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AFDC RECIPIENTS

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We are grateful to the staff of the Hennepin County Welfare Department, especially Al Kohls, Dave Young and John Burns, for the invaluable assistance they rendered in the course of this project. We are also indebted to Muriel Fogel and Tom McDonald for their consistent and creative assistance in collecting data and planning analyses. Finally, we thank Barbara Walston and Jane Piliavin for their critical appraisals of our work. This research was supported in part by funds granted to the Institute for Research on Poverty by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare pursuant to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

ABSTRACT

In recent years the delivery of social services in public welfare agencies has been separated from income maintenance responsibilities. The change has received support from many sources including social workers. However, no systematic effort has been made to ascertain welfare recipients' responses to separation. This article reports on a field experiment intended to examine some of these responses. The experimental results suggest that the pre-separation form of social service delivery leads to greater recipient demand for and greater satisfaction with social services. Some implications of these results for social policy formation are discussed.

According to at least one authority, the separation of financial aid from service provision in public welfare agencies has been "one of the most important and fundamental...developments in public welfare" (Hoshino, 1973). At the time of this writing no listing is available of state and local public assistance programs which have implemented separation; however, their number is unquestionably large. Among social work scholars there has been substantial support for separation (Hoshino, 1971, 1972; Hamilton, 1962; Burns, 1962; Bell, 1973), and only infrequent criticism (Oliphant, 1974; Chaiklin and Frank, 1973). However, the response of AFDC recipients to separation has never been assessed. The study to be reported upon here sought in part to provide information concerning this response. Its approach was to give AFDC recipients a sustained experience (up to one year) with some variant of the separated or integrated form of service delivery. The responses of interest to the investigators were recipients' requests for services and their assessments of the help they received.

1. SEPARATION: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Separation of aid and services in public welfare has two components. The first involves giving responsibility for social service delivery to one group of workers while assigning public assistance eligibility determination and grant supervision tasks to another. Members of the first group have been designated variously as social workers, service workers or caseworkers. Members of the second group, generally believed to need less skills and training for their work, have been called case-aides and eligibility technicians. The second component of separation concerns the criteria for instigating services. Prior to separation,

workers (then having both service and grant supervision responsibilities) periodically took the initiative to visit with welfare recipients, at which time they not only assessed need for continued financial aid but offered services they believed were needed by recipients for abatement of family problems and the attainment of economic independence (Bell, 1973, pp. 67-69). Under separation, service workers normally have no contact with public assistance families unless their efforts are specifically requested by them. The only contacts families can expect routinely to have with welfare department personnel are with those case aides responsible for redetermining family eligibility for financial aid.

Social work proponents of separation argue that it offers solutions to at least three problems which they believe have vitiated the effectiveness and legitimacy of social services in public assistance. First, they say, it relieves services of the "albatross of relief (Hamilton, 1962); second, it makes possible the provision of services under nonadversary and nondemeaning conditions (Hoshino, 1972); third, it permits services to be rendered in a manner assuring recipients freedom of choice (Hoshino, 1972; Social and Rehabilitation Service, 1972). These points require brief amplification.

When Gordon Hamilton advocated separation in a 1962 editorial she argued that if clerical level workers were given the responsibilities involved in monitoring public assistance grants, case workers could perform service functions with increased consistency and effectiveness. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Hoshino wrote several papers in part expanding Hamilton's argument but making several additional points. According to Hoshino, provision of social services in the integrated framework which existed through the 1960s not only confused service and

income maintenance functions but demeaned recipients. Two basic assumptions of service provision under integration, said Hoshino, were that families receiving public assistance were in poverty because of personal pathologies and that social services could reduce these pathologies (Hoshino, 1971). The first assumption, Hoshino claimed, distorted the real life situations of many recipients. The second justified the institution of social services independently of recipients' requests and this led to a practice which denied individuals freedom to determine their own fate.¹ Separation on the other hand, said Hoshino, enabled income maintenance recipients to define their situation in their terms, and provided them with service only if they desired it. Separation also permitted them to obtain service from individuals with whom they were not otherwise in an adversary relationship.

It must be noted that there are some ideal-type representations in the preceding portrayals of social services in the pre-separation format. Studies by Briar and by Handler and Hollingsworth have suggested that prior to separation public assistance caseworkers only visited infrequently with welfare recipients and that the substance of these visits, aside from that involved with grant review, was rather innocuous (Briar, 1966; Handler and Hollingsworth, 1971). Workers rarely engaged in therapeutically oriented counselling activities but spent most of their time discussing work possibilities, child rearing concerns, health, budget management and other day-to-day coping problems.² For their part, recipients generally reported that their contacts with caseworkers were not unpleasant and some found certain aspects of these contacts helpful (Handler and Hollingsworth, 1971, pp. 107-133).

The Briar and Handler and Hollingsworth findings notwithstanding, there were policies and practices involved in the integration of social

services with public assistance grant supervision that warranted criticism. To begin, Hoshino's concerns about the demeaning character of service in the integrated format referred to a clear possibility if not a frequent reality. But beyond this there were other problems with the integrated service grant supervision format. Workers who presumably were to serve recipients were generally ill equipped to do their work (Hamilton, 1962). Agencies, in their efforts to acquire federal funds intended to promote services, expanded the service concept to include activities which involved grant supervision and administration (Hoshino, 1972). And, above all, while the social policies that expanded casework among public assistance recipients were premised on the belief that social services would reduce economic dependency, they apparently did not. In the course of a great expansion of social services in public welfare agencies there was also a great expansion of AFDC caseloads. These latter considerations contributed to a disaffection among political leaders with the service concept in public assistance. Since separation offered the possibility of service curtailment it drew their favor.

But while social workers and politicians came to favor separation, albeit for somewhat different reasons, no systematic effort was made to determine how it might affect welfare recipients' perception and use of services. Although Hoshino's arguments suggested that recipients might favor separation, neither he nor anyone else had data from which to draw such a conclusion. Admittedly the failure to ascertain clients' probable responses before implementing separation does not represent a unique event in the history of social policy decision-making. Yet in this instance assessment seems particularly relevant for at least two reasons.

First, from the standpoint of social work, separation was intended in part to benefit welfare recipients through improved conditions and standards of service. Furthermore, and more generally, social work literature during the past decade has placed great emphasis on the importance of clients' interests and demands in the production of social services (Moqulof, 1973; Schwartz and Chernin, 1967; Kramer, 1969). Accordingly, some assessment of these demands seemed in order whatever the views of policy makers and social workers on the production of social services. We think that assessment is still in order if only to inform us what effects the separation policy has had on those whom, according to social workers, it was intended to help.

2. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We have noted above that there is no prior social policy research to indicate what recipient response to separation might be. A review of sociological and social-psychological literature on the topic reveals somewhat ambiguous implications. For example, reactance theory, a fairly recent development in social psychology (Brehm, 1966; Brehm and Cole, 1966), indicates that separation would be more satisfying to welfare recipients than would integration. This prediction derives from an axiom of reactance theory which states that individuals tend to reject features of their situation which constrain their freedom to select alternative courses of action. Integrating (combining) social services with public assistance grant supervision entails the possibility that service workers will intrude on recipients' lives. It also puts these workers in the position of monitoring recipients' financial expenditures. Thus, reactance theory suggests, welfare recipients in combined and worker

initiated service caseloads would be less positive about and less often seek social services than would recipients in separated and client initiated service caseloads. In contrast to reactance theory, attribution theory suggests the hypothesis that welfare recipients will favor integrated and worker initiated services (Jones and Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967). According to attribution theory the request for help is self-depreciating and an admission of incompetence. The individual making the request acknowledges that he or she lacks the capacity to cope with the problem at hand. For problems which touch on an individual's core attributes such requests become particularly difficult. According to attribution theory, the greater the ease with which helping persons allow service requests to be made the less negative will be the affect accompanying the requests and the more often they will occur. The conditions in combined and worker initiated service caseloads appear to contribute to ease of request in at least two ways. First, workers in these conditions may be seen as concerned and not simply intrusive when they initiate appointments for service or assistant recipients in grant and budget matters. Under these circumstances service requests should be easier to make than in conditions involving separation where workers, because they do not request visits, are not able to behaviorally indicate concern for recipients' well being. Second, recipient requests for service may be further eased in the course of worker initiated contacts because much of the effort and inconvenience in getting service started has already taken place. The recipient in effect is more able to request services "in passing". The attribution theory prediction has found some support in two experimental studies on help seeking. In one study, Tessler and Schwartz (1972) found that help seekers were more likely to ask for assistance when they could attribute their failures to external conditions rather

than personal characteristics. More recently, Broll, Gross and Piliavin found that persons attempting to solve a difficult logic problem preferred and used more assistance from those helpers who offered it rather than those who rendered it only on request (Broll et al., 1974). Certainly the context of these studies fails to tap the severity and complexity of circumstances confronting welfare recipients. Their findings, however, do suggest that the conditions of separation in the present study will lead to lessened recipient demand for services and to less positive attitudes toward social service workers.

3. METHOD

It was noted previously in this paper that separation involved two basic changes at the agency practitioner level. These changes provided the basis for the two major variables manipulated in the experiment described here. The first was the combined-separated variable. Recipients placed in the combined (or integrated) service condition received services and income maintenance supervision from the same agency worker. Recipients in the separated condition received services and supervision from two different workers, one a service worker, the other an eligibility technician.

The second variable involved the basis for initiating social services. In a client request condition, recipients were told they could receive agency services of various kinds--these being described in some detail--and to receive these services they needed only to call their service worker. In the worker initiated, or service imposed, condition, recipients were told that they would be visited by a worker periodically, about once every two months, to see how they were getting along and to offer

services.³ As in the client request condition, these recipients were told they could ask the worker for services at any time and the services were described in detail. In order to control for memory effects, recipients in the client request condition were sent a postcard from their worker at the same interval as worker initiated visits in the worker initiated service condition (two months) which simply reminded them of the workers' continued availability.

Recipients who were brought into the experiment were served for a maximum of one year in accord with the specifications of the conditions in which they were placed. Recipients who terminated AFDC for any reason prior to the one year maximum were dropped from the analysis at that time.⁴ Recipients who no longer met project eligibility standards were also dropped.⁵

The basic paradigm, therefore, was a combined vs. separated x client vs. worker initiated service⁶ factorial design as depicted in Figure 1. Recipients in Cell 3 of the design received services in accord with the pre-separation service model, that is, they had one worker who provided services and grant supervision and who at his or her initiative periodically visited each recipient. Recipients in Cell 2 received services in accord with the post-separation model and those in Cells 1 and 4 received service variants obtained when only one of the manipulated variables was fixed at post-separation conditions. A fifth comparison group (control) was also established which consisted of people who could have been included in the basic design but remained in the regular agency caseload. Attitudinal

Figure 1. Alternative Conditions for Receiving Services

	Income Maintenance and Services Combined	Income Maintenance and Services Separated
Service Contact Initiated only at Recipient Request	1	2
Service Contact Initiated by Worker as well as Client Initiative	3	4

and utilization data were obtained concerning these recipients in order to examine possible "placebo effects" of the experiment. Assignment to condition was done through randomization.

Data on service utilization were drawn from records kept by the service workers and the eligibility technician participating in the study. These personnel recorded the nature of every contact made with project recipients, the name of the person who initiated each contact, what was asked for and what was delivered. Contacts concerning continuing problems were recorded separately from contacts concerning new problems. Data on recipients' attitudes toward themselves, their workers, public welfare agencies, and a variety of other dimensions were collected by an interviewer on two occasions: the first at the time recipients became eligible for inclusion in the project and the second, when they left the project. Because of the focus of this paper only the satisfaction and contact data will be presented here.

In order to reduce error variance, delineate the recipient group as clearly as possible, and avoid the possibility of reactive responses due to prior experience with public assistance, a number of criteria were set up to screen project participants. Thus, they included only women family heads who were new admissions to AFDC, who had never before received public assistance in the study site (the Minneapolis metropolitan area), and who were mothers of the children for whom aid was sought. No cases involving unemployed fathers were included nor were any cases which fit the eligibility criteria but were classified as WIN or problem cases (for example, protection, drug abuse, etc.). These latter cases required service imposition and were therefore excluded from the study.

The project staff monitored all intake applications. When the staff was informed that an applicant who met eligibility specifications had been accepted for AFDC, an Initial Offer of Service (IOS) visit was made to the mother during which it was explained that the public welfare agency was using various service delivery approaches and that her family had been assigned to one of these.⁷ The conditions for service delivery under that assignment were explained and opportunity was given to the recipient to express dissatisfaction and request another delivery approach. In one case a recipient did object to the assignment she received. The case was assigned to the recipients' preferred treatment condition and data concerning the case were excluded from analysis.

Obviously only cases which received an IOS could be included in the experiment. The mean interval from the time of a recipient's AFDC application to the time when project personnel were informed that the case was eligible and receiving public assistance benefit was 62 days. In some cases this delay reflected problems in assessing eligibility; in others it reflected problems in communication. In any case, this fact necessitated that the control group cases be composed of otherwise project-eligible families who, if they left the AFDC caseload for any reason, did not do so until after 62 days of their date of application. This stipulation made controls and experimentals comparable as to their minimum exposure to their respective treatment conditions.

The workers who supplied services to project families were employees of the welfare department in which the study took place. Each service worker was assigned clients in each condition, thus controlling for worker effects. As project participants dropped because of welfare ineligibility, change of residence, or other circumstances, they were

replaced by another family coming into the sample pool. All families in the separated social service condition received income maintenance supervision from a single welfare technician. Service workers and the technician carried project cases in addition to their normal caseloads. In order to insure that relatively high quality of services be provided to study members, the project employed agency staff at overtime rates for the service given to study cases.

In all, 19 workers, seven males and twelve females, provided services for the project. Three workers had masters degrees (in social work), fourteen had bachelors degrees and two some graduate work. The mean age of the workers was 32.9 years and their mean length of agency experience was 5.3 years. The number of recipients served by agency workers in the course of the project totaled 145. An additional 151 recipients were assigned as controls.⁸

The great majority of the recipients were white, separated or divorced, and young. About half were high school graduates. As seen in Table 1, the project sample characteristics did not closely resemble those of a nationwide probability sample of AFDC recipients studied in 1973. To some degree the age and family size differences between the project and nationwide samples may be attributable to the fact that project members were intake cases and not known to have been previously on AFDC. The education and race differences, however, probably represent regional population patterns. The AFDC population in the state in which the project took place is estimated to be 80 percent white, 10 percent black and six

Table 1
Selected Attributes of Project Sample and
National AFDC Caseload Sample

Attributes	<u>Project Sample</u>	<u>National 1973^(a) AFDC Sample</u>
	Mean or Percent	Median or Percent
Age	25.7 years	29.8 years
Education	11.6 years	10.5 years
Number of Eligible Children	1.9	2.6
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Married	6.6%	-
Divorced	12.9%	-
Separated	59.3%	-
Never Married	18.0%	-
Other	3.2%	-
<u>Race^(b)</u>		
White	81.4%	38.0%
Black	13.2%	45.8%
Indian	4.0%	1.1%
Other	1.4%	15.1%

Note: (a) See U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare Findings of the 1973 AFDC Study Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974.

(b) Percentages based only on project worker reports. Agency policy prohibits this information from being placed in records to avoid reactive effects. No effort was made to obtain these data from control case aides. The race of 50 recipients was not reported by project workers. The percentages shown are compatible with estimates of the racial distribution of Minnesota AFDC recipients in the state where this study was undertaken.

percent American Indian. Among those for whom information is available, the median education level is high school graduation. Unfortunately nationwide and state data on the marital status of recipients are not available in a form which permits comparisons with our data.

4. FINDINGS

In order to clarify the following discussion we must make some terminological distinctions. First, we distinguish between contacts and service requests. There is some ambiguity in the former measure in that, in a given contact, requests can involve recipient desire for any number of services. The concern of our analysis will be with service requests. Second, we distinguish between requests for new services and those for continuing services. New service requests indicate the emergence of new problems or the later recurrence of old problems following apparent adequate closure. Continuing service requests refer to requests for assistance on problems that have been previously brought up but persist. We focus only on new service requests since requests for continuing services may not represent a desire for additional aid of a given type but may simply reflect recipient unhappiness and consequent action resulting from worker failure to deliver a previously requested service. In contrast, new service requests should provide more accurate estimates of the effects of our manipulations. Finally, among new service requests we will distinguish between those which are financial in character and those that are nonfinancial. Financial requests have to do with economic problems encountered by families including those involving

their grants. Nonfinancial services include other things counseling, job finding, referral, and efforts to obtain access to other service organizations.⁹ In comparing service use among experimental groups we will use mean monthly requests per case in order to control for any variations among groups in cell size and sample members' length of stay in the project.

Overall, experimental sample members requested services at the rate of 0.38 service requests for each case per month. Somewhat less than two-thirds of these requests (.24 requests per month) were requests for new services, and among these new service requests about 55 percent were for nonfinancial services. The dispersion of new service requests was highly asymmetric. In order to make more appropriate the use of statistical tests based on the normal distribution, the data were subjected to a square root transformation prior to analysis (Kirk, 1968). The data found in Tables 2 and 3 cannot be directly converted to raw frequencies.

Table 2 data refer to the effects of the experimental manipulations on client monthly request rates for new services. No significant interactions were observed. On the other hand, both the combined and worker initiated service conditions led to significantly increased recipient service request rates, although in different ways. Recipients receiving services by one worker who had both service and grant monitoring responsibilities made significantly more requests for assistance on new financial problems than did recipients who were served by two workers. Recipients receiving services in the worker initiated service condition made significantly more requests for assistance on new nonfinancial problems than did recipients in the client initiated service condition.

In order to examine whether these effects would be larger for long-term project members (on the assumption that increased exposure would lead to increased effects), the paradigm represented in Table 2 was analyzed excluding from analysis those recipients who were served for less than two months. No alteration in the initial effects was found.

Clearly the data in Table 2 are consistent with the hypothesis that separation leads to lessened client requests for casework services. Yet it could be argued that the findings in Table 2 are artifactual because of the nature of our manipulations. Specifically, workers in two cells of our design--the combined service and grant monitoring condition and the worker initiated service condition--must spend some time with recipients while workers in other cells need not. And, to generalize, recipients in the former conditions can be expected overall to have greater exposure to workers. This greater exposure in turn could lead to more service requests because the workers' presence makes requests easier to initiate. We acknowledge this possibility and in fact have suggested earlier that it is one reason for expecting more service requests in the worker initiated service condition. But in terms of the attribution model, convenience is not the only basis for expecting more service requests in the combined and worker service initiated conditions. Specifically, as noted above, the model implies that the style of workers in these conditions connotes that they are interested in recipients' problems and desire to provide assistance. This derivation suggested that we examine new service request patterns while controlling for worker initiated exposure effects. Our approach was to look at those client requests for services which took place only in the course of client

Table 2
Effect of Experimental Manipulations on Recipient Requests
for New Services Across All Contacts

Type of Request	Monthly Request Rates			
	Combined Service Condition (N=70)	Separated Service Condition (N=75)	Worker Initiated Service Condition (N=72)	Client Initiated Service Condition (N=73)
Recipient Requests for New Financial Services	.260**	.140**	.200	.191
Recipient Requests for New Non-Financial Services	.343	.262	.398	.207**

**Designates a difference significant at the 1 percent confidence level.

initiated contacts with workers. Since these contacts resulted from client initiative, the service requests that arose in their course should reflect client demand in a straightforward manner. One disadvantage inheres in this approach. That is, because of this restriction a significant positive effect due to the worker initiated service manipulation becomes very unlikely. In the client initiated service condition service requests are concentrated in client initiated contacts. In the worker service initiated condition they are spread over worker initiated and recipient initiated contacts. Thus our restricted analysis disproportionately reduces the number of new service requests available for analysis in the worker initiated condition. On the other hand, under these circumstances a clear test of the combined vs. separated service effects is possible. The relevant data are found in Table 3. The comparisons are consistent with those of Table 2 although as anticipated only the combined-separated effect remains significant. Again the implication is that separation leads to lessened demand for services.

5. RECIPIENTS' OPTIONS ON AGENCY EXPERIENCES

We turn to a second issue, that concerned with recipients' expression of relative satisfaction with their public welfare service experience. As noted above, this information was obtained from participants at the time of their termination from the project. Five questions were asked of recipients, three concerning the welfare department and two dealing with their service workers. The three agency oriented queries dealt with

Table 3
 Effects of Experimental Manipulations on Client Requests
 for New Services Within Client Initiated Contacts

Dependent Variable	Monthly Rates			
	Combined Service Condition (N=70)	Separated Service Condition (N=75)	Worker Initiated Service Condition (N=72)	Client Initiated Service Condition (N=73)
Recipient Requests for New Financial Services	.246*	.144*	.195	.191
Recipient Requests for New Non-Financial Services	.277	.202	.279	.198

*Designates a difference significant at the 5% confidence level.

recipients' perceptions of the welfare department's interest in helping them, its fairness in dealing with them, and the overall satisfaction their agency experiences gave them. No differences were found among the views of the four experimental groups on these questions. Group means indicated that recipients believed the agency was moderately concerned with helping them¹⁰ and usually fair in dealing with them.¹¹ They generally found their agency experiences somewhat better than satisfactory.¹²

Perceptions concerning service workers showed more variation. These findings are presented in Tables 4 and 5. The data in these tables reveal two main effects of separation. Recipients in the combined condition express a stronger view that service workers are concerned with providing them with help and are marginally more likely to consider service workers as helpful. In addition to these main effects, there is an interaction effect found in Table 5. Recipients in the separated and recipient initiated service cell had a less positive view of their workers' helpfulness than did recipients in the other three cells.¹³

One final result on recipients' views of their welfare agency experience is worthy of note. Project participants were asked whether their workers saw them too often (scored 1), often enough (2) or not often enough (3). The findings presented in Table 6 indicate a strong separation effect and marginal worker service initiation effect. Recipients in the combined service condition believed that the frequency of their contacts with service workers was about "often enough" ($\bar{x} = 1.93$); recipients in the separated condition tended more to believe that they did not see their worker often enough ($\bar{x} = 2.32$). A similar pattern is observed among recipients in the worker initiated condition ($\bar{x} = 2.04$) and client initiated condition ($\bar{x} = 2.22$).

Table 4
 Recipients Mean Response Scores to
 "How Concerned was Your Service Worker
 in Helping You?"^(a)

	Combined Condition	Separated Condition	Mean
Recipient Initiated Service	3.64 (22) ^(b)	2.96 (28)	3.26
Worker Initiated Service	3.45 (22)	3.23 (22)	3.34
Mean	3.55	3.08	

Source of Influence	F	Probability
Client vs. Worker Service Initiation	.05	n.s.
Combined vs. Separated	6.47	P < .05
Interaction	1.58	n.s.

Note: (a) Scores range from "1" to "4". ("Not at all concerned " to "very concerned")

(b) Sample size per cell in parentheses

Table 5
 Recipients' Mean Response Scores to
 "How Helpful was Your Service Worker in
 Solving Your Problems?"^(a)

	Combined Condition	Separated Condition	Mean
Recipient			
Initiated Service	3.68 (22) ^(b)	2.32 (28)	2.92
Worker			
Initiated Service	3.18 (22)	3.41 (22)	3.30
Mean	3.43	2.80	

Source of Influence	F	Probability
Client vs. Worker Service Initiation	.95	n.s.
Combined vs. Separated	3.54	P = .06
Interaction	6.96	P < .01

Note: (a) Scores range from "1" to "5" ("Not at all helpful" to "very helpful")

(b) Sample size per cell in parentheses

Table 6
 Recipients' Mean Satisfaction Scores on
 Frequency of Service Worker Visits

	Combined Condition	Separated Condition	Mean
Recipient Initiated Service	2.04 (23) ^(a)	2.36 (28)	2.22
Worker Initiated Service	1.82 (27)	2.27 (22)	2.04
Mean	1.93	2.32	

Source of Influence	F	Probability
Client vs. Worker Service Initiated	3.42	P = .07
Combined vs. Separated	21.02	P < .001
Interaction	.71	n.s.

Note: (a) Scores range from "1" to "3" ("worker sees me too often" to "worker does not see me often enough").

(b) Sample size per cell in parentheses.

Possible Placebo Effects

We now turn briefly to a comparison of our project participants with members of the control sample. Our concern is to determine the degree to which our data on the experimentals' level of service use and attitudes may be due to the quality of our experimental stimulus or placebo effects. If we compare the means of our controls with those of experimental group members who most resemble the controls (the separated client service initiated sample) no significant experimental effects appear. Thus while controls requested new nonfinancial services at the rate of .03 per client month, the equivalent experimental request rate was .07 per month ($P > .05$). Furthermore the request rate for new financial services among controls was .10 per client month while that for equivalent experimentals was .06 per client month ($P > .05$). Similar comparisons of controls and experimentals on our satisfaction measures reveal no significant differences. If any placebo effects occurred our data do not reveal them.

6. DISCUSSION

The findings presented above offer consistent evidence that, at least from the perspective of AFDC recipients, the changes that have taken place in public welfare social service delivery under the term "separation" may have had several negative consequences. Specifically the findings indicate that under the circumstances of separation recipients tend to reduce requests for services and to perceive service workers as less helpful.

Table 7
 Mean Response Scores of Controls and Equivalent Experimentals
 to Satisfaction Questions on Past Project Questionnaire

Item	Controls (N=151)	Experimentals Having Client- Initiated Services (N=145)	P
"How concerned was your social worker with helping you?"	3.02	2.96	n.s.
"How helpful was your social worker in solving your problems?"	2.90	2.32	n.s.
"How often does your worker see you?"	2.40	2.36	n.s.

Pursuing these findings in further detail we found that the two major features of separation influenced recipients' service use in somewhat different ways. Removing income maintenance responsibilities from service workers led to a lessening of requests for financial services, whereas provision of services at client request only lessened demand for non-financial services. While a definitive explanation of these results awaits additional research, we may put forth a tentative interpretation. The separation of service and income maintenance puts matters pertaining to the welfare grant in the hands of someone who did not serve recipients but apparently only monitored their eligibility. This "technician" may have been seen as not "open" to service requests even when these requests pertained to grant and budget matters. Additionally, the service worker in the separated condition may not have received financial service requests since he or she had no apparent grant monitoring duties. In consequence recipients in the separated condition may simply have developed less inclination to raise financial issues with either of the workers who could have helped them. This problem of role partitioning was not likely to be experienced by recipients in the combined service condition.

The results of the client vs. worker initiated service manipulation are in accord with an attributional interpretation of help seeking. As Broll et al. (1974) have noted, it is not easy for most people to acknowledge limitations in their ability to deal with day to day psychological and interpersonal stresses. Among welfare recipients this may be particularly difficult for either of two reasons. First, if they acknowledge these limitations in the context of their economic dependency it may

force the conclusion that both problems result from personal failure; second, this acknowledgement may be seen by recipients as a stigma which can lead others to regard them as failures. In either case, when workers "volunteer" their services by initiating contact and when they make inquiries, however tentatively, about family experiences they may ease the burden experienced by recipients in requesting help.

While the above explanations of our findings are speculative, the results themselves do suggest problems with separation. At the very least, they indicate that for many welfare recipients separation may have led to decreased utilization of services which under a prior service delivery model were found useful. It is quite possible that if the data reported here had been available to policy makers in the 1960's they might not have been at all dissuaded from deciding on the current policy of separation. Yet, it might have been otherwise. Certainly, we might anticipate that social workers given their consumer orientation in the provision of social services would have been less supportive of separation. The fact is that separation policy was implemented without any knowledge about how social services were used by welfare recipients and what factors influenced this utilization. Thus, social workers, among others, simply developed arguments consistent with the actions that had been taken. The possible negative consequences of separation were unknown and ignored.

Three final points need to be mentioned. First, the criticism may be made that the present research is of little significance because of the current absence of data showing that social services reduce

dependency. Thus, the degree to which they are desired and utilized by welfare recipients is an irrelevant issue. There would be some validity to this criticism if indeed the only justification for social services to public assistance recipients is to create economic independence. However, we dissent from this view and take the view expressed by at least some social workers that social work services should be concerned with client concerns and wants as well as those of funders. Elaboration of this perspective can be found elsewhere (Piliavin, 1968; Morris, 1973). It provides for us the premise which makes client satisfaction and demand for service legitimate, even high priority, service delivery issues.

Second, it may be argued that welfare departments generally cannot supply the quality of service supplied by the workers participating in this project and that therefore the findings of the present study are really not relevant to the situation of public welfare. In fact, the argument might continue, given the level of service that it is actually possible to supply in public welfare agencies, welfare recipients might be just as content under separation as under integration. While this argument may also be valid, it may be taken to imply that public welfare agencies simply need to obtain better funding to provide adequate social services. Finally, it may be argued that the findings presented here represent only one study done in one community, and that conditions might be quite different elsewhere. Indeed, they might, and we would encourage additional collection of data in diverse settings. Policies which rely on solid information seem eminently more sensible and more in the public interest than policies with little empirical basis which tend to be justified by selective post hoc arguments.

NOTES

¹It has been noted that in theory recipients could refuse services under the pre-separation format, but that in reality they feel obligated to accept it because of their dependent and consequently subservient status. See Social and Rehabilitation Service (1972).

²According to Handler and Hollingsworth, workers did believe that one of their most important responsibilities was to help recipients become economically independent. But they saw the most important means toward achieving this end as job finding and provision of support services rather than rectifications of personal pathologies (Handler and Hollingsworth, 1971; pp. 44-55).

³This approach was suggested by Handler and Hollingsworth's finding that public welfare caseworkers' recipient contacts were not set up as diagnostic or service visits. Rather they were usually focused "friendly" visits, which presumably were intended to give recipients opportunity to bring up problems of concern. See Handler and Hollingsworth, pp. 103-132.

⁴Any services these recipients wished to have maintained were continued despite termination.

⁵This refers to a few recipients who were dropped from the analysis at the point they married or were reclassified as problem or special service cases. Data on these recipients up to the point of ineligibility were included in our analyses.

⁶A third variable was also manipulated in the design. This concerned the degree to which recipients' rights to services were made

clear to them. Because findings on this topic are not directly relevant to the issue of separation, they will be deferred to a later publication.

⁷Controls were not given the initial offer of service visit.

⁸The different totals among controls and experimental sample members as well as the variation in cell sizes among the various experimental groups is attributable to two factors. First, some sample members were found to be ineligible late in the observation period, Second, membership in some experimental cells turned over a bit faster than that in others.

⁹Detailed specifications of these categories can be obtained by writing to the senior author.

¹⁰Response categories ran from "not at all concerned" ("1") through "moderately concerned" ("3") to "very concerned" ("4"). The mean of the total sample was 3.01.

¹¹Response categories were "always unfair" ("1"), "usually unfair" ("2"), "usually fair" ("3") and "always fair" ("4"). The mean of the total sample was 3.10.

¹²Response categories were "very unsatisfactory" ("1"), "unsatisfactory" ("2"), "satisfactory" ("3") and "very satisfactory" ("4"). The mean of the total sample was 3.13.

¹³In Table 5 using the Tukey pairwise comparison procedure, the separated service/recipient initiated service cell mean was found to be significantly lower ($P \leq .05$) than the means of each of the other service cells. For details on the Tukey procedure, see Kirk (1968).

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