5-1-1966

The use of indigenous persons as neighborhood aides by Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc.

Robert E. Shrider

Atlanta University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations

Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

THE USE OF INDIGENOUS PERSONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD AIDES BY
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ATLANTA, INC.

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
ROBERT E. SHRIDER

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1966
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have assisted in the preparation of this study. Appreciation is expressed to each person who was interviewed to obtain the data presented herein. Special acknowledgment is made to Miss Frankie V. Adams, Assistant Director for Training and Staff Development, Neighborhood Services Organization, Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., for her guidance and cooperation during this study.

A special word of appreciation is expressed to my wife, Betty, for her assistance with some of the tabulation of material presented in this study and her help with proof-reading.

R.E.S.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE USE OF INDIGENOUS PERSONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD AIDES</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Employment of Neighborhood Aides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Aides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision of Aides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Aides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIXES</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 1</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 3</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ATLANTA, INC.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Distribution of Applicants by Age</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Number of Children of Applicants</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Distribution of Applicants by Education Completed</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Number of Applicants with Some Work Experience in a Particular Job Classification</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Study

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was passed by the Eighty-eighth Congress on August 20, 1964. The Declaration of Purpose of this Act states:

Although the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States have progressed to a level surpassing any achieved in world history, and although these benefits are widely shared throughout the Nation, poverty continues to be the lot of a substantial number of our people. The United States can achieve its full economic and social potential as a nation only if every individual has the opportunity to contribute to the full extent of his capabilities and to participate in the workings of our society. It is, therefore, the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity. It is the purpose of this Act to strengthen, supplement, and coordinate efforts in furtherance of that policy.¹

Included within the Act were provisions for several types of programs: Youth Programs, including Job Corps, Work-Training Programs, and Work-Study Programs; Urban and Rural Community Action Programs, including General Community Action Programs, Adult Basic Education Programs, and Voluntary Assistance for Needy Children; Special Programs to Combat Poverty in Rural Areas; Employment and Investment Incentives;

Community Action Programs are required to be "...developed, conducted and administered with the maximum feasible participation of the residents of the areas or neighborhoods in which the programs will be carried out and of the members of the groups that it will serve."¹ The employment of nonprofessionals on the staff of community action agencies is consistent with this requirement. One of the means which can ensure resident participation is stated in the Community Action Program Guide:

Employment, to the maximum extent feasible, of the residents of areas being served in jobs created as part of the community action program itself...will allow residents to influence the ways in which policy decisions are made and carried out... [This will include jobs]...in which special advantage can be taken of the residents' knowledge of and familiarity with the area. Such employment opportunities should be maximized through identification of tasks not requiring professional status.²

There are several assumptions made in employing indigenous persons as nonprofessionals on Community Action Programs staffs:

1. Employment of nonprofessional residents is one way of achieving resident participation in the total program.

2. An anti-poverty program should make jobs available for disadvantaged persons.

3. Existing professional shortages create a need for new staffing patterns to expand helping services.

4. Nonprofessionals, especially local residents, can perform certain tasks better than middle-class professionals.

5. A subsidiary goal, but an important one in long-range terms, is the gathering of information and assessment of

²Ibid., p. 16.
the contribution of nonprofessionals as a guide for future job creation in the human services.¹

If a community action agency is going to employ indigenous persons, it is necessary that strong commitment be made to their use. Assigning nonprofessionals only to low-level routine tasks does not guarantee commitment. It is necessary to have a substantial number of positions which can be filled by indigenous persons, provide adequate training and supervision, allow for feedback from the workers, and offer constructive evaluation periodically.

Let us assume that a resident of the target area is employed as a neighborhood worker with certain organizing and liaison functions. He becomes involved with problems relating in part to the inadequacies of a particular agency in responding to the needs of an individual, a family, or a group of families. Such problems could arise in regard to welfare, health, housing, placement service, or education, each a semi-autonomous agency. The nonprofessional may be able to convince his own professional colleague of the need for change, but what happens then? It is almost impossible to effect change in large organizations from the outside. The problem is to balance the desire for change on the part of the community action agency and the realization of the long term effort required. It is important that this realization be a part of the orientation of the nonprofessional so that failure to change immediately will not damage morale. The worker should be acquainted with the necessity to organize his clients around changes which may only come when consensus develops in the neighborhood, and when that consensus can be made effective through community organization.²

In recent years there had been a great deal of controversy within the social work profession as to whether or not persons without professional training should be used as aides in social work agencies.³ The


²Ibid., Section III.B.3.

staff shortage in the field of social welfare is focusing more attention on the use of the nonprofessional worker for some tasks in social work. "There is wide agreement that auxiliary personnel ought to be used as assistants to relieve the heavy work load of the harassed social worker. There is also considerable, although less widespread, sentiment for the development of a social work associate position...Both 'solutions' presuppose well-educated technicians who, although less trained and experienced than the professional, function essentially in his image..."\(^1\)

Reaching the lower socio-economic groups and particularly the poor is a growing and vital concern of the professional in human services and the more enlightened public service minded government agencies. The increasing recognition that there is a vast multitude of people with unmet needs has resulted in two national programs - the community mental health program and the anti-poverty program. Both of these programs have as their aim to tend to the total problems of those in society whose needs are greatest. Both are concerned with developing programs in the community for these hitherto forgotten people....

What strategies can be developed to convert the very great existing need into effective demand for services? How can we get those who need these services most to utilize the new programs? How can we bridge the gap between these people and the professionals who wish to help them?...Many new strategies relating to program, technology, and other aspects are being devised and demonstrated, especially in the field of mental health where planning began earlier.

The extent to which these will succeed depends ultimately on three factors: whether there is sufficient manpower in the human service professions, whether the service offered is appropriate, and whether it is utilized. These factors are closely interrelated...We wish to propose a strategy which we believe greatly increases the chances of success with all three of these factors. That strategy is a created unity between the skilled specialists from the helping professions and trained workers from the groups being helped (i.e., indigenous nonprofessionals). Indigenous nonprofessionals can

greatly increase manpower resources; they can serve in ways which are significantly more appropriate and which can effectively increase utilization. They can bridge the social distance and bring together the needy and the service, the server and the served.¹

In mid-1964, the Atlanta-Fulton County Economic Opportunity Authority was formed. Six persons each were appointed by the City of Atlanta and Fulton County. These twelve persons selected a person outside of the group, Mr. Boisfeuillet Jones, as its chairman. In the fall of 1964, Mr. Charles O. Emmerich was employed as Director, with full-time duties beginning January 1, 1965. Much of the planning and writing of the proposal for the Community Action Program was done on a contractual basis between the Authority and the Community Council of the Atlanta Area, Inc.

The official title for the agency administering the anti-poverty program in Atlanta is Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc. The target of the program is to meet the needs of over 200,000 persons whose annual income is under $3,000.00. Most of these persons are uneducated, untrained, unemployed, and underemployed. The basic philosophy of the Community Action Program in planning to meet these needs is to take whatever services are needed to the people in their own neighborhoods. The original planning called for establishing twelve neighborhood service centers in target areas within the city and the county.

On February 23, 1965, funds were received for the establishment of the first four of these neighborhood service centers. By mid-1965,

these four centers were in various stages of operation: West End Neighborhood Service Center, 725 Lawton Street, S. W.; NASH-Washington Neighborhood Service Center, 247 Ashby Street, N. W.; Price High School Neighborhood Service Center, 1127 Capitol Avenue, S. E.; South Fulton Neighborhood Service Center, 2735 East Point Street, East Point, Georgia. The remaining eight centers are in varying stages of development, and by March 1, 1966, all but two of the centers had directors.

Within the overall plan for the Community Action Program was the recognition of the shortage of trained workers and the need to develop a new type of worker. A proposal was made to train a corps of Neighborhood Service Aides. A total of three-hundred and sixty aides was to be trained, with thirty aides to be used at each center. Past programs in Atlanta prove that "...persons in poverty can perform in paid, responsible positions in a neighborhood center to help ensure the success of the program and make it become a more potent force in the community."¹

The application further proposed "...to establish a training course which would develop a corps of Neighborhood Service Aides comprised of mature men and women, ages 25-65, recruited from the neighborhoods in which the Economic Opportunity Authority is operating. Through a specially designed curriculum and carefully selected faculty, the course would attempt to achieve the following specific purposes:

1. Provide the aides with the knowledge, motivation, and ability to help implement the Neighborhood Services Program.

2. Develop talents and skills that might otherwise be dormant and provide people with an opportunity to fulfill more of their potential.

3. Supplement family income and increase independence.

4. Enrich the program and increase the quality and quantity of services given.

5. Not only alleviate staff shortages, but also relieve fully trained workers of tasks making relatively few demands on their professional skills.

6. Increase the capacity of people to help themselves and assure opportunities for the active participation of the residents of the neighborhoods in decisions and actions for individual and neighborhood improvements.

7. Complement the professional by not merely taking over lesser tasks, but also by fulfilling newly created ones.\(^1\)

Notice was received in Atlanta on April 9, 1965, that the application was approved by the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington. The Assistant Director, Training and Staff Development, immediately began to implement the training course program for aides. Faculty persons were selected to conduct various phases of the training course, and an orientation period was held to acquaint them with the purposes of the training. They were also given some help in developing the content and some methods of teaching which might be used. The first training course was started April 27, 1965. A total of nine classes is to be held before the contract expires.

Background Information

There has been a limited amount of pertinent material written to date relating to the use of indigenous persons as aides. Five sources

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 2.
will be cited which seem to have the most direct relation to the subject of this study. Two of these do not refer specifically to the use of the indigenous person, but they describe the use of aides in a way which has been a pattern for some of the other programs.

Philadelphia.--In January, 1959, an investigation was started at the Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, which would evaluate one approach to alleviation of the social work manpower problem in a hospital setting. It was supported by a Public Health Service research grant from the National Institute of Mental Health.¹

The study recognized that professionally trained social workers perform many services which may or may not require their full skills. Underutilization of the skills of a trained worker lessens effectiveness and does not serve the best interests of the clients.

The research design encompassed the demonstration and testing of a central plan of assigning cases on the basis of criteria for four levels of staff: senior caseworker, caseworker, case aide, and secretary. By identifying various elements in the case during the intake process and the duration of the case, it was planned to determine the lowest staff level at which the case could be responsibly assigned and carried...Entire responsibility for a case could be given to any level except secretary.²

Over the three year period prior to the beginning of the study, the staff had developed criteria for assignment of cases to case aides and the two levels of caseworkers. Criterion was then developed for the new case system for assignment. For a comprehensive use of this


²Ibid., pp. 36-37.
criterion, each staff member, except secretary, needed to be familiar with the criteria applying to all levels. Then the casework staff could be alert to the indications for partial assignment or for total transfer of the case from one level to another.\(^1\) Three approaches were described for evaluating the results: from the point of view of quantity of service, from the point of view of quality of service, and from the point of view of staff reaction.\(^2\)

**National Social Welfare Assembly.**--The Conference on Individualized Services of the National Social Welfare Assembly held a series of meetings of "Effective Utilization of Staff." One meeting in January, 1958, was held on the "Use of the Case Aide," and following it there was a great demand for this material to be more fully developed for a wider audience. Summaries of many other programs refer to this document.\(^3\)

If an agency decides that it needs to create a case aide position, there are several factors which should be given consideration:

The agency should examine the content of its casework services, in order to identify the work which requires full professional social work training, partial professional social work training and no professional training.

Once these areas are clear, the agency then is ready to determine at what educational level it will set the case aide position.

The next step is the determination of the personal qualities necessary for this position. Basic is an aptitude for and an interest in working with people. Whatever qualifications

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 37-38.

\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 39-43.

\(^3\)The Use of Case Aides in Casework Agencies, op. cit.
are selected as required, this position is at the beginning of the casework classification sequence.

If the position is well defined, it is not merely an adjunct to the caseworker, but has dignity in itself and will give satisfaction to the individual so employed.

Age need not necessarily be a factor...

The agency must also give consideration to ways of handling staff concerned lest the case aide imperceptibly slide into functioning as a caseworker... When the case aide position is defined clearly it has its own dignity and becomes a career position...

The agency should involve its board and the chest or united fund in the development of the case aide position, in order to understand the objective and how the case aide implements agency services. With such interpretation, there will be no need for concern that the case aide position is an economy measure replacing more expensive staff and lowering service standards.

The agency should give careful thought to supervision of the case aide, for experience has emphasized the need for adequate and appropriate supervision... It is expected that as case aides gain experience under supervision, they become more competent and require less supervision.

...An agency should examine periodically all its casework positions.

The use of volunteers also needs further examination. Depending upon the skills they bring to their work, they may be performing clerical, case aide or casework functions.¹

These considerations are very important for agencies which are using aides for purposes other than casework, also. They have served as guidelines for various experiments and projects in different settings.

Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited.--Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, better known as HARYOU, has done some work using

¹Ibid., pp. 1-3.
residents of a target community as the persons employed to give direct service. It appears that professional training often engenders flight from the clients, both ideologically and literally. Because of the shortage of personnel, it often develops that, after thorough orientation and retraining, they can best be used for advisory, consultative, teaching and program planning functions.

The residents of the target community, as workers, can benefit financially and in other ways which have wholesome consequences for themselves and their families, such as status, self-esteem, pride, and meaningful work. They can communicate better with other residents. They are more amenable to long hours of direct contact.

Some residents will have traits and natural skills for the role. They will need orientation to roles affording wider scope for natural and homely talents. They will need help in developing more sophisticated levels of skill and understanding in dealing with problems of the area. They can avoid the cultural shock of middle-class workers. In some cases, the training for the resident worker may serve as a "substitute" for treatment for the indigenous person who has not gone into apathy or despair too far. Many of the components of this approach are found in other programs also using the indigenous person.

National Institute of Labor Education.--The National Institute of Labor Education has issued a special report on "The Indigenous Non-professional," which describes a strategy of change in community action

---

and community mental health programs. It analyzes the need for
and the use of indigenous nonprofessionals as "bridgemen" between the
professional worker and low-income people.

The essential value of the indigenous nonprofessional is his
capability for acting as a bridge between the middle-class
oriented professional and the client from the lower socio-
economic groups. Implicit in the bridge concept is the
notion that people drawn from lower socio-economic strata
may have special skills for establishing communication
across lines...

The indigenous nonprofessional is poor, is from the neighbor-
hood, is often a member of a minority group. His family is
poor. He is a peer of the client and shares a common back-
ground, language, ethnic origin, style and group of interests
which it would be impossible and perhaps even undesirable for
most professionals to maintain. These attributes alone make
the worker more acceptable to the client and ward off the
suspicion, distrust, obsequiousness or hostility which often
characterize the attitude of the poor toward professionals.2

Because of what the indigenous person is, he can do things which
the professional can not do. The indigenous nonprofessional is con-
siderably less formal. "The nonprofessionals...will hug clients,
accept and repay their hospitality, and share first-name designations."3
Because of his own situation, the indigenous nonprofessional has
acquired some first-hand experience in dealing with the problem of
the poor. Many times he has experienced similar difficulties to those
with which his client needs some help.4

---

1Reiff, op. cit.
2Ibid., p. 8.
3Ibid., p. 9.
4Ibid., pp. 9-10.
The 'Style' of the nonprofessional is significantly related to this effectiveness, because it matches the clients'. This is perhaps best seen in the indigenous nonprofessional's tendency to externalize causes rather than look for internal ones. 1

Indigenous nonprofessionals tend to be more militant than professionals. They call for action, with less willingness for talk and delay. This indicates a concern for something to be done to correct a problem right now. 2

The motivation for the indigenous nonprofessional is very important. His effectiveness will depend to some degree on what the job does for him. He gets special satisfaction for his work, such as "...respect gained from performing a meaningful job in cooperation with professionals, pride in learning a skill, and most of all, a feeling that he is helping others." 3

The 'helper therapy' principle has at least two important implications for the indigenous nonprofessional of lower socio-economic background: 1) since many of the nonprofessionals recruited for anti-poverty programs will be school dropouts, former delinquents, long-term ADC mothers and the like, it seems quite probable that placing them in a helping role will be highly therapeutic for them; 2) as the nonprofessionals benefit personally from their helping roles they should become more effective as workers and thus provide better help at a higher level of skill. 4

The report describes various jobs the indigenous nonprofessional can do, factors in recruitment and selection, and issues in their training. The report warns that an agency can use the nonprofessional

---

1Ibid., p. 10.
2Ibid., p. 10.
3Ibid., pp. 10-11.
4Ibid., p. 11.
in a negative manner only to provide a facade to serve the poor.\footnote{Ibid., p. 41.} From the conclusions drawn from this report, two sections are quoted:

Given the current background of the manpower shortage, the anti-poverty climate, and the criticism of social agencies with regard to their treatment of the poor, we argue that the utilization of indigenous nonprofessional personnel is likely to be quite strategic. It is not the use of the indigenous workers in the abstract which will foster change of agency outlook and program, but their use in the context of other pressures in the same direction - for example, government funding and support through the Economic Opportunity Act and the Community Mental Health Centers Act. The indigenous nonprofessional, working in this context, can help pull together a variety of factors moving toward new agency orientation...

We believe that the introduction of indigenous nonprofessional workers into agency structures can be effective strategy of change in the field of human services. It can meet many of the present needs. 1) It can markedly reduce the manpower shortage in the social service fields. 2) It can help make the professionals' role definitions more flexible, creating an alliance between professionals to more fully play their technical roles. 3) It can provide more, better and 'closer' service for the poor. 4) It can rehabilitate many of the poor themselves through meaningful employment. 5) It can potentially provide millions of new jobs for the unemployed in social service positions which are not likely to be automated out of existence.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 41-43.}

The presentation through this report is very stimulating and should be a very helpful guide and stimulus to agencies involved in any kind of program for community action. This report has been used by Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., as it made some preparation for using indigenous persons in the Neighborhood Service Centers.

Mobilization for Youth.--One of the programs under Mobilization for Youth made use of fifteen neighborhood women employed by a social
work agency as visiting homemakers. They were assigned to homes for several full or half-days a week to help low-income families improve their skills in home-management tasks such as shopping, cleaning, sewing, budgeting, taking care of their children, cooking, and planning their time. In addition, homemakers offered some services traditionally done by case aides, such as escorting persons to clinics, helping establish eligibility for public housing or public assistance, and providing companionship and support as part of a casework plan. They maintained a baby-sitting center where mothers could leave their children while they kept appointments or ran errands.

The visiting homemakers were able to be helpful to a substantial number of the families served. Many of these families were not likely to have been receptive to agency-based casework or counseling. Homemakers were assigned to forty-eight cases during the first six months. All but six families improved in at least one area of home management. Among those cases regarded as failures, the homemaker was able to develop a good relationship with the client in most instances, but was unable to effect changes in her pattern of behavior. The apparent ability of the visiting homemakers to decrease the self-defeating behavior of low-income clients makes it important for us to try to understand their contribution to a social welfare program.¹

appreciates and knows how to realize their potentiality."¹ Sometimes untrained neighborhood workers are considered poor substitutes for professionals; therefore, the goal of supervision, training and administration may be to help them become as "professional" as possible. They must be oriented to agency goals and social work goals and be freed as much as possible from attitudes which are hostile and damaging to clients.²

Because we would sometimes prefer to hire professionals if given the choice, we tend to seek upwardly mobile slum dwellers or middle-class persons who lack social-work education. We find such persons, who usually serve as case aides, easier to get along with than lower-class persons because they are more likely to share our values. Unfortunately, these middle-class oriented workers also share our difficulties in developing rapport with clients. They have neither the know-how of the lower-class worker nor the skill of the trained worker.

To a certain extent a lack of respect for the work of lower-class neighborhood staff stems from a clinical approach to the problems of the poor. We have acknowledged that our neighborhood workers were indeed unskilled when it came to psycho-social diagnosis and to psychotherapy. They were neither caseworkers nor case aides. However, if we regard social deprivations as critical barriers for many lower-class clients, the providing them with skills for coping with difficult management problems (as well as expanding social opportunities) is an important goal of social work practice. In this type of social treatment, an indigenous staff can make a substantial contribution. Even when there are severe psychological problems, bread-and-butter difficulties often need to be alleviated before the client can concentrate on inner or intra-psychic help. In several cases the homemakers' help with environmental problems was an important prelude or concomitant of psychological treatment by the casework staff.³

¹Ibid., p. 42.
²Ibid., pp. 42-43.
³Ibid., pp. 43-44.
George Brager points out most of the same reasons for using indigenous nonprofessionals as have the preceding reports. He does point out in addition that the indigenous worker can serve as an effective model for other community residents. This worker becomes someone with whom another resident can more clearly identify than he can with a professional worker.

Concerning the programs of Mobilization for Youth which use indigenous persons, Mr. Brager states, "It is a documented fact that the programs serve vast numbers of low-income persons heretofore unreached by private agency services. Although this probably has more to do with the nature of the service than with the use of nonprofessionals, it is safe to assume that they are a contributory element."

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe the planned use of indigenous persons as neighborhood aides by Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc. It is assumed that there is value in using as aides these persons who are residents of the neighborhood being served. They are being employed as nonprofessionals to help people with various kinds of problems find ways of solving these problems.

Method of Procedure

Interviewing will be done with personnel in the central office of Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., and with aides employed at the

---

1Brager, op. cit., pp. 33-35.
2Ibid., p. 35.
3Ibid., p. 40.
first four Neighborhood Service Centers: West End, NASH-Washington, Price High, and South Fulton. This study will describe what the proposal for the use of aides included and how this has been implemented.

The proposal of Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., for the use of residents as aides will be reviewed to understand the original plan. All other written materials within the agency relating to the use of aides will be carefully screened. All applications for aides will be reviewed to document some of the characteristics of applicants for the position of Aide. A sample will be selected for presenting this information.

Through this descriptive study these questions will be answered:

1. What kinds of people will be considered for employment as Neighborhood Aides? What qualifications have been established? What are some of the characteristics of those who have applied for employment as aides?

2. What type of training will be received before they start to work in the neighborhood?

3. What kinds of jobs will aides be expected to perform? What level of performance is expected?

4. What supervision will be given to aides?

5. What criteria will be considered in evaluating the work done by aides? Who will make evaluations? How frequently will evaluations be conducted?

6. What implications does the use of indigenous persons as nonprofessionals have for social work?
CHAPTER II

THE USE OF INDIGENOUS PERSONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD AIDES

Recruitment and Employment of Neighborhood Aides

Applicants for all positions of employment with Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., including Neighborhood Aides, are expected to complete an Application for Employment. A wide range of information is requested, including biographical data, educational background, employment history, health record, and references.

A Job Description has been prepared for use in employing Neighborhood Aides. It lists several qualifications:

Mature person ranging in age from 22 to 65, but exact age is not important.

Must be intelligent and literate with a capacity and deep desire to learn and to develop, but educational background is not important.

Warm, friendly person who is able to relate to people with sincere interest, concern, and willingness to help and not pass judgment.

Roots and interest should be in the community and there should be a concern with the problems that exist in it.

Ability to accept supervision and abide by the rules and regulations which govern the E.O.A.

\[1\] Application for Employment, Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., Appendix E, p. 56.
Ability to work comfortably with others, to adapt to changing situations and to varied personalities.1

The duties which Aides are expected to assume are listed in the Job Description. In addition to these duties listed, some additional ones may be assigned within the Neighborhood Service Center.

'Reach out' to find those who are unemployed and see that they are interviewed by the employment counselor.

Maintain contact with those placed in jobs for a specific period to assure adjustment on the job.

Supplement the counseling, education program and services given by the schools.

Assist in cafeteria in conjunction with breakfast and free lunch programs.

Work with parents to increase their understanding of how children's performance in school is related to conditions in the home.

Serve as a liaison between the neighborhood and the larger community - locating and defining problems and mobilizing resources to help meet the problems.

Stimulate and motivate individuals and groups to participate in programs of self help and help them organize and work together to use their own resources and those of the community to help meet and solve problems.

Keep records, gather and analyze statistical and research data.

Help recruit and screen candidates for special programs such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Manpower Development Training courses and Basic Education courses.

Serve as an Expediter. It is the Expediter's responsibility to put the client and the service in touch with each other.

May be assigned to special problem areas, i.e., home management, day care, vocational rehabilitation, public

welfare, health, employment.

May be assigned as method of service, i.e., casework, group work or community organization.¹

All applications for Neighborhood Aides are kept on file in the Neighborhood Service Organization, Office of Training and Staff Development, 101 Marietta Street Building. Many of these applications have been made at the downtown office, while others have been referred by the Neighborhood Service Centers. A cursory check of the application for eligibility is made by staff members in the Office of Training and Staff Development. Applications are then sorted by address as they fall within the twelve target areas of the Neighborhood Service Centers.

Center Directors review the applications to select those persons who seem to be the best possibilities for employment. These applications are processed by the Personnel Office to determine whether or not the applicant is eligible for employment. A credit check is made and background information is checked for character references and any police record. If these points are cleared, a physical examination must then be passed before employment could become effective. When the "check-out" is completed, the Center Director makes his decision concerning the employment of the applicant. While this process of "check-out" is being carried out, the Center Director will have had the opportunity to interview the applicant more fully. In addition, he may request other center staff, such as the Social Service Supervisor or the Aide Supervisor also to talk with the applicant. With all of this background, the Center Director is then in a position to make

¹Ibid., pp. 1-2.
the decision.

Applicants for the position of Aide are sometimes interviewed by staff in the Training Office. The Personnel Office has added some considerations which need to be made, in addition to the qualifications listed earlier. Nearly all of the aides which are employed must reside within the area served by the Neighborhood Service Center. Between 75 - 80% of the aides must reside within the target area. The income base should not be too flexible, and should adhere closely to an annual income of $1,600.00 or less for a single person, $3,200.00 for a family of 2-4 persons, $3,800.00 for a family of 5, and $4,500.00 for a family of six or more. It is also felt that it is unwise to employ persons who tend to be immature and pretend that they have more money than they really do. Based on some earlier experiences, this kind of attitude has made for some difficult relationships among other employees.

Those applicants not employed are kept on file in the Neighborhood Service Organization office. Some of these persons may be considered at a future time. Some may be referred for other programs, such as aides to work with the Atlanta Public Schools or aides to work in a temporary program to inform residents about Medicare. Those applicants who are employed as aides are encouraged to submit applications for positions above this classification as they qualify. As this is done, these applications are kept in the central Personnel Office. The same considerations are made for these persons as for all other applicants applying for regular positions.
Currently there are four classifications for aides. Class #4 Aides should have a high school education or less. They will work in Neighborhood Service Centers, Fulton County Health Department Centers, Grady Memorial Hospital or with the Atlanta Housing Authority. Their salary will be $2,600.00 per annum. Class #3 and Class #2 Aides should have a higher educational level and some special training. They will work in specialized assignments at the centers, such as intake workers, manpower and recreation leaders. Their salary will be $3,000.00 per annum for Class #3 and $3,300.00 per annum for Class #2. Class #1 Aides should have reached the college level or had 1 or 2 years of college and special skills. They will be used as community organization leaders and home management workers. Their salary will be $3,850.00 per annum.

Provision is made for each Neighborhood Service Center to have thirty aides with the following distribution: five in Class #1, six in Class #2, six in Class #3, and thirteen in Class #4. There is no provision for increments within each class. In order for an aide to receive an increment, she must be elevated to a higher class. This can only be done if there is an opening within that class.

Current benefits which aides receive are hospitalization and major medical insurance, including some life insurance, social security, sick leave, annual leave, holidays and blood bank. There is a three-month probationary period for aides, while the period for professional workers is six months.

A proposal is under consideration which would eliminate the four classes of aides, and establish two new categories. Eleven of
the thirty persons in each Neighborhood Service Center would be classified as subprofessionals or Assistants to the Professional. This new classification would encompass the former Class #1 and Class #2 Aides. The annual salary for these persons would be within a range of $3,300.00 to $3,850.00. This would allow for increments without moving to another classification. Nineteen of the thirty persons would be classified as Neighborhood Service Aides. This would include the former Class #3 and Class #4 Aides. The salary range for this group would be $2,600.00 to $3,300.00. The same benefits listed above would apply to all thirty of these persons, with the eleven subprofessionals also qualifying for retirement benefits and tenure after six months.

In order to see some of the characteristics of those making application for the position of Aide, a sampling of these applications was made. As of September 9, 1965, 1182 applications were on file with the Neighborhood Service Organization. Every tenth application was included in the sample, beginning with the first application, continuing with the eleventh, twenty-first, and so on, making a total of 119 applications in the sample. One hundred and nine of these were female and ten were male.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the sampling of applicants by age. The median age for applicants is between the ages of 31 and 35.
### TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICANTS BY AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 and under</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 35</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 40</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 55</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 - 60</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over half of the applicants are married. Sixty-one are married, twenty-one single, twenty are separated from the spouse, nine are divorced, and eight are widowed. Fifty-six applicants indicated that they live with their spouse while sixty-three do not live with a spouse.

Table 2 shows the number of children applicants have. The average number of children per applicant is two. The statement is often made that many low-income persons have children out of wedlock. This sampling shows that of the twenty-one single applicants, six have one child each, two have two children each, and thirteen have no children.
TABLE 2
NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF APPLICANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A description of the guideline for income for applicants and their families was given on page 22. It is difficult to determine the exact income of the families. Cursory examination shows that nineteen applicants seem to be above the amount which the income guideline permits, while one hundred seem to fall below it.

Table 3 indicates the distribution of applicants by education completed. Thirty-nine of the sample did not complete high school, while eighty graduated from high school. Of these eighty, twenty-six
did some college work. Not shown in the table is the fact that of the fifty-four which completed high school only, ten did some special training, such as a post-graduate business course, some practical nursing training, or beauty school training.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICANTS BY EDUCATION COMPLETED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Education Completed</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7th grade or below</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th grade</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th grade</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th grade</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year college</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years college</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years college</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information entered under employment history on the applications indicates a wide range of work experiences, but most of the experience is in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Forty-three of the applicants in the sample show experience in more than one type of job, seventy show experience in one type of job only, and six show no job
experience of any kind. Table 4 shows the number of applicants with some work experience in a particular job classification. In order to tabulate the work experience, some broader classifications are used which include several types of jobs. Domestic Help includes maids, baby sitters, day workers and porters. Food Service includes cooks, waitresses, bus boys and steam table operators. Industrial Workers include assembly line workers, bottlers, packers, and sorters. Nursing Assistants include nurses aides, dental assistants and practical nurses. Office Clerks include file clerks and receptionists. Sales clerks, stock clerks and cashiers make up the category of Store Clerks. Nearly all of the jobs included under the category of Other are those with only one listing, such as upholstery worker, lifeguard, elevator operator, and the like.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF APPLICANTS WITH SOME WORK EXPERIENCE IN A PARTICULAR JOB CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Classification</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Help</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Workers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Clerks</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store Clerks</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care Workers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry Helpers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauticians</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Training of Aides

Aides have been trained in classes averaging forty persons per class. Each class consisted of four weeks spent in a classroom setting and four weeks in a field placement. The curriculum for the training course had the following broad objectives:

1. To impart knowledge about helping individuals in a neighborhood to overcome their problems and to develop the capacity of the people to help themselves. This would involve knowing the nature of the problems, the nature of the people, and the nature of attitudes in giving help.

2. To develop appreciation and understanding of health, education and welfare problems.

3. To know and be able to use community resources. To know what they are, how they can be used, and why certain requirements and regulations exist.

4. To develop skills in using some of the tools and techniques of giving help to individuals and groups. These would include interviewing, fact finding, record keeping, making referrals and group meetings.

5. To develop leadership and increase resident interest in assisting to improve conditions in the neighborhood.¹

Sessions were included in the training course to provide three basic sets of materials. One set helped to answer questions related to problems of the poor. The problems selected were those which were known and were most obvious at the time the training was initiated, and included day care, mental health, welfare, health, family problems, housekeeping and home management, and employment. Another set of material introduced many of the community resources which could be used to meet some of these problems. This included content about Economic

Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., its program, structure, and information about neighborhoods. It also included information about existing agencies and their programs. A third set of material was offered to help the aides develop some skills which would be needed to perform the duties assigned to them.

A proposed outline of what would be discussed each week included:

First Week - orientation to Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., and the Neighborhood Services Program; description of neighborhoods where aides would work, including simple maps to be filled in by aides, tours, census information, locations of services offered within areas, etc.

Second Week - problems of the area as they are seen by the aides, specialists, and professional staff; ways of solving these problems, using discussion, trips to facilities, case histories, individual interviews, and small work groups.

Third Week - ways of working with individuals and groups who have problems, including interviewing, record keeping, referral methods, methods of working with groups.

Fourth Week - field placement in an agency to carry out some work in a specialized area.

Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Weeks - placement in Neighborhood Service Center to which the aide would regularly be assigned; the last day of each week would be spent back in the classroom discussing problems encountered during the week and evaluating the experiences. ¹

Class sessions during the first four weeks lasted from 9:30 A.M. until 3:30 P.M., with one hour for lunch. They were held Monday through Friday. Sessions the fifth through eighth weeks operated Monday through Thursday in each center from 8:30 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Friday sessions were held in class and the hours were the same as the

¹ Ibid., pp. 2-7.
first four weeks. The decision for this schedule was made by the Project Director, based on some past experiences in group training with volunteers. This shorter schedule during the early part of the course took into account the fact that most of the aides had not been in a classroom setting for some time. It required considerable adjustment to sit and to concentrate for this length of time.

Teachers selected to present material were persons whom the Project Director knew were experienced in the information area they were requested to teach. Special effort was made to include personnel from Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc., representatives from Emory University and Atlanta University, and local agency persons. A conscious effort was also made to have a racially integrated faculty.

Each individual who was invited to teach was requested to submit an outline of the material to be presented and of the teaching methods which would be employed. An orientation session was held with the first group of teachers to inform them in more detail about the Economic Opportunity Program, the kind of group which was being taught, and some teaching methods which might be effectively used. Several of the teachers conferred with the Project Director so that they would be better prepared to meet the class. In some cases, outlines were returned with the request that some revisions be made. For example, some of the teachers needed to simplify the terminology being used; others needed to present more basic material and less detailed material.

After the first training course was completed, some minor adjustments were made. The basic content was maintained, but the number of hours was lessened for some teachers and increased for
others. This decision was based on the interests and needs of the class members. More time was also allowed for discussion and for review of content. Some of the hours for classes were shifted due to available times of the teachers. The only major revision was the giving up of the field work with an agency being interspersed with the classroom theory. There were not enough agencies which were able to provide a valuable learning experience for a few days of field work. It was too difficult arranging legitimate experiences for the aides for such a brief time and then have them leave the agency after a week.

Interviews were held with a sample of the aides employed in the first four Neighborhood Service Centers. The sample was obtained by selecting every fifth aide listed on the employment board for each center. Five aides were interviewed in each center for a total of twenty interviews. In response to the question, "Did you feel the training you received was helpful?", eighteen answered, "Yes." Two replied, "In some ways." The following answers were given when asked, "In what ways was the training helpful?":

1. "The class helped make me less shy. I would have been glad to pay for the experience. I realize much more the community conditions. I can see the relation of E.O.A. and the church...The class helped break down barriers between races. I'm getting incentive to do a brush-up course in business and public speaking."

2. "The course is...one of the most wonderful things that ever happened to me. It would have helped if I had known what to expect. I did not know this would be an integrated class. This has been an experience which really helped. Each day gets better."

3. "It helped me get some answers from experts. Sharing opinions was helpful."
4. "It was helpful to some degree. It was geared too low for me, but I know that it was helpful to many people."

5. "I was helped to see [the importance of] the confidential nature of information."

6. "I have more assurance in my work. I have a closer relationship to those persons and agencies related to E.O.A. Meeting new friends, finding new resources, and how to do certain things meant a lot."

7. "It was a broad experience in basic understanding of people and improving communication. I was enlightened on social services with more depth than earlier learnings. ...I will be able to work more closely with clients and see what I am doing."

8. "I got help in approaching people and knowing some ways I could be helpful. I learned how to do follow-up and am encouraged to do a better job."

9. "I look at things differently. I couldn't do without this."

10. "I understand many things I did not know before. It helped me see responsibility and how I could meet this."

11. "It helped me in some ways. I was helped in working with groups."

12. "I have more new knowledge. I know how to interview and evaluate problems."

13. "It was a new kind of experience. I learned so many new things."

14. "I learned new things."

15. "The experience helped even more [than the class]. The training helped me get more objectivity in my work."

16. "The information told how to do something, like block formations."

17. "I learned how to meet people and not get too upset by problems. I learned about welfare and social security, and how to interview."
18. "It helped me be less bashful. I can carry on a better conversation."

19. "It prepared me in many ways. It could have been a longer training period and more time spent on interviewing."

20. "Lectures on interviewing were most helpful."

All persons in the sample were asked, "What was most helpful in the training course?" Eleven indicated that the information on interviewing was most helpful, although there were many things which they found helpful from the course. Two persons said that the agency information concerning available resources was most helpful. Four people believed that the information about group meetings was most helpful. One indicated that the techniques about things you should and should not do in community organization were most helpful. Two said that they just could not pick out anything that was most helpful because so many things were helpful.

When asked, "What things were least helpful in the training course?", twelve persons did not believe that there was anything included in the training that was not helpful. One person said that she would never use the information about visiting nurses. One person said that some of the teachers used words which were too big and too hard to understand. One person felt that the tours to centers were a waste of time because she did not see anything going on. One person said that the family planning information was not helpful because it was not accurate. The respondent said, "There were discrepancies in what he said. He used only what he wanted to in order to get a point across."

Four people indicated that the information on Urban Renewal was not helpful. Three out of the four respondents said the teacher was just
too dull, and that is the reason this was not helpful.

The following replies were given when asked, "What additional information do you wish you had received?":

1. "We needed fuller information about different agencies, such as Red Cross, Grady, and others. We should have pamphlets of some kind on every agency. Could we get a stencil cut on different agency services? Also we need a pamphlet on services we will offer in our E.O.A. center."

2. "I missed the first two weeks, so this is hard to answer. We should not be allowed to miss any weeks."

3. "It would be helpful to have some of the orientation the Service Aides get before starting into a class for C.O. [Community Organization] Aides."

4. "I needed more definite working knowledge of techniques. It would have been helpful if we had more follow-through. One teacher promised to get us some information and reports, but he never did."

5. "I would like help on how to file records we write."

6. "We need someone to pave the way so we could have a better working relationship at Grady and the Welfare Department. Policies seem to change so quickly there... We need some identification [badge] for aides as a form of authorizing us to visit homes and make agency contacts."

7. "We need additional business information."

8. "We need to help people have better ways of reacting to people contacted. We need training as to how to deal with people and speak to people. We need training in a more adequate follow-up program. These are needed with almost all center personnel, not just aides."

9. "We need more home management information and what this could do for people. We need more surplus food information. Also, how do we deal with children who are not regularly attending or not enrolled in school? We also need help in how to impress people about the importance of making the effort to come to the center, and the need for getting children back in school."
10. "We need more help in health, and how to motivate people to personal and household cleanliness."
11. "We need more background about E.O.A. We only had a Fact Sheet, and I need more information."
12. "More information on social security is needed. We need help in making reports more condensed, yet meaningful. I came in late and missed some."
13. "I didn't need any other information."
14. "A little longer time is needed. I came in late and missed some."
15. "More time is needed with the person from welfare. We need longer in class so more information on agencies could be presented."
16. "Record-keeping information is needed. How do we get it done promptly and keep it concise? We need more on how to carry out a personnel interview. Also, more help in public speaking and expressing yourself in a more adequate manner is needed."
17. "A little more interviewing would be helpful."
18. "More information on welfare is needed. We need more actual policies and procedures."
19. "More time could be used in each phase of training. We need a prevue of what the course would include. I was not clear on what the relationship of an aide is to E.O.A."
20. "More information about new social security laws is needed."

Supervision of Aides

The supervision of the aides is the primary responsibility of the Aide Supervisor in each Neighborhood Service Center. Some aides may be assigned to other areas of responsibility within the center, such as intake, manpower, or home management. In these cases, the responsible staff member will do some of the supervising, but the Aide Supervisor still has the final responsibility for their supervision.
The Aide Supervisors in each of the four Neighborhood Service Centers were interviewed to determine what is being done in the supervision of aides. The nature of the supervision given to aides includes:

1. "Assignments are made, communications skills and problems with English are worked on, and other problem areas are discussed. I try to help them with personal problems when they come to me. They also need a lot of help with office procedures."

2. "They need help with reports so they can interpret the problems and say what they mean. We do a lot of work on spelling and grammar. I am helping them to be more resourceful. They need to learn how to think for themselves."

3. "We work a lot on communication skills. Their spelling is bad. We work on sentence structure and word definitions. I make assignments and we discuss them. We spend time evaluating what they are able to do."

4. "We work on record keeping so they learn to record as quickly as possible after the interview and so they actually put down what is done. We try to improve communication in the reports. We try to develop a sense of loyalty to E.O.A., and understand the responsibility for completing assignments. We try to work on individual growth through reading assignments and discussing any learning situations as they arise. There seems to be a resistance to forms and recording on the part of many of them."

All four Aide Supervisors indicated that there is a group conference every morning as the aides arrive. This is primarily to give instructions and make assignments. One supervisor indicated that group conferences are also held at other times as needed. Usually these will come late in the afternoon when nearly all of the aides have returned to the center.

One Aide Supervisor said that she did not make any definite plans for the conferences. Another indicated that she left the agenda up to the group as to what problems they wanted to discuss and what
points they wished to clear. Two supervisors prepare some sort of an agenda based on the needs that they observe and the new programs or explanations which need to be given.

Aides in all centers are expected to record all interviews and contacts on the form provided. Each aide makes a daily report of what she actually does. Each center also has some sort of canvass form which is completed to determine what problems exist within each household in the neighborhood served by the center.

These records provide the basis for seeing where there are problem areas which need to be explored with the group or with an individual aide. They point up problems of recording which need further improvement. They also serve as instruments to see what progress is being made in sentence structure, spelling, and grammar. Some case illustrations are used from time to time in group and individual conferences to point up good work which was done or areas where better approaches might have been made.

Two Aide Supervisors have made no definite plans for in-service training, although they do include some items they consider as training in group conferences. The other two supervisors have a plan for this training on a regular basis once a week. There are occasions where additional sessions will be scheduled during the week. None of the four centers has definite outlines to follow. The training grows out of the problems, needs, and new programs which must be explained. The two supervisors which do have some plan include some information related to human development and human behavior, interviewing techniques, home management demonstrations, and English classes. Help in making
referrals and information about some of the social agencies are offered on occasion.

The twenty aides in the sample were asked, "Has your supervision since you started to work in the center been helpful? In what ways?" Eighteen aides said that it had been helpful, while two said that it had not. Some gave more than one way in which it was helpful:

Help in seeing errors in cases - 2
Helped by making suggestions - 4
Helped by being understanding - 4
Helped with problems of recording - 2
Helped with interviewing - 3
Helped with grammar and spelling - 3
Helped by being frank and honest - 1
Helped by always being willing to talk - 2
Did not help because supervisor isn't available - 2
Did not help because we are not given authority - 1

These aides were also asked, "Is there some help which you feel you need and are not getting? Describe this need." Thirteen aides said that there was not any help which they needed and were not getting. Seven indicated there was some help needed. These comments reflect this needed help:

"We need some help with transportation. The aides can't get clients to the community resources because we don't have enough transportation."

"The supervisor does not go into the problems with enough depth to be very helpful."

"We need more conferences individually with the supervisor, and we need them regularly."

"The supervisor is not always available because she is too pressured. She has to supervise thirty of us, and she just can't get around to us all when we want her."

"I feel that I am not getting all of the information I should from people I interview. I need a lot more help in this area."
"I can't get help when I need it. The supervisor says that she can not listen to another problem or case today. Instead of answering my questions, she always passes them off by asking another aide what she thinks. I resent having coworkers give the answers to problem cases because they are usually having similar problems. You can't ever get to her to discuss a problem in private."

Evaluation of Aides

An outline for evaluating aides has been prepared by the Assistant Director for Training and Staff Development. Each aide is ranked on the following points:

Demonstrated Skills in:

1. interviewing - The ability to place clients at ease, to secure accurate information from clients, and to limit the discussion to information necessary to make a referral to the Neighborhood Service Center.

2. fact finding - The ability to secure promptly accurate information on the eligibility of clients for different services of E.O.A., or to collect information on special assignment as requested.

3. record keeping - Accuracy in keeping records dealing with services to clients, promptness in writing up records, correct usage of the English Language, neatness in maintaining files and records, and the ability to relay information to the professional staff.

4. making use of Center services - The ability to make appropriate use of the various programs available at E.O.A. for clients of the Center.

5. group meetings - The ability to efficiently assist the instructor and group members in meetings. This task may involve various duties.

6. knowledge and use of resources - The ability to utilize information on other institutions or programs available in the city which may provide services to clients.

7. developing relationships - The ability to make a client feel free in order to discuss his problem or accept the help the Aide has been authorized to give; likewise the ability to work cooperatively in the Center.
8. Assisting clients to define their problems - The ability to help the client determine what his problems are and/or to help the client get an understanding of what request he should make of the Neighborhood Service Center.

Application to Assignments:

1. Promptness - Getting reports done while the information is fresh in ones mind, as well as in all job assignments.

2. Follow-up - Having an understanding of what the problem is, from the professional staff, so that the information can be clearly relayed to the clients and further activity in a case can be easily carried out.

3. Use of time at work - Conscientious usage of an eight-hour day toward getting part of a team's effort done.

4. Routine of agency - Understanding the Center's or Agency's activity where placement is secured, and diligently working at carrying out job assignments.

5. Acceptance of supervision - The ability to learn from the assigned Supervisor duties that are to be performed and to accept criticism willingly.

Personality Traits Observed in the Work:

List those traits that stand out as strengths and weaknesses.¹

The evaluation form gives five rankings following each of the above points. These are: outstanding, good, fair, unsatisfactory, not applicable. A check is to be placed in the category which seems to best describe the ability of the aide. There is additional space after each point where comments can be entered, if desirable.

The four Aide Supervisors were asked how frequently these evaluations would be completed for each aide. Two Supervisors said that no definite time had been established yet. Two Supervisors indicated

that this would be done every three months. One of these said it had been discussed in her Center as to whether it should be done every three months or every six months. It was felt that "...many changes take place and six months is too long for the kind of job being done and the kind of workers we have."

The question was asked, "Who will conduct evaluations of the aides and the work they have done?" These replies were given by the four Aide Supervisors:

1. "The Center Director, the Social Service Supervisor, and the Aide Supervisor will do them together. A brief narrative will be written by other supervisors to which aides are assigned."

2. "The Center Director will do these. The Aide Supervisor and Social Service Supervisor will be called in to help."

3. "The Aide Supervisor will make evaluations, but she will consult with the Social Service Supervisor and the Center Director."

4. "The Aide Supervisor will do the evaluations and they will be reviewed by the Social Service Supervisor."
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It appears necessary that there be some flexibility in the requirements made for those applying for the position of Neighborhood Aide, although this flexibility can not be too wide in latitude. It is the desire not only to employ the low-income resident, but to employ a person who can do an adequate job of the assignment to be completed. It is difficult to determine the exact income of a family in many cases; therefore, some flexibility could be allowed in applying the "rule of thumb" scale.

An improved system of consolidating all applications for the position of aide into one central location could be developed. There is currently a good plan, but not all applications get placed in the Neighborhood Service Organization file of aide applications. Some of these applications are misdirected to the central personnel file, while others seem to be held occasionally at a Neighborhood Service Center.

There is a wide variety of jobs which Neighborhood Aides can do and are assigned to do. The depth of service and the breadth of assignments are largely determined by the initiative of the Center Director and the Aide Supervisor. A great amount of flexibility has been given for the use of aides in the original proposal and additional directives from the Assistant Director of Training and Staff Development.
In some cases, aides tend to take on a different set of standards as they become employed and trained. Care must be taken to see that they do not "rise too far above" their neighbors in their attitudes toward the problems which exist and the people with whom they continue to live. This is not an easy matter, and it is an area where much criticism has already been leveled in other programs where indigenous persons become employed workers. It is also a criticism of the social worker who tends to become more middle-class oriented in attitudes and in service.

The proposed system for removing the four aide classifications and establishing two categories with salary ranges seems to be a wise plan. This would provide more flexibility for recognizing achievements and growth, granting increments, and making promotions.

Applicants come from a wide variety of work experiences, but they are primarily grouped in labor and unskilled jobs. Even though a substantial number of applicants are high school graduates (about two-thirds), their place in the job market has been in the low pay range and in jobs requiring little or no training other than what is done on the job by the employer.

The outline for training aides appears to have been well-constructed and thoroughly studied. The suggestions offered by aides for changes have already helped to strengthen the training and provide a basis for certain adjustments in future classes. These suggestions can be helpful in establishing some type of outline for a continuing program of in-service training.

The attitudes of the teachers in the training course are very important to what is learned. A positive attitude of talking to the
aides so that they can understand, yet not talking "down" to them, is necessary. These resident employees can very quickly determine who is sincere in working with them and who is condescending.

It seems obvious from the comments of Aide Supervisors and the aides themselves that an alternate plan for supervision needs to be provided. It is very difficult to adequately supervise thirty persons. Although much supervision is done within the group, more individual supervision could strengthen the work of many of the aides. Periodic evaluation will also help to point up areas of strengths and weaknesses. Although evaluation is recognized as an ongoing process, some definite plan for periodic evaluation is necessary.

The indigenous worker has the potential to make some drastic changes in the approaches social agencies use in meeting the needs of clients, whether these clients be individuals, family units, or community groups and neighborhoods. Agencies outside of programs under the Economic Opportunity Act are considering the use of these nonprofessionals. There may be a wide variety of reasons for this, such as wanting to get into something new, wanting to help professional workers have some assistance, sincerely wanting to provide help for people who are poor, or for other philosophical reasons. These all mean that there is a wide range of possibilities for the use of the nonprofessional indigenous worker, and he can be invaluable to an agency when given meaningful work to do along with some training and supervision.

There are several implications for social work if we are going to use nonprofessionals to help meet the demands made of the social work agencies and personnel. Schools of social work will need to include in
the curriculum more emphasis on working with the low-income person so that professionally trained social workers will be better prepared to understand their special problems. The criticism is often heard that social workers are trained to work only with the middle-income person. This training will also need to include help in supervising nonprofessionals who may be employed from low-income residents so that professionals will be better equipped to work with the nonprofessional.

Schools of social work will also need to consider whether or not they have a responsibility to offer non-credit courses and training courses for persons who may not be professionally trained in social work, but who are supervising nonprofessional employees. Schools of social work located in areas where Economic Opportunity programs are operating are currently facing this challenge. Whether or not it is accepted remains to be seen.

Social agencies can reduce the manpower shortage which they face if they employ nonprofessionals. These agencies will need to be aware of the contribution which can be made through this source and the pitfalls which will need to be avoided. These agencies would need to carefully define the role of the nonprofessional, the tasks which he would perform, and the relationship to other workers within the agency.

Social agencies can also provide better service to low-income residents through the use of the indigenous worker, and may also be able to help rehabilitate many low-income persons through meaningful work. This somewhat new approach can not be used lightly; it is the responsibility of each social agency to carefully look at its current service and the goals it has to see if the use of the nonprofessional
will help it reach its goals more quickly and help it offer more adequate service.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Public Documents


Articles and Periodicals


Reports


Unpublished Material


Eisenstein, Fannie P. "Poverty and Poetry: The Revolution of Abundance." Speech before the Student Association, School of Social Work, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, May 13, 1964. (Mimeographed.)


APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 1

This Interview Guide will be used to interview the personnel officer of Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc. These questions will be asked:

1. What information must the applicant furnish when submitting an application?

2. What qualifications have been established?

3. Are all applicants interviewed? How is the judgment made as to which applicants will be interviewed? What method is used to decide which applicants will be interviewed first?

4. How is the judgment made as to which applicants will be employed? Are those not employed early kept on file for possible future employment? What happens to applicants who are clearly ineligible for employment?

5. Do family income, location of the applicant's residence, and amount of education of the applicant have any specific bearing upon whether or not the applicant is employed?

6. What salary will aides be paid? Is there an increment plan? What other benefits will they receive?
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 2

This Interview Guide will be used to interview the Assistant Director, Training and Staff Development:

1. What areas of training are to be covered in the period of training? How long will this training period last? How was the decision reached about what should be included and what should not be included?

2. What was the basis for the decision concerning those persons who were to be asked to present course material?

3. How much direction was given to the persons presenting course materials? How much freedom was given to them in selecting what they would like to present?

4. What adjustments were made between the first, second, and any subsequent training courses?

5. How did the aides respond to those presenting material to them?

This person will be asked these additional questions:

1. Are there other considerations for the jobs aides will be expected to do other than those written in Job Descriptions? What are these considerations?

2. Do the Neighborhood Service Centers have some freedom in determining the jobs aides will do within the center? Describe this margin of freedom.

3. What criteria has been established to determine what level of performance is expected?

4. What do Personnel Practices provide in the way of trial periods for the aide? What is expected in order that the aide may move from a trial period to regular employment?
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE NUMBER 3

This Interview Guide will be used to interview the Aide Supervisors in the four Neighborhood Services Centers:

1. What is the nature of the supervision which will be given to the aides?

2. How much individual supervision will be offered? How much group supervision will be done? How often will supervisory conferences be held?

3. How do you plan for the supervisory conference?

4. What kinds of recordings will the aides be expected to keep? How will these be used in supervision?

5. What provisions will be made for in-service training and/or on-the-job training? What will this kind of training include?

6. What will be the basis for evaluations done periodically?

7. How often will evaluations be made? How was this decision reached?

8. Who will conduct evaluations of the aides and the work they have done?
This Interview Guide will be used to interview a selected sample of Neighborhood Aides in each of the four Neighborhood Service Centers:

1. Did you feel the training you received was helpful? In what ways?

2. What things were most helpful? Why?

3. What things were least helpful? Why?

4. What additional information do you wish you had received?

5. What did you feel was unnecessary in the training course?

6. Has your supervision since you started to work in the center been helpful? In what ways?

7. Is there some help which you feel you need and are not getting? Describe this needed help and what you expect to do about getting it.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION REFERENCES</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DISPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAME ___________________________ LAST ___________________________ FIRST ___________________________ MIDDLE OR MAIDEN ___________________________

HOME ADDRESS ___________________________ NUMBER ___________________________ STREET ___________________________

CITY ___________________________ COUNTY ___________________________ STATE ___________________________ ZIP CODE ___________________________

HOME PHONE ___________________________ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER ___________________________

PREVIOUS ADDRESSES (If Less Than 5 Years at Present Address)

ADDRESS ___________________________ CITY ___________________________ STATE ___________________________

ADDRESS ___________________________ CITY ___________________________ STATE ___________________________

AGE ___________________________ DATE OF BIRTH ___________________________ PLACE OF BIRTH ___________________________

HEIGHT ___________________________ WEIGHT ___________________________ HAIR ___________________________ EYES ___________________________

CHECK BELOW:

SINGLE ☐ ENGAGED ☐ MARRIED ☐ DIVORCED ☐ SEPARATED ☐ WIDOWED ☐

RENT ☐ OWN HOME ☐ LIVE WITH RELATIVES ☐ BOARD ☐ OTHER ☐

SPOUSE’S NAME ___________________________

SPOUSE’S ADDRESS (If Different From Above) ___________________________

SPOUSE’S EMPLOYER ___________________________

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ___________________________ NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS OTHER THAN CHILDREN ___________________________

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED OTHER THAN A TRAFFIC VIOLATION? ☐ IF YES, EXPLAIN ___________________________

DO YOU OWN A CAR? ☐ MAKE AND MODEL ___________________________ DRIVER’S LICENSE NUMBER ___________________________

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY:

NAME ___________________________ TELEPHONE ___________________________

ADDRESS ___________________________ RELATIONSHIP ___________________________

56
U. S. MILITARY RECORD

PRESENT DRAFT STATUS________________ IF DEFERRED, EXPLAIN______________________________

DATE INDUCTED_________________________ DATE DISCHARGED OR RELEASED_____________________

BRANCH OF SERVICE____________________ HIGHEST RANK YOU HELD_____________________________

WHAT WERE YOUR PRIMARY DUTIES?__________________________________________________________

LIST ANY AWARDS OR CITATIONS YOU RECEIVED_____________________________________________

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A RESERVE UNIT OR THE NATIONAL GUARD?______________________________

ACTIVE________________ INACTIVE________________ STANDBY_____________________________

ARE YOU RECEIVING A PENSION OR DISABILITY COMPENSATION?____ IF YES, EXPLAIN________________

EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>YEARS ATTENDED</th>
<th>DATE GRAD.</th>
<th>DEGREE</th>
<th>MAJOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>COLLEGE</td>
<td>UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>GRADUATE</td>
<td>SPECIAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT WAS YOUR GRADE AVERAGE? HIGH SCHOOL ______ COLLEGE ______ GRADUATE ______ SPECIAL ______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS OF GREATEST INTEREST</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS OF LEAST INTEREST</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT FOREIGN LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK OR WRITE?</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR EXPENSES DID YOU EARN WHILE ATTENDING SCHOOL?</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT AWARDS, HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE YOU RECEIVED?</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN WHAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES DID YOU PARTICIPATE?</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN WHAT CIVIC ACTIVITIES HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED AND WHAT OFFICES HAVE YOU HELD?</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WHAT ARE YOUR SPECIAL INTERESTS, SKILLS, OR HOBBIES?**

**ARE YOU PRESENTLY EMPLOYED?** __________  **MAY WE CONTACT PRESENT EMPLOYER?** __________

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY** — LIST LAST OR PRESENT EMPLOYER FIRST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM MO YR</th>
<th>TO MO YR</th>
<th>COMPANY NAME</th>
<th>BEGINNING SALARY</th>
<th>POSITION HELD</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL DUTIES</th>
<th>REASON FOR LEAVING</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR’S NAME</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR’S TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(USE ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY)*

**HAVE YOU EVER BEEN DISCHARGED OR FORCED TO RESIGN?** __________  **IF YES, EXPLAIN** __________
HEALTH

HOW IS YOUR GENERAL HEALTH? HAVE YOU EVER HAD A SERIOUS ILLNESS OR OPERATION? IF YES, EXPLAIN

ARE YOU AWARE OF OR UNDER TREATMENT FOR ANY AILMENT NOW? IF YES, EXPLAIN

DO YOU WEAR GLASSES?

APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY DAYS HAVE YOU MISSED FROM WORK IN THE PAST TWO YEARS?

DO YOU HAVE ANY DISFIGUREMENTS OR DISABILITIES? IF YES, EXPLAIN

REFERENCES — GIVE NAMES OF THREE PEOPLE, NOT RELATIVES OR EMPLOYERS, WHO HAVE KNOWN YOU AT LEAST FIVE YEARS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>YEARS ACQUAINTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL STATEMENTS MADE HEREIN AND ATTACHED HERETO ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, AND I KNOW THAT ANY FALSEHOOD OR MISREPRESENTATION LATER DISCLOSED WILL BE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

EXAMINATION RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOOD TYPE</th>
<th>POLICE CHECK</th>
<th>MEDICAL SCHEDULED</th>
<th>PERSONAL REFERENCES</th>
<th>CREDIT CHECK</th>
<th>FORMER EMPLOYER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

INTERVIEWED BY