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FEELINGS AND CONCERNS ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICES
AND SOCIAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF CATHOLIC
CHARITIES MEMBERS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Stephan Ernie Oldham


June 2010

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the feelings and concerns of the Low SES members of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and social economic conditions they are currently experiencing. The study consisted of partially Likert type quantitative questions and partial open-ended quantitative questions. The idea behind the study was to explore how clients felt about support services in such areas as; health care, Medi-Cal, dental care, vision/eye care, day care/child care, school/education, WIC, food stamps, and utilities and how clients felt about social conditions such as; housing, safety, recreation/fun, laundry facilities, transportation, and general quality of life. The study found low income families juggle several social conditions and support services with a significant percentage of difficulty and satisfaction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like acknowledge Dr. McCaslin for all her support and help. I would also like to thank the wonderful support I have received from all the people at Catholic Charities and Ken Sawa. Without their help none of this would be possible.

DEDICATION

To the Author of all things. My family and friends;
all of who had to endure my demeanor, lack of
availability and yet still supported me with their
thoughts and prayers.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

One of the things that has always been a major concern to the profession of social workers has been the study of underprivileged populations and their struggle to sustain a better quality of life for disadvantaged populations. In the very preamble of the social work code of ethics it states:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. (NASW, ¶ 1999)

Perhaps, nowhere is this need to "enhance human well-being" more clearly seen than in the proper support and care for those struggling to make ends meet in our current economic situation. According to the State of California Employment Development Department (EED, 2009), "the unemployment rate was 11.5 percent in May, and nonfarm payroll jobs declined by 68,900 during the month"

(p. 1). According to EED (2009), "In a year-over-year comparison (May 2008 to May 2009), nonfarm payroll employment in California decreased by 739,500 jobs (down 4.9 percent)" (p. 2). The staggering decline in unemployment has lead many families to experience the struggles of poverty for the first time while for those who are already experiencing low socioeconomic status (SES), the influx of more people has created greater demand for the scarce number of resources being provided to the poor and the agencies that service them.

Many agencies, such as Catholic Charities, have struggled to meet the ever-growing number of people in need. Yet, little is known about how the people living in low SES conditions in the Inland Empire perceive the current services and conditions they are experiencing.

With this great increase in the number of people now living in a low socioeconomic status it is important that the feelings and concerns of these people are known. It is important to understand how they feel and think about the services being provided to them by multiple agencies and it is also important to see how they perceive the unique conditions that people of low SES experience.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be to explore the feelings and concerns of clients of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and social economic conditions they are currently experiencing.

San Bernardino/Riverside Catholic Charities (2009) describes its mission as follows:

The mission of Catholic Charities San Bernardino/Riverside is to provide services that impact family, neighborhood, and society so that people's lives are filled with hope. Catholic Charities respects the dignity of all people and, in partnership with individuals, families and communities, advocates for their needs and supports their right to self-determination. (§ 1)

Catholic Charities (2009) also states that its mandate is, "To identify physical, social, emotional problems and address their causes, and to develop and implement strategies that promote personal and social change" (§ 1).

It is with both of these goals in mind that the study was designed. In order to develop strategies and to increase the self-determination of people in low SES

conditions, this study attempted to explore and identify the concerns of the many community members who are affiliated and receive assistance from Catholic Charities.

In an attempt to discover the many feelings and concerns the clients of Catholic charities has, an exploratory questionnaire was developed based on the many community support services and social conditions that Catholic Charities has assisted its members with. The idea behind the study was to explore how clients felt about support services in such areas as; health care, Medi-Cal, dental care, vision/eye care, day care/child care, school/education, WIC, food stamps, and utilities.

The general categories for how clients felt about social conditions were as follows; housing, safety, recreation/fun, laundry facilities, transportation, and general quality of life.

The questions asked for support services and social conditions were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative questions were Likert type scale questions and the qualitative questions were general open-ended questions asking how the clients felt about the services.

The demographic information was supplied via the agency records and consisted of things such as: gender, age, gross monthly income, ethnicity, marital status, number of children and housing accommodations.

Significance of the Project for Social Work

As stated earlier, part of the mission of San Bernardino/Riverside Catholic Charities (2009) is to work, "in partnership with individuals, families and communities, advocates for their needs and supports their right to self-determination" (§ 1). This studies primary objective was to help the community stay informed about the feelings and attitudes of those whose voices often go unheard. Having a greater awareness of what people in the community perceive has helped and how they perceive their condition is tantamount to their self-determination.

Gathering information about how people feel about their specific support services helps empower communities to make changes that are not only in the best interest of the beneficiaries of aid but are also beneficial to those in the community at large. Studies such as this one allows agencies, like Catholic Charities, to better

target and assist their clients with the kind of support services they receive.

The same can be said for understanding the social conditions of people in low SES conditions throughout the Inland Empire. If support service and social workers understand how the people in a particular neighborhood feel about such thing as safety and education, then social workers and support services will be better informed about the their clients.

This study can contribute and inform all phases of the generalist model. Everything from, engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and termination will all benefit from a greater awareness of the feelings and perceptions of the community. When engaging clients in practice or community outreach for the first time a greater awareness of their condition would help practitioners create greater rapport. Since the study is an assessment of the community's needs, it can also be used to guide social work practitioners in their ability to identify social problems. When creating a plan and strategizing ways to improve social conditions and social support services, it is crucial to know how people feel about them first. When a social worker

implements their plan, it is important to have a benchmark on the community's perception and whether or not it has changed. Evaluating any future plans with future studies like this one will tell if the plan that has been implemented has been affective. The ultimate goal of all social work programs is to get to a place of self-determination and without a starting point, like this study, no termination point can be established. Knowing how the community feels about its resources and is conditions is empowering and to empower individuals, groups and communities is a fundamental belief among social work practitioners.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to examine the historic perspectives on poverty, modern perspectives on poverty, and the various affects poverty has on those in low socioeconomic conditions.

Historic Perspectives on Poverty

In order to gain an understanding of the modern viewpoints of how the poor perceive their condition, it is imperative that an understanding of the key elements of how our country has historically formed its views came to be.

From as early as the Colonial and Early American Era, Two dominate views on poverty immerged with varying degrees in the United States. The first view, according to Holman (1978, p. 54-55), is that poverty stems "from the limitations, maladjustments or deficiencies of individuals." Popple and Leighninger (2005) refer to this view as the "individualistic" view (p. 270). The second view, concerning poverty, Popple, and Leighninger refer to as the "structural" view (p. 287). According to Popple

and Leighninger (2005) the structural view comes from the perspective that poverty is the "result of social factors that act on individuals, causing them to exhibit the characteristics that the other theories state are the result of individual or cultural shortcomings. To reduce poverty significantly, according to the structural perspective, the basic fabric of society will need to change" (p. 287).

According to Popple and Leighninger (2005), these two areas of focus emerged in the early colonial period and still remain within American society to this day.

Popple and Leighninger state that both views were largely shaped out of two areas of concern in early America; "economic and cultural" (p. 307) and led to a strong American, "belief in the importance of work." According to Popple and Leighninger (2005), the economic concerns regarding the poor were largely built out of the necessity for survival needed in the early period (2005). According to Mink and O'Connor (2004), during the last half of the eighteenth century, "At least 15 percent of Philadelphia's inhabitants were unable to provide themselves with the necessities of life" (p. 2). These strong economic ties led to an even stronger moral belief

that those that can work should work no matter how rough the conditions. Mink and O'Connor (2004) state that, "Poverty was a grinding experience in early America. Although charity or relief was available to some, on a limited basis, most had to work or starve. They worked at the most tedious and grueling tasks - the jobs no one else wanted to do." Link and O'Connor (2004, p. 2) state this view of the social welfare of the poor at this time was that the poor were largely an oversight that needed to be managed.

According to Popple and Leighninger (2006), the second concern regarding the poor was cultural and was related to what has become known as "the Protestant work ethic", sometimes simply referred to as "the work ethic" (p. 306). "The work ethic" is the strong somewhat religious belief that "work is innately good and that hard work indicates a person of quality - hard work may even be useful for earning salvation" (p. 307). According to Link and O'Connor (2004), "The Protestant work ethic in the early and mid-nineteenth century defined earthly success as evidence of God's favor - the product of industry, good character, and thrift - and poverty, by contrast, as the result of laziness and sin" (p. 10-11).

Links and O'Connor (2004) state that though the state of charitable giving increased, largely due to churches, the view of the poor having moral failings still persisted. The view that the cultural responsibility for the poor rested with the families, then with private charitable organizations and lastly with governing institutions was and still is a main view of how the poor receive aid In America.

According to Popple and Leighninger (2006), as the Industrial Revolution began to take place and up through the Civil War and Reconstruction area the two views regarding the poor (individual and structural) have largely remained intact. Both Conservative and Liberal American views seek to understand poverty in terms of culture and societal structural reasons but, according to Popple and Leighninger, each group tends to favor on the either Individual view or Structural views.

Though many historical events (such as the American Civil War and the Industrial Revolution) have modified these views over the years both views still hold prominence in American Ideological perspectives concerning the poor. What has changed in the modern era has been the level of federal involvement and the

sophistication of charitable/philanthropic organizations (Patti, 2000, p. 28-29).

Modern Perspectives on Poverty

According to Iceland (2006), the role of government in dealing with issues of low SES was Greatly Altered prior to World War II (p. 122). Iceland (2006) states,

The stock market crash in the fall of 1929 and the subsequent Depression vastly changed the economic, social, and political landscape. Between 1929 and 1933 the unemployment rate climbed from 3.2 percent to 24.9 percent. The nation's Private charity agencies simply lacked the means to meet the growing need across the country. It became quite evident that at least some of the new poverty resulted from social and economic factors that the needy could not control. (p. 122)

Iceland (2006) stated that the government took a larger than usual role in helping people of Low SES by creating huge federal programs to assist a number of social conditions and that prior to that time a larger number of private organizations helped the poor (p. 123). According to Iceland (2006), the attitude at the time was that the

need to address the Social economic conditions caused by the Depression was such that only the government could help "restore public confidence" (p. 123).

According to Iceland (2006), prior to this new attitude of government involvement the majority of aid to the poor by the government was directed at what legislators considered the "deserving poor." According to Popple and Leighninger (2005), the idea of a "deserving poor" population in America goes back to the early Colonial day. The basic idea was that poor people are of two kinds of groups. One group is made of those that can help themselves but choose not to and the other is made up of those that cannot help themselves (Popple & Leighninger, 2005). According to Iceland (2006), The "Deserving Poor" were primarily made up of those that were either widows or orphans. Iceland states that, "thirty-nine states had such statutes in place by 1919, and all but two by 1935" (p. 122). According to Iceland, (2006), we would see the role of government continue to evolve into the modern era as legislators attitudes on the effectiveness of government to eliminate poverty began to change.

According to Iceland (2006), in 1971 key economic members of the Johnson Administration predicted that poverty would be completely eradicated by the 1980's (p. I.) According to Iceland (2006) it did not take many people in America long to realize how "naïve" a sentiment that would prove to be in the years to come (p. I). The coming years would prove both a waxing and waning approach to how different administrations dealt with governmental involvement in the eradication of poverty. According to Mink and O'Conner (2004), Conservative administrations such as the Reagan administrations placed greater emphasis on private organizational involvement and took a stronger anti-Welfare approach to Government (p. 811). These two varying views on government involvement and private organizational involvement in helping those in Low SES conditions can be seen right up into the present day.

Effect of Low Socioeconomic Status

The effects of Low Socioeconomic Status (SES) on the U.S. population have been studied and debated for quite some time in the modern era. The low SES population faces

many adverse effects as a result of their conditions. The list of negatives is quite lengthy.

According to Lichter and Crowley (2002), children born in Low SES conditions are not as healthy, are delayed in both cognitive and developmental areas, have greater difficulties in education, and report that their emotional well-being is lower than children born in other SES conditions. According to Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, and Simmons (1994), the hardship that occurs as a result of Low SES conditions, "has an adverse influence on psychological well-being and on the quality of family relationships" (p. 541). According to Myers (2008), the stress of low Socioeconomic Status has contributed to a, "persistent disparity in health status, morbidity, and mortality among many racial/ethnic minority groups compared to Caucasians" (p. 9).

It would seem from the literature that the social Economic conditions experienced by the poor have many adverse and harmful effects and that they are vulnerable population in America.

This study attempted to gather not just the outside view of what these effects feel like but to gather information about what is going on from the perspective

of low SES members themselves. This study also attempted to focus on how low SES members feel about the many social services they are currently receiving and how helpful they feel they are. Organizations such as Catholic Charities have been working with the low SES population for several decades and this study chose that organization to gain access to this population. The study was spread throughout twenty-four different cities within the Inland Empire and all of the participants income levels were between 1-3000 dollars per month.

In understanding how the United States population has perceived the poor

This study attempted to gain insight on how people in low SES conditions perceive both the governmental and community services they receive and attempted to probe the many feelings and concerns about the various social conditions people of Low SES are currently experiencing.

That is why the main purpose of this study was to explore the feelings and concerns of the Low SES members of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and social economic conditions they are currently experiencing.

Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to examine the historic perspectives on poverty, recent perspectives on poverty, and the many various affects poverty has on those in low socioeconomic conditions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

This chapter will cover the research methods that were used in this study. This chapter was divided into several sections: Study Design, Sampling, Data Collection and Instruments, Procedures, Protection of Human Subjects, Data Analysis and Summary.

Study Design

The purpose of this study was to explore the feelings and concerns of clients of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and social economic conditions they are currently experiencing.

Sampling

The number of participants was 135; 23 male, 106 female and 6 who did not answer the question. The participants were community member who use the services of Catholic Charities in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties of California.

Data Collection and Instruments

The questionnaire consisted of partial Likert type quantitative questions and partial open-ended quantitative questions. A demographic data produced from agency records was also utilized to obtain information about community services and SES conditions. Our factors were generated from a list of "support services" generally provided to Low SES community members and a list of low "SES condition" usually experience by Low SES community members associated with Catholic Charities.

Procedures

Catholic Charities Members where asked if they would like to partake in a survey that was completely voluntary. If yes, they were given the questionnaire and once filled out would return it. The participants were community member of various; Age (above 18), sex, racial, social economic, and ethnic, backgrounds throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

Protection of Human Subjects

Due to the sensitivity of the data, each questionnaire was assigned a random number with no way of identifying the user. No attempt was made to identify any

of the participants by name so as to maintain anonymity. The demographic data associated with that client was attached to the questionnaire by the agency representative. The questionnaires, once collected, will be held in a safe lock boxes where only the researcher has access to it. Upon data entry and completion of the data analysis all previous questionnaires were destroyed via security shredder. Informed consent as well as a debriefing statement were distributed with each of the questionnaires. The debriefing statement contained a phone number of a therapist who could be reached in case of any psychological distress that may have occurred while filling out or after filling out the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

As stated earlier, A partial quantitative and partial open-ended questionnaire as well as demographic data from agency data records was utilized to obtain information about community services and SES conditions. Our factors were generated from a list of "support services" generally provided to Low SES community members and a list of low "SES condition" usually experience by Low SES community members associated with Catholic

Charities. Both Likert type and open-ended quantitative questions were generated from each of the following categories:

Health care, Medi-Cal, dental care, vision/eye care, day care/child care, school/education, WIC, food stamps, and utilities. The general categories are as follows for SES "conditions": housing, safety, recreation/fun, laundry facilities, transportation, and general quality of life. Demographic Data was generated from the agency records.

The Likert type questionnaire portion asked members of the program to rate each support service and low SES conditions on a Likert type scale from 1 to 5. The participants were then asked a number of open-ended questions in order to ascertain their feelings or concerns regarding these services and conditions. The demographics of the client was taken with permission from the data collected by the client from past intake assessment and was supplied via the agency to insure confidentiality.

The Demographic information was supplied via the agency with permission from the participants and consisted of the following: Gender, Age, Economic Status,

Ethnicity, Marital Status, Number of Children, and Housing Accommodations.

Summary

This chapter gave an overview of the data used to study the feelings and concerns of clients of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and social economic conditions they are currently experiencing. The findings will be discussed in a later chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the explored feelings and concerns of clients of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and the social economic conditions they are currently experiencing.

Presentation of the Findings

The participants were community members from twenty four cities throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties who use the services of Catholic Charities in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties of California. The number of participants was 135; 23 male, 106 female and six who did not answer the question. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 69 years old. The ages were broken down into groups of which the largest percentage of people were between the ages 30 to 39 at 31.1%. The second largest was between the ages of 40 to 49 years of age at 30.3%. The third Largest was between the ages of 18 to 29 years of age at 26.2%. The fourth group was between the ages of 50 to 59 at 8.2% and the last group

was between the ages of 60 to 69 years of age and made up 4.1% (see Table 1). The breakdown along ethnicity was 36.3% African American, 11.3% Caucasian, 49.2% Hispanic, 1.6% Native American and 1.6% other (see Table 1).

Education levels ranged from no high school diploma to graduate school with 24.1% having no diploma, 51.8% having a GED or a high school diploma, 21.5% having some college or a college degree, and 2.7% attending graduate school (see Table 3). The marital status of the participants was 6.9% divorced, 52.6% single, 34.5% married, 5.2% separated, and .9% widowed (see Table 3).

As for gross household income, it was divided into groups. The first group was people whose income was between \$1.00 and \$500.00 at 10.2%. The second group was between \$500.00 and 1000.00 at 23.1%. The third group was between \$1001.00 and \$1500.00 at 33.3%. The fourth group was between \$1501.00 and \$2000.00 at 11.1%. The fifth group was between \$2001.00 and \$2500.00 at 1.9%, and the last group was between \$2501.00 and \$3000.00 at .9% (see Table 4).

The social conditions were divided into housing, safety, recreation/fun, laundry facilities, transportation, and general quality of life. Several

questions were asked in each category. The first category was housing and asked a series of question pertaining to housing and living arrangements. The first question asked was "Do you currently live in a house, apartment, with family, with friends, or other?" Out of the 135 who answered the question, 39.3% live in a house, 38.5% live in an apartment, 8.8% live with friends or family members, and 13.3% answered other (see Table 5). The second significant question asked was, "Does anyone in your household have to share a room?" On this was a yes or no question, 62.6% answered "Yes" and 36.6% answered "No." The Third significant question asked was also a yes or no question and it asked, "Does everyone in your household have a bed to sleep on?" Though 79.5% answered "yes", 20.5% answered "No."

Safety was the second category under Social Conditions. The first question asked under safety was a yes or no question and it asked, "Are you living in a neighborhood that currently has a gang or gang related activities?" Though 71.9% answered "no", 27.3% answered "yes." The second significant question was on a Likert type scale and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5 how safe do you feel your neighborhood is?" Of those that answered

21.9% stated their neighborhood was "not safe at all" or "a little safe", 25.8% answered "average", and 52.3% answered "safe" or "very safe." The third significant question was also on a Likert type scale and it asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5 how much exposure to crime do you witness in your neighborhood?" Though 64.7% answered rarely or hardly ever, 35.3% answered sometimes, frequently or almost every day (see Table 6).

The third category under social conditions was recreation. The first question asked under the category recreation was an open-ended question. The question asked was, "What do you do for fun?" and the answer most given at 37.4% was "go to the park." The second most frequently answered given at 13.3% was "watch TV or Videos." The second Question asked was also open ended and asked, "If you have children what do they do for fun or recreation?" Out of 109 people who answered this question, 32.1% answered that their children "go to the park", 17.4% answered "sports or athletic activities" and 11.9% answered "play outdoors." The last significant question asked under the category of recreation was, "How often per month do you or your children get to do things for fun, which cost money, such as go to the movies, go out

to eat, or go to amusement parks?" Out of the 106 people who answered this question 79.7% answered between "once every 6 months" to only "2 days a month" and 20.3% answered between "3 days" to "8 days" per month. No one answered more than 8 days. The fourth significant question was a yes or no question and asked, "Have you ever felt like you could not afford to do things you like for recreation or fun because of the cost?" Only 7.5% of the people answered "No" and 92.5% answered "Yes." The last significant question asked under recreation was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how much has your financial situation affected your overall recreation/fun?" Out of the 133 people who answered the question 73.7% answered that their overall recreation/fun was "mostly affected" or "completely affected" by their financial situation and 26.3% answered that their recreation/fun was "affected, "somewhat" affect, or "Not at all" affected by their financial situation.

The fourth category under social conditions was laundry. The first question asked under laundry was a "yes" or "no" question and asked, "Do you have adequate facilities and laundry products to do your laundry?"

Though 75% answered "yes", 25% answered "no." Out of those that answered "no" a follow up question was asked. The question stated, "What would you need to have adequate laundry resources?" The choices were soap, money, soap and money, washer and dryer, laundry mat and all of the above. The most frequent answer given was "all of the above" at 22.7%.

The fifth category under social conditions was Transportation and asked a series of questions pertaining to how or what people use to travel around and costs pertaining to travel. The first question was a yes or no question and asked "Do you have an automobile?" Though 62.3% answered "yes", 37.7% "no" they did not have a car. Of those that did have a car, a follow up question was asked. The question stated, "if yes, what is the year of your car?" Out of the 76 people who owned a car, 64.3% owned a car ten years old or older, 26.3% own a car that is a 2000 to 2004 model and 9.4% own a car that is a 2005 to 2008 model. The third significant question asked was a "yes" or "no" question and asked, "Due to low funds, have you ever had to forgo getting your car registered?" Almost half (48.3%) the people answered "yes" they did have to forgo registering their car. The fourth question

was also a "yes" or "no" question and asked, "due to low funds, have you ever had to go without auto insurance?" Only 41.7% answered "no", while 58.3% answered "Yes" they did have to go without auto insurance. The last question answered under the social condition of transportation was a Likert type scale. It stated, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how reliable would you say the transportation you most often use is?" Though 56.9% answered that their transportation was "good" or excellent", 43.1% answered that their car was "fair", "poor", or "very poor" when it came to being reliable.

The last category under social conditions was General Quality of Life. This question was on Likert type question and stated, "On a scale from 1 to 5 how would you rate your overall quality of life?" Out of the 126 people who answered; 31.7% "good" or "excellent", 44.4 answered "Fair" and 23.8% answered "poor" or "very poor."

The last set of factors was generated from a list of "support services" generally provided to low SES community members. The categories of this set of support services are health care, Medi-Cal, dental care, vision/eye care, day care/child care, school/education, WIC, food stamps, and utilities.

The first category under support services is Health Care. The questions in this category pertained to people who are on some kind of paid health care. The first question was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how much has your financial situation affected your overall health care?" Only 45.4% answered that their financial situation "somewhat" affected or did "not at all" affect their health care, whereas, 54.6% answered that their financial situation was "affected", "mostly affected" or "completely affected" their overall health care (see Table 7). The last significant question asked in the category of health care asked, "Have you ever had a difficult time getting a prescription filled, yes or no?" Though 63.6% answered "no", 36.4 answered "yes" they did have a difficult time getting prescriptions' filled.

The second category under support services is Medi-Cal. The first question asked was a yes or no question and asked, "If you are on Medi-Cal, have you ever had to pay for anything that was not covered or you needed?" Though 74% said "no", 26% said that they did have to pay for things they needed that were not covered by Medi-Cal. The second significant question was also a

yes or no question and asked, "have you ever had to go without a specialist (such as a foot doctor) because there were no specialists available or not specialist would take Medi-Cal?" Though 80.2% answered "No", 19.8% answered "yes" they did have to go without a specialist. The third question asked was also a yes or no question and asked, "Have you ever had a doctor give a prescription that you couldn't fill through Medi-Cal or Medicare or private insurance?" Though 68.9% said "no", 31.1% said "Yes" they were given a prescription they could not fill. The last question under the category of Medi-Cal is a Likert type question and asked, On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the health care you are getting from Medi-Cal?" The results were almost split with 50.9% rating Medi-Cal as either "good" or "excellent" and 49.1% rating Medi-Cal "fair", "poor", or "very poor" (see Table 8).

The third category under support services is dental care. The first question asked was a yes or no question and asked, "Do you currently have dental care or dental coverage?" Though 68% answered "yes", 32% answered "no" they do not have any dental coverage. The second question was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale from 1

to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the dental care you are getting?" Though 45.9% rated their dental care as "good" or "excellent", 25.7% rated it only "fair" and 28.4% rated their dental care "poor" or "very poor." The last question asked under the category of Dental Care was also a Likert type question and asked, "Of the dental surgeries or procedures you have had, on a scale from 1 to 5 how good of a job do you think the surgery or procedures were?" Though 54.3% rated their procedures were "good" or "excellent", 25.7% rated their procedure "fair" and another 25% rated their procedure "poor" or "very poor."

The fourth category under support services is vision/eye care. The first question asked was a yes or no question and asked, "Do you currently have vision care or eye care?" Only 53.1% answered "yes;" while, 46.9% said they do not have any eye care. The second question was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale for 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the eye care you are currently getting?" Though 50.4% answered that they felt their eye care was "good" or excellent", 49.6% said their eye care was "fair", "poor" or "very poor." The last question under the category of vision/eye care

was a yes or no question that asked, "Have you or anyone in your family ever had to go without glasses because you couldn't afford them or your old glasses broke?" Though 58.7% answered "no", 41.3% answered "yes" they did have to go without glasses.

The fifth category under support services was day care/child care. The first question asked under day care was a yes or no question and asked, "Do you use day care?" Only 11.9% said they use day care; whereas, 88.1% said they do not use day care. The second question asked was an open ended question which asked, "What do you use for child care?" The majority of people said they use "a friend" or "family" at 82.8%, 12.9% said they use a "particular business" and only 4.3% said they used something "other" than the answers given (see Table 9). The last question asked was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the day care you are currently getting?" The majority of people answered "good" or excellent at 82.4%; whereas, 17.6% answered with "fair", "poor" or "very poor."

The sixth category under social support is School/Education. The first question asked under

education was an open ended question and asked, "How far away is your child's school from your home?" The majority of people answered within "1-10 miles" at 95.5% and only 4.5% answered "11-20 miles" or "20-30 miles." The second question was a Likert type question and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of education your child/children are receiving?" The majority of people answered "good" or "excellent" at 68.9%; whereas, 31.1% answered that their children's schools were "fair", "poor" or "very poor." The last significant question asked under school/education was a yes or no question and asked, "Are all your children on the same track for school?" Though 73.2% said yes, 25.8% said "no" their children were not on the same track for school.

The seventh category under support services was WIC. The first question was a yes or no question and asked, "Are you currently on WIC?" Though 55.9% answered "no", 44.1% answered "yes" they currently are on WIC. The second question was a Likert type and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of WIC Program?" The majority of people answered "good" or "excellent" at 78.7%; whereas, only 21.3% answered that

their children's schools where "fair", "poor" or "very poor."

The eighth category under social support is the food stamp program. The first question under the food stamp program was a Likert type and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how easy is it to get food stamps the first time?" The majority of people answered "difficult", "very difficult", or "nearly impossible" at 58.4%; whereas, only 41.6% answered "somewhat easy" or "very easy" to get food stamps. The second question under the food stamp program was also a Likert type and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how easy is it to maintain food stamps eligibility?" Although a majority of people answered "somewhat easy" or "very easy" to maintain eligibility at 52.5%, a large percent answered "difficult", "very difficult" or "nearly impossible" at 47.5%(see Table 10). The third question under the food stamp program was also a Likert type and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how helpful is the food stamp program to your family?" The majority of people answered "helpful", "somewhat helpful" or "extremely helpful" at 75.8%; whereas, only 24.2% answered "not helpful" or "not worth it" as far as being helpful to their families. The last question about the

food stamp program was also a Likert type and asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the food stamp program?" The majority of people answered "good" or "excellent" at 68%; whereas, only 32% answered that the program was only "fair", "poor" or "very poor."

The last category under support services was utilities. The first question asked under utilities was a yes or no question and asked, "In the past year have you had your utilities cut off?" Though 62% answered "no", 38% answered "yes" they have had their utilities cut off in the past year. The second question was an open ended follow up question and asked, "If yes, how much were you charged for reconnect fees, deposits and service fees?" Only 27.5% paid \$0-\$90 with only one person paying "\$0." The most frequent amount paid at 42.5% was between \$91-\$210. The third most frequent amount paid was between \$211-\$300 at 22.5% (see Table 11). The last question under utilities was also open ended and asked, "About how much of your monthly income goes to paying utilities?" The average mean amount paid was "\$376.00-\$400.00" with a standard deviation of 325\$.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results of the explored feelings and concerns of clients of Catholic Charities in relation to the community services and the social economic conditions they are currently experiencing.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter is an analysis of the findings and what real world applications they hold for people of Low Social economic status.

Discussion

The results of this study illustrate the many vast concerns and feelings the clients of Catholic Charities in regards to the community services and social economic conditions they are experiencing. The study represented people whose Gross Monthly Incomes ranged from \$1.00 to \$3000.00 and asked a series of questions about what they thought of the services and social conditions they are currently experiencing.

As stated in chapter four, the demographics breakdown from the study showed that 83.9% of people who are low SES in the Inland Empire are either African American or Hispanic, 50.9% have a high school diploma, and 52.6% are single or never married. These results would seem to show a greater number of minorities in the Inland Empire are of Low SES conditions in comparison to

that of Caucasians. This would seem to be in contrast to the national average. According to the United States Census (2010), Caucasians making up 44% of all poor people living in America (¶. 16).

As for social conditions the study found that the participants, all of whom are living in low SES conditions, are struggling with many quality of life issues.

The first social condition the study focused on was "housing." The responses to housing indicated that though 39.3% live in a house and 38.5% live in an apartment, a majority of these participants (62.6%) are forced to share a room and of those that responded many (20.5%) do not have adequate number of beds for every member of the household. When considering the demographics responses to the "Number of Family in the Home", 55.7% of participants have anywhere from 4 to 9 people living in the same dwelling place. These findings suggest that people of low SES are living in crowded homes with less than adequate sleeping arrangements and little privacy. It is possible that these living conditions can lead to increases in stress as well as a lack of privacy.

The second social condition explored in this study was "Safety." The participants stated that 27.3% are living in a neighborhood that has a gang or gang related activities. The participants also stated that 21.9% do not feel their neighborhoods are safe and 35.3% answered that they are exposed to crime "sometimes", "frequently" or "almost every day." These findings would seem to indicate that at least a quarter of those who participated in the study feel that where they are living is not that safe.

The third social condition explored in this study was "recreation." It would appear from the data the majority of families living in low SES conditions are greatly affected by a lack of resources and funds. The number one answer to what people do for recreation or fun was "go to the park." The second most common answer was watch TV or videos. Both of these activities together represent 50.7% of all of the responses given. Both of these answers are activities that require little in way of funds to participate.

When directly asked directly, "how often per month do you and your children get to do things for fun, which cost money...", 79.7% of the participants responded that they

only get to go out anywhere between once every six months two days a month. Over 90% of those answered that they have had to forgo going out due to low funds.

According to Hutchinson, Bland, and Kleiber, Within the field of leisure studies there is growing evidence of the value of leisure activity and experience in the course of coping with and adjusting to the kinds of acute and chronic life stressors that clients in therapeutic recreation (TR) settings may encounter. (2008, p. 9)

Hutchinson et al. express the importance leisure plays on dealing with life changes. If leisure and recreational activities play a big part in developing healthy coping mechanisms when people are dealing with life changes it would be safe to say that among the Low SES participants in this study that leisure activity may be less than adequate to help with those life changes.

The fourth social condition explored in the study asked about adequate laundry facilities. When asked if they had adequate laundry facilities One out of every four participants answered that they do not. Though laundry may seem like a small thing it is however a major hygiene issues.

The fifth social condition dealt with adequate transportation and 37.7% answered that they did not have an automobile of any kind. According to Howard, Dresser, and Dunklee (2009), "everyday errands can require twice as much time as those of parents who have operating vehicles at their disposal" (p. 63). Something as simple as going to the grocery store could take up a large portion of the day for those who do not have a car. Of those that did drive, 64.3% stated they owned a car 10 years or older. A car that is at least 10 years old is to cost more to operate and have more routine maintenance problems. When asked how reliable the participants most often use is, 43.1% answered "fair", "poor", or "very poor." This data would seem to suggest that people of low SES are feeling the frustration that comes with a lack of adequate and reliable transportation. Transportation is just one of many stressors people of low SES are dealing with.

The last social condition dealt with in this study was "quality of life." When you consider the state of many of the social conditions people in this study are undergoing, it is no wonder that 68.2% of the people of low SES in this study responded that their quality of

life is only, "fair", "poor", or "very poor." Though not at all conclusive by any means, it is not hard to see with all of the many difficulties people of low SES are facing why the score on quality of life was so low.

Historically, the United States has sought to help people in Low SES conditions by means of federal, state, local, and private organizations. The last set of factors was designed to ascertain how these participants felt about the "support services" they are currently receiving.

The first support service inquired about in this study was "Health Care." This factor was not designed to be answered by people on Medi-Cal but people who pay for their own health care out of pocket. Of those that paid for their own health care 54.7% answered that their overall finances were "affected", "mostly affected" or "completely affected" their health care. In other words, it would appear these people feel their Low SES status has affected their ability to get decent health care.

The second support service inquired about was "Medi-Cal." The first question asked of people on Medi-Cal was if they ever had to pay for anything that was not covered or was needed and 26% answered that they

did. This comes at great cost because those that qualify for Medi-Cal are often on fixed incomes or have disabilities. Any little expense can and often does cause financial hardships. Another question asked in the study was if they had to go without seeing a specialist because none were available or no one would take Medi-cal. Of those that answered, 19.8% answered, "yes" they did have to forgo seeing a specialist. When asked if they were ever given a prescription Medi-cal would not fill, 31.1% answered, "yes." When one looks at the many difficulties a significant number of people in the study reported concerning Medi-Cal, it is no wonder that when asked to rate the program 49.1% gave it a rating of "fair", "poor" or "very poor."

The third support service this study inquired about was "dental care." The first question the study asked concerning dental care was whether or not the participants even had dental coverage and 32% said they do not have dental coverage at all. Of those that did have dental care we asked them to rate the quality of the dental care. 54.1% answered with "fair", "poor" or "very poor." Of those that had a dental surgical procedure we asked them to rate how good of a job the procedure was

and 50.7% answered "fair", "poor" or "very poor." These responses would seem to suggest that a larger percentage of the low SES people who participated in this study feel they have less than good quality dental care.

The fourth support service this study inquired about was "Vision/Eye Care." Similar to dental, the first question the study asked was whether or not the participants have eye care and 46.9% stated that they do not even have eye care. Of the 53.1% that do have eye care, 49.6% stated that it was "fair", "poor" or "very poor." When asked if anyone in their family had to go without glasses do to cost 41.3% answered that they did. It would seem that people of low SES are really struggling in the area of eye care. Not many of them can afford eye care at all and of those that do very few of them would rate their eye care as good or great.

The fifth support service that this study inquired about was "day care/child care." Like the support services before, participants were asked if they used child care and only 11.9% of them did. When asked what they did use for childcare 82.8% of the participants said they use a friend or family member for child care. Only, 12.9% stated they used a particular business. When asked

to rate their childcare 82.4% stated it was "good" or "excellent." The results of this portion of the study may be hard to determine. On the one hand it may be that people of low SES prefer to have someone they know watch their children or it is possible that they cannot afford a paid day care and thus leave their children with someone they really trust.

The sixth social support service we inquired about was "school/education." The results of the first question were that 95.5% of the participants have children that live within the first ten miles from their homes. This is good sign in that it proves helpful for people who do not have adequate transportation. The second question asked the participants to rate the quality of the education their children are receiving and 68.9% of the participants rated their schools as "good" or "excellent" but a percentage of 31.1% rating their children's education at "fair", "poor" or "very poor" is still significant enough for concern. Coupled with the other responses of the support service, this does add to the frustrations of the variety of concerns that these low SES participants are dealing with on a daily basis.

Question three from the survey asked parents with more than one child were they on the same track for school and 25.9% of them answered "no." It is possible that not having all of your children on the same track can be contributing to how these parents feel about their children's education but in any case it make juggling the multiple stressors even more difficult for these parents.

The seventh support service the study inquired about was WIC. When asked if they were currently on WIC 55.9% answered "no" and 44.1% answered "yes." Of those who are on WIC 78.7% of the people rated the programs as "good" or "excellent." This would seem to suggest that the program may indeed be difficult for people to qualify for but once on it people really find it helpful. Out of all of the support services in the study WIC received the highest ratings in terms of quality.

The eighth support service the study inquired about was the "food stamp program." The first question was to rate how easy it was to get on the food stamp program and 58.4% rated that it was "very difficult or "nearly impossible." When asked how difficult it was to maintain eligibility for the program 47.5% stated that it was "difficult", "very difficult" or "nearly impossible."

With more than half of the people answering that Food stamps were difficult to get on and a little less than half having a difficult time staying on food stamps, it would seem the program is one of the more difficult support services to deal with in the study. When asked to rate the overall quality of the performance 68% rated it as "good or "excellent." It would seem that though the program is hard to receive and maintain eligibility, the people in the study who use it would rate it highly. This may be due to people feeling the program is indeed helpful. It could also be due to the need for groceries being so great that people are thankful to receive any kind of help even if it is stressful or difficult to maintain. At any rate there would seem to be a trend in this study between WIC and food stamps as to how difficult they are to obtain. If these programs are very difficult to get it may show that it is very possible that these programs could be adding to the list of stressors already being experienced by people of low SES conditions. If people on food stamps are constantly having to contend with maintaining eligibility or having a difficult time receiving the services they may opt to

quit trying before they receive the benefit so many people have stated is helpful.

The last support service had to do with "utilities" and or "utility companies." Many of them provide vital services to low incomes and how they deal with people of low SES can either hinder or help. Also, the questions were designed to see what kind of struggle financially people are having as a result of their utility bills and how the companies responded. The first question asked if the participants had their utilities cut off in the past year. Of those that answered, 38% stated that they did have their utilities shut off at some time in the past year. Of those that answered "yes", 27.5% paid between \$0-\$90 to reconnect the service. This, on the surface, may sound reasonable but for a family whose incomes are low these amounts can cause significant financial hardships. The last question under utilities sought to find out just how much of their monthly household income people spent on their utilities. The highest among paid per month for a family was between \$376 and \$400.00 per month. When considering that 97.2% of the people in this study make less than 2000 dollars per month and the

average family size is at least 4 that is a substantially large chunk of income to take up.

Limitations

This study had several limitation that could be addressed in later studies. First, the design of the study was based on many open-ended questions. That may have limited the number of similar responses being grouped together in one category. Perhaps close-ended questions based on the open-ended responses from this study could help draft a better questionnaire for future studies on this topic. A significant portion of data was lost when it was filled out in Spanish. Having a Spanish version of the questionnaire would have also helped in the gathering of this data. This was the first attempt at drafting questionnaires from experts in the field of low SES support organizations such as Catholic Charities. It may be helpful in the future to gather a small group of users of the services and ask them what questions they think would be helpful in ascertaining information about the support services and social conditions they are experiencing.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

One of the major concerns with studies on poverty is that multi faceted struggles of the poor tend to be minimized with looked at individually. One thing this study attempted to do was paint a picture of what those difficulties looked like when you studied them as a whole. People of Low SES struggle with everything from Housing to adequate laundry facilities and are dealing with not only one social services but a handful of social services at any given time. When considering the plight of those from Low SES it is imperative that social workers keep in mind the number of things any one family may be juggling at any given time. Social workers, are to be advocates to those in low SES conditions. One of the goals of this study was to show just how many complex things need to be considered when dealing with the needs of people experiencing low SES frustrations.

When policies are drafted and programs for the poor are created greater concern for how difficult some of these eligibility requirements are should be considered. As simple as the paperwork may be to those who deal with it all day to a family dealing with several different

kinds of eligibility requirements it may prove to be more of a challenge. When talking with educators and program employees on behalf of clients, it is imperative that social workers educate the public at large and those in particular about the number of stressors and frustrations people of low SES have to manage.

Managing a household in any SES bracket can be difficult but considering that most low SES families are ran by single parents it is imperative that social workers learn to go the extra mile to help out.

Future research should be done in the area of managing multifaceted low SES stressors and strategies should be developed that helps people tackle the unique challenges this group faces. Too often the research is focused on just one aspect without any regard as to how to manage the many aspects involved in low SES populations.

Conclusions

The plight of those in low SES conditions often goes overlooked in everyday society. That is why it is imperative for social workers and the public at large to understand that people who are poor are not just dealing

with one thing but many different things at one time. It is easy for people when looking at only housing to minimize that one struggle but when you consider how difficult it really is to manage a family when so many things are going on it is no wonder that so many difficulties arise out of this population. The purpose of this study was to gain insight not just on what the government or others think about people of low SES conditions but to gain insight as to what people in low SES conditions think about it themselves. If this study was able to accomplish that even on a minor scale then perhaps some good was accomplished in spreading that awareness.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Questionnaire

Housing

1. Do you currently live in a (please circle one of the following):
 - a. house
 - b. an apartment,
 - c. stay with family
 - d. stay with friends
 - e. Or other (if other please explain)? _____
2. Have you moved in the past 2 years? If yes, why?
 - a. eviction
 - b. property condemned
 - c. more affordable
 - d. property sold
 - e. property foreclosed
3. How many people sleep in your house at night? _____
4. How many beds do you currently have in your house/apartment? _____
5. How many rooms do you have in your house/apartment? _____
6. Does anyone in your household have to share a room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, how many people have to share a room?
7. Does everyone in your household have a bed to sleep on? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, how many people in your household have to share a bed?
8. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning housing?

Safety

1. On a scale from 1 to 5 how safe do you feel your neighborhood is?

1 = Not safe at all, 2 = a little safe, 3 = average, 4 = Safe, 5 = Very Safe
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

2. On a scale from 1 to 5 how much exposure to crime do you witness in your neighborhood?

1 = Almost Every day, 2 = Frequently, 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely, 5 = Hardly Ever
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

3. Are you living in a neighborhood that currently has a gang or gang related activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes, what activates are they? _____

4. How long have you lived in your current neighborhood? _____

5. If you moved to this neighborhood in the past 3 years, do you feel this neighborhood is: *(Circle the appropriate letter)*

- a. A lot safer than the one you last moved from
- b. Somewhat safer than the one you last moved from
- c. About the same as the one you last moved from
- d. Not as safe as the one you last moved from
- e. Or not at all as safe as the one you last moved from

6. If your children had to change schools in the past 3 years, do you feel the new school is: *(Circle the appropriate letter)*

- a. A lot safer than the one than your child/children last went to
- b. Somewhat safer than the one than your child/children last went to
- c. About the same as the one your child/children last went to
- d. not as safe as the one your child/children last went to
- e. Or not at all as safe as the one your child/children last went to

7. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning safety? _____

Recreation/ Fun

1. What do you do for recreation or fun? _____
2. If you have children, what do they do for fun or recreation? _____

3. How often per month do you or your children get to do things for fun, which cost money, such as go to the movies, go out to eat, amusement park, etc.? _____

Have you ever felt like you could not afford to do things you like for recreational or fun because of the cost? ☐Yes ☐No

- a. If yes, what would you like to do if you had the money? _____

4. Are your children involved in any sports or hobbies? ☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, which sports or hobbies are they currently participating in? _____
 - b. If yes, how much did you pay for:
a) uniforms \$_____ b) physicals \$_____ c) Other fees _____
 - c. If your child/children are not involved in any activities, why not? _____

5. On a scale from 1 to 5, how much has your financial situation affected your overall Recreational / Fun?
1 = not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Affected, 4 = mostly affected, 5 = completely affected
(Circle the appropriate number) 1 2 3 4 5
6. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning fun/recreation?

Laundry Facilities

1. Do you have adequate facilities and laundry products to do your laundry?
☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, please describe (home washing machine, laundry mat, at friends or families house), _____

 - b. If no, please describe what you would need to have adequate laundry (Soap, money for laundry mat, working dryer, working washing machine, etc). _____

2. Have you ever had to ask for clothes due to a lack of adequate laundry facilities or products?
☐Yes ☐No ☐Other (please explain) _____
3. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning laundry or facilities? _____

Health Care

4. How much do you pay per month for Health Care out of your own pocket?

5. On a scale from 1 to 5, how much has your financial situation affected your overall Health Care?

1 = not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Affected, 4 = mostly affected, 5 = completely affected
(Circle the appropriate number) 1 2 3 4 5

6. Have you recently (within the past year) had to change your health care provider? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes, what was the main reason why? _____

7. Have you ever had a difficult time getting a prescription filled? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes please explain _____

8. Have you ever had the option to sign up for COBRA or continue your previous employer's health care after you left a job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If so, did you sign-up? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. If not, why? _____

9. Has a pre-existing condition ever prevented you from getting medical insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes please explain _____

10. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning health care? _____

Medi-Cal

1. If you are on Medi-Cal, have you ever had to pay for anything that was not covered or you needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes, what are some of the things you had to buy and how much did it cost you? _____

2. How much per month do you spend for health and medical related items or services? _____
3. What is the longest you've had to wait to get medication (or TAR)? _____
4. Have you ever had to go without a specialist (such as foot doctor) because there were no specialists available or no specialist would take Medi-Cal? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes please explain _____

5. If you have had to see a specialist, how far did you have to travel to see one?
6. Have you ever had a doctor give a prescription that you couldn't fill through Medi-Cal or Medicare or private insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. If you had wait for a TAR what the longest you had to wait for it to go through or to have Medi-Cal approve it? _____
8. Have you ever had a doctor give a prescription that took a long time to fill while you were sick? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes, how long did you have to wait before it was filled? _____
 - b. About how many times in the past year has this happened? _____
9. How do you feel about the quality of the health care you are now getting?

10. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the health care you are getting from Medi-Cal?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

Vision / Eye Care

1. Do you currently have vision care or eye care? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If yes, how much do you pay for eye care per year? _____
2. Do you feel you have adequate eye care or vision care? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the eye care you are currently getting?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

4. Do you or a family member currently have a prescription for glasses?
☐Yes ☐No
5. Have you or anyone in your family ever had to go without glasses because you couldn't afford them or your old glass broke? ☐Yes ☐No
6. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning vision/ eye care? _____

Day Care / Child Care:

1. Do you use day care? ☐Yes ☐No

a. If not, why not? _____

2. How much per month does child care cost you? _____

3. Who do you use for child care?

- a. a friend,
b. particular business,
c. family
d. Or other (if other please explain)? _____

4. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the day care you are currently getting?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

5. Is the child care you use subsidized? ☐Yes ☐No

6. What transportation do you use to pick up and drop off your child? _____

7. How far do you have to go from home to child care and from child care to work or school? _____

8. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning day care/child care? _____

School/Education

1. How far away is your child's school from your home? _____
2. How do your children get to and from school (via school bus, city bus, by walking, family car, etc)? _____
3. Are all of your children on the same track for school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - a. If no, how do you manage when some are in school and some are not?

4. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of education your child/children are receiving school?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5
5. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning your child/children's schooling?

WIC

1. Have you ever filled out paperwork to receive WIC? ☐Yes ☐No
2. Are you currently on a waiting list to receive WIC? ☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, how long have you been on a waiting list for WIC? _____
3. Are you currently on WIC? ☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, how long did it take to you to receive the benefits? _____
4. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the WIC program?

(Circle the appropriate number): 1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
 1 2 3 4 5

5. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning WIC? _____

Food Stamps:

1. Have you ever filled out paperwork to receive Food Stamps? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- a. On a scale from 1 – 5, how easy is to get food stamps the first time?

1= very easy, 2= somewhat easy, 3= difficult 4= very difficult, 5= nearly impossible
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

- b. On a scale from 1-5, how easy is it to maintain food stamp eligibility?

1= very easy, 2= somewhat easy, 3= difficult 4= very difficult, 5= nearly impossible
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

- c. On a scale from 1-5, how helpful is the food stamp program for your family?

1= extremely helpful, 2= somewhat helpful, 3= helpful, 4= not helpful, 5= not worth it
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

- d. Have you or someone you know sold their food stamps for money to be used for other bills? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall quality of the Food Stamp program?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

3. a) Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning the food stamp program? _____

4. What do you generally purchase with food stamps? _____

5. What would you like to purchase with food stamps that is not allowed?

Utilities:

1. In the past year have you had your utilities cut off? ☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If so, how many times? _____
2. If yes how much were you charged for reconnected fees, deposit, and service fees? _____
3. If you contacted the utility company on a scale from 1 to 5 how would you rate the way you were treated.

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

4. About how much of your monthly income goes to paying utilities? _____
5. In the past year, how many have you had to pay a utility late fee? _____

1 = Most of the Time, 2 = Frequently, 3 = Sometimes 4 = Rarely, 5 = Hardly Ever
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

6. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning utilities? _____

Transportation

1. Do you have an automobile?
 - a. If yes, what is the year of your car?
2. What form of transportation do you most often use?
 - a. Car
 - b. Bus
 - c. Dial a ride
 - d. Other (if other please explain)? _____
3. Due to low funds have you ever had to forgo getting your car registered?
☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, how long did you go without it? _____
4. Due to low funds have you ever had to go without auto insurance?
☐Yes ☐No
 - a. If yes, how long did you go without it? _____
5. On a scale from 1 to 5, how reliable would you say the transportation you most often use is?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

6. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share concerning transportation? _____

General

1. What are some of the circumstances that you fear might happen to you that you tend to worry most about? _____

2. On a scale from 1 to 5 how would you rate your quality of life?

1 = Very Poor, 2 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent
(Circle the appropriate number): 1 2 3 4 5

3. Are there any other concerns you think would be important, helpful or would like to share with this study? _____

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to explore the many services and conditions that people are experiencing in the Inland Empire. This study is attempting to gather the perspectives and opinions of people who know firsthand the strengths and difficulties of dealing with many different kinds of needs and hopes and to shed light on them in an attempt to make others more aware. This study is being conducted by Stephan Oldham under the supervision of Dr. McCaslin, Professor of Social Work. This study has been approved by the Department of Social Work Subcommittee of the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

In this study you will be asked to respond to several questions regarding the services and conditions in your community. The following questionnaire should take about 25 to 35 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence by the researcher(s). Your name will not be reported with your responses. All the data will be reported in group form only. You may receive the group results of this study upon completion after September, 2009, at Catholic Charities.

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are free not to answer any questions and withdraw at any time during this study without penalty. When you have completed the survey/ questionnaire you will receive a debriefing statement describing the study in more detail. A small incentive of a gift voucher will be offered in order to increase the number of volunteers.

The risk to any participants will be minimal if any at all. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. McCaslin at (909) 537-5507

By placing a check mark in the box below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

☐
☐

I have read, understood, and agreed to participate in this study.

I have not read, nor do I understand the informed consent.

Today's Date: _____

APPENDIX C
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

THE IMPACT OF THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM FOSTER
YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES ON FOSTER YOUTH

Debriefing Statement

The study in which you participated is designed to explore the many services and conditions that people are experiencing in the Inland Empire. This study is attempting to gather the perspectives and opinions of people who know firsthand the strengths needed and difficulties of dealing with many different kinds of struggles and hopes and to shed light on them in an attempt to make society more aware.

The survey you took will be used to measure and gather the feelings and opinions of people who use government and agency services (i.e. Medi-Cal, WIC and various health agencies). The other things the survey you took will be used to measure and gather information on are the many socioeconomic conditions people in the Inland Empire are experiencing (i.e. housing, Safety, Transportation).

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Dr. McCaslin at (909) 537-5507. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study please Catholic Charities after September 2009.

Again, thank you for your participation

APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic Sheet

Age:	
City:	
Gender:	
Ethnicity:	
Education Level:	
Gross Monthly Household Income:	
Number of Family in Home:	
Number of Children in Home:	
Marital Status:	

APPENDIX E

TABLES

Table 1

Demographic Statistics by Age and Ethnicity

Age	Valid Percent	Ethnicity	Valid Percent
18-29	26.2	African American	36.3
30-39	31.1	Caucasian	11.3
40-49	30.3	Hispanic	49.2
50-59	8.2	Native American	1.6
60-69	4.1	Other	1.6

Table 2

Demographic Statistics of Education Level

Level	Valid Percent
no high school diploma or GED	24.1
GED high school graduate	51.8
some college or college graduate	21.5
grad school	2.7

Table 3

Demographic Statistics of Martial Status

Status	Valid Percent
divorced	6.9
single	52.6
married	34.5
separated or widowed	.9

Table 4

Demographic Statistics of Gross Household Income

Gross Household Income in Dollars	Valid Percent
\$1.00-\$500.00	10.2
\$501.00-\$1000.00	23.1
\$1001.00-\$1500.00	33.3
\$1501.00-\$2000.00	11.1
\$2001.00-\$2500.00	1.9
\$2501.00-\$3000.00	.9

Table 5

Percentage Breakdown on Type of Housing

Type of Housing	Valid Percent
house	39.3
apartment	38.5
with friends or family	8.8
other	13.3

Table 6

Percentage of How Safe Clients Feel Their Neighborhood Is

Responses	Valid Percent
not safe at all	8.3
a little safe	13.6
average	25.8
safe	31.8
very safe	20.5

Table 7

Financial Situations Reported Affect on Health

Per Month	Valid Percent
somewhat	27.7
not at all	17.7
affected	17.7
mostly affected	10.8
completely affected	26.2

Table 8

Overall Quality of Medi-Cal Program

Per Month	Valid Percent
very poor	6.4
poor	12.7
fair	30.0
good	37.1
excellent	13.6

Table 9

Kind of Child Care Used

Per Month	Valid Percent
a friend	21.4
family	61.4
particular business	12.9
other	4.3

Table 10

Ease of Maintaining Food Stamp Eligibility

Per Month	Valid Percent
very easy	24.2
somewhat easy	28.3
difficult	15.2
very difficult	15.2
nearly impossible	17.2

Table 11

*Percentage of Amount Charged For Fees, Deposits and
Services*

Amount of Fees In Dollars	Valid Percent
\$0.00-\$90.00	27.5
\$91.00-\$210.00	42.5
\$211.00-\$300.00	22.5
\$301.00-\$1100.00	7.5

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