ADVOCACY PARTICIPATION, STRUCTURE, AND STRATEGY AMONG NONPROFIT HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

by

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(Under the Direction of Stacey Kolomer)

ABSTRACT

Championing the cause of the disadvantaged and oppressed has been a core value of the social work profession since its inception. As a practice strategy, advocacy has allowed social workers to raise their voices regarding issues affecting individuals, groups, and entire communities, and has allowed human service nonprofit organizations to respond to environmental factors influencing the services they provide. However, in spite of the seemingly important role of advocacy there is a paucity of research in this area, with the focus of the literature placed on legislative advocacy. In an effort to address this gap in knowledge, the purpose of this study was to explore the influence of institutional factors on the advocacy behavior of human service nonprofit organizations. The central questions that guided this study were: (1) what institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy? (2) what institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service organizations? And (3) what institutional factors predict organizations' choice of specific advocacy targets?

This quantitative exploratory-descriptive study employed a cross-sectional design. An electronic survey was sent to 345 organizations serving the Northeast Georgia region, which were selected through convenience sampling. Ninety-eight responses were received, of which 72 were included in the study. Logistic and multiple regression analyses were utilized to interpret data. Results suggested that as a group organizations are involved in advocacy; however, the level of participation is low. A majority of organizations reported doing advocacy, but when asked how often they go to their advocacy targets, they reported doing it infrequently. This was the case for all targets, which included legislators, administrators, court officials, and the community. Additionally, organizations reported having an advocacy structure, which was predicted by formalization. The more formalized organizations were, the higher theirs odds of having an advocacy structure. The study also showed that knowing the lobbying law was one significant predictor of advocacy targets, indicating that the more knowledge organizations have, the more likely they are to go to all the targets except the courts. Implications based on these findings were presented and recommendations for future research were made.

INDEX WORDS: Advocacy, Human Service Non-profit Organizations, Macro Social Work Practice, Social Change, Systems Advocacy

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family whose steadfast love and support made this journey possible. To my father, Luis Sarmiento, who instilled in me the desire to learn and the drive to reach for my goals. To my mother, Patricia Zúñiga Sarmiento, who taught me to care and to use my abilities to bless others. To my sister Viviana, whose tender heart showed me a softer side of life. To my sister Veronica, whose strength motivates me to keep going. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my husband Duane Mellinger, my faithful companion, encourager, and best friend.

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CHAPTER 1

Background of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) have been recognized as a vital part of the social, economic, and political development of modern society (Anheier, 2005; Hasenfeld, 2010). They have been defined as "those entities that are organized for public purposes, are self-governed, and do not distribute surplus revenues as profits" (Boris & Steuerle, 2006, p. 66). They play an important role in the democratic and civil health of society (Alexander, Nank, & Stivers, 1999; Berger & Neuhaus, 1977; Berry, 1999, 2003; Boris, 2006; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Saidel, 2002; Smith, 1993; Suárez & Hwang, 2008). Some argue that NPOs exist because the leaders of these organizations want to reach the lofty goal of making our society a better place (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Ryan, 1999). This goal includes services provided to the disadvantaged, and fulfilling a social mission that promotes justice and equality (Schmid, 2004). In multiple ways, these organizations provide an opportunity for individuals to demonstrate their commitment to increasing civic, cultural, and religious values, and provide a voice for those who are traditionally less likely to be heard (Bass, Arons, Guinane, & Carter, 2007; Berry, 2003; Boris & Krehely, 2002; Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000).

Historians believe that early forms of Western philanthropy, based on spiritual, social, and moral imperatives, have shaped and continue to influence the way the modern nonprofit sector or third sector operates (Robbins, 2006). The term third sector, has been used to refer to "self-governing private organizations, not dedicated to distributing profits to shareholders or directors, pursuing public purposes outside of the formal apparatus of the state" (Salamon, 1995,

p. 1). Although some argue that terms used to describe NPOs have different meanings (Frumkin, 2002), the term third sector has been used interchangeably with other descriptors such as the voluntary sector and the nonprofit sector (Anheier, 2005; Kramer, 1981; Steinberg & Powell, 2006). In the last few decades, interest among scholars has increased regarding the function and role of this sector (Boris, 2006; Hall, 1992). Interdisciplinary theoretical approaches have provided a range of perspectives regarding how these organizations are viewed (Boris, 2006), and some discussion has ensued regarding the terminology used to refer to this diverse group of organizations (Frumkin, 2002).

Nonprofit Organizations and Advocacy

In 1981, Kramer identified the main functions of human service organizations, among them advocacy. Twenty years later, Salamon (2002) affirmed these functions, stating that "nonprofit organizations make crucial contributions to national and community life" (p. 9). These functions include the roles of (a) vanguards, defined as pioneering the development and adoption of services needed by communities; (b) advocates, defined as promoting social justice; (c) value guardians, defined as preserving the interest and values of religious, cultural, social, and other minority groups; and (d) service providers, defined as the physically delivering services to clients.

Although there are many definitions of advocacy, there is consensus in the literature that cause or macro advocacy refers to action taken on behalf of a group of people, and the goal is broad level change (Epstein, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 2001). It has been argued that advocacy has been a primary mode by which NPOs have carried out their role as intermediaries between citizens and other institutions (Reid, 2000). NPOs fulfill advocacy roles as they act as agents of social change (DiMaggio & Anheier, 1990). In many ways, advocacy has also allowed NPOs to act as schools for democracy (Alexander et al., 1999). Besides providing services, they have been able to contribute to civil society by identifying social problems, protecting basic human rights, and providing a voice for social, political, cultural, and community affairs (Salamon, 2002).

Some researchers contend that NPOs are driven by advocacy-based missions, which guide their desire to address social issues or improve some aspect of societal well-being (Salipante & Golden-Biddle, 1995). Specifically, human service NPOs, with their altruistic ideology of charity, usually see their overall mission as one to enhance individuals' well-being, which in turn fulfills their social mission of promoting social justice and equality (Schmid, 2004). In their roles as advocates, as stated by Kramer (1981) and Salamon (2002), human service organizations identify social problems, protect basic human rights, and provide a voice to a wide array of concerns. Additionally, they serve as critics and guardians that pressure decision-makers to create, expand, and improve needed services (Kramer, 1981, 1987). This advocacy role has historically been one carried out at the same time that services are provided (Kramer, 1987). However, concerns have been raised regarding the level of advocacy in which NPOs are involved, increasing the fear that these organizations are headed in a direction that can potentially silence their voice (Bass et al., 2007; Bass, Guinane, & Turner, 2003).

In spite of the seeming importance of the role of advocacy within NPOs, there is a paucity of research in this area (Berry, 2003; Ezell, 2001; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Salamon, 2002; Salamon & Geller, 2008). Additionally, a large portion of the literature is focused on conceptual and theoretical assumptions. For example, Kramer (1981) states that the four roles of NPOs he espouses are derived from discussions regarding the goals, character, and function of these organizations. Salamon's (2002) support of Kramer's nonprofit functions 20 years later is also based on a conceptual framework. Furthermore, the research that is available mainly addresses the legislative/policy aspect of advocacy, leaving out other important areas of advocacy, such as agency, legal, and community advocacy (personal communication, M. Ezell, March 24, 2010).

Social Work and Advocacy

Advocacy has not only been discussed in the nonprofit field, the topic has also been addressed in the social work literature. Championing the cause of the disadvantaged and oppressed has been a core value of the social work profession since its inception, and it is also the thrust behind organizations' advocacy activities. The quest to achieve social change in order to provide a better world for marginalized and disadvantaged populations was evident in the work of early social workers. Throughout social work history, human service NPOs have been the primary place of employment for social workers (Kramer, 1981; Berry, 2003); and these organizations have included advocacy activities among their functions. Social workers have engaged in advocacy in an effort to represent the interests of their clients since the beginning of the profession (Abramovitz, 1998; Ad Hoc Committee on Advocacy, 1969; Austin, 2000; Gilbert & Specht, 1976; Herbert & Mould, 1992; Lundblad, 1995). As a practice strategy, advocacy has allowed social workers to raise their voices regarding issues affecting individuals, groups, and entire communities, as well as allowed organizations to respond to environmental factors influencing the services they provide.

Despite the long history of advocacy in the profession of social work, there has been tension between macro and micro practice (Gibelman, 1999; Schneider & Netting, 1999). Macro practice refers to work with communities and other large systems while micro practice refers to practice with individuals and their intimate interactions (Lesser & Pope, 2007; Sheafor &

Horejsi, 2006). The main debate revolves around whether social work should be involved with social reform, treating individuals, or both. Some have argued that social work "was founded on a strong belief in the perfectibility of society" (Specht & Courtney, 1994, p. 7), leading it to seek solutions for the enormous social problems present. Yet, historical accounts show that there have been long periods of emphasis on direct practice, while intermittent waves of social activism and advocacy have risen during periods of crisis (Abramovitz, 1998; Haynes, 1998). Although social workers continued to call for involvement in social change during periods of emphasis on individual practice, the call and its response was neither clear nor commanding. Additionally, it has been argued that the pressure toward the professionalization of social work has left a gap in the use of macro-level advocacy, which is believed to have contributed to the waning support for human services (Anderson & Gryzlak, 2002; Stoesz, 1999).

Historical overview. The three main historical periods identified as times when social work activism increased are marked by changes in the political and economic climate of the time. First, the turn of the century brought with it the Progressive Era, a time when the Settlement House Movement brought its message of adverse social conditions to light (Abramovitz, 1998; Axin & Levin, 1997; Day, 1997; Lundblad, 1995). It was during World War I, and the conservative years which followed, that social work's emphasis on social change subsided and there was a shift toward psychiatry and psychoanalysis (Abramovitz, 1998; Haynes, 1998; Lundblad, 1995; Woodroofe, 1966). Wenocur and Reisch (1989) argued that as the idea of professionalization gained strength, the commitment to social reform within the Settlement House Movement, which became identified with social work, declined. This was aided by the growth of the market and the "growth of casework specializations" (p. 139).

The second historical period that saw renewed vision for social activism was during the Depression Era (Abramovitz, 1998; Ehrenreich, 1985; Trattner, 1994). The gravity of the situation moved social workers to reevaluate the profession's stance on social action (Wenocur & Reisch, 1989), and many made a call for social policies that would lessen the burden the economic situation brought upon many (Ehrenreich, 1985). Another war, however, affected this renewed passion. The Second World War brought the focus back to individual needs as the emphasis for social change was diminished by the political fear of the era, and a more affluent society began to change the faces of the people social workers served (Abramovitz, 1998). It was the social turbulence of the 1960s that brought about a third wave of social activism (Ehrenreich, 1985; Reamer, 1998; Trattner, 1994), but as the urgency for social reform waned, the focus shifted back to individual practice. In the mid-1970s social workers supported the separation of individual practice and political activities, and by the 1980s only a few social work schools offered a social justice focus in their curricula. This move away from social reform and toward professionalization was further confirmed during the time when welfare reform, perceived as punitive, gained approval in Congress in the late 1990s (Abramovitz, 1998).

In spite of this historical tension, advocacy has been a highly regarded ideal (Hawranick, Doris, & Daugherty, 2008; Sosin & Caulum, 1983). Social work's long tradition of social reform has been supported by many, stressing that the profession's commitment to serve individuals is good, but it may not be enough (Abramovitz, 1998). As ecological theory emphasizes, understanding individuals and their environments can only be accomplished when the interaction between the two is examined (Germain & Gitterman, 1995). If a goal is to help individuals gain self-determination and improve their lives, change must be sought not only at the individual level, but also in the social conditions that affect their ability to reach those goals.

In order to effectively intervene at the macro level, social workers must view the community as an ecological system (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006). However, in spite of this call for active participation, some fear that while social change has continued to be in the idiom and rhetoric of social work, the actual practice of advocacy for social change has become languid (Morris, 2000).

Concerns Regarding Advocacy among Human Service Organizations

As stated above, the paucity of research on advocacy is a major concern (Berry, 2003; Ezell, 2001; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Salamon, 2002; Salamon & Geller, 2008). This is especially true for advocacy by charitable organizations whose primary goals are not to engage in external representational activities but to provide direct services. The information available on issues such as how advocacy participation varies among organizations, what factors motivate NPOs to advocate, and how they advocate is not conclusive, with available studies providing divergent results (Salamon & Geller, 2008). Although the literature is limited and mixed, it has offered preliminary insights into the advocacy behavior of NPOs, and has provided data that can be utilized to understand some implications of advocacy on organizations. Nevertheless, many questions remain about the specifics surrounding the advocacy behavior of organizations, especially that of particular groups within the nonprofit sector, such as human service providers.

Several issues have made the study of advocacy among NPOs a difficult task, among them the lack of consistency of terminology and labels used (personal communication, M. Ezell, March 24, 2010). Many definitions have surfaced through the years, emphasizing different aspects of advocacy depending on the context in which the term is employed; to date no consensus on one definition has been reached (Bass et al., 2007; Boris & Krehely, 2002; Ezell, 1991; Nelson, 1999; Reid, 2000; Schneider & Lester, 2001; Sosin & Caulum, 1983). However, among available definitions, one aspect is consistent, cause or macro level advocacy refers to bringing about change on a larger scale (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Donaldson, 2007; Jenkins, 1987; Schmid, Bar, & Nirel, 2008).

Additionally, the majority of advocacy studies has examined only one aspect of advocacy, that which seeks to influence policy, termed by some political advocacy or policy advocacy (see Abramovitz, 2005; Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Chaves, Stephens, & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Child, & Gronbjerg, 2007; Donaldson & Shields, 2009; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007). However, even the term policy advocacy is ambiguous. Although Jenkins' (1987) definition of policy advocacy as "any attempt to influence the decisions of any institutional elite on behalf of a collective interest" (p. 297) is commonly used, to many, the term refers to direct lobbying or advocacy of legislators at the state and federal levels of government (Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007). Furthermore, even when policy advocacy is said to be the area of study, assumptions are made about other areas of advocacy such as advocacy directed toward administrators, where the goal is not to change or influence policy. For example, a national study that measured the impact of tax law on the political participation of nonprofits, asked questions about contact with government and policy makers. No distinction was made regarding the level of government to which advocacy tactics were directed and yet the author stated that "reasonable inferences" were made about the targets of these tactics (Berry, 2003, p. 100).

Although policy advocacy is a common form of advocacy, it has been argued that the term goes beyond efforts that only influence public policy. Advocacy includes various aspects of civic involvement (Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Donaldson, 2008; Schneider & Netting, 1999), and addressing it from this broader perspective would allow for a better understanding of the role nonprofits play in providing a voice for their constituents.

Another issue that clouds the understanding of advocacy is the samples used in research that include “nonprofits” as the unit of analysis. This is important because there is evident diversity in the nonprofit sector in terms of client focus and type of service. One survey found that although the common understanding of NPOs is that they serve the disadvantaged, less than one-third of these organizations identify their focus as such (Salamon, 1995). In addition to providing human services, NPOs provide cultural, arts, and recreational oriented services, health services, education, research, and other services that attend to various social needs (Salamon, 1995). These obvious differences make comparisons and generalizations difficult. Moreover, this diversity is even evident when only human service organizations are studied. For example, day care centers, job training organizations, family and child service agencies, and residential care facilities, are all included in the human service category and yet these organizations are different from one another. This lack of homogeneity within the nonprofit sector calls for research that provides clearer data, which can inform the advocacy behavior of specific organizations, versus making assumptions about a heterogeneous group.

Structure of Advocacy within Nonprofits

The structure of advocacy within NPOs has been mentioned in the literature (Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996; Taylor, 1987), but has not been given considerable attention in research; this is evident in that no research articles were found addressing advocacy structure. Some scholars have suggested that advocacy should be part of the organizational structure as a program and service (Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996; Taylor, 1987), since advocacy is too often a marginal function, employed in a reactive mode when issues arise (Taylor, 1987).

Within service organizations, advocacy is often a peripheral and ineffectual function that lacks consistency and coherence (Gibelman & Kraft, 1996); additionally, nonprofit infrastructure places little emphasis on advocacy (Bass et al., 2007). Gibelman and Kraft, (1996) contended that unless advocacy is incorporated as an established program and service, nonprofits will continue to be vulnerable and will need to react to and accept the decisions made by those outside the service field. Furthermore, it can be argued that organizations should undertake a systematic planning process that can help them place advocacy within the context of the organization's mission and programs. An advocacy agenda should be developed as part of a planning process, along with the allocation of resources and staff to move advocacy efforts forward (Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996).

The literature suggests that investing resources in advocacy pays off in many ways, including affording organizations access to decision-makers (Berry, 2003). Because advocacy is a large scale and important commitment, some have suggested that a specific staff person be dedicated to advocacy (Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996). This addresses several issues such as avoiding having advocacy be reactive to issues that arise at any given moment; allowing time to be dedicated specifically to advocacy without the distraction of other assignments (Berry, 2003); and avoiding resentment and burn out from those who would potentially receive this assignment in addition to their existing duties.

Additionally, advocacy takes time (Ezell, 2001; Netting, O'Connor, & Fauri, 2007) and therefore, organizations need to be committed to advance the issues until they are resolved, in order to see the results of their advocacy efforts. Having a specific person responsible for advocacy activities can provide the organization with continuity and the ability to follow up on the ultimate results of advocacy efforts.

Advocacy Strategy

Regarding advocacy strategy, it is understood that organizations must carefully select their targets and the tactics to be employed in order to not risk their survival (Ezell, 2001; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Schneider & Lester, 2001; Taylor, 1991). Because organizations seek legitimacy, which means they need to conform to expected behavior (Zucker, 1983), they must utilize tactics that are acceptable by the human service community and by the objects of their advocacy. Targets and tactics of advocacy can provide insight into the strategy adopted by an organization as it seeks to advance its advocacy agenda.

Targets. One of the ways in which the literature distinguishes between micro and macro level advocacy is by addressing the targets of advocacy. For macro advocacy, the locus of change is not the individual as it is in micro practice, but a larger system (Ezell, 2001; Netting et al., 2007). In macro advocacy the target can be an organization, proposed legislation, a law, powerful leaders, or the community; the change in this setting is geared toward system change. Schneider and Lester (2001) assert that the goal of advocacy is to "systematically influence decision-making in an unjust or unresponsive system" (p. 65), which does not limit advocacy to influencing public policy.

The targets of advocacy are usually elected officials, especially at the federal and state levels. However, little is known about advocacy that targets local government officials, especially those not in elected positions. Moreover, community leaders, such as large business owners or executives, influential lawyers, judges, influential religious leaders, and the community at large as targets of advocacy are seldom referred to in the literature, leaving a gap in research that could be helpful in developing an understanding of advocacy by NPOs.

Ezell (2001) viewed advocacy from a broad perspective in which he identified types of advocacy that include many of the targets aforementioned. Agency advocacy refers to tactics and activities used to "bring about change in programs and agencies that will benefit clients" (Ezell, 2001, p. 53); it involves identifying needed changes in program policies (rules and regulations) and practices (procedures, outcomes, etc.), and influencing agencies to make needed modification. Legal advocacy is a strategy utilized primarily in the judicial branch of government; the goal is to influence the implementation of laws or legal rules as they influence clients. In community advocacy, the target is the community and its assumptions about vulnerable populations. Attitudes and myths often promoted within communities influence access to services for those in need, therefore advocacy is necessary to change mistaken public perceptions in order to change policies or programs that do not meet the needs of clients (Ezell, 2001). Although Ezell (2001) addresses the community's attitudes in his definition, it can be argued that targeting individuals who are respected in the community and are viewed as powerful could also be considered community advocacy. Individuals with influence such as business owners or executives, influential religious leaders, and those well positioned can also sway priorities or practices within community organizations.

Tactics. Tactics are defined as the steps taken to achieve a desired goal (Bobo, Kenda, & Max, 1996). They are the day-to-day activities, specific techniques, or behaviors carried out by organizations when seeking to bring about change in a system (Schneider & Lester, 2001). Although there is no single source that provides an account of the range of advocacy tactics employed by NPOs (Saidel, 2002), some typologies have been developed (Avner, 2002; Mosley, 2006; Ranghelli & Craig, 2009; Reid, 1999; Schmid et al., 2008; Schneider & Lester, 2001; Wierner, Kirsch, & McCormack, 2002). However, the typologies available in the literature tend to represent the policy aspect of advocacy, leaving unanswered questions regarding the tactics utilized with targets other than elected officials. When viewing advocacy as a practice intervention that goes beyond influencing policy, gaining knowledge about these tactics is necessary.

Overview of Theoretical Framework

Many questions have been raised about the field of nonprofit studies, including questions about the reason NPOs exist, the behaviors of NPOs, and the impact of NPOs on society (Anheier, 2005). Both, complementary and divergent theories have been developed to answer these and many other questions about these organizations. The economics literature has attempted to explain why the nonprofit sector exists, while organizational theories have sought to explain the behavior of the nonprofit sector (Anheier, 2005). For the purpose of this study, an organizational theory seeking to explain organizational behavior will be utilized.

Institutional theory, also known as neo-institutional or new institutional theory, is one of many approaches that seek to explain the behavior of NPOs. The theory is a revised form of the classical approach first introduced by Selznick in the 1940s (Feeney, 1997; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Scott, 2001); the new institutionalism emerged in the 1970s. For the purpose of this research, the newer approach will be utilized, and following the lead of the literature, it will be refered to as institutional theory from here forward.

Institutional theory emphasizes that organizations are best understood when seen as embedded in their environments, i.e. communities, political systems, cultures, industries, or fields of organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001). Institutions, which are defined by the theory as the prevailing social rules, norms, and values in which organizations operate, form and shape organizational actions (Anheier, 2005). The approach suggests that understanding the external environment in which organizations operate is critical to the understanding of organizational behavior (Feeney, 1997). The theory proposes that institutions constrain and regularize the behavior of organizations, and impose restrictions by defining legal, moral, and cultural boundaries, while at the same time supporting and empowering organizational activities and actions (Anheier, 2005; Scott, 2001). Researchers have used institutional theory to explain the influence of the environment on organizations' behavior. More specifically, they have found that organizations operating in a particular organizational field, influenced by similar forces, go through an isomorphic process becoming similar to each other in behavior and structure, pointing to the common impact of environmental forces on organizations (Anheier, 2005; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Additionally, the theory contends that institutionalization is rooted in conformity (Zucker, 1983), where components of formalized structures become widely accepted as appropriate and necessary, and serve as a means of legitimization (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Organizations' long-term survival depends on conformity to norms and acceptable behavior (Anheier, 2005; Covaleski & Dirsmith, 1988; Oliver, 1991).

From an institutional theory perspective, it would follow that environmental factors influence the advocacy behavior of human service organizations. The formalization of organizations, the professionalization of human services, the interpretation of laws, and the expectations of bodies of authorities (i.e. accreditation bodies and funders) are institutional factors that have been found to influence organizational behavior (Mosley, 2006; Scott, 2001), and could in turn shape the advocacy activities of organizations. Because institutionalization is rooted in conformity (Zucker, 1983), certain practices and interventions become widely accepted as appropriate and necessary, serving as ways of legitimizing the organization in its environment

(Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Reliance on institutional rules then becomes a main task of the organization (Mosley, 2006) potentially predicting the adoption or rejection of practices that could increase or decrease the legitimacy of the organization. Human service organizations whose primary goal is to provide services may not see advocacy as an appropriate or necessary practice. If advocacy is viewed as a potential risk to the survival of the organization or perceived as a practice that would hinder survival, advocacy tactics and targets, if employed at all, may reflect this perception. For example, if organizations believe that speaking to legislators, writing letters expressing their opinions, or requesting that a law be reviewed (all advocacy tactics) can obstruct the funding they receive from the government, they could be likely to avoid using these tactics.

Studying the advocacy behavior of organizations from an institutional perspective can prove useful in determining the factors that influence practices that have been institutionalized. In this study, those behaviors would include overall participation in advocacy, the structure of advocacy within organizations, and the targets used when participating in advocacy.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of the conceptual value advocacy has been given among NPOs, many questions remain regarding the advocacy behavior of organizations. Questions regarding the scope and intensity of advocacy, and factors that influence an organization's advocacy behavior remain. Because seeking social justice through advocacy is indeed a core value of the social work profession, and advocacy has seemed to play an important role within human service organizations, it is necessary to answer questions that remain regarding the advocacy involvement of these organizations.

Although broader conceptual definitions of advocacy as an intervention that goes beyond influencing policy have been addressed in the literature, systematic research in this area is scarce. Organizations understand and practice advocacy in different ways, and it is assumed that among those actually advocating, structure and implementation varies. Therefore, the overall advocacy participation, the advocacy structure, and the advocacy targets of a selected group of human service organizations located in the Northeast Georgia Region are the focus of this study. Organizations providing services in the counties included in the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission area, which includes 12 counties, in addition to three other counties served by Community Connection for a total of 15 counties, will be studied. This region was selected because of the proximity of the researcher to the area, accessibility to the Community Connections' directory, and the link between the counties through the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore institutional factors that influence the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs providing services in the Northeast Georgia region. Specifically, overall advocacy participation, the structure of advocacy, and the targets of advocacy activities were explored. The central questions that guided this study were: (1) what institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy? (2) What institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs? And (3) what institutional factors predict advocacy targets?

Significance of the Study

Disadvantaged and marginalized individuals are usually the least likely to be heard within systems that are expected to represent them (Berry, 2003). This is due in part to their seeming lack of power and inaccessibility to decision makers. Human service NPOs have sought to fill this gap and act as intermediaries between individuals and institutions; however, many questions remain regarding how these organizations carry out this function. Research has focused on one area of macro level advocacy, that which addresses policy change, neglecting other types of advocacy presumably used by human service NPOs. Advocacy is a much broader reaching concept, an idea that has been discussed in the literature, but for which there is little research. In that regard, this study could have significant potential to add to the knowledge base by addressing advocacy at various levels of intervention and exploring the factors that influence organizations' advocacy behavior.

In addition to providing a voice for the people NPOs serve (Berry, 2003), advocacy can also help build organizations' legitimacy (Mosley, 2006), and provide a forum for organizations to inform the public and decision makers regarding specific issues and concerns (Frumkin, 2002). NPOs have been recognized for being able to identify problems traditionally neglected by the public and decision makers, being skilled at developing positions overlooked or ignored by others, and being influential in defining local priorities (Frumkin, 2002). Although this influence is often attached to policy change, it can be argued that it also encompasses initiatives that reach various levels of societal change. Because advocacy can migrate upward (Frumkin, 2002), community and local initiatives can and do shape decisions in upper levels of government and other decision-making arenas. Although human service organizations are in a position to see and understand the issues faced by the populations served they have increasingly been perceived as absent from the strategy tables where plotting a course for broader action takes place (Abramovitz, 1998; Morris, 2000). This often leaves organizations subject to the decisions of others who lack broader knowledge of social problems. Social work practice should go beyond providing services most likely shaped and mandated by individuals who do not fully understand the conditions of those affected by social and economic conditions. Therefore, understanding the advocacy behavior of organizations can be a springboard for developing best practices that can be utilized by human organizations.

Because organizations interpret, structure, and implement advocacy in different ways, the study of advocacy has important implications for human service NPOs. It can provide insight into the proliferation of broad advocacy practices that have spread through the human service nonprofit world. It can also provide insight into the variability among human service NPOs' advocacy behavior in cases where organizations do or do not conform to expected behavior. Furthermore, it can allow for the exploration of environmental expectations and pressures as potential barriers to experimentation and innovation among human service NPOs regarding advocacy behavior.

In order to gain a seat at the table where decisions affecting the disadvantaged are made, additional knowledge regarding advocacy is needed. Morris (2000) argues that as long as no changes are made within the social work profession, social workers will continue to have a place in social institutions, but not as influencers of policy and social change, but as "midlevel facilitators" (p. 70).

Chapter Summary

Advocacy has been recognized as an important role of human service NPOs. This chapter provided an overview of the issues addressed in the literature regarding advocacy and provided a framework for the need to expand advocacy research. An introduction to the goals of the study was also provided. The next chapter presents a more detailed review of the literature that will set the context for the study; it will also further address the theoretical framework used to support the research questions presented.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study was to explore institutional factors that influence the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs, regarding overall advocacy participation, the structure of advocacy, and the targets of advocacy activities. The central questions that guided this study were: (1) What institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy? (2) What institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs? And (3) what institutional factors predict advocacy targets?

To provide context for the proposed study, this chapter is comprised of four sections. First, an overview of the nonprofit sector is provided, which includes a discussion on human service organizations and their place within the sector. Second, advocacy is described in the context of human services, including a discussion of the definition of advocacy and factors that have been found to influence the policy advocacy behavior of organizations. Third, a discussion of the structure, targets, and tactics of advocacy is provided. Finally, institutional theory is addressed as the framework that informed this study.

The literature that contributes to the current knowledge of the advocacy behavior of human service organizations comes from various disciplines, including social work, political science, public administration, law, and sociology. Due to the lack of research in certain areas of advocacy, personal communication with experts in the field is also noted in this section.

The Nonprofit Sector

The nonprofit or third sector is composed of a large number of diverse organizations (Anheier, 2005; Salamon, 2002). This sector includes health organizations, theaters, universities, orchestras, research institutions, policy think tanks, human services, and even fraternities and sororities, to name a few (Anheier, 2005; Salamon, 2002). Scholars have tried to clarify the manner in which these organizations are classified by providing various taxonomies. However, clearly defined boundaries for this sector remain blurred and fluid (Anheier, 2005). Because of this diversity, it is difficult to generalize conclusions based on one type of organization to other nonprofits (Boris & Steuerle, 2006).

One of the most straightforward systems of classification comes from the Internal Revenue Code, within which most tax-exempt organizations fall under section 501. Although there are over 20 categories in this section, 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 comprise the largest groups of tax exempt organizations (Anheier, 2005). Within these two groups, the 501(c)3 is the largest, encompassing approximately two-thirds of all tax-exempt nonprofits (Salamon & Anheier, 1997; Boris & Steuerle, 2006). Section 501(c)3 is composed of organizations considered public charities, and it is these organizations that generally come to mind when speaking of "nonprofits" (Berry, 2003). The main difference between the largest two groups, 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 organizations, is that though they are both tax-exempt, only 501(c)3 organizations can receive contributions from individuals and corporations that are tax deductible (Anheier, 2005; Boris & Steuerle, 2006; Salamon, 2002).

Within the tax code, there are two policies that govern the lobbying activities of 501(c)3 organizations, the "substantial rule" and the "H elector" rule. In 1934, Congress incorporated the substantial rule into a statute. They stated that a charity organization could have its tax-exempt status revoked if a “substantial” part of the activities it conducts is intended to influence legislation. However, what “substantial lobbying” constitutes has never been defined by Congress (Berry, 2003). The H elector policy was passed in 1976 as part of the Tax Reform Act. If organizations become H electors, they have specific guidelines as to how much of their revenue can be used in lobbying activities; this depends on the size of the organization (Berry, 2003).

In addition to the tax code, several classifications have been developed in order to help identify NPOs (Anheier, 2005). One of the most widely used classifications in the U.S. is the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE), which groups organizations by activity (Anheier, 2005; Urban Institute, 2009). The NTEE divides nonprofits into 26 major groups that fall under 10 broad categories (Urban Institute, 2009), where human services is one of the broad categories. Other classification systems, such as the International Classification on Nonprofit Organizations (Anheier, 2005), use the term social services.

In spite of all the work recently done on the nonprofit sector, there is not a clear picture of the size of the sector (Berry, 2003; Boris & Steuerle, 2006). One of the reasons for this gap in knowledge is that many organizations are small and therefore not required by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to register (if they earn less than $5,000 in annual gross receipts) or to file Form 990, required of organizations with more than $25,000 in gross receipts (Berry, 2003; Boris & Steuerle, 2006). Another reason is the fluctuation of active organizations in the sector, where many are created with relative ease and others are easily dissolved (Boris & Steuerle, 2006). The nonprofit sector, however, has experienced growth since the 1970s and it contributes notably to the U.S. economy (Berry, 2003). For example, estimates of the nonprofit sector’s share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) range between 4.2% and 7% (Berry, 2003; Boris &

Steuerle, 2006). Additionally, this sector employs approximately 10% of the U.S. workforce (Berry, 2003).

Although it has been difficult to classify and size the nonprofit sector, several important conclusions have been reached regarding these organizations. According to Anheier (2005), this sector is a major player in the economic and social make up of the U.S. Second, the sector has become a major focus of policy initiatives. Third, even though research in the area has been expanded, knowledge of this sector is still limited. Lastly, interest in studying these organizations, seen as operating in the public interest, has increased (Anheier, 2005).

As nonprofits continue to be seen as a vital part of the social, economic, and political development of modern society (Anheier, 2005; Hasenfeld, 2010) analysts have sought to understand the roles they play. Among the most salient roles these organizations play in national and community life are their roles as service providers and as advocates, the latter being the focus of this dissertation (Frumkin, 2002; Kramer, 1981; Salamon, 2002). As service providers, they deliver services to the public (i.e. education, health care, day care, counseling, employment and training, etc.), and develop innovative practices (Salamon, 2002). Through the advocacy role, they identify social problems and bring them to public attention, they seek to protect human rights, and provide a voice to social, political, and community needs (Salamon, 2002); in essence they seek social change (Ezell, 2001; Frumkin, 2002).

The literature has consistently affirmed the role NPOs play in the democratic and civil health of society (Alexander et al, 1999; Berger & Neuhaus, 1977; Berry, 1999, 2003; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Saidel, 2002; Smith, 1993; Suárez & Hwang, 2008). In various ways, these organizations provide an opportunity for individuals to demonstrate their commitment to increasing social value and provide a voice for those who are traditionally less likely to be heard

(Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Boris & Krehely, 2002; Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000). Advocacy has been a primary mode through which NPOs have carried out this role as intermediaries between citizens and other institutions (Reid, 2000); in many ways, advocacy has allowed NPOs to act as schools for democracy (Alexander et al., 1999).

Human Service Organizations

If deciphering the overall nonprofit sector is difficult, attempting the same with human services is no less challenging. In fact, to many people, human services or social services “are the nonprofit sector” (Smith, 2002, p. 149). Originally, social services was the term used to identify personal services received by individuals who experienced social problems or had low socio-economic status (Grønbjerg, 2001; Smith, 2002). Today some scholars believe that receiving personal services has become an expectation of all citizens and these services have expanded to include a broad range of assistance, including day care for children, elderly care (in the home or in residential facilities), support for individuals with disabilities, and counseling, among others (Grønbjerg, 2001). In more recent literature, the term human services has been used to refer to social services (Grønbjerg, 2001); currently, the terms are used interchangeably. Salamon (1999) defines social services as “forms of assistance, other than outright cash aid, which help individuals and families to function in the face of social, economic, or physical problems or needs” (p. 110).

As with the overall nonprofit sector, determining the size and exact structure of human services has proven difficult. However, it is know that organizations offering human services are well represented in the universe of NPOs. For example, Berry (2003) found that human service organizations represent 37% of all nonprofits large enough to file a tax return, making them the biggest group. Additionally, these organizations account for about 18% of the sector’s paid employment (Salamon, 2002; Weitzman, Jalandoni, Lampkin, & Pollak, 2002), and they are major recipients of volunteer hours (Anheier, 2005).

The expansion of human services has been well documented. From 1977 to 1997, the number of human service nonprofits providing individual and family services grew by about 314% (Smith, 2002). Although there has been privatization of some services this growth is believed to be a result of the creation of new programs and services (Smith, 2002). Although it is known that for-profits also provide social services, nonprofit human service organizations provide a larger percentage of these services. For example, compared to for-profits, human service NPOs provide 80% of individual and family services (Salamon, 2002).

Because human service organizations are a subgroup of the nonprofit sector, when the roles of nonprofits are addressed they also apply to human services. Obviously, the service role is the primary reason for human service organizations to exist. Services provided by these organizations are varied and include day care, services for the elderly and for individuals with disabilities, vocational training, counseling for marital or other problems, assistance for victims of abuse, and even self-help groups, among others (Grønbjerg, 2001). Additionally, the advocacy role has also been seen as a vital and a traditional responsibility of these organizations (Berry, 2003; Boris & Krehely, 2002), and social work as a profession is believed to have "the greatest influence on human service advocacy" (Ezell, 2001, p. xxi). However, research has shown that human service organizations are experiencing increased tension between their role as advocates and as service deliverers (Bass et al., 2007).

Advocacy

Although advocacy is believed to be valuable and important to nonprofits and the social work profession (Hawranick et al., 2008; Ezell, 2001; Kramer, 1981, 1987; Salamon, 2002;

Sosin & Caulum, 1983), questions have been raised regarding the advocacy involvement of NPOs. One of the concerns is the potential silencing of these organizations if they are not able or willing to advocate for the causes in which they believe (Bass et al., 2007; Bass et al., 2003). Additionally, in spite of these concerns, research in this area is limited (Berry, 2003; Ezell, 2001; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Salamon, 2002; Salamon & Geller, 2008), and the research available has narrowly defined advocacy as legislative or policy advocacy. The following section provides an overview of advocacy as defined in the literature, and it offers a summary of the current advocacy research available.

Defining Advocacy

One of the difficulties of addressing the advocacy of NPOs is the inconsistency in the use of terminology and labels (personal communication, M. Ezell, March 24, 2010), which extends to the lack of consensus on a definition of advocacy. Schneider and Lester (2001) reviewed over 90 definitions of advocacy before arriving at what they termed a "new definition" based in the context of the social work profession; however, even this definition has not been adopted as "the definition" of advocacy, as evidenced by the variety of ways in which the concept is represented in the literature.

Two broad types of advocacy have been identified in the literature, case advocacy (or client advocacy), and cause advocacy (macro, systems, or class advocacy) (Epstein, 1981; Ezell, 1991; Hardina, 1995). Case advocacy refers to action on behalf of a client and it rarely causes changes in agency or government policies (Ezell, 1991; Hardina, 1995). Cause advocacy, on the other hand, refers to action taken on behalf of a group of people with a goal of broad level change (Epstein, 1981; Ezell, 1991, 2001). The focus of this dissertation is on the latter type of advocacy; because this will be the only type of advocacy addressed, the word cause will be omitted from here forward.

Although definitions of advocacy are varied and the views on what should be included in a definition differ, there are common threads that can be pieced together to arrive at a general perspective on advocacy. First, advocacy is not passive but active. Most definitions include actions such as identifying, influencing, pleading, supporting, recommending, representing, defending, intervening, changing, and embracing as part of their explanation of advocacy (see Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Ezell, 2001; Hopkins, 1992; Mickelson, 1995; Reid, 2000; Salamon, 1995; Schneider & Lester, 2001). Second, advocacy is not exclusive to seeking legislative or policy change. Common definitions of advocacy make broad statements about seeking change (Ezell, 2001), securing social justice (Mickelson, 1995), shaping social and political outcomes (Reid, 2000), systematically influencing decision making (Schneider & Lester), or shaping public life (Salamon, 1995) without restricting itself to one target.

Perhaps one of the simplest and oldest definitions of advocacy used in social work is to defend or promote a cause (McCormick, 1970; Panitch, 1974; Weissman, Epstein, & Savage, 1983; Ezell, 2001). This definition was expanded by Hopkins (1992) who wrote that advocacy is the "act of pleading for or against a cause, as well as supporting or recommending a position…Advocacy is active espousal of a position, a point of view or a course of action" (p. 32). Neither definition makes an assertion as to who is the target of advocacy and it has been argued that the term advocacy goes beyond describing efforts that only influence public policy. The term should include various aspects of civic involvement (Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Donaldson, 2008; Schneider & Netting, 1999), which would allow for a broader understanding of the role nonprofits play in providing a voice for their constituents. In addition to legislative advocacy, agency, legal, and community advocacy have been included in these broader definitions, concepts that will be addressed in later sections of this chapter.

Clearly, there are limitations to both approaches. Reid (2000) recognizes that using a broader definition of advocacy can make data collection difficult and possibly imprecise, though utilizing a narrow definition of advocacy provides an incomplete picture of the larger issue. Because most research has focused mainly on one area, many gaps remain in the understanding of advocacy as a broader intervention. Although Reid's (2000) caution is germane, it is necessary to explore advocacy in a broader context to obtain a fuller picture of the wider phenomenon and its influence on research and practice. Heeding Reid's (2000) advice this dissertation will address advocacy from a broad perspective in an effort to fill some of the gaps extant in the knowledge base about advocacy as a practice intervention that goes beyond seeking legislative change.

Advocacy Research: Scope of Participation and Factors that Influence Policy Advocacy

The lack of a common definition of advocacy is not the only issue that has made measuring this concept difficult. The discussion that follows reviews the research available regarding the scope of advocacy among NPOs. The studies generally encompass the broad nonprofit sector, with human services being one of the many components of this sector (see Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Child & Gronbjerg, 2007; Salamon & Geller, 2008). This undoubtedly makes it difficult to generalize findings to human service organizations, as some studies include theaters and museums alongside children and family service agencies in their analysis. Notable exceptions include Donaldson (2007, 2008), Mosley (2006), Nicholson-Crotty (2007), and Schmid et al. (2008), studies that specifically addressed advocacy by human service organizations.

Scope of participation. Several studies on policy advocacy have sought to determine NPOs' participation level on advocacy activities. Although interpretations of advocacy participation vary, one area of agreement is that NPOs are involved in advocacy to one degree or another (Bass et al., 2007; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Hudson, 2002; Salamon & Geller, 2008). How much they participate, however, is a more difficult question to answer, with results being mixed.

In a study of emergency service organizations, substance abuse treatment organizations, and multiple service organizations, Donaldson (2007) measured advocacy behavior utilizing the Advocacy Behavior Scale (ABS). On a scale ranging from zero to 96, with 96 representing greater advocacy, the author found that the overall advocacy behavior scores were low for all three types of agencies ($M = 32.5; SD = 19.7$). The ABS measured three dimensions of advocacy behavior, demonstrating political influence, taking action, and identifying with and empowering clients. Organizations scored the highest on demonstrating political influence and the lowest on identifying with and empowering clients (Donaldson, 2007).

Saidel and Harlan (1998), in a study that included the role of policy advocacy (specific actions in the interest of the organization and its consumers) in nonprofits, found that the most frequently reported pattern of legislative advocacy was that of bystander (38.8%), where neither staff nor board members were involved in influencing government action. This study included a general sample of nonprofits; however, they found that patterns in policy advocacy did not vary by service area (Saidel & Harlan, 1998). Child and Grønbjerg (2007) agree that organizations participate in advocacy, but they found that among human services, advocacy was not a core activity. They concluded NPOs do participate, but do "not devote most of any staff, financial, or volunteer resources to it" (Child & Grønbjerg, 2007, p. 273). Additionally, Bass et al. (2007)

found that although four in five organizations (86%) said they participate in advocacy, participation is not frequent. Approximately 69% of organizations in their study said they never participate in the policymaking process or do so infrequently, another 77% never or infrequently testified in front of policy makers, and 78% never or infrequently released a research report to the media, the public, or policy makers. Of the participating organizations, 29.1% were human service organizations (Bass et al., 2007). The authors concluded that involvement in advocacy appears to be wide but not deep, with many organizations recognizing its importance and yet not sitting at the policymaking table (Bass et al., 2007). Lack of resources, negative organizational attitudes toward advocacy, and lack of skills were mentioned by participants as barriers to advocacy participation (Bass et al., 2007). This pattern of low participation seems to carry outside the U.S. nonprofit sector. For example, in a study conducted in Israel, it was found that although organizations advocated, their level of political activity was moderate to low (Schmid et al., 2008).

Salamon and Geller (2008) provided a more positive outlook on advocacy participation, albeit contradictory to the previous findings. In a national study of NPOs ($N = 872$), they found that overall, three out of five organizations reported being involved in public policy efforts at least once per month. Additionally, 31% reported doing it quarterly. This level of participation was interpreted by the authors as an indicator that political involvement is strong among nonprofits. The results also showed that human service organizations (elderly services and children's services) were the most likely to be involved in policy advocacy and lobbying (Salamon & Geller, 2008).

Factors that influence policy advocacy participation. Various factors believed to influence the policy advocacy behavior of NPOs have been considered in the literature. Although, results from these analyses have been mixed, helpful insights have been provided as an understanding of advocacy participation is sought. As with other research mentioned, studies only addressed one aspect of advocacy, and in most cases, they addressed the advocacy of NPOs, not specifically human service organizations. Where possible, conclusions that specifically apply to human services are noted.

Funding and resources. The funding of NPOs is an issue widely discussed in the literature. Studies have sought to determine how foundation funding, government contracts, and individual donations influence the behavior of these organizations. Clearly, this issue affects the resources available to organizations, and the decisions they make concerning services and other activities. Regarding policy advocacy, some research has explored the influence of government funding on the behavior of organizations. Additionally, some literature was found regarding the resources made available for advocacy, and resources needed to do effective advocacy.

Some believe that government funding decreases the level of NPOs advocacy involvement (Alexander et al., 1999; Bass et al., 2007; Donaldson, 2007). Among the reasons given for this assertion is the fear that organizations may lose funding if they are perceived as challenging the hand providing their sustenance (Alexander et al., 1999; Bass et al., 2007; Donaldson, 2007). Some studies have found support for this assertion. For example, a study including 239 nonprofits in Ohio found that diminishing of their advocacy capacity was largely seen in the organizations' reluctance to speak freely about the impact of policies on clients and services (Alexander et al., 1999). Similarly, Schmid et al. (2008), found the level of dependence on government funding had a negative effect on policy advocacy. Bass and colleagues (2007) also found that as government funding increased, it became a larger barrier for the organizations' advocacy activities. Respondents mentioned fear of retribution from the government as a reason not to advocate. They also noted their perception that foundations are often unwilling to provide support for advocacy (Bass et al., 2007).

Although this reluctance to advocate was a deterrent, no information was provided as to whether the fear of jeopardizing relationships with the government, a significant funder for many organizations, was based on actual negative consequences experienced or simply perceptions of the organizations' leaders (Alexander et al., 1999). The exception was a study by Berry (2003), in which 18% of the organizations reported audits conducted by the IRS or other federal or state agencies with the intention of "uncovering political expenses and not just a general review of accounting and operations" (p. 72). Of those who reported an audit, all believed they were singled out due to their political activity. Furthermore, they were able to say what "they had, allegedly, done to incite the ire of opponents" (Berry, 2003, p. 73). Additionally, an interview of an IRS official confirmed that if they receive a letter encouraging them to audit a 501(c)3, they seriously consider the request (Berry, 2003).

However, results of studies regarding government funding have been mixed. Some studies have found that government funding has no negative effect on the level of advocacy activities of NPOs (Chavez et al., 2004; Suárez & Hwang, 2008). Suárez and Hwang (2008) found that receiving government grants had no effect on an organization's involvement in lobbying, and if there was a relationship at all, it was a negative relationship. Lobbying was defined broadly as any attempt to influence legislation (Suárez & Hwang, 2008), a concept often used interchangeably with advocacy to refer to the same activities (Bass et al., 2007). On the other hand, Chaves and colleagues (2004), in a study comparing congregations and NPOs, found that organizations receiving government funding were significantly more likely to engage in political activities than those that did not receive government funding. They found no evidence that government funding decreased the political activity of NPOs. Similar results were found by five other studies reviewed. Organizations that received government funding did participate in advocacy activities, and the five studies agreed that the more funding organizations received from the government, the more likely they were to be involved in advocacy (Cruz, 2001; Donaldson, 2007; Mosley, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007; Salamon & Geller, 2008). Although these results are mixed, it is important to point out several limitations. The lack of methodological uniformity, the activities that are included in each study's definition of advocacy, and the various samples utilized, make a fair comparison of these results difficult.

The literature contains some discussion regarding non-government funding and resources, and their impact on NPOs' advocacy. Several authors have found that the lack of sufficient funding is a significant barrier to advocacy participation (Andrews & Edwards, 2004; Bass et al., 2007; Donaldson, 2007; Salamon & Geller, 2008; Schmid et al., 2008). Additionally, it has been stated that diversity in sources of funding is needed to support advocacy staff, which would enhance advocacy participation among human service organizations (Donaldson, 2007; Netting et al., 2007; Reisch, 1990; Salamon & Geller, 2008). Diversified funding was mentioned as a core principle in the development of progressive advocacy programs (Donaldson, 2008).

The restrictions organizations face regarding funding impact their advocacy behavior in several ways. Gormley and Cymrot (2006) found the lack of financial resources prevented organizations from utilizing the full range of advocacy strategies available. Salamon and Geller (2008) found 85% of organizations in their study devoted scarce resources to advocacy and lobbying (less than 2% of their budgets) and only 11% of the organizations had staff dedicated to public policy activities. Nicholson-Crotty, (2007) determined that human service organizations choose advocacy activities based on their capacity and available resources.

As is the case with other human service activities and services, the literature suggests that a key to expanding NPOs involvement in advocacy is increased funding. Salamon and Geller (2008) believe funding to be the one factor that would make the biggest impact on organizations' ability to increase policy advocacy. Furthermore, Reisch (1990) and Crutchfield and Grant (2008) found that effective organizations were more likely to allocate resources to influence legislation and were proactive in legislative activities. "The best nonprofits both advocate and serve…the two activities reinforce each other" (Crutchfield & Grant, 2008, p. 53).

Environment changes and political climate. The external environment has been found to have an effect on the behavior of organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Feeney, 1997). Regarding policy advocacy, some studies have shown that the political climate, or changes in the environment in which NPOs operate, has an impact on their advocacy behavior. One such change noted is the welfare reform of the 1990s. A qualitative study seeking to understand the impact of welfare reform on clients, social workers, and the mission of NPOs found that organization's advocacy behaviors changed as a result of the reforms (Abramovitz, 2005). After the law was implemented, organizations felt compelled to advocate for the rights of the clients they were serving. The increase in advocacy was seen in three levels, case or individual advocacy, self-advocacy (encouraging clients to take control over their lives), and cause advocacy. More than 50% of the agencies in the study reported engaging in the six advocacy activities included in the interview (information dissemination, encouraging attendance to community meetings, informal and education meetings, encouraging participation in rallies and demonstrations, working with advocacy groups, and educating legislators and policymakers) (Abramovitz, 2005).

Another study, specifically addressing policy advocacy among reproductive health providers, found that the political environment, as measured by an index of state-level reproductive health policies, significantly influenced organizations' advocacy behavior (Nicholson-Crotty, 2007). The author stated that an increase in the liberal ideology of a state, increased the likelihood that an organization would make the decision to advocate (Nicholson-Crotty, 2007). Additionally, Donaldson (2007) found that changes in the political environment served as an incentive for advocacy, while Cruz (2001) found that environmental changes affected the advocacy behavior of NPOs by forcing them to focus more on survival strategies than on advocacy. Although organizations continue to advocate, their outcomes may be diminished due to dependence on government funding and fear of losing their 501(c)(3) status (Cruz, 2001).

Another environmental factor that can impact the advocacy behavior of NPOs is marketization. In a study of 124 organizations in Ohio, Alexander and colleagues (1999) found that marketization resulted in a loss of public service character. The impetus to adopt market-oriented strategies and to meet individual clients' needs was seen as limiting to organizations' ability to provide public services such as research, advocacy, and education. They saw this trend as de-politicizing nonprofits. The diminishing of their advocacy capacity was largely seen in organizations' reluctance to speak freely about the impact of policies on clients and services. A fear of jeopardizing relationships with the government, a significant funder for many organizations, was a major deterrent to advocacy (Alexander et al., 1999). The authors summarized their findings by stating that environmental changes pressure NPOs to alter their character, as evidenced by their need to adopt a business orientation. Furthermore, dependence on government resources seemed to be silencing organizations, forcing them to abandon advocacy which has traditionally provided a voice for the most needy in their communities (Alexander et al., 1999).

The mission of organizations. Whether the mission of an organization has an impact on its policy advocacy behavior has been briefly examined in the literature. As with other factors, the results have been mixed. Bass et al., (2007) and Donaldson (2007) both found that for NPOs policy advocacy participation is mission driven. Bass et al., (2007) found that 81% of respondents say that they engage in policy advocacy in order to promote policies that will support their missions. Donaldson (2007) found that for organizations that were the least active in advocacy, not having an explicit advocacy statement in the mission was almost as strong of a barrier to advocating as the lack of resources. However, Mosley (2006) found that having an explicit mission to serve the poor was not a significant predictor of advocacy participation among human service NPOs.

Association or coalition membership and collaboration. NPOs' membership in coalitions or associations, and their level of collaboration with other organizations is one area of policy advocacy research in which results are fairly consistent. Studies have shown that these memberships and collaborations with other organizations increase the level of advocacy involvement of NPOs. Bass et al., (2007) found that organizations belonging to coalitions or associations were the most active in regard to advocacy. Donaldson (2007) found that membership in coalitions was the second most frequently mentioned enhancement of advocacy participation of human service NPOs. Similarly, Mosley (2006) found that collaboration was a significant predictor of advocacy participation; the higher the degree of collaboration, the more likely organizations were to advocate.

Saidel & Harlan (1998) surveyed 400 NPOs in four different service areas: arts and culture, social services, general health, and mental retardation and developmental disabilities (MR/DD) organizations. When looking at patterns of nonprofit governance they included interorganizational associations as a predictor of political advocacy. The authors found that having association with an influential statewide or regional association significantly increased the political advocacy participation of staff and the board of directors.

One study presented some mixed results regarding the impact of coalitions or associations. While Salamon and Geller (2008) found that membership in coalitions and associations played a significant role in the policy advocacy involvement of NPOs, this relationship affected organizations' involvement by either increasing or decreasing participation. The study found that a majority of the organizations in the sample (89%) belonged to a coalition or membership organization. Additionally, size of the organization played a role, with 95% of large organizations and 92% of mid-size organizations reporting membership in a coalition or other organization (Salamon & Geller, 2008). However, regarding engagement in policy advocacy or lobbying, results showed that coalition membership allowed NPOs to let the coalition carry out these responsibilities. This was especially the case regarding lobbying, where 77% of organizations said, the coalition would do it for them. It is important to note that this study specifically asked about lobbying and advocacy as two separate activities. A large number of family and child organizations and elderly service organizations reported association with coalitions as reason for not engaging in advocacy or lobbying. At the same time organizations in this study indicated they do respond to calls for participation from these umbrella coalitions;

80% of respondents said they do heed the association or coalition's request for action at least four times per year, and 40% reported responding once per month (Salamon & Geller, 2008).

Other factors believed to influence advocacy. In addition to the factors mentioned above, a few studies have hypothesized about other issues that can potentially influence the policy advocacy involvement of NPOs. Although there is literature to theoretically support these factors, research to explore them has not been extensive. A more detailed discussion of these factors is provided in the theoretical framework section of this paper.

Among these other factors believed to influence advocacy is the interpretation of the tax law. Bass et al., (2007) found that when organizations were asked the same question using three different terms, advocate, educate, and lobby, responses regarding policy making participation differed. Although some use advocacy and lobbying interchangeably, others prefer to make a distinction between the terms. The study found that those who answered the "lobby" question were twice as likely to answer they never do it, in comparison to those who answered the "advocate" or "educate" questions (Bass et al., 2007). Additionally, the study reported that tax law or IRS regulations were a significant barrier to policy participation (Bass et al., 2007). Similarly, Child and Grønbjerg (2007) found that having 501(c)(3) status decreases the likelihood an organization will advocate by 50% compared to organizations registered under other IRS sections or for those not registered. The authors concluded that this provides some evidence that regulations in the tax code may be a factor that suppresses nonprofit advocacy (Child & Grønbjerg, 2007).

There has been much discussion in the literature regarding the professionalization of NPOs and the professionalization of social work and its influence on advocacy, however, little research is available in this area. One study that addressed the issue concluded that the professionalization of human service organizations' leadership was a predictor of overall advocacy participation and of the utilization of specific advocacy tactics (Mosley, 2006). The author also explored the professionalization of staff and found that it was a significant predictor of the amount of time devoted to policy advocacy. The more professionalized the staff, the more likely they were to invest time in advocacy (Mosley, 2006). This is one of few studies that specifically explored advocacy within human service organizations.

It is important to reiterate that all studies mentioned in this review, specifically addressed policy advocacy. The conclusions to which these researchers arrived cannot be applied to other types of advocacy, such as legal, agency, and community advocacy because no specific questions were asked regarding other types of advocacy. Furthermore, some studies obtained information from national databases which record information reported in tax forms, which is only required when advocacy activities fall in the government definition of lobbying. Limitations of the reliance on tax data to define advocacy have been found in the literature, namely the boundaries it places on the definition of advocacy to the tax code definition (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). It is possible that some of these factors would only influence policy advocacy, but this is not conclusively supported by the literature. Moreover, even when addressing policy advocacy, there is a paucity of detail regarding the level of government NPOs target. There is some evidence in the literature to indicate that access to targets at the federal, state, or local levels of government varies (Berry, 2003). However, only one study addressing this issue was found, and the survey utilized did not ask specific questions about the level of government NPOs targeted (Berry, 2003).

Advocacy Structure and Strategy by Human Service Organizations

It has been established that although research on advocacy is scarce, the majority of studies available include all types of NPOs in their samples. Even for those few studies where human services are examined independently, samples vary. For example, Nicholson-Crotty, (2007) only examined nonprofits providing reproductive health and family planning services, while Mosley (2008) included most human services with 501(c)3 status excluding strictly medical or educational institutions. Donaldson's (2007) sample only included emergency services, substance abuse treatment, and multiple service agencies. Although this poses a challenge for researchers, the literature available, both empirical and conceptual, has provided some insight into the advocacy behavior of human service organizations. The following section will specifically address the structure of advocacy, advocacy targets, and advocacy tactics among human services drawing from both empirical and conceptual literature.

Structure of Advocacy within Organizations

While the value of advocacy within NPOs and the social work profession has been affirmed in the literature (Abramovitz, 1998; Alexander et al., 1999; Anheier, 2005; Austin, 2000; Berry, 2003; Boris, 2006; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Gilbert & Specht, 1976; Hasenfeld, 2010; Reid, 2000; Saidel, 2002; Suárez & Hwang, 2008), little is known about the structure of advocacy within organizations. Questions have been raised regarding planned and structured participation in advocacy versus participation precipitated by crisis (Austin, 2000). Schneider and Lester (2001) state that many organizations do not have advocacy structures and that they often use isolated advocacy efforts executed by the board or administrators, which have little effect. Additionally, Taylor (1991) posits that advocacy will not be successful if it is carried out as an ad hoc activity. She states, “advocacy will not be pursued within an agency when no one is responsible for it” (p. 141).

There is some conceptual discussion in the literature regarding the benefits of having a structured advocacy strategy, a specific staff person dedicated to advocacy, and even advocacy programs (Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996; Netting et al., 2007; Taylor, 1991). Reisch (1990), in one of the few empirical studies found, reviewed the relationship between advocacy and organizational structure in 125 organizations. He found that organizations that were effective in conducting advocacy were more likely to have formal organizational structures, were more likely to use official communication between leadership and staff, and were more likely to allocate resources for advocacy. Furthermore, they were "more likely to have established a structured goal-setting process . . . and to have maintained consistent goals over the past five years” (p. 73).

Berry (2003) stated that if organizations do not see advocacy as a top priority, they may not see the need to build this practice intervention into the “design of the organization” (p. 133). He found that conventional organizations (those that chose to not report lobbying expenditures on their 990 tax return and which comprise 97% of tax-deductible organizations) were less likely to have a formally designated person to do advocacy, compared to H electors. He viewed this difference as an indicator that conventional NPOs do not see advocacy the same way as those organizations that chose to report their lobbying activities to the government. He also stated that conventional organizations that do have someone responsible for advocacy are rewarded with more contact with government through calls and requests for information. He speculated that this contact encourages NPOs to formalize their policy advocacy efforts within the organization.

Although Reisch's (1991) and Berry's (2003) studies demonstrated the value of an advocacy structure, the literature shows the responsibility to do advocacy tends to rest on the executive director (Bass et al., 2007; Salamon & Geller, 2008) pointing to the possible lack of an advocacy program or specific staff person to carry out advocacy responsibilities. However, it would be inappropriate to conclude from findings that showed executive directors carry advocacy responsibilities, that organizations lack an advocacy strategy or that they do not have another person who also has responsibilities for advocacy. Further study in this area is needed in order to make these assertions.

Donaldson (2008) presented six building blocks for developing an advocacy program as well as an example of an organization that developed such a program. Among the building blocks is the need for the full leadership support, diversifying funding for advocacy, and having full-time staff devoted to advocacy. She concluded that more research is needed to assess the factors that relate to the structure of advocacy within human services. Gibelman and Kraft (1996) also argued that advocacy must be incorporated as an ongoing program and service within human service organizations. They viewed advocacy as a "realistic and essential response to the external environment in which human service agencies function" (p. 46) and advised against using advocacy as an ad hoc intervention. Within their recommendations to implement a successful advocacy program were the need for staff that specifically focus on advocacy and the need for leadership and board support. They concluded that an advocacy program can help achieve agency goals, provide opportunities for participation in social justice for all those interested, build cohesion within the organization, and gain social justice victories at various levels.

Taylor (1991), in a conceptual paper argued that human service organizations must have a structure through which advocacy can be processed. If structure is lacking, social change would be merely a conversation topic, and no action would take place. She outlined a model where the organization, with an advocacy director on staff pursues social change. In order for this effort to succeed she argued board, staff, and community support is necessary. She provided various reasons as to why a structured advocacy effort or program is beneficial to an organization. She stated that a structured effort provides complete agency awareness and commitment before an issue is adopted as an advocacy cause; it provides a clear understanding of the advocacy role within the organization; it ensures accountability at every organizational level; and it provides documentation of the work. Taylor's model of advocacy was successfully implemented at a multi-service agency in Pennsylvania for over 30 years, until the merger of the organization and the lack of board commitment to advocacy brought the program to an end (personal communication, P. Wolf, December 1, 2008).

In agreement with Taylor's (1991) model, Netting and colleagues (2007) suggested a formal organizational structure for advocacy is needed in order for it to be a legitimate channel for funding. Additionally, they proposed that social change and advocacy language should be translated into program planning language in order to receive the needed support. They also argued that staff with specific skills is needed in order to carry out the goals of the program.

Some research supports the integration of advocacy and service provision within the same organization. Crutchfield and Grant (2008), in their study of successful NPOs, indentified six practices that help organizations achieve their desired outcomes, among them the integration of direct service and advocacy. Organizations studied, labeled high-impact organizations, provided programs to serve their communities, but at the same time advocated for system change at the local, state, and national levels. A notable finding from this study was that organizations that successfully incorporated advocacy with direct service increased their credibility, their influence, and their funding. The authors concluded that when policy is informed by direct services, organizations are more effective at both micro and macro levels of practice. They also stated that top leaders were highly engaged in policy advocacy, however, no details were provided regarding the structure of advocacy within these organizations (Crutchfield & Grant, 2008).

From this review of the literature, it is reasonable to conclude that further exploration of how organizations manage and structure advocacy is needed. Staff with specific advocacy responsibilities is one indicator of potential formal structures; however, additional areas such as a strategic plan for advocacy approved by leadership and board, as well as the presence of a formal advocacy program should be explored.

Advocacy Targets

A target is defined as “one to be influenced or changed by an action or event” (The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 2000). It was established earlier that much of the advocacy literature addresses one target, policy or legislation. However, advocacy is a broader concept that goes beyond changing or shaping legislation. From this perspective, Ezell (2001) addressed four broad advocacy categories, delineating the targets in each group. In his conceptual framework, he uses the term strategy for these categories; however, this research will argue that the central premise for each strategy is the target of the advocacy or who/what is sought to be influenced or changed with the tactics utilized. Ezell’s (2001) framework will be used to define the targets of advocacy included in this dissertation.

Agency or Administrative advocacy. The first broad category is agency or administrative advocacy; here the goal is to bring about change in programs and agencies. It involves identifying needed changes in program policies (rules and regulations) and practices (procedures, outcomes, etc.), and influencing agencies to make needed modification in these programs in order to benefit clients (Ezell, 2001). Because the goal is not to change a law or policy that needs legislators' intervention, it is possible that organizations do not perceive it as advocacy.

Ezell stated that advocates would make better progress in bringing about change if agency advocacy was used more often (personal communication, March 24, 2010). Berry (2003) agreed by stating that as long as organizations use this type of advocacy they seem to be free from lobbying regulations and should be able to do as much of it as they would like. Additionally, Berry (2003) found that on a five-point scale, conventional organizations used legislative tactics with considerably less frequency than they did administrative or agency advocacy tactics (0.9 versus 1.4). Although he referred to tactics and not targets (the subject of the next section), tactics are used on specific targets, therefore it can be assumed, his conclusions point to organizations going to agencies as targets more frequently than to legislators.

However, these conclusions should be interpreted with caution since the study made no distinction regarding the level of government or type of government agency to which advocacy was directed. The author stated that "reasonable inferences" were made about advocacy targets (Berry, 2003, p. 100) even though no specific questions about agency advocacy were asked.

Some scholars have made a distinction between agency or administrative advocacy and administrators as advocates. In the latter concept, the focus is on the worker and the activities carried out by this individual. Schnider and Lester (2001) defined "internal advocates" as people responsible to make changes in practices or procedures negatively affecting clients. These individuals are usually called client representatives or unit advocates. The focus of analysis in this type of advocacy is on what administrators can do to advocate on behalf of their clients (Ezell, 1991; Richan, 1980; Schnider & Lester, 2001; Villone, 1983). This dissertation, however, focused on the organization as the unit of analysis, not the worker, and on administration as the target of change.

Legal advocacy. The target in legal advocacy is the judicial branch of government (Ezell, 2001). The goal is to influence the implementation of laws or legal rules as they influence clients, as "courts often become the forum for interpreting laws and regulations" (Schnider & Lester, 2001, p. 224). Social work and human services have a historical relationship with the courts. Early reformers such as Florence Kelly enlisted the help of prominent lawyers to argue cases in front of the court (Albert, 2001). Although there were specific cases argued, the ramifications of this early legal advocacy formed the basis for similar efforts years later (Albert, 2001). Madden (2001) argued that if social work "is to be in control of its future, it must become committed to the role of exerting influence on the legal system" (p. 333). Legal advocacy is one of the ways in which this role is fulfilled.

Writings on social work and the law appeared in the 1920s, describing legal-social work relationships (Kopels & Gustavsson, 1996). Works on the interplay between social work and the law, and the need for lawyers and social workers to collaborate in order to help their clients, have continued to be published in both, legal and social science journals (Kopels & Gustavsson, 1996). However, little is known of the role of advocacy and its interplay with the legal system. According to Ezell (personal communication, March 24, 2010) it is very difficult to find research that addresses legal advocacy; most of the information available comes through case law.

Madden (2001) argues that social work has not taken advantage of the opportunities it had to influence the legal system. One reason for the gap in knowledge in this area may be the perception that legal advocacy equals litigation. Ezell (2001) contended that litigation is only one component of legal advocacy; other ways of seeking change at the judicial level that are non-litigious can be utilized.

There are many reasons for which the judicial branch of government can be a target of human service's advocacy. Among them are, the protection of individual rights, seeking to change court rules impacting negatively on clients, to create or improve services, to eliminate practices detrimental to clients, to seek funding for services, to seek clarification of the interpretation or application of laws, or to support or oppose one side in a lawsuit (Ezell, 2001; Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006). Advocacy in the judicial system does not have to equal lawsuits; social workers, who understand human behavior and institutional rules, can play an important role in advising judges and other court officials so needed macro changes can be implemented (Moss & Zurcher, 1984).

It is true however, that a large number of reforms in areas such as mental health, special education, welfare, reproductive rights, and disabilities came about from law suits (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006; Sheafor, Horejsi, & Horejsi, 1994). For example, one of the most well known legal challenges to education was the historical case Brown v. Board of Education, where the practice of separate but equal was struck down by the courts (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006). Similarly, involvement in child welfare, women's issues, aging, and mental health has brought about court challenges where the welfare of these populations has been addressed. Social workers have been involved in many of these cases, either by filing amicus briefs, such as the one filed by the National Association of Social Workers in Bottoms v. Bottoms (444S.Ed.2d.

276), or by taking cases to the courts where the constitutionality of a law is questioned (See *Social Work and the Courts: A casebook* by Pollack, 2003). The treatment of First Nations Peoples in the U.S. has also brought about many court challenges where lands have been returned and restitution has been required to be made to tribes (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006; Brave Heart & Chase, 2005). Although social workers have been involved with this population and this issue is addressed in social work books, actual cases that indicate practitioners' direct involvement with court cases are difficult to find.

Challenging the courts by bringing about lawsuits has been an effective form of advocacy; however, legal action should only be pursued when it is the most appropriate and perhaps only way to address a macro level issue (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006). Other ways of targeting the legal branch of government can also be effective (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006); however, research on these other ways was not found.

Community advocacy. The third broad category outlined by Ezell (2001) is community advocacy, where the target is the community and its assumptions about vulnerable populations. Attitudes and myths often promoted within communities influence access to services for those in need, therefore advocacy is necessary to change mistaken public perceptions in order to change policies or programs that do not meet the needs of clients (Ezell, 2001). Research has shown that media portrayals of crime, poverty, mental illness, and other issues provoke negative assumptions and produce adverse consequences for public opinion and therefore social policy (Altheide & Snow, 1991; Brawley, 1997; Shain & Phillips, 1991, Wahl, 1995). Ezell (2001) contended that if social changes are to occur and programs are to improve, erroneous beliefs and perceptions must be "neutralized, at least, and reversed if possible" (p. 115), which is the goal of community advocacy. As is the case with the previous three targets of advocacy, a few conceptual writings regarding the value of community advocacy are available (Ezell, 2001; Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2006), but research was not found.

Legislative advocacy. The last category in Ezell's (2001) model is legislative advocacy, used when the target of change is a law or government regulation such as state law, local ordinance, municipal code, or school board policy, or when the budget is being reviewed, changed, and approved by the legislative body. It has been established above, that this is the most common target of advocacy by human services. Because the research presented earlier, specifically addresses the legislative or policy advocacy of these organizations, these studies will not be repeated in this section.

Advocacy Tactics

Advocacy tactics are described in the literature as specific techniques used to bring about change; they are the everyday activities utilized by organizations (Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 1998; Schneider & Lester, 2001). Several scholars have tried to conceptualize advocacy into a set of activities (Avner, 2002; Donaldson & Shields, 2009; Mosely, 2006; Ranghelli & Craig, 2009; Salamon & Geller, 2008; Schmid et al., 2008; Schneider & Lester, 2001; Wierner et al., 2002) but just as with an advocacy definition, these conceptualizations are varied. For example, Schneider and Lester (2001) defined three broad categories of tactics, those supporting collaborative strategies, those supporting campaign strategies, and those supporting contest or more confrontational strategies. Others have taken several sources and constructed a list of tactics that fits the research being conducted (i.e. Mosley, 2006). Researchers have yet to define one group of tactics that can encompass all aspects of advocacy; however, sets of activities available tend to have some tactics that are consistently present in all of them, i.e. writing letters to legislators, or meeting with legislators. Obviously, no matter how careful we are, there are limitations to constraining such a varied concept into one set of activities. Reid (2000) stated that when broad conceptualizations of tactics are made, the collection and classification of the data can be difficult; at the same time, when narrower subsets are used, we risk providing an incomplete picture of the larger issue.

In spite of the availability of advocacy tactics typologies, researchers are faced with the problem of these available sets mainly including legislative activities. Ezell (2001) and Schneider and Lester (2001) are two notable exceptions which include tactics that can be used when trying to bring about change beyond the legislative arena. To this extent, this dissertation gathered tactics outlined in existing typologies in an effort to present a comprehensive list that included tactics utilized with each of the targets outlined above. Tactics outlined by Avner (2002), Donaldson (2007), Ezell (2001), Gormley and Cymrot (2006), Mosley (2006), Ranghelli and Craig (2009); Salamon (1995), Schmid et al., (2008), Schneider and Lester (2001), and Wiener et al., (2002) were utilized to compose the list. See appendix B for the survey instrument, which includes advocacy tactics.

Theoretical Framework

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory is one of many theories that seek to explain the behavior of NPOs. A revised form of the traditional or classical approach was first introduced in the 1940s (Feeney, 1997; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Scott, 2001). The theory has a long history and has made inroads in fields such as economics, political science, and sociology (Anheier, 2005; Scott, 2001). Early thinkers such as economists Menger and Mitchell; political scientists Burgess and Willoughby; and sociologists Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, and Berger are credited with contributions to early institutional theory (Scott, 2001). Although they studied social institutions, little attention was paid to organizations at that time. Their focus was on larger institutional structures and on the meanings that emerged from social interaction. The formal study of organizations as an idiosyncratic social form began in the 1930s and it was in the 1940s, that connections between organizations and institutional positions were developed (Scott, 2001).

In the 1970s, two influential articles launched institutional theory into the sociological study of organizations. Meyer and Rowan (1977) and Zucker (1977) built on Durkheim's and Berger and Luckmann's views on institutions to develop this new approach (Scott, 2001). Meyer and Rowan (1977) presented institutions as a composite of cultural rules, and organizations as the result of the augmented rationalization of cultural rules. Zucker (1977) focused on the micro level of institutions, emphasizing the power of cognitive belief to establish behavior. Later, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and Meyer and Scott (1992) developed a macro perspective of institutions.

Researchers have used institutional theory to explain the influence of the environment on organizations' behavior. More specifically, the theory posits that as organizations operate in a particular organizational field, and as they are influenced by similar forces, they tend to go through an isomorphic process and thereby become similar to each other (Anheier, 2005; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identified three processes through which isomorphism occurs; these are coercive (political influences and legitimacy), mimetic (response to an uncertain environment), and normative (related to professionalization) mechanisms, which at times occur simultaneously. This similarity among organizations has various consequences for the entire organizational field to which organizations belong, such as the ability to attract likeminded staff, potential ease in transactions with other like organizations, and to fit categories that will make them eligible for certain types of funding (DiMaggio &

Powell, 1983). However, isomorphism does not equate with efficiency (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1983). It has been argued and demonstrated that organizations conform to environmental expectations in order to increase legitimacy and to increase their ability to survive regardless of the effectiveness of the behavior adopted (Scott, 1987; Zucker, 1983).

The theory emphasizes that organizations are best understood when seen as embedded within communities, political systems, cultures, industries, or fields of organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001). Institutions, defined by theorists as the prevailing social rules, norms, and values in which organizations operate, form and shape organizational actions (Anheier, 2005). The approach suggests that understanding the external environment in which organizations operate is critical to understanding organizational behavior (Feeney, 1997). The theory proposes that institutions constrain and regularize the behavior of organizations, and impose restrictions by defining legal, moral, and cultural boundaries, while at the same time supporting and empowering organizational activities and actions (Anheier, 2005; Scott, 2001).

Additionally, the theory contends that institutionalization is rooted in conformity (Zucker, 1987), where components of formalized structures become widely accepted as appropriate and necessary, and serve as a way of legitimization (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Organizations' long-term survival depends on conformity to norms and acceptable behavior (Anheier, 2005; Covaleski & Dirsmith, 1988; Oliver, 1991). Research has shown that organizations adopt structures or practices if they believe they will give them legitimacy and allow them to present themselves as up-to-date with external expectations (Arnaboldi & Lapsley, 2004; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983).

Institutional Theory and Human Service Organizations

Institutional theory has been widely utilized in the study of human service organizations (Frumkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Galaskiewicz & Bielefeld, 2003). Christensen and Molin (1995) demonstrated that the Danish Red Cross' resiliency could be attributed to its conformity to institutional requirements. D'Aunno, Sutton, and Price (1991), in their study of drug abuse treatments, demonstrated that organizations adapt their practices to institutional demands. Other studies have explored institutional factors within art museums (DiMaggio, 1991), health organizations (Ruef & Scott, 1998; Scott, Ruef, Mendel, & Caronna, 2000), social services (Bielefeld & Corbin, 1996; Bielefeld & Scotch, 1996; Guo & Acar, 2005), and higher education (Brint & Karabel, 1991; Kraatz & Zajac, 1996).

As stated earlier, this theory defines institutions as the prevailing social rules, norms, and values in which organizations operate, which form and shape organizational actions (Anheier, 2005). These institutions impose restrictions on organizations and are capable of controlling and constraining behavior (Scott, 2001). The theory also acknowledges that a variety of constituents, external mandates, and horizontal and vertical relationships influence organizational behavior (Feeney, 1997). One of the benefits of using institutional theory for the study of human service organizations is its predictive power in explaining behavior (Eisenhardt, 1988; Mosley, 2006; Scott, 2001). Additionally, the theory's premise of conformity to rules and regulations in order to gain legitimacy is believed to be highly applicable to human service organizations (Hasenfeld, 2000; Mosely, 2006).

Several factors, employed as institutional indicators, have been utilized to study organizational behavior; among them formalization, the law, professionalization, funding, and memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies, factors that were explored in this study.

Formalization is seen as an indicator of organizational structure, which reflects the adoption of common practices expected to increase the legitimacy of organizations (Leiter, 2005; Mosley, 2006; Zucker, 1987). Mandates from laws, professional bodies, and funding sources are seen as regulatory factors that constrain and regularize organizational behavior (Scott, 2001). Compliance with the law and with the requirements from funders and professions shows the organization's desire to seek and maintain legitimacy (Frumkin, & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Scott, 2001). Laws, with their set of coercive requirements, have incentives and penalties that affect how organizations are viewed by the larger community, influencing their behavior (Luoma & Goodstein, 1999; Scott, 2001). The same argument has been made for professions and funders, as they are able to exert pressure and have power to regulate organizational behavior (Frumkin, & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Lee & Pennings, 2002; Zilber, 2002).

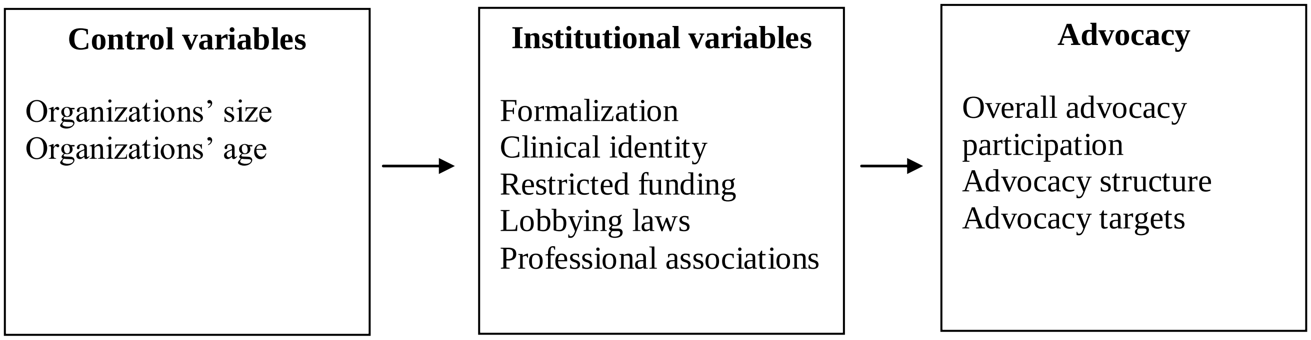
Researchers have also examined associations with accrediting or certifying bodies (i.e. professional associations) and other social networks as indicators of institutionalization. These associations have been described as important regulatory bodies and are believed to influence adoption of internal structures and patterns of decision-making within organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Lee & Pennings, 2002; Ruef & Scott, 1998).

Utilizing institutional theory and the indicators described above, several assumptions can be made regarding advocacy. Although it was established earlier that human service organizations are believed to have social missions that promote justice and equality (Salipante & Golden-Biddle, 1995; Schmid, 2004), and that advocacy is one of their main roles (Frumkin, 2002; Kramer, 1981, 1987; Salamon, 2002), the need for legitimacy in order to survive may lead them to compromise their mission (Minkoff & Powell, 2006). This may result in silencing their voice when it comes to social justice issues; if advocacy is perceived as a risk to survival, organizations could decide to remain silent. Institutionalization brings legitimacy to organizations through conformity, but it could also lead them to be guarded toward activities that could be interpreted as controversial as is the case with advocacy (Mosley, 2006). Furthermore, organizations could potentially place their energy in areas such as formalization of internal structures and compliance with the expectations of the profession (perceived or real), which can lead to neglect of other activities, such as advocacy.

Additionally, drawing on the connection between human services and social work, it is known that the profession has historically sought legitimacy and recognition (Dominelli, 1996; Gibelman, 1999; Haynes & Mickelson, 2000). It could be argued that this search for legitimacy has led human service NPOs to follow the norms of the time by providing the services expected of them by funders and constituents, moving them toward individual practice as the preferred mode of intervention. Doing only what is expected, conveys that organizations are “acting on collectively valued purposes in a proper and adequate manner” (Meyer & Rowan, 1991, p. 50). It could also be argued, as Leiter (2005) does, that environmental expectations can preclude organizations from seeking innovation and experimentation for fear of losing resources. If advocacy is seen as something “different” from the expected, organizations may not be willing to incorporate it as a regular practice strategy.

Following the lead of previous research, this study utilized the above-mentioned institutional indicators to determine if they influence the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs. It is possible that although advocacy is recognized as a valuable intervention, the formalization of an organization, the expectations of the professional world, the interpretation of the law, funding requirements, and associations with regulatory bodies dictate the type of advocacy and the intensity of the advocacy practiced by these organizations. A figured depicting the conceptual model of institutional theory as applied to advocacy is presented next, followed by a more detailed application of the theory to advocacy.

Overall Conceptual Model of Institutional Theory as Applied to Advocacy



Institutionalization

In this study, institutionalization was operationalized by utilizing indicators of the concept found in the literature. Specifically, the level of formalization, clinical identity as an indicator of professionalization, funding, the law, and memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies were explored.

Formalization. Formalization has been associated with bureaucratization and it has been utilized to determine the level of institutionalization in organizations (Leiter, 2005; Mosley, 2006). An organization that is highly formalized is one where policies and procedures, rules, roles, job descriptions, and methods of communication are in writing (Mellor & Mathieu, 1999; Pugh, Hickson, Hinings, & Turner, 1968; Wally & Baum, 1994). For human service organizations, this is usually an expectation of funders in order to be seen as legitimate (Mosley, 2006) and a requirement for accountability (Scott, 2001), therefore a suitable test of organizations' institutionalization.

Formalization, and therefore bureaucratization, is believed to shift leadership focus to organizational maintenance of goals, which can detract from other interventions or practices

(Staggenborg, 1989). Because advocacy is not an established structure within many human services (Schneider and Lester, 2001) and it is often seen as a burden by staff (Berry, 2003) it is possible that the more organizations need to focus on goal maintenance, less time and resources will be invested in it. On the other hand, if advocacy is already an established structure or is seen as an important role of the organization, formalization would provide support for it as a practice intervention that would need to be maintained, or at least for its structure to be maintained. This could lead organizations with higher levels of formalization to actively utilize advocacy as an intervention strategy in order to meet their goals or to maintain an advocacy structure.

Professionalization. Institutional theory identifies professionalization as one of the important sources of institutionalization (Edelman, Abraham, & Erlanger, 1992; Meyer, 1994; Scott, 2001). Scott (2001) stated that professions regulate the behavior of organizations by controlling belief systems and constructing frameworks that define arenas within which they claim jurisdiction. Because in our society professionals are believed to lay claim to formal knowledge, they control beliefs through the generation of ideas—they create guidelines, formulate theories, and devise models that become part of organizational structures (Scott, 2001). Professional ideas are disseminated through formal education, but also through professional networks and the workplace (Edelman et al., 1992). This happens through mediums such as educational instruction, trade associations, professional journals and books, and conferences among others (Edelman, et al., 1992). It could be argued that within human service organizations, the emphasis placed on direct and clinical services has left advocacy as a reactionary intervention only used when issues arise. The professionalization of human services has been addressed in the literature as one of the factors that has moved organizations toward the provision of individual practice and away from policy advocacy or other broad interventions to seek social change (Andrews & Reisch, 2002; Cloward & Epstein, 1965; Riley, 1981; Salamon, 1995). Additionally, research has shown that specific practices, such as therapy, counseling, or psychotherapy, can become institutionalized, displacing other forms of practice from an organization's structure (Zilber, 2002).

Some argue that professionals may disregard organizational goals in order to maintain the status quo and to aid career advancement, which could be a deterrent to advocacy if it is seen as a secondary goal and potentially a burden (Baumgartner & Leech, 1998; Jenkins & Halcli, 1999). Berry (2003) found that advocacy is often seen by nonprofit employees as a burden, especially if it is not perceived as part of the organization's mission and no one is responsible for it. This is important because even if advocacy is not explicit in the mission, NPOs are believed to have an intrinsic social justice mission (Schmid, 2004).

More specifically, the educational background of chief operating officers (CEOs) has been found to influence the adoption of organizational structures or innovations (Fligstein, 1985, 1990; Westphal & Zajac, 1994). Mosley (2006) found that organizations with a CEO holding a masters, professional, or a higher degree were more likely to do legislative advocacy than those who did not. This provides support for the assumption that the CEO's educational background would influence the way the organization views and practices advocacy. Additionally, Berry (2003) found the CEO had the most influence when making decisions about legislative advocacy. One study found that professionalization was not a statistically significant factor in legislative advocacy participation; however, professionalization was defined as the number of paid staff versus the number of volunteers (Leroux and Goerdel, 2009). This conceptualization of professionalization fails to take into account the level of education, the professional identity, and the field in which individuals obtained their training. Additionally, no specific questions were asked regarding the educational background of the executive director.

Funding. Institutional theory sees rules and regulations as factors that influence the behavior of organizations (Scott, 2001). Human service organizations must abide by the regulations prescribed by their funders, therefore, the type of funding received will be utilized as an indicator of institutionalization. As organizations function in their environment they must depend on funders to survive; the more dependent they become on funders that do not support advocacy as a legitimate intervention, the less likely they will be to advocate. Government funding has become a major source of support for NPOs (Chavez et al., 2004; Guo, 2007; Salamon, 1995); therefore, it would be reasonable to argue that funding becomes a regulatory entity that affects the behavior of organizations. Although it has been established that the literature is mixed regarding the influence of government funding on NPOs, Child and Grønbjerg (2007) found that government funding appears to stifle the policy advocacy of these organizations.

The law. The literature shows that the law is a powerful institutional influence on organizational behavior (Edelman, 1992; Frumkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Luoma & Goodstein, 1999; Selznick, 1992; Suchman & Edelman, 1997). It is a set of coercive requirements (Oliver, 1991) but it is also a "broad cultural framework" (Suchman & Edelman, 1997, p. 920) through which organizations react by behaving in a culturally accepted manner (Luoma & Goodstein, 1999). The passage of laws has been demonstrated to be influential in organizations' adoption of structures, practices, and personnel policies, even when the law did not specifically require it (e.g. Dobbin, Sutton, Meyer, & Scott, 1993; Edelman, 1990; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983).

Furthermore, the literature has shown that the interpretation of law, more specifically the lobbying law, does influence at least the legislative advocacy behavior of human services (Berry, 2003). The organization's compliance with the law, or with its interpretation of the law, is an indicator of the desire to seek and maintain legitimacy (Scott, 2001) and therefore an indicator of institutionalization. Edelman and colleagues (1992) found that the interpretation of an ambiguous law regarding firing practices determined its institutionalization within organizations. Additionally, Bass and colleagues (2007) found that legal rules and NPOs leaders' understanding of these rules seemed to be obvious barriers to political participation.

Professional associations. Professional associations are portrayed in the literature as important regulatory systems (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Ruef & Scott, 1998). These organizations provide guidelines for behavior but also provide legitimacy to organizations. Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings (2002) outlined three reasons for the importance of these organizations; first, they provide a medium for organizations to interact and provide "intra-professional agreements over boundaries, membership and behavior" (p. 62); second, they allow and shape interactions with other groups; and third, they play a role in monitoring conformity with expectations. Deephouse (1996) found that banks' association with state regulatory agencies was positively related to the bank's adoption of industry practices. Similarly, Ruef and Scott (1998) found that accreditation of hospitals by professional associations was positively associated with their survival. After reviewing both of these studies, and determining that the influence of these bodies of authority varies, Scott (2001) concluded that organizations that receive support from normative authorities are more likely to survive.

Because professional associations can provide a broad view of the profession and the populations served (Greenwood et al., 2002), and ties to other organizations influence external organizational activities (Mosley, 2006; Staggenborg, 1989), it can be argued that membership will lead human service organizations to be more involved in advocacy. Even if the professional organizations to which one belongs differ, membership can be utilized as a general measure of participation and therefore, a potential institutional factor in the behavior of NPOs.

The previous section sought to outline the institutional indicators that were utilized in this study in order to determine their influence on the advocacy behavior of human service organizations. The following section will briefly discuss organizational variables that can also impact the advocacy behavior of human service organizations.

Organizational Structure

Size and age of an organization are considered important factors when addressing the behavior of organizations (Mosley, 2006). These two variables were used in this study as control variables.

Size. The size of an organization has been found to be an important determinant of an organization's conformity to the external environment (Luoma & Goodstein, 1999). Additionally, it has been found to be a factor in the legislative advocacy of organizations (Donaldson, 2007). The size of an organization points to the capacity of an organization, therefore it is an important factor when addressing advocacy. Bass and colleagues (2007) found that lack of financial resources was a significant barrier for nonprofit advocacy. In this study budget size impacted the likelihood of organizational involvement in legislative advocacy; as annual budgets increased so did policy participation. Furthermore, the larger the organization's annual budget, the more likely the organization was to participate with more frequency (Bass et al., 2007). Other studies agree with the finding that larger organizations are more likely to participate in advocacy (Child & Grønbjerg, 2007; Mosley, 2006). Mosley (2006) found that size, as measured by the organization's expenditures, was a predictor of legislative advocacy participation. She concluded that having resources and the staff capacity to advocate plays a role in how much the organization actually participates in advocacy (Mosely, 2006). Additionally, Minkoff (2002) determined that the size of the organization also seemed to play a role in their survival; among those that provided services and did advocacy (hybrid organizations), organizations with larger staffs had a lower risk of failure. The literature has also shown that larger organizations tend to be more institutionalized and more dependent on government funding (Smith & Lipsky, 1993), making this an appropriate variable to evaluate.

Age. Age is another internal factor that has been found to correlate with policy advocacy (Donaldson, 2007). Some have suggested that age can influence organizational behavior, with younger organizations being less bureaucratized and therefore more willing to advocate (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). However, findings regarding age have been mixed. Some studies found the age of an organization did not affect overall political activity (Child, & Gronbjerg, 2007; Mosely, 2006; Schmid et al., 2008), while Salamon and Geller (2008) found that age correlated positively with involvement in advocacy and lobbying. Because age has been discussed in the literature and it also seems to be an important factor related to institutionalization (Mosley, 2006), it seems appropriate to use it as a control variable.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented an overview of literature relevant to this study. A brief overview of NPOs was provided first followed by a discussion of human service organizations. The definitions of advocacy and factors that have been found to influence the policy advocacy behavior of organizations were discussed. The third section consisted of a discussion of the structure, targets, and tactics of advocacy as they relate to the specific research questions of this study. Finally, institutional theory was addressed as the framework that will inform this study, including institutional factors believed to influence the behavior of organizations. These factors are formalization, professionalization, funding, the law, and professional associations. Two control variables, size and age, were also discussed. The following chapter outlines the methodology that was used in the study, including the definitions of variables and the statistical procedures which provided a means to analyze the data.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore institutional factors that influence the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs, including overall advocacy activity, the structure of advocacy, and the targets of advocacy activities. The central questions that guided this study were: (1) what institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy? (2) what institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs? And (3) what institutional factors predict advocacy targets? This chapter presents the strategies that were used to explore how the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs is affected by institutional factors.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on previous research which has utilized institutional theory as a framework, it was expected that the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs could be explained by the level of institutionalization in the organization. Several factors have been used in the literature to measure institutionalization. Following the direction of previous studies, five aspects of institutionalization (formalization, clinical identity, funding, the law, and memberships in accrediting or certifying bodies) were used to predict the outcome variables. The following research questions and specific hypotheses were tested in this study:

Overall advocacy participation. Research question #1: What institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy?

Hypotheses for question #1

1. Organizations with higher levels of formalization will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.
2. Organizations with leadership who identify as clinicians will have lower levels of overall advocacy participation.
3. Organizations with higher levels of restricted funding will have lower levels of overall advocacy participation.
4. Organizations with greater knowledge regarding lobbying laws will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.
5. Organizations with memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.

Structure of advocacy. Research question #2: What institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs?

Hypotheses for question #2:

1. Organizations that have a higher degree of formalization will be more likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.
2. Organizations with leadership who identify as clinicians will be less likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.
3. Organizations that receive higher levels of restricted funding will be less likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.
4. The more knowledge human service leaders have about the lobbying law, the more likely the organization is to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

5. Organizations with memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies will be more likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

Advocacy targets. Research question #3: What institutional factors predict advocacy targets?

Hypotheses for question #3:

1. Organizations that receive higher percentages of restricted funding will be less likely to be involved in each of the advocacy targets (federal legislative, state legislative, local legislative, agency, legal, and community advocacy).
2. The more knowledge organizations have regarding the lobbying law, the more likely they will be to participate in advocacy.

Study Design

This dissertation is a quantitative exploratory-descriptive study, which is appropriate when little information is available on the topic (Singleton, Straits, Straits, & McAllister, 1988). A cross-sectional design with non-probability sampling was utilized to examine the relationship between institutional factors and the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs. Data were collected through a survey instrument. Cross-sectional designs are utilized to investigate an issue by obtaining responses from a sample at one point in time (Fink, 2003a; Schutt, 2006). This design is appropriate when no intervention or treatment is applied (Rubin & Babbie, 2008), as was the case in this study. Although not an experimental design, it does allow for the testing of associations between variables and the testing of hypotheses (Singleton et al., 1988).

Sampling Method and Procedure

To investigate the factors that influence the advocacy behavior of human service organizations, this study surveyed a selected group of NPOs that provide services to the

Northeast Georgia region. A convenience or availability sample was employed; this type of sampling is utilized when the researcher relies on subjects available to participate in the research (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). This is a commonly used sampling technique in social research because it is less expensive and, as the name suggests, is more accessible to researchers (Rubin & Babbie, 2008; Schutt, 2006; Singleton et al., 1988). Because the literature has shown that NPO's executive directors are often involved in advocacy (Berry, 2003; Bass et al., 2007), the survey was sent to the executive directors of the selected organizations.

After discussing the potential areas that could be included in this study with the committee chair and the director of Community Connections, the Northeast Georgia region was selected as a sampling frame. The 211 directory of Northeast Georgia was utilized to obtain the sample for the study. This directory was obtained through Community Connections of Northeast Georgia, the organization that compiles and maintains the database. This organization has been providing information and referral services to the community since 1984 and its service area includes 15 counties in the Northeast Georgia region (J. Meehan, personal communication, April, 28, 2010). The counties are Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Franklin, Greene, Hart, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Stephens, and Walton. They maintain a database of 2,400 programs, which contains an array of organizations, including animal rescue services, human services, educational institutions, and health providers, among others. Because only those organizations that fit the definition of human services were studied, the survey was sent only to the organizations that met the criteria. Organizations did not have to have a physical office in the Northeast Georgia region, but needed to provide services in the area. The survey was sent electronically to each organization; a list of the electronic mail addresses was obtained from Community Connections. Phone calls were made to organizations that did not list an electronic address in the directory in order to obtain the executive director's address.

When Community Connections was launched, the decision was made to utilize the already established division of the state defined by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, formerly known as the Regional Development Center (J. Meehan, personal communication, April 28, 2010). Currently the state of Georgia has 12 state sanctioned regional commissions, of which Northeast Georgia is one. Regions were originally established as planning and development areas and until 2009, the state was composed of 16 regions. In 2009, a service delivery task force recommended that regions become more uniform, with each including a minimum of 300,000 people and one metropolitan area. The state legislature adopted this recommendation and several regions merged, leaving 12 regions in the state. The Northeast Georgia region was not changed (J. Dove, personal communication, June 18, 2010).

According to J. Dove, executive director of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (personal communication, June 18, 2010), the 12 counties that compose the region fit together because of their geographic location, similar topography, economics, their proximity to Athens, and their proven ability to work together. Although the counties are different, ranging from rural areas to metropolitan areas, they have been able to work together on infrastructure issues, such as water supply, solid waste, transportation, managing population growth, industry, and utilities. Because this was an existing grouping already created by the state, Community Connections simply followed the Regional Commission's geographic area for their 211 information and referral services. However, due to funding of the 211 system through the United Way, Community Connections added three counties to their service area, Franklin, Hart, and Stevens. These three counties were outside of the other 211 regions' service area, and Community

Connections was asked to cover them and received funding to do so (J. Meehan, personal communication, April 28, 2010).

Sampling criteria. Human service NPOs were defined as organizations with 501(c)3 status that provide assistance to individuals and families in order to promote individual, social, economic, and psychological well being (Mosley, 2010; Salamon, 1999). This definition includes a wide array of services, often provided by social workers. Although this study did not categorize organizations by using the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE), its classification of organizations is useful in identifying specific services. The NTEE divides NPOs into 10 broad categories, among them the human services grouping; organizations from this grouping were used to select the sample. These include the following subgroups, (F) Mental Health, Substance Abuse Programs, (I) Crime & Legal, (J) Employment, (K) Food, Agriculture & Nutrition, (L) Housing, (M) Public Safety, Disaster Services, (O) Youth Development, and (P) Human Services (2009, Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics, retrieved from http://nccs.urban.org/classification/NTEE.cfm) . Each letter in parenthesis denotes the category given to the specific area.

The subcategory of human services is included because under the NTEE classification system, it is broad category Roman Numeral V, which contains subcategory P by the same name. Organizations in this subcategory include those that are not part of the other groupings; these include adoption, family-based services, parenting education, programs for single parents, financial counseling, among others. Following previous work done on the behavior of human services (Grønbjerg & Smith, 1999; Mosley, 2010; Salamon, 1995), this study excluded strictly educational and medical organizations.

The original sample list consisted of 439 organizations which according to the directory fit the criteria for the study. Of these organizations, 309 electronic mail addresses were obtained to which the initial survey was sent. For the additional 130, an e-mail address was not provided or their fit to the criteria was in question. As a result, additional information was sought on the 130 organizations through phone calls and their web pages. Phone contact was made with 88 nonprofits, from which 36 additional electronic mail addresses were obtained and to which the survey was sent; this resulted in a total of 345 surveys sent. Addresses for the other 52 (of the 88) were not obtained mainly due to the inability to reach someone at the organization by phone (44 organizations were not reached). Three organizations did not want to provide an address and five had a number listed that was disconnected or the number provided was a fax. The other 42 (of the 130) organizations did not meet the criteria (no longer provided services in the area, were government organizations listed as nonprofits, or were duplicate programs listed as separate organizations). The contact made by phone to obtain an electronic mail address was approved in the original IRB request.

Two weeks after the original survey was sent by Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia, a reminder was sent to the organizations in order to solicit additional responses. Three weeks later, a third reminder was sent. Because the number of responses was low (67 responses), permission was granted by the IRB to contact organizations and ask if they would be willing to do the survey by phone. A total of 189 organizations were contacted by phone, of which 55 agreed to do the survey but requested the survey be sent by electronic mail. The same link originally sent to the organization was resent with a unique password to access the survey. Of those who agreed to do the survey, 31 accessed the survey. A total of 98 organizations accessed the survey, a 28.4% response rate. However, not all responses were usable; after the elimination of cases that were mostly incomplete and those that after further review did not meet the survey's criteria (i.e. not a 501(c)3 organization or not a service provider), the final sample consisted of 72 cases or a 20.9% response.

Of the 134 organizations that did not access the survey, the majority (89 calls) were not reached. Calls went directly to voice mail or the CEO was not available. Additionally, eight organizations said they did not want to complete the survey, 18 did not answer the phone, 11 numbers were disconnected, four said they were closing their doors, two had wrong numbers listed, one stated that they were not a nonprofit, and one was a duplicate of the same organizations with a listing of one of its programs as a separate organization.

There has been much discussion in the literature regarding an appropriate sample size in research. Although a large sample size is often preferable, some have suggested that when utilizing multiple regression, 10 cases per predictor and control variable allows for an acceptable analysis (Concato, Feinstein, & Holford, 1993). In this study, there were five predictor variables and two control variables; following this guideline a minimum of 70 cases was needed to obtain sufficient data to analyze the results.

As an incentive for participation and following a suggestion from the Community Connections director, organizations that participated and that provided their contact information will be invited to a free advocacy workshop that will be conducted by the researcher in the spring or summer or 2011 (personal communication, J. Meehan, April 28, 2010). Results of the study will be provided to participants, as well as additional information on what organizations are able to do regarding advocacy. The results of this study will be used to prepare the workshop.

Data Collection

Data were collected through an electronic survey (see appendix B). Survey research is commonly used in the social sciences (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). It accounts for more than one third of the research published in sociology, economics, and social psychology (Schutt, 2006). This is a common form of collecting data because of its versatility in helping the researcher obtain information that can increase understanding of virtually any social issue (Rubin, & Babbie, 2008; Schutt, 2006). Additionally, it is an efficient way of collecting data that allows for a larger number of subjects to be involved, while collecting data at a low cost and relatively quickly (Schutt, 2006).

Once approval was obtained from the University of Georgia's (UGA) Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Survey Research Center at UGA assisted with the data collection. The Center sent the survey to the selected organizations, collected the raw data, and provided the responses in a file format compatible with the Predictive Analytics SoftWare (PASW), formerly known as SPSS. They formatted the survey to fit their software requirements; however, the researcher designed the survey. In addition to sending the original survey, they sent two reminders in an effort to obtain an acceptable response rate.

Data Measures

The unit of analysis for this study was the organization; the study analyzed human service organizations with a 501(c)(3) status, providing services in the local communities.

In order to determine if the institutionalization of human service NPOs has affected the advocacy participation of these organizations several models were tested. In order to facilitate the understanding of the research questions, a list of the predictor variables with the operational definitions is presented next.

Control Variables

The two control variables size and age of the organization, were defined as follows:

Size of organization. The size of the organizations was measured by the total budget. This variable was measured as a continuous variable.

Age of organization. Age was operationalized as the number of years the organization has been in existence.

Predictor Variables

Formalization. In this study, formalization was measured by utilizing a five-item scale constructed for a study of the policy advocacy of human service NPOs (Mosley, 2010). The items in Mosley's (2010) scale are consistent with definitions of formalization and with other scales present in the literature which measure this concept (House & Rizzo, 1972; John & Martin, 1984; Olson, Walker, & Ruekert, 1995; Organ & Green, 1981; Podsakoff, Williams, & Todor, 1986; Pugh et al., 1968; Vorhies & Morgan, 2003). The scale was developed through factor analysis where a single factor was dominant, explaining 78% of the variance; Cronbach's alpha was .74. Each item is scored as a yes or no. Organizations were given one point for each element of formalization to which they responded with yes. The scale's score ranges from 0 to 5 and the total number of positive responses was used to score the scale. Organizations with a higher score were considered to be more formalized (Mosley, 2010). An example of one of the five items on the scale is, does your organization have formal job descriptions for each paid staff position? (Question 16a)

Clinical identity. Because the assumption in this study is that the clinical emphasis of social work as a profession, and the tendency of human services to provide clinical services have influenced organization's advocacy participation, the clinical identity of leadership was measured. This was accomplished by asking, "Do you professionally identify as a clinician?" Other studies, namely Mosley (2006), have used the possession of an advanced degree to measure this variable. This was not appropriate for this study as the argument is not that a professional degree diminishes the value of advocacy, but instead that the emphasis on clinical practice is what diminishes advocacy participation.

Restricted funding. The percentage of revenue received by the organization, which can only be utilized for activities or services specified by the funder was used to measure this variable. These are funds different from those that allow the organization to make independent decisions regarding expenses, such as donations from individual donors. This was a percentage of the total organization's revenue.

Knowledge of the law. Because the law is considered a major institutional factor that influences the behavior of organizations (Edelman, 1992; Frumkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004; Luoma & Goodstein, 1999; Selznick, 1992; Scott, 2001; Suchman & Edelman, 1997), this study measured the knowledge executive directors have regarding lobbying. This was done because often lobbying and advocacy are believed to be the same concept; the literature has shown there is confusion regarding what organizations can and cannot do when it comes to their influence on legislation or implementation of regulations (Berry, 2003; Bass et al., 2007).

In a national study that measured the impact of the tax law on legislative advocacy, Berry and colleagues (2003) developed an eight-item quiz where they asked about organizational leaders' understanding of the law. Permission was obtained from Berry (personal communication, J. Berry, April 6, 2010) to utilize these items in this question. In this study, the number of correct answers was utilized for the analysis.

Professional associations. This variable was measured by asking organizations if they belong to any professional associations or coalitions. This included, but was not be limited to, accrediting organizations, membership associations such as the Alliance for Children and Families or other state or national organizations.

Outcome Variables

Three research questions were utilized in this study, overall advocacy participation, structure of advocacy within the organization, and advocacy targets. This yielded a total of eight outcome variables, where the targets research question was divided into legislative targets at three levels (federal, state, and local), agency, legal, and community.

Overall advocacy participation. Following previous research (Chaves et al., 2004; Mosley, 2006) participation in advocacy was operationalized as a dichotomous variable. Organizations were asked “Is your organization involved in advocating or promoting solutions for broad scale social problems evident in your community, and in the interest of a certain group of groups of people?” Respondents were asked to check a yes or no as a response to this question.

Structure of advocacy. Because of the paucity of research in this area, the literature was used to operationalize advocacy structure as having one or more of these items: an advocacy program, a person in charge of advocacy, a formalized advocacy strategy approved by the board of directors, or advocacy as part of its mission. Organizations with one of these items were considered to have an advocacy structure. This variable was measured dichotomously, with organizations that have one or more of the three items coded as yes and those with none of them, coded as no.

Advocacy Targets. Using the dictionary definition of target, this study operationalized this concept as one to be influenced or changed (The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 2000). This study utilized Ezell's (2001) framework to define four specific targets. Although Ezell (2001) used his model to define types of advocacy, this study argued that the central premise for each type is the target of the advocacy or who/what is sought to be influenced or changed with the tactics utilized. The advocacy targets were defined as follows:

- Legislators or elected officials are the target when a law or government regulation is sought to be changed or influenced (legislative advocacy). These include but are not limited to state law, local ordinance, municipal code, school board policy, or a budget that is reviewed, changed, and approved by the legislative body. This target can be located at the federal, state, or local levels of government and is comprised of elected officials to government posts.
- Agencies or administrators (agency advocacy) are the target when advocacy is aimed at changes in programs and agencies. It involves identifying needed changes in program policies (rules and regulations) and practices (procedures, outcomes, etc.) and influencing agencies to make needed modification in these programs in order to benefit clients (Ezell, 2001). Individuals targeted are not elected government officials.
- The judicial branch of government is the target when the goal is to influence the implementation of laws or legal rules as they influence clients.
- The community is the target when attitudes and assumptions about vulnerable populations are the locus of change (community advocacy).

Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze data. PASW (or SPSS) version 18.0 was utilized to carry out the analysis. Descriptive statistics, which allow for the assessment of how variables of interest are distributed in the sample, were conducted. These included distributions and measures of central tendency and dispersion as appropriate for the type of variable addressed. Several inferential statistics were utilized to test the proposed hypotheses.

Logistic Regression Analysis

Two of the outcome variables in this study are binary variables with responses of yes or no, something common in social and behavioral research (Pedhazur, 1997). In situations where the dependent variable is binary, logistic regression is considered the appropriate analysis (Hosmer & Lemshow, 2000). This is the case because the properties of a binary outcome variable violate the assumptions needed to do linear regression (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Pedhazur, 1997).

Following the recommendation of a statistician at the Statistical Consulting Center at the University of Georgia, each predictor variable was tested individually before making the decision to add it to the full model (personal communication, J. Reeves, February 23, 2011). Using PASW, a logistic regression was done to analyze the first research question, “what institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy?”, and the second research question, “what institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs?” Although the second research question examines four aspects of advocacy structure, (advocacy program, specific staff person to do advocacy, a formalized advocacy strategy, and advocacy as part of its mission), this variable was measured as a binary outcome. Organizations that said yes to any of the four aspects were coded as a having an advocacy structure and those that said no to all components were coded as having no advocacy structure.

Multiple Regression Analysis

In order to answer research question three, multiple regression analysis was utilized. This analysis is considered flexible and appropriate when a relationship is expected between factors (independent variables) and outcomes (dependent variables) (Cohen et al., 2003). Additionally, it allows for hypothesis testing, and it is widely used in social science research (Cohen et al., 2003; Pedhazur, 1997). Multiple regression should be driven by a theoretical framework (Cohen et al., 2003), which is the case in this study.

The aim is to determine the predictability of the variables for each outcome. Outcome variables were treated as individual models in which all the appropriate predictors were included. The goal was to determine if any of the indicators employed to define institutionalization predicted the targets to which organizations go in order to advocate.

Validity and Reliability

One of the issues when conducting any type of research is the amount of error present in the data collected. Although this is inevitable, the literature does suggest ways in which the amount of error in survey research can be decreased. This section will focus on ways in which validity and reliability were addressed in this study.

Validity

Validity refers to the ability of a measurement instrument to accurately reflect the concepts being considered (Fink, 2003b; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Content validity, one of the common types of validity discussed in the literature, refers to the instrument's ability to adequately assess the skills or characteristics it seeks to measure (Fink, 2003b). This type of validity is often based on established models or theoretical frameworks that guide the researcher in defining the concepts addressed in the study. In this study, concepts were derived from the institutional theory literature in order to define institutional factors believed to influence the behavior of NPOs. Furthermore, concepts from the advocacy literature were utilized to develop items that can answer the proposed research questions. Additionally, the feedback of faculty and individuals in the field available to review the survey instrument was obtained. This content check strengthened the validity of the study.

Another way of enhancing validity, which this study utilized, is by carefully examining the instrument's questions. Face validity "refers to how a measure appears on the surface" (Fink, 2003b, p. 51). Three individuals with no knowledge of the subject matter were asked to review the instrument in an attempt to increase face validity. This allowed examinations of the items to determine if the questions were clear. Additionally, review by those with knowledge of human service organizations and to some extent advocacy, helped determine if the needed questions to inform the study were asked in the survey.

External validity. External validity refers to the generalizability of a study's findings (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). One of the risks of utilizing a convenience sample, as was done in this study, is the sacrifice of the ability to generalize beyond the sample obtained. However, because a survey allows for a larger number of responses, this survey allowed at least for generalization to human service organizations in the Northeast Georgia region. Caution should be used when citing the results of the study to describe organizations not included in the sample.

Internal validity. Because this study utilized a cross-sectional design, obtained the data through a survey instrument, and more importantly did not seek to make causal inferences, internal validity was not addressed. According to Rubin and Babbie (2008), internal validity refers to ability to accurately determine if one variable is or is not the cause of another variable. This study sought to determine relationships between variables, but not to determine if the predictor variables caused the outcome variables to occur.

Reliability

Reliability refers to an instrument's ability to obtain the same result each time it is administered (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). In survey research, reliability is a bit clearer than validity; however, it can still be an issue of concern, especially because many recommendations for increasing it include using the instrument more than once with the same sample. In spite of the time and resource restrictions affecting this study, and its inability to use repeated administration to test the reliability of the study, some suggestions provided in the literature helped increase the reliability of the survey.

One way to increase a survey's reliability is by paying close attention to the wording of the questions to diminish the responder's unreliability (Fink, 2003b; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). To this regard, the survey used in this study was worded with language commonly used in the literature and by human service organizations. Feedback on the language of the survey was sought from the dissertation committee, the Survey Research Center, and three individuals with knowledge of the human service field.

Additionally, questions were aimed at requesting information that is factual, such as the organization's budget, educational background of the executive director, number of full-time staff, advocacy activities which have been conducted by the organizations, and what they know about the lobbying law. The survey avoided questions that required the assessment of attitudes or demeanors. However, it is important to recognize that even in this case, where information perceived by the researcher as factual was sought, the threat of recalling facts and events incorrectly was present. This is, nonetheless, a risk every researcher faces regardless of the topic and type of research.

Another suggested way to increase reliability of a survey is by using a sample that will be able to provide the information being sought with the instrument; in other words, using a sample that is knowledgeable of the issue at hand (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). This survey was sent specifically to executive directors, because they were expected to have knowledge of the issues represented in each question. Equally important in increasing the reliability of a survey is how it is administered. In order to increase reliability in this regard, the survey was administered through the Survey Research Center of the University of Georgia. The Center was established in 1981 as a multidisciplinary aide to the research and teaching community in Athens and other areas of Georgia. Staff have expertise in many areas of research, including survey development, web-based surveys, and statistical analysis of survey data (Survey Research Center, retrieved 5/15/2010, http://src.uga.edu/capabilities.html). Although the Center was not involved in developing the instrument, it was consulted about the survey design and wording of the questions. This was done in an effort to increase the reliability of the instrument and to ensure the survey is compatible with the Center's survey software.

The survey contains one newly developed scale regarding targets of organizations' advocacy efforts. In an effort to ensure internal consistency and because this scale has never been tested before, a Cronbach's Coefficient alpha test was conducted. The results of the reliability coefficients are reported in the next section.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the study's design, sample, data collection methods, data analysis, and validity and reliability. This quantitative, cross-sectional study allowed for the collection of data that can inform and increase understanding of the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs. Because much of the literature only focuses on one area of advocacy (legislative), this study sought to add to current knowledge by exploring three additional areas of advocacy (agency, legal, and community).

CHAPTER 4

Results

This chapter contains five sections. The first section presents a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the organizations in the sample. The second section reports the logistic regression results on overall advocacy participation. The third section presents the logistic regression results on the structure of advocacy. The fourth section reports the multiple regression analyses conducted on advocacy targets. The last section presents the hypotheses outlined in chapter three with the respective results.

Descriptive Analysis

Sample characteristics. Table 4.1 presents the characteristics of the NPOs in the study. As stated in chapter three, of 98 responses obtained, 72 cases were used for the study, a 20.9% response. The majority (87.5%) of NPOs were non-faith based organizations. The average age of the organizations, measured as the number of years in operation, was 32 (*SD* = 32.5) with a range of one year to 187 years. Over half (57%) of the organizations had budgets of less than $500,000; 22.2% had budgets between $500,001 and $3,000,000; and 20.8% had budgets above $3,000,001. The average total budget was $2,144,288 (*SD* = 3796947). Budgets ranged from $11,980 to $15,000,000. Additionally, organizations were asked about their sources of funding. These included, government, individual donors, fees for service, fundraising events, and an other category. For this sample (*N* = 68), government provided the largest percentage of funding to the organizations (*M* = 32.5; *SD* = 32.8), with two (3.1%) organizations receiving as much as 95% of their income from this source and 19 (29.7%) receiving no government funding. Fundraising events provided the lowest percentage of the organizations' income (*M* = 11.5; *SD* = 16), with one (1.6%) organization receiving as much as 80% of its income from these events, and 15 (23%) receiving no income from fundraising events.

The average number (*N* = 68) of full-time staff considered professionals was 10.5 (*SD* = 17.3) and of part-time professional was 4.3 (*SD* = 11.4). An average of 7.8 (*SD* = 11.6) staff had bachelor degrees, 3 (*SD* = 4.6) had master degrees, and 1.2 (*SD* = 1.7) had social work degrees (*N* = 67). The percentage of executive directors with a master's degree was the same as those with a bachelor's degree (41.2%). Three organizations (4.4%) said the executive director had no degree, and two (2.9%) reported the executive director had a high school diploma. Additionally, the majority (84.1%) of executive directors did not have a social work degree (*N* = 68).

The fields in which the college degrees were granted were varied. Some had degrees in education, child and family development, counseling, and social work, while others had degrees in business administration, health care management, nursing, law, music, and even zoology. Although the goal was to have executive directors complete the survey, nearly one quarter (22.2%) of those who completed it was comprised of someone other than the executive director. They were board members (2.8%), staff (16.7%), volunteers (1.4%), and other (1.3%).

The organizations in this study represented a variety of services provided by human service NPOs. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the general service categories. Among the most common were youth development, child welfare, housing, basic assistance, services for individuals with disabilities, and family and children services.

Table 4.1

Nonprofit Organizations' Characteristics (N = 72)

Variable	Value	Number (%)	Mean (*SD*)
Type of NPO	Non-faith-based	63 (87.5%)	
	Faith-based	9 (12.5%)	
Age of organization (years in operation)	Range 1-187		32.1 (32.5)
Total annual budget (size)	Range $11,980 - $ 15,000,000		$2,144,288 (3796947)
Budget categories			
	Small < $500,000	41 (57%)	
	Medium $500,001 - $3,000,000	16 (22.2%)	
	Large > $3,000,001	15 (20.8%)	
*Income source (percentage of total income)	Government		32.5 (32.8)
	Individual donors		21.8 (26.1)
	Fees		13.8 (25.7)
	Fundraising events		11.5 (16.0)
	Other		20.4 (21.9)
*Number of staff (professionals only)	Full-time professionals		10.5 (17.3)
	Part-time professionals		4.3 (11.4)
*Educational background of executive director	Doctorate	3 (4.4%)	
	JD	3 (4.4%)	
	Masters	28 (41.2%)	
	Bachelors	28 (41.2%)	
	Associates	1 (1.5%)	
	High school	2 (2.9%)	
	No degree	3 (4.4%)	
*Social work education of executive director	Social work degree	11 (15.9%)	
	None social work degree	58 (84.1%)	

Note: * *n* = 68

Table 4.2

General Categories of Services Provided (N = 68)

Service Category	Number	Percent
Youth development	10	14.7
Basic assistance	8	11.8
Housing and homeless prevention	8	11.8
Child welfare	7	10.3
Disability services	6	8.8
Family and children services	5	7.4
Skill/job development	5	7.4
Abuse prevention	4	5.9
Food provision	4	5.9
Elder services	3	4.3
Legal services	2	2.9
Mental health services	2	2.9
Referrals	2	2.9
Drug and alcohol rehabilitation	1	1.5
Transportation	1	1.5

Predictor variables' characteristics. Five predictor variables were measured in the study, formalization, clinical identity, percentage of restricted funding, knowledge of the lobbying law, and membership in associations or coalitions. Table 4.3 presents the descriptive statistics for these variables.

Formalization was measured with a self-rated scale with values ranging from 0 to 5. Organizations with a higher total score were considered more formalized (Mosley, 2010). The mean for formalization was 4.2 (*SD* = 1.2), with 76% of organizations having a score of four or above demonstrating that organizations were highly formalized.

Clinical identity was measured by asking if the individual completing the survey identified him or herself as a clinician. The majority (88.9%) of respondents said they did not identify as a clinician and 83.3% reported they did not have a professional license. Of the 12 (16.7%) individuals who reported type of licensure, four said they had a license in social work.

In addition to inquiring about the total budget of the organization, participants were asked to report the percentage of restricted and unrestricted funding they receive. The mean of the percentage of restricted funding was 45% (*SD* = 33.3) and the mean of unrestricted funding was 55% (*SD* = 35.3).

In order to assess the participants' knowledge of the lobbying law, they were asked to answer eight questions about what their organizations can or cannot do regarding lobbying. The answers were binary as the questions had a correct answer. This variable was measured as the total number of correct answers, with a range between 0 and 8; the higher the score, the higher the knowledge regarding the lobbying law. The mean score for the sample was 4.3 (*SD* = 2.5), with 9.7% of respondents answering all questions correctly. Half (50%) of the sample answered five or more questions correctly. The largest percentage of responses were clustered on two opposing ends of the scale, with 18% answering two questions correctly and 21% answering six questions correctly. The range of responses was between zero (9.7%) and eight (9.7%).

The last predictor variable in this study was a binary variable asking if organizations have membership in associations or coalitions. Over half (51%) of the respondents did not answer this question. Of those who answered, 46% said they do belong to an association or coalition and 3% said they do not belong to an association. Because of the low response in this variable and because it would have been difficult to predict what the response would have been, the decision was made to exclude it from the analysis.

Table 4.3

Predictor Variables' Descriptive Statistics (N = 72)

Variable	Value	Number (%)	Mean (SD)
Formalization	Range: 0 - 5		4.2 (1.2)
Clinical identity	Yes	8 (11.1%)	
	No	64 (88.9%)	
Funding	Restricted		45 (33.3)
	Unrestricted		55 (33.3)
Knowledge of the law	Range: 0 - 8		4.3 (2.5)
Membership in associations	Yes	33 (46%)	
	No	2 (3%)	
	Missing	37 (51%)	

Outcome variables' characteristics. Three research questions guided this study, which related to advocacy participation, advocacy structure, and advocacy targets. From those research questions, eight outcome variables were employed, overall advocacy participation, structure of advocacy, and six targets of advocacy (federal, state, and local legislative advocacy, agency advocacy, legal advocacy, and community advocacy). Table 4.4 presents the descriptive statistics for these variables.

Overall advocacy participation was measured as a binary variable by asking organizations if they were involved in advocating or promoting solutions for broad scale social problems (yes or no response). The majority (65%) of organizations responded that they are involved in advocacy. Although not used in the analysis, organizations were also asked to report on the effectiveness of their advocacy efforts. One question asked them to rate their effectiveness from zero to four, with zero representing no effectiveness and a four representing high effectiveness. The majority (51.4%) of the respondents said they believe their advocacy efforts to be either highly or very highly effective (selecting a three or four on the scale). One quarter (25%) reported low effectiveness (selecting a one or a two on the scale). A small group (5.6%) said they viewed their advocacy efforts as ineffective and the rest (18%) said they were not involved in advocacy; a higher percentage (35%) said they were not involved in advocacy when the question about advocacy participation was asked as a yes or no response.

The structure of advocacy was measured by asking if the organization had at least one of four components described in the literature as indicators that advocacy is part of the overall organization's composition. The components included an advocacy program, a specific staff person in charge of advocacy, a formalized advocacy strategy approved by the board, and advocacy as part of the organization's mission. The majority (65%) of the organizations said they had at least one of the indicators present in the organization. When examining the indicators individually, 40% of the organizations said they had an advocacy program, 32% reported having a specific staff person in charge of advocacy, 31% had a formalized advocacy strategy approved by the board, and 52% said they had advocacy as part of their mission. Additionally, 35% did not have advocacy as part of the organizations' structure.

Advocacy targets were measured through a scale that asked the level of participation in specific activities. The targets included legislative officials, agency administrators, legal officials (the courts), and the community; the legislative target was divided into federal, state, and local levels. The activities for the scales were selected based on literature that indicates they are used when trying to reach a specific target. The scales were standardized so the values analyzed ranged from zero to four. Each legislative target was analyzed separately.

Two of the respondents did not answer any questions regarding the advocacy targets. Because none of the items was answered, these two cases were excluded from the analyses of the target variables.

The scales used to measure the targets were allowed for the determination of the level of advocacy participation (none, extremely low, low, medium, and high) by human service NPOs. Table 4.5 depicts the sample's amount of advocacy directed toward each target. Additionally, Table 4.6 represents the number of tactics or activities used by organizations to go to each target.

Table 4.4

Outcome Variables Descriptive Statistics (N = 72)

Variable	Value	Number (%)	Mean (SD)
Overall advocacy participation	Yes	47 (65%)	
	No	25 (35%)	
Structure of advocacy	Yes	47 (65%)	
	No	25 (35%)	
*Advocacy targets:	Range: 0 - 4		
Legislators – federal			0.8 (0.95)
Legislators – state			1.2 (1.1)
Legislators – local			1.1 (1.0)
Administrators (agency)			1.5 (1.3)
Legal			0.6 (0.9)
Community			1.6 (1.1)

Note: * N = 70

Table 4.5

Level of Advocacy Participation Based on Targets (N = 70)

Target	Frequency of advocacy participation	Number	Percentage
	Never	16	22.9%
	Extremely Low	35	50%
Legislative Federal	Low	10	14.3%
	Medium	5	7.1%
	High	4	5.7%
	Never	16	22.9%
	Extremely Low	26	37.1%
Legislative State	Low	10	14.3%
	Medium	15	21.4%
	High	3	4.3%
	Never	14	20%
	Extremely Low	26	37.1%
Legislative Local	Low	15	21.4%
	Medium	12	17.2%
	High	3	4.3%
	Never	15	21.4%
	Extremely Low	14	20%
Agency	Low	13	18.6%
	Medium	19	27.1%
	High	9	12.9%
	Never	34	48.6%
	Extremely Low	23	32.9%
Legal	Low	8	11.4%
	Medium	2	2.8%
	High	3	4.3%
Community	Never	15	21.4%
	Extremely Low	7	10%
	Low	23	32.9%
	Medium	17	24.3%
	High	8	11.4%

Table 4.6

Frequency of the Number of Tactics Used by Organizations to Go to Targets (N = 70)

Targets	Number of Tactics	Number of Organizations	Percentage
Federal legislators (16 items)	0	16	22.9%
	1-4	21	30.1%
	5-8	17	24.2%
	9-12	9	12.8%
	13-16	7	10%
State legislators (16 items)	0	16	22.9%
	1-4	8	11.4%
	5-8	10	14.4%
	9-12	19	27.1%
	13-16	17	24.2%
Local elected officials (16 items)	0	14	20%
	1-4	10	14.4%
	5-8	13	18.5%
	9-12	21	30%
	13-16	12	17.1%
Agency officials (10 items)	0	15	21.4%
	1-4	11	15.7%
	5-7	11	15.7%
	8-10	33	47.2%
Legal officials (13 items)	0	34	48.6%
	1-4	14	20%
	5-8	15	21.4%
	9-13	7	10%
Community (13 items)	0	15	21.4%
	1-4	1	1.4%
	5-8	11	15.8%
	9-13	43	61.4%

In order to determine the reliability of the scales measuring advocacy targets, a reliability analysis was conducted. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was high for all the scales, over .90, which is considered acceptable to demonstrate the internal consistency of a scale (Spector, 1992). Table 4.7 shows the results for each analysis. Examining the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for each scale if items were deleted, demonstrated that the coefficient would not be increased sufficiently to warrant removing any items. For example, The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for legislative advocacy at the federal level with items deleted ranged from .948 to .953, with the total alpha coefficient (with all items included) totaling .954

Table 4.7

Advocacy Targets Scales' Reliability (N = 70)

Advocacy Target Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Legislative advocacy – federal	.954	16
Legislative advocacy – state	.955	16
Legislative advocacy – local	.948	16
Agency advocacy	.951	10
Legal advocacy	.947	13
Community advocacy	.948	13

Statistical Analysis

Logistic regression for overall advocacy participation. In this section, the method used to test each individual variable is described first, followed by the logistic regression model with all the variables that were significant and the two control variables. Table 4.8 shows the relevant statistics for the analysis of each variable.

A simple logistic regression was used to test formalization. Formalization was statistically significant (p = .008) indicating that it predicts overall advocacy participation. The 0.555 odds ratio for formalization indicated that the relationship is negative, with the odds of advocacy participation cut in about half for each unit increase in organizations' formalization.

A Chi Square test was conducted to test the relationship between clinical identity and overall advocacy participation. The Chi Square test was not significant, χ^2 (1,72) = .927, p = .336. The results showed there was no relationship between the clinical identity of respondents and the overall advocacy participation of organizations.

A simple logistic regression was used to test unrestricted funding. The percentage of restricted funding was not statistically significant (p = .146), indicating it was not a predictor of advocacy participation. The same analysis was used to test knowledge of law, which was statistically significant (p = .002), indicating that this variable predicts overall advocacy participation. The .696 odds ratio for formalization indicates the relationship is negative, with the odds of advocacy participation decreasing for each unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law.

Both control variables, total annual budget and age of organization, were tested with a simple logistic regression. Neither variable was significant when tested individually (total budget p = .269; age of organization p = .835). However, because they are control variables, they were both included in the full model analysis.

Table 4.8

Individual Statistical Analysis for Overall Advocacy Participation (N = 72)

Variable	Value	Statistic	*P*
Formalization	Scale: 0-5	Odds ratio = 0.555 (95% CI: 0.361 - 0.855)	.008*
Clinical Identity	Yes or No	χ^2 = .927	.336
Restricted funding	Percent	Odds ratio = 0.989 (95% CI: 0.974 – 1.004)	.146
Knowledge of the lobbying law	Range: 0 - 8	Odds ratio = 0.696 (95% CI: 0.556 – 0.872)	.002*
Total budget	Range \$11,980 - \$15,000,000	Odds ratio = 1.000 (95% CI: 1.0 – 1.0)	.269
Age of organization	Range 1 – 187 years	Odds ratio = 0.998 (95% CI: 0.983 – 1.014	.835

Note: $p < .01$

In order to construct the model for the logistic regression, only the variables that were significant were entered along with the two control variables, total budget and age of the organization. The overall logistic regression model was significant, χ^2 (4,72) = 15.492, p = .004. The model was able to correctly classify 94% of those organizations that said they participate in advocacy and 48% of those that said they did not, for an overall success rate of 78%.

Table 4.9 shows the logistic regression results for each of the predictors. Utilizing an alpha of .05 only knowledge of the law predicted advocacy participation (p = .01). The odds ratio (.730) for this variable in the full model indicated similar results as it did when tested individually, holding all other variables constant the odds of advocacy participation decreased .729 for each unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law. Formalization however, when entered in the full model did not show statistical significance (p = 0.06) as it did when tested individually. The pseudo R^2 (Negelkerke R^2) for the model was .267.

Table 4.9

Logistic Regression Analysis for Overall Advocacy Participation

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	Wald's χ^2	*df*	*p*	Odds ratio (95% CI)
Formalization	-.482	.257	3.503	1	.06	.618 (0.373 – 1.023)
Knowledge of the lobbying law	-.315	.122	6.655	1	.01*	.730 (0.574 – 0.927
Total budget	.000	.000	.024	1	.88	1.00 (1.0 -1.0)
Age of organization	.005	.009	.273	1	.60	1.00 (0.988 – 1.022)
Constant	2.457	1.102	4.974	1	.03	-

N	72
$X^2(4,70)$	15.492
Negelkerke R^2	.267
p	.004

Note: $p \leq .01$

Comparing the -2 Log Likelihood statistic between a model with one variable and one with additional predictor variables can indicate if the expanded model is doing better predicting the outcome variable (Wuensch, 2009). In order to do this with the overall advocacy participation of organizations, the significance of the difference between models was tested. The change between three models was analyzed; one model with the difference between one predictor (formalization) and two predictors (formalization and knowledge of the law); one with the difference between two predictors (formalization and knowledge of the law) and four predictors (adding control variables); and one with the difference between four predictors and all original predictors (six variables). The only model change that showed a significant difference (p = .03) was the one with the two predictor variables that were significant when tested individually (formalization and knowledge of the law). Adding the knowledge of the lobbying law variable to the model with formalization significantly improved the model, $\chi^2(2,72) = 7.345$, $p < .05$. However, when the two predictor variables were entered, the change in the -2 Log Likelihood statistic was not significant and the variable formalization became non-significant. Additionally, it should be noted that when all six variables (four predictors and two control variables) were entered in the model, only knowledge of the lobbying law was statistically significant, therefore adding the extra variables to the model does not add additional predictive ability to the model.

Logistic regression for structure of advocacy. The structure of advocacy was also coded as a binary variable (having an advocacy structure versus not having a structure); therefore, logistic regression was employed for this analysis. The same procedure was utilized for constructing the model as for overall advocacy participation. The method used to test each individual variable is described first, followed by the logistic regression model with the variables that were significant. Table 4.10 shows the relevant statistics for the analysis of each variable.

A simple logistic regression was used to test formalization. When holding all other variables constant, formalization was statistically significant (p = .008) indicating that it predicts the structure of advocacy. The 1.800 odds ratio for formalization indicates that the odds of having an advocacy structure are almost doubled for each unit increase in organizations' formalization scale.

A Chi Square test was conducted to test the relationship between clinical identity and structure of advocacy. The Chi Square test was not significant, χ^2 (1,72) = .927, *p* = .336, indicating that there is no relationship between the clinical identity of respondents and the structure of advocacy within organizations.

The simple logistic regression for percentage of restricted funding (*p* = .174) and knowledge of the lobbying law (*p* = .08) showed that these variables were not statistically significant), indicating that they do not help predict the structure of advocacy.

Both control variables were tested with a simple logistic regression. Neither variable was significant when tested individually (total budget *p* = .34; age of organization *p* = .831). However, because they are control variables, they were both included in the full model analysis.

Table 4.10

Individual Statistical Analysis for Advocacy Structure (N = 72)

Variable	Value	Statistic	*p*
Formalization	Scale: 0-5	Odds ratio = 1.800 (95% CI: 1.170 – 2.771)	.008*
Clinical Identity	Yes or No	χ^2 = .927	.336
Restricted funding	Percent	Odds ratio = 1.011 (95% CI: 0.995 – 1.026)	.174
Knowledge of the lobbying law	Range: 0 - 8	Odds ratio = 1.193 (95% CI: 0.976 – 1.459)	.084
Total budget	Range $11,980 - $15,000,000	Odds ratio = 1.000 (95% CI: 1.0 – 1.0)	.340
Age of organization	Range 1 – 187 years	Odds ratio = .998 (95% CI: 0.984 – 1.013)	.831

Note: p < .01

The goal of testing each variable separately was to be able to determine which variables were significant on their own so they would be entered in the model. In the case of the structure of advocacy, only formalization was significant so no other variables were entered in the model. However, total budget and age, although not significant, were control variables that were also included in the full model. The logistic regression for the full model was significant, χ^2 (3,72) = 8.671, p = .03. The model was able to correctly classify 92% of those organizations that said they have a structure of advocacy and 36% of those that said they did not, for an overall success rate of 72%.

Table 4.11 shows the logistic regression statistics for each of the predictors. The full model showed that formalization was significant (p = .01) in predicting the structure of advocacy. The odds ratio (1.863) for formalization indicated similar results as it did when this variable was tested individually. When holding all other variables constant, for each unit increase in formalization the odds of having a structure advocacy increased (almost doubled) by 1.863. The pseudo R^2 (Negelkerke R^2) for the model was .156.

Table 4.11

Logistic Regression Analysis for Advocacy Structure

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	Wald's χ^2	*df*	*p*	Odds ratio (95% CI)
Formalization	.622	.240	6.704	1	.01*	1.863 (1.163 – 2.9844)
Total budget	.000	.000	.047	1	.83	1.00 (1.0 – 1.0)
Age of organization	-.007	.008	.871	1	.35	.993 (0.977 – 1.008)
Constant	-1.712	.956	3.205	1	.07	-
N	72					
$X^2(3,72)$	8.671					
Negelkerke R^2	.156					
P	.03					

Note: p ≤ .01

In order to compare the difference in the change of the -2 Log Likelihood statistic between the model with formalization as the only predictor and the model with the control variables, the significance of the difference was tested. This test showed that there was no significant difference between the two models, χ^2 (3,72) = 0.86, $p > .05$. Additionally a test was performed to determine if the difference between a model with the significant variable (formalization) and a model with all predictor variables would be a better predictor of advocacy structure. Adding the additional predictor variables did not significantly improve the model, χ^2 (6,72) = 2.623, $p > .05$.

Multiple regression for advocacy targets. The targets of advocacy were measured as continuous variables, therefore multiple regression was utilized to determine which institutional variables predicted each target. The legislative advocacy target was measured at three different levels, federal, state, and local. In consultation with a statistician from Statistical Consulting Center at the University of Georgia, (personal communication, J. Reeves, February 23, 2011), the decision was made to treat each target as a separate variable in order to determine which institutional variables were able to predict advocacy for a given target. Two cases had no data in any of the target variables, therefore they were eliminated from the analysis, making the total N = 70.

Multiple regression for federal legislative advocacy. The model for federal legislative advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F_{6,63}$ = 3.554, p = .004). Knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant predictor (B = .139, p = .003) of federal legislative advocacy. The regression showed that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, federal legislative advocacy increases by .139. The Adjusted R^2 for the model was .182. To determine the change in the Adjusted R^2 when controlling for total budget and age of the organization, these two variables were entered in a second block of the model. The change was not significant (R^2 change = .009, p = .67). The variables in the model are shown in table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Multiple Regression for Federal Legislative Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.059	.099	.07	.56
Clinical identification	.208	.331	.07	.53
Restricted funding	.005	.003	.18	.12
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.139	.046	.36	.003*
Total budget	2.52^{-8}	.000	.10	.40
Age of organization	.000	.003	.01	.91
Constant	-.789	.749	-	-
$F_{6,63}$	3.554*			
Adjusted R^2	.182			
R^2 change	.009			

Note. *p < .01

Multiple regression for state legislative advocacy. The model for state legislative advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F_{6,63}$ = 6.215, $p < .001$). Percentage of restricted funding ($B = .008$, $p = .03$) and knowledge of the lobbying law ($B = .201$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of state legislative advocacy. The regression showed that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in percentage of restricted funding, state legislative advocacy increases by .006. Additionally, holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, advocacy participation increases by 1.92. The Adjusted R^2 for the model was .312. To determine the change in the Adjusted R^2 when controlling for total budget and age of the organization, these two variables were entered in a second block of the model. The change was not significant (R^2 change = .004, p = .83). The variables in the model are shown in table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Multiple Regression Predicting State Legislative Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.133	.104	.146	.20
Clinical identification	.011	.348	.003	.97
Restricted funding	.008	.003	.232	.03*
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.201	.048	.456	.00**
Total budget	3.09^{-9}	.000	.011	.92
Age of organization	-.002	.004	-.065	.54
Constat	-.567	.787	-	-
$F_{6,63}$	6.215*			
Adjusted R^2	.312			
R^2 change	.004			

Note. *p < .05, **p < .001

Multiple regression for local legislative advocacy. The model for local legislative advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F_{6,63}$ = 4.017, p = .002). Knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant predictor (B = .192, p = .00) of local legislative advocacy. The regression showed that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law, local legislative advocacy increased by .192. The Adjusted R^2 for the model was .208. To determine the change in the Adjusted R^2

when controlling for total budget and age of the organization, these two variables were entered in a second block of the model. The change was not significant (R^2 change = .022, p = .38). The variables in the model are shown in table 4.14.

Table 4.14

Multiple Regression for Local Legislative Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.044	.107	.051	.68
Clinical identification	-.052	.357	-.016	.89
Restricted funding	.006	.004	.198	.08
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.192	.049	.456	.00*
Total budget	-3.1^{-8}	.000	-.115	.33
Age of organization	-.003	.004	-.090	.43
$F_{6,63}$	4.017*			
Adjusted R^2	.208			
R^2 change	.022			

Note. p = < .001

Multiple regression for agency advocacy. The model for agency advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F_{6,63}$ = 6.287, p < .001). The Adjusted R^2 for the model was .315. Knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant predictor (B = .225, p > .001) of agency advocacy. The regression indicated that with all other variables held constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, agency advocacy increased by .225. To determine the change in the Adjusted R^2 when controlling for total budget and age of the organization, these two variables were entered in a second block of the model. The change was not significant (R^2 change = .05, p = .09). The variables in the model are shown in table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Multiple Regression Predicting Agency Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.099	.120	.093	.42
Clinical identification	.213	.402	.054	.60
Restricted funding	.006	.004	.159	.16
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.225	.056	.442	.00*
Total budget	6.39E-008	.000	.193	.08
Age of organization	-.007	.004	-.179	.10
Constant	-.423	.910	-	-
$F_{6, 63}$	6.287*			
Adjusted R^2	.315			
R^2 change	.050			

Note. p = <.001

Multiple regression for legal advocacy. The model for legal advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, this model was not significant ($F_{6,63}$ = 1.150, p = .34). As shown in table 4.4 the mean for legal advocacy was the lowest of all the targets (M = .60, SD = .89). A majority (85.7%) of the respondents indicated that they did very little legal advocacy and over one fifth (21.4%) indicated they never participate in legal advocacy. The adjusted R^2 for the model was .013. Statistics for the model are shown in table 4.16.

Table 4.16

Multiple Regression Legal Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.122	.102	.164	.23
Clinical identification	-.302	.340	-.109	.38
Restricted funding	.003	.003	.112	.38
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.013	.047	.036	.79
Total budget	9.38^{-9}	.000	.040	.76
Age of organization	-.006	.003	-.203	.11
Constant	.581	.769	-	-
$F_{6, 63}$	1.150			
Sig	.35			
Adjusted R^2	.013			

Multiple regression for community advocacy. The model for community advocacy included all potential predictor variables and the two control variables (total budget and age of the organization). Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F_{6,63} = 8.089$, $p < .001$). Knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant predictor ($B = .266$, $p < .001$) of local legislative advocacy. The regression showed that with all other variables held constant, with every unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law, community advocacy increased by .266. The Adjusted R^2 for the model was .381. To determine the change in the Adjusted R^2 when controlling for total budget and age of the organization, these two variables were entered in a second block of the model. The change was not significant (R^2 change = .033, p = .17). The variables in the model are shown in table 4.17.

Table 4.17

Multiple Regression for Community Advocacy (N = 70)

Predictor	*B*	*SE b*	*Beta*	*p*
Formalization	.080	.103	.084	.44
Clinical identification	.526	.346	.147	.13
Restricted funding	.006	.003	.171	.09
Knowledge of the lobbying law	.266	.048	.577	.00*
Total budget	-1.2^{-8}	.000	-.039	.71
Age of organization	.-006	.003	-.179	.08
$F_{6,63}$	8.089*			
Adjusted R^2	.381			
R^2 change	.033			

Note. p = < .001

Hypotheses Testing

Based on each of the research questions, various hypotheses were tested for each of the models. This section presents each research question with the respective hypotheses along with the results from the analyses.

Overall Advocacy Participation

Research question #1: What institutional factors predict overall participation in advocacy?

Hypothesis #1: Organizations with higher levels of formalization will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.

This variable, when tested individually in a logistic regression showed statistical significance (Odds ratio = .555; p = .008). However, when entered in a model with other significant variables and the two control variables, it no longer showed statistical significance (p = 0.61). This result does not support the hypothesis that higher levels of formalization would indicate higher levels of advocacy participation.

Hypothesis #2: Organizations with leadership who identify as clinicians will have lower levels of overall advocacy participation.

Clinical identity was not a significant (χ^2 (1,72) = .927, p = .336) predictor of overall advocacy participation. This test does not support this hypothesis.

Hypothesis #3: Organizations with greater levels of restricted funding will have lower levels of overall advocacy participation.

In this model, the percentage of restricted funding was not statistically significant (p = .146), indicating that is not a predictor of advocacy participation. This test did not support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis #4: Organizations with greater knowledge regarding lobbying laws will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.

When tested in a simple logistic regression model, knowledge of the lobbying law was statistically significant (p = .002), indicating that this variable predicts overall advocacy participation. However, the hypothesis was not confirmed. The 0.696 odds ratio for formalization indicates that the relationship between knowledge of the lobbying law and advocacy participation is negative, not positive as stated in the hypothesis. When holding all other variables constant, the odds of advocacy participation decreased by 0.696 for each unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law. This variable was also significant (p = .01) when entered in the full logistic regression model. The odds ratio (0.730) for this variable in the full model indicated similar results as it did when tested individually, that when holding all other variables constant, the odds of advocacy participation decreased .729 for each unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law, again providing no support for the hypothesis.

Hypothesis #5: Organizations with memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies will have higher levels of overall advocacy participation.

As stated earlier, due to high number of missing values for this question, membership in associations or certifying bodies was not included in the analysis. This hypothesis was not tested in this study.

Structure of Advocacy

Research question #2: What institutional factors predict the structure of advocacy among human service NPOs?

Hypothesis #1: Organizations that have a higher degree of formalization will be more likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

When tested individually, a simple logistic regression showed that formalization predicts an organization's odds of having an advocacy structure (p = .008). The 1.800 odds ratio for formalization indicates that when holding all other variables constant, the odds of having an advocacy structure are almost doubled for each unit increase in organizations' formalization scale. When this variable was entered in a model with the two control variables, the overall model was significant (χ^2 (3,72) = 8.671, p = .03.) and formalization was also significant (p = .01) in predicting the structure of advocacy. The odds ratio (1.863) for formalization in the full model indicated similar results as it did when tested individually. When holding all other variables constant, for each unit increase in formalization the odds of having an advocacy structure increased (almost doubled) by 1.863, providing support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis #2: Organizations with leadership who identify as clinicians will be less likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

This hypothesis was not supported by the data. Clinical identity was not a significant predictor of an organization's advocacy structure. A non-significant, Chi Square (χ^2 (1,72) = .927, p = .336) indicated that there is no relationship between the clinical identity of respondents and the structure of advocacy within organizations.

Hypothesis #3: Organizations that receive higher levels of restricted funding will be less likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

The simple logistic regression for percentage of restricted funding did not support this hypothesis. This variable was not statistically significant (p = .174).

Hypothesis #4: The more knowledge human service leaders have about advocacy lobbying laws, the more likely the organization is to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

The statistical analysis of this variable demonstrated that for these organizations, having knowledge of the lobbying law was not a predictor of the structure of advocacy (p = .084). This test provided no support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis #5: Organizations with memberships to accrediting or certifying bodies will be more likely to have advocacy as part of the organizational structure.

Membership in associations or certifying bodies was not included in the analysis due to the high number of missing responses; therefore, this hypothesis was not tested in this study.

Advocacy Targets

Restricted funding and knowledge of the law were the two variables believed to predict the targets of advocacy. As it was demonstrated above, the regression analyses showed that from all the predictors and the two control variables, these were the two variables that significantly predicted advocacy targets.

Research question #3: What institutional factors predict advocacy targets?

Hypothesis #1: Organizations that receive higher percentages of restricted funding will be less likely to be involved in each of the advocacy targets (federal legislative, state legislative, local legislative, agency, legal, and community advocacy).

Multiple regression analysis showed that percentage of restricted funding was only a predictor of state legislative advocacy (B = .008, p = .03). The model for state legislative advocacy that included all predictor variables was significant ($F_{6,63}$ = 6.215, p < .001), with an Adjusted R^2 = .312. The regression showed that with all other variables held constant, for every unit increase in percentage of restricted funding, state legislative advocacy increases by .006. This test, although significant did not provide support for the hypothesis, as the direction of the results was opposite to that of the stated hypothesis.

Hypothesis #2: The more knowledge organizations have regarding the lobbying law, the more likely they will be to participate in advocacy.

The multiple regression analyses performed for each of the advocacy targets demonstrated this variable consistently predicted organizations' advocacy activity. Knowledge of the lobbying law predicted legislative advocacy at all three levels (federal, state, and local), as well as agency and community advocacy.

Knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant (B = .139, p = .003) predictor of federal legislative advocacy. The regression showed that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, advocacy participation increased by .139. This variable was also significant in predicting state legislative advocacy (B = .201, p < .001), showing that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, state legislative advocacy increases by 1.92. For local legislative advocacy (B = .192, p = .00) the regression showed that for every unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law, local legislative advocacy increased by .192.

Agency (B = .225, p > .001) and community advocacy (B = .266, p < .001) were also predicted by knowledge of the lobbying law. The regression indicated that holding all other variables constant, for every unit increase in knowledge of the law, agency advocacy increased by .225. Additionally, holding all other variables constant, with every unit increase in knowledge of the lobbying law, community advocacy increased by .266. Legal advocacy was the only target not predicted by knowledge of the lobbying law. The regression model for legal advocacy was not significant ($F_{6,63}$ = 1.150, p = .34).

Missing Values

As expected in survey research, missing values were an issue that needed to be addressed in this study. The following section describes the procedures utilized to address missing values, which follow the recommendations made by two statisticians at the Statistical Consulting Center at the University of Georgia, (personal communication, J. Reeves & K. Love-Myers, February 23, 2011).

Predictor Variables

For the variable measuring formalization, there were two missing values. Because the variable was measured through a scale and other values were present, the assumption was made these individuals simply did not indicate the zero values, therefore, these two values were filled with zero. Clinical identity had four missing values. Because this was a yes or no question, the assumption was made that those who did not respond did not identify as clinicians. Missing values for percentage of restricted funding were filled in with the mean of the percentage of restricted funding for those who responded to the question.

Knowledge of the lobbying law was measured with an eight-question quiz respondents answered. There were very few missing values (seven) and these were within subjects that answered all the other questions in the quiz. The assumption was made that if the question was left blank, the individual did not know the answer to the question, therefore the missing values were filled with the incorrect answer to the question.

As stated earlier, membership in associations or coalitions was the one variable missing the most values (51%). Because no reasonable assumptions could be made as to what respondents would have answered, this variable was eliminated from the analysis.

Control Variables

Total annual budget contained some missing values. Because organizations are required to file a 990 form with the IRS, an attempt was made to obtain this information through the form. Guide Star and the Foundation Center are two organizations that gather and publish information on nonprofits. Both of these organizations publish 990 forms that are made available to them by the IRS. The 990 forms report the total annual budget of organizations. All but five 990 forms were obtained. Because the majority (78%) of the organizations in the sample had a budget below $3,000,000, the mean of organizations with a budget of $3,000,000 or below was utilized to fill in the five missing values. The data set (i.e. number of staff) indicated these organizations were not large; therefore utilizing the mean of the whole sample would have skewed the mean of this variable.

Outcome Variables

Overall advocacy participation had very few missing values (three). Filling in these values was aided by the narrative provided by respondents. Some said they did not respond to the advocacy questions because their organizations were not involved in advocacy. The case for advocacy structure was similar with only three missing values. Because this was measured as a binary variable, the three missing values were assumed to be a representation of a lack of an advocacy structured and filled in respectively.

The narrative also aided filling in missing values in the advocacy targets. Some respondents who said their organizations were not involved in advocacy did not respond to the target questions. The assumption was made that since they had already stated they do not engage in advocacy, they did not need to complete this part of the survey. A few respondents left some of the target questions unanswered. Because they were missing values in between given answers, those cases were filled in with a zero, assuming they simply did not fill in with a zero in the cases where they were not involved. Lastly, there were two cases where no indication was given as to why the target questions were unanswered. Both respondents said the organizations do participate in advocacy, which indicated that filling the target questions with zero would not be appropriate. Because there was no indication of how to fill in the missing values these two cases were excluded from the analyses involving advocacy targets. These participants provided other information that warranted including them in the sample for the analyses of the other outcome variables.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the statistical analyses utilized to test the relationship between four predictor variables (formalization, clinical identity, percentage of restricted funding, and knowledge of the lobbying law) and the outcome variables overall advocacy participation, structure of advocacy, and advocacy targets. Formalization, percentage of restricted funding, and knowledge of the lobbying law were predictors for several of the outcome variables. Several of the hypotheses tested were confirmed while others need further exploration.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The intent of this study was to explore institutional factors that influence the advocacy behavior or human service NPOs. The findings support and at the same time raise questions about previous research that has examined advocacy participation among these organizations. The study also provided new insights as it expanded advocacy research by examining areas beyond legislative advocacy. These areas included agency, legal, and community targets, as well as the structure of advocacy within human service NPOs.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section includes an interpretation of results presented in the previous chapter. The second section addresses the limitations of the study. The third section discusses the implications of this study for social work, in terms of research, policy, and practice. The last section proposes areas for future research.

Interpretation of Data Analysis Results

This study examined three main areas of advocacy and their relationship to institutional factors. This section discusses the interpretation of results for these outcome variables.

Overall advocacy participation and advocacy structure. As discussed in chapter two, although not extensively, the literature does address the advocacy participation of human service NPOs. This study confirmed previous research that has shown NPOs do participate in advocacy. When responding to the question of whether organizations are involved in advocating or promoting solutions for broad scale social problems, 65% of respondents in this study said they did. Other studies have reported advocacy participation ranging from 27% (Child & Grønbjerg, 2007), 56% (Mosley, 2006), 60% (Salamon & Geller, 2008), and 86% (Bass et al. 2007).

This relatively high participation in advocacy raises an interesting issue, especially when paired with the results from the logistic regression. Although this level of advocacy participation could be interpreted as advocacy being an institutional practice, when indicators of institutionalization were utilized to predict it, only the knowledge of the lobbying law emerged as a significant predictor. Formalization, clinical identity, and percent of restricted funding were not significant predictors of overall advocacy participation. Neither were the two control variables, size and age of the organizations.

Organizations in this sample were highly formalized, with a mean score of 4.5 (*SD* = 1.2) in a scale ranging from zero to five, which indicates a high level of organizational structure. From an institutional theory perspective, this structure reflects the adoption of common practices expected to increase the legitimacy of organizations (Leiter, 2005; Mosley, 2006; Zucker, 1987). When a practice is seen as important and it is an established structure in the organization, high levels of formalization tend to support it as an intervention that needs to be maintained. However, in this case, formalization did not contribute to organizations' overall advocacy participation. Another explanation could be that because formalization is believed to shift leadership's focus to organizational maintenance, which can detract from other interventions or practices (Staggenborg, 1989) even if they were part of the organizational structure, advocacy participation would decrease. This assumption was somewhat supported when a simple logistic regression of formalization showed it was a significant predictor of advocacy participation. The relationship between the outcome and predictor variable was negative. The odds ratio for formalization showed that with all other variables held constant, advocacy participation actually decreased by 0.55 (or 44.5%) for every unit increase in formalization. However, the fact that this variable was no longer significant when entered in a model with additional variables and that a majority of organizations reported doing advocacy, should be further investigated.

When examining the second outcome variable, structure of advocacy, formalization proved to be the only significant predictor. This finding supports the statement made above, that if advocacy, or at least a structure of advocacy, is an established part of the organization, systems would be set in place to maintain it. In the case of advocacy structure, the hypothesis that more formalized organizations would have advocacy as part of their configuration was confirmed. Institutional theory suggests that institutionalization is rooted in conformity, and that at times structures are set in place and left in place regardless of their value to the organization (Anheier, 2005; Arnaboldi & Lapsley, 2004; Covaleski & Dirsmith, 1988; Oliver, 1991; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). This study confirms this theoretical assumption since higher levels of formalization led to higher odds of having an advocacy structure. However, this structure does not speak to the value of advocacy or the amount of advocacy that occurs within an organization, it simply speaks to organizational composition.

Although no studies were found that examined the structure of advocacy, the literature suggests that in order for advocacy to occur, an advocacy structure must be present in the organization (Donaldson, 2008; Gibelman & Kraft, 1996; Taylor, 1987). This study provides preliminary support for this statement; however, results also point to the need to answer additional questions about this relationship. The assumption that advocacy structure will lead to advocacy participation needs further exploration. When advocacy participation and advocacy targets were explored, the formalization of the organization showed no relationship to these outcomes. Additionally, when the frequency of advocacy tactics used to go to a specific target was examined, the results showed that advocacy happens at a low rate. In a scale from zero to four, the means for all targets ranged from a low of 0.6 (for legal advocacy) to a high of 1.6 (for community advocacy). This demonstrates that having an advocacy structure does not equate with a high level of advocacy involvement.

Clinical identification was another variable that was not a significant predictor of advocacy participation or advocacy structure. This finding is harder to compare with other studies since the issue addressed in the past has been the education level of the executive director (presence or absence of a masters degree), not clinical background. In this study, the majority of respondents did not identify as clinicians (89%). Additionally, a small percentage had a professional license (17%) and of those with a license, only four had a social work license. Executive directors with a social work degree (at any level) were also a small percentage in the sample (15%). Because the issue of interest in this study was the clinical professionalization of human service NPOs and the results showed that this variable was not a predictor of either outcome variable, this area needs further research. The lack of this variable's significance could point to the lack of training on advocacy received by these individuals. As research has shown, advocacy has been part of the culture of NPOs (DiMaggio & Anheier, 1990; Kramer, 1981; Reid, 2000; Salamon, 2002; Salipante & Golden-Biddle, 1995; Schmid, 2004), which would explain the fact that advocacy happens in these organizations regardless of how the leadership identifies in regard to their professional background. However, the frequency of advocacy can point to the potentially low value given to this activity regardless of who is in charge of the organization. Issues for future research regarding clinical identity as the appropriate measure of professionalization will be discussed later in the chapter.

An interesting finding in this study was the fact that the percentage of restricted funding was not a significant predictor of advocacy participation or advocacy structure. Previous studies have examined the impact of government funding on legislative advocacy. Because results of these studies have been mixed, with some suggesting that government funding decreases advocacy (Alexander et al., 1999; Bass et al., 2007; Donaldson, 2007), while others suggesting it has no impact (Chavez et al., 2004; Suárez & Hwang, 2008), this study specifically asked about restricted funding without tying it to a specific source. Institutional theory suggests that rules and regulations are factors that influence the behavior of organizations (Scott, 2001). Restrictions in funding where human service organizations must abide by the regulations prescribed in their contracts were assumed to potentially influence their advocacy behavior. However, in the case of overall advocacy participation and structure, this was not the case. The lack of significance of this variable could point to the perception organizations have regarding funding. It is possible that what influences advocacy participation is not that the funding is restricted, but instead from where the restricted funding comes. If organizations perceive the funding to come from an authority that has power to affect them, they may be less likely to be involved in activities that could be perceived as a risk to survival. As with the other variables that were not predictors of advocacy participation or structure, additional research is needed to understand the role of restricted funding in the advocacy of human service NPOs.

Interestingly, the one institutional variable that was significant in predicting overall advocacy participation, provided results opposite to what was expected. The knowledge of the lobbying law variable predicted advocacy participation, but as reported in chapter four, the direction of the relationship was negative. Therefore, among organizations with better knowledge of the law, overall advocacy participation decreased. This seems counterintuitive but there may be some reasonable explanations for the results.

As was discussed in the literature review, advocacy has been a difficult concept to define. Additionally, interpreting the tax code regarding lobbying has also been difficult, specifically because of the ambiguity in the law (Berry, 2003). If this is true, even if respondents were able to correctly identify activities they can or cannot do, they may not perceive the actions which they engage in as advocacy, potentially indicating that although knowledgeable of the law, they do not participate in advocacy.

Knowledge of the lobbying law was also a significant predictor of advocacy targets (legislative, agency, and community) except for legal advocacy. The relationship between the targets (which can also indicate advocacy frequency) and knowledge of the lobbying law was positive, indicating that the more knowledge respondents had, the more likely they were to go to the targets, except the courts (legal advocacy). Although this result seems to add more confusion to explaining the advocacy behavior of organizations, it provides support to the statement made above. When asking about targets, the word advocacy was not employed. The questions were intentionally worded to ask about activities (or tactics) directed to a specific target.

Interestingly, examining the responses of those who said they do not do advocacy indicated that although they do not think they advocate, they do report using certain advocacy behaviors in order to influence specific targets. Additionally, some of the organizations that said they do not do advocacy, reported using some tactics often. For example, of those who said they do not do advocacy, 36% used seven or more tactics directed toward the community (13-item scale); 28% used eight or more legislative tactics directed at state and local elected officials (16-item scales); 16% used six or more tactics directed to agency administrators (10-item scale); and

12% used eight or more tactics directed toward legislators at the federal level (16-item scale). Although the frequency of use of these tactics was not high, with most of them employed infrequently, the fact that they believe they do not do advocacy but use activities that comprise advocacy points to the lack of understanding of this concept.

This is not the first study to find that language matters. One study showed that when organizations were asked the same question with the words advocate, educate, or lobby their responses were different. Those answering the lobbying question, were more likely to say that they did not lobby compared to the other two groups (Bass et al., 2007). Additionally, as was the case in this study, even those who reported not doing advocacy said they use advocacy tactics to influence legislators (Bass et al., 2007).

Because the literature has shown that size is an important factor in the advocacy behavior of organizations (Bass et al., 2007; Child & Grønbjerg, 2007; Donaldson, 2007; Mosley, 2006) it was used in this study as a control variable. Contrary to other findings, this study found that size was not a significant predictor of any of the outcome variables. One possible explanation for this finding is that organizations may view advocacy as a philosophical commitment. If they are committed to doing advocacy (regardless of the frequency of their participation), they at least believe they are doing it no matter what their budget size. The fact that over half (65%) of the respondents said their organizations participate in advocacy and that the same number said they have a structure of advocacy can provide support to this conclusion. The size of the organization's budget does not necessarily affect the apparent commitment to doing advocacy. However, it is also possible that the wide range in organizations' budgets could have hindered the ability to see the impact of size on the outcome variables.

Although the age of an organization is considered a factor related to institutionalization, in this study it was not a significant predictor of any of the outcome variables. The same conclusion as above can be drawn for this predictor variable; if advocacy were a commitment, how long the organization had been operating would not influence advocacy behavior. In the case of age, these results confirm previous studies that have shown that there is no relationship between the age of an organization and advocacy behavior (Child, & Gronbjerg, 2007; Mosely, 2006; Schmid et al., 2008).

Advocacy Targets

Although individual multiple regressions were utilized to analyze the relationship between institutional factors and advocacy targets (legislative, agency, legal, and community), some overall conceptual conclusions can be made. Looking at the results of this study as a whole it is interesting that a large percentage of organizations say they advocate and that they have an advocacy structure (65%). However, when the means of advocacy targets were examined, the study showed that very little advocacy is actually taking place. The questions in the advocacy targets scales were designed to not only show activities directed toward specific targets, but also to determine the frequency with which they occur. As was stated earlier, the means for all targets were very low, with none above 1.6. This result is consistent with previous research that has shown that advocacy appears to be wide but not deep (Berry, 2003; Child & Grønbjerg, 2007). Further examination of the use of tactics to influence the targets provides support for this assertion.

As indicated in table 4.5, for all the targets except legal, one fifth or more of participants said they never use the tactics to influence specific targets (this is the case for each target); note that this is lower than the percent that reported never doing advocacy (35%). For legal advocacy, almost half (48.6%) said they never use the tactics. Furthermore, for the legislative targets at all three levels (federal, state, and local), over 50% of participants said they use the tactics with extremely low or low frequency (64.3%, 51.4%, and 58.5% respectively). For the agency target 38.6% and for the community target 44.3% reported they use the tactics with extremely low or low frequency.

Additionally, the number of tactics used by organizations is also low for all but two of the targets (agency and community). For example, 30.1% of participants said they used one to four of the tactics targeting legislators at the federal level (out of 16 tactics) and 20% said they use the same number of tactics targeting legal officials (out of 13 tactics). Additionally, 25.8% of participants said they use half or less of the tactics targeting legislators at the state level (out of 16 tactics), and 32.9% said this about targeting elected officials at the local level (out of 16 tactics). Agency and community targets were the exception, with 47.2% of participants reporting they used the majority of the tactics (eight to ten in a 10-item scale) to target agency administrators, and 61.4% using the majority of the tactics to target the community (nine to thirteen in a 13-item scale). Again, the number of tactics used does not indicate frequency of use, as it was mentioned above that most organizations use them infrequently.

Another finding that deserves mention is that the mean of the legal target was the lowest (M = 0.6, SD = 0.9). Although no conclusions can be made simply because this mean is low, this is not surprising given the void in the literature about this target. Additionally, none of the institutional variables showed significance when predicting this advocacy target. It is possible that this is the case because indeed there is no relationship between the predictors and the outcome. However, it is also possible that there is an effect that was not detected due to sample size or lack of variability. For the legal advocacy target, the standard deviation demonstrates that the spread of the responses is narrow, showing the lack of variability.

Two of the institutional factors in this study were believed to have a relationship with the targets of advocacy. As stated in the hypotheses, knowledge of the lobbying law and percentage of restricted funding were expected to predict organizations' decision to go to the targets. When observing all the multiple regressions performed, one pattern was clear, knowledge of the lobbying law was a significant predictor of all targets except for legal. Furthermore, the relationship with the outcome variables was positive indicating that as knowledge of the law increased so did the advocacy activity of organizations. Unlike the results for overall advocacy participation, this positive relationship was the expected outcome. If leaders of organizations know what they can and cannot do to advocate, the hope is that they take the initiative to do so, without fearing negative consequences. It is also interesting to note that knowledge of the law was a predictor of agency and community advocacy, both targets not covered in the lobbying law. It has been argued that if organizations understand the law, they would be more likely to go to these targets since their attempt to influence agency administrators and community leaders would not be scrutinized by the lobbying law. This should also make intuitive sense for legal advocacy; however, as discussed above, no institutional factors predicted the legal target.

In addition to knowledge of the law, percent of restricted funding was also a significant predictor, but only of the legislative target at the state level. Moreover, the direction of this relationship was surprising. As indicated in the hypothesis, the expected outcome was that as the percentage of restricted funding increased, the level of advocacy would decrease. This was not the case with legislative advocacy directed toward state officials.

Although this relationship with only one target seems peculiar and the direction of the relationship was not expected, there may be some plausible explanations. First, relationships with state legislators may be easier to develop when compared to those at the federal level (Berry, 2003). If these relationships are really present, it would make sense that leaders of NPOs would freely reach out to legislators in order to advocate for issues related to their constituents. Second, because NPOs do receive state funding, it is possible that they use advocacy behaviors when relating to their funders. Both of these assumptions need further exploration.

While only two of the four institutional predictors were utilized in the hypotheses, all predictors were entered in the regression models. These predictors were found to have no relationship with the outcome variables, which was expected. Still, it is important to note that the observed power of these relationships was low, ranging from .05 to .413. As is the case with the legal advocacy target, this points to the possibility of Type II error which could be due to the small sample size or the low variability in the responses.

Although not all predictor variables were significant in the multiple regressions the Adjusted R^2 for these models (all except for the legal target) is considered acceptable. The regression model for the community target was able to explain the highest amount of variability at 38% (Adjusted R^2 = .038). The model for the legislative target at the state level and for the agency target were the next highest, explaining 31% of the variability (Adjusted R^2 = 0.31 for both variables). The local legislative target model explained 21% of the variability (Adjusted R^2 = .021), while the federal legislative target explained 18% of the variability (Adjusted R^2 = .018). As stated above, no predictors were significant for the legal target, therefore the amount of variability explained by the regression model was non-existent (Adjusted R^2 = .013). Naturally, the differences in the ability of each model to explain the variability of the outcome variables need to be further explored.

Limitations

This study contributes important information to the understanding of advocacy behavior among human service NPOs, however, several limitations need to be addressed. This section outlines these limitations and provides some direction for how to address them in the future.

Although important, this study did not seek to determine how leaders of human service NPOs view or understand advocacy. Instead of asking for a definition of advocacy, the concept was defined for them in the question inquiring about advocacy participation. Even though this approach provides consistency for all respondents, it does not allow for an understanding of how organizations define the concept. Future research should address this issue, as it is important in helping researchers study advocacy with increased accuracy.

The use of a convenience sample is another limitation. While this type of sampling allows for maximizing the reach to individuals available to participate in the study, it also introduces bias. The obvious issue is the inability to generalize the findings beyond the area selected for the study. In order to extend the findings from this study, additional research should attempt to include a sampling method that relies on probability sampling.

How questions are asked in a survey can obviously influence the responses and outcomes of a study, affecting its reliability. Although efforts were made to diminish responder's unreliability by carefully examining the wording of the questions, these issues are difficult to eliminate in their entirety. It was mentioned earlier that one of the predictor variables was eliminated from the analysis. This was done because the response rate for this question was low. Over 50% of participants did not answer the question. One of the potential reasons for this is the way the question was worded. Although the intent was to determine if organizations were members of associations or coalitions, the question was written in personal manner, asking, “Do you belong to associations or coalitions?” Researchers interested in further examining this predictor as an indicator of formalization must pay careful attention to the way the question is asked.

Because no measures of advocacy were found in the literature, how to measure advocacy participation was a challenge. In an attempt to capture frequency of advocacy, similar scales were constructed for each of the targets of advocacy. This is a limitation because these scales have not been tested in previous research, however, in order to advance knowledge it is necessary to have a starting point. Although the literature does provide information on advocacy activities and the scales were derived from this available information, further refining and testing of the scales is necessary.

The response rate in this study is also a limitation. As stated earlier, of the 345 surveys sent, 98 responded and of those 72 were used in the study. Low response rates, resulting in small samples influence the results and therefore the conclusions that can be made about the topic at hand. As discussed in chapter three, although efforts were made to increase the response, limited success was achieved. It is difficult to determine why others did not respond, but it is possible that some felt the survey did not apply to them because they do not participate in advocacy. If this is the case, it is possible that advocacy participation would have been even lower than this sample showed.

Fear could have potentially been a deterrent for participation. Advocacy can be an uncomfortable topic to discuss especially because it is often equated with lobbying. The fear usually stems from potential negative consequences to the organization if the government perceives their behavior as lobbying. This is not necessarily a rational fear, but a fear nonetheless. This is a difficult limitation to overcome since advocacy research is not extensive. This study and future studies on advocacy have the potential to help overcome this limitation by bringing discussion on advocacy to the forefront and making clear that advocacy is a legal intervention even when targeted at elected officials.

Another possible deterrent to participation may have been the length of the survey. Leaders of human service NPOs are busy with many demands on their time. Completing a survey is probably not a priority for many especially if it is on a topic that could be perceived as a risk, or on a topic that may seem irrelevant. Future researchers should address this issue by being more focused and only including items that have the most relevance to the research questions at hand.

Because this study was of an exploratory nature, a survey alone may not have been the best approach of capturing the desired information. Future research in this area should perhaps include interviews or focus groups that can provide additional information not captured in this study.

Implications for Social Work

The results of this study demonstrated that additional attention needs to be given to advocacy as a broad social work practice intervention. This section will outline the implications of this study for research, policy, and practice.

Research

It was well established earlier that there is a paucity of research regarding advocacy. One of the reasons for this may be the challenges that arise in conducting research on this topic. One of these challenges is the perceived sensitivity of this topic. Because advocacy is often equated with lobbying, and lobbying with government restrictions, organizations' leaders may be afraid to respond to questions they believe could put their organizations at risk of scrutiny and potentially risk their survival. Utilizing clear language that identifies advocacy as a legitimate and legal activity for human service NPOs may aid researchers in obtaining information from organizations. Additionally, including a variety of questions that can assess not only whether organizations do advocacy, but also how much advocacy actually takes place, is important in research. As demonstrated in this study, a majority (65%) of respondents said they do advocacy, however, the magnitude of the involvement was captured through asking about specific advocacy behaviors and the frequency with which they are utilized. The results showed that although respondents said they do advocacy, the amount of advocacy carried out was very little.

Because advocacy can be a sensitive issue, utilizing qualitative research techniques can complement the information obtained through survey research. Researchers interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the meaning of advocacy, how it is carried out, and of its effectiveness can complement their research by utilizing qualitative techniques. Interviews or focus group would provide information on the topic at a level that is not possible to reach with a survey. Additionally, these techniques would provide an opportunity for human service NPOs' leaders to share their perspective on the value of advocacy and its potential risks for their organizations.

Capturing the presence or absence of advocacy within organizations also possesses challenges for researchers. As was the case in this study, some respondents accessed the survey, but stopped completing it when they arrived at the advocacy section of the instrument (these cases were excluded from the analysis). It is possible that they did this because they felt the questions were not relevant to their organizations. Several individuals contacted the Survey Research Center asking if they should respond to the survey because they did not do advocacy.

Others asked this question on the phone when they were contacted to be asked to complete the survey. Obviously, the absence of advocacy is something that is difficult to capture. However, in order for the profession to have a clear picture of advocacy's role in the field, it is necessary to understand organizations that do little to no advocacy. Researchers need to be able to address the differences between those organizations with successful advocacy interventions and those that perceive advocacy as something in which they do not need to get involved. How to capture both, the presence and absence of advocacy should continue to be on researchers' agenda.

One of the issues that needs to be addressed when studying the low advocacy participation of human service NPOs is its effectiveness. It is possible that advocacy has not been emphasized because those who tried it in the past found it to be ineffective. It is difficult to make this argument when social changes such as the advancement of civil rights, better services for battered women, and increased services for children, among others are present today in part due to advocacy. Furthermore, if an apparent lack of effectiveness is one of the reasons advocacy is not emphasized the question needs to be asked if this is a good reason not to do it at all. The argument can be made that not all direct practice interventions are effective and those that are effective are not so all the time. This has not, however, been used as a reason to stop casework or clinical interventions. However, regardless of the apparent evidence of past advocacy results and its obvious decline in use within the profession, effectiveness is a question that needs to be raised and that warrants further exploration. It should be noted that advocacy is an intervention that takes time and measuring its effectiveness can be difficult, but efforts should be made to determine its usefulness as a social work intervention.

Another challenge in this topic's research is the lack of tested instruments to measure advocacy and other constructs related to advocacy. For this study, no instruments that measured the structure of advocacy or the frequency of advocacy were found. Furthermore, when addressing the various advocacy targets, the literature became even more limited since the emphasis on advocacy has been at the legislative level. The challenge for advocacy researchers will be to develop valid and reliable instruments that can capture advocacy as a broad concept in order to provide a better assessment of this practice in the social work field. The instrument developed for this study is a place to begin, however, additional testing and refinement of this instrument is needed.

As shown in chapter four, this sample had a variety of budget sizes ranging from $11,980 to $15,000,000. Additionally, the majority (57%) of organizations had budgets of less than $500,000. Although size has been shown to influence legislative advocacy (Bass et al., 2007; Child & Grønbjerg, 2007; Donaldson, 2007; Mosley, 2006), this was not the case in this study. It is possible this was due to this wide range, therefore, future research should address this issue. With a larger sample and more organizations in each budget category, it may be possible to determine if there are differences in the advocacy behavior of these organizations based on their size. Furthermore, this study utilized total budget as a continuous variable, perhaps coding this variable into categories would provide information that was not captured here.

Another question not addressed in this study is the type of organization or the population served, and whether it makes a difference in advocacy involvement. This area will need further exploration, as it is possible organizations serving one population versus another feel more of an obligation to advocate for serving that meet the needs of their clients. Additionally, funding sources for organizations servicing specific populations vary, and this may affect their involvement in advocacy.

Theory. One last area that deserves mention is the role of theory in research. Institutional theory was the framework that aided this study. This theory was utilized because of its predictive ability and proved usefulness in explaining organizational behavior. However, other organizational theories may be better able to explain advocacy behavior. The theoretical model presented in chapter two assumed a relationship between two control and five predictor variables, and the outcome variables. The results of this study showed that neither control variable was a predictor of the outcome variables, and that three of the four predictor variables tested (membership in associations and coalitions was eliminated from the analysis) were significant. However, the direction of the relationships found was not always as predicted. These findings raise several implications for research and theory.

First, researchers addressing advocacy need to explore if the way institutional factors were operationalized is the best way to measure these proxy variables. This study utilized clinical identity as an indicator of professionalization, but other indicators of this factor may be better predictors of advocacy. Second, researchers should explore additional theories that can potentially explain advocacy behavior, such as resource dependency or entrepreneurship theory. Third, researchers should consider the possibility of developing a theory that fits the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs through methods such as grounded theory.

Policy

Human service organizations have been recognized as important contributors to the well-being of society (Alexander et al., 1999; Berry, 2003; Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998; Saidel, 2002; Smith, 1993; Suárez & Hwang, 2008). However, their visibility among those who make decisions regarding services has been questioned. This study’s results point to the need for these organizations to continue to make their voices heard so the services provided to the disadvantaged can be improved and expanded. Because advocacy is a macro level issue and a venue to seek social change, the results of this study bring to light a number of policy implications for the social work profession.

The case has been made that human service NPOs can enhance their ability to represent their constituents through the establishment of representative structures that allow their views to be expressed (Guo, 2007; Rosenblum, 1998). However, this study demonstrated that having a structure is not enough. A majority (65%) of organizations in this sample said they had an advocacy structure and that they participated in advocacy, and yet as stated earlier, results confirmed what previous research has shown that advocacy participation may be wide but is shallow (Berry, 2003; Salamon & Geller, 2008). These results point to the fact that although advocacy may be taking place, the lack of depth in advocacy behavior may be compromising NPOs' visibility among decision makers and within their communities. When organizations find themselves locked within their walls and are not able or willing to express their views and concerns regarding social issues, they risk not being recognized by those who make decisions that affect their constituents, their funding, and their programs. This lack of recognition has been acknowledged as one of the biggest risks human service NPOs face today (Phillips, 2006).

Additionally, the development of relationships with decision makers, one of the goals of advocacy (Berry, 2003), can provide human service NPOs with a seat at the table when these decisions begin to take shape. It has been argued that no profession is in a better place to ascertain the impact of social policy than social work (Domanski, 1998; Haynes & Mickelson, 2000; Schneider & Netting, 1999). Social workers know and understand the issues their clients face. Being able to share what they see with decision makers can potentially improve the visibility and availability of their services.

As discussed earlier, advocacy has to go beyond legislative advocacy. We must begin a conversation that includes policy implications at the agency, legal, and community levels. Regulations and policies are not only set at the legislative level. Agency officials and those in the courts, although not elected officials, also play a role in shaping the services human service organizations provide to individuals and families. Furthermore, agency, legal, and community advocacy are practices outside the bounds of the lobbying law, providing organizations with an opportunity to promote social change starting in their own back yard. Berry (2003) suggested that the amount of resources needed to advocate at the state and local level are considerably less than those needed to lobby at the federal level. Additionally, well funded lobbying groups are typically not something to contend with at the administrative and local levels. This fact allows for the development of relationships with individuals in positions of power that can grant social workers an audience to advance the promotion of social and economic justice. It has been argued the social work curriculum has promoted social workers having a place in social institutions, but not as influencers of policy and social change, but as “midlevel facilitators” (Morris, 2000, p. 70). In order to move beyond the midlevel facilitator role, social workers and those leading human service organizations must embrace a broad view of advocacy that includes interventions in the legislative, agency, legal, and community arenas.

Practice

One interesting area this study highlights is the absence of social workers leading human service NPOs. Although this study employed a small sample and it was specific to one geographic region, the question should still be raised of who is leading the organizations that are considered the primary area of employment for social workers. Not having social workers at the head of human service organizations can raise many issues for social work practice, including involvement in advocacy. Social work as a profession has a specific mandate to advance social and economic justice, a mandate that has traditionally been carried out through human service organizations. However, if trained social workers are not leading these organizations it is reasonable to wonder how social work is carrying out this mandate.

Obviously additional research is needed to determine the direction in which the leadership of human service organizations is going. However, if the trend is for non-social workers to lead these organizations, then the profession must rethink the way education about macro level practice, including advocacy, is delivered. Although some schools of social work have begun interdisciplinary programs to train nonprofit managers, many non-social work programs (i.e. public administration, sociology, law, business administration) have began to focus on nonprofits in the last 20-years (Mirabella, 2007; Mirabella & Wish, 2001). If these programs are training the nonprofit managers of the future, then education on advocacy needs to be incorporated into this curriculum. Additionally, collaboration with the fields already training nonprofit managers, such as public administration, public health, business administration, and law should be promoted in order to pass on the social work profession's mandate to advance social and economic justice.

Additionally, continuing education is also something that needs attention. Regardless of who is at the helm of these organizations, training on how to engage decision makers, policy makers, and others in positions of authority should take place.

Social work education. In addition to addressing leadership in human service NPOs, advocacy within social work education also needs attention. For social workers in academia, the classroom is the practice field and this is especially relevant to the baccalaureate and master programs. Although the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has clearly affirmed the profession's commitment to social and economic justice in its Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2008), advocacy education and its direct impact on the field should be examined. Schools of social work will continue to have the responsibility to pass on the skills and even the passion needed to carry out social change. Teaching students about advocacy as a viable practice intervention should be a major responsibility of social work educators.

One of the arguments in favor of teaching students about advocacy is that it is an ethical obligation of social workers (Lynch & Mitchell, 1995). However, active involvement in systems change is not only an ethical obligation, but also a viable practice intervention the profession must continue to advance. Some believe that social work students do not receive enough training on advocacy, specifically as it relates to development of skills necessary to deal effectively with large systems (Abramovitz, 1998; Lynch & Mitchell, 1995; Steen, 2006). It is possible that this lack of training in macro practice keeps social workers away from leadership positions in human service organizations and away from getting involved in advocacy. Abramovitz (1993) argues that social work professors need to be intentional about teaching students to become experts in the promotion of social change; if we are going to help individuals gain self-determination and improve their lives, then change in the social conditions that affect their ability to reach those goals must be sought. It is the responsibility of social work educators to teach students about the relationships between human condition and societal oppression. However, beyond teaching about these relationships, students need to be taught how to effectively intervene at all levels of practice.

In addition to teaching advocacy skills in schools of social work, training staff to carry out advocacy successfully is also an implication for practice. Although this study did not specifically ask about advocacy skills, it is possible that advocacy occurs in such low frequency because of the lack of appropriate training. Studies have found that the lack of advocacy skills among employees of human service NPOs was a major barrier to employing advocacy as an intervention (Bass et al., 2007; Berry, 2003; Boris & Krehely, 2002; Ezell, 2001; Nelson, 1999; Salamon & Geller, 2008). This is an obvious challenge to human service administrators as individuals who are not trained and lack the skills to do advocacy can place the organization at serious risk. They could potentially damage its reputation, sever relationships with decision makers, and ultimately compromise the services the organization provides. Although some skills social workers learn are interchangeable between macro and micro practice (Haynes & Mickelson, 2000), many skills are different and specialized training is needed in order to practice advocacy successfully.

Because the issue of training (students, workers, or administrators) is important, partnerships and collaborations between schools of social work and NPOs can be vital. They can provide organizations with the opportunity to offer input on the type of training needed in order to be effective advocates, while at the same time providing students with an arena where these skills are practiced before they leave their schools.

Another area this study points to is that of advocacy as a broad practice intervention. It was already established that legislative advocacy is the one area addressed in the literature. However, with the continued federal devolution it is imperative for social work schools to teach students to actively and effectively influence social policy, not only at the federal level but at the state and local levels as well. Furthermore, results from this study point to the low frequency of advocacy not only at a legislative level, but also at the agency, legal, and community levels. These areas of advocacy are not restricted by lobbying and could considerably increase human service NPOs access to decision makers. Including these areas in the social work curriculum could potentially benefit clients as well as increase the visibility and legitimacy of these organizations.

Recommendations for Future Research

The goal of this study was to examine the advocacy behavior of human service NPOs regarding participation, structure, and targets. Institutional theory was employed as the framework to help explain the factors that predict advocacy behavior. Although this study provided valuable information, because of its exploratory nature and the fact that advocacy research is scarce, additional research is needed to expand the understanding of what influences organization's decision to advocate.

One of the interesting findings of this study was that a majority (85%) of the executive directors did not have a social work background. It is possible that the advocacy behavior of organizations led by social workers would differ from that of those without a social work degree. The social work profession has made a commitment, at least philosophically, to the advancement of social and economic justice so it would be somewhat reasonable to expect differences. However, in spite of this commitment, the profession has been criticized for "serving as a handmaiden of the status quo" (Abramovitz, 1998, p. 512), and for training midlevel facilitators (Morris, 2000) that provide no input into the social changes needed in society. Future research on advocacy carried out by organizations with social workers at the lead is needed in order to determine if these differences do exist and if the criticisms of the profession are warranted.

In addition to the lack of social workers' leadership in these organizations, this study also found that on average, only 1.2 (*SD* = 1.7) of the staff had a social work degree. The mean number of full-time staff for these organizations was 10.5 (*SD* = 17) and 4.4 (*SD* = 11.4) for part-time staff. This raises the same question stated above, of whether organizations with a larger percentage of social workers on staff would behave differently toward advocacy. Additional research is needed in this area, as results would have implications for social work education as well as for social work practice. If social workers are not providing social services, how is the profession carrying out its mandate to advance social and economic justice?

A related issue to those discussed above is the professionalization of social work and of human service organizations. Both have been cited as reasons for the lack of involvement in advocacy. This study attempted to determine if the clinical identity of executive directors was an institutional factor related to advocacy behavior. This indicator was not a significant predictor of any of the outcome variables. Several issues can be raised from these results. First, is clinical identity the best indicator of professionalization? The argument made in this study was that professionalization in general is not what has moved organizations away from advocacy, but that the clinical emphasis of the profession is what has had an impact. This argument was not supported in the results; however, it was difficult to determine if clinical identity had an impact since the majority (85%) of the executive directors did not have a social work degree and of those with a license, only four had a social work license. Perhaps in a sample where the majority of executive directors are social workers, clinical identification would be a more appropriate predictor of advocacy behavior. Additionally, a study where social workers are asked about their clinical identity, their micro or macro orientation to social work practice, and their involvement in advocacy, could potentially better answer the question about clinical professionalization.

Second, this study raises questions about the general professionalization of human service NPOs. If only 15% of executive directors had a social work degree, is the move toward professionalization a move away from social work? Because this sample was a non-random sample, it would be inappropriate to make generalizations about who is leading human service NPOs and how this leadership affects advocacy. Therefore, additional research is needed to explore the direction of professionalization among these organizations.

It was established in the literature review that the impact of government funding on advocacy behavior has yielded mixed results. This study sought to determine if the percentage of restricted funding was an institutional indicator of advocacy behavior. The results showed that this was only a predictor for legislative advocacy targeted toward state elected officials. Additional questions need to be asked in order to understand this relationship where, as restricted funding increases so does the level of advocacy at the state level. Furthermore, examining the relationship between government funding and advocacy with relation to restricted funding can answer questions about how organizations view funding and its restrictions. It is possible that the issue is about where the restrictions come from rather than the restrictions themselves.

Regarding advocacy structure, no other studies were found in the literature that addressed this issue. Because this seems to be the first study to explore it, additional research is needed in order to understand how advocacy is incorporated into organizations' formal structure. This study included four indicators of advocacy structure, which were then converted into a binary variable that showed its presence or absence. Future research should address these four indicators in order to determine if they are the best descriptors of advocacy structure. Additionally, treating them as a continuous variable could shed light on the strength of an advocacy structure within an organization. For example, differences could be examined between organizations that only have one indicator present versus those with all the indicators, or between those with advocacy as part of their mission and those that have an established advocacy program.

Another important issue that warrants additional research is the tactics utilized by organizations that do advocacy. This study addressed advocacy targets, which speaks to where organizations chose to direct their efforts. However, in order to determine the targets, specific activities (or tactics) were utilized to measure these variables. Future research should seek to identify what tactics organizations are utilizing in order to advocate. If 65% of organizations say they advocate, how are they doing it? Does the type of tactics they utilize have any practical significance? Additionally, what factors predict the tactics organizations are using?

Asking the question about tactics and at the same time determining to whom these activities are directed can prove to be difficult. Researchers will need to be selective in the number of tactics utilized in a measure, since the length of a list of tactics could get overwhelming when responding to a survey. Additionally, attention needs to be paid to the potential redundancy in asking about targets and tactics at the same time.

A perhaps even more difficult issue to address, but one that deserves attention, is the classification of tactics utilized by these organizations. Previous research has alluded to the type of tactics to which organizations gravitate identifying some as low-risk or low-time consuming activities (Salamon & Geller, 2008). However, no measures have been created to determine what organizations classify as low or high risk. Because no research has been conducted in this specific area of advocacy and yet assumptions have been made about what organizations do, future studies should seek to address this gap in knowledge by exploring the perception of risk regarding advocacy activities.

One last area worth mentioning is the social work curriculum and its content of advocacy as a macro intervention. Some have questioned the need to increase content on social change, wondering what would be replaced in the curriculum if this content were added (Bardill, 1993).

Additionally, questions about the consequences of shifting the emphasis of social work from direct practice to macro practice, as well as about the effectiveness of macro level interventions have been raised (Bardill, 1993; Haynes, 1998). These issues speak to the historical "either or" approach to social work practice, where the profession has been placed in a position of having to choose between macro and micro interventions. Although this debate has been present since the profession was established, research in this area is paramount. Research sanctioned by the CSWE would be a good place to start. Because the profession espouses a commitment to social and economic justice, exploring the actual practice of this philosophy within schools of social work is necessary. This exploration would not only include curriculum content, but it should also address schools' involvement in advocacy, their expectations for faculty and students to be actively involved in social change, and the opportunities they provide for students to practice advocacy skills if indeed they are taught in the classroom.

Chapter Summary

This study set out to test the relationship between institutional factors and three areas that measured advocacy behavior by human service NPOs. Although not all hypotheses were confirmed, valuable information was obtained, which helped fill the knowledge gap present in advocacy research. In addition to confirming previous research and raising questions about previous findings, this study also expanded the field's knowledge of advocacy by reaching into areas that had not been previously addressed. This chapter presented interpretations of the results, implication for social work, limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey Cover Letter

Advocacy Structure and Strategy within Nonprofit Organizations

The Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia is assisting Ms. Marcela Mellinger, a Ph.D. student under the direction of Dr. Stacey Kolomer in the School of Social Work, in conducting a research survey about advocacy participation of nonprofit organizations. Because of the services your organization provides to the community and your geographic location, you have been selected to participate in the study. **Your participation is very important!** It is anticipated that the survey will take no more than 20 minutes of your time to complete.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. **All information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and you may chose not to answer any questions you do not want to answer.** No risk or discomfort is anticipated from participation in the study and there are no individual benefits from participating in the research. Please note that Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once your responses are received, standard confidentiality procedures will be used. All records from this study will be kept in a password-protected computer to which only the researcher has access.

At the completion of the survey, you will be asked to provide your contact information in order to invite you to a free advocacy workshop that will be conducted in the spring. This workshop will present the results of the study and will provide general information on advocacy by non-profit organizations. Although your organization's information will be collected if you chose to provide it, this information will not be connected to your survey responses.

To being the survey, please clik on the 'START SURVEY' link below.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask now or at a later date. You may contact James Bason, Ph.D., director of the Survey Research Center at 706-542-9082, or jbason@uga.edu or Marcela Mellinger, investigator at 706-546-1828, or marcela1@uga.edu with any questions.

Thank you for the invaluable help that you are providing by participating in this research study.

Sincerely,

James J. Bason, Ph.D.
Director and Associate Research Scientist
Survey Research Center

University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602
Phone: (706) 542-9082
E-mail: jbason@uga.edu

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to the Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia, 30602-7411; telephone (706) 542-3199; e-mail address: IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX B

Survey Instrument

Advocacy Structure and Strategy among Nonprofit Organizations Survey

Thank you for taking the time to help us learn more about the advocacy activities of nonprofits. As noted in the cover letter, your answers will be strictly confidential.

In this survey **advocacy** is defined as *purposive efforts which attempt to impact a specific decision, law, policy, or practice on behalf of a group of clients. The goal of advocacy is to bring about change in practices of service delivery systems and social policies that are unresponsive to clients' needs.*

Part I

General information regarding you, your organization, and its capacity

1. What is your title?

   _____ Executive director

   _____ Board member

   _____ Staff (specify position) ________________________

   _____ Volunteer (other than Board)

   _____ Other ________________________

2. Does your organization have 501(c)3 status? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Is your organizations
   a. A school ___ Yes ___ No
   b. A religious organizations ___ Yes ___ No
4. In what year was your organization founded? ______________

5. What is the primary purpose of your agency? _______________________

   ____

   ____

6. What is your organization's mission?

____

7. What is your primary target population? ____________________________________

8. How many full-time and part-time staff members does the organization employ? (Estimates are fine). Please write in the numbers below:

Professionals: ___ Full-time ____ Part-time

Clerical/support: ___ Full-time ____ Part-time

Other: ____ Full-time ____ Part-time

9. How many volunteers does your organization utilize (estimates are fine)? ___________

10. What is the educational background of the Executive Director?

Degree: _________ In what field ___________

Level: ____ High School ____ Associates ____ Bachelors ____ Masters ____ Doctorate

11. Do you professionally identify as a clinician ____ Yes ____ No

12. Do you have a professional license ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, what is your license ___________________

13. Please estimate the number of staff with the following educational backgrounds

______ Bachelors _______ Masters ________ Doctorate ______ Other

How many have a social work degree? ___________________________

14. What are the sources of your organization's annual income? Rough estimates are fine.

a. *Percent*

_____% Individual donors

_____% Government (any level; grants or contracts)

_____% Income from services provided to clients or others

_____% Fundraising events

_____% Other ____

100% Total

b. What percentage of the funds is restricted versus unrestricted?

______% Restricted (allocated for specific purpose by the funder)

______% Unrestricted (discretionary funds available for any necessary expense)

c. Total annual budget $_______________________

15. Have you seen a change in your budget since 2008? _____ Yes _____ No

a. If yes, what has the change been ______ Increase _____ Decrease

16. Regarding your organization's structure:

a. Does your organization have formal job descriptions for each paid staff position? ___ Yes ___ No

b. Does your organization have formal performance evaluations for each paid staff position? ___ Yes ___ No

c. Has your organization developed a strategic plan? ___ Yes ___ No

d. Does your organization keep statistical records on programs and services? ___ Yes ___ No

e. Has your organization formally evaluated any programs or services over the previous 3 years? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, how often are evaluations performed? ______________________

17. Is your organization accredited?

    ____ Yes ____ No ____ Do not know

18. Do you belong to any associations or coalitions?
    a. At what level? (check all that apply) ___ Local ___ State ___ National
    b. What are the names of those associations or coalitions? ____________________

19. Do any of these organizations represent you before government or other authority figures?

    ____ Yes ____ No

20. In your opinion, what are the major roles of nonprofit organizations? Please list them below:

    ____

    ____

Part II.

We would now like to learn about your advocacy participation, the structure of advocacy in your organization, and the way in which your organization communicates with people in authority and the community.

21. Is your organization involved in advocating or promoting solutions for broad scale social problems evident in your community, and on behalf of a certain group of groups or people (this includes attempts to impact a specific decision, law, policy, or practice with the goal of bringing about social change)? ___ Yes ___ No

22. Does your organization have any of the following:

An advocacy program	___ Yes	___ No
A specific staff person in charge of advocacy	___ Yes	___ No
A formalized advocacy strategy approved by the board	___ Yes	___ No
Advocacy as part of its mission	___ Yes	___ No

23. If your organization has one or more persons who are responsible for advocacy, please indicate who this person is. Please check all that apply.

____ Executive director

____ Staff member

_____ Full time advocacy responsibilities

_____ Part-time advocacy responsibilities

____ Board member

____ Board committee

____ Volunteer

____ Lobbyist or other outside professional on retainer

24. Has your organizations implemented any changes on the level of advocacy participation since 2008? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, in what direction has participation changed ____ Increase ____ Decrease

25. Based on your understanding, can your organization:

Support or oppose federal legislation under current IRS regulations	____ Yes	___ No
Take a policy position without reference to a specific bill under current regulations	_____ Yes	___ No
Support or oppose federal regulations	_____ Yes	___ No
Lobby if part of your budget comes from federal funds	_____ Yes	___ No
Use government funds to lobby Congress (State or National level)	_____Yes	___ No
Endorse a candidate for elected office	_____ Yes	___ No
Talk to elected public officials about public policy matters	_____ Yes	___ No
Sponsor a forum or candidate debate for elected office	_____ Yes	___ No

26. Does your organization consult experts about the legality of any efforts you make to influence government, other figures of authority, or the community at large? Check all that apply.

____ Attorney ____ Accountant ____ Experts at other nonprofits

____Other Please specify ___________________________________

____Never make any effort to influence figures of authority

27. In thinking about the major decisions your organization makes concerning advocacy efforts, how would you estimate the relative influence of the following participants in the decision-making process?

Influence	None				High
Executive director	0	1	2	3	4
Board of directors	0	1	2	3	4
Professional staff	0	1	2	3	4
Important donors and funders	0	1	2	3	4
Other ____________________	0	1	2	3	4

28. In thinking about the advocacy efforts in which your organization has engaged, how would you estimate the general effectiveness of those efforts?

Effectiveness

Not effective				High
0	1	2	3	4

Please provide any comments you have about the effectiveness of your advocacy

29. Does your organization have a specific evaluation plan to measure the outcomes of advocacy efforts?

______ Yes ______ No

If yes, what type of evaluation do you use? Please describe

A variety of ways of communicating and interacting with those in government, those in positions of authority, or the community at large are listed below. We would like to know which of these activities you utilize and how often you utilize them. Please use the scale below to indicate how frequently, if at all, your organization engages in these activities.

In this scale, "0" means never, "1" is relatively infrequent, and "4" is ongoing.

1. Legislative communication *Used when the target of change is a law or government regulation such as state law, local ordinance, municipal code, or school board policy, or when the budget is being reviewed, changed, and approved by the legislative body*						
Tactics **Does your organization:**	***Frequency:***	***Never***	***Low***			***High***
Build positive relationships with elected officials:	Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
	State level	0	1	2	3	4
	Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Monitor the legislative or local laws process at the following levels:	Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
	State level	0	1	2	3	4
	Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Testify in legislative or local hearings	Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
	State level	0	1	2	3	4
	Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Work with legislators or local elected officials through legislative process or establishment of local ordinances process	Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
	State level	0	1	2	3	4
	Local level	0	1	2	3	4

Respond to mass mailing or calls to action intended to influence legislators or local officials					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Write unique letters to legislators (NOT mass mailings or calls to actions)					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Make phone calls to elected officials to voice your opinion on specific issues					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Attend sessions during a vote					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Initiate and draft bills (participate in developing or revising public policy)					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Argue for types of funding to be changed					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Seek an executive veto or the signing of specific legislation or ordinance					
Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4

Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Invite elected officials to visit programs Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Provide testimony in legislative committee meetings or hearings Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Identify legislative activities that affect your organization's issues Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Encourage others to contact elected officials Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4
Collaborate with other organizations regarding political affairs Federal level	0	1	2	3	4
State level	0	1	2	3	4
Local level	0	1	2	3	4

2. Agency communication
Refers to tactics and activities used to bring about change in programs and public agencies that will benefit clients; it involves identifying needed changes in program policies (rules and regulations) and practices (procedures, outcomes, etc.) and influencing agencies to make the needed modification.

Tactics ***Frequency:*** **Does your organization:**	***Never***	***Low***			***High***
Meet with appropriate staff from public agencies in order to advocate for positive changes for clients	0	1	2	3	4

Write specific letters to administrative staff in public agencies requesting specific action	0	1	2	3	4
Provide feedback about government programs (services and client outcomes)	0	1	2	3	4
Participate in public agencies commissions or committees	0	1	2	3	4
Collaborate with other organizations regarding public agencies' affairs (services and client outcomes)	0	1	2	3	4
Meet with the administrator of another organization (nonprofit or for-profit service provider) with the goal of changing existing policies, regulations, or practices negatively impacting you clients	0	1	2	3	4
Monitor a public agency's activities that affect clients (budget preparation, decision-making, service delivery, and client outcomes)	0	1	2	3	4
Utilize the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) to comment on rules, provide written comments, encourage the agency to adopt or drop rules, or appeal decisions about rules	0	1	2	3	4
Work with inside advocates	0	1	2	3	4
Join task forces to investigate problems and propose solutions	0	1	2	3	4

3. Legal communication
A strategy utilized primarily in the judicial branch of government to influence the implementation of laws or legal rules as they influence clients

Tactics ***Frequency:*** **Does your organization:**	***Never***	***Low***			***High***
Meet with judges to discuss court practices that may affect clients	0	1	2	3	4
Meet with court workers to discuss court practices	0	1	2	3	4
Petition the court for needed services to be provided or improved	0	1	2	3	4

File or join lawsuits relevant to issues for which you have advocated	0	1	2	3	4
Access attorneys regarding accuracy of rules and regulations or court representation	0	1	2	3	4
Utilize local legal service organizations regarding broad level issues (not individual client issues)	0	1	2	3	4
Utilize the National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA), which provides technical assistance and support to advocates for low-income clients and their families and communities	0	1	2	3	4
Raise funds for litigation	0	1	2	3	4
Be an expert witnesses in cases where social justice for a group of people is at stake (versus individual cases)	0	1	2	3	4
Act as consultant for the litigating (i.e. providing research summaries, reviews from expert witnesses, discussion experts' observations)	0	1	2	3	4
Monitor court orders	0	1	2	3	4
Participate in the litigating strategy teams	0	1	2	3	4
Conduct community education efforts regarding cases in litigation	0	1	2	3	4

4. **Community communication**
In this strategy, the target is the community and its assumptions about vulnerable populations. Attitudes and myths often promoted within communities influence access to services for those in need, therefore intervention is necessary to change mistaken public perceptions in order to change policies or programs that do not meet the needs of clients.

Tactics ***Frequency:*** **Does your organization:**	***Never***	***Low***			***High***
Identify and research issues affecting the community at large	0	1	2	3	4
Write op-ed pieces or letters to the editor expressing your opinion on an issue	0	1	2	3	4
Organize a public event to raise awareness on an issue	0	1	2	3	4

Participate in community committees or task forces addressing social issues	0	1	2	3	4
Meet with an influential community member to advocate for an issue	0	1	2	3	4
Contact reporters to initiate publication of an article	0	1	2	3	4
Maintain relationship with reporters	0	1	2	3	4
Disseminate press releases or position papers	0	1	2	3	4
Initiate and participate in demonstrations, marches, rallies, vigils, or other forms of protest	0	1	2	3	4
Initiate and participate in informational meetings	0	1	2	3	4
Provide public education about a specific issue	0	1	2	3	4
Provided skill-building workshops to the community to encourage their participation in community issues (legislative, policy, or general community issues)	0	1	2	3	4
Engage in non violent civil disobedience (deliberately broke a law to draw attention to unjust government policies, programs, or actions)	0	1	2	3	4

Thank you for taking the time to help us. As stated in the cover letter, organizations that complete the survey will be invited to a free workshop regarding advocacy (results of the study will also be discussed). If you are interested in attending this workshop, please provide the following information:

Name of person to contact about workshop_________________________

Organization____

Address ____

____

Phone number ____