

**A Comparative Analysis of Client Satisfaction with Food Assistance Programs: The Case of  
Nonprofit and Public Sector Organizations in Alabama and Georgia**

by

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## Abstract

The epidemic of poverty, hunger, and food insecurity is at an all-time high in the United States and other parts of the world, spurring great interest in finding solutions to address and alleviate this economic disparity. A multifaceted approach is required, thus warranting exploration of different sectors, organizations, programs and services designed to alleviate this crisis. The rationale for food assistance programs rests mainly on their effectiveness in addressing food insecurity and hunger, thus satisfying the clients who utilize the services by meeting their needs. Current research has, however, failed to properly assess the effectiveness of the programs and services already in place, deciding instead to trust these methods to eventually solve the problem. However, a crucial way to truly understand the issue is to seek the input of the clients who use the services and the employees who administer the services to ascertain their perspectives of what does and does not work. This study attempts to address this deficiency.

This project has a threefold purpose: to compare the level of satisfaction of clients of nonprofit organizations versus those of clients of governmental agencies in the delivery of food assistance services; to explore the relationship between organization type and indicators of red tape among clients of nonprofit organizations versus governmental agencies; and to investigate whether employees of governmental agencies would perceive more bureaucratic red tape as hindrances to providing satisfactory services to their clients than employees of nonprofit organizations. In an effort to explore these issues, three hypotheses were developed based on Organization Type and Perceived Red Tape for both clients and employees. A crosstabulation

and chi-square between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable, client satisfaction, revealed that most of the hypothesized relationships were not supported. There was no association between organization type and client satisfaction, and governmental agencies were not found to contain more red tape than nonprofit organizations. However, there was an association between organization type and employee perception of red tape. Once this association was established, logistic regression determined that clients were nearly 10 times more likely to be satisfied when they did not perceive red tape. An additional association was made between client comfort with staff and client satisfaction, revealing through logistic regression that when clients are comfortable with staff they are more than 17 times more likely to be satisfied with services.

In general, this study points to some important conclusions. It points to the fact that clients are not more satisfied by any specific organizational type, at least as it pertains to nonprofit versus governmental agencies. It also shows that perceived red tape, regardless of organizational type, discourages client satisfaction with services. Furthermore, it also points to the fact that the client's comfort with staff was the most critical component of their satisfaction with the organization from which they received services.

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## List of Abbreviations

ACF	Administration for Children and Families
ACFB	Atlanta Community Food Bank
ADHR	Alabama Department of Human Resources
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
A2H	America's Second Harvest
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
DCBH	Dekalb County Board of Health
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EAFB	East Alabama Food Bank
FA	Feeding America
FRAC	Food Research and Action Center
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
IRS	Internal Revenue Services
MCDHR	Montgomery County Department of Human Resources
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
USCB	United States Census Bureau
WHES	World Hunger Education Service

WIC

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### General Introduction

In the times when society predated the state, and before there was any organized form of government, there were families and communities that relied on each other and on themselves to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and safety. Even in later years when government began to form in an effort to govern new territories and to regulate the development of public infrastructures, many people did not trust government and again chose to rely on each other and on their communities for their needs. This marked the beginning of the nonprofit sector. The nonprofit sector grew from the attempts of common everyday people to bypass the perceived inefficiency of government and the selfishness of elites to create a system that looked out for their interests and met their community needs (Brudney, 1998). Even today, as public distrust continues to grow, the nonprofit sector continues to strive to meet the growing needs of a community of people who value smaller government, are distrustful of bureaucracy, or simply require public services that a government swamped with a multitude of responsibilities and obligations may not be able to provide efficiently.

#### Nature of the Problem

Though the nonprofit sector has stepped up to face the challenge of providing services to communities, much remains unknown about this sector. According to Larsen, Attkisson, Hargreaves, & Nguyen (1979) there have been few attempts to determine whether and how

different aspects of service delivery processes affect overall clients' satisfaction with services. In the years since, many researchers have delved into this topic across a variety of settings, such as client satisfaction with occupational health services (Verbeek, van Dijk, Rasanen, Piirainen, Kankaanpaa, & Hulshof, 2001), home health care services (Laferriere, 1993), family planning services (Williams, Schutt-Aine, & Cuca, 2000), medical care (Ross, Mirowsky, & Duff, 1982; Bessinger & Bertrand, 2001), and even internet services (Nath & Singh, 2010). However, questions still abound pertaining to how indicators of organizational type - structure, design, and processes - affect the delivery of food assistance services, how satisfied or dissatisfied clients are with those services, as well as the extent to which nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies complement or oppose each other in the delivery of food assistance services (Weisbrod, 1997; Salamon, 1999).

### Objective of the Study

This work seeks to address these questions by comparing levels of client satisfaction in nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies, with respect to their delivery of food assistance programs and services in Georgia and Alabama. Both states provide appropriate units of analysis for the examination of client satisfaction with food assistance programs because Georgia has a food insecurity rate higher than the national average (15.6 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively) and Alabama has the highest number of hungry and food insecure people in the United States (Birmingham News, 2010; Census Bureau, 2010; Nord, Andrews, and Carlson, 2009). As such, both states represent environments in need of food assistance services delivered satisfactorily to the clients they serve.



### Methodology of the Study

The research design is descriptive and comparative. A nonprofit organization and a governmental agency from Alabama, as well as from Georgia were compared to explore clients' levels of satisfaction with their respective sector's food assistance programs and services, in an effort to explore the factors that influence client satisfaction and thus effective service delivery.

Two different surveys were distributed, one to clients and the other to employees and executives of each organization. A 16 question survey was given to clients and a 26 question survey to employees/executives. Four organizations – two governmental and two nonprofit - across Georgia and Alabama were used in the survey. Random sampling was used to target clients and employees/executives who received services or worked at the selected organizations.

### Theoretical Framework

Organization and economic theories provided the theoretical framework for the investigation of client satisfaction with the service delivery processes of the two different types of organizations. The food assistance services included food banks, Food Stamps, and the Women, Infant and Children's Supplemental Nutritional Program (WIC), which are the programs most commonly used by clients of the respective organizations. Food assistance programs have significant economic, political, and social consequence, and thus warrant proper consideration and adequate attention.

### Contribution of the Study

Advancement of research in this area will result in a better understanding of food assistance services and programs, the unique needs of low-income clients, as well as how organizational dynamics affect client satisfaction. This information can help researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to understand which sector, public or nonprofit, is able to more

effectively deliver food assistance services that satisfy clients. By isolating the differences in the capacity of public sector and nonprofit organizations to satisfactorily deliver food assistance services, contemporary administrative practices can possibly avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary waste of public resources. Because nonprofits share essentially some of the social values implicit in the objectives of public service delivery – which entails meeting public needs within the confines of decreasing budgets – this can help to serve the public interest without wasting scarce resources, which could be used to expand ongoing services or develop new ones.

### Research Question

My research question is: Are clients of nonprofit organizations or clients of governmental agencies more satisfied with their respective sector's food assistance programs or services?

Examination of this research question will allow exploration of the influence of organizational type on ratings of client satisfaction as well as on employee perception of organizational reputation. Additionally, it will provide a conduit for continued research in the areas of client satisfaction of public service agencies and nonprofit organizations, and government and nonprofit collaboration and specialization regarding food assistance programs and services.

### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in two regards. First, the evaluation occurred only in two states, within three cities and it remains to be seen to what extent the findings could be generalized to other city or state contexts. Secondly, the cities selected are all located in the southern region. This may mean that issues of geography, local politics and ideological and cultural similarities could be consequential and relevant in any interpretation of the findings.

The next chapter makes a case for food assistance programs and explores the background and emergence of food assistance programs and services across the nonprofit and public sectors. Each sector's contribution to the provision of food assistance is also examined.

## Chapter II

### The Case for Food Assistance Programs

#### Introduction

The problem of hunger and food insecurity is a pervasive one. In 2009, 17.4 million households were food insecure, an increase from 17.1 million in 2008 (Food Research and Action Center [FRAC], 2010). This represents more than 1 in 6 households that reported not getting enough food, having to miss dinner or other meals throughout the day, and/or going to bed hungry (Cohen, Mabli, Potter & Zhao, 2010). This staggering statistic consists of 50.2 million Americans - 33 million of which were adults and 17.2 million were children – all in need of assistance in acquiring the food they need to survive. An additional 5.7 percent of Americans experienced very low food security, represented by a lack of continuous meals and/or receiving an inadequate amount of food (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2009).

Hunger and food insecurity disproportionately affects vulnerable members of society - children and seniors. For households with children, the rate of food insecurity almost doubles (21.3 percent), than for households without children (11.4 percent) (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2009). Similarly, nearly 1 million households consisting of independent seniors who live alone were food insecure (7.8 percent). Food insecurity also disproportionately affects the households of ethnic minorities, such as Blacks and Hispanics, at rates higher than the national average, 24.9% and 26.9% respectively, with the national average at 14.7% (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2009).

Vulnerable populations such as children and seniors face additional consequences when they do not have enough food to eat. Lee and Frongillo Jr. (2001) found that seniors who did not have enough to eat had significantly lower intakes of vital nutrients in their diets, resulting in higher nutritional risks and deficits. They were also more likely to report fair or even poor health status. Moreover, medical concerns are especially crucial among this population with many of them having medical needs that necessitate a particular nutritional diet regimen. Seniors also have additional considerations that are threatened by food insecurity. For example, Wolfe, Frongillo & Valois (2003) found that even when seniors had enough money to buy food, they were unable to access or prepare the food because of issues ranging from physical limitations to lack of transportation – all of which contribute to their food insecurity. Hence the need for government and nonprofit food assistance support.

The epidemic of poverty exacerbates the issue of hunger and food insecurity. According to Jensen (2002) hunger is one of the clearest indicators of poverty. The existence of poverty has been attributed to many causes, such as lack of opportunities, political disempowerment, unemployment, inadequate training and education (Nemon, 2007), as well as policies and strategies imposed to segregate certain groups by income and race, low-paying jobs, lack of marriage leading to single, female-headed households, and even mental, emotional and behavioral disorders such as alcoholism and violent behavior (Goldsmith & Blakely, 2010).

Additionally, poverty leads to a lack of income, health problems, poor housing, and inability to properly care for and feed one's children (Goldsmith & Blakely, 2010). Unfed, undernourished children develop developmental, emotional, intellectual, psychosocial, and behavioral disorders that limit their opportunities in life and may lead to a life of poverty as

adults. They then produce more children who, more than likely, suffer the same fate. And so the cycle continues.

Food assistance programs provide the necessary missing piece of the puzzle. Food assistance programs feed millions of low-income people every year – providing not only the food they need to survive but the nutrition they need to live healthy lives. As such, food assistance programs comprise an essential anti-poverty strategy employed by both the public and the nonprofit sectors. However, much remains unknown about the effectiveness of certain food assistance programs regarding the clients they were intended to serve.

Although certain anti-poverty strategies have been employed to address and eliminate poverty, and thus food insecurity and hunger, such as the establishment of a minimum wage and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, many of them have had an opposite effect. Minimum wage is an example. The minimum wage is a pay scale that was enacted federally to establish a base amount of what an individual should be paid. The current minimum wage rate of \$7.25 per hour only raises families to 69 percent of the poverty line (World Hunger Education Service [WHES], 2011). That is not much of a difference considering that without it they were already at nearly 50 percent. Simply stated, households below the poverty line had \$11,000 in cash income to contribute to the food and care of a family of 4. The minimum wage only raised that amount by \$4,000, to approximately \$15,080 per year (WHES, 2011). In most cases, this amount is not enough to adequately feed and care for a family of four. Moreover, the minimum wage also does not account for inflation, so its actual benefits are reduced even further (WHES, 2011).

Other food assistance programs with an unknown effect on client's satisfaction include TANF, formerly known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The Personal

Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) replaced the AFDC program, with TANF. TANF was established to reform the AFDC by eliminating unlimited federal cash assistance in lieu of state-governed temporary subsidies to needy families and imposing requirements that participants obtain employment (Huffman and Jensen, 2005). TANF did put many single parents to work, but at minimum wage, poverty-level salaries. Additionally, its strict regulations made it difficult for potential participants to receive services. For example, many single women could not afford child care and thus could not work as required - which meant they could not receive assistance. Furthermore, a decline in funding further restricted the potential contribution of TANF because many needy families were unable to receive the service (CBPP, 2005).

Many critics argued that TANF, and other anti-poverty strategies and food assistance programs did not actually address poverty and its effects, such as lack of food. According to Martin, Cook, Rogers & Joseph (2003) welfare reform (as TANF became known) only succeeded in getting people off of public assistance and not out of poverty or into self-sufficiency. In addition, although it got many people into the workforce, because of the caliber of their job, and subsequent low wages, the working poor actually fared worse than the unemployed because they have more demands competing for their limited resources. Research supports this finding and illustrates that the working poor actually received food assistance more than those who were unemployed (Kaufman, 2003). Berner, Ozer, and Paytner (2008) also assert that the working poor are at a greater risk for making repeated visits to a food pantry to receive food assistance services than those who do not work. In summary, food assistance programs appear to bypass the very population they were designed to serve. An understanding of the client's reaction

to, and satisfaction with, such food assistance programs is therefore essential to ensuring their effectiveness in feeding those in need.

As demonstrated, hunger and food insecurity inflict physical, emotional, intellectual, behavioral, and psychosocial costs, as well as costs to individuals, families, communities. As discussed, these costs come in the form of lost opportunities, low education, low income, single-parenting, malnourished children with developmental and other delays and disorders, truant youth, and offending adults. But food assistance programs are also important issues because of the financial costs they impose. Brown, Shepard, Martin, and Orwat (2007) conservatively estimate that the United States spends over ninety billion dollars annually on providing food assistance, with the number rising every year. Moreover, this enormous figure represents simply keeping pace by feeding as many needy individuals as possible - not actually eradicating the issue of hunger.

To eliminate hunger, researchers estimate that an additional 10 – 12 billion dollars would be needed over the current level of spending (Brown et al., 2007). The economic cost of domestic hunger, they contend, encompasses direct and indirect costs as well as public, private and nonprofit sector spending. These costs are incurred directly through program and/or product expenditures or indirectly through loss of income because of illness and/or lack of education, for example. Some direct and indirect costs are charity (which amounts to 14.4 billion dollars annually), illness and psychosocial dysfunction (amounting to 66.8 billion dollars annually), and less education and lowered productivity (amounting to 9.2 billion dollars annually) for a 90.4 billion dollar total cost burden of hunger (Brown et al., 2007). The charitable activities in the annual hunger cost burden analysis included food assistance by food banks; local feeding



programs such as food pantries and soup kitchens; volunteer support, other non-food bank related national feeding programs; and unaffiliated local feeding programs.

Overall, charities and nonprofit organizations receive over 14 billion dollars, approximately 15% of the total cost burden, to aid their efforts to feed the poor (Brown et al., 2007). As such, an understanding of the contribution of this sector to the elimination of hunger and food insecurity is crucial.

Although hunger and food insecurity exacerbate medical and mental conditions, costing the American people billions of dollars every year, researchers do not hold out hope that there is an end in sight to this dilemma. While the projected costs of actually attempting to end hunger in America is estimated to be between 100 to 102 billion dollars annually, Brown et al., (2007) firmly assert that many federal policymakers exert the minimal effort and are content to simply keep pace with the issue of hunger instead of seeking to eliminate it. Unless researchers and scholars develop a better understanding of the problem of hunger and food insecurity and subsequently develop a solution to eradicating it –in the form of food assistance programs that satisfy the clients they were designed to serve - the American people will continue paying for a losing battle. And many more will continue to suffer from a condition that is otherwise preventable.

### Welfare Politics

American welfare policy has historically supported one of two positions: “help for the deserving poor” or “redistribution to produce fair shares” (Wilson, 1992, 476). The latter idea takes the position that the government’s responsibility is to decide what each person’s “fair share” is, and to allocate or redistribute resources accordingly. In other words, money is to be taken from those who have “a lot” and redistributed to those who have “a little.” The former idea

- that help should be given to the deserving poor - takes that the position that those who cannot help themselves (e.g. the country's disabled, elderly, children, or the poor) are entitled to receive help from the government. Supporters of this position favor the provision of services, and not the giving of money. Such services usually exist in the form of education, training, and medical care (Wilson, 1992). Traditionally, this is the position Americans take on welfare policy.

Over time, arguments have ensued concerning “who deserves to benefit,” what it means to “not be able to support oneself,” and the extent to which we provide the support (e.g. economically or through social and community development). Wilson (1992) states, “American welfare policy since the 1930s has been shaped by a slow but steady change in how we have separated the ‘deserving’ from the ‘undeserving’ poor” (p. 475). According to Wilson, the United States government has formed its welfare policy and developed its subsequent programs around those perceived as “deserving” of assistance: vulnerable populations, such as elders, the disabled, children and youth, the working poor, and those populations adversely affected by unpreventable conditions (e.g. The Great Depression, World Wars). The programs established by the government for these categories of citizens have included: the Social Security Act of 1935, the Economic Act of 1964, the Medicare Act of 1965, and the Food Assistance Plan of 1969.

#### Food Assistance Plan of 1969

The Economic Act of 1964 and the Medicare Act of 1965 paved the way for the Food Assistance Plan of 1969, which was instrumental to welfare reform. The Economic Act of 1964 sought to address “pockets of poverty” within the land of plenty (Wilson, 1992; Davies, 1996) by providing actual services to those populations of Americans who were disenfranchised, unlike the Social Security Act of 1935 which mainly financed programs. The Medicare Act of 1965 redistributed some of the power and responsibility for healthcare from the private sector to

government (Wilson, 1992). A shift occurred following the Medicare Act of 1965 when the focus became how much large-scale, federal support should be assigned to the problems of such a small segment of society. In other words, policymakers began to question whether certain segments of society warranted the benefits that so many others would have to finance. Policymakers did not want to reward bad behavior (such as having multiple children out of wedlock, or shouldering the burden for irresponsible fathers), or foster a sense of dependency on the government for assistance. Programs that developed during and after this period included: the Food Assistance Plan of 1969; and Welfare Reform (Wilson, 1992).

Amid controversy, the Food Assistance Plan sought to extend coverage to all needy people including families, and not just the existing population of vulnerable citizens (Wilson, 1992). The Food Assistance Plan was controversial because as had been the case with the previous welfare program (AFDC), recipients increased and some feared that costs would also increase beyond a manageable level. Although the Food Assistance Plan did not replace AFDC, it did result in the earned income tax credit, which once again illustrated government's historically vital role in addressing public need and implementing social programs (Wilson, 1992).

### Welfare Reform

Welfare reform was sold as a program designed to “decrease misconduct” (Wilson, 1992). Formerly AFDC, the new welfare program TANF, sought to discourage long-term dependence by imposing a 5-year limit on program participation, as well as employment requirements. Additionally, eligibility requirements were made more stringent as policymakers sought to control costs (Molnar et al., 2001; Huffman & Jensen, 2008; Daponte & Bade, 2006). Critics belittled the efforts of the welfare reform program and argued that it threatened the

security of the nation's safety net. They argued that the increasing cuts to the program and to other programs that comprise the safety net, were threatening to the American people who needed it most; especially since as cuts were made to programs that benefitted low-income people, additional resources were also allocated to programs for other segments of society, such as elders (Wilson, 1992; Berner, Ozer & Paynter, 2008).

To date this issue has not been resolved. As it stands, government services to the elderly represent the highest federal expenditure. Second to that are services to the poor. Not surprisingly, these two types of programs are always in competition. More often than not, services to the elderly receive greater funding, and fewer cuts. Elders represent a protected class of people. They have a strong political voice, through the AARP, unlike people with low socioeconomic status, and politicians are often afraid to oppose this group and go against the status quo for fear of political retribution. This obvious favor for one group of society over another apparently needier group has led many Americans to mistrust government, claiming that in addition to being inefficient, the government also abuses its political power and contains representatives that act in their own interests (as cited in Goodsell, 2004).

Despite some die-hard critics and opponents, government has many supporters. Charles Goodsell's (2004) work details the contributions of government. In "The Case for Bureaucracy," Goodsell defends the government arguing that citizens' previous perceptions of government are dated and inaccurate. He makes the claim that government is no longer the cumbersome, rule-laden, inflexible organization of yesteryear, and that many more people are satisfied with government services than was previously thought. He highlights several contributions of government to the lives of the American people, including its willingness to act on the behalf of all citizens, its service-minded bureaucrats and their professional expertise, as well as

government's ability to provide public resources. Moreover, he highlights how government programs have impacted the lives of many Americans. For example, the government provides environmental protection that affords Americans with cleaner air, safe water, and preserved land and wildlife for future generations; public safety that reduces violent crimes and decreases violent and accidental deaths; health and welfare programs that increase life expectancy as well as health and life outcomes for women, children and vulnerable members of society (Goodsell, 2004).

#### Food Assistance Programs: Government's Response to Issue of Hunger and Food Insecurity

Himmelgreen and Romero-Daza (2010) date food assistance programs back to food kitchens and breadlines that formed as a result of the record unemployment and reports of hunger from the Great Depression. The Great Depression marked a time where the United States and many other countries experienced a nearly ten year economic downturn as a result of decline in spending (Romer, 2003). From 1929 to about 1939, the United States faced, among other things, severe unemployment. People were hungry and angry about the lack of assistance available to them and their families. The Federal government intervened under the weight of many enraged Americans and structured the New Deal which developed many aid programs. The New Deal, among other things, introduced the first federally funded school-lunch program in 1936 and an experimental food stamp program in 1939 (Himmelgreen and Romero-Diaz, 2010). These measures were small short-term solutions to satiating the American public and were not intended to be a solution to the problem of eliminating hunger.

The federal food stamp program was developed to provide the nation with a food assistance safety net. Along with food stamps, some other food assistance programs offered by the federal government, often in conjunction with states, included: the Women, Infants ,

Children program (WIC), school meals programs, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Elderly Nutrition Program, and Food Assistance for Disaster Relief (Berner, Ozer, Paynter, 2008). The Food Stamp program provided money to low-income individuals and families to be used exclusively to purchase food. WIC also gave aid, in the form of a voucher, to single and low income mothers, or expecting mothers to aid in their purchase of nutritive foods to sustain their pregnancies and/or their children. Despite the good intentions of the Food Stamp and WIC programs, much evidence exists that negates the impact federal food assistance programs actually have on feeding hungry families, or decreasing food insecurity. For example, research shows that the use of food stamps did not decrease hunger or food insecurity, but actually increased food insecurity among recipients (Wilde and Nord, 2005).

Moreover, despite apparent need, many potential and/or eligible food stamp participants willingly chose not to receive food stamps. In these cases, potential, eligible participants turned instead to nonprofit organizations' food assistance programs (food pantries and food banks). When clients were questioned about why they chose not to receive food stamps, many participants cited a lack of information about program eligibility and the stigma of receiving welfare (Wilde and Nord, 2005). In addition to misinformation about program eligibility and welfare stigma, another reason many people do not use the food stamp program is because they have difficulty with applying. Ellen Vollinger, legal director of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) asserts that government food stamp allotments are so low that participants cannot afford even the cheapest of dietary staples, such as beans. Moreover, Olasky (1992), as cited in Molnar, Duffy, Claxton, and Bailey (2001) contends that government bureaucracies responsible for welfare and child protection are "rule-laden," "cumbersome," "smothers society in red tape," and "deny essential aid to the poor" (p. 189).

In any case, many clients of governmental agencies turn to nonprofit food assistance programs when they believe government has or will fall short in food assistance or other need-based programs. Some even turn to food pantries and food banks before seeking to receive food stamps. According to Daponte and Bade (2006) one third of households using nonprofit pantry food assistance had never even applied for food stamps, and only 36% of households dependent on a food pantry received food stamps.

Given the seeming preference for nonprofit food assistance programs, and the nature of nonprofits to step up to meet the needs of underrepresented and otherwise disadvantaged members of society, an understanding of this sector's food assistance programs and its response to the issue of hunger and food insecurity is presently crucial.

### History of the Nonprofit Sector

The terms “Independent, Third, Voluntary<sup>1</sup>, Nonprofit, and Noneconomic Institution” are all names used to describe what has become one of the fastest growing sectors of the United States economy (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996; Rose-Ackerman, 1996). According to Smith (2010), the importance of nonprofit organizations within public administration in the United States is at an all-time high, with the number of 501(c)(3) organizations totaling nearly 1 million since 2009. The nonprofit sector not only provides public services but also work – either through volunteer or employment - to millions of citizens (Smith, 2010). Notwithstanding, Salamon (1999) notes that many Americans are unaware of what this sector is or even what it does. In this project, I will refer to this sector of governance as the Nonprofit Sector, though all of these names – Independent, Third, Voluntary - pertain to a varied category of organizations that serve

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<sup>1</sup> The Voluntary sector may also refer to informal and unorganized people and groups who serve charitable purposes, as long as their activities are evident in the way the organization is governed, in the way that services are delivered, and in the way that financial support is obtained (1998).

a multitude of community purposes and public needs. The nonprofit sector may include foundations, human service or religious organizations, arts and culture, and educational and research institutions (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996), and address issues related to religion, education, health, and social welfare (Scott, 1998), just to name a few.

To add to the uncertainty many Americans have concerning the definition of the nonprofit sector, there is equal confusion and varied opinions about the origin of this sector. According to Dimaggio and Anheier (1990) in the nineteenth century nonprofit organizations were formed by the elite and upper class as a way to monitor and control the behaviors and environments of the urban, lower class citizens. It was also a way to define social boundaries by enforcing rules and regulations. Some attribute the Industrial Revolution as the causal agent that spawned the movement that would eventually become the nonprofit sector. Ott (2001) attributes the “reduced self-sufficiency caused by the Industrial Revolution’s need for specialization, division of labor, and urbanization” as the origin of voluntary action, and thus the nonprofit sector (as cited in Cass and Manser, 1976). He contends that the nonprofit sector has its roots in the philosophical works of the early Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians, and in the philosophical writings of John Locke and John Stuart Mill, following the Industrial Revolution. Block (2001) argued that, ultimately, the nonprofit sector originated from the concepts of volunteerism, charity and philanthropy, which traces its roots back as far as 9,000 B.C.

### Volunteerism, Charity, and Philanthropy

Anderson (1973) traces the earliest occurrence of volunteering to the Neolithic period, with the development of independent villages that were not a part of the political and economic systems of that time. Block (1990) also traces the origins of the nonprofit sector to primitive societies and their reliance on themselves and each other for food, shelter, and safety. Even as



these societies advanced, they continued to rely on each other, and also began to incorporate rules and develop structure. The Babylonians' Code of Hammurabi is an example of this initial establishment of rules developed to protect disadvantaged members of a society. The Code of Hammurabi instructed the community to care for the poor, the widows, and the orphans (Block, 1990).

Philanthropy is defined as giving, serving and associating voluntarily to achieve public good (Brudney, 1998). It involves the giving of gifts of time or valuables, and is also a source of financial support for nonprofits (Salamon, 1999). Much of that support comes from foundations, which are set up by individuals, families, and business corporations and donate money, property, and other assets for public good and use (Brudney, 1998). Charity is similar to philanthropy in the involvement of money, time, and effort and other gifted resources for the purposes of public good. The difference, however, is that philanthropy seeks to address and remedy causes of an issue, for example poverty, at a broader level and not just alleviate individual discomfort (Ott, 2001). Despite their differences, the concepts are often linked together, and philanthropy is often referred to as "charitable giving" (Salamon, 1999). Charity and philanthropy trace its origins as far back as ancient Egypt. During this time, aristocrats were buried with riches for the gods, as well as records of the gifts they'd given to the poor over their lifetime (Block, 1990). The Greeks also advocated giving, but to the community as a whole and not simply to individuals (i.e. the poor) within the community. Weaver (1967) noted that the Egyptian form of giving was more akin to the modern concept of charity, and the Greek form of giving was more similar to the modern notion of philanthropy.

Volunteerism is defined as "actions undertaken freely by individuals, groups, or organizations that are not compelled by biological need or social convention, mandated or

coerced by government, or directed principally at financial or economic gain, and are regarded as beneficial by participants or the larger society” (Brudney, 1998, p. 57). Differences exist between volunteerism on the one hand and charity and philanthropy on the other. Volunteerism requires direct involvement with beneficiaries whereas charity and philanthropy require little direct involvement. Moreover, volunteerism does not function primarily to serve the disadvantaged whereas charity and philanthropy do (Block, 1990). What all these concepts have in common, however, is their importance to the understanding of the art of giving, which is an inherent and vitally important feature of the nonprofit sector.

### Scope of the Nonprofit Sector

The most common types of 501(c)(3) organizations are charitable, educational and religious (Salamon, 1999). Charitable organizations are those that “conduct activities that promote relief of the poor, the distressed, or the underprivileged; advance religion, education, or science; builds or maintains public buildings and monuments; lessens the burdens of government, and neighborhood tensions; and eliminates prejudice and discrimination, defends human and civil rights, combats community deterioration and juvenile delinquency”(IRS Publication 4220, 2009, p. 4).

Educational organizations are “schools, colleges, or professional/ trade schools; organizations that conduct public discussion groups, forums, panels, lectures, or similar programs; organizations that present a course of instruction by means of correspondence or through the use of television or radio; and museums, zoos, planetariums, symphony orchestras, or similar organizations, such as nonprofit day-care centers and youth sports organizations” (IRS Publication 4220, 2009, p. 4).

Religious<sup>2</sup> organizations include “churches” such as synagogues, temples, mosques, and similar types of organizations, such as mission organizations, speakers’ organizations, nondenominational ministries, ecumenical organizations, or faith-based social agencies (IRS Publication 4220, 2009, p. 4). Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status are charitable organizations that are formal and incorporated. Any person with a cause, and at least another person who shares their interest, may form a nonprofit to meet local community needs. And indeed many people do. To receive federal recognition and associated benefits, nonprofits may file for 501(c)(3) status. The benefit of having tax exemption under section 501 (c)(3) of the US tax code are to receive federal income tax exemption and eligibility to receive tax-deductible contributions (IRS Publication 4220, 2009).

The three key components for a nonprofit organization to receive federal tax exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code are that it must be organized and operated for the purposes for which it received tax exemption. The nonprofit organization must also limit its purposes to those described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) and must not allow activities that do not further its exempt purpose(s) (IRS Publication 4220, 2009). Scrivner (1999) lists three reasons charitable organizations continue to receive tax exemption and sheds light on tax law changes that have impacted nonprofits over the last century. The heritage explanation recognizes the “preferred status” of many organizations that had existed before the Tax Code. Such organizations have grandfathered rights and privileges. The special interest explanation recognizes the political power of some of these groups (e.g. business leagues) and/or the service they have provided to the country (e.g. veterans’ organizations). Lastly, and of special

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<sup>2</sup> Churches, such as synagogues, temples, mosques, etc. are not required to file an exemption from tax but may do so for purposes of proving legitimacy to its members and others (IRS Publication 4220, 2009)

significance is the morality/public policy explanation, also known as the “subsidy theory,” which recognizes the integral role nonprofits play in the functioning of government by providing a public benefit (Scrivner, 1999). Human service organizations usually fall under this category and comprise the greatest type of nonprofit, along with minority organizations, trade associations, art museums, and hospitals (Dimaggio and Anheier, 1990; Singh et al., 1990; Minkoff, 1988; Aldrich, et al., 1989; Alexander and Burgey, 1987).

### Nonprofit Organizations: Role in Food Assistance Programs

Historically, non-profit and charitable organizations have usually occurred in response to government inefficiency, as a way of supplementing inadequate government response to an issue. Martin et al., (2003), however, contend that in the case of food assistance, nonprofit (i.e. charitable) organizations were the first to respond and attempt to address the issue of hunger and food insecurity by providing food assistance in the form of handouts of soup and bread. During those times, the ‘charitable and not-for-profit organizations’ were unofficial and consisted primarily of individuals gathering together to help feed their neighbors and themselves as they all sought to survive amidst the disabling effects of the Great Depression. Still, those handouts provided food to many who would not have otherwise been able to feed themselves and their families.

Martin et. al., (2003) asserts that it was the initial assistance from these individuals that prompted the government to get involved through the use of a pilot food stamp program. Others agree that the traditional role of nonprofits, as a backup to the government, has changed. Indeed, nonprofits are now often on the front line of service delivery. Researchers point to the increase in nonprofit food assistance programs over the last twenty years. Molnar et al.,(2001) illustrate the impact of America’s Second Harvest (A2H), the largest nonprofit hunger relief agency, and its

having fed nearly 26 million people through its network of food distribution centers. Currently Feeding America (formerly A2H) serves roughly 37 million different people annually, which represents a nearly 50 percent increase over four years (46% increase since 2005) (Cohen, Potter, & Zhao, 2010). This breakdown includes food assistance provided by pantries, “soup” kitchens, and shelters.

The participation of nonprofit organizations in food assistance programs is especially vital given that they are sometimes the only recourse for the hungry and needy. Many view the food assistance services of government negatively and elect to not use the services at all, even when they have tremendous need for the assistance. Gabor, Williams, Bellamy and Hardison (2002) conducted a study in Washington D.C. among elderly focus group participants in which they investigated factors that negatively influenced food stamp participation. Food stamps represent the largest government food assistance program and the cornerstone of the federal nutrition safety net (Martin, et al., 2003). As such, it represents what should be the most crucial component in the fight against hunger. However, the study conducted among the senior participants and nonparticipants found that many did not access the services because of the stigma involved in “being on welfare” and being uninformed of the food stamp rules (Gabor, Williams, Bellamy and Hardison, 2002).

Many researchers also note that as rates of food stamp participation have decreased, use of nonprofit food assistance programs (i.e. food banks, food pantries) has increased (Martin et al., 2003). And the significance of these nonprofit food assistance programs, as well as their presence, is growing. According to Poppendieck (1998) there are tens of thousands of emergency food programs, such as food banks, pantries and soup kitchens that feed nearly one-tenth of the population every year. The importance of nonprofit organizations in the fight against hunger is

therefore unquestionable. Critics of government as a service provider agree. Such critics of government – who believe government to be ineffective because of its obsessive rules and cumbersomeness – promote food banks as the best solution to the hunger problem. They argue that the nonprofit organizations' position in, and representation of, the community, make them appear more responsive to community needs (Molnar et al, 2001).

Following the apparent preference of many people for the food assistance services of food banks and pantries from nonprofit organizations, many more arose as community groups expanded their presence through the establishment of additional food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens. However, even with the increased presence of nonprofit food assistance programs, the rate of food insecurity continues to increase. In 2005, Feeding America reported serving 70% of households of which were food insecure (Cohen, Potter, & Zhao, 2010). In 2009, just 4 years later, that number had risen to 75%. Similarly, the number of food insecure households with children also rose during that time period, from 73% in 2005 to 78% in 2009 (Cohen, Potter, & Zhao, 2010). Such findings illustrate that nonprofit organizations, which were only supposed to be a short-term solution to an emergency situation, are also not sufficiently addressing the persistent problem of hunger and food insecurity.

Still, the failure of government and nonprofits to resolve or even decrease food insecurity, according to some, is indicative of the complexity of the issue of hunger and food insecurity and not necessarily of programmatic inadequacy. Many researchers, such as Mosley and Tiehen (2004) and Bhattarai, Duffy, and Raymond (2005), argue that no one sector can resolve the issue alone and that needy individuals need the services of both nonprofit organizations and government food assistance programs. For example, Mosley and Tiehen (2004) found data showing that the same people using food stamps also access food pantries.

Their research proved that people are not “substituting” one form of assistance for another but are accessing as many types of assistance as is necessary. Bhattarai, Duffy, and Raymond (2005) had similar findings and concluded that participation in one food assistance program increased the likelihood of participation in the other.

But the data are scarce, resulting in unclear and mixed findings and beliefs concerning the organizational capacity of either sector in delivering food assistance services. What is clear is that neither sector has decreased food insecurity and hunger. The government’s food stamp safety net has holes in it, with many potential clients misunderstanding the process and thus missing eligibility or fearing stigma and refusing to even utilize the service (Wilde and Nord, 2005; Gabor et al., 2002). Food stamp allotments are reported as too low, and only suffice to purchase unhealthy foods that increase obesity, cancers, and heart disease (Gibson, 2003; Daponte and Bade, 2006). The nonprofit sector’s food banks have fed many and appear to be preferred over food stamps but this preference has not been substantiated. Neither has food banks decreased food insecurity, nor provided any advantages to its clients over that of governmental food assistance clients. In other words, clients do not seem to be better satisfied with the services of nonprofit food assistance programs. If anything, food banks seem to be the lesser of two evils, with neither sector wholly satisfying its client-base. To further explore client satisfaction with existing food assistance programs, we must first understand how organizational performance is measured and what constitutes client satisfaction.

The next chapter explores the literature on organizational performance measurement, client satisfaction, and provides the theoretical framework for this study.

## Chapter III

### Literature Review

#### Organizational Effectiveness, Capacity, and Performance Measurement

An organization is defined as a group of people who work together to pursue a goal (Rainey, 2003). To achieve their goals, supportive strategies are developed in light of certain structures and processes. Structures are defined as relatively stable, observable assignments and divisions of responsibility within the organization, achieved through such means as hierarchies of authority, rules and regulations, and specialization of individuals, groups, and subunits. These structures, among other things, aid coordination of the organization – they help to coordinate the set of organs that make up the whole (the organization). Although processes are less physically observable, they are more dynamic and changing activities and are just as important as structures to the coordination, organization, and management of the organization. Processes, for example, include decision-making within the organization, evaluation of organizational and individual performance, and change and innovation within the organization. Finally, within these structures (rules, regulations, hierarchies of authority) and processes (decision-making, evaluation), members of the organization (individuals and groups) contribute and produce products and services that, presumably, result in effective performance (Rainey, 2003, p. 18).

One of the central issues affecting public and nonprofit management is the question of how to measure organizational performance (Behn, 1995; Young, 1997). According to Wang (2010) public management literature defines performance “as a state of actions, products, accomplishments, results, impacts, or achievements” (p. 3). Similarly, organization performance



refers to the actions, products, accomplishments, results, impacts, or achievements of an organization. Performance, essentially, is an organization's outputs or outcomes; whereby outputs refer to the amount of the product produced or the service provided, and outcomes refer to the direct impact of a product or a service on the desirable goal (Wang, 2010, p.4). In other words, performance is a measure of the amount and the impact of a product or service. Although organizations consist of individuals (i.e. employees), and these individuals affect an organization's performance, organizational performance is more than the tally of their performances. Employees affect organizational performance through their work efforts (i.e. how hard they work), and managers affect organizational performance through their leadership styles. However, of all the various factors that influence organizational performance, employees are only a small part. Other factors that influence organizational performance include: an organization's environment, its administrative or organizational structure, and client characteristics (Wang, 2010).

An organization's environment consists of political, socioeconomic, cultural, and legal considerations. As an example, Wang (2010) notes the influence of the political structure<sup>3</sup>, the performance of the economy<sup>4</sup>, and funding constraints. The administrative or organizational structure of an organization can also affect its performance. The organizational type (i.e. public versus private versus nonprofit) reflects elements of decision-making and service delivery (Wang, 2010). As discussed earlier, this finding is especially relevant to the present study as it attempts to compare public and nonprofit organizations. It is expected that the administrative and organizational structure of nonprofits will provide them with an advantage, which will be

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. stakeholders' willingness to support and even implement performance management activities.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the availability of resources, listing as an example the impact of teachers' salaries on school performance.

reflected in the levels of satisfaction reported by their clients. Additional factors that affect organizational performance include funding source, such that private funding sources may require more strict performance analysis; and an organization's mission, goals, and service objectives. Finally, the use of technology also affects organizational performance.

An organization can also be affected by characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of the clients it serves (Wang, 2010). For example, Gill and Meier (2001) and Heinrich and Lynn (2000) demonstrated how a client's socioeconomic status could impact an organization's performance by highlighting studies that found school performance to be negatively correlated with minority student status and those from low-income families, as well as lower earnings for minority students, high school drop-outs, and clients receiving welfare assistance. Moreover, additional studies support the finding that socioeconomic and personal characteristics, such as age, gender, race, and education of clients affect an organization's performance (Wang, 2010).

All of the above elements, in one way or the other, contribute to an organization's performance outcomes. As such, analysis of organizational performance can take many forms, resulting in different performance causes within different organizations. Wang (2010) defines performance analysis as a "managerial tool used by organizations to improve performance through describing, monitoring, understanding, and evaluating organizational performance" (p.12). He asserts that performance analysis "stems from the demand of citizens, clients, legislative bodies, or other stakeholders for high quality public services," and that the "results of performance analysis provides clues on how to provide high-quality products and services" (p. 13). In addition to satisfying the clients and consumers of the public services it provides, an organization's performance analysis "protects managers from the criticisms of external stakeholders," and "helps managers to demonstrate areas of need or for improvement," as well as

“providing performance guidance and expectations for employees” (pp. 12-13). Poister (2003) asserts that the purpose of performance measurement is to “produce objective, relevant information on program or organizational performance that can be used to strengthen management and inform decision-making, achieve results and improve overall performance, and increase accountability” (pp. 4).

Performance measurement is designed to impact the behavior and decisions of organizations and individuals within the organization. Analyzing the performance of nonprofit and public organizations is especially crucial to the present study because of the unique features of public and nonprofit organizations. The features include those associated with goal setting and multiple interests, decision-making structures and funding, service delivery processes, and external environments, and all uniquely affect performance analysis within public and nonprofit organizations (Poister, 2003).

Within nonprofit and public organizations there are clients, employees, legislators, other companies, and stakeholders who all have multiple interests, many of which are inconsistent and even contradictory. For example, whereas spending more time and money on each individual client may serve the interest of the clients who depend on the public services, it may prove contradictory to employees who wish to improve efficiency, and legislators who wish to save resources and decrease costs. Additionally, because of the short duration of public managers, the focus is often on “quick results.” Moreover, because nonprofits and public organizations provide services and not tangible products, the absence of tangible products and revenue-generating capability make analysis difficult (Poister, 2003). As such, limitations in interpretation exist, and can result in inaccurate estimates of organizational performance (Wang, 2010). To mitigate the impact of multiple and conflicting influences, Wang suggests having a set of analytical criteria

constant over a period of time, consisting of the development of the questions, measurement, data collection, and data analysis. This is what my study attempts to address.

### Client Satisfaction as a Factor in Service Quality and Organizational Effectiveness

Different kinds of performance measures are used to analyze different aspects of performance, such as efficiency, productivity, service quality, cost-effectiveness, and effectiveness and client satisfaction (Poister, 2003). Wang (2010) defines efficiency as the level of output for a given level of input (p. 41). In other words, an organization is more efficient if it produces the same outputs using fewer resources, or if it uses the same resources, but produces more outputs. Measures of efficiency do not address service quality or client satisfaction. The same can be said for measures of productivity. According to Poister (2003), productivity most often measures the rate of production per some specific unit of resource, usually staff or employees; and is usually in reference to some particular unit of time (p. 50). For example, the number of clients helped per case-worker is a measure of productivity. It does not, however, assess clients' satisfaction with the service or the quality of the service. Neither do measures of cost-effectiveness, which relate cost to outcome measures. For example, cost effectiveness would indicate the cost, to the organization, per client served.

Cost effectiveness, like efficiency and productivity also fail to address service quality or client satisfaction, which is essential for the analysis and evaluation of human service programs for several reasons. This is so because the client's input and assessment allow for a more complete evaluation of services and eliminates bias towards the perspective of the service provider or evaluator (Larsen et. al., 1979). The authors use an example of bias towards

therapist's ratings over that of clients to illustrate this point. They assert that both perspectives – that of the consumer and service provider – are necessary to gain a more complete assessment of service process and outcome (effectiveness).

Secondly, assessing client satisfaction in the human service fields is necessary because certain legislative mandates require inclusion of the clients/citizens in the evaluative process (Larsen et. al., 1979). An example is title III of Public Law 94-63, of the Community Mental Health Centers Amendment of 1975. Public Law 94-63 requires the evaluation of “acceptability” of services and thus entails client or patient participation in program evaluation. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the authors assert that these supplier-dominated, publicly-funded health and human service organizations must assess the clients who receive services – most of whom are “poor, immobile” or otherwise disadvantaged with limited or no alternatives –because without doing so may lead to under-doctoring (Larsen et al., 1979). Under-doctoring occurs when there is too little service or service of poor quality (p. 198). Within this population are clients who may not be able to select among alternative services because of quality, even if they are dissatisfied. Moreover, because these organizations are publicly-funded there is no financial incentive to satisfy clients. Client evaluations, then, are the only way to truly measure “quality, adequacy, and appropriateness” of the services received by these clients (Larsen et. al., 1979).

Nevertheless, many researchers attempt to make evaluations of an organization's performance and effectiveness based on measures of efficiency<sup>5</sup>, productivity<sup>6</sup>, and cost-

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<sup>5</sup> e.g. how quickly participants receive their food stamps or WIC, how long they wait to be seen by a worker, how long it takes between application process and receipt of the food assistance requested.

<sup>6</sup> e.g. how many clients a worker serves per hour or day, how many new cases of Food stamps or WIC are processed per week, how many clients renew their application and continue receiving the service.

effectiveness<sup>7</sup>(Poister, 2003; Wang, 2010). These measures give us some information, but they do not tell us how well an organization is performing, nor do they tell us about the quality of that service, or whether clients are satisfied with the service. According to Poister (2003), customer satisfaction measures are associated with effectiveness measures and are often closely related to service quality measures, and provide an integrated set of measures. Using client satisfaction as a factor in assessing service quality and organizational effectiveness provides a perspective that examines many varied aspects of service delivery, quality, and client satisfaction. Service quality assesses how much of a service is being provided, the quality of the service, including: turnaround time, accuracy, thoroughness, accessibility, convenience, and courtesy (Poister, 2003).

Similarly, Poister (2003) contends that effectiveness measures constitute the single most important category of performance measures because they represent the degree to which an organization is producing its intended outcomes and achieving the desired results. Finally, customer satisfaction provides a complementary perspective on overall program performance. The integrated measures of service quality and organizational effectiveness as defined by clients and consumers of health and human service organizations is thus important to the advancement of our knowledge about this population, and about the services that these organizations provide - especially as it relates to satisfying the consumers of the services.

As it stands, much is still unknown about these health and human service organizations. According to Lebow (1983) the majority of client/consumer satisfaction studies have been conducted in community mental health center settings (e.g. Larsen et. al., 1979; Byalin, 1993;

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<sup>7</sup> e.g. how much money is saved from month to month on service delivery, how costs can be reduced - in the case of food banks: shortened hours, reduction of staff, use of volunteers in service delivery.

Tanner, 1981). The focus of this study will be to assess the quality of food assistance services offered by nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies based on levels of client satisfaction. There is an inadequate amount of research in this area for a number of reasons. Firstly, many health and human service organizations lack the financial and human resources necessary to conduct surveys of client satisfaction. Larsen et al. (1979) notes that such data may be more expensive than what human service organizations, with limited funds, can afford. They may also lack employees capable of conducting such “complex and sophisticated” studies. Secondly, the cost associated with conducting the studies may not be warranted if they will not be used in future decision-making and improving the organization (Larsen et al., 1979). Since nonprofit organizations are often constrained by legislative mandates, this may limit much of their control and power to incorporate needed improvements into daily operations.

Other problems associated with using client satisfaction surveys is the high levels of reported satisfaction. Researchers note that this might be due to “grateful testimonials” given at exit interviews (Larsen et al., 1979). Larsen et al. (1979) notes that this leads to deceptive findings, though some service providers may take the results at face value and declare their organizations as effective. To moderate this effect, I use anonymous surveys, with a few qualitative, open-ended questions that ask for specific experiences. I also sample the opinions of existing clients instead of former clients during or after an exit interview.

Second, some evaluators and service providers use client satisfaction measures without a useful comparison base. In other words, they assess levels of satisfaction “in absolute terms and in isolation from other data” (Larsen et al., 1979). To mitigate this, I compare organizations that offer similar services across different organizational types (i.e. nonprofit organizations versus

governmental agencies). Comparisons can then be made not only of client satisfaction of services provided, but also of the impact of organizational type on levels of client satisfaction.

### Theories and Viewpoints

Theories help to explain the occurrence of certain phenomena. Theories of the nonprofit sector help to explain the behavior of nonprofit organizations (such as why the sector exists, what needs it meets), or in relation to other factors (such as comparing similarities and differences between nonprofits and other sectors, or observing community [i.e. individuals'] response to nonprofit organizations). In understanding the behavior of nonprofit organizations in relation to governmental agencies (i.e. the similarities and differences in how they respond to hunger and food insecurity, and develop and administer food assistance programs), two theories are useful in this regard. Organization theory is useful as an explanation of why organizations exist, and how they should be examined. Economic theories illustrate how organizations (government and nonprofit) respond to conditions caused by the market, and to the people these conditions affect.

#### Organization Theory

Organization theory takes a sociological perspective in that it focuses on the organization as a whole, such as the organizational environment, its goals and effectiveness, its structure and design (Ott, 2001; Rainey, 2003). Specifically, organizational theories seek to understand why organizations make the strategic decisions they do; what causes them to act in certain ways; and why they are organized, structured, designed, and managed as they are.

Classical organization theory concerned itself with the operation of large bureaucratic business and government organizations. Founding fathers included Frederick Taylor, Max



Weber, and Luther Gulick. Organization theory, in the days of Taylor, Weber, and Gulick, focused on the accomplishment of production-related and economic goals, the best way of accomplishing a task, specialization, and division of labor (Fry & Raadschelders, 2008). Organization theory today includes the study of nonprofit organizations, as well as that of business and government organizations. Additionally, it is more dynamic and assesses the affects of organizational dynamics (such as how organizations are governed, how they adapt to changes in the world around them, how they make decisions, and how their structure affects their operation). Furthermore, organization theory provides a lens through which to assess each organizational type. For example, does the structure of governmental agencies make them more complex? Is there bureaucratic red tape that complicates delivery of food assistance services, thereby affecting levels of client satisfaction? Do nonprofits have structures that make receiving services easier, and thus more advantageous to clients? Organization theory would help in the exploration of these questions and in providing possible answers.

### Economic Theories

Once the organization is understood in terms of how its structure impacts its environment and operation, the next goal is to understand the purpose of the organization. Some theories state that organizations, specifically nonprofits, exist to correct social wrongs and restore independence to communities (e.g. social and community theories) (Ott, 2001). These theorists assert that communities should be self-governing and free from the rule of government. Government, they contend, restrains the ability of communities to care for its own members.

Economic theories explore the relationship between nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies in relation to the control government has in “organizing, providing, and regulating” many services, such as food assistance. Some of these theories explore the

collaborative relationship between nonprofits and government, utilizing rational choice theories, principal agency theories, and transaction cost theories (Ott, 2001). What these theories have in common is that they seek to explicate different service delivery relationships, such as why some governmental agencies prefer to contract out for services instead of delivering them directly? Or why government contracts out some services to for-profits and still others to nonprofits? Or in other situations which no clear preference exist for either sector to deliver a particular service.

Failure theories also explore the relationship between nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. Failure theories “explain the existence or actions of one phenomenon by the failure of another phenomenon” (Ott, 2001, p. 181). More often, these failures are of the government and these theories base the existence of the nonprofit on these failures of government. Of particular relevance to the exploration of the relationship between nonprofit and government agencies, and to the understanding of economic theory on this research project are: Market Failure theory, Government Failure theory, and Contract Failure theory.

### *Market Failure Theory*

Market failure occurs when goods and services that are collectively consumed encourage a “free-rider” problem, whereby individual members of society allow other citizens to pay their way, while partaking in goods and services for which they did not contribute (Ott, 2001). In the event that all people take the same position (i.e. become free-riders) this will result in inadequate public goods (e.g. security). Government charges taxes to ensure that all citizens contribute in some way to receive the public goods and services – but not everyone pays taxes nor are public goods accessible to some (Ott, 2001). Nonprofits, specifically, serve a purpose in this regard by allowing a sub-group of people to pool their resources to produce goods they want. Such goods might include a soup kitchen to feed the homeless (who do not have access to food stamp

applications, or may not have young children and therefore cannot receive WIC); or it could include a mobile food pantry for clients who need food assistance but do not have access to transportation. Transaction costs, information asymmetry costs, externalities, and public goods are four types of failures that help to further illustrate the existence, role, and function of nonprofit organizations.

Transaction costs refer to the costs associated with market exchanges. Nonprofits help to offset some transaction costs by freely providing some services that would otherwise come at a cost and/or helping communities to pool their resources to acquire the common good or service they desire (Ott, 2001). In relation to food assistance services, examples include those listed above as well as food banks which acquire food and other grocery products from many donors and distribute it, free of charge, to people in need. Information asymmetry occurs when the producer or seller of a good has more knowledge about the good than the consumer does (Ott, 2001). The costs associated with this failure occur when consumers pay money for that knowledge, or pay someone to gauge the quality of that good. Nonprofits help to reduce the cost of this information, and also create trust, because they lack a profit-seeking motive (Ott, 2001).

Externalities are a source of failure because they throw off the “natural” workings of the market by not reflecting certain indirect costs of a transaction. Nonprofits correct this failure by encouraging positive externalities (e.g. the neighborhood benefits associated with a neighbor painting their home) and discouraging negative externalities (e.g. pollution from a production plant) (Ott, 2001). Lastly, public goods refer to those goods and services made available for human consumption. Nonprofits correct this failure by supplementing undersupplied public goods (as in the case of food assistance services) and discouraging abuse of public goods (Ott, 2001).

### *Government Failure Theory*

Government failure focuses on the limitations of government and how nonprofit organizations serve the needs left unmet by the government (Young, 1998). Government failure occurs when the government fails to provide a service – either because it is too costly, or because it only satisfies a small, non-representative sample of the general population. The government provides food assistance in the form of food stamps and WIC. This is a cost that it must bear because many low-income Americans need food to survive. Similarly, it provides WIC because children and single mothers are often most affected by hunger and food insecurity (Nord, Andrews, and Carlson, 2009) and this affects all of Americans. For example, unsupported single mothers raise hungry, developmentally, mentally, and physically delayed children who become bigger costs to society. As such, meeting their hunger and food insecurity needs is paramount to the sustainability of this country. Using a previous example, a smaller, non-representative sample of the population might include hungry and food insecure individuals without transportation or who live in rural areas that make getting to governmental food assistance programs difficult. It would be too costly for government to develop offices in those select areas, or to purchase vehicles that take those services to the individuals in need. Instead, nonprofit organizations supplement government's inability or unwillingness to provide these services by providing such services themselves. Indeed, some nonprofit organizations have a "mobile food pantry" that takes food baskets to individuals who cannot access the services otherwise.

Douglas (1983 and 1987, as cited in Young, 1998) highlighted five sources of governmental constraint that created unsatisfied demands for public services to which nonprofits responded: Categorical constraint occurs when public needs go unmet because they differ from the needs of the majority. The example above illustrates categorical constraint. Nonprofits are

not required to provide services for everyone, or even for the majority. As such, they are prime candidates for meeting such needs and/or providing such services. Nonprofit organizations correct failures created by categorical constraint by providing additional services to smaller (i.e. non-majority) members of society, and also by introducing new and experimental programs to the public.

Majoritarian constraint is a second type of government failure. It refers to the failure of government to meet the diverse needs of the American public, especially those needs held by fewer members of society (Douglas, 1983 and 1987, as cited in Young, 1998). Nonprofits correct this form of government failure by filling these “niches” and providing services to the minority population. A third form of constraint, time horizon constraint, refers to the failure of government to address long-term societal issues -like hunger and food insecurity - because of short tenures of officeholders (Douglas, 1983 and 1987, as cited in Young, 1998). This form of government failure is supplemented by nonprofit organizations in that they are able to stay with a societal issue longer, whereas government support for, and interest in, an issue often fluctuates with political appointments. What is not presently on the agenda does not get attention and resources. Nonprofit organizations, in this regard, have more long-term sustainability.

The knowledge constraint refers to the failure of government to employ up-to-date research to social policy issues because of bureaucrats’ limited knowledge and creative flexibility (Douglas, 1983 and 1987, as cited in Young, 1998). Nonprofit organizations do not face such restrictions and are able to correct this failure through use of advocacy groups and nonprofit research centers. Size constraint is the final form of government failure. It mirrors the perception of many American people, that government is too big and cumbersome, and thus

difficult to get involved in. Nonprofits act as mediators and liaisons between government and the American people (Douglas, 1983 and 1987, as cited in Young, 1998).

### *Contract Failure Theory*

Contract failure occurs when consumers are unable or unwilling to purchase goods and services because they are incapable of competently judging the quality or quantity of the goods or services they are receiving. Contract failure is a form of information asymmetry. Information asymmetry is associated with three factors: the complexity of goods or services, the incompetence of consumers who utilize the goods or services, and the goods or services that are consumed by people other than those who purchased them. Nonprofits, again, correct this failure by eliminating the for-profit motive and thus creating trust (Young, 1998).

The next chapter will examine the programs and services of the nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies under review in this study.

## Chapter IV

### The Organizations and Their Programmatic Responsibilities

#### Governmental Agencies and Programmatic Responsibilities

The governmental agencies in this project include the Montgomery County Department of Human Resources (MCDHR) in Montgomery, Alabama and the Dekalb County Board of Health (DCBH) in Atlanta Georgia. Both organizations are agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The DHHS officially began in 1953 as the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW), but activities of the DHEW began as early as 1798 with the passage of an act for sick and disabled seamen -what would eventually become the U.S. Public Health Service (Radin, 2010; DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011) . The DHHS was drastically smaller than it is today, a reflection of the minimal role that government played at that time in social policy and in the lives of the American people.

By 1973, following a growth in the role of government, the DHEW had grown to 13 agencies and 10 offices responsible for administering over 200 programs (Radin, 2010). At the same time, several different programs were also separated into their own departments. The Department of Education Organization Act provided for the separation of education into its own department, and health programs were separated into a department that also contained the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control, the Health Resources Administration, the Health Services Administration, and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration. In 1980 the

DHEW became the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011). Over the next 20 years, despite the removal of two major programs (Education and Health) the DHHS grew to over 300 programs with an operating budget of 880 billion dollars. Today, just a decade later, budget is nearly 911 billion dollars and it employs approximately 73,000 full-time people (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011). (See Figure 3.1)

**Figure 3.1**

**Fiscal Year 2011 President’s Budget for DHHS**

	2009	2010	2011	2011 +/- 2010
Total Budget Authority	834, 506	845,432	901,927	+ 56,495
Total Outlays	794,234	859,763	910,679	+ 50,916
Full-Time Equivalents	67,875	70,028	72,923	+ 2,895

(dollars in millions)

From 2011 *Budget in Brief*, retrieved from [dhhs.gov/asfr/ob/docbudget/2011budgetinbrief.pdf](http://dhhs.gov/asfr/ob/docbudget/2011budgetinbrief.pdf).

The DHHS addresses issues related to health (e.g. for mothers and babies), healthcare (i.e. Medicaid and Medicare), health information technology, social science research, disease prevention, food safety, drug safety, financial assistance, education (e.g. Head Start), individual safety (i.e. prevention of child abuse and domestic violence), substance abuse, and emergency relief. Many of these services are provided specifically to and for disadvantaged or vulnerable members of society (i.e. low income, elderly, physically and mentally disabled, children, etc.) (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011).

DHHS is divided into ten operating divisions, composed of eight agencies from the U.S. Public Health Service, and the remaining three from human service agencies. The U.S. Public Health Service agencies include: National Institutes of Health (NIH), Food and Drug

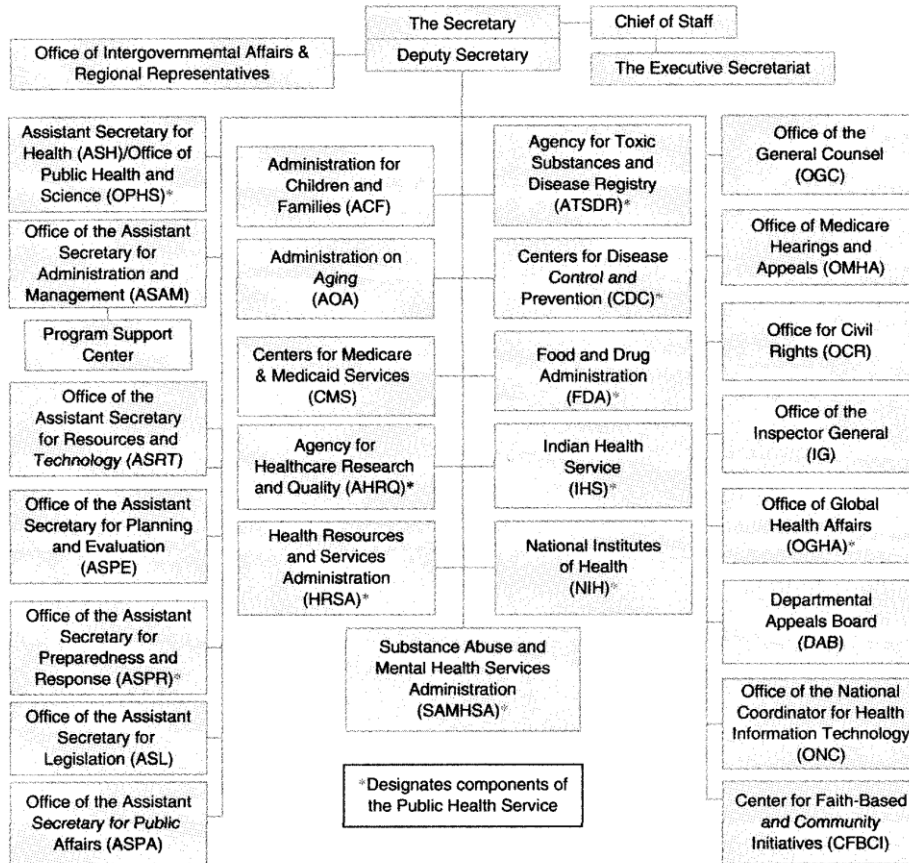


Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in combination with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Indian Health Services (IHS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ). The human services agencies include: the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) (also known as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and the Administration on Aging (AoA) (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011). (See Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2

The Structure of the Department of Health and Human Services

The structure of the Department of Health and Human Services, 2009



From DHHS 2011 Organization Chart.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) comprise the focus of this study. CMS is the highest funded operating division, receiving over 781 billion dollars in funding in 2011. ACF is the second highest funded operating division receiving over 58 billion dollars of funding in 2011 (DHHS

Budget in Brief, 2011). The CMS includes programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP), and the ACF includes the TANF program.

Considering that CMS funds such costly programs as Medicare and Medicaid, it is not surprising that they receive such a large allotment- the vast majority of the total budget. The ACF receives the second largest allotment. The purpose of the CMS is to provide a "skilled, committed, and highly motivated workforce; an affordable health care system; high-value health care; confident, informed consumers; and collaborative partnerships" ([www.cms.gov/consortia](http://www.cms.gov/consortia), 2009). CMS administers Medicare which covers the greatest portion of the budget at over 475 billion dollars. Medicaid is funded at over 271 billion dollars, and CHIP at over 10 billion dollars. Although Medicaid covers a wide range of medical services for low-income individuals, such as Immunizations, and Pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) testing and preventive services, the WIC program, which is a part of the Medicaid program, will be the only program from CMS analyzed and compared in this research project.

The purpose of ACF is to provide for the "social and economic well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities" ([www.acf.gov](http://www.acf.gov), 2009). ACF administers over 60 programs, such as Head Start, Child Care, Refugee Programs, Energy assistance programs (such as LIHEAP), and TANF (which includes Supplemental Nutrition Programs, such as Food Stamps and WIC). The discretionary programs, such as Head Start, Child Care, Refugee programs, and a new child care initiative total over 17 billion dollars of the DHHS budget. The mandatory programs comprise ACF's greatest source of spending and total over 41 billion dollars. They include: TANF at a cost of 17.4 billion dollars, 7.5 billion dollars for Foster care and related programs, 4.3 billion dollars for Child Support Enforcement and Family Support, and 3.7 billion dollars for Child Care Entitlement to States. ACF'S 2011 budget of 58.8 billion

dollars marks an increase of 9.3 billion dollars from 2010 (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011). (See Figures 3.3. and 3.4).

**Figure 3.3**

**Fiscal Year 2011 Total ACF Budget**

	2009	2010	2011	2011 +/- 2010
<i>Discretionary/1:</i> Program Level	22,505	17,342	17,486	+144
Budget Authority	22,457	17,336	17,480	+144
<i>Entitlement/2:</i> Budget Authority	38,652	34,284	41,329	+7,045
Total ACF Budget Authority	61,109	51,620	58,809	+7,189
Total ACF Budget Authority (Excluding Recovery Act)	50,144	49,490	58,809	+9,319

(dollars in millions)

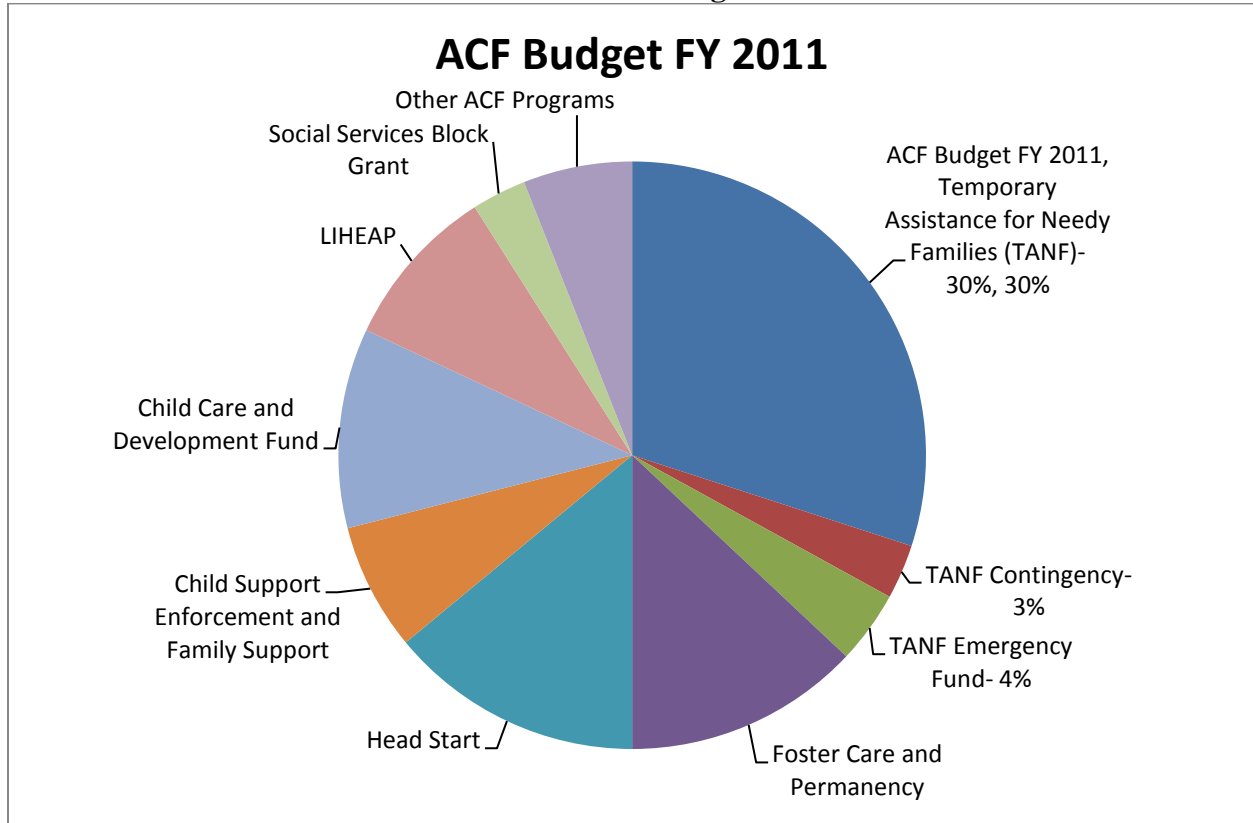
1/ Includes Recovery Act funding of \$5.1 billion in FY 2009.

2/ Includes Recovery Act funding of \$5.8 billion in FY 2009 and \$2.1 billion in FY 2010.

From 2011 *Budget in Brief*, retrieved from [dhhs.gov/asfr/ob/docbudget/2011budgetinbrief.pdf](http://dhhs.gov/asfr/ob/docbudget/2011budgetinbrief.pdf).

Figure 3.4

Fiscal Year 2011 ACF Budget Allocations



(TANF = 37% of total ACF Budget)

Reproduced from DHHS *Budget in Brief*, 2011

Relevant to this project are the Child Care and TANF services. TANF services under review include those associated with food assistance, such as Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The agencies which deliver these services are the Department of Human Resources and the Board of Health. The specific agencies analyzed in this dissertation research are the Montgomery County Department of Human Resources in Alabama, which delivers Food Stamps, and the Dekalb County Board of Health in Georgia, which delivers WIC.

## Montgomery County Department of Human Resources

The MCDHR is a part of the Alabama Department of Human Resources. ADHR was created in 1935 as a part of the Social Security Act of 1935. The Social Security Act enabled “a floor of protection against the hardships of poverty” (Hansen, 2008, p.41) and was created to help Americans affected by the Great Depression. Originally, the agency was named the Department of Public Welfare (DHR, 2011). Twenty years after its inception, in 1955, it was renamed the Department of Pensions and Security. Thirty-one years later it was renamed the Department of Human Resources, the name it currently holds. The ADHR has one goal: to help those in need. Aiding in that effort are 4,200 employees, comprised mainly of social workers, within 67 county departments (DHR, 2011)

MCDHR is one of those 67 county departments. It offers a wide array of services, such as: Adult Protective Services (to protect elderly and disabled adults from abuse and neglect), Child Protective Services (to protect children from abuse and neglect), Child Support Enforcement (to help families establish paternity and financial support for the care of children), Child Care Services (to provide child care to working mothers and licensure to childcare facilities), Adoption (to provide caregivers for children who have been neglected or abused by their parents), Foster Care (to provide temporary and safe housing to children awaiting a permanent home placement), Family Assistance (to provide financial, employment, and childcare assistance, includes TANF), and Food Assistance (to provide food and nutrition to low-income families) (DHR, 2011). The MCDHR’s Family Assistance and Food Assistance programs are the primary focus of this work. Other programs were considered, but these programs were the most popular (i.e. most often used) as reported by clients of MCDHR. The

Family Assistance program includes TANF and the Food Assistance program includes Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Food Stamps.

*Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)*

TANF is a block grant program that is funded by the federal government to provide assistance and work opportunities to needy (i.e. low-income) families. TANF has been in operation since 1997, when it replaced the AFDC, and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS), emergency assistance welfare programs under the welfare reform legislation of 1996. The welfare reform legislation of 1996, known as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) restructured the government's nutritional and social safety net, by ending federal entitlement to cash assistance and creating TANF to help in the provision of services through federal funding and greater responsibility to States, territories, and tribes (ACF, 2009; Himmelgreen and Romero-Daza, 2010; Borders and Lindt, 2009). TANF imposed greater restrictions on recipients, including a five-year lifetime limit for recipients, employment requirements, and stricter eligibility requirements.

The purpose of TANF is to foster independence of recipients by moving them off welfare (in the short-run) and out of poverty (in the long-run). Specifically, TANF seeks to assist needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes; prevent out-of-wedlock pregnancies; promote job preparation, and work and marriage among needy families, thus encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. The overall mission of TANF is to aid low-income families in becoming self-sufficient (Himmelgreen and Romero-Daza, 2010; Daponte & Bade, 2006; Border and Lindt, 2009). The federal funds allocated to TANF are to cover benefits, administrative costs, and the services made available to the needy families. TANF was reauthorized through fiscal year 2012 under the Deficit Reduction Act of

2005. In 2011 TANF received 17.1 billion dollars (DHHS Budget in Brief, 2011). Some of the programs under TANF include: Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs and WIC.

### *Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs*

The first Food Stamp program began on May 16, 1939 and it provided its beneficiaries with orange and blue stamps (USDA, 2009). Specifically, for every \$1 worth of orange stamps purchased, 50 cents worth of blue stamps were received. Orange stamps were used to buy any food, whereas blue stamps were used only to buy food that was considered to be surplus. In 1943 the program ended as food surpluses decreased, unemployment improved, and the need for the program no longer existed. Eighteen years passed before another program was implemented. When the program was implemented, it was only as a pilot food stamp program, and lasted three years before being made permanent in the Food Stamp Act of 1964 (USDA, 2009). Since then, the Food Stamp program has endured expansion, legislative changes, and cutbacks. By August 2008, the Food stamp program reached a record high of 29 million beneficiaries per month. The 2008 Farm Bill increased the commitment to Federal food assistance programs by more than 10 billion over the next 10 years. Additionally, it renamed the Food Stamp program the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP, as of October 1, 2008 (USDA, 2009).

The name change from Food Stamps to SNAP was to fight the stigma attached to the former name, and also to reflect the new focus on nutrition<sup>8</sup> (USDA, 2009). Individual states were also encouraged to adopt the new name, or an alternate name, and many have already done so. The purpose of SNAP is to make healthy foods available to low-income families and to provide education on nutrition to help clients learn to make healthy eating and active lifestyle

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<sup>8</sup> In this research project SNAP will be referred to as Food Stamps to distinguish it from WIC, which is another supplemental nutrition assistance-type program.



choices (USDA, 2009; DePolt, Moffitt and Ribar, 2009; Huffman and Jensen, 2005; Martin, Cook, Rogers and Joseph, 2003; Berner, Paynter, Anderson, 2009; Pati, Romero, and Chavkin, 2002). In 1969, there was an average of 2.9 million total participants at an average benefit cost of \$6.63 per person, and 250.5 million dollars in total costs (228.80 million dollars in benefits alone). By 2010 those numbers had increased to over 40 million participants at an average benefit cost of \$133.79 per person. Of the over 40 million participants, they include 864,727 in Alabama (an increase of 9.3 percent from 2010), and over 1.7 million participants in Georgia (an increase of 12.4 percent from 2010) (USDA, 2011).

### Dekalb County Board of Health

The Dekalb County Board of Health (DCBH) is a division of the Georgia Department of Community Health which was created by the General Assembly in 1999, and appointed the single state agency for Medicaid ([www.dekalbhealth.net/hs/](http://www.dekalbhealth.net/hs/), 2011). The Dekalb County Board of Health consists of 5 health centers, covering Atlanta, Lithonia, Stone Mountain, Dunwoody, Decatur, and other cities within Dekalb County.

The DCBH offers 2 different categories of services: Maternal and child health, and Adult health. Maternal and child health services include: perinatal care/obstetrics, dental health services, immunizations, vision and hearing screenings, well child check-ups, children's medical services, services for children with special needs, physicals for student athletes, medicaid enrollment, and WIC, as well as other programs for babies, children, teens, and community schools. Adult health services include: breast exams, dental health services, family planning services (i.e. birth control), hypertension, refugee health programs, immunizations, HIV/AIDS services, and STD services ([www.dekalbhealth.net/hs/](http://www.dekalbhealth.net/hs/), 2011). The service under review in this

research project is WIC. Other programs were considered, but WIC was the most popular (i.e. most often used) as reported by clients of the DCBH local health center sampled in the analysis.

*Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)*

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is another type of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program. Specifically, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is the third largest food program in the United States (USDA, 2011). It began in 1972 as a pilot program to improve nutritional status and health outcomes of vulnerable populations, and became permanent two years later in 1974 (Khanani, Elam, Hearn, Jones, Maseru, 2010). Although Food Stamps are the largest food program, nearly twice as many children under the age of 4 received WIC than Food Stamps (Zedlewski and Rader, 2005). The WIC program promotes the development of children from birth to five years old by providing supplemental food packages, nutritional education, and healthcare, as well as social service referrals to low-income mothers and caregivers. In addition to providing food and nutritional services to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children, services are also provided to children found to be at nutritional risk (Foster, Jiang, Gibson-Davis, 2010).

To qualify for WIC, potential participants must meet three requirements. The first requirement is they must be a member of an eligible group (pregnant woman, postpartum woman, or children up to 5 years old). Secondly, they must be income eligible (with an income at or below 185 percent of the poverty line or also participate in TANF, Medicaid, or Food Stamps). Thirdly, they must be deemed to be at “nutritional risk” as defined by underweight status, anemia, or inadequate diet (Foster, Jiang, Gibson-Davis, 2010). In 1974, there were 88,000 total participants at an average monthly food cost of \$15.68 per person. By 2010 those numbers had

increased to over 9 million participants and an average monthly food cost of \$41.45 per person. Of the 9 million participants, they include over 2 million women, over 2 million infants, and nearly 5 million children (USDA, 2011). Alabama had 143,833 WIC participants as of January 2011, and Georgia had 295,856 WIC participants. Alabama's WIC participation increased 1.2 percent since 2010 (from 142,121 participants to 143,833), whereas Georgia's WIC participation decreased 5.1 percent since 2010 (from 311,779 participants to 295,856) (USDA, 2011).

### Nonprofit Organizations and Programmatic Responsibilities

Feeding America is the nation's largest domestic hunger relief charity with more than 200 food banks and 61,000 agencies across the United States (Feeding America, 2010). It is the largest nongovernmental feeding program in the United States. Feeding America was started in 1967 by John Van Hengel who started a food bank in St. Mary's Church in Phoenix, Arizona. His food bank grew from his solicitation of food from agricultural and food companies, in conjunction with tax laws that provided deductions, credits and/or legal immunity to individuals, localities and states involved with food donations. In 1979 the original, modest network Van Hengel began thirteen years earlier evolved into Second Harvest, and was incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. Decades later, it changed its name to America's Second Harvest (A2H), and eventually to Feeding America, its current name (Daponte and Bade, 2006).

Feeding America has several functions. In addition to providing 2.6 billion pounds of food and grocery products, and feeding over 37 million people every year, Feeding America also certifies the 501 (c)(3) status of other food banks as well as their compliance with health, safety and sanitation standards; ensures coverage of geographic areas, as well as a sufficient number of

staff; and provides financial stability. It also provides community support and disaster relief to member food banks (FA, 2010; Daponte and Bade, 2006).

Feeding America works by receiving food and grocery products from donors. Donors include: growers, processors, restaurants, manufacturers, distributors, retailers, convenience stores, wholesalers, food industry associations, food service operators, food drives, and the USDA. Donors donate to Feeding America, which then distributes and tracks the donated food to agencies. Agencies include: Youth programs, community kitchens, soup kitchens, senior centers, day care centers, rehabilitation centers, homeless shelters, kids' cafes, residential shelters, and of course food pantries/food banks such as the East Alabama Food Bank (EAFB) in Lee County, Alabama and Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) in Dekalb County, Georgia. These agencies, such as the EAFB and ACFB, then provide food assistance in the form of food baskets to families and individuals, such as victims of disaster, children, the working poor, single-parent families, newly unemployed, mentally ill, homeless, disabled, and elderly people (FA, 2010).

#### East Alabama Food Bank

The East Alabama Food Bank (EAFB) is located in Auburn/Opelika, Alabama. It is a Feeding America member organization, and has been in operation since 1993. EAFB serves over 185 agencies within six counties in south central Alabama, including: Lee, Macon, Tallapoosa, Chambers, Barbour, and Russell.

The EAFB works by offering food at a low fee to organizations that help the ill, needy, infants, and the elderly (EAFB Agency Handbook, 2010). The EAFB has grown rapidly in response to the tremendous need of Alabama residents. In 1993, when it began, the EAFB distributed 125,253 pounds of food. In 2010 that number had increased to over 3.8 million pounds of food. Also, in 1994, EAFB had 45 member agencies. As of 2009 that number had

nearly quadrupled to 179 member agencies. Similarly, the EAFB had an annual budget of \$77,650, whereas in 2010 that number had increased to \$901,200. In addition to feeding the hungry, the EAFB developed some special programs in response to specific community needs. Those include: the Brown Bag Program, which supplies supplementary groceries each month to seniors who live below the poverty level; Baby Manna, which provides formula, baby food and diapers along with nutritional and WIC information to benefit babies born into poverty; the Freezer Project, which supplies freezers to EAFB for the freezing of meats, meals, frozen fruits and vegetables, dairy products and bakery goods for clients; and a Mobile Food Pantry for serving clients without vehicle access or who live in rural areas. With a 15-person full-time staff, and over 9,000 volunteer hours, the EAFB provides over 300,000 pounds of food and feeds over 13,000 Alabamians each month (EAFB Agency Handbook, 2010).

#### Atlanta Community Food Bank

The Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) is located in Atlanta, Georgia. It is also a Feeding America member organization, and has been in operation since 1979. ACFB serves over 700 agencies within 38 counties in Metro Atlanta and North Georgia, including: Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray, Fannin, Gilmer, Union, White, Lumpkin, Dawson, Hall, Forsyth, Cherokee, Pickens, Bartow, Gordon, Floyd, Chattooga, Polk, Haralson, Paulding, Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Walton, Morgan, Newton, Rockdale, Henry, Clayton, Fayette, Carroll, Heard, Coweta, Spalding, and Butts counties.

The ACFB works much in the same way as the EAFB. It receives food and grocery items from donors and distributes it to partner agencies. At its inception, in 1979, the ACFB distributed just over 15,000 pounds of food. In 2009, that number had dramatically increased to nearly 22 million pounds of food per year. Similarly, the 25 partner agencies in 1979 totaled 700 by 2009.

The 2009 budget of the ACFB was \$46, 657,315, majority of which came from donated products and food (over 31 million dollars). In addition to feeding the hungry, the ACFB offers a number of supplementary and auxiliary services, including: The Atlanta Prosperity Campaign, which connects low- to moderate-income working families to existing economic benefits available to them; Atlanta's table, which collects and distributes prepared perishable food from local restaurants to some partner agencies; Community Gardens, which brings people together to grow their own food; Hunger 101, which educates the public about hunger and poverty using workshops, online curricula, and other educational tools; and Kids in Need, which provides free-of-charge school supplies to educators to aid in the academic achievement of their students. The ACFB provides nearly 22 million pounds of food and feeds many Georgians each month (ACFB Agency Handbook, 2010).

### The Case for Nonprofit Organizations in Service Delivery

The nonprofit sector has many structural and procedural advantages that make it a prime candidate for the effective delivery of food assistance services. Nonprofit organizations lack the organizational complexity of governmental agencies; they are smaller, and thus perceived to be more efficient; their employees have less burnout and "bureaucratic red tape" to contend with, and are perceived as more altruistic; they have the trust of the American public, and they are flexible and responsive to social issues (Weisbrod, 1997; Brudney, 1998; Carver et al., 2003). And these are just a few of their benefits. Based on these advantages, it is expected that clients of nonprofit organizations will be more satisfied with food assistance services than clients of governmental agencies.

An answer to the question of which organizational type better satisfies the clients of food assistance services is long overdue. While Food Stamps and WIC remain crucial elements of the government's food assistance programs and continue to feed thousands of families across the nation, many clients who need these services are not receiving them. Whether as a result of fear, or stigma, or complicated application and eligibility requirements, the clients of governmental food assistance programs are not getting the assistance they need. Similar findings exist for nonprofit food assistance services, such as food banks. Nonprofit organizations are admirable in their efforts to step up to supplement the food assistance services of the government, but have they been effective? Are clients satisfied?

Existing research has not answered the question of whether and to what extent nonprofit and/or governmental food assistance services satisfy their clients? What has been asked and answered in the research is whether the food assistance programs do what they intended to do, and that is feed the hungry, eliminate food insecurity, and eradicate poverty? The answer is a resounding no. Neither nonprofit food assistance services nor governmental food assistance services actually do what they were intended to do. WIC merely addresses the problem of inadequate nutrition, food banks attempt to keep up with the struggle of feeding the needy, and food stamps, in some cases, exacerbate it. This presents a dilemma. The dilemma is that we have two different organizational types in which neither has proven their ability to adequately provide food assistance services. So how can we address this dilemma?

My theory is that the answer to this dilemma lies within the clients of these services. The clients receive the services, year in and year out, and are thus better equipped to ascertain the quality (and/or effectiveness) of the service. The quality of the service affects how clients feel about and respond to it. The client's opinion, as such, about how satisfied they are with each

sector's service provides insight into whether organizational dynamics might have an effect on the delivery of the actual service. In other words, are clients less satisfied with food baskets and is that why they are perceived to be ineffective at eliminating hunger? Or, are clients less satisfied with food stamps - because service is slow, red tape makes receiving services difficult - and are thus more likely to determine that food stamps are unsatisfactory? The client's perception of an organization's services is the key to understanding how the organization itself might play a role in the continuation of this problem. For example, are the organizations themselves the problem? Is the structure of one type of organization more suited to the delivery of food assistance services? Only the clients who use the service can tell.

The client's perception of the organization's services, whether they are satisfactory or not, also provides future direction. If clients are more satisfied with nonprofit food assistance, future research can explore why that is? Do the singular missions and focus of nonprofit organizations make them more effective at delivering food assistance services? Is it that their board of directors live within the communities they serve, and are thus better able to respond to community needs? Or will clients be less satisfied with nonprofit organizations because they lack resources and must expend energy finding funding, thus wasting time actually delivering the service? Once these questions have been asked, decisions can be made. Based on the findings – of which sector better satisfies clients – should additional resources be allocated to nonprofit organizations, if clients are more satisfied with their method of food assistance service delivery and thus more likely to utilize it? Or if the clients of governmental agencies are more satisfied, is that an indication that government should take more of a role in delivering food assistance services? If neither method satisfies clients, reassessments need to be made, evaluating why people are still hungry, especially if both methods of food assistance equally satisfy them. And



if both methods satisfy clients, other criteria can be employed to decrease oversaturation of services or costly duplication, since neither method is decreasing hunger. Perhaps the least expensive of the service methods can be employed, with additional resources being fed back into those programs with documented success. In any case, it all starts with the client.

What we know is that neither method is ideal, or actually decreases hunger. What we have is a very expensive band-aid – a waste of money and resources that could be going towards programs or policies that actually decrease hunger and poverty, such as higher education programs that equip people to have professional and/or higher paying jobs, or training and entrepreneurial opportunities that provide individuals with alternative prospects that might help them to increase their own assets and remove themselves from poverty. In other words, if food assistance handouts do not work at solving the problem they were created to solve, perhaps we should support the old adage of “teaching them to fish.” This research will allow us to step back from the overwhelming, increasingly complex issue of hunger and food insecurity, and get back to the basics of the problem. By evaluating the opinions of the clients who use the service, we can reevaluate this country’s response to hunger and food insecurity and develop a system that works. Then we can finally fix the problem.

The next chapter examines the development of the hypotheses for this study.

## Chapter V

### Hypothesis Development

#### Introduction

Researchers such as Berner, Ozer and Paynter (2008) suggest a lack of research in the area of client satisfaction with food assistance - due to difficulty of collecting valid and reliable data on the topic of client needs - as the reason for the obscurity of the issue of hunger and the subsequent confusion in the field. They suggest surveying the recipients of food assistance program as a solution to the lack of detailed and consistent data -as opposed to previous studies which simply count the number of individuals served, and otherwise just tracks clients (Martin et al., 2003; Berner, Paynter, and Anderson, 2009). Unlike previous studies before which only collected demographic information on clients, or only tracked clients, this study will survey the actual clients from each of the sectors in response to the exact food assistance service received to determine which if any clients from which if any sector(s) are more satisfied with food assistance services. The purpose of this work is to analyze the satisfaction of clients of food assistance programs across the public (i.e. government) and nonprofit sectors to ascertain their level of satisfaction with the services offered by these organizations. In an effort to assess client satisfaction among nonprofit and public sector organizations in relation to food assistance programs, the following hypotheses will be tested in this research project:

H1: Clients who receive food assistance services from nonprofit organizations are more likely to be satisfied than clients receiving similar services from government agencies.

H2: Clients from governmental agencies will perceive more organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) as hindrances to satisfactory services than clients from nonprofit organizations.

H3: Employees from governmental agencies will perceive more bureaucratic red tape and hindrances to satisfactory service delivery than employees from nonprofit organizations.

The hypotheses for this research project were derived from data that provides structural distinctions between nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. Many of these structural distinctions illustrate advantages to nonprofit agencies in their delivery of services, and in their ability to respond to client needs.

### Structural Distinctions between Nonprofit Organizations and Governmental Agencies

#### The Generic Tradition

Some have argued that there are few differences between the different organizational types (i.e. government, nonprofit, private businesses). These organizations, they argue, face similar challenges, such as managing, leading, and motivating employees, evaluating and ensuring organizational effectiveness; and follow similar patterns, such as developing mission statements and ethical codes on which to base organizational goals and values, and using incentives to produce, develop and reward employee performance (Fry and Raadschelders, 2008; Shafritz, Hyde, and Parkes, 2004).

The very history of Public Administration is founded on the Generic Tradition belief, which asserts that all organizations have similar functions and responsibilities and are thus essentially the same (Fry and Raadschelders, 2008). Theorists of the Generic Tradition, such as Taylor, Weber, Gulick, and Mooney all took the similar positions that commonalities among

organizations should be emphasized to develop knowledge that could be applied to all organizations. They avoided the distinctions made about public versus private organizations or nonprofit versus governmental agencies.

Theorists of the Generic Tradition promoted a “machine-like efficiency” in which each task and person had a specific purpose within the organization – which itself had a function and duty – to perform in a consistent, rational, controlled, and detailed way for the purposes of increasing individual and organizational output (Rainey, 2003). This position represented a closed system. Although theorists such as Simon and Maslow eventually began to explore other factors - such as employee motivation, worker morale and satisfaction, and other social, psychological, and economic influences - organizational type was not a consideration at that time and thus no distinctions were made between organizational type and capacity to deliver services. As a matter of fact, the classical theorists asserted that such distinctions made between organizations created “intellectual dangers,” such as “oversimplification,” they were “misleading, confusing, and impeded sound theory and research”(Rainey, 2003).

But that eventually changed as many more researchers began to disagree with the theorists of the Generic Tradition and asserted that the differences between organizational type were real and worthy of exploration. The organizational types that were explored, however, were often public agencies (i.e. governmental) versus that of private organizations. The distinctions were of not-for profit versus for-profit organizations, and included theorists such as Graham (1980), Boyne (1999 and 2002), Murray (1975), Coglianesi, (2003), and Hood (1991). They explored the dynamics, governance structure, funding source, and structure of authority between public agencies and for-profit organizations and began to question what made those organizations different from each other.

Although much research exists that compare the differences between private and public organizations, very little research exists that explores the differences between nonprofit and traditional public agencies (i.e. governmental). Particularly, as these differences relate to an organization's ability to deliver services.

There are many structural and process (i.e. organizational) distinctions between nonprofit and public agencies. Funding, control, regulations and guidelines, efficiency, focus, and public trust make up some of the organizational differences between nonprofits and governmental agencies. These distinctions provide the basis for the hypotheses' assertions that: Clients from nonprofit organizations are more likely to be satisfied with services than governmental agencies, and are less likely to perceive excessive organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) than clients from governmental agencies. Also, that employees from governmental agencies are more likely to perceive bureaucratic red tape that hinders their ability to deliver services than employees from nonprofit organizations. Borrowing from categorization in the Rainey (2003) text, these distinctions can be categorized as follows: Environmental Factors (such as economic markets, funding, regulations and guidelines); Organization-Environment Transactions (such as externalities, monopolies, control, efficiency, public trust); and Organizational Roles, Structures, and Processes (such as goals and performance criteria, focus, administrative authority).

### Environmental Factors

According to Rainey (2003) one of the common assertions and distinctive characteristics of public organizations is their "absence of economic markets for output." Economic markets refer to the laws of supply and demand, and are set by consumer needs and price systems. Markets are common in for-profit organizations and control economic production (what the consumer wants and is willing to pay for, they get) and allocation (best use of resources to

maximize output, minimize input and increase profit). Barton, 1980; Breton and Wintrobe, 1982; Dahl and Lindblom, 1953; Downs, 1967; Niskanen, 1971; and Tullock, 1965, as cited in Rainey, (2003) examine how the absence of economic markets for outputs makes public (i.e. governmental) organizations more bureaucratic, inefficient, change-resistant, and susceptible to political influence than private, for-profit organizations. This occurs because as public agencies lack economic incentive, they consequently have less incentive to reduce cost and perform effectively. Markets – which reflect the laws of supply and demand – operate synergistically with consumers. As consumers want more of a product or service, more of it is produced. As they want less of a product or service, less of it is produced. As a result, markets have incentive to provide only how much of a service is desired and to reduce services that are not. They must operate efficiently to meet the needs of the consumer and in order to survive. They must reduce costs to make a profit, they must also allocate resources properly to profit, unless they risk increasing input and decreasing output. Public-serving agencies do not have this incentive. There are no price systems in place to control their production and allocation decisions. This distinction is true of both nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies.

Nonprofit organizations however, although public-serving, only exist to meet the needs of a certain subsample of the public (e.g. single mothers, youth, elders, farmers, etc.) (Rainey, 2003; Ott, 2001). They often do not charge for these services, or only charge minimally, so economic markets, price points, and profit generation do not apply here. Although some nonprofit organizations have become commercialized in an effort to increase their revenue, profit-generation is not their focus, which elicits public and consumer/client trust (Rainey, 2003). Moreover, there are disadvantages that occur when nonprofit organizations try to transition into business-like activities and blur the lines. The disadvantages of becoming business-like for

nonprofit organizations are apparent as such nonprofit organizations come under fire and receive criticism for jeopardizing their public service missions (Weisbrod, 1997), and the public trust they receive. Government agencies produce a general public service that everyone pays for. To offset these costs and alleviate the financial burden from taxpayers, there is an incentive for government to become business-like. Accordingly, some suggest that government should become more business-like (or at least adopt some business principles) (Rainey, 2003). In this way, government can become more efficient and less wasteful of resources.

Unlike businesses, though, government has the weighty responsibility of providing many necessary public services to a number of people, and correcting some market failures, such as the problem of free-riders and externalities, for example. As such, government cannot rely on economic markets to influence the public. It uses, instead, political authority to exercise social control (unlike for-profit organizations which use price systems, supply and demand), and must provide services and products based on public need (Rainey, 2003; Ott, 2001). Its focus is not profit-generation – it is on social/public sustainability. Government seeks to generate profit only in relation to minimizing the public burden of sustaining the services it must provide to the people. Most nonprofit organizations do not have this same responsibility of necessarily providing services to the general public as a whole. Nonprofit organizations do not have to provide food assistance to all Americans, regardless of need, or of the individual's ability to pay in some way for the service - in addition to providing safety, housing, education, and healthcare. Nonprofit organizations can focus their efforts on providing food assistance to those individuals in need, or to a sub-sample of individuals with disproportionate need (such as elders and children), without the responsibility of providing these services to the general public (Ott, 2001).

The responsibility of the government to provide public services to so many people may leave it less amenable to meeting the needs of certain segments of society.

In summary, neither nonprofit nor governmental agencies use economic markets to control output. Government agencies use political authority to control output (in the form of rules, regulations, and fiscal policies), and nonprofit organizations use whatever is at their disposal, including internal processes (such as missions statements, expressed need, as well as the altruistic behaviors of volunteers) to control outputs. Neither nonprofit organizations nor governmental agencies rely on economic markets to produce their output. Similarly, nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies differ in what their outputs are used for. Nonprofit organizations exist to meet the needs of un- or underrepresented segments of society usually on a particular issue, whereas government must meet the varied needs of all of the people (Rainey, 2003).

A similar difference related to “absence of economic markets” is the nonprofit sector’s “reliance on governmental appropriations for financial resources.” Blau and Rabrenovic (1991) noted that nonprofit organizations often relied on government agencies for the majority of their funding. This funding often comes in the form of grants. Governmental agencies, on the other hand, rely on taxes. The government’s use of taxes (i.e. public money to meet a public need) restricts its ability to provide some services. For example, Carver, Reinert, Range, Campbell, and Boyd (2003) found that the rules, procedures, and traditions of governmental agencies (like receiving tax money) interfere with cultural demands. Government agencies cannot (or, at least should not) “favor” a group of people using public money. As such, governmental agencies are restricted in their work with certain populations, such as faith-based organizations (because of potentially conflicting religious and/or ideological beliefs between the church and that of the



general public). This limits their potential impact on children (Carver et al., 2003) and some segments of society that might almost solely utilize the services of the church (e.g. for food assistance, counseling and mental health services). Nonprofits do not have this restriction, and often work – synergistically – with religious organizations. The collaboration between nonprofit organizations and religious organizations is especially crucial to the delivery of food assistance because many churches operate food drives and food pantries to feed the needy. As such, religious organizations are key contributors in the fight against hunger. Religious organizations also heavily rely on the food banks of nonprofit organizations to feed their parishioners or others in need. Similarly, for many people in need, the church is often the first place they look to acquire food assistance because of its accessibility and visibility within their communities.

Unlike government, nonprofit organizations do not have free use of public money. Nonprofit organizations must rely on government appropriations for financial resources (often in the form of grants and contracts) but cannot charge the general public for the services it provides to that sample of the population. In addition to grants, nonprofit organizations also receive private donations. Private donations provide an additional distinction in the way nonprofit organizations and governmental programs and activities are funded, as well as certain advantages to nonprofits. For example, nonprofit organizations receive greater donations of time and money, as government organizations rarely receive private charity and donations (Rose-Ackerman, 1996). Although grants impose some limits, private donations provide some organizational benefits. In support of this assertion, Rose-Ackerman (1996) contends that the interaction between institutional structure and other environmental features such as government policies, private donations, and overall competitive environment greatly affects an organization's form, performance and survival. She argues that neither organizational form is superior (i.e.

government versus nonprofit), but that either can isolate certain factors that can provide it advantages. In the case of private donations, Rose-Ackerman (1996) contends that nonprofit organizations have ideological advantages (i.e. more people assume the nonprofit sector to have altruistic workers than private and other entities) which results in them receiving more donations than other sectors. Similarly, nonprofit organizations operate under a non-distribution constraint (i.e. profits and earnings are not distributed among members of the board) (Scott, 1998) and thus lack ownership and a for-profit motive which elicits greater public trust.

Yet another distinction is the elaborate and intensive formal legal constraints that nonprofit and governmental organizations face (Rainey, 2003). Those constraints are operational and procedural. Merton (1957), in his article on bureaucratic structure and personality discusses these governmental operational and procedural constraints as “bureaucratic dysfunctions.” Such dysfunctions occur when inflexible training results in rigid operational procedures (trained incapacity) or preferences and discriminations (occupational psychosis), such that what was learned under one condition is automatically applied to another condition (professional deformation), or bureaucrats over-conform and fail to employ necessary contingencies when situations change (Shafritz, Hyde, Parkes, 2004). Essentially, what Merton is highlighting in these examples are the government’s inflexibility to meet the changing needs of society, or slow response in doing so, because of legal and restrictive policies and processes. Nonprofit organizations do not have such complex governance and legal structures, and can be dynamic and flexible in their delivery of services and addressing of public needs.

A final distinction related to environmental factors includes extensive external political influences. Both governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations have external pressures and influences, but governmental agencies have them to a greater degree. Governmental agencies

have to contend with formal (i.e. policymakers, lawmakers) and informal groups (i.e. interest groups, as well as the general public. Such oversight by many different groups with varied interests is restrictive and confusing and may hinder the government's ability to deliver services (Rainey, 2003). Nonprofit organizations have some pressures from external authorities that may govern or fund them (such as accreditation boards or grantors) but do not have nearly as many formal authority chains to adhere to or public pressures to conform to as governmental agencies (Carver et al., 2003). For nonprofit organizations, this should result in greater responsiveness to the clients who rely on their services and superior flexibility in their capacity to deliver services. Given these advantages, one could argue that clients of nonprofit organizations will be more satisfied with services than clients of governmental agencies and employees from nonprofit organizations will perceive more satisfaction from the clients they serve than employees of governmental agencies.

#### Organization-Environment Transactions

Carver et al., (2003) also stress that nonprofits may provide advantages over governmental agencies in the form of efficiency, and having the trust of the public. In terms of efficiency, Carver et. al., (2003) noted that nonprofits are smaller, which might make them "more efficient than multilayered governmental agencies, which typically have an established structure and a culture that resists learning and adaptation" (182). They also argue that although 'burnout' can happen in either entity, that it is especially prevalent within governmental agencies because of "bureaucratic red tape." Finally, Carver et. al. (2003), contend that nonprofits have the trust of the public, whereas governmental agencies experience distrust from the public, especially among minorities (Goodsell, 2004).

## Organizational Roles, Structures, and Processes

Carver, et al., (2003) also stress that nonprofits may provide advantages over governmental agencies in the form of their ability to employ a single-minded focus. Nonprofits have the ability to be focused in “mission, charter, and expertise,” and as such may be less susceptible to the multiple demands of governmental agencies. By contrast, governmental agencies often have competing demands and programs.

There are also programmatic differences between nonprofits and government. Nonprofit organizations are governed by boards of directors. Rose-Ackerman (1996) also observes that organizations operate differently depending upon their ownership structure and the motivations of their constituency (employees, managers, customers). Nonprofit members who serve as boards of directors are often members of the communities they serve, thus having a vested interest (beyond economic incentive) for its success (Ott, 2001).

### Advantages of the Nonprofit Sector in Service Delivery

In a study of why nonprofit organizations exist, Weisbrod (1997) stated that the primary function of the nonprofit sector is to provide quality services in an environment that would be otherwise difficult to detect (e.g. daycare for children who cannot assess the quality of care and centers for the elderly or mental hospitals), and to provide quality services to citizens who have insufficient information or who cannot assess the information necessary to gauge the particular service.

Nonprofit organizations also address and remedy social problems by allowing subgroups with common interests to form and combine resources to address their needs, even if they are not

the needs of the majority. Nonprofits also help to decrease the size of government by helping to deliver some of the services that government normally provides (such as food assistance) (Salamon, 1999). Ensuring that the American people have freedom to express their various needs and preferences is yet another factor explaining why clients and employees of nonprofits may be more satisfied or perceive more satisfaction than clients and employees of governmental agencies.

The next chapter presents the methodology and data for the study.

## Chapter VI

### Methodology and Data Analysis

#### Introduction

This study examines satisfaction with food assistance programs among clients of nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. Traditionally, previous studies have compared public sector organizations versus that of private organizations (Graham, 1980; Boyne, 1999 and 2002; Murray, 1975; Coglianesi, 2003; and Hood, 1991). Moreover, it has been argued that public sector organizations are more complex and rule-laden than private organizations (Vigoda-Gadot and Kapun, 2005). This study differs from the existent literature in that perceptions of red tape are explored from both clients and employees across public sector and nonprofit organizations. Employees are assessed in terms of their perception of bureaucratic red tape within their respective organizations. As bureaucrats within their organizations they are able to accurately discern (1) whether excessive red tape and bureaucratic processes exist and (2) whether they hinder employees' ability to deliver services. Clients, as the customers and recipients of the organization's services, are assessed in relation to their level of satisfaction with the services based on their perceptions of extenuating organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) that they believe may hinder their ability to receive services. Client and employee perceptions are necessary tools when measuring perceived satisfaction with services because their evaluation is based on personal experience and it is their personal experience that

determines their level of satisfaction. Additionally, other factors that might impact client satisfaction will be explored.

The findings are then compared within sectors (i.e. nonprofit organization versus nonprofit organization and government agency versus government agency), and across sectors (i.e. nonprofit organization versus governmental agency) as well as across states (i.e. Alabama versus Georgia) to determine if governmental agencies are perceived to exhibit more red tape than nonprofit organizations, resulting in clients who are less satisfied than those of nonprofit organizations. Although studies exist that compare private and public agencies, no such comparative studies exist that compare clients of nonprofit organizations versus the clients of governmental agencies in terms of satisfaction with food assistance services.

For practical purposes, the scope of this study is limited to two Southern states: Alabama and Georgia. Alabama has the highest rate of people who go hungry in the United States (Birmingham News, 2010; Census Bureau, 2010), and Georgia is one of five states that exhibited statistically significant higher household food insecurity than the U.S. national average (14.7%) between 2007 and 2009. Georgia's food insecurity rate was 15.6%, with Arkansas at 17.7%, Texas at 17.4%, Mississippi at 17.1%, and North Carolina at 14.8% (Nord, Andrews, and Carlson, 2009).

### Implementation

The recruitment of participants and data collection occurred in Dekalb County in Atlanta, Georgia and Montgomery and Lee Counties in Montgomery and Auburn/Opelika, Alabama. Informative flyers were posted in waiting rooms in each of the organizations. Additionally, individuals were approached randomly, as they entered the organizations or sat in the waiting rooms. Clients or employees that were younger than nineteen years old were not allowed to

participate in this study. In addition to the age requirement, individuals must have been, or are recipients of the particular organization's services. I approached individuals, face-to-face, within the organization and administered the survey. One hundred and twenty participants – thirty from each organization, including a mix of clients and employees - were stipulated for the study. Even though only thirty participants from each organization were needed for the study, to control for errors that might occur in filling out the questionnaire and/or participants who might fail to return the questionnaire to the lockbox after filling it out, I gave extra surveys to each organization. Sixty client surveys and thirty employee/executive surveys were bought to each organization (for a total of ninety surveys per organization). A total of one hundred and seventy-two (172) questionnaires were returned.

When approaching potential participants, I followed a general script (See Appendix A). Once the surveys were completed and collected, the responses from the surveys were coded and entered into IBM SPSS Statistics 19. Several analyses were conducted to examine the data. A frequency analysis was conducted to provide a count of the number of cases that took on each variable (Manheim et al., 2006). For example, how many clients from an organization were female, how many clients reported using a particular service, how many employees perceived bureaucratic red tape within their respective organization? Crosstabulation analyses were conducted to facilitate an examination of the relationships between the variables; for example, the exploration of the relationship between client satisfaction and organizational type, or client satisfaction and perceived organizational rules and guidelines (red tape). According to Manheim et al., (2006) crosstabs are based more directly upon hypotheses, and is the most popular form of table used in contemporary political science research. As such, crosstabs were used to test for each hypothesis, and Gamma and Chi square values were used to determine the strength and



significance of association between variables. Additionally, once relationships were established between the variables, logistic regression was used to discuss the explanatory power of each independent variable in terms of odds (Huck, 2004). For example, logistic regression allows one to conclude that the result was “twice as likely to occur,” further strengthening the statistical relevance of the findings. Based on the results, I was able to confirm or reject the hypotheses of this research project, one by one, as well as better understand and explain the factors that influence satisfaction among nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies that provide food assistance.

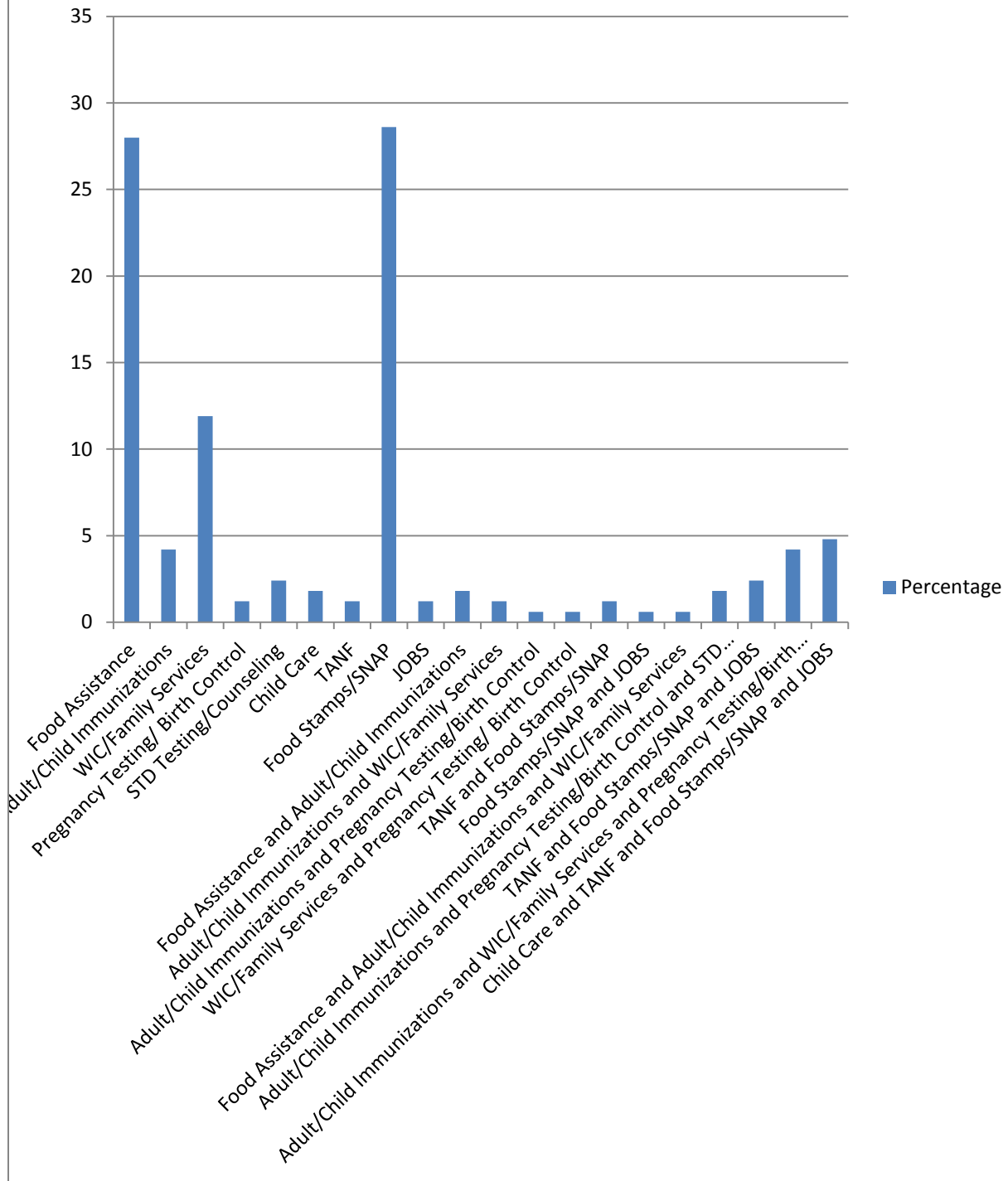
### Client Satisfaction Survey

The purpose of this work is to analyze clients’ perception of the effectiveness of the nonprofit sector versus that of the governmental sector in providing food assistance services, as well as employees’ perceptions about the satisfaction levels of the clients they serve. At the outset of this process, secondary data on other social issues was collected from refereed articles focusing on nonprofit and governmental programs that provide community services. Some of the initial social programs under consideration were food assistance (i.e. food bank baskets, food stamps/SNAP), health-related services (i.e. adult and child immunizations, pregnancy testing and birth control, and STD testing and counseling), family services (i.e. WIC, childcare), income assistance (i.e. TANF), and employment assistance (JOBS). Prior to initiating the survey, I sought permission from the Auburn University IRB to survey twenty-one different organizations across three different states. This was done to ensure that I would be allowed to sample within the organization(s) that offered the service most sought after among client participants. Additional IRBs were completed through the Georgia Department of Community Services and

the Alabama Department of Human Resources to ensure that I would be granted access to sample participants within those selected organizations, as well as full federal compliance.

For primary data collection, one survey for clients and one for employees, consisting of 16 questions and 26 questions respectively, along with a section for comments, was developed and distributed to clients and employees of two governmental agencies: Dekalb County Board of Health in Atlanta, GA and Montgomery County Department of Human Resources in Montgomery, Alabama. These two organizations offer all of the above services, and the purpose of the initial distribution of the surveys was to determine the areas of service most utilized by clients, and as reported by employees, of the particular governmental agencies. (Figure 6.1 illustrates the areas of service delivery).

**Figure 6.1  
Areas of Service Delivery**



**N = 168**

The assessment revealed that the most popular type of service offered by both types of organizations were food assistance services. Specifically, MCDHR clients most often utilized

food stamps. Forty-eight of the 70 client participants from MCDHR reported food stamps as their primary service received, with an additional 14 client participants reporting food stamps as either a secondary or additional service, for a total of 62 out of 70 client participants receiving food stamps. This is compared to only 3 clients from MCDHR reporting Child Care as a primary service, 2 reporting TANF as a primary service, 2 reporting JOBS as a primary service, and 1 reporting a mix of 4 services, including: Adult/Child Immunization, WIC/Family Services, Pregnancy Testing/Birth Control and STD Testing/Counseling. DCBH clients most often utilized WIC/Family Services. Twenty of the 49 client participants from DCBH reported WIC/Family Services as their primary service received, with an additional 10 reporting WIC/Family Services as either a secondary or additional service, for a total of 40 out of 49 client participants receiving WIC/Family Services. (See Appendix B for the Survey administered to the Client Participants of the Governmental Agencies; and Appendix C for the Survey administered to the Executive/Employee Participants of the Governmental Agencies).

The Governmental Agency Employee/Executive surveys are the same except for questions 2 and 9. Question number two lists the particular name of the organization and is therefore different depending on which organization's clients received the survey. This was done to protect the anonymity of the participating organizations. Similarly, number nine assesses the respective organizations list of offered services, and differs depending on which organization is being analyzed. For example, the list of services MCDHR participants can choose from include: Food assistance (food stamps/SNAP), TANF, Child care, and Jobs. Whereas, the list of services DCBH participants can choose from include STD testing, teenage pregnancy, and immunizations. The surveys were made distinctive to protect the anonymity of the participating organizations.

Keeping in line with food assistance programs, and for comparative purposes, I chose to survey nonprofit organizations that also provided food assistance services. Those organizations are: Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) in Atlanta, GA, and the East Alabama Food Bank (EAFB) in Auburn/Opelika, AL. Twenty-nine out of the 30 client participants from ACFB reported food assistance as the primary service received, with an additional person reporting food assistance as either a secondary or additional service received. Eighteen out of 19 client participants from the EAFB reported food assistance as the primary service received, with an additional person reporting some other service as the primary service received. (See Appendix D for the Survey administered to the Client Participants of the Nonprofit Organizations; and Appendix E for the Survey administered to the Nonprofit Organization's Employee/Executive Participants).

Similar to the distinctions made on the previous surveys, the client surveys for both of the two nonprofits are the same except for question numbers 2 and 9. Question number two lists the particular name of the organization and is therefore different depending on which organization's clients received the survey. This was done to protect the anonymity of the participating organizations, as was question nine, which lists the particular organization's services.

The dependent variable in this study was Client Satisfaction, and the independent variables were: (1) Organizational Type and (2) Perceived Bureaucratic Red Tape/ Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines. Organizational Type refers to whether an organization is nonprofit or public sector (governmental). Perceived bureaucratic red tape is the employee version of red tape, whereas difficult organizational rules and guidelines is an indicator for red tape experienced by clients. According to Roth and Sonnert (2010) and Bozeman (1993) organizational red tape is a specific dysfunction of bureaucracy and describes the rules,

regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden for the organization but have no efficacy for the rules' functional object (p. 386, 283). Bozeman (1993) and others explain further that red tape involves excessive or meaningless paperwork; a high degree of formalization and constraint; unnecessary rules, procedures and regulations; inefficiency; unjustifiable delays; and as a consequence – frustration and vexation (Bennett and Johnson, 1979; Hall, 1968; Bozeman, Reed, and Scott, 1992). Employees are behind the scenes and are able to perceive organizational or “bureaucratic red tape.” For example, they experience, firsthand, whether there is excessive or seemingly meaningless paperwork, whether their organization is highly formalized and constraining, as well as the extent and impact of unnecessary rules, procedures, regulations and their contribution to inefficiency and unnecessary delays in service. As such, the employees who are participants will be assessed on their perception of bureaucratic red tape within their organization.

Clients, on the other hand, are able to experience elements and effects of organizational red tape, and can discuss how these elements impact services and therefore their satisfaction with its delivery. For example, client participants can experience and report on difficult organizational guidelines as a result of an overly formalized and constraining organizational structure, or how certain rules, procedures and regulations, as well as delays impact their satisfaction with services. In this regard, difficult organizational guidelines might refer to “excessive” or complex paperwork, or rules, procedures and regulations that make it “difficult” for clients to receive services. In summary, both variables refer to the concept of ‘red tape’. However, perceived bureaucratic red tape refers to the employees’ direct experience of red tape and difficult organizational guidelines refer to the client’s mostly indirect experience of organizational red tape.

Surveys were utilized for both clients and executives/employees of the governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations. The use of a survey was suited to this study for the purpose of providing analysis of “attitudes and opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2009, p. 12). In other words, using a survey allowed me to sample the actual clients of each type of organization to obtain their opinions and perspectives of their respective organization’s food assistance services. Because a quantitative design was employed, this study can be replicated and generalizations made concerning exploration of other samples, or organization types and agency jurisdictions.

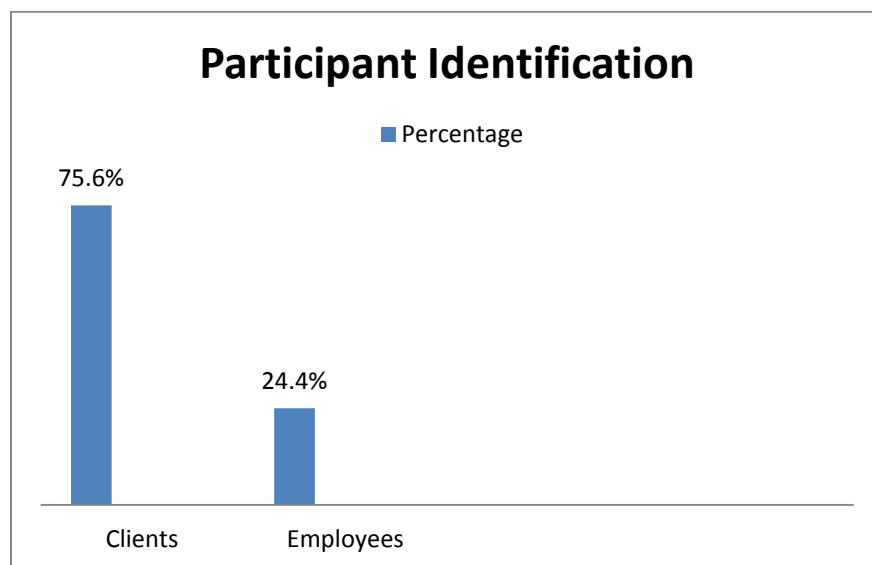
### Results

This study focuses on the extent to which differences in organizational dynamics of two governmental agencies and two nonprofit organizations influence their capacity and effectiveness in delivering food assistance services in Alabama and Georgia, as perceived by clients of the respective organizations. The objective was to determine which organizational model’s (i.e. nonprofit or government) clients perceived to be more satisfactory in the delivery of food assistance programs and services. In an effort to gauge client’s level of satisfaction, two different surveys were distributed. A 16 question survey was given to clients and a 26 question survey to employees and executives of the four organizations to incorporate their perspectives and insights into organizational dynamics. Though only 120 surveys were needed to conduct the study, a total of 360 surveys were brought to each organization. 172 surveys were returned. The results are presented in this chapter.

## Nature of Sample

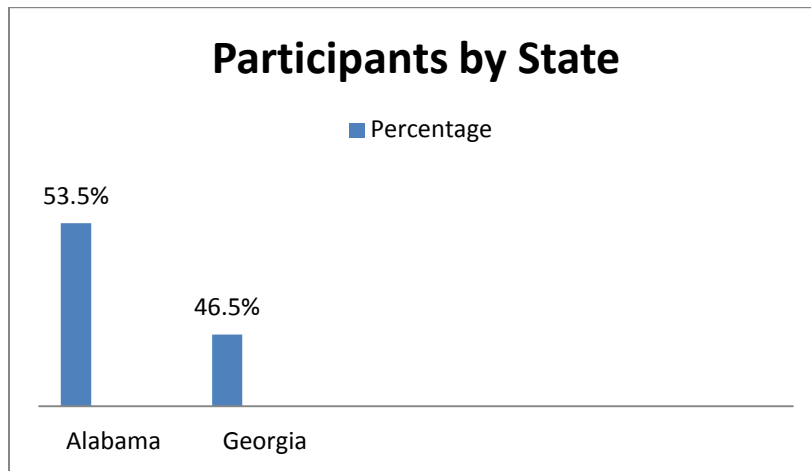
Results of the frequency analysis showed that 172 individuals participated in this research study. Of the 172 participants, 130 were clients of the organizations (75.6%) and 42 were employees of the organizations (24.4%) (See Figure 6.2). Ninety-two were from Alabama (53.5%) and 80 were from Georgia (46.5%) (See Figure 6.3). Fifty-one (29.6%) were from nonprofit organizations: 32 were from the Atlanta Community Food Bank (18.6%), 19 were from the Food Bank of East Alabama (11%); whereas 121 (70.4%) were from governmental agencies: 49 were from the Dekalb County Board of Health (28.5%), 72 were from the Montgomery County Department of Human Resources (41.9%) (See Figure 6.4a and 6.4b). 21.5% were male, 78.5% were female (See Figure 6.5). Less than one percent was Asian or White Hispanic, 77.9% were African American/Black, 17.4% were White, and 3.5% reported 2 or more races (See Figure 6.6).

**Figure 6.2 Participant Identification**

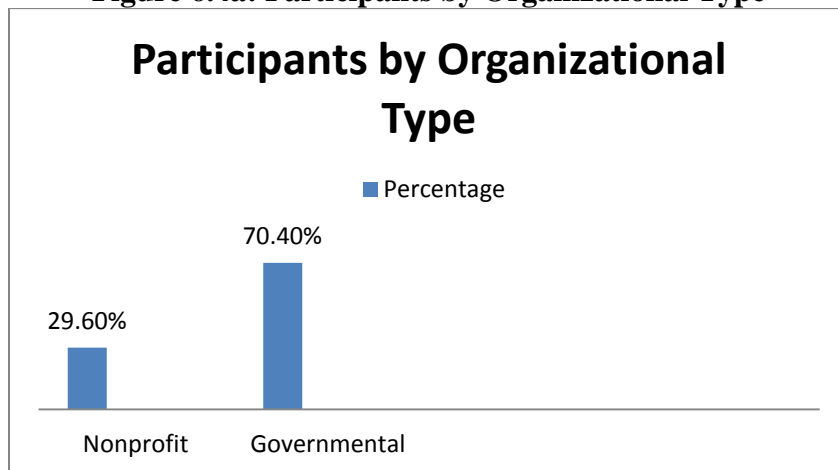




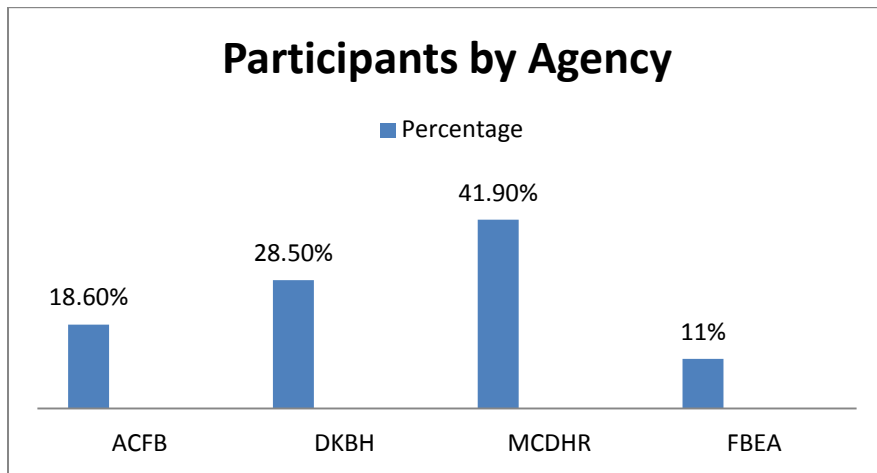
**Figure 6.3: Participants by State**



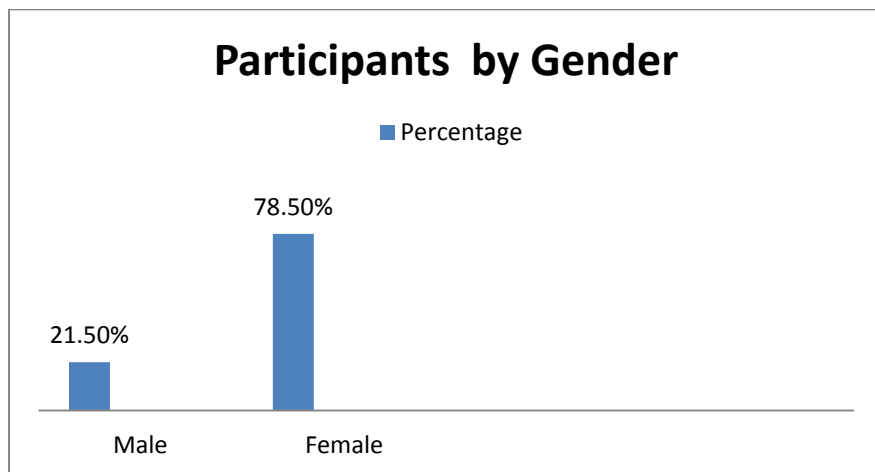
**Figure 6.4a: Participants by Organizational Type**



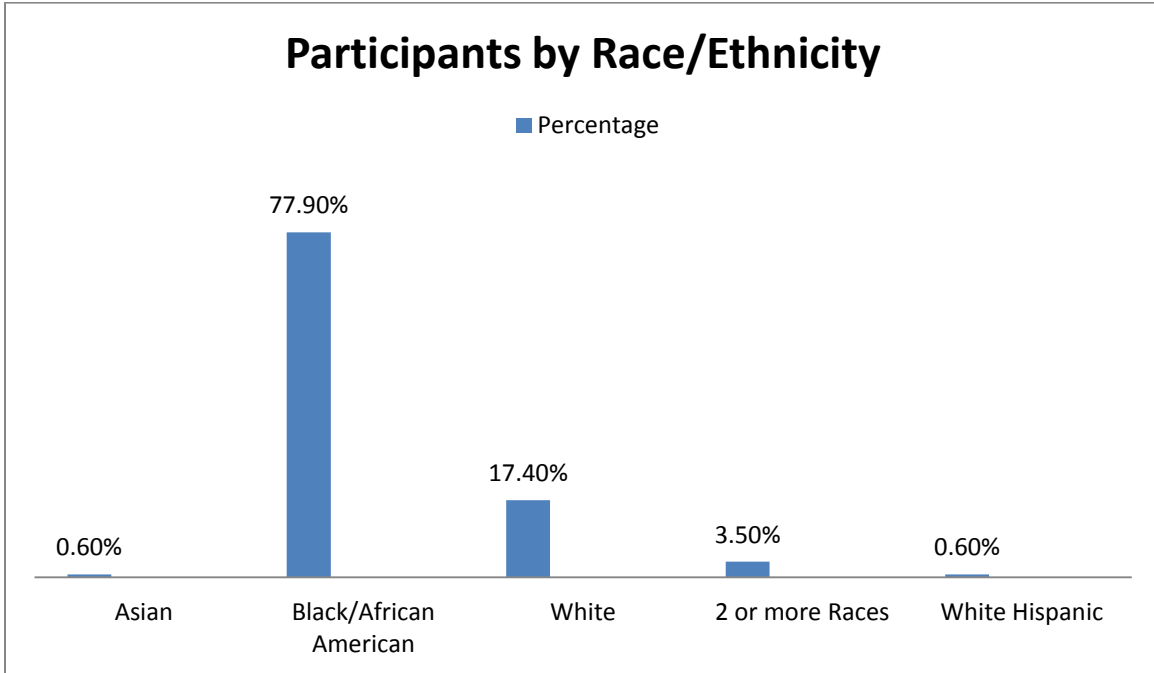
**Figure 6.4b: Participants by Agency**



**Figure 6.5: Participants by Gender**



**Figure 6.6: Participants by Race/Ethnicity**



### Client Characteristics

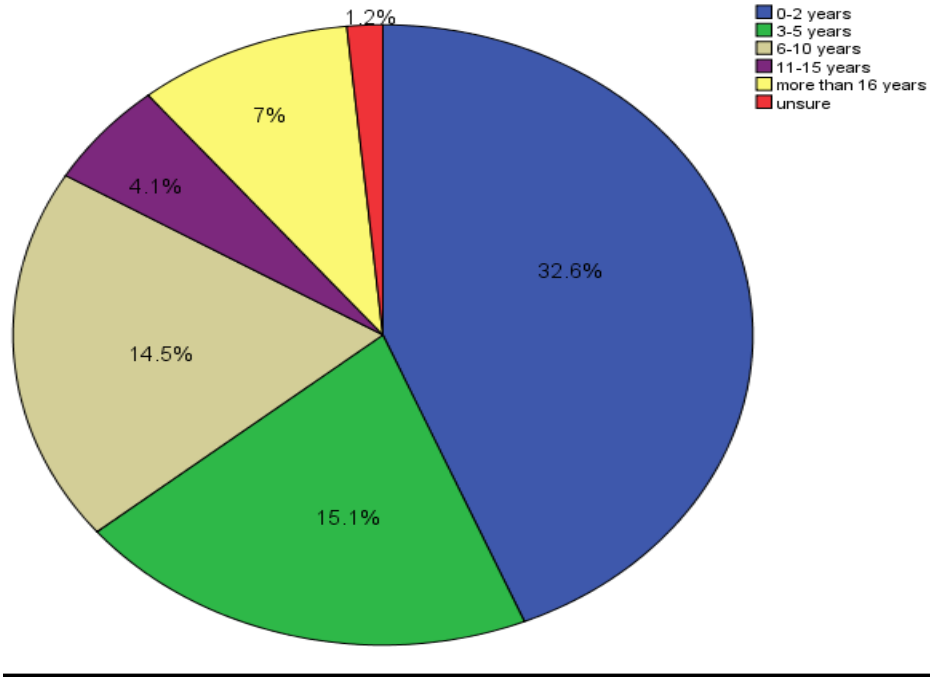
In regard to education, a crosstabulation was used to extract client data from the sample of all participant data. A crosstabulation analysis is a statistical technique in the form of a data table that allows examination of the relationships between variables (Manheim et al., 2006). In this analysis, those variables are Identification of Participant (client or employee) and Education. 169 total participants reported their level of education. Three client participants (1.7% of the total sample) did not report their level of education. Of the 169 total participants, 127 were clients of the organizations and most reported having only a high school diploma (54%). Sixteen client participants had Associate's degrees (13%), 3 client participants had Bachelor's degrees (.02%), 7 client participants Master's degrees (.06%), 20 client participants had Technical or Other types of degrees (.16%), and 3 client participants reported having either a high school diploma and a technical degree or an Associate's degree and a technical degree (.02%) (See Figure 6.7).

**Figure 6.7: Clients versus Employees' Level of Education**

		Level Of Education								
		High School Diploma	Assoc. Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctorate Degree	Technical Degree	High School/Technical Degree	Assoc. /Technical Degree	
ID of Participants	1. Clients	68	16	13	7	0	20	1	2	
	2. Emp.	8	2	16	8	0	7	1	0	
	3. Total	76	18	29	15	0	27	2	2	

The majority of clients had been receiving services from their respective organization for a relatively short period of time. 32.6 % of clients had received services from their respective organization between 0 and 2 years, 15.1% of clients received services between 3 and 5 years, 14.5% had received services between 6 and 10 years, 4.1% had received services for 11-15 years, and 7% had received services for more than 16 years. 1.2% was unsure of how long they had received services from their respective organizations. 44 client participants (25.6%) did not report how long they had received services from their respective organizations (See Figure 6.8).

**Figure 6.8: Number of Years Clients Received All Services from Their Organization**



Hypothesis 1: Client Satisfaction and Organizational Type

A second crosstabulation was performed examining the variables Agency and Client Satisfaction to ascertain which agencies had higher levels of client satisfaction. Of the 26 client participants from the ACFB, the majority, 17 (65%) reported being “Very Satisfied” with food assistance services. Out of the remaining 9 client participants from the ACFB, 7 reported being “Satisfied,” 1 reported being “Very Dissatisfied” and 1 reported being unsure. Of the 35 client participants from the DCBH, the majority, 19 (54%) reported being “Satisfied” with food assistance (i.e. WIC) services. Out of the remaining 16 client participants from the DCBH, 14 reported being “Very Satisfied,” and 2 reported being “Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied” with food assistance (i.e. WIC) services. Of the 52 client participants from the MCDHR, the majority, 18 (35%) reported being “Satisfied” with food assistance (i.e. food stamps) services. Out of the remaining 34 client participants, 16 reported being “Very Satisfied,” 7 reported being “Neither

Satisfied/Dissatisfied,” 7 reported being “Dissatisfied” and 4 reported being “Very Dissatisfied.” Finally, of the 15 client participants from the EAFB, the majority, 10 (67%) reported being “Very Satisfied” with food assistance services. The remaining 5 client participants reported being “Satisfied” with the services. Both of the nonprofit organization’s had a majority of clients report being “Very Satisfied,” whereas, both governmental agencies had a majority of clients report being “Satisfied.” The data table is below (See Figure 6.9).

**Figure 6.9: Client Rating of Satisfaction by Agency**

		Client Satisfaction						Total
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Unsure	
Agency	ACFB	17	7	0	0	1	1	26
	DCBH	14	19	2	0	0	0	35
	MCDHR	16	18	7	7	4	0	52
	EAFB	10	5	0	0	0	0	15
	<b>Total</b>	57	49	9	7	5	1	128

To determine the strength of the association as well as the statistical significance of the measures of client satisfaction in the crosstabulation, Gamma was used. Gamma is a coefficient of association for ordinal variables. Ordinal variables are scales that assign a number to a variable (e.g. 1= “Very Satisfied” through 5= “Very Dissatisfied”), ranking it from high to low. The coefficient of association (Gamma, in this case) provides a measure of the degree and direction of association between the two variables (Manheim et al., 2006). In other words, Gamma measures whether the relationship between the variables is strong (degree) and/or

positive or negative (direction). A positive relationship will be denoted by a Gamma (G) value of 1 and is an indication of perfect agreement (high scores with high scores, low scores with low). A negative relationship will be denoted by a G value of -1, and is an indication of a perfect inversion (highest scores on one variable with lowest scores on the other and vice versa). The function of Gamma is to predict the ranking or position of cases, as a measure of how close the rankings of these variables come to perfect agreement. A G value of 0 indicates no association between the variables (Manheim et al., 2006).

The relationship between Agency and Client Satisfaction produced a G value of .18, with a significance of .101. This illustrated that there was only a weak association between the particular agency and the client's rating of satisfaction, and that the association was not statistically significant. To confirm those results, I sought the use of a Chi-square measure of statistical significance. Chi-square is a test of statistical significance for nominal variables that tells whether a nominal-level association between two variables results from chance (Manheim et al., 2006). Since client satisfaction was an ordinal level variable, I had to transform the ordinal variables into nominal variables, thereby recoding the variables into the smallest number of categories that were still logically useful. I did this by consolidating Very Satisfied and Satisfied into 1 variable and Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, and Very Dissatisfied into a second variable. For client satisfaction, the recoded variables became (1) Satisfied and (2) Unsatisfied. For the purposes of using Chi-square it was also necessary to transform Agency into a 2x2 contingency table, so I recoded the Agency variable from 1 = ACFB, 2 = DCBH, 3 = MCDHR and 4 = EAFB into 2 categories, 1 for ACFB and EAFB (the nonprofit organizations) and a second category for DCBH and MCDHR (the government agencies). The variable Agency, which distinguished between four different organizations (two nonprofit and two government)

became Organizational Type, which grouped and compared the organizations by type - nonprofit versus government. With the recoded variables in place, Chi-square indicated a significant relationship between the variables Organization Type and Client Satisfaction ( $p = .011$ ). To further examine the relationship between Organizational Type and Client Satisfaction, in terms of odds ratios, I ran a logistic regression. The logistic regression was run with Client Satisfaction as the dependent (or outcome) variable and Organizational Type as the predictor variable, with State of Service, and Difficult Organizational Guidelines as the covariables that were controlled for in the model. Logistic regression revealed that when State of Service and Difficult Organizational Guidelines were controlled for, Organizational Type did not affect Client Satisfaction. Specifically, nonprofit organizations were not more likely to experience client satisfaction than governmental agencies ( $p = .19$ ).

Additionally, State of Service was also not significant ( $p = .09$ ). In other words, clients from Alabama were no more satisfied than clients from Georgia and clients from nonprofit organizations were no more satisfied than clients from governmental agencies. In summary, client satisfaction did not differ between agencies, and was therefore not impacted by Organizational Type. Thus, hypothesis 1, which states that *Clients from nonprofit organizations will be more satisfied with food assistance services than clients of government agencies receiving food assistance* is rejected as Organizational Type (nonprofit versus governmental) is shown not to affect Client Satisfaction. The results indicate that clients from nonprofit organizations are not more satisfied with food assistance services than clients of governmental agencies. Moreover, this finding persisted regardless of which state the client received services from, or even which organization type they received services from. In other words, clients were extremely dissatisfied with red tape whether it came from a governmental agency or a nonprofit



organization. Clients did not make a distinction of which type of organization red tape was more likely to come from, it seemingly did not matter. What was significant, in terms of impacting client satisfaction, was whether clients perceived that red tape existed. Perceived bureaucratic red tape, in any organization type, is associated with client satisfaction, such that it decreases satisfaction in services, and this association is statistically significant. There was, however, a significant relationship between Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines and Client Satisfaction, such that clients who perceived No Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines (red tape) were almost 10 times more likely to be satisfied than clients who perceive Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines (red tape)(Adjusted Odds Ratio, 9.7; Confidence Interval, 3-31.3;  $p = .000$ ) . (See Figure 6. 10).

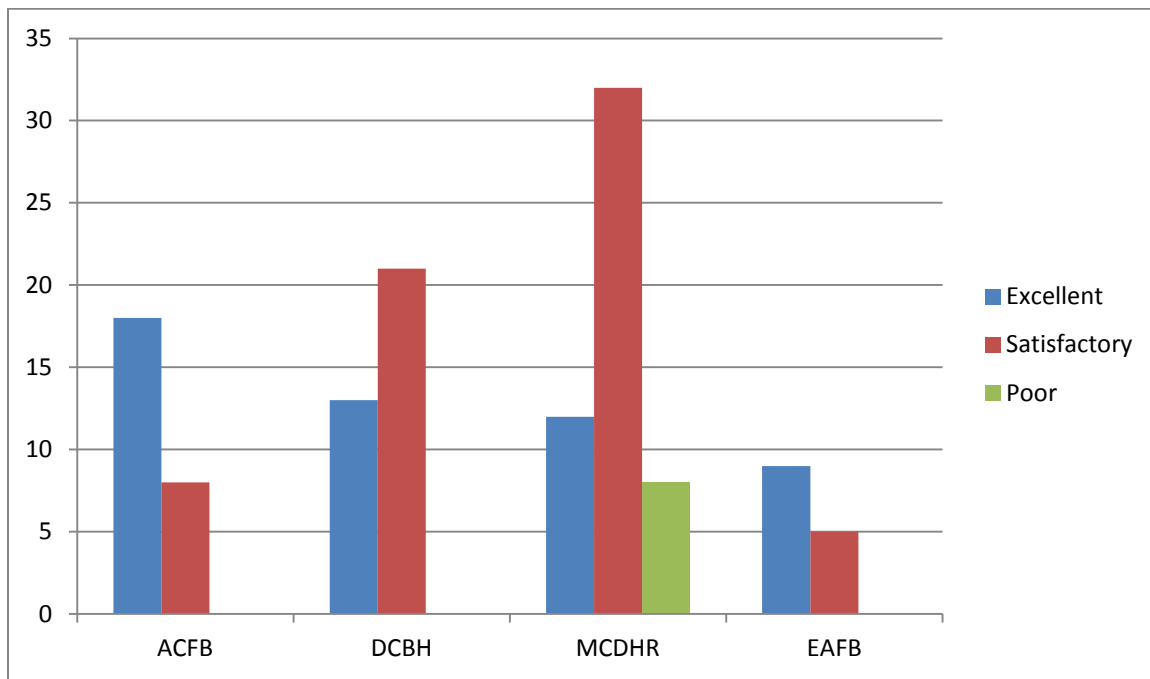
**Figure 6.10 Test of Hypothesis 1 in Multivariable Logistic Regression Model**

Predictor Variable	B Coefficient	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	df	Significance (p)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Interval
Organization Type	1.06	.817	1.7	1	.19	2.9	.6 - 14.4
State of Service	-1.09	.65	2.9	1	.09	.3	.09 – 1.2
Difficult Organizational Guidelines	2.27	.60	14.4	1	.000	9.7	3 – 31.3

Clients were also asked to give an overall rating of their respective organizations. The majority of clients rated their organization as Satisfactory (38.4%). 30.2% rated their organization as Excellent. Less than 1% rated their organization as between Excellent and Satisfactory, and only 4.7% rated their organization as Poor. A break down by agency revealed that 18 out of 27 clients from the ACFB rated the organization as Excellent (67%), with an additional 1 person rating the organization as between Excellent and Satisfactory, and 8 people

rating the organization as Satisfactory. There were no Poor ratings. The DCBH had 13 out of 34 clients rate the organization as Excellent (38%), with an additional 21 rating the organization as Satisfactory (62%). There were no Poor ratings. The MCDHR had 12 out of 52 clients rate the agency as Excellent (23%), with an additional 32 rating the organization as Satisfactory (62%). 8 clients rated the organization as Poor. MCDHR was the only organization to have ratings of Poor. The EAFB had 9 out of 14 clients rate the organization as Excellent (64%), with an additional 5 clients rating the organization as Satisfactory (36%) (See Figure 6.11).

**Figure 6.11: Client’s Rating of Organization by Agency**

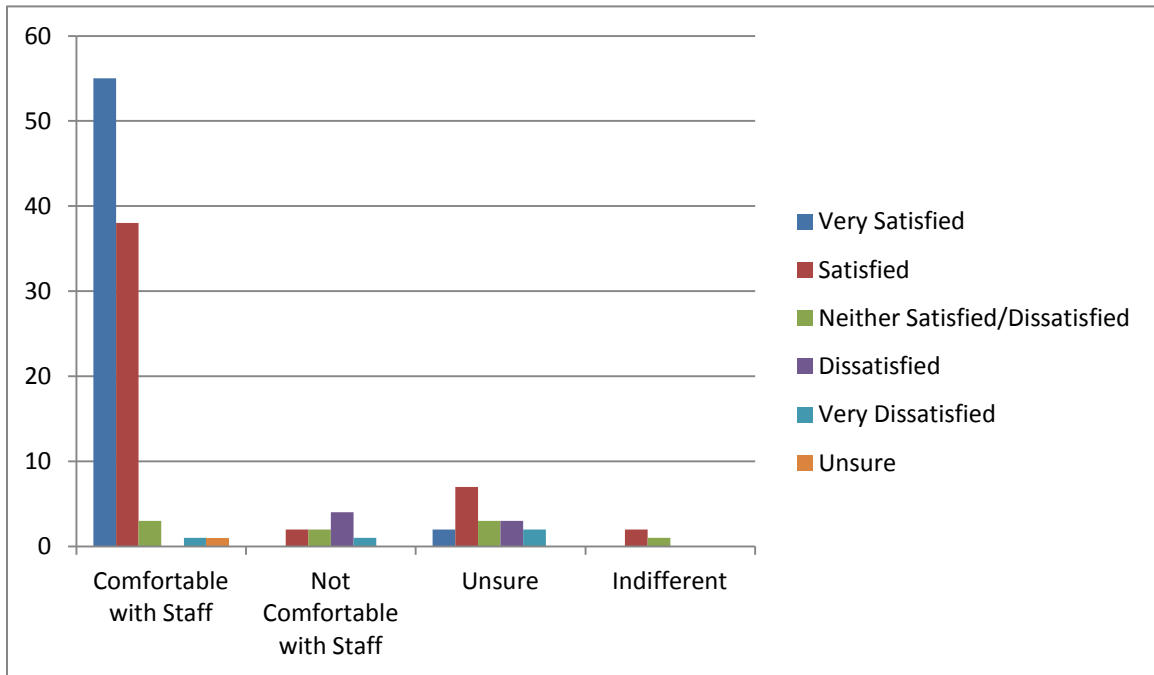


Finally, clients were asked about their comfort with staff in an effort to determine if this variable would affect client satisfaction. The majority of the client participants reported feeling comfortable with the staff (57%). 5.2% reported that they did not feel comfortable with the staff, nearly 10% reported being unsure of whether they felt comfortable or not with staff, and 1.7% reported feeling indifferent concerning comfort with staff. The crosstabulation examining

Client Comfort with Staff and Client Satisfaction, and its accompanying G value of .76 revealed a strong relationship between client's comfort with staff and their level of satisfaction with services. Additionally, the association between the variables was statistically significant ( $p = .000$ ). After recoding the variables into two categories consisting of (1) Yes, client comfortable with staff responses and (2) No, Unsure, and Indifferent responses, and using the previously recoded variables for Client Satisfaction (1) Satisfied and (2) Unsatisfied, the data were examined using logistic regression.

Further examination with a logistic regression yielded significant results. With Client Satisfaction as the outcome variable, Client Comfort with Staff as the predictor variable, and Organization Type, State of Service, and Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines as the covariates controlled for in the model, results indicate that when clients are more comfortable with staff, they are more than 17 times more likely to be satisfied with services (Odds Ratio, 17.09; Confidence Interval, 4.43-66.02;  $p = .000$ ). As such, the client's comfort with staff members greatly affects their satisfaction with the services of the organization (See Figure 6.12). Moreover, Client Comfort with Staff had a greater impact on Client Satisfaction than even the perception of red tape (Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines) (Odds Ratio, 5.35; Confidence Interval, 1.28-23.98;  $p = .02$ ) (See Figure 6.13)

**Figure 6.12: Relationship between Client Satisfaction and Comfort with Staff**



G = .76  
p = .000

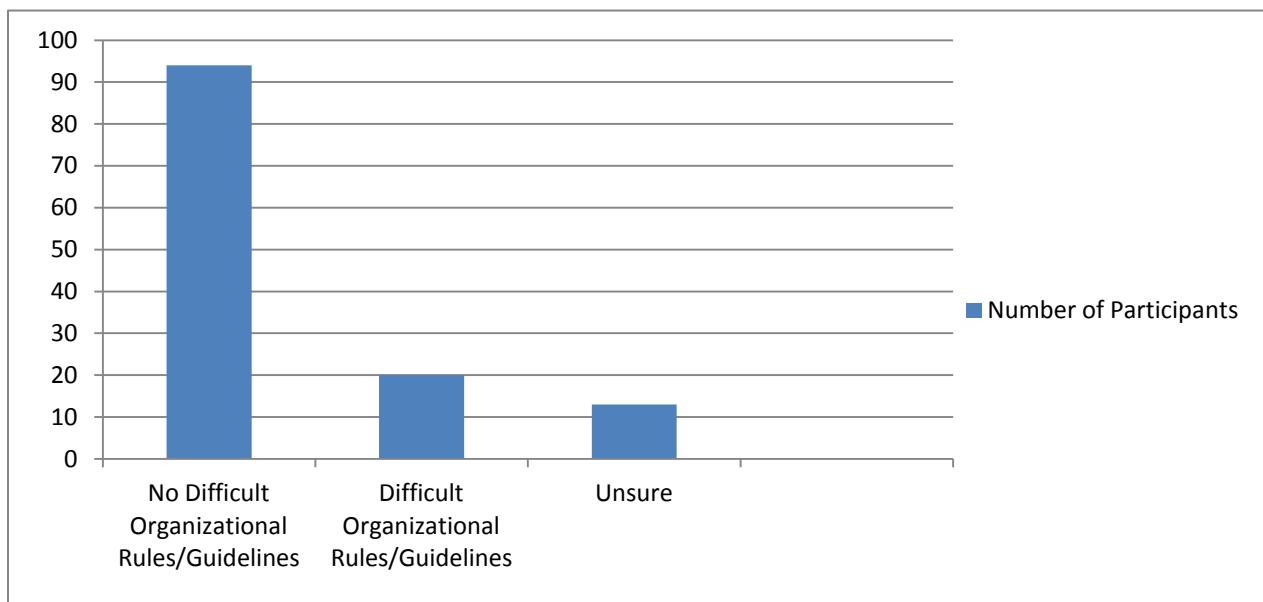
**Figure 6.13 Test of A Priori Hypothesis in Multivariable Logistic Regression Model**

Predictor Variable	B Coefficient	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	df	Significance (p)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Interval
Organization Type	.097	.923	.011	1	.92	1.10	.18 - 6.74
State of Service	-.997	.741	1.81	1	.18	.369	.09 - 1.58
Client Comfort with Staff	2.84	.689	16.96	1	.000	17.09	4.43 - 66.02
Difficult Organizational Guidelines	1.71	.749	5.21	1	.02	5.53	1.28 - 23.98

## Hypothesis 2: Organizational Rules and Guidelines (Clients)

The second hypothesis states that *clients from governmental agencies will perceive more organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) as hindrances to satisfactory services than clients from nonprofit organizations*. A frequency analysis of both types of organizations revealed that over 54% of clients did not feel that organizational rules and guidelines from their organization made it more difficult for them to receive food assistance services. 11.6% stated that they did believe that organizational rules and guidelines made it more difficult for them to receive food assistance services, and 7.6% were unsure (See Figure 6.14).

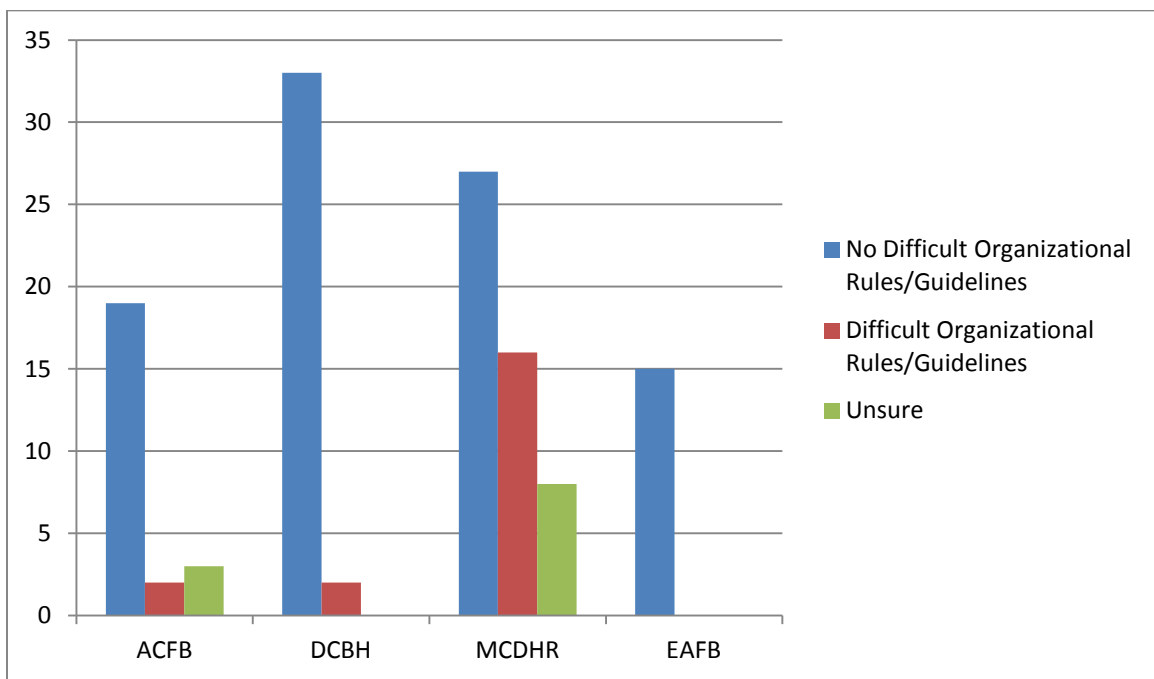
**Figure 6.14: All Clients Reporting of Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines by Number of Participants**



Broken down by agency, the majority of clients from all the agencies did not believe that organizational rules and guidelines adversely affected their receipt of food assistance services (73% from the ACFB; 94% from the DCBH; 53% from the MCDHR; and all 15 participants from the EAFB = 100%). An additional 2 participants from the ACFB did not perceive difficult organizational rules and guidelines as making it more difficult to receive services (.08%), and 5

were unsure (19%). From the DCBH, 2 did perceive difficult organizational rules and guidelines as making it more difficult to receive services (.06%). From the MCDHR 16 did perceive organizational rules and guidelines as making it more difficult to receive services (31%), and 8 were unsure (16%). Finally, for the EAFB no participants reported organizational rules and guidelines as hindrances to services (See Figure 6.15).

**Figure 6.15: All Clients Reporting of Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines by Agency**

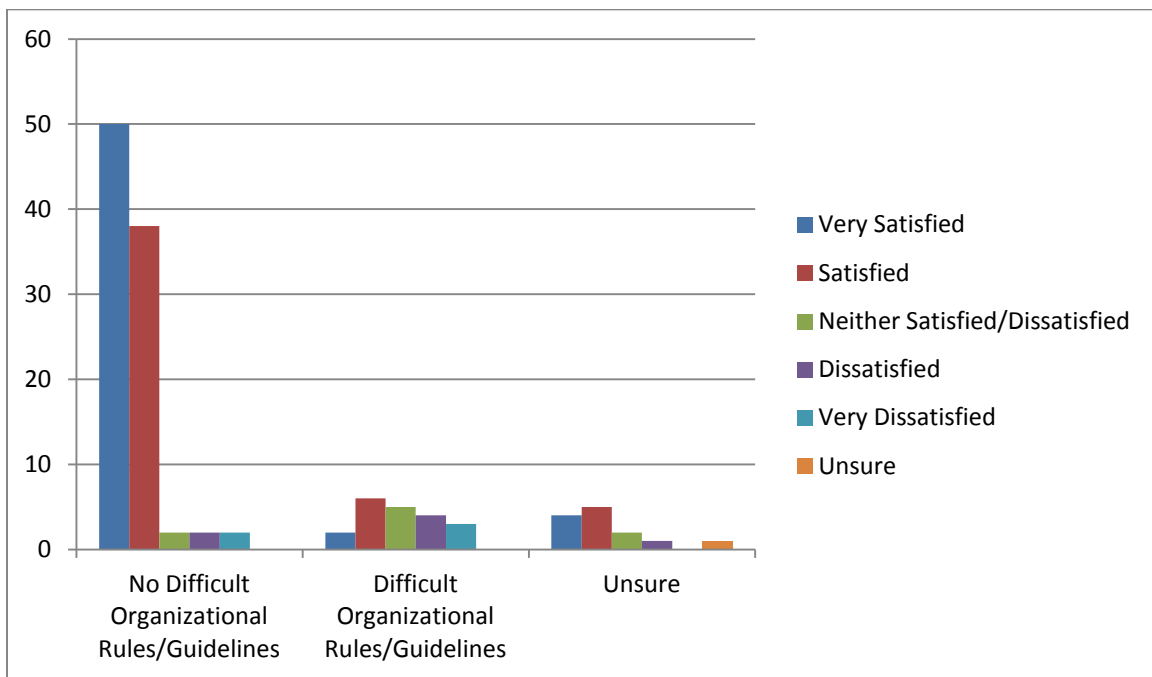


**p = .000**

Using the previously recoded variables for Client Satisfaction and Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines (such that category 1 means that Yes, there are perceived difficult organizational rules and guidelines and category 2 means that No, there are not perceived difficult organizational rules and guidelines) a crosstabulation was performed to assess whether there was a relationship between the variables in question. The initial crosstabulation, revealed that there was a relationship between Client Satisfaction and perceived Difficult

Organizational Rules and Guidelines ( $p = .000$ ) (See Figure 6.16). Further examination utilizing a logistic regression with perceived Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines as the outcome variable, Organization Type as the predictor variable, and State of Service as the covariate controlled for in the model, revealed that Organization Type was not significantly related to perceived Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines in a model that controlled for the State where services were received ( $p = .07$ ). There was, however, a significant relationship between State of Service and perceived Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines such that a larger percentage of clients from Alabama perceived difficult organizational rules and guidelines than clients from Georgia (approximately 25%) (Odds Ratio, .26; Confidence Interval, .08-.85;  $p = .03$ ) (See Figure 6.17).

**Figure 6.16: Clients' Reporting of Difficult Organizational Rules and Guidelines and Client Satisfaction**



**$p = .000$**

**Figure 6.17: Test of Hypothesis 2 in Multivariable Logistic Regression Model**

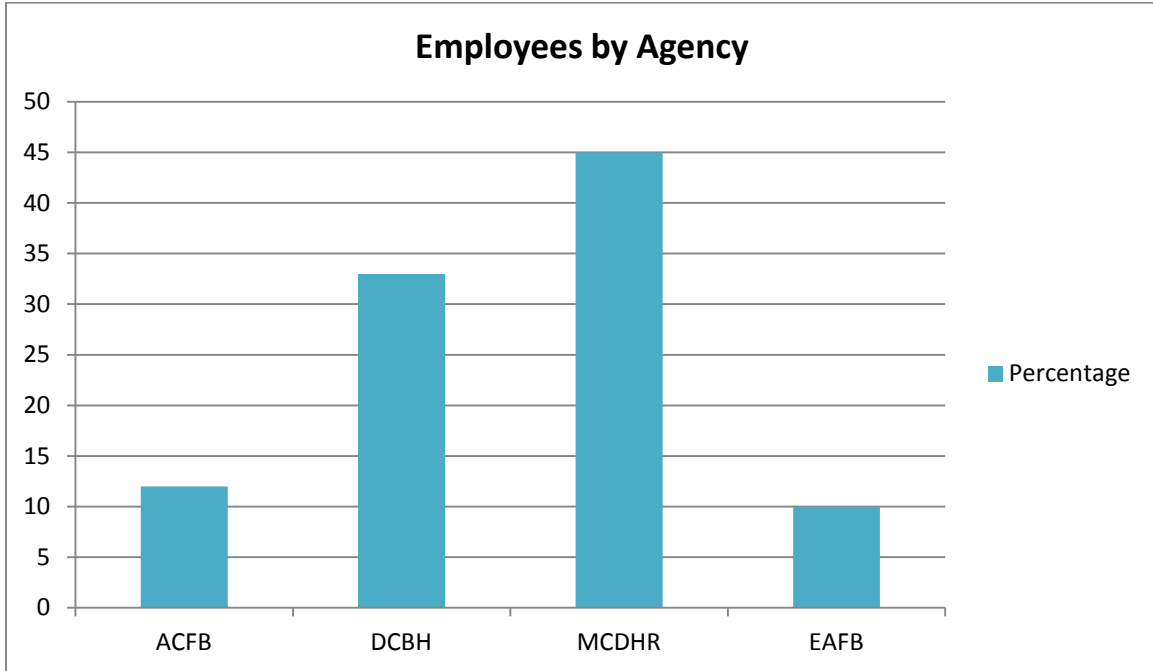
Predictor Variable	b Coefficient	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	df	Significance (p)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Interval
Organization Type	1.41	.785	3.22	1	.07	4.09	.88 – 19.06
State of Service	-1.34	.601	4.96	1	.03	.26	.08 - .85

Employee Characteristics

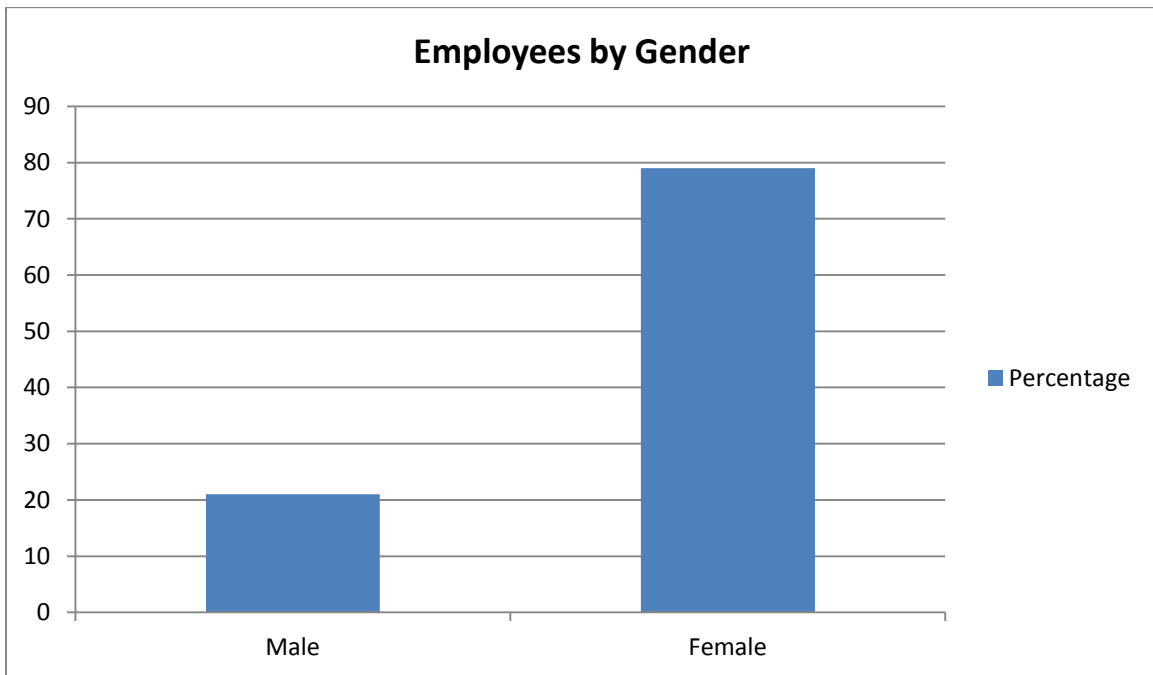
Forty-two employees across 4 different organizations participated in this research study. 5 employees were from ACFB (12%), 14 from DKBH (33%), 19 from MCDHR (45%) and 4 from EAFB (10%) (See Figure 6.18). Nine employees were male (21%) and 33 were female (79%) (See Figure 6.19). Thirty employees were Black/African American (71%), 10 were White (24%), and 2 were 2 or more races(.05%) (See Figure 6.20). Eight employees held high school diplomas(19%), 2 employees held Associate’s degrees (.05%), 16 held bachelor’s degrees (38%), 8 held Master’s degrees (19%), 7 held Technical degrees (17%), and 1 held a high school diploma and a technical degree (.02%) (See Figure 6.21). 4.1% of employees (7) were at the Executive/manager level, 19.2% were employees (33), and 1.2% (2) classified themselves at level “other” (See Figure 6.22). Concerning job title, 1.2% (2) labeled themselves as Director, 3.5% (6) labeled themselves as Managers, 2.3%(4) labeled themselves as Supervisors, another 2.3% (4) labeled themselves as Administrators, and over 15% (26) labeled their job title as “Other.” 4.7% (8) of employees had between 0 and 2 years of experience, 10.5% (18) of employees had between 3 and 5 years of experience, 5.8% (10) of employees had between 6 and 10 years of experience, 2.3% (4) had between 11 and 15 years of experience and 1.2% (2) had more than 16 years of experience (See Figure 6.23).



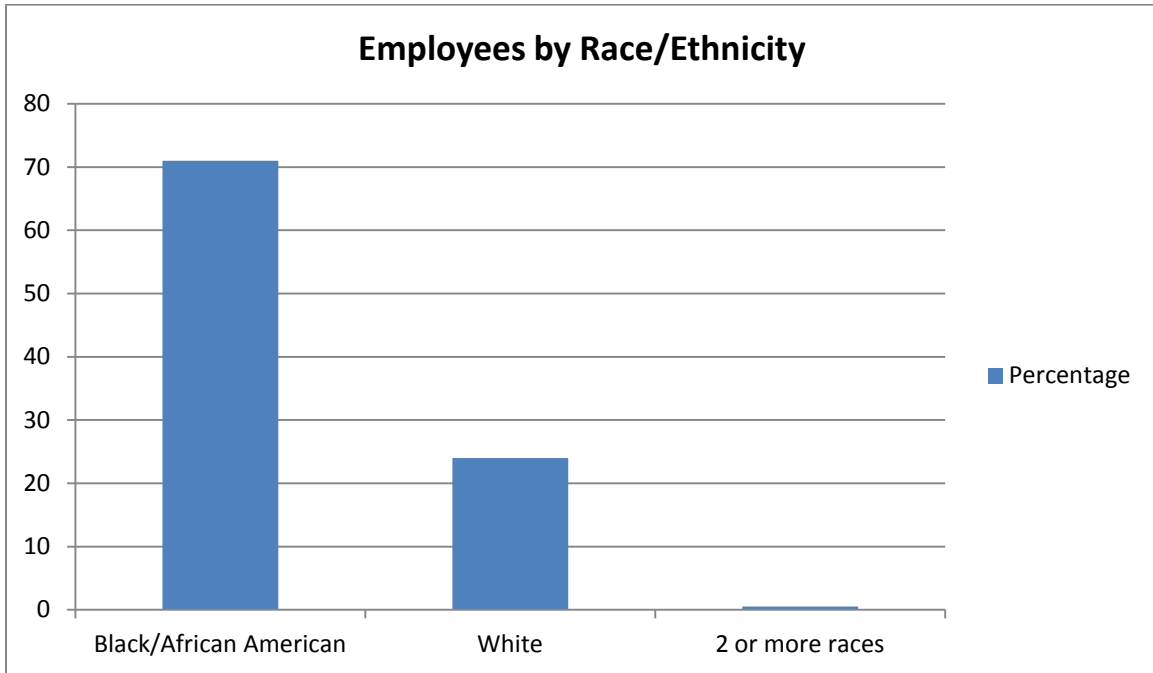
**Figure 6.18: Employees by Agency**



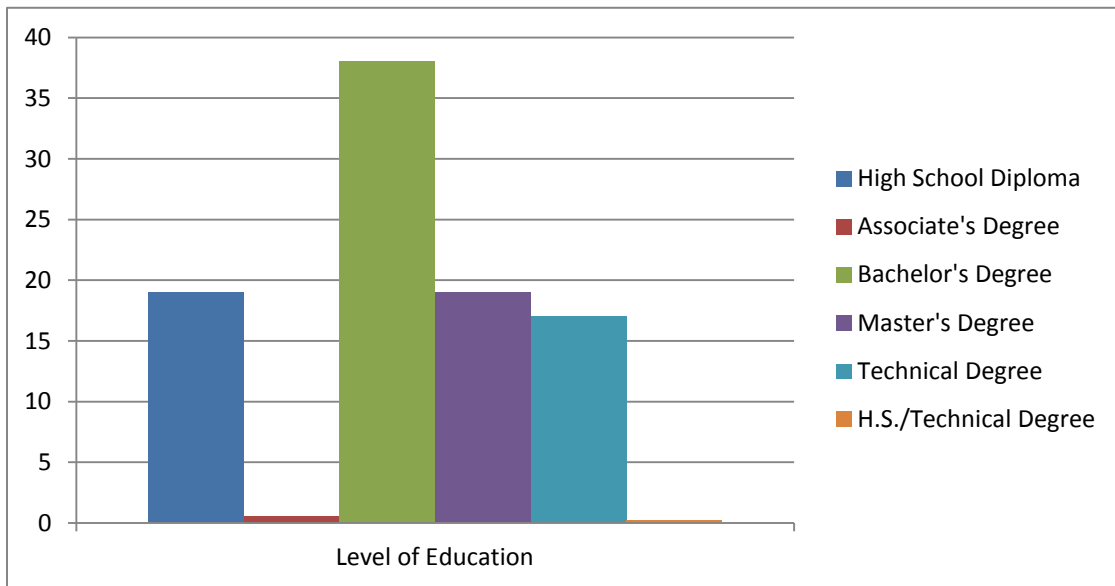
**Figure 6.19: Employees by Gender**



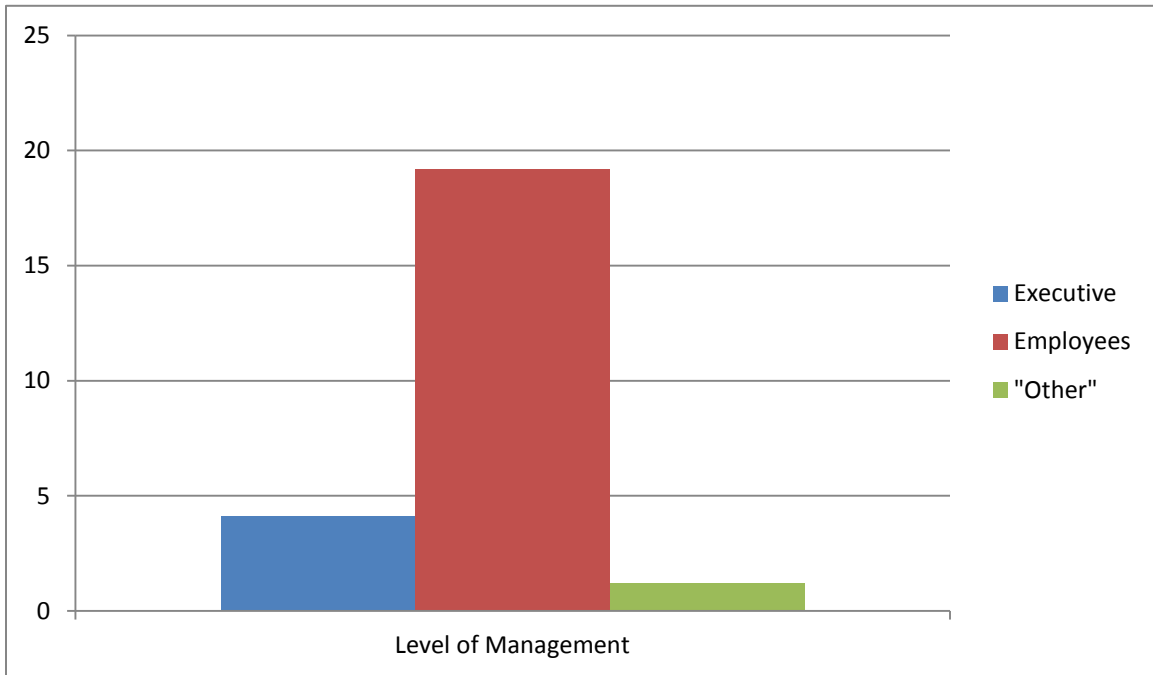
**Figure 6.20: Employees by Race/Ethnicity**



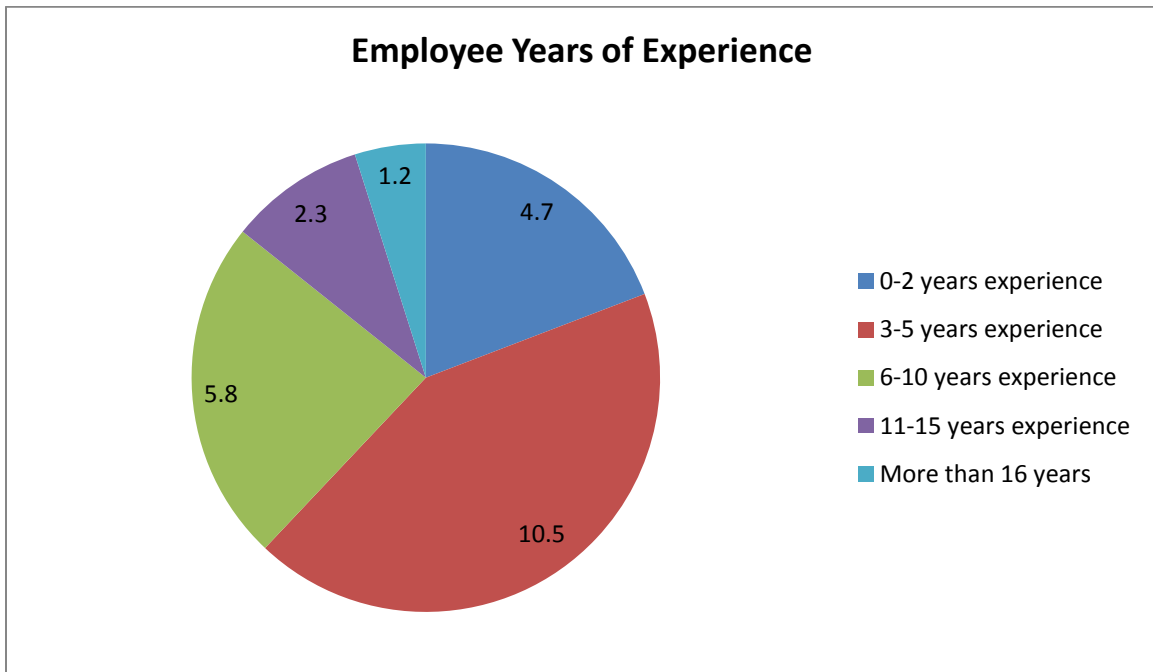
**Figure 6.21: Employees by Level of Education**



**Figure 6.22: Employees by Level of Management**

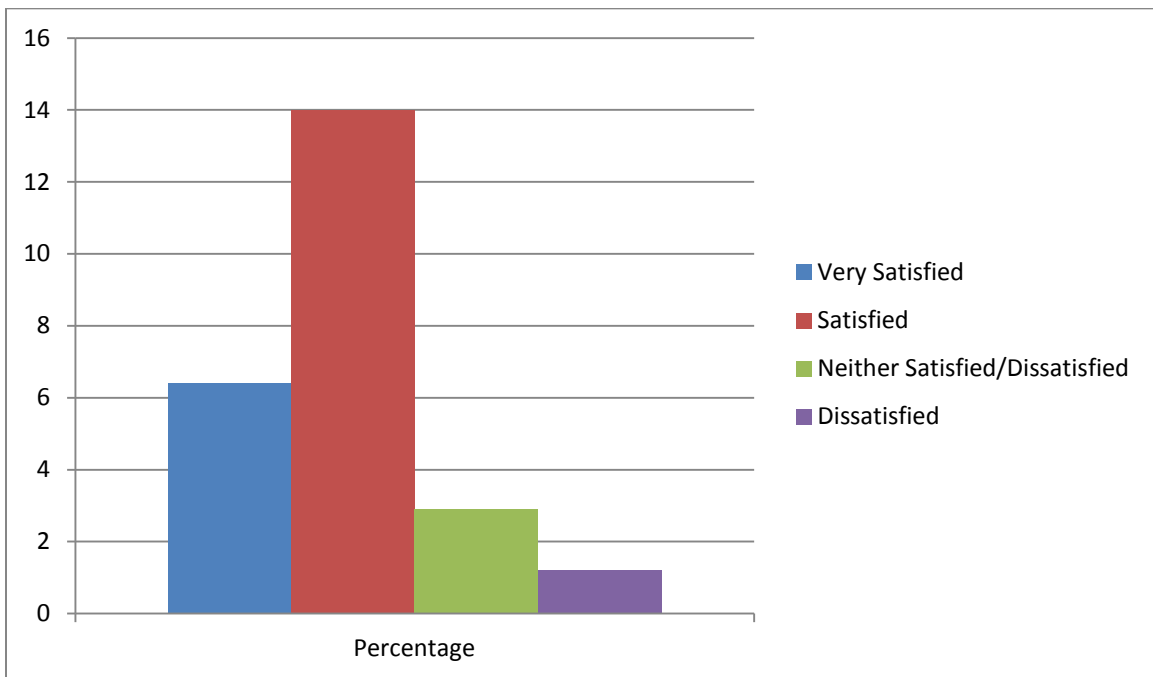


**Figure 6.23: Employee Years of Experience**

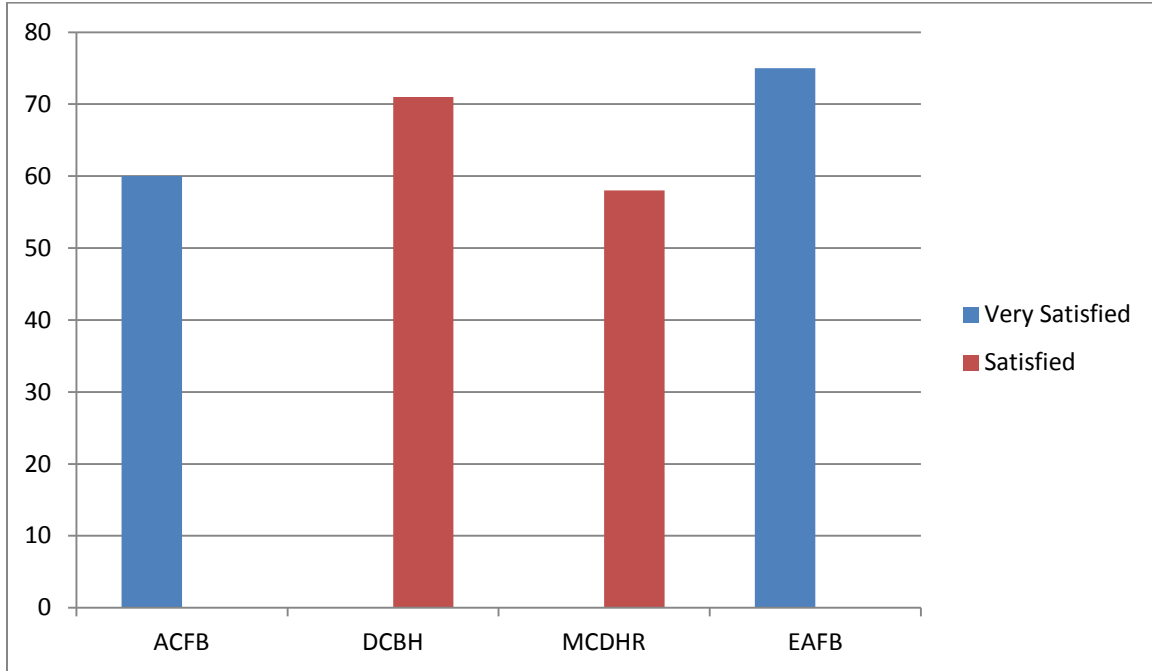


The majority of employees perceived that their clients would report their level of satisfaction as Satisfied, 24 (14%). Eleven (6.4%) of employees perceived that their clients would be Very Satisfied, 2.9% (5) reported that clients would be Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied, and 1.2% of employees (2) perceived that their clients would be Dissatisfied. Broken down by agency, the employees of the nonprofit organizations more often believed that clients would be Very Satisfied with services (ACFB = 3 out of 5 [60%], and EAFB 3 out of 4 [75%]). Employees from the governmental agencies more often believed that clients would report that they were Satisfied with services (DCBH = 10 out of 14 [71%]; MCDHR = 11 out of 19 [58%]).

**Figure 6.24: Employee’s Perception of Client Reporting of Satisfaction**



**Figure 6.25: Employee's Perception of Client Reporting of Satisfaction by Agency**

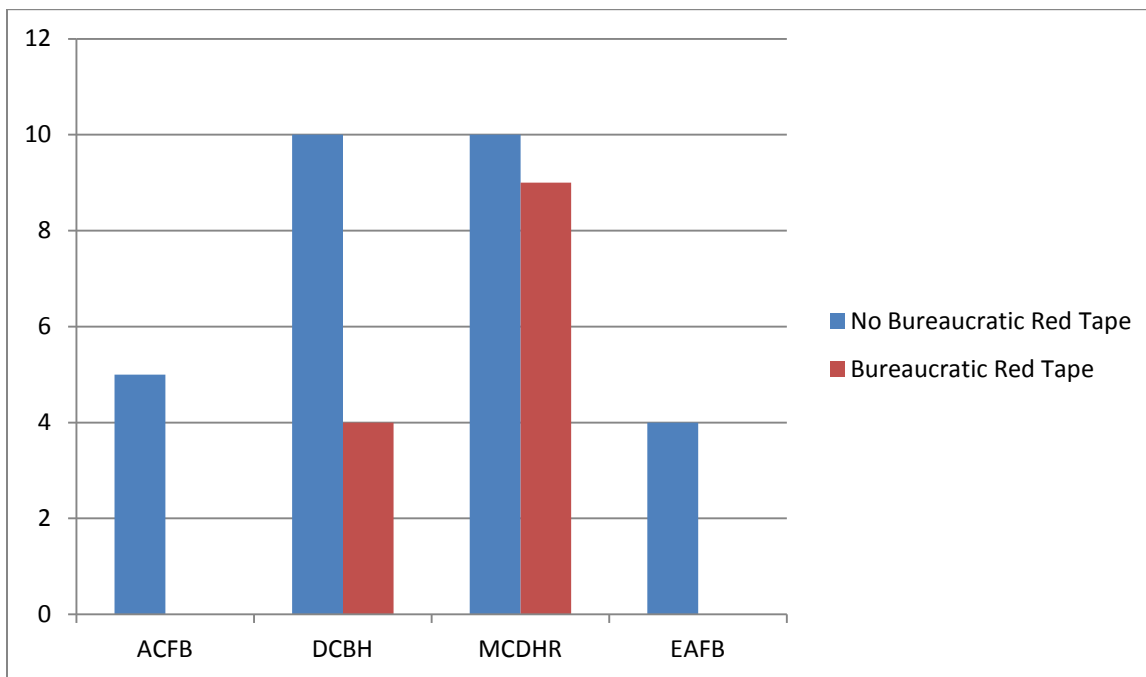


### Hypothesis 3: Perceived Bureaucratic Red Tape (Employees)

The final hypothesis states *employees from governmental agencies will perceive more bureaucratic red tape and hindrances to satisfactory service delivery than employees from nonprofit organizations*. A frequency analysis revealed that the majority of employees reported that they did not perceive bureaucratic red tape to hinder their ability to deliver services (69%). The remaining 31% did perceive bureaucratic red tape as a hindrance to effective service delivery. Broken down by organizational type, 100% of the employees from the nonprofit organizations (ACFB and EAFB) did not perceive bureaucratic red tape as a hindrance to service delivery. In contrast, 4 out of 14 employees from the DCBH (29%) and 9 out of 19 employees from the MCDHR (47%) did perceive bureaucratic red tape as hindering service delivery (See Figure 6.26). Still, the majority of employees from both organizational types did not perceive bureaucratic red tape in their organization. A crosstabulation revealed that no association existed

between perceived bureaucratic red tape and the employee's perception of client satisfaction ( $p = .49$ ). Recoding the variables into a  $2 \times 2$  contingency table as before, with Organization Type representing 1 for Nonprofit Organizations and 2 representing Governmental Agencies, and Perceived Bureaucratic Red Tape representing 1 for No perceived bureaucratic red tape and 2 for yes, perceived bureaucratic red tape yielded a significant chi-square ( $p = .02$ ). However, the contingency table had empty cells, which questions the validity of the chi-square measurement (See Figure 6.27). In this case, Fisher's Exact Test of Significance was used. Unlike chi-square, Fisher's Exact Test of Significance gives an exact significance despite violations in minimum expected frequency counts (empty cells). Fisher's Test of Significance yielded a Significance value of .038, indicating a significant relationship between relationship of Organization Type and Employee Perception of Bureaucratic Red Tape (See Figure 6.28). Thus, hypothesis 3 – employees from governmental agencies will perceive more bureaucratic red tape and hindrances to satisfactory service delivery than employees of nonprofit organizations - is confirmed. Organization type is significantly related to Perceived Bureaucratic Red Tape, such that greater incidences of government employees perceive bureaucratic red tape than employees of nonprofit organizations.

**Figure 6.26: Employee Perceived Bureaucratic Red Tape by Agency**



**P = .49**

**Figure 6.27: Relationship of Organization Type to Bureaucratic Red Tape: Raw Data and Percents**

	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Nonprofit Organization	9 (100%)	0 (0%)
Government Agency	20 (61%)	13 (39%)

**Figure 6.28: Relationship of Organization Type to Bureaucratic Red Tape: Fisher’s Exact Test of Significance**

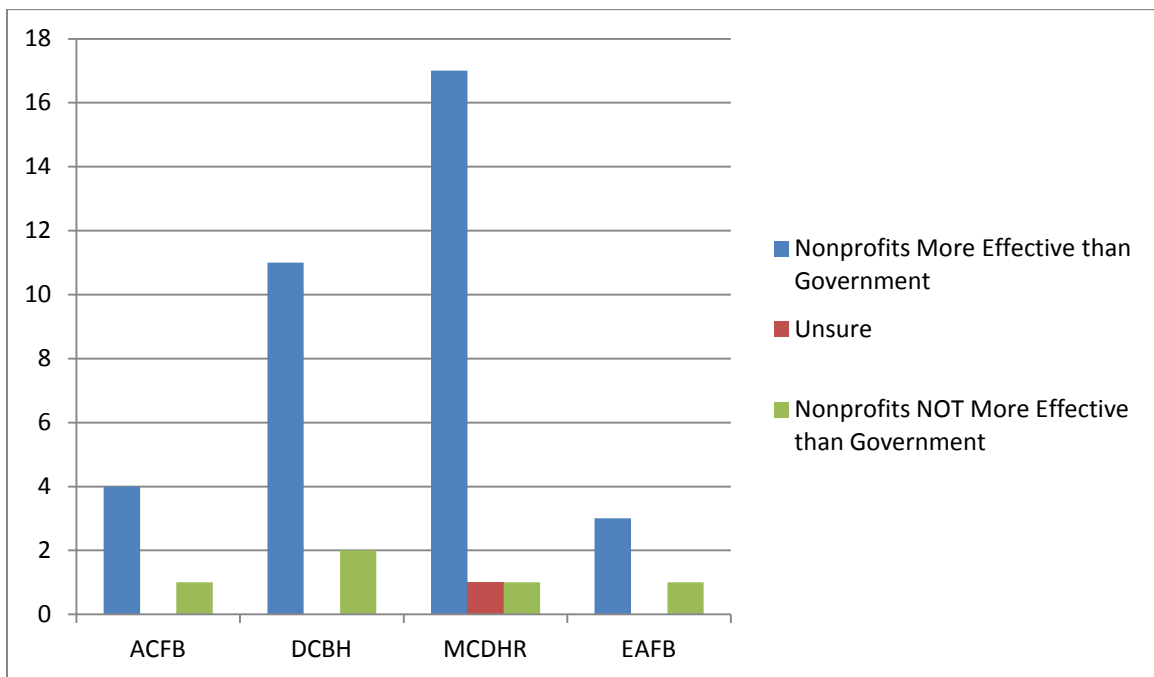
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	5.14a	1	.02	
Continuity Correction	3.46	11	.06	
Likelihood Ratio	7.72		.005	
Fisher’s Exact Test				.038
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.01	1	.03	
N of Valid Cases	42			

Data were collected to assess employees’ perception of nonprofit versus governmental food assistance service delivery. Specifically they were asked whether they believed nonprofit organizations were more effective, or governmental agencies were more effective. Eighty percent (80%) of employees from the ACFB did believe that nonprofit organizations were more effective than governmental agencies in delivering services and 75% of employees from the EAFB believed that nonprofit organizations were more effective than governmental agencies in delivering services. The majority of governmental agencies also perceived nonprofit organizations to be more effective in delivering services than governmental agencies (11 out of 13 [85%] from DCBH; 17 out of 19 [89%] from MCDHR). Surprisingly, a similar percentage of employees reported the exact opposite of this finding. As many employees from nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies reported that they perceived that governmental agencies were more effective than nonprofit organizations. Specifically, 60% of employees from ACFB, 86% from DCBH, 89% from MCDHR, and 50% from EAFB all reported that they



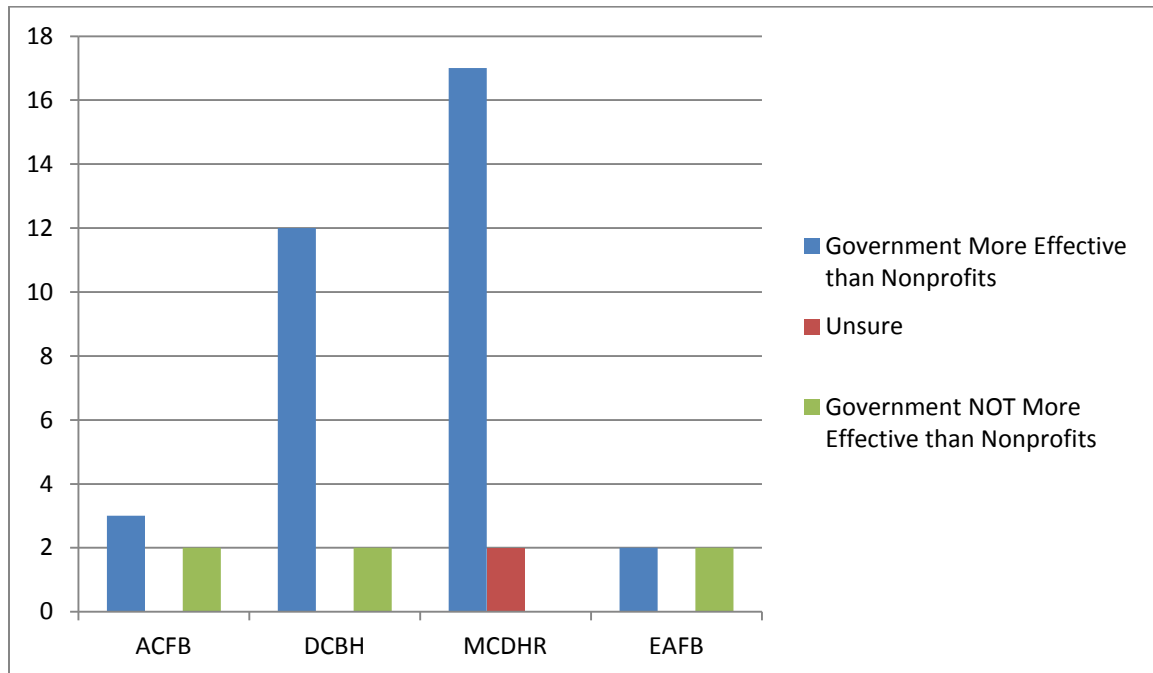
perceived that governmental agencies were more effective than nonprofit organizations in their delivery of services. Overall, all of the organizations and both organizational types (nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies) perceived nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies as equally effective in delivering services. The association between the variables, however, was not statistically significant ( $G = .87$  and  $.91$ , respectively) (See Figures 6.29a and 6.29b).

**Figure 6.29a: Perception of Effectiveness of Organizational Type (Nonprofit) by Agency**



**$G = .87$**

**Figure 6.29b: Perception of Effectiveness of Organizational Type (Government) by Agency**



**G = .91**

Several follow-up questions asked whether employees thought nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies should collaborate or specialize in delivering services. A crosstab revealed that that employees, again, often took contradictory positions of the issue of collaboration and specializations. Over 90% of employees thought that nonprofit and governmental agencies should collaborate. Similarly, many of these same employees thought that nonprofit organizations and government agencies should specialize and offer separate services (57%). None of the employee data were statistically significant.

The contradictory findings in the employee data illustrate the confusion in the field of who should do what in regards to service delivery. It also highlights the necessity of understanding which sector satisfactorily provides which service so that informed decisions can be made about specialization and/or collaboration of services.

The next chapter discusses the programmatic and policy implications associated with the findings.

## Chapter VII

### Discussion of Findings: Programmatic and Policy Implications

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze client satisfaction with the food assistance services of nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. As a result, three hypotheses were developed and tested via this research project, utilizing information obtained from a sample population of clients and employees of four organizations- two nonprofit organizations and two governmental agencies - offering food assistance services.

The data reveal some interesting findings and provides fertile ground for future research.

#### Organizational Type

It was hypothesized that clients from nonprofit organizations would be more satisfied with food assistance services than clients of governmental agencies. The general argument presented here is that nonprofit organizations are smaller, focused in mission, and therefore more responsive to social problems and community needs which would, in turn, make them more adept at delivering food assistance services than governmental agencies, which are more cumbersome and restricted in their response (Weisbrod, 1997; Brudney 1998; Ott, 2001; Goodsell, 2003).

The findings from this analysis show that this indicator was initially weakly associated with client satisfaction and not statistically significant ( $G = .18$ ,  $p = .101$ ). However, when the

variables were recoded into dichotomous categories and all empty cells were eliminated, the indicator yielded significance ( $p = .011$ ) and allowed for a logistic regression and further examination of the relationship between *Organizational Type* and *Client Satisfaction*. With *Client Satisfaction* as the dependent variable and *Organizational Type* and *State of Service* as the covariables, results showed that *Organizational Type* was not statistically significant and thus had no effect in terms of its impact on *Client Satisfaction* ( $p = .193$ ). This finding can be viewed in two ways.

If we consider the structural distinctions between nonprofit and governmental agencies, it would seem that many of the distinctions keep nonprofit organizations under the rule of thumb of governmental agencies, thereby blurring their lines beyond what is necessary to recognize and appreciate their distinctiveness and individual contributions. For example, as previously discussed, government receives its revenue from taxes and nonprofit organizations receive theirs primarily from grants that come from government. Blau and Rabrenovic (1991) contend that the reliance of nonprofit agencies on grants from governmental agencies leave nonprofits under the control of governmental agencies and forced to operate under the regulations and guidelines that the governmental agency sets. Such findings support the conclusion of Gazley and Brudney (2007) that nonprofit executives are reluctant to collaborate with governmental agencies for fear that they will come out on the disadvantaged end, by losing control.

Conversely, nonprofit organizations sometimes work symbiotically with government agencies for the benefit of low-income people. Government agencies and nonprofit organizations help to mitigate the spillover effects of negative externalities and also help to create positive externalities (Ott, 2001). Externalities are indirect effects of market transactions. They can be negative (e.g. housing costs of neighboring homes decreasing because of a run-down house on

the block), or positive (e.g. housing values rising within a neighborhood as other homeowners fix up the exterior of their homes) (Ott, 2001). Nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies work to offset these externalities by providing housing vouchers or subsidies to low-income families who may not be able to afford to live in a specific community. Nonprofit organizations also enable the formation of advocacy –based programs that work to decrease pollution, or educate low-income people, for example. In the case of food assistance, whereas government agencies provide vouchers that work as checks or debit cards that work as cash for clients to purchase food, nonprofit organizations provide direct access to food in the form of food baskets. Such collaboration between the sectors might explain why the organizations might be similar and thus organizational type insignificant in terms of how each sector delivers services.

However, the funding and subsequent control of nonprofit organizations by governmental agencies restricts their flexibility and responsiveness to social issues. An advantage that is unique to this sector. Although collaboration is at times sought, sometimes there is no choice for nonprofit organizations that rely on government for financial assistance. This financial assistance might come at the cost of required technical assistance and training, for example. Moreover, a separate conclusion can be made that if nonprofit organizations were allowed to act independently (without the constraints that collaborating would impose) that they might be able to respond to social problems more creatively, improving their ability to focus on community issues, and resulting in better service delivery.

### Red Tape

Many definitions abound that seek to explain and define red tape. What can be concluded is that red tape is a form of dysfunctional bureaucracy, characterized by excessive rules, regulations and procedures that burden an organization and impede its ability to function

properly (Bozeman, 1993; DeHart-Davis, 2008). As discussed in earlier chapters, such dysfunction can include: excessive or meaningless paperwork; a high degree of formalization and constraint; unnecessary rules, procedures and regulations; inefficiency; and unjustifiable delays (Bozeman, 1993; Bennett and Johnson, 1979; Hall, 1968; Bozeman, Reed, and Scott, 1992). Moreover, it can result in inflexible training and rigid operational procedures (trained incapacity), or preferences and discriminations (occupational psychosis), such that what was learned under one condition is automatically applied to another condition (professional deformation), or bureaucrats over-conform and fail to employ necessary contingencies when situations change (Merton, 1957).

The elements of red tape would thus be experienced firsthand by employees in the organizations. It would also be manifested in the organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) experienced by clients of the organizations in the form of excessive paperwork to receive services, long wait times, complicated forms, etcetera, all resulting in delays or restrictions in receiving services. For example, as I collected data on the organizations in this study I was able to observe that some organizations had longer wait times than others and more clients to serve that needed a wider range of services. If such observations were experienced by clients, or made by employees they would serve as examples of difficult organizational rules and guidelines (red tape). To encompass such observations and perceptions, and to eliminate preconceptions that might accompany the term “red tape,” perceived difficult organizational rules and guidelines (for clients) and perceived bureaucratic red tape was used as indicators for red tape.

It was hypothesized that clients from governmental agencies would perceive and report more organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) impeding their receipt of satisfactory services than clients from nonprofit organizations. The findings in this analysis reveal that this hypothesis

is not supported. Although clients from governmental agencies did not perceive more organizational rules and guidelines than clients from nonprofit organizations, clients did report that the perception of organizational rules and guidelines, regardless of organization type, did make receiving services more difficult and negatively affected client satisfaction. Perception of organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) correlated with client satisfaction and was statistically significant.

The initial crosstab revealed that a relationship between client satisfaction and difficult organizational rules and guidelines was statistically significant ( $p = .000$ ) warranting further examination with a logistic regression. In terms of relative effect, the logistic regression revealed that clients were nearly 10 times more likely to be satisfied with services when they did not perceive red tape in the form of organizational rules and guidelines (Adjusted Odds Ratio, 9.7; CI, 3 - 31.3;  $p = .000$ ). It showed that clients had much higher levels of satisfaction when they did not perceive difficult organizational rules and guidelines within the organization in which they received services.

This finding highlights the importance of the issue of red tape and the potential critical impact it has on organizational performance and client satisfaction. DeHart-Davis (2008) contends that red tape reduces services to clients, and Scott and Pandey (2000) argue that it reduces client benefits as well. Still others assert that red tape serves an important social function, such as ensuring accountability to and representation of fragmented citizens and interest groups (Bozeman, 1993). Perhaps the crucial next step is determining the extent to which red tape and formalized procedures are effective in increasing organizational performance and the extent to which it creates stagnancy and dysfunction.



As a potential beginning step to finding a middle-ground on the issue of bureaucratic red tape, DeHart-Davis (2008) proposes a theory of effective organizational rules, referred to as green tape. The effective organizational rules of green tape contrasts with the organizational pathology of red tape: whereby green tape illustrates the functions of normal bureaucracy. The five elements of green tape distinguish between good and bad rules and include: “ (1) written requirements, (2) with valid means-ends relationships, which (3) employ optimal control, and (4) are consistently applied, and have (5) purposes understood by stakeholders” (DeHart-Davis, 2008, 362).

The function of written requirements is to enable rule enforcement, provide validation, and “neutralize authority.” The premise here is that unwritten rules cannot be enforced and therefore will not be followed. The contribution of valid means-ends relationships are that they identify good rules by means that appear logically connected to ends, and bad rules by means that do not logically relate to one another (DeHart-Davis, 2008, 367). Without valid means-ends relationships, DeHart-Davis warns of fundamental failures and unintended consequences. Concerning optimal control, good rules imposed what was perceived as just the right amount of control, whereas bad rules imposed control beyond what was needed to achieve the necessary objectives. Optimally controlling rules were described as “flexible” and “reasonable,” and over-controlling rules as “picky” and “inflexible” (DeHart-Davis, 2008, 369). Consistent rule application identifies good rules by consistency of application whereas bad rules were identified by the opposite – inconsistent application. Finally, “purposes understood by stakeholders” identified good rules as those with understandable purposes, whereas bad rules lacked understandable purposes (DeHart-Davis, 2008). These distinctions between good and bad rules,

and red and green tape are a good place to start in the discussion of what might constitute optimal red tape.

As discussed earlier, an organization's significant others may include supervisors, employees, or public servants (Vigoda-Gadot, 2006). These individuals can also be referred to as an organization's stakeholders. DeHart-Davis (2008) lists stakeholders as: parent agencies, political superiors, central management agencies, interorganizational partners and coalitions. She notes that stakeholder red tape is a richer conceptualization than organizational red tape. Accordingly, stakeholder red tape is defined as "organizational rules, regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden, but serve no object valued by a given stakeholder group" (DeHart-Davis, 2008, p.284). As such, the input of the employees and executives as the leaders and administrators of the agency are crucial.

In an effort to gauge and explore the employee perception and response to perceived red tape, a separate hypothesis was developed. Keeping in line with research pointing to increased red tape among government agencies in relation to private organizations, it was hypothesized that the employees from government agencies would perceive more red tape and therefore hindrances to satisfactory service delivery than employees of nonprofit organizations. The finding shows that this hypothesis was supported. A crosstabulation revealed that there was a significant relationship between perceived bureaucratic red tape and organization type, such that employees from governmental agencies perceived more bureaucratic red tape than employees from nonprofit organizations.

Although DeHart-Davis and Pandey (2005) contend that red tape reduces organizational commitment, job involvement, and job satisfaction among managers, the discrepancy between employees' perception of red tape and satisfactory services versus that of the client's perception

of red tape and unsatisfactory services, seems to support the argument by Bozeman (1993) that some red tape might serve a necessary function, and that this concept, at minimum, deserves more attention. According to Bozeman (1993) red tape might serve a social function by ensuring organizational accountability and thus performance; as well as the contention of DeHart-Davis (2008) that once red tape is properly understood it could be revised from dysfunctional to the effective organizational rules of green tape. The disconnect between the influence of red tape on satisfaction with services, whereby employees do not feel as if it hinders satisfactory services and clients report that it does, contributes to the confusion surrounding revamping the concept of red tape from one of bureaucratic dysfunction to one of organizational necessity indicative of effective performance. In other words, it would seem that collectively clients and employees are unsure of what to make of red tape – whether it’s useful or detrimental to either their satisfaction (clients) or their purpose (employees) within the organization.

In support of the conclusion of “employee confusion” is the finding that the majority of employees equally believed that the different organization types should collaborate (90%) as well as specialize (57%). Similarly, the same employees reported that nonprofits were more effective than governmental agencies in delivering services (85%), as well as the opposite that governmental agencies were more effective than nonprofit organizations (81%). These findings underscore the necessity of continued research in the areas of employee perception and response to organizational red tape, as well as organizational and employee preference for collaboration and/or specialization of services.

#### Comfort with Staff

An interesting finding was the association between client’s comfort with staff and client satisfaction. An initial crosstabulation examining client comfort with staff and client satisfaction

revealed a strong association between the variables ( $G = .76$ ;  $p = .000$ ). Further examination of the variables with a logistic regression yielded significant results, indicating that when clients are more comfortable with staff, they are more than 17 times more likely to be satisfied with services (OR, 17.09; CI, 4.43-66.02;  $p = .000$ ). This finding mirrors the previous conclusion which encourages future research into the impact of employees on various organizational dynamics, such as red tape, collaboration and specialization of services, as well as the impact of employee-client relations on organizational performance. For example, a common criticism of clients within government agencies is that there is stigma associated with receiving governmental services. This finding lends support to spending resources on effective communication strategies and techniques to use with clients that might decrease stigma and result in improved client satisfaction with an organization.

In general, this study points to some important conclusions. It points to the fact that clients are not more satisfied by any specific organizational type, at least as it pertains to nonprofit versus governmental agencies. It also shows that perceived red tape, in the form of excessive organizational rules and guidelines, regardless of organizational type, discourages client satisfaction with services. Furthermore, it points to the fact that the client's comfort with staff was a critical component of their satisfaction with the organization they received services from. This is a crucial relationship to explore and nourish considering that employees are the first point of contact between a client and the food assistance services (s)he often need in order to survive. The findings on perceived bureaucratic red tape and employees' perception of client satisfaction illustrate a discrepancy between employee and client perceptions of organizational dynamics and performance, such that when employees perceive red tape they still believe their services are satisfactory, whereas when clients perceive red tape they report dissatisfaction with

services. These findings stress the relevance of continued research and resource allocation into exploration of client and employee dynamics. In addition to employee-client dynamics, employees' preference for collaboration or specialization suggests a potentially rich and rewarding area of continued research.

The next chapter presents the summary and conclusion of this study including suggestions for further study.

## Chapter VIII

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### Introduction

The epidemic of poverty, hunger, and food insecurity is at an all-time high in the United States and other parts of the world, spurring great interest in finding solutions to address and alleviate this economic disparity. A multifaceted approach is required, thus warranting exploration of different sectors, organizations, programs and services designed to remedy this crisis. The rationale for food assistance programs rests mainly on their effectiveness in addressing food insecurity and hunger, thus satisfying the clients who utilize the services by meeting their needs. Existent research, however, has failed to question the programs and services already in place, deciding instead to trust these methods to eventually solve the problem. The only way to truly understand and thus resolve the issue is to seek the input of the clients who use the services and the employees who administer the services to ascertain their perspectives of what does and does not work (Larsen et al.,1979; Poister, 2003). This research project attempts to do that.

#### Hypotheses and Findings

This research project had a threefold purpose: to compare the level of satisfaction of clients of nonprofit organizations versus those of clients of governmental agencies in the delivery of food assistance services; to explore the relationship between organization type and indicators of red tape among clients of nonprofit organizations versus governmental agencies; and to

investigate whether employees from governmental agencies would perceive more bureaucratic red tape and hindrances to providing satisfactory services than employees of nonprofit organizations. In an effort to explore these theories, three hypotheses were developed. The first of three hypotheses stated that clients from nonprofit organizations would be more satisfied with food assistance services than clients from governmental agencies. The results revealed that there was not a statistically significant relationship between client satisfaction and organizational type. In other words, clients from nonprofit organizations were not found to be more satisfied with their services than clients of governmental agencies. Additional information collected from clients consisting of their rating of their organization revealed that the majority of clients from each type of organization in each state reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with the food assistance services they had received.

Since findings indicate no difference between satisfaction of clients from the governmental sector than clients from the nonprofit sector, future research should focus less on organizational type than on the factors themselves that influence client satisfaction. More importantly, since existent literature suggests that neither sector has eliminated food insecurity or even decreased hunger, continued research should be done to explore the disconnect between apparently satisfied, though food insecure individuals. In other words, why are clients who are satisfied with food assistance services also reporting instances of hunger, missed meals, and going to bed without a meal?

Implications might exist for whether clients are truly food insecure, but falsifying their reporting to increase allotment amounts or food basket sizes. On the other hand, perhaps clients are truly dissatisfied with food assistance services but hesitate to be truthful on surveys for fear of losing services, for example, either because of personal retribution or causing the organization

to lose funding because of negative reports from unsatisfied clients. Larsen et al. (1979) warns of deceptive “grateful testimonials” whereby clients report high levels of satisfaction with human service organizations. The possibility of grateful testimonials is plausible considering that nonprofit food assistance clients receiving food baskets, as well as governmental food assistance clients receiving food stamps have all seen a fluctuation in their services. Over time, nonprofit organizations have seen increases in donations and grants, as well as decreases depending on the wealth and financial position of the country. So have governmental agencies. Clients from governmental agencies have seen food stamp allotments increase and decrease. Conceivably, the mindset among this population is that it is better to have some service than no service at all.

Whether or not that is their position, we owe more to the vulnerable members of our society. They deserve more than inadequate services, especially since American citizens pay such a high price for these services. Moreover, more money should not be thrown at the problem, as some researchers suggest that food insecurity is a result of limited allotments (Daponte and Bade, 2006). Much more work needs to be done to understand what, in fact, satisfies clients receiving food assistance services, since findings from this study suggest that where they receive this service from has no effect.

Lastly, as it pertains to hypothesis one, clients were asked about their comfort with staff in an effort to determine if this would have an effect on their level of satisfaction. The data revealed that a strong and statistically significant relationship did, in fact, exist between client’s comfort with staff and their level of satisfaction with services. This indicates the importance of the relationship between clients and staff. Perhaps future research can further explore how best to use this finding to increase organizational impact and effectiveness. For example, it might be a great use of resources to have employee training include effective communication strategies and



techniques to use with clients. Similarly, perhaps employees might be urged to be more personable to, and respectable of, clients, thereby improving a client's satisfaction with an organization and decreasing the stigma related to receiving food assistance.

The second of three hypotheses stated that clients from governmental agencies would perceive more organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) as hindrances to satisfactory service than clients from nonprofit organizations. The results revealed that there was not a statistically significant relationship between organizational type and perceived organizational rules and guidelines as hindrances to satisfactory service. In other words, clients from governmental agencies did not perceive more rules and guidelines (red tape) standing in the way of them receiving services than did clients from nonprofit organizations. Further exploration of the data, by isolating client satisfaction and perceived organizational rules and guidelines – regardless of organizational type - exposed the relationship between the variables. Specifically, a strong and statistically significant relationship existed between perceived organizational rules and guidelines and client satisfaction with services. In other words, clients from each type of organization who perceived organizational rules and guidelines were less satisfied with services. Two things are interesting to note here.

One, clients from governmental agencies did not perceive more organizational rules and guidelines than clients from nonprofit organizations. This finding refutes the traditionally held belief that the American public perceives the government as cumbersome and laden with complex policies and processes that make it inefficient and unfavorable to citizens (as cited in Goodsell, 2004). With the support of such findings, conceivably, the anti-government movement could become a pro-government movement in which the reputation of government becomes that of an efficient, effective service provider, as well as financier. Critics would disagree. Even so,

this finding is promising, and illustrates the need for more research that explores the effects of government in service provision.

Two, organizational rules and guidelines (red tape) affect client satisfaction with services. This exemplifies the importance of the political process to the overall perception of the organization. Organizations must not be so complex and rule-laden that they disconnect from the constituency they serve. Further research should address whether de-complicating the policies and processes of social service organizations will increase their organizational effectiveness and capacity to deliver much needed public services.

The third and final hypotheses examined the employees of the governmental and nonprofit organizations to ascertain their opinions about their respective organization's red tape and bureaucratic processes. Specifically, hypotheses three stated that employees from governmental agencies would perceive more bureaucratic red tape and hindrances to satisfactory service delivery than employees of nonprofit organizations. The results were statistically significant. Employees from governmental agencies did perceive more bureaucratic red tape than employees from nonprofit organizations. This finding lends support to the assumption that government processes, procedures, and policies are more complex and that that complexity results in dissatisfaction with governmental inefficiency. In any case, more research into a useful gray area of red tape, referred to a green tape - in which a certain level of red tape might be necessary and even advantageous - is validated and warrants further investigation.

### Relationship to Prior Research

#### Research on Food Assistance Programs

Existent research generally depicts the structure of nonprofit organizations as advantageous to clients and consumers of their services. Although the perception of government

has changed, with many recognizing that the quality of governmental service has improved, there is still criticism of government as ineffectively bureaucratic, inflexible, inefficient and self-serving (Olasky, 1992; Molnar et al., 2001). Consequently, there is division in the field with respect to the assigned roles of each sector. Traditionally, government's role has been to fund services, while nonprofits have been charged with delivering the service (Ott, 2001). Within the field this has been deemed "collaboration." This research project depicts government differently. Government, according to the findings, is just as effective (as perceived by clients) as nonprofit organizations clients assessing a similar service. Although the field of public administration advocates collaboration and shared power between the sectors, it does so with inherently imposed restrictions of what each sector's responsibility should be. These designations are usually assigned based on folklore, without any real basis or merit.

The call for partnerships is persistent, but the understanding of their purpose and function are limited. The common prescription for social ills in the field of public administration is collaboration as the universal salve. Partnerships are not a bad idea but they are presumptuous if assigned without knowledge gained empirically, and not allegorically. Many studies have begun to look at the service delivery systems of governmental agencies with respect to specific types of programs (child care, senior care, mental health). In so doing, some of these studies more often than not fail to openly test and challenge traditionally held beliefs about "red tape," bureaucracy, and governmental waste. According to the findings in this research project, clients of governmental agencies did not perceive more organizational rules and guidelines than did clients of nonprofit organizations. Neither did governmental employees perceive more bureaucratic red tape than nonprofit employees. All in all, this research, like research in the field, has begun the initial submersion into the specific function of government in all aspects of service delivery –

albeit very slowly and cautiously. However, unlike current studies that assessed client hunger and food insecurity on tangible manifestations (i.e. missing one or more meals per day), this study tested clients on their subjective perception of satisfactory services. Both types of input are needed, and the field is heading in the direction of acquiring both types. The next step, one that still needs work, will be in deciding what then to do with the data we obtain. How then to apply it to the elimination of the problem of hunger and food insecurity, to the point of no longer needing food assistance programs.

#### Research on Client Satisfaction

Client satisfaction research serves as a product of research on employee perceptions. Historically organization research preceded the study of employees within the organization, which then preceded the study of clients of the organizations. That body of literature has grown to include characteristics of clients, antecedents of client behavior, client satisfaction, and client outcomes. This research did not further the advancement of knowledge about client characteristics or client outcomes. It did, however, relate to and contribute from existent literature on client satisfaction. Recent literature has begun to look at clients as consumers of a service. As consumers they are entitled to satisfactory service and input into organizational processes, such as decision-making. As such, this research builds on the existing literature that necessitates the satisfaction of clients as an indicative measure of service quality (Poister, 2003).

#### Research on Organizational Differences

Research exploring the organizational processes and dynamics between nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies has found some similarities as well as unique differences between the sectors. Many of the distinctions are generically positive, stating that both solve public problems and address the needs of the people. Others are negative and state

that one sector (usually the nonprofit) has advantages over the other (usually government) in terms of addressing some particular need. Still, others are merely observatory, and neutrally, if not dispassionately, list some of the key differences and similarities between the sectors. This research does not reflect the current sentiment about nonprofit and governmental agencies – that whether negative or positive there are inherent effectual differences between the sectors according to their structures. The findings in this research indicated that there were no perceived differences between either sector, in terms of organizational structure. These findings were the same for internal members of the organization (employees) as well as for external members (clients). Overall, the picture presented by the data are that there might be reasons outside of organizational attributes that affect service delivery, such as client comfort with staff. These topics deserve an adequate amount of scholarly attention.

#### Implications for Public Policy

While there has been an enduring concern on the issue of hunger and food insecurity, as well as the effects of poverty on America and its citizens, decreased budgets and demand for accountability have become additional considerations on the table. Decreased budgets have changed our habitual inclination of throwing more money at the problem. Currently, there is little money left to throw. Moreover, with what little money there is, we want proof that it is being well spent and producing outcomes. In this new environment, the concern is that limited resources will be wasted on programs that do not work and thus fail to contribute to the greater good of society. For example, if a food assistance program works, and thus decreases hunger, society benefits from well-nourished individuals who require less medical care, fewer hospitalizations, less mental health care, who eventually become productive members of society. The positive externalities are almost limitless and the benefits are too numerous to count.

Similarly, there is a demand for accountability. An already financially strained America is weary of shelling out any more money for anything other than results. Good intentions can no longer be funded.

This is not necessarily to advocate for reduction in spending on food assistance and other types of human service programs, or even to argue that federally funded programs provide proof-positive demonstrable evidence of effectiveness and measurable program outcomes. It is, however, to bring attention to the higher standard demanded by the American people who pay for these services, the raising of the bar for policymakers and political figures who represent the people, and the people who are affected by the service. These people deserve answers, and most of all, the right to the bare necessities in a land well-known for overindulgences and excess.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study has two limitations. First, the evaluation occurred only in two states, within three cities and it remains to be seen to what extent the findings could be generalized to other city or state contexts. Secondly, the cities selected are all located in the southern region. This may mean that issues of local politics and essential ideological and cultural similarities could be consequential and relevant in any interpretation of the findings.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

##### Methodological Research

Many studies exist that purport to measure some aspect of the service delivery process and test its “effectiveness.” Some studies sought to do this by counting the number of clients served, or how much it cost to serve them (Daponte and Bade, 2006; Huffman and Jensen, 2008; Berner, Paynter, and Anderson, 2009). Even questionnaires aimed at surveying clients and customers were different and asked different questions (Martin et al., 2003; Depolt et al., 2009;

Wang, 2010). Similarly, each organization that I entered had previously conducted some sort of survey within their own organization. More needs to be done to develop a measure or measures that assess clients from both types of organizations on the same types of services asking the same questions, so that a comparative base can be established. And this comparative base needs to cross sectoral lines and be inclusive enough to be used in any method of service delivery by any organization delivering that service. Simply standardizing arbitrary questionnaires will not suffice to establish a baseline measurement of organizational effectiveness and capacity across all organizational types. This is the only way we will truly know how well each sector delivers which particular services.

#### Nonprofit and Governmental Response to Food Assistance Programs

Current studies all note relatively similar findings. People are still hungry, food security remains elusive, and poverty still exists. What varies is the recommendations for solving this problem. Some suggest revisions in the policies and procedures governing the food assistance programs (e.g. making it easier to apply for government assistance, or relaxing some of the eligibility requirements), others suggest changes to the programs themselves (e.g. larger allotments of food stamp benefits, mobilizing food banks) (Berner, Ozer, and Paynter, 2008; Molnar et al., 2001; Martin et al., 2003; Daponte and Bade, 2006; Huffman and Jensen, 2008; Depolt et al., 2009; Berner, Paynter, and Anderson, 2009). Still more suggest increased collaboration among the nonprofit and governmental sectors (Harnisch, 2002; Smith 2010).

Future research should look outside of the box. To confront this problem we have traditionally gone to the usual suspects “nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies” to provide these services. As a solution, perhaps we should get back to business, literally. Researchers have overlooked private businesses as a possible contender in the fight to eliminate

hunger and poverty. Maybe this is because we historically think of human service agencies as the go-to because of their features: they are, by nature, public serving, composed of mostly volunteers whom we perceive as altruistic, and they lack a for-profit motive, which we associate with trust (Rainey, 2003; Ott, 2001). But these very features can be problematic in addressing the issue. For example, because these agencies are public-serving, they are used to delivering public services, and likely in some designated way. Merton (1957) warns against “occupational psychosis” and “trained incapacity” where the job becomes more about following the designated guidelines and procedures than it does about actually serving the public.

Private businesses might be able to shake up the “rut” governmental and nonprofit service providers find themselves in by employing different policies and procedures to the complex problem of hunger and food insecurity. The fact that private businesses have traditionally been out of the loop of public service might provide them a unique and useful vantage point. Their inexperience with the issue will provide a fresh perspective by which to examine and address the problem. Future research needs to be done to ascertain if private business might provide a fresh set of eyes and a new pair of hands in the fight to eliminate hunger. We cannot keep turning to the same players to solve the problem in the same way – just in varying degrees - and with more or less of the same resources. After all, we cannot keep doing what we have always done if we expect to get a different result.

#### Relationship between Nonprofit Organizations and Governmental Agencies

As it stands now, the collaborative relationship thought to exist between nonprofit organizations offering food assistance services and governmental agencies offering food assistance services is a double-sided myth. On one side, we have the myth that these agencies collaborate and work together to offer food assistance to those in need. This is simply not the



case. Nonprofit organizations solely offer food baskets to feed the hungry and needy and governmental agencies offer food stamps and WIC. There is no togetherness or collaboration of these agencies. Government funding of nonprofit initiatives is not collaboration. Employees' referring of individuals who receive one type of service to the other agency to also receive their service is not collaboration, and it is not solving the problem. In fact, the only real link between governmental food assistance and nonprofit food assistance are the clients who use both services.

Perhaps this lack of true collaboration is a part of the reason why clients are still hungry. If one organization is doing one thing on one side, and the other is doing its own thing on the other side, how can anything get accomplished? How does each side know what the other is doing, so it can know how and when, and even if it should supplement? The answer is that it cannot. To use an analogy, if one leg does not know what the other leg is doing, then neither can move forward. Their lack of communication impedes the progression of the whole body. Conceivably this is what is happening in the field of nonprofit and government food assistance. Future research should explore if the pseudo-collaboration of the sectors negatively affects service delivery.

Myth number two is that it is assumed that each party believes collaboration is necessary. Past and present research studies suggest that collaboration between the sectors is essential (Harnisch, 2002; Smith, 2010). Many have even suggested that "shared power" is the future of public administration (Koppell, 2010; Bowornwathana, 2010; Hayward, 2010; and Warner, 2010). But is it in the best interest of both sectors? Is it even in the best interest of the clients? The employees? On the one hand are the proponents. Theirs is a belief that "[I]t is a community norm that you collaborate and get along, or you don't survive" (as cited in Altman-Sauer, Henderson, and Whitaker, 2001, p. 35). On the other hand are the opponents, that mirror the

position of an employee who stated “On the surface there appears to be a spirit of cooperation, but it is only on the surface. We work together but I don’t trust them” (as cited in Altman-Sauer, Henderson, and Whitaker, 2001, p. 35). Again, despite the seeming saturation of scholarly articles and books on the subject of collaboration, so many more questions and so much more confusion still exists. Current and future research should examine the true extent of collaboration between the nonprofit and government sectors, and explore whether collaboration is beneficial to one, both, or none, as well as how it affects program outcomes and client satisfaction. I have collected data on collaboration within the organizations in this study and plan to pursue answers to some of these questions.

Whether government agencies and nonprofit organizations are going to continue to each provide separate services (e.g. government offering food stamps and WIC; nonprofits offering food baskets), or are going to pool their resources and form hybrid organizations that take the best practices from each organizational type and offer food assistance services, much research remains to be done concerning how to understand the true nature of nonprofit and governmental relations, so that we can learn from each other. Altman-Sauer, Henderson, and Whitaker (2001) offer some insights into why nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies might have difficulties relating to each other. There are inconsistencies between the sectors in relation to different perceptions they might have about the same situations, the lack of understanding they might have of each other’s work, and an imbalance of power precipitated by the government’s funding and fathering of nonprofit organizations.

To establish a prompt and clear understanding of each sector, continued research into each sector, separate and apart from the other sector is necessary. It is no longer sufficient to explore governmental organizations in relation to how they compare to private businesses, or

nonprofit organizations, they deserve careful and thorough attention on all of their processes, functions, purposes, methods, and nuances. That being said, future research should also focus on comparing the service delivery of governmental agencies versus that of nonprofit organizations on specific social policy issues. Instead of lumping nonprofits and government into one big “human service, public-serving” designation, more research should focus on how each sector addresses each social policy issue – and whether or not each does it well. In this way, the sectors can be disentangled and serve their specific functions, reducing duplication of effort and wasted resources.

Most importantly, in designing solutions to the problem of food insecurity, it is important to assess hunger as a larger social policy issue. Food assistance programs address the issue of hunger and food insecurity on an immediate basis, as a short term solution. Food assistance programs are a way of getting low-income people who might need the assistance in order to survive into the door. On a larger scale, however, we cannot expect food assistance programs to solve the issue of hunger and food insecurity in America. Client satisfaction will not lead to a reduction of hunger as a larger social policy issue for a couple of reasons. One, because hunger is a part of the larger social policy issue of poverty, which involves – among other things - political un-involvement among low-income citizens. This political un-involvement results in inattention to the issues that affect this population -such as hunger and food insecurity - and other such issues that are lumped into a “social welfare policy” designation. Until the issue is reframed from one of “entitlement spending” to a basic human rights issue, it will persist. The key to solving the problem of increasing hunger and food insecurity is to address the root causes, such as poverty, educational disparities, and political disenfranchisement. It is only then that we can begin to win the fight against hunger. In the interim, research on client satisfaction with food assistance

programs is necessary as it provides a crucial first step in understanding how to provide basic relief to those most affected. I hope this study offers a continuing inspiration as well as a challenge for further inquiry.

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Appendix A:

Script for Recruiting and Approaching Participants

-SCRIPT-

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a Ph.D. candidate from Auburn University conducting research on this organization's services. Would you like to participate?

If yes, proceed to next question.

If no, thank the individual for his/her time (end of process).

Are you 19 years or older?

If yes, administer the informed consent (which explained the purpose of the study as well as the time requirements for completing the survey). Once the informed consent was signed and returned, administer the survey along with a pen/pencil and clipboard if necessary. The informed consent was detached and separately collected from each participant to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

If no, thank the individual for his/her time (end of process).

-END-



Appendix B:

Survey for Clients of Governmental Agencies

Survey for Clients

Unless the question indicates otherwise, please circle only one response.

1. In which state do you receive services?

1. Alabama                      2. Georgia

2. Please list the agency from which you receive services (e.g. Dekalb County Board of Health, Montgomery County Department of Human Resources, local nonprofit organization, etc.)

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3. What is your gender?

1. Male                      2. Female

4. What is your race/ethnicity?

1. Hispanic (regardless of race); and for non-Hispanics    2. American Indian or Alaska Native  
3. Asian                      4. Black or African American    5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
6. White                      7. Two or more races (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
8. Nonresident alien (for whom race and ethnicity is not reported)  
9. Race and ethnicity unknown

5. What is your highest education level completed?

1. High School Diploma                      2. Associate's Degree                      3. Bachelor's Degree  
4. Master's Degree                      5. Doctorate                      6. Technical/Other

6. Please specify the exact services you receive from this agency/organization? (circle all that apply)

1. Adult/child Immunization                      2. WIC/Family services  
3. Pregnancy Testing/Birth Control                      4. STD testing, counseling

**7. Please list the services in the order in which you receive them and what need the service meets (e.g. #1. WIC/Family services can provide nutrition assistance or information; #2. STD testing, counseling can provide sex education or disease prevention, etc).**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How many years have you received services from this agency/organization?**

1. (0-2) years
2. (3-5) years
3. (6-10) years
4. (11-15) years
5. More than 16 years

**9. How satisfied are you with the services offered by this agency/organization?**

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

**10. Are you aware of the services this agency/organization provides?**

Yes	No
1	2

**11. How does this agency/organization make you aware of its activities and the services it provides? (circle all that apply)**

1. Newspaper advertisements
2. Television
3. Online website
4. Journal/brochures
5. Residential mailing
6. It does not
7. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Do you feel comfortable with the staff.**

Yes	No	Unsure	Indifferent
1	2	3	4

**13. Are there organizational rules or guidelines that make it difficult for you to receive services?**

No	Yes	Unsure
1	2	3

**14. Please explain.**

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**15. Overall, how would you rate this agency/organization?**

Excellent  
1

Satisfactory  
2

Poor  
3

**16. Please list any comments, recommendation or suggestions that you would like to make.**

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Appendix C:

Survey for Employees/Executives of Governmental Agencies

**Survey for Employees/Executives**

Unless the question indicates otherwise, please circle only one response.

**1. In which state do you work?**

1. Alabama    2. Georgia

**2. What is the name of the agency or organization in which you work (e.g. Dekalb County Board of Health, Montgomery County Board of Health, local nonprofit organization, etc.).**

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**3. At what level of government/nonprofit do you work?**

1. Executive/Management    2. Employee    3. Other

**4. What is your job title?**

1. Director    2. Manager    3. Supervisor    4. Administrator

5. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your gender?**

1. Male    2. Female

**6. What is your race/ethnicity?**

1. Hispanic (regardless of race); and for non-Hispanics    2. American Indian or Alaska Native

3. Asian    4. Black or African American    5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

6. White    7. Two or more races (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Nonresident alien (for whom race and ethnicity is not reported)

9. Race and ethnicity unknown

**7. What is your highest education level completed?**

- 1.High School Diploma      2. Associate’s Degree      3.Bachelor’s Degree
- 4. Master’s Degree      5. Doctorate      6. Technical/Other

**8. How many years of experience do you have in your current position?**

- 1. (0-2) years      2. (3-5) years      3. (6-10) years      4. (11-15) years
- 5. More than 16 years

**9. In which areas does this organization or agency deliver services? (circle all that apply)**  
**In which areas does this organization or agency deliver services? (circle all that apply)**

- 1. Adult/child Immunization      2. WIC/Family services
- 3. Pregnancy Testing/Birth Control      4. STD testing, counseling

**10. Of the areas in which this organization/agency delivers services, please rank them in order of priority or popularity and list what their purpose/objective is (e.g. #1 Food Assistance = provides food/nutrition to local organizations)**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**11. How satisfied do you perceive your clients to be with the services this organization/agency offers?**

- |                |           |                                |              |                   |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied |
| 1              | 2         | 3                              | 4            | 5                 |

**12. How does this organization/agency measure effective service delivery? (circle all that apply)**

- 1. No measures are used      2. According to number of clients served
- 3. According to resources expended      4. According to money saved
- 5. According to client satisfaction      6. According to organizational guidelines
- 7.Other (please specify) :

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**13. How many times per month does your organization/agency collaborate with other organizations/agencies?**

- 1. Never      2. 1-4 times a month      3. 5-9 times a month      4. 10-14 times a month
- 5. More than 15 times a month

**14. How many organizations/agencies does your organization/agency collaborate with on a monthly basis?**

1. None      2. 1-4 organizations      3. 5-9 organizations      4. 10-14 organizations  
5. More than 15 organizations

**15. How effective do you feel it is to work with other agencies/organizations?**

- Very effective      Effective      Doesn't Apply      Ineffective      Very Ineffective  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**16. How aware do you feel your community is about the services this organization/agency provides?**

- Very aware                                      Somewhat aware                                      Not at all aware  
1    2    3

**17. Which of the choices listed below do you rely on most in making clients aware of this agency/organization and its activities? (circle all that apply)**

1. Newspaper advertisements      2. Television      3. Online website  
4. Journal/brochures      5. Residential mailing

**18. How appreciated do you feel by the community for which this organization provides services?**

- Very appreciated                                      Somewhat appreciated                                      Not at all appreciated  
1    2    3

**19. Do you feel comfortable with your co-workers?**

- Yes                                      Indifferent                                      No  
1    2    3

**20. Do you feel comfortable with your clients?**

- Yes                                      Indifferent                                      No  
1    2    3

**21. Is there bureaucratic "red tape" that hinders your ability to deliver services?**

- No                                      Yes  
1    2

**22. In your opinion, are nonprofit organizations effective in delivering services?**

- Yes                                      No  
1    2

**23. In your opinion, are governmental agencies effective in delivering services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**24. In your opinion, should governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations collaborate in delivering services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**25. In your opinion, should nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies specialize and offer separate services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**26. Please list any comments or recommendations you have in reference to what can make this agency/organization more effective in delivering services and what obstacles this organization/agency faces in delivering services, as well as any other suggestions you might have.**

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Appendix D:

Survey for Clients of Nonprofit Organizations

Survey for Clients

Unless the question indicates otherwise, please circle only one response.

**1. In which state do you receive services?**

1. Alabama                      2. Georgia

**2. Please list the agency from which you receive services.**

Atlanta Community Food Bank

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**3. What is your gender?**

1. Male                      2. Female

**4. What is your race/ethnicity?**

1. Hispanic (regardless of race); and for non-Hispanics    2. American Indian or Alaska Native  
3. Asian                      4. Black or African American    5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
6. White                      7. Two or more races (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
8. Nonresident alien (for whom race and ethnicity is not reported)  
9. Race and ethnicity unknown

**5. What is your highest education level completed?**

1. High School Diploma                      2. Associate's Degree                      3. Bachelor's Degree  
4. Master's Degree                      5. Doctorate                      6. Technical/Other

**6. Please specify the exact service(s) you receive from this agency/organization? (circle all that apply)**

1. Food Assistance                      2. Other (\_\_\_\_\_)

**7. Please list the services in the order in which you receive them and what need the service meets (e.g. #1. Food Assistance feeds disadvantaged youth in my organization, helps me feed my family, etc.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How many years have you received services from this agency/organization?**

1. (0-2) years    2. (3-5) years    3. (6-10) years    4. (11-15) years  
5. More than 16 years

**9. How satisfied are you with the services offered by this agency/organization?**

- |                |           |                                |              |                   |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied |
| 1              | 2         | 3                              | 4            | 5                 |

**10. Are you aware of the services this agency/organization provides?**

- |     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
| 1   | 2  |

**11. How does this agency/organization make you aware of its activities and the services it provides? (circle all that apply)**

1. Newspaper advertisements                      2. Television                      3. Online website  
4. Journal/brochures                      5. Residential mailing                      6. It does not  
7. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Do you feel comfortable with the staff.**

- |     |    |        |             |
|-----|----|--------|-------------|
| Yes | No | Unsure | Indifferent |
| 1   | 2  | 3      | 4           |

**13. Are there organizational rules or guidelines that make it difficult for you to receive services?**

- |    |     |        |
|----|-----|--------|
| No | Yes | Unsure |
| 1  | 2   | 3      |

**14. Please explain.**

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**15. Overall, how would you rate this agency/organization?**

Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor
1	2	3

**16. Please list any comments, recommendation or suggestions that you would like to make.**

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Appendix E:

Survey for Employees/Executives of Nonprofit Organizations

**Survey for Employees/Executives**

**Unless the question indicates otherwise, please circle only one response.**

**1. In which state do you work?**

1. Alabama    2. Georgia

**2. What is the name of the agency or organization in which you work.**

Food Bank of East Alabama

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**3. At what level of government/nonprofit do you work?**

1. Executive/Management    2. Employee    3. Other

**4. What is your job title?**

1. Director    2. Manager    3. Supervisor    4. Administrator

5. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your gender?**

1. Male    2. Female

**6. What is your race/ethnicity?**

1. Hispanic (regardless of race); and for non-Hispanics    2. American Indian or Alaska Native

3. Asian    4. Black or African American    5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

6. White    7. Two or more races (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Nonresident alien (for whom race and ethnicity is not reported)

9. Race and ethnicity unknown

**7. What is your highest education level completed?**

- 1.High School Diploma    2. Associate’s Degree    3.Bachelor’s Degree
- 4. Master’s Degree    5. Doctorate    6. Technical/Other

**8. How many years of experience do you have in your current position?**

- 1. (0-2) years    2. (3-5) years    3. (6-10) years    4. (11-15) years
- 5. More than 16 years

**9. In which areas does this organization or agency deliver services? (circle all that apply)**

- 1. Food Assistance    2. Other ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

**10. Of the areas in which this organization/agency delivers services, please rank them in order of priority or popularity and list what their purpose/objective is (e.g. #1 Food Assistance = provides food/nutrition to local organizations)**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**11. How satisfied do you perceive your clients to be with the services this organization/agency offers?**

- |                |           |                                |              |                   |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neither Satisfied/Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied |
| 1              | 2         | 3                              | 4            | 5                 |

**12. How does this organization/agency measure effective service delivery? (circle all that apply)**

- 1. No measures are used    2. According to number of clients served
- 3. According to resources expended    4. According to money saved
- 5. According to client satisfaction    6. According to organizational guidelines
- 7.Other (please specify) :

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**13. How many times per month does your organization/agency collaborate with other organizations/agencies?**

- 1. Never    2. 1-4 times a month    3. 5-9 times a month    4. 10-14 times a month
- 5. More than 15 times a month

**14. How many organizations/agencies does your organization/agency collaborate with on a monthly basis?**

- 1. None    2. 1-4 organizations    3. 5-9 organizations    4. 10-14 organizations
- 5. More than 15 organizations

**15. How effective do you feel it is to work with other agencies/organizations?**

Very effective	Effective	Doesn't Apply	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
1	2	3	4	5

**16. How aware do you feel your community is about the services this organization/agency provides?**

Very aware	Somewhat aware	Not at all aware
1	2	3

**17. Which of the choices listed below do you rely on most in making clients aware of this agency/organization and its activities? (circle all that apply)**

2. Newspaper advertisements	2. Television	3. Online website
4. Journal/brochures	5. Residential mailing	

**18. How appreciated do you feel by the community for which this organization provides services?**

Very appreciated	Somewhat appreciated	Not at all appreciated
1	2	3

**19. Do you feel comfortable with your co-workers?**

Yes	Indifferent	No
1	2	3

**20. Do you feel comfortable with your clients?**

Yes	Indifferent	No
1	2	3

**21. Is there bureaucratic "red tape" that hinders your ability to deliver services?**

No	Yes
1	2

**22. In your opinion, are nonprofit organizations effective in delivering services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**23. In your opinion, are governmental agencies effective in delivering services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**24. In your opinion, should governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations collaborate in delivering services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**25. In your opinion, should nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies specialize and offer separate services?**

Yes	No
1	2

**26. Please list any comments or recommendations you have in reference to what can make this agency/organization more effective in delivering services and what obstacles this organization/agency faces in delivering services, as well as any other suggestions you might have.**

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