435 (0.794)	-0.025 (0.595)	0.901 (0.784)	0.626 (1.099)
Staff Size (log)	-0.015* (0.113)	0.015 (0.097)	-0.063 (0.121)	0.091 (0.193)
Age of the Organization	0.009 (0.006)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.006 (0.009)
Director-Level Characteristics				
Male	-0.234 (0.315)	0.196 (0.276)	0.015 (0.334)	0.463 (0.533)
Black	-0.268 (0.379)	-0.354 (0.347)	-0.148 (0.417)	0.216 (0.624)
Years worked for current employer	-0.0303 (0.024)	0.016 (0.020)	0.003 (0.024)	-0.042 (0.041)
Years worked in current position	-0.015 (0.0265)	0.020 (0.024)	-0.001 (0.028)	0.0482 (0.039)
Post-Graduate Degree	0.352 (0.320)	0.066 (0.275)	-0.769** (0.344)	0.020 (0.525)
Executive Director, CEO, President	0.364 (0.389)	-0.599* (0.360)	0.348 (0.461)	-0.648 (0.662)
Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology	0.365 (0.642)	-0.438 (0.557)	0.014 (0.679)	-0.165 (0.986)
Minister, Pastor, Assistant Pastor	----	0.310 (0.880)	0.781 (0.968)	0.509 (1.329)
Constant	1.704 (0.798)	-0.239 (0.620)	-1.597* (0.846)	-2.561* (1.162)
Log Likelihood	-138.17738	-173.050	-130.398	-64.283
Pseudo R-Square	0.0398	0.0354	0.0425	0.0578
N	264	263	263	263

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: *p<.10; **<.05. All multivariate results in this table and subsequent tables present regression coefficients. The variable that measures an agency's operating budget is omitted because it is highly correlated (0.88) with staff size. Since the budget variable contains more missing data, it was omitted from this and subsequent equations. The occupational categories included in these equations were chosen for their relevance to the literature and current policy debates. Indicators for field-of-study measures were not statistically significant and did not improve the fit of the model and were not included in the final analysis.

Table 8a: Logit equations for determinants of changes in the provision of service services since welfare reform (standard errors in parentheses)

Stem: "Since welfare reform, has your organization..."	Reduced the Number of Clients Served	Reduced the Level of Service Provided	Eliminated Program or Service	Expanded the Number of Clients Served
Selected Poverty Attitudes				
Lack of education/skills/jobs/adequate wages	-0.470 (0.445)	-0.140 (0.442)	-0.404 (0.395)	0.542 (0.364)
Cultural transmission/learned lifestyles	-0.259 (0.376)	0.215 (0.359)	-0.329 (0.329)	0.138 (0.298)
Attitude/work ethic/laziness/motivation	-0.967* (0.582)	-0.891* (0.540)	-0.547 (0.450)	0.929** (0.409)
Social service programs too generous	-0.413 (0.831)	0.952 (0.627)	0.382 (0.589)	-0.244 (0.562)
Agency-Level Characteristics				
NRO	-1.051* (0.616)	-0.535 (0.639)	-.7498 (0.590)	0.659 (0.557)
FBO	-1.441* (0.780)	-1.308 (0.855)	-1.261* (0.743)	0.371 (0.655)
Government	-0.731 (0.708)	-0.786 (0.749)	-0.369 (0.668)	-0.239 (0.620)
Staff Size (log)	0.315** (0.133)	-0.013 (0.133)	0.431** (0.125)	0.179 (0.112)
Age of the Organization	0.0002 (0.0007)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.003)
Director-Level Characteristics				
Male	0.342 (0.377975)	-0.132 (0.379)	0.787** (0.335)	-0.465 (0.307)
Black	-0.111 (0.499)	0.286 (0.438)	0.973** (0.383)	0.933** (0.438)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Current Job	0.00587 (0.028)	0.017 (0.029)	-0.023 (0.025)	-0.013 (0.024)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Agency	-0.009 (0.034)	0.003 (0.033)	-0.0002 (0.029)	0.018 (0.028)
Post-Graduate Degree	-0.153 (0.391)	0.186 (0.377)	0.298 (0.340)	-0.523* (0.316)
Executive Director, CEO, President	-0.274 (0.463)	-0.068 (0.481)	-0.354 (0.445)	0.538 (0.393)
Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology	0.170 (0.783)	-0.588 (0.885)	0.089 (0.733)	0.600 (0.612)
Minister, Pastor, Assistant Pastor	-----	0.169 (1.376)	0.965 (1.142)	0.349 (0.959)
Constant	-0.943 (0.856)	-1.010 (0.869)	-1.407* (0.808)	-0.856 (0.750)
Log Likelihood	-102.96628	-108.03801	-124.46744	-145.54738
Pseudo R-Square	0.0817	0.0508	0.1262	0.0897
N	263	263	263	263

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: *p<.10; **<.05. In the equation for reduced clients served, the variable for Minister, Pastor, and Assistant Pastor was not included because it predicts failure perfectly.

Table 8b: Logit equations for determinants of organizational innovation since welfare reform (standard errors in parentheses)

Stem: "Since welfare reform, has your organization..."	Introduced New Service/Program	Joined/Established Service Network	Developed Mutual Board Membership	Increased Joint Activities or Programs	Increased Referrals/Information Sharing
Selected Poverty Attitudes					
Lack of education/skills/jobs/adequate wages	0.903** (0.389)	0.582* (0.333)	0.897 (0.368)	0.880** (0.382)	0.820 (0.453)
Cultural transmission/learned Lifestyles	-0.143 (0.335)	-0.172 (0.269)	-0.250 (0.276)	-0.299 (0.329)	-0.525 (0.400)
Attitude/work ethic/laziness/Motivation	0.304 (0.403)	-0.346 (0.336)	0.231 (0.343)	0.243 (0.402)	0.088 (0.490)
Social service programs too Generous	-0.298 (0.595)	.3432 (0.532)	0.299 (0.552)	0.136 (0.619)	1.012 (0.868)
Agency-Level Characteristics					
NRO	0.269 (0.696)	0.408 (0.536)	0.994* (0.614)	0.757 (0.597)	0.093 (.796)
FBO	-0.289 (0.791)	0.268 (0.632)	0.461 (0.708)	1.256* (0.761)	0.157 (0.916)
Government	-1.013 (0.747)	-0.163 (0.603)	1.212* (0.667)	0.591 (0.676)	0.494 (0.919)
Staff Size (log)	0.510** (0.137)	0.129 (0.101)	0.058 (0.101)	0.182 (0.123)	0.207 (0.144)
Age of the Organization	-0.0004 (0.0007)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.0003 (0.0007)	-0.0005 (0.0007)	-0.0006 (0.0006)
Director-Level Characteristics					
Male	-0.188 (0.352)	0.082 (0.281)	-0.015 (0.287)	-0.064 (0.349)	-0.402 (0.423)
Black	0.754 (0.476)	0.492 (0.349)	-0.264 (0.358)	1.004** (0.522)	0.211 (0.542)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Current Job	-0.032 (0.026)	0.008 (0.021)	-0.031 (0.022)	-.0110 (0.026)	0.018 (0.032)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Agency	0.012 (0.040)	-0.029 (0.025)	-0.008 (0.026)	0.006 (0.030)	-0.026 (0.035)
Post-Graduate Degree	0.321 (0.354)	0.204 (0.281)	-0.149 (0.291)	0.313 (0.349)	-0.169 (0.415)
Executive Director, CEO, President	0.811* (0.433)	0.615 (0.381)	0.172 (0.393)	0.613 (0.427)	0.869* (0.522)
Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology	1.969** (0.732)	0.490 (0.577)	0.678 (0.579)	0.453 (0.654)	0.887 (0.881)
Minister, Pastor, Assistant Pastor	-0.089 (0.952)	0.122 (0.934)	-0.323 (1.019)	-1.620* (0.981)	-0.670 (1.016)
Constant	-1.247 (0.870)	-1.395** (0.715)	-1.909** (0.796)	-1.030 (0.798)	0.406 (0.999)
Log Likelihood	-120.40**	-168.66**	-164.06	-124.34*	-93.04
Pseudo R-Square	0.18	0.07	0.06	0.10	0.10
N	263	263	263	263	263

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: *p<.10; **<.05. In the equation for reduced clients served, the variable for Minister, Pastor, and Assistant Pastor was not included because it predicts failure perfectly.

Table 8c: Logit equations for determinants of organizational political engagement since welfare reform (standard errors in parentheses)

Stem: "Since welfare reform, has your organization..."	Sponsored Forums on Government Budget Cuts/Policy Changes	Participated in Protests Against Public Policy Changes	Participated in Rallies/Protests in Support of Public Policy Changes
Selected Poverty Attitudes			
Lack of education/skills/jobs/adequate wages	-0.006 (0.335)	0.143 (0.438)	0.576 (0.404)
Cultural transmission/learned Lifestyles	-0.490* (0.276)	-0.718** (0.352)	-0.169 (0.312)
Attitude/work ethic/laziness/Motivation	0.060 (0.339)	-0.722 (0.503)	-0.760* (0.440)
Social service programs too Generous	0.141 (0.542)	0.253 (0.677)	0.0318 (.648)
Agency-Level Characteristics			
NRO	0.437 (0.535)	-0.779 (0.591)	0.257 (0.627)
FBO	-0.967 (0.629)	-0.9634 (0.691)	-0.182 (0.720)
Government	-0.132 (0.598)	-1.488** (0.721)	-0.390 (0.712)
Staff Size (log)	0.265** (0.010)	0.439** (0.121)	0.318** (0.110)
Age of the Organization	-0.0008 (0.0007)	-0.0003 (0.0008)	-0.0003 (0.0007)
Director-Level Characteristics			
Male	0.215 (0.284)	0.119 (0.345)	0.622* (0.312)
Black	0.345 (0.348)	-0.213 (0.451)	0.0349 (0.394)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Current Job	0.0013 (0.021)	-0.00006 (0.027)	0.026 (0.024)
Mean Number of Years Worked in Agency	0.010 (0.025)	0.012 (0.030)	-0.052* (0.030)
Post-Graduate Degree	0.393 (0.287)	0.784** (0.352)	0.784** (0.321)
Executive Director, CEO, President	-0.001 (0.364)	0.078 (0.446)	0.517 (0.442)
Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology	-0.114 (0.580)	0.766 (0.741)	1.284** (0.658)
Minister, Pastor, Assistant Pastor	-----	-----	-----
Constant	-0.114 (0.580)	-2.034** (0.852)	-3.162 (0.886)
Log Likelihood	-164.79548	-119.62286**	-137.3946**
Pseudo R-Square	0.0952	0.1530	0.1407
N	263	263	263

Source: *Impacts of Welfare Reform on Community Social Services in Indiana* (1999)

Note: *p<.10; **<.05. In the equation for reduced clients served, the variable for Minister, Pastor, and Assistant Pastor was not included because it predicts failure perfectly.

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End Notes

¹ According to Edin and Lein (1997:181-2), between 25 and 44 percent of welfare reliant mothers depend on social service agencies to help meet basic human needs.

² The counties in this study include: Marion (the county which contains Indianapolis); Howard (the county which contains Kokomo); Lake (the county which contains Gary); Bartholomew (the county which contains Columbus); and the counties of Floyd, Harrison, and Greene (a cluster of southern rural counties to ensure an adequate number of rural social service providers). Together, these counties constitute six case studies that are fairly representative of the mix of communities in the state of Indiana.

³ While it is true that particular poverty attitudes might be inappropriate for leaders of organizations, producing socially desirable responses in public discussions or a weeding out of people who hold such views. We believe this was not a serious problem based on our face-to-face data collection methods and interviewer observations. More important, our findings match-up closely with the results of larger studies on poverty attitudes among more front-line social workers in New York City (Reeser and Epstein, 1987). This would seem to suggest that position in an organization may not matter much in explaining variance in poverty attitudes.

⁴ It is important to note that all of the selected counties have experienced substantial declines in TANF participation. These trends closely mirror the overall state declines. Within the targeted counties, the rate of decline has been greatest in the rural areas, specifically Greene and Floyd counties. While Lake County continues to have the highest rate of welfare receipt in the state, Marion County's TANF participation has reached surprisingly low levels for a place that contains the state's largest city – Indianapolis. Despite these declines, the targeted seven counties contain 51 percent of the state's 1999 welfare case load – compared to approximately 47 percent in 1995 when Indiana's welfare reform began.

⁵ Overall, the educational attainment of the respondents is very high: 46 percent of the respondents had a master's degree and 29 percent had a four-year college degree. Respondents' field of study while in school varied considerably. Administration and planning degrees represented the largest category, accounting for 21.9 percent of the all respondents. Social work and psychology degrees were the next largest category, accounting for 21.7 percent of all respondents.

⁶ Five organizational types were identified and used in the selection of agencies. These include: (1) public or government organizations; (2) not-for-profit, non-religious organizations; (3) not-for-profit, religious organizations; (4) for-profit firms; and (5) hybrid organizations. The hybrid category is a residual category used to describe those agencies that are a mixture of these other organizational types; however, none were actually interviewed in this study. Eight types of organizational activity were identified and used in the selection of agencies. These include: (1) counseling; (2) intermediary services for other social service providers; (3) transportation; (4) legal and civil rights; (5) housing; (6) food and health; (7) childcare and youth services; and (8) workforce development and education. Since many organizations provide services across these various categories, field associates were instructed to ask potential respondents to identify the most important service area for the organization and to use this response when screening organizations.

⁷ The distribution of interviews across organizational service types is as follows: 34.7 percent provide workforce development and educational services; 25.1 percent provide counseling and health related services; 33.3 percent provide food and health services, including food pantries; 29.2 percent provide childcare and youth services; and 23.7 percent provide housing related services, including homeless shelters. A much smaller percentage of organizations in the sample provide legal or transportation services. Similarly, only 6.2 percent of the sample is an intermediary, coordinating the provision and funding of social services for other providers. A substantial number of organizations in this sample provide services across service areas. These figures are not mutually exclusive, and organizations are counted in more than one category. Therefore, these figures not add up to 100 percent.