

**Case Workers Perspectives on the Impacts of
Welfare Reform and its Effectiveness on
Families**

By

Kanice McQueen

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ABSTRACT

Case Workers Perspectives on the Impacts of Welfare Reform and its Effectiveness on Families

Welfare reform has experienced many changes throughout its long history. Policy makers and administrators have long struggled with the question of who is supposed to take care of poor families when they are unable or unwilling to take care of themselves. And how they can make those that receive cash assistance take more responsibility for their own situation.

This study explores the components of welfare legislation and describes the attitudes of case managers regarding the implementation and impact of TANF on families in Texas. The research uses descriptive categories to explore the attitudes of mandatory participation, moral and work requirements, job training and placement, the prevention of dependency, and impacts of legislation and economic changes that welfare recipients face everyday.

The research uses a survey and interviews to learn what attitudes, perceptions and beliefs the caseworkers in Austin have about welfare reform.

The key findings overall showed that the caseworkers agreed that welfare reform is helping families become more responsible and putting recipients to work. However, only more time will tell if the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) will help welfare come to an end.

By Kanice McQueen

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Chapter One:

INTRODUCTION

Welfare policy has been one of the most controversial issues since the early 20th century. Over the past several years, states have made great strides toward a critical goal of moving families from welfare to work spurred on by the federal government. In August of 1996, President William Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) into law and "ended welfare as we know it" (Hasenfield 1998, p.1). PRWORA eliminated the federal entitlement of cash assistance to needy families, imposed a lifetime five-year limit on receipt of aid, and set tough work requirements (Hasenfield 1998, p.1).

Purpose

The purpose of this applied research project is to identify and explore the components of the welfare legislation in relation to PRWORA and to describe the attitudes of case managers regarding the implementation and impact of TANF on families in Texas. The research uses descriptive categories as the conceptual framework.

The Advent of the Welfare System

Welfare reform has been shaped by events and values that have led to changes throughout the years. Welfare's initial inception was during the Great Depression. In 1935, Congress enacted Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), a relatively modest program focused primarily on widows, orphans, divorced or deserted mothers and their children (Komisar 1997, p.63). Unfortunately, as time passed and economic conditions improved, ADC became an entitlement program and generated negative connotations for the families receiving these services.

For years the media has portrayed welfare recipients abusing the system thus public views toward welfare became negative. Linda Gordon notes that the stigmatization of the AFDC program (now known as TANF or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with the passage of PRWORA) first began on a large scale in 1950's and 1960's" (1994, p. B1). Gordon notes that there are three reasons for the stigmatization:

1. The role of women began to be redefine in the 50's and 60's, more women were expected to work outside of the home and as a consequence, single mothers on AFDC began to be shamed for being on welfare rolls.
2. Another development that contributed to the stigmatization was the increase in the divorce rate, which left more women alone to raise their children.
3. The assertion by African American women that welfare was a right (1994, p.81).

Why Welfare Reform?

In the early 60's and 70's the federal government was the leading trendsetter in social welfare policy (Rom 1999,p.369). According to Table 1.1, growth accelerated during the 1960s and 1970s, however, the program was then renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) (USDHS). In the 1980's the Reagan and Bush administrations endorsed an economic program that cut taxes and government spending. The people who were hurt the most were the current and former welfare recipients (Zastrow 1968, p.23). One of the most significant impacts on welfare was the economic boom in the 1990's, which brought the unemployment rate to its lowest level in years (USDHS). But had little if any affect on the millions of welfare recipients as shown in Table 1.1.

Consequently, there was a need to move welfare recipients from welfare to work. The passage of PRWORA is the most sweeping legislation to date regarding welfare reform. The AFDC program was abolished. PRWORA transformed AFDC to a temporary assistance program and renamed- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). As a result years of social change brought about another in welfare reform called the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. And with the enactment of PRWORA states now have the sole

challenge of removing millions of people from welfare and moving them into work. As shown in Table 1.1 from PRWORA's inception in 1996 welfare recipients have dropped from 12.6 million to 5.7 million as of June 2000.

Table 1.1

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), formerly called AFDC**Total U.S. Population, 1960-1999**

Year	Recipients in millions	U.S. Pop. in millions	% of Pop.
AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)			
1960	3.0	180.7	1.7%
1964	4.1	191.9	2.1%
1970	8.5	205.1	4.1%
1974	10.8	213.8	5.1%
1975	11.1	215.9	5.2%
1976	11.3	218.0	5.2%
1977	11.1	220.2	5.1%
1978	10.6	222.6	4.8%
1979	10.3	225.1	4.6%
1980	10.5	227.7	4.7%
1981	11.1	229.9	4.9%
1982	10.4	232.2	4.5%
1983	10.6	234.3	4.5%
1984	10.8	236.3	4.6%
1985	10.8	238.5	4.5%
1986	10.9	240.7	4.6%
1987	11.0	242.8	4.6%
1988	10.9	245.0	4.5%
1989	10.9	247.3	4.4%
1990	11.4	249.9	4.6%
1991	12.5	252.6	5.0%
1992	13.6	255.4	5.3%
1993	14.1	258.1	5.5%
1994	14.2	260.4	5.5%
1995	13.6	263.0	5.2%
TANF(Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) Implemented			
1996	12.6	265.3	4.8%
1997	10.9	267.6	4.1%
1998	8.7	270.0	3.2%
1999	7.2	272.6	2.6%
June 2000*	5.7	275.1	2.1%
Note: unless noted, caseload numbers are average monthly *most recent available Source: HHS Administration for Children and Families *Please see US Department of Human Services for reference			

Description of Chapters

Chapter Two contains a review of the literature on Welfare Reform. The literature is used to define the topic, describe the reasons for enactment of welfare reform and review legislation with a special section entitled 'conceptual framework'. The Conceptual Framework section discusses in detail the legislation and ideas for the literature that determined the descriptive categories. Chapter Three describes welfare reform in Texas and identifies important components of the Achieving Change for Texans (ACT). This assessment uses a survey and interviews to collect data. Chapter Four is the methodology chapter, which will present the manner in which the study has been conducted and outlines the reasoning behind the methods used. Chapter Five contains the results and analysis of research. The final chapter summarizes the study's major findings and future recommendations.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature in order to identify and evaluate various aspects of welfare reform. This chapter examines the history and evolution of welfare reform legislation, evaluates and reviews the current Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and identifies and describes the major components of legislation-included in the descriptive categories.

The conceptual framework section of the chapter provides a detailed discussion of the descriptive categories in relation to the implementation of welfare reform.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY¹

Before the current system can be assessed it is essential to examine the legislative history of welfare reform.

1909- THE WIDOWS PENSION OR MOTHERS AID MOVEMENT

The Widows Pension or Mothers Aid Movement reaffirmed the idea that whenever possible, needy children should be provided for in their own home (Trattner 1999, p. 222).

In April 1911, Missouri enacted America's first widow's pension law, a permissive statute allowing counties to provide

cash assistance to full-time mothers with dependent children. By 1919, similar laws had been enacted in thirty-nine states, and by 1935 all but two South Carolina and Georgia were extending aid to widows with children (Trattner 1999, p. 224-25).

1935-SOCIAL SECURITY ACT "AID FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN"

In 1935 the Aid for Dependent Children ACT (ADC) became the cornerstone of today's welfare system an omnibus measure. Which through two lines of defense contributory social insurance and public assistance aimed at preventing destitution (Trattner 1999, p.288).

ADC provided for old-age (pensions) and public assistance for the aged; unemployment insurance (compensation) for the jobless; public assistance to dependent children in single-parent families, to cripple children, and to the blind; and federal monies for state and local public health work (Trattner 1999, p.289).

In addition, the act provided federal aid to states, on a matching basis to help single parent families with dependent children ("to assist, broaden, and supervise existing mothers aid programs," many of which throughout America had been discontinued due to lack of funds), crippled youngsters, and the blind (Trattner 1999, p.290).

¹ Legislative history information is from the book Poor Law to Welfare

The 1935 act established the only welfare system in the world in which the state did not bear full responsibility for the care of its senior citizens (through general tax revenues raised, for the most part, from the more well to do); only in America did workers contribute directly to a program of old-age security (Trattner 1999, p.292).

The Social Security Act also established a new alignment of responsibility in the field of public welfare. For the first time in American history, funds to finance all or part of the needs of selected groups in the population became a major permanent item in the federal budget one that has continued to grow each year (Trattner 1999, p.294).

With the inclusion of extended aid to the "caretaker", the name was changed to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in 1956 (Komisar 1977, p.89).

1950-1960- AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN (AFDC)

In 1956 an amendment required state welfare agencies to provide social services to AFDC families (Komisar 1977, p.89). Child welfare services were extended from urban to rural areas. A partial sliding scale for assistance grants to the states was adopted in an effort to equalize welfare payments in poor and wealthy states. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

was created to oversee implementation of AFDC (Trattner 1999, p.312).

According to Trattner, AFDC increased federal support (from 50 to 75 percent of the cost) to the states. The grant included the provision to local welfare departments for casework, job training, job placement, and other "soft" services to public assistance recipients (1999, p.320).

The number of recipients and total expenditures continued to climb. Between 1963 and 1966 federal grants to the states for social services more than doubled. Approximately one million new public assistance cases were added to the welfare rolls, especially in AFDC programs -and another 3.3 million would be added before the end of the decade (Trattner 1999, p.328).

Because of the attitudes of society, politicians and welfare recipients have endured many pressures.

Welfare rules:

Require most recipients to work within two years of receiving assistance, limits most assistance to five years total, and lets states establish "family caps" to deny additional benefits to mothers for children born while the mothers are already on public assistance (Froomklin 1999, p. 2).

The federal government has moved most of the responsibility for the care of impoverished families. Thus the federal government is no longer the trendsetters because the

states enforce the rules and requirements of the new welfare policy.

Political and societal pressures seem to be one of many reasons why legislation continues to change. In 1992, Bill Clinton was elected president promising to "end welfare as we know it". By 1994 a Republican Congress was also determined to change the existing system.

As a result, on August 22, 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which ended the welfare entitlement and replaced it with a new block grant providing \$16.5 billion per year to states to assist the needy.

1996-PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT (PRWORA); TANF (TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE for NEEDY FAMILIES):

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 abolished AFDC and replaced it with a system of grants to the states. This legislation allowed states to establish most of the rules of eligibility and set requirements to end welfare to all recipients after two years, whether or not they had found jobs by that time. The new law also set a lifetime limit on assistance at five years, barred legal immigrants who had not yet become American citizens from receiving food stamps and supplemental security income, and gave

states the authority to end Medicaid payments to legal immigrants as well (Trattner 199, p.397).

The literature suggests that while time limits may encourage some recipients to enter labor markets sooner than they would have if time limits were not in place, time limits cannot compensate for the limited labor market faced by some recipients. In addition recipients often face challenges, like no childcare and lack of education and job skills, thus they have a harder time finding work and the time limits are more likely to adversely affect them (Pavetti 1996, p. 5).

Furthermore the enactment of PRWORA gave states the challenge of moving millions of people from government cash assistance to people with paychecks (living wages). Implementation of TANF was relatively smooth because welfare recipients were, for the most part, able to find jobs. As a result they became productive members of society and provided for their children. From this point on those receiving welfare would have to acquire gainful employment or lose their TANF benefits.

According to Scott Logan, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) initiated one of the most revolutionary experiments of our time, the end of

welfare, as we, for many generations, have known it (2000, p.1). With the inception of PRWORA the old system, Aid to Dependent Families with Children (AFDC) lost its statutory authority to provide assistance to needy families.

PRWORA created many challenges and opportunities for states and local governments to make changes. These entities that were charged with implementing the new legislation, while still providing a safety net of services to the indigent and most vulnerable in our society, particularly children and the elderly (NACO 1999, p.1). Given that the welfare reform act will expire² on September 30,2002, the focus is now shifting to welfare recipients and how they are faring since leaving the welfare rolls (Logan 2001, p.4). While this legislation gives states broad flexibility in some areas, it also includes several important mandates designed to transform the existing AFDC program into a work oriented transitional assistance program (Pavetti et al 1997, p. 1). Consequently, if a state fails to comply with the new welfare system they will also receive financial penalties. Therefore, it becomes the states responsibility to ensure implementation of the law.

² TANF comes up for reauthorization by Congress in 2002.

OBJECTIVES OF PRWORA

The purposes of welfare reform are: 1) providing state flexibility, 2) requiring work, 3) reducing out of wedlock births and 4) reducing poverty, especially among children.

Providing State Flexibility

With the enactment of PRWORA states can specify their own rules and provide recipients with "programs" they design and implement (NACO 1999, p.1). Federal eligibility standards and benefit level requirements have been repealed so that states may decide who is eligible for family welfare and the amount of their grant. States may also partner with other public, nonprofit or for-profit entities to help carry out welfare reform.

State and local officials face numerous challenges as they begin to transform a system whose primary purpose was to provide cash assistance to families with children into a system whose primary purpose is to help the parents in those families find employment (Pavetti et al. 1997, p.1

.

Requiring Work

The goal of requiring work is to help recipients obtain employment as soon as possible in order to reach self-sufficiency before they are timed out of benefits. As long as jobs and training are available the work requirement may be very effective in getting welfare recipients to achieve new levels of independence. However, with every policy change there are always the disadvantages.

According to Rector, traditionally when welfare recipients were required to look for employment, most returned claiming that they could not find work. As long as "unsuccessful job seekers" are allowed to remain idle on welfare rolls, any work requirement becomes a sham and dependence will not be reduced (2000, p.299). To deal with this problem states like Wisconsin have required recipients to job search immediately before and after being certified for TANF. If they have not obtained a private sector job after some six weeks of continuous supervised job search, they are then required to perform community service in exchange for ongoing benefits (Rector 2000, p. 299).

Although recipients may be required to perform community service, paid employment is still the ultimate goal. Many states are accomplishing this goal. Even though there has been a recent change in the economy since the inception of welfare reform, there should still be more people moving from welfare to

work. Promoting workforce participation is a key component of the PRWORA. The shift to a "work first" approach has resulted in work participation requirements by states for TANF recipients (Relave 1999, p. 1).

Reducing out of wedlock births

Another goal of TANF is to reduce the number of out wedlock births through encouraging family and marriage. Reducing out of wedlock births will be a huge test for most states. Fortunately since states now have more flexibility they can really push for programs that teach and educate abstinence and thus might make or attempt to make a difference (Rector 2000, p.311).

Although the abstinence programs might help promote awareness there is not a provision in PRWORA that specifically addresses this problem. PRWORA addresses the problem in the sense that the legislation has allowed more funding to help assist abstinence programs but essentially that might not be enough (Comparison 1996, p.19).

Reducing Poverty, especially among children

The final goal of welfare reform is the reduction of poverty. Reducing poverty is the key to a productive society in every aspect. But this is also one of the hardest issues to tackle. States are, however, at a huge advantage because at the

time the PRWORA was passed the economy was doing well and employers could not find enough employees to fill all jobs (Besharov et al. 1997, p.1).

These issues seem to suggest an important question: who is the better provider- the states or the federal government? Upon examining the literature the answer is that policy makers do not know yet and probably will not know for years to come.

MAJOR DIFFERENCES IN TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES:

The new program, called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), differed from its predecessor in a number of important ways, including:

Eliminating the Welfare Entitlement

Under TANF, recipients are no longer guaranteed welfare benefits based on eligibility. The 1996 law also eliminated a childcare guarantee for welfare recipients, but provided increased funding for childcare through a newly created Child Care and Community Development Block Grant. The 1996 law did not affect Medicaid or food stamp eligibility, though critics contend that links between these programs have resulted in numerous recipients being denied Medicaid and food stamp assistance (Rowe 2000, p.20).

Eligibility

Families with children and pregnant women who meet certain income guidelines are eligible for TANF (Rowe 2000,p.17).

The eligibility requirement shows the effectiveness of the welfare program by showing that those off of welfare have agreed to hold themselves responsible and go to work.

After an in depth interview applicants and recipients are required to sign a Personal Responsibility Agreement (PRA), which has several requirements. Some of the most important ones are that clients must refrain from voluntarily quitting a paying job without good reason; they must participate in the employment services program; refrain from drugs and participate in parenting skills classes if referred (Rowe 2000,p.15). Clients who refuse to participate ultimately receive a fine that can vary from 78 dollars to 100 dollars and/or program dismissal.

The expectation is that clients would adhere to program rules rather than accept the deduction of cash benefits. Consequently, the objective is for parents to be encouraged to gain and retain employment.

Establishing Work Requirements

TANF requires recipients to be working within two years of receiving benefits. This general mandate is reinforced by rules requiring states to reach fixed and rising work participation thresholds. By 2002, for example, 50 percent of families receiving assistance in every state must be engaged in work-related activities (Relave 1999,p.2).

Establishing a Five Year Lifetime Limit on Assistance

To address long-term welfare dependency, TANF placed a five-year lifetime limit on assistance, but allows states to exempt up to 20 percent of such cases for hardship reasons. States are allowed to reduce this lifetime limit below 5 years, and almost half of the states have done so (Fact Sheet 1996, p.1).

Time Limits

Time limits are assigned in the interview process but the benefit months are not counted toward the clients' time limit until the client receives notification to voluntarily participate in the TANF Program (TDH 1998, p.25). This means that once an employment program outreaches the recipients not

only does their states time clock start but also their 5-year lifetime clock begins. States are not only penalized for not following the new legislation but they are also rewarded for compliance. Texas is one of the few that have been rewarded.

According to Relave, time limits might be very effective because they may induce recipients into becoming more eager to get off welfare by adding the pressure of possible benefit termination. The time limit requirement might also make recipients more eager to get off welfare because there is a transition period and the program offers work requirements thus leading to more welfare recipients going to work (Relave 1999, p.1).

Caseload Reduction

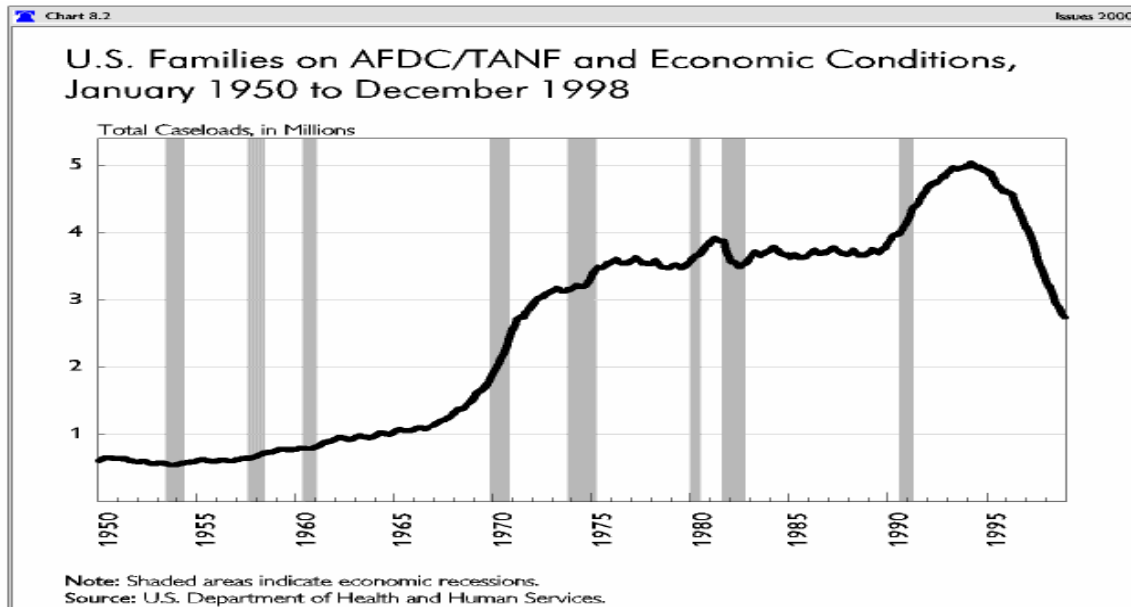
Since TANF was enacted, the number of people on welfare has declined dramatically. According the Department of Health and Human Services by 1999, there were only 7.2 million recipients, including 2.6 million families and 5.1 million children, roughly half the caseload of the 1994 peak. Analysts believe several factors have contributed to this decline, including an improved economy, tougher work requirements, and diversion strategies that have moved applicants directly to work programs (Relave 1999, p.1). Not only have recipients left the program in higher numbers, but also few have joined to replace them.

Supporters of the 1996 changes point to declining caseloads as evidence of the new law's success. Opponents argue that reducing poverty is more important than reducing welfare dependence, and that poverty has not dropped nearly as much as welfare enrollment, implying that people in need are turned away. Whatever the reason caseloads have dropped and we seem to be closer to ending welfare, as we used to know it. However, the Department of Health and Human Services only shows that welfare recipients are falling off welfare rolls but it does not show how or where the recipients are now (Danzinger et al. 2000, p.4).

ECONOMY

PRWORA was passed when supporters insisted that the robust economy provided a drive for welfare reform because of low unemployment levels. As the data in Figure 2.1⁴ indicates, the link between periods of economic growth and recession and changes in AFDC/TANF caseloads is tenuous at best. Modest increases in AFDC caseloads occurred during some, but not all, periods of economic recession (Rector 2000, p.296).

Figure 2.1



Furthermore there were eight periods of economic expansion prior to the 1990s, not one of these growth periods resulted in any substantial decrease in AFDC caseloads (Rector 296). According to the Technical Report of the Council of Economic Advisors, two primary factors are the reasons for the caseload changes in America; one begins with the strong labor market and the second factor is the change in welfare policy (Council of Economic Advisors, 1999, p.2). This report also goes further to explain that the nation is under the longest peacetime expansion in its history, with low unemployment and rising wages (1999, p.2).

⁴ Please see Robert Rector in Bibliography for source information.

In fact, previous economic booms coincided either with relatively flat caseloads or with substantial caseload growth (during the late 1960s and early 1970s). In reality, as Figure 2.1 makes clear, no sustained and significant declines in AFDC caseloads occurred at any point before the mid-1990s. Thus, claims that the recent unprecedented drop in dependence has been caused largely by the current economic expansion are clearly refuted by the historical record (Rector 2000, p.296).

In contrast, Author Stephen Bell examined seven studies and found that the economy was indeed closely tied to caseload size, and a major contributor to recent declines in dependence (2001, p.40). The economy was booming and it only made sense to have able-bodied individuals on welfare working and not receiving money from the government.

Conceptual Framework

This research uses descriptive categories to organize the empirical investigation of caseworkers attitudes toward welfare reform. **Table 2.3** illustrates the conceptual framework and its linkage between the descriptive categories and the literary resources.

**Table 2.3: Conceptual Framework linking the literature to
the Descriptive Categories**

Concepts/Categories	Literature
I. Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Parent Training • Time Limits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDH 1998 • Pavetti et al 1997 • Sawhill 1995 • Besharov 1997 • Fact Sheet 1996 • Relave 1999
II. Initial Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral requirements (PRA) • Work Requirements • Children Eligibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rowe 200 • TDH 1998 • Pavetti et al 1997 • Rector 2000 • Comparison 1999
III. Transition to Self Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Training • Job placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDH 1998 • Danzinger 2000
IV. Ongoing Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemptions allowed • Dependency • Two parent families • Work barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pindus et al 1997 • Pavetti et al 1997 • Relave 1999 • Danzinger 2000
V. Impacts of Legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals of TANF and benefits • Benefits received by welfare recipients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blum et al 2000 • Rom 1997 • TDH 1998 • NACO 1999
VI. Economic Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong economy • Recession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council of Economic Advisors 1999 • Rector 2000 • Bell 2001

The descriptive categories are organized so that the implementation of TANF and the impacts that it has on the families in Texas can be explored.

Work requirements of TANF recipients are one of the most important aspects of the program. Work Requirements represent a major shift from past policy. Other critical requirements include, parent training classes and time limits. Many welfare recipients fear that they will not have health insurance if they go back to work, because not all jobs give health insurance for part-time work (Sawhill 1995, p.24). Most will have to work part-time or low paying jobs due to their lack of education and work experience. TANF will however apply different levels of time limits for those with more education levels than others (Rowe 2000, p.22). This policy should help ensure and evaluate the skills or potential skills of welfare recipients.

As examined in this chapter PRWORA's main agenda is **personal responsibility** - being held morally accountable for your actions is a very important factor. Seemingly, upon completion and or acceptance of these requirements there is a **transition to self-support**, programs promoting work and independence is a major contributor of PRWORA. Consequently, there was a strong push and urgency for people to have

independence and go to work. However, there still seems to be a need for **ongoing eligibility**- for those who often times have unwanted or unpredicted circumstances. Some welfare programs also allows for **exemptions** like the rainy day fund for those who get in a bind so that before they come to the welfare office they can receive a one-time payment.

The literature further shows the effect that the **economy** has and will have on welfare recipients. At the inception of the PRWORA - the country has had one of the best economies ever and also experiencing one of the lowest unemployment rates in approximately 40 years. As explained in the literature the US saw a "strong labor market, which has made work opportunities relatively more attractive, drawing people off welfare and into jobs. The unemployment rate has declined as much in the post-TANF period as it did in the 1993-96-waiver period. As a result the share of the caseload that is attributable to improvements in the labor market was much higher in 1993-96 (roughly 26 to 36 percent) than is the 1996-98 (8 to 10 percent)(CEA 1999, p.1).

The overall purpose of this research is to address the **impacts** that legislation has had on these categories and how it has affected them. The goals of TANF are to:

- (1) Provide support to poor families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
- (2) promote job preparation, work, and marriage in order to reduce families receipt of government benefits;
- (3) prevent and reduce the incidence of non-marital

pregnancies; and (4) encourage the formation and the maintenance of two parent families. Under the new law, states are allowed greater flexibility over the design and implementation of their welfare program, but required to impose work requirements and enforce a 5-year limit on the receipt of federal assistance. (Blum et al. 2000, p.2).

CONCLUSION

Social welfare is an enormously varied and complex policy. Changes in welfare policies, programs and practices affect millions of people. Even experts have difficulty predicting the effects of what may at first seem to be relatively minor shifts in goals methods, or activities (Macarov 1995, p.1). In response to policy changes states have developed a variety of new programs to assist them in helping move welfare recipients to work. Some states have implemented mentoring programs to help people cope with the new requirements of a job. Welfare agencies have also been working with employers to provide subsidies for those who hire welfare recipients.

Many more recipients have left or will be leaving the rolls than previously because they do not meet program requirements or because they hit the time limit on their benefits (Loprest 1999, p. 1). Welfare reform has gone through many changes and it is likely that it may go through many more. With the new welfare reform ultimately performing President Clinton's goal of "ending welfare, as we know it", this may be the last major change in welfare reform long time.

Chapter Three

TEXAS RESEARCH SETTING

This chapter describes the State of Texas and its role in relation to welfare reform. Since 1962, the Secretary of the Health and Human Services has had the authority to waive federal welfare requirements if a state proposed experimental or pilot programs that furthered the goals of Aid to Dependent Children (AFDC)" (Advisers 1999, p.8).

Although, there were a few waivers granted in the early 1980's it was not until the early to mid-1990's that major state- waivers became widespread (Advisors 1999, p.8). Prior to the passage of PRWORA in August 1996, many states received waivers from federal regulations that allowed them to experiment with new AFDC policies (Bell, 2001,p.2). In other words states could make exceptions and exemptions to PRWORA for a limited time.

In 1995 Texas implemented a waiver called ACT (Achieving Change for Texans) which aimed to assist participants to achieve independence from welfare through an increased emphasis on employment training, temporary assistance and support services (TDHS 1998, p. ix). These waivers and pilot programs are significant they have allowed states to test the waters and to

see what they could to lower the number of welfare recipients before the state waiver expires. On March 31, 2002, all state waivers will no longer exist. Every state will then function under the federal TANF laws.

Texas Welfare Reform¹

Since, Texas was one of the first states to apply for a waiver of the federal welfare legislation they have shown that ACT (Achieving Change for Texans) puts people to work who can work. Social welfare policy in Texas is shaped by belief in individual responsibility, distrust of "big-government" and fiscal conservatism. Consistent with this philosophy an overarching goal of welfare reform is to make sure that all Texans able to work do work (Pindus et al 1998, p.3). Despite low benefit levels, Texas had the third largest AFDC caseload in the nation (Pindus et al 1998, p.15). Although the return to the labor market among former Texas AFDC recipients is significant there are signs of problems. The state actually has more families seeking aid each month than four years ago. Applicants are often disappointed because welfare is harder to get and harder to keep. (De Parle 1999, p. A1).

¹ Unless otherwise noted all descriptive information regarding Texas welfare reform was from the Texas Department of Health and Human Services website at <http://www.dhs.state.tx.us>.

HOUSE BILL 1863

House Bill (HB) 1863, enacted by the 74th Legislature and signed into law by Governor George W. Bush in June 1995, significantly changed the welfare system in Texas, making an immediate priority for low-income families applying for or receiving TANF aid. The state began implementing HB1863 welfare reform provision in June 1996. The reformed welfare system, Achieving Change for Texans (ACT) operates under a federal waive that continues until March 2002. The Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) jointly administer the TANF program in the state. It is responsible for eligibility and TWC coordinates employment and training activities.

Under ACT, families are limited to between 12 and 36 months of cash assistance. Mandatory recipients must work or participate in welfare to work activities that can help them find a job. Because Texas already had federal approval to implement ACT before President Clinton signed the federal welfare reform law in August 1996, many of the federal provision will not apply to Texas until the states waiver ends.

Personal Responsibility Agreement

All Texans applying for or receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash benefits are required to sign a

personal responsibility agreement as a condition of getting benefits, except those in a control group. Parents agree to:

- Keep their children in school, have them immunized; and complete required health screening;
- Cooperate with child-support collection efforts;
- Participate in job-training or education programs;
- Not voluntarily quit a job;
- Not abuse alcohol or drugs and;
- Attend parent-training classes.

Benefits for single parents are reduced up to \$78 per month for each condition not met; the amount is up to \$125 for two parent families. Families are denied benefits completely if parents refuse to sign the agreement. This provision was implemented in June 1996.

Time Limits

TANF recipients who participate in Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Choices program are limited to one to three years of cash benefits. Time limits are based upon education level and job experience.

- 1-year limit- High School education or better or work experience of at least 18 months.

- 2-year limit -At least three years of high school, or work experience of at least six to 18 months.
- 3-year limit -Less than three years of high school and less than six months of work experience.

When the time limit is reached, parents, not children lose their TANF benefits. Once parents have exhausted their time limits, they are ineligible for TANF for five years. Some exemptions apply to local economic factors and parents who care for a family member who has a disability.

Transitional Medicaid and Child-Care

When families lose their TANF benefits because of increased earning or by exhausting their time limits, they may be eligible for 12 to 18 months of transitional Medicaid and childcare.

License Suspension

Other agencies have also agreed to take part in welfare reform. For example, the Attorney General Office may suspend the professional license of parents who don't pay child support.

Other Provisions

HB 1863 allows DHS to undertake fingerprint imaging, one-time emergency assistance, and individual development account

pilot projects in selected counties. It also established alimony, consolidates job training, and created local workforce boards.

- The Lone Star Image Systems uses biometric technology to capture finger images of all adults and minor head of households receiving food stamps, and all adult minor parents receiving TANF. The goal is to detect and deter duplicate program participation. The system was implemented statewide in August 1999.
- One Time TANF allows households that aren't currently receiving TANF (but that would otherwise be eligible) to receive a lump-sum cash assistance payment of \$1,000. Besides meeting all TANF requirements, the household must also meet a crisis criterion. Households choosing one-time TANF are not eligible for TANF or one-time TANF cash assistance again for 12 months.

CHANGES FROM THE 76TH LEGISLATURE

The following changes were made to the state welfare reform law during this legislative session:

Increased TANF Grant

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) monthly grant increased to approximately 17 percent of the Federal

Poverty income in October 1999, from a maximum of \$188 to \$201 a month for a family of three. In addition, each August families will receive a \$60 school subsidy as a supplemental payment for each TANF child.

Earned Income Disregard

The first few months of work are usually both exciting and stressful for TANF clients. There may be extra expenses, like uniforms or work clothes, as well as transportation and child-care costs. A change in the Earned Income Disregard allowance may make the transition easier. Beginning in FY 2001, TANF recipients who start working will receive an increase in the standard work-related expense allowance, as well as 90-percent disregard of income for four months as a work incentive payment. These allowance help stabilize recipients during the first months of work, thereby increasing the likelihood of their remaining employed and moving the family toward self-sufficiency.

Medicaid Reviews

To improve medical care for Texas children, in July 1999 DHS began automatically reviewing recipients Medicaid eligibility when a TANF case is denied. These reviews are to instill that children are no left without proper medical care.

Caretaker Exemption

Originally, a TANF caretaker with a child under age 4 (when the family applied for benefits) was exempt from work requirements until the child turned 4. Beginning in January 2000, since TANF caretakers are exempt from work requirements until the youngest child in their home -at the time they first became eligible for TANF -turns 3 years old. The exemption for the youngest child's age decreases to age 2 in September 2000 and to age 1 in September 2001. Two-parent households receiving TANF unemployed parent (TANF-UP) benefits cannot claim this exemption.

The next chapter describes the methodology used to conduct the research. Chapter four also ties the conceptual framework to the empirical portion of the research. The statistical techniques used to conduct the research are also detailed.

Chapter Four

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology used to answer the research question. The questionnaire is designed using the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework organizes the ideas and the questionnaire is the organ of the empirical inquiry.

Survey Research (Questionnaire)

Babbie states that surveys (questionnaires) can be used for descriptive and exploratory purposes and that they are excellent tools for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population (2001, p.238).

The survey was developed to assist in analyzing caseworkers attitudes. It was constructed after a careful review of the literature on welfare reform. A conceptual framework was developed from the literature. From there, survey items were constructed. Hence it is an appropriate tool to assess caseworkers attitudes.

Table 4.1 summarizes the conceptual framework and links the framework to the specific questionnaire items. The survey (**APPENDIX A**) asks various questions using a Likert scale to measure the intensity of agreement or disagreement with

particular statements about current welfare policy that will help explore caseworkers attitudes. The responses were analyzed by calculating percentage distribution for the survey.

Figure 4.1: Operationalization the Conceptual Framework

Concepts/Categories	Survey Question
I. Mandatory Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work requirements • Parent Training • Time limits 	<p>Q-8 The mandatory work requirements under TANF are effective.</p> <p>Q-19 Parent Training has made recipients better parents</p> <p>Q-7 Time limits decrease family dependency on welfare</p>
II. Moral and Work Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Participation • Children's Health • Personal Responsibility 	<p>Q-5 Welfare reform has reduced out-of - wedlock childbearing</p> <p>Q-10 Welfare recipients are adhering to personal responsibility agreements</p> <p>Q-3 Welfare participants are keeping jobs</p> <p>Q-14 Welfare reform has resulted in children getting more health screens and immunization.</p>
III. Job Training and Job Placement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Training • Types of work • Promotes Job Preparation 	<p>Q-9 Job training has been effective in moving TANF recipients from welfare to work.</p> <p>Q-16 TANF recipients are receiving quality work positions.</p> <p>Q-20 TANF participants are putting job preparation skills to use effectively</p>
IV. Preventing Dependency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic conditions "one time payment" • Dependency- incentives to achieve independence • Encourages two-parent families 	<p>Q-12 Two parent families are able to get back on their feet with the one time payment allowance.</p> <p>Q-11 TANF allows clients to achieve independency and thus there are fewer exemptions.</p> <p>Q-6 The TANF program supports two parent households</p>
V. Impacts of Legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRWORA makes caseworkers jobs easier • Provide Support to poor families • Prevents Non-marital pregnancies 	<p>Q-2 Since the enactment of welfare reform my caseload has been reduced.</p> <p>Q-4 The implementation of welfare reform has reduced poverty among families.</p> <p>Q-15 PRWORA allows welfare caseworkers more flexibility</p> <p>Q-13 Non-marital pregnancies have been reduced since welfare reform was implemented</p>
VI. Economic Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong economy • Recession 	<p>Q-17 At the inception of PRWORA economic conditions contributed to the success of welfare reform</p> <p>Q-18 TANF recipients have suffered because of the recent downturn in the economy.</p>

Strengths and Weaknesses

Surveys have the advantages of standardization of the data collected. They are also flexible and have a high level of reliability (Babbie, 2001, p.268). Surveys have the weaknesses of appearing, superficial in the coverage of complex topics; seldom dealing "with the context of social life; artificially due to the inability to measure social action (Babbie, 2001, p.268).

Therefore, the deficiencies of my response rate were counteracted with the additional use of interviewing.

Demographics/Sample

The sample consisted of all caseworkers at various TDHS offices in Austin, Texas. The surveys were emailed to approximately 100 case managers and their supervisors. This would be considered a convenience sample because of the restraints of exploratory nature of the research, time and access to caseworkers. An online survey tool called surveymonkey.com; was the delivery mechanism. Fifty surveys were returned for a return rate of fifty percent.

Survey Research (Interview)

The data gathered from the survey was then triangulated with evidence gathered through interviews. Interviews were

conducted to supplement the survey data and are an alternative method of collecting data (Babbie 2001, p.258). Interviewing is often so much like normal conversation researchers must keep reminding themselves that they are not having an normal conversation (293).

Strengths and Weaknesses

Flexibility is an advantage of interviews as survey research as well as its ability to be relatively inexpensive it is also tends to have more validity (Babbie 2001, p.298). The advantages of an interview survey over a self-administered questionnaire are fewer complete questionnaires and fewer misunderstood questions, generally higher return rates (Babbie 2001, p.271) Babbie suggests another potential problem to survey research and that is the issue of reliability, because the researchers must sort out their own biases and points of views (299).

Nature of Interview Subjects

Four interviews were conducted; the first interview was conducted on October 12 with Dr. James Chahin who is the Dean for the College of Applied Arts at Southwest Texas State University. The second interview was conducted with Crystal Bearley a Choices Career Lead at Work Sources a private company

contracted by the Texas Workforce Commission on October 15, 2001. The last two were telephone interviews with Gina Muniz a TDHS Program Administrator and Tamisha Parker a Texas Works Advisor with the Department of Health and Services.

Interview Questions

Open-ended interviews do not follow a strict line of questioning, but follow general questions about certain topics and areas of interest. The interviews conducted for this research were based on questions relating to the descriptive categories and subcategories. The interviewees were asked in depth questions regarding welfare reform. A copy of the questions can be found in **Appendix B**.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the methods used to collect assessment data. Also explained, was how the conceptual framework is linked to data collection. Chapter five presents the results of the assessment.

Chapter Five

RESULTS

The purpose of the results chapter is to present the findings from the interviews and surveys. The attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of caseworkers on welfare reform are assessed in light of the conceptual framework developed earlier in this paper. Each category will be discussed separately using tables. A summary of these survey results, interview results and suggestion for additional research will be provided in the concluding chapter. The rest of the chapter is organized by categories identified in the conceptual framework.

Each subheading contains a brief discussion of the elements of the category, a table that presents results related to the category and a discussion of the findings.

Table 5.1 Mandatory Participation: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
Questions	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
Work Requirements	76%	6%	18%
Parent Training	82%	10%	8%
Time Limits	80%	6%	14%

Mandatory Participation

As displayed in Table 5.1 the caseworkers believe strongly (76%) that the work requirements are an important aspect in mandatory participation and are effective under TANF. They also believe by a strong majority (82%) that parent training and (80%) that time limits are an effective influence for families on TANF.

Crystal Bearley, states that some recipients are just not work ready and that they lack education skills. Dr. Chahin states that the economy does not provide livable wages, and the limitations of PRWORA in affect have a negative impact and probably increase the number of people that are displaced and potentially homeless. Chahin goes on to say that even if we (government) provide work and employment skills, and the economy does not have the jobs to make livable wages- the intent of the policy is incongruent with the net results.

Table 5.2 Moral and Work Requirements: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
Work Participation	66%	2%	38%
Children's Health	84%	8%	8%
Personal Responsibility	40%	6%	54%

Moral and Work Requirements

According to Table 5.2, 66% of the caseworkers surveyed believe that welfare participants are keeping the jobs that they are getting. However, with the downturn economy the situation has changed because so many workers have been laid off.

Children's health is something that has benefited from welfare reform. Tamisha Parker says that insuring children's health will definitely benefit society because it will help children stay in school. As a result, drop out rates will decrease and as a consequence provide children with education to get jobs and stop the cycle of welfare.

This table also examines the issue of the recipients taking responsibility for their actions. However, only about (40%) of caseworkers are in agreement that this actually helps. Although (54%) of the caseworkers surveyed disagree that recipients are adhering to their responsibility agreements. Dr. Chahin, states that in order to adhere to the law recipients must have to go

through some type of requirements. He further states that if it is used as a planning tool to enhance the service to the clients then it becomes a public benefit to require the participants to sign the agreement.

Table 5.3 Job Training and Job Placement: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
Job Training	84%	6%	10%
Types of Work	84%	2%	16%
Promotes Job Preparation	78%	4%	18%

Job Training and Job Placement

As displayed in Table 5.3 the caseworkers strongly agree that job training has been effective in moving TANF recipients for welfare to work. There is a strong (84%) consensus among caseworkers that the types of work the welfare recipients have received has been quality work positions. They also agree that TANF participants are putting the job preparation skills to use effectively.

However, Tamisha Parker said that a lot of the clients do not have job training skills and those that do are unqualified or illegal aliens with no education or experience so they end up with underpaid jobs. Crystal Bearley, on the other hand, says

that there is success in putting people to work and giving them training. However, welfare recipients need more work experience not skills. But specialized training may be more effective.

Table 5.4 Preventing Dependency: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
Economic Conditions "one time payment"	74%	12%	14%
Dependency-incentive to achieve independence	74%	6%	20%
Encourages two- parent Families	82%	14%	4%

Preventing Dependency

Table 5.4 shows that the one-time payments help families get back on their feet. Most respondents (37%) feel that the one time payment was helpful to families. Contrastingly, those interviewed, specifically Ms. Parker stated that those who did take the one-time payment are really those people who want to be independent. Most don't take it because they then become ineligible for TANF for a year.

Table 5.4 also shows that (41%) of the Texas caseworkers agree that TANF encourages two-parent families. Nevertheless,

Crystal Bearley notes that although they have seen more two-parent families she would guess that at least 95% of welfare recipients are single mothers.

Table 5.5 Impacts of Legislation: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
Questions	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
PRWORA makes caseworkers jobs easier	38%	12%	12%
Provides support to poor families	76%	8%	16%
Prevents non-marital pregnancies	22%	10%	68%

Impacts of Legislation

Respondents agree that PRWORA has made their jobs easier and reduced their caseload. However, those interviewed think that caseloads were down when it was easier to put people to work.

76% of respondents agree that TANF does provide support to poor families. Those interviewed also agreed that welfare policies have made differences but other agencies must be involved to help with the process.

According to Table 5.5 the (68%) disagreed that welfare policy prevents non-marital pregnancies. In Texas, according to Crystal Bearley, the recipients may be denied benefits but the

children will not be denied benefits. Dr. Chahin stated that we could never legislate behaviors. He states that the intent of the law was good but morality and behavior can never be legislated.

Table 5.6 Economic Changes: Summary of Findings (N)=50 SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree N= No Opinion SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree			
Questions	SA/A	No opinion	SD/D
Strong Economy	79.6%	10.2%	10.2%
Recession	86%	6%	6%

Economic Changes

The majority of respondents agree that the economy has had an affect on welfare recipients. Almost (80%) believe that much of PRWORA success was contributed to the success of the economy. Consequently, with the downturn of the economy (86%) agree that TANF recipients have suffered because of the recent downturn.

Crystal Bearley maintains that it has been harder to put people to work. Because of the downturn in the economy people that have been laid off are taking jobs that were normally recommended for TANF clients. Tamisha Parker notes that the downturn has affected the caseworkers in her agency. With an influx of people needing assistance, caseworkers have to perform group interviews with 50- 100 people.

Overall the respondents and interviewees were found to have very similar beliefs on the welfare reform and its effectiveness. Chapter six will summarize those findings and make recommendations for future research.

Chapter Six

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Purpose

This chapter summarizes the applied research project, discusses how the findings relate to the research question, makes recommendations based on the findings and suggests directions for future research. According to Shields, pragmatism⁵ joins theory and practice through action-pragmatic administrators learn by experience (401). The purpose of the summary and conclusions chapter is to state what the findings are. And make suggestions and recommendations by examining the survey and interviewed evidence of the attitudes and perceptions and beliefs.

Research Summary

The research purpose was intended to describe and explore the attitudes about the affects and effectiveness of welfare reform by Texas Caseworkers. The results of the research seemed to indicate that a majority of those respondents had similar opinions and attitudes about welfare reform.

⁵ Pragmatism is the philosophy of common sense.

This chapter just discusses how and why welfare reform and policy changes are important to public administrators and if those policy changes are effective according to caseworkers.

Table 6.1 displays the summary findings of each descriptive category.

Table 6.1: Summary Table		
Characteristics of Welfare Reform	Findings	Rating Percentage
Mandatory Participation		
<i>Work Requirements</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Parental Training</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
<i>Time Limits</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
Moral and Work Requirements		
<i>Work Participation</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Children's Health</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
<i>Personal Responsibility</i>	Disagree	58-20%
Job Training and Job Placement		
<i>Job Training</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
<i>Types of Work</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
<i>Promotes Job Preparation</i>	Agree	79-59%
Preventing Dependency		
<i>Economic Conditions</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Incentive to achieve independence</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Encouragement of Two parent families</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%
Impacts of Legislation		
<i>PRWORA makes caseworkers job easier</i>	Disagree	49-20%
<i>Provides support to poor families</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Prevents out of wedlock pregnancies</i>	Disagree	49-20%
Economic Changes		
<i>Strong economy</i>	Agree	79-59%
<i>Recession</i>	Strongly Agree	100-80%

Summary of Findings

Work Participation

The surveys results and interviews strongly supported mandatory participation in work. This is a key issue in making welfare reform work. Not only is work an important part of everyday life but it is also the key to living a productive life and achieving self-dependency. Dr. Chahin says that there is an expectation or feeling in our society, that if your able-bodied you should be working and that is the best way to return dignity.

Job Training

Job training is similar to work participation. However, it is different in the sense that welfare participants need job training to engage in and retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Those interviewed believe it is important to provide recipients with work experience instead of job training. But they also need the training to gain experience.

Dr. Chahin stated several times that the government must provide livable wages, like ten dollars an hour for most people to provide for a family of four. Livable wages is a very important aspect to have a good quality of life. Raising the minimum wage is something that should be examined if the

government is serious about moving welfare recipients from welfare to work.

Impacts of Legislation

Overwhelmingly, the impact of the legislation has been very successful according to the Texas Case Workers surveyed and experts interviewed. The change from AFDC to TANF has affected the guidelines and time limits to receiving assistance. Not only has this legislation attempted to make changes necessary to decrease out of wedlock pregnancies and increase and promote two-parent families, the legislation has also enhanced the caseworkers and their flexibility.

Throughout history there has been many changes in welfare policy. Although societal and economic changes have made those changes necessary, it is important to examine the whole assets of a family's life instead of a particular component.

Conclusion

The research overwhelmingly supported welfare reform and the effectiveness of the policy in helping the poor. Responsibility is the strong factor in making welfare policy work. Welfare policy has never had a provision to sign a personal responsibility agreement. This action almost forces those who receive welfare to realize that it is their responsibility to be

productive and able-bodied citizens. Public administrators should do future research to gain better insight as to the impact of welfare reform.

Public policy is shaped by events, theories, values and actions. It is also shaped by groups of professionals. These professionals leave an imprint on policy. Their influence is observed and often easily organized (Shields 1996 p.390). Public administrators have used theory, values and actions are the exact changes that encompasses the changed in welfare reform.

APPENDIX A: Welfare Reform Survey

1. Since the enactment of welfare reform my caseload has been reduced.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

2. Welfare participants are keeping jobs

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

3. Implementation of welfare reform has reduced poverty among families

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

4. Welfare reform reduced out-of -wedlock childbearing

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

5. The TANF program supports two parent households.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

6. Time limits decrease family dependency on welfare.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

7. The mandatory work requirements under TANF are effective.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

8. Job training has been effective in moving TANF recipients from welfare to work.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

9. Welfare recipients are adhering to the personal responsibility agreement

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

10. TANF allows clients to achieve independency and thus there are fewer exemptions.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

11. Two parent families are able to get back on their feet with the one time payment allowance.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

12. Non-marital pregnancies have been reduced since welfare reform was implemented.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

13. Welfare reform has resulted in children getting more health screens and immunization.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

14. PRWORA allows welfare caseworkers more flexibility.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

15. TANF recipients are receiving quality work positions.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

16. At the inception of PRWORA economic conditions contributed to the success of welfare reform.

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

17. TANF recipients have suffered because of the recent downturn in the economy

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

18. Parent Training has made better recipients parents

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

19. TANF participants are putting job preparation skills to use effectively

=Strongly Agree =Agree = No Opinion =Disagree =Strongly Disagree

Appendix B: Interview Questions

I. Mandatory Participation

- Welfare recipients have a lifetime limit of five years on assistance is that enough time for welfare recipients to move from dependency to independency?
- Do you think that it is fair to make welfare recipients to sign the personal responsibility act to receive benefits?

II. Moral and Work Requirements

- One of the goals of welfare reform is to prevent and reduce non-marital pregnancies - do you think that the states ability to refuse benefits for additional children born to a woman who is receiving benefits a way to achieve that goal?
- The requirements of parent training classes are important part to self-sufficiency?
- Will children benefit from welfare reform because their parents are required to keep them in school and immunized?

III. Job Training and Job Placement

- Why is job training a key factor in the issue of welfare reform?
- Is training the key to making welfare recipients to self-sufficient?
- Do welfare recipients receive sufficient training to sustain a life above the poverty level and gain employment?

IV. Preventing Dependency

- A one-time payment to help welfare recipients before they get to rock bottom helps prevent dependency?
- Has welfare reform failed to make individuals self-sufficient?
- Has TANF encouraged two parent families and marriage?
- Will job training help prevent dependency?

V. Impacts of Legislation

- Have welfare policies specifically PRWORA made a difference in poverty?
- How do you think that TANF has fared against its predecessor AFDC and will the new welfare system help or punish the poor?
- Will the shift of welfare being in the federal government's hands to now being in the states helped in bureaucracy and flexibility?

VI. Economic Changes

- Are recent caseload declines an example of the new welfare reform or because of our robust economy?
- Economic downturn will bring a rise in the needy thus-bringing caseloads up again?

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