UKCPR
UK Center for Poverty Research

UKCPR Discussion Paper Series
#2006-04
http://www.ukcpr.org/Publications/DP2006-04.pdf

February 2006

Devolution, Discretion, and Local Variation in TANF Sanctioning

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This project was supported with a grant from the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, grant number 5 ASPE417-02. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of the UKCPR or any agency of the Federal government.

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the federal government made large-scale changes to income assistance, replacing the entitlement Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Under TANF, state policymakers were given significant freedom to craft their own approaches to public assistance (Nathan 1996). It is now generally acknowledged that states have responded in diverse ways that systematically reflect their social, economic, and political characteristics (Fellowes and Rowe 2004; Gais and Weaver 2000; Soss et al. 2001).

What is perhaps less often appreciated about welfare reform under TANF is that devolution of authority from the federal government to state governments has been accompanied by a significant decentralization of policymaking authority *within* states as well. TANF's emphasis on flexible services and sanctioning virtually ensured that decision making would be pushed downward to local implementers, including case managers, who serve as the primary "street level bureaucrats" in the new world of welfare service delivery. However, many states have further expanded local discretion in TANF implementation by pursuing "second-order" devolution – formal transfers of state control to county governments and/or to local public/private governance boards (Nathan and Gais 1999). Although there is little systematic data on the extent of second-order devolution in welfare policy, a recent study estimates that by 2001, at least 20 states had engaged in either "slight" or "significant" amounts (Gainsborough 2003).

Advocates of welfare decentralization have successfully argued that devolution promotes TANF goals by fostering innovation and flexibility in meeting client needs. This is critical to TANF's success, supporters say, because employment barriers are best identified and addressed by local decision makers who know local needs and resources. Decentralization, however, is not without its critics. Many observers have pointed out that, with greater discretion for local actors, significant variation is likely to emerge in the range of TANF policies and the quality of TANF services across local jurisdictions. Some also speculate that variation in local TANF practices may be driven less by needs and resources, and more by local values and ideology.

Understandably, this debate has renewed attention to the ways welfare administrators put “policy into action” (Lennon and Corbett 2003). Increasingly, scholars and practitioners are asking how policy effects may be mediated by dynamic interactions among incentives, organizational forms, cultures, and personnel found in welfare agencies (Ewalt and Jennings 2004; Meyers, Riccucci, and Lurie 2001). In this paper, we contribute to this literature by examining the impact of decentralization on one of the most consequential aspects of reform: the use of sanctions to penalize recipients who fail to fulfill TANF requirements. Although a number of studies have examined the determinants of sanctioning, they have almost exclusively focused on client characteristics, and thus have implicitly ignored possible variation in sanctioning due to the effects of implementation. Thus, we seek to add to our understanding of sanction outcomes by addressing two specific questions. First, to what extent has welfare decentralization led to variation in the use of TANF sanctioning across local jurisdictions operating under the same sanction policy? Second, are local differences in sanctioning solely a function of variation in client characteristics, or is the use of sanctioning also influenced by the local implementation environment?

To answer these questions, we examine sanctioning outcomes in the state of Florida, which stands as a leader in welfare decentralization and second-order devolution. Relying on administrative data for over 64,000 TANF clients provided by the Florida Department of

Children and Families, we conduct a series of analyses which examine the relationship between individual sanction outcomes and (1) individual client traits, (2) local social and economic conditions, and (3) the local political environment. Our results suggest that a significant amount of local variation exists in sanctioning outcomes across the state of Florida, even after controlling for the characteristics of TANF clients. Moreover, local patterns in sanctioning outcomes are not random, but are systematically related to selected characteristics of the local community, including the ideological tendency of the local implementation environment.

WELFARE REFORM AND SANCTIONING UNDER TANF

Sanctions have long been used by caseworkers to encourage compliance with state welfare rules. Over the past decade, however, sanctions have come to play a more prominent role in welfare implementation because, under the TANF program, clients now confront stricter work requirements, narrower exemption criteria, an expanded menu of behaviors subject to sanction, and stronger penalties for noncompliance (Hasenfeld and Powell 2004). Indeed, most analysts agree that sanctions have been a linchpin of the successful effort to transform welfare from a system focused on providing cash benefits (AFDC), to one focused on the promotion of work norms (TANF).

Federal legislation requires that TANF clients be subject to a reduction in benefits for failure to follow a number of different program rules. The vast majority of sanctions, however, are imposed for failure to comply with work requirements. Under TANF, states have a range of options in determining exactly how benefits should be reduced, the most important of which include (i) whether to reduce the benefit for the adult(s) or the entire family, and (ii) whether and when to impose a partial or full reduction of benefits. Seventeen states have adopted the strictest combination of these choices, enforcing what are referred to as "immediate full-family sanctions." In these states, the entire TANF family is immediately removed from the TANF rolls at the first instance of noncompliance. Fifteen states use "gradual full-family sanctions," which potentially have the same impact, but only after continued noncompliance. The remaining states enforce what are known as "partial sanctions," which result in a partial reduction of benefits (usually affecting only the adult portion of the grant) (Pavetti, Derr and Hesketh 2003).

The impact of TANF sanctioning can be measured in a number of ways, all of which suggest that sanctioning has had significant effects on both the size and characteristics of the TANF caseload. In one of the first studies to document the full impact of sanctions in the TANF era, Goldberg and Schott (2000) estimated that the number of families who lost benefits from 1997 to 1999 was close to 500,000, or a quarter of the reduction in the TANF caseload during that period. Other studies have focused on selected states, and have found the incidence of sanctioning to be quite significant. Given these estimates, it is not surprising that many state-level studies of caseload reduction conclude that states with the strictest sanctioning policies have experienced as much as a 25 percent greater caseload reduction than states with the least stringent policies (Mead 2000; Rector and Youseff 1999).

Several studies have also examined the characteristics of sanctioned families, using either surveys of TANF recipients or state administrative data. The findings converge on the conclusion that sanctioned clients tend to exhibit the characteristics of long-term welfare recipients (Pavetti, Derr and Hesketh 2003; Wu 2004). Specifically, these studies find that the probability of being sanctioned is related to a client's race, marital status, age, family size, education level and job experience (Born, Caudill and Cordero 1999; Hasenfeld, Ghose, and Hillesland-Larson 2002; Kalil, Seefeldt, and Wang 2002; Koraleck 2000; Mancuso and Liner 2001; Westra and Routely

2000). Together with findings on the overall incidence of sanctioning, these studies suggest that sanctioning practices have greatly affected the characteristics of the TANF population.

Despite this progress in analyzing sanctions, the literature has paid surprisingly little attention to the decentralized implementation processes at the heart of welfare reform. Indeed, given recent developments, it is remarkable how little we know about the question that anchors this study: *In the context of unprecedented decentralization of authority in welfare provision, how do local differences in policy implementation affect the imposition of TANF sanctions?* There is some evidence that, within states, sanction rates vary across locales with different social and political characteristics (Keiser, Meuser, and Choi 2004), and different sanctioning philosophies and procedures (Pavetti et al. 1998; Born, Caudill and Cordero 1999; Koralek 2000). These few studies notwithstanding, however, the consequences of dispersed local implementation remain a blind spot in our understanding of sanction processes and outcomes. Indeed, as Pavetti, Derr and Hesketh (2003) conclude in their recent review of sanction research, "there is scant literature on implementation of sanctions. Although there is some evidence to suggest that sanction rates vary from one local office to the next, there has been very little research to assess what might contribute to these differences" (25). We address these questions below.

DEVOLUTION, DISCRETION, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TANF SANCTIONS

Our central argument in this paper is that welfare reform has been accompanied by a significant, and in recent decades, unprecedented devolution of policymaking discretion to local actors in the TANF implementation process. In turn, we expect that this decentralization has resulted in significant and systematic variation in the use of TANF sanctions within states due to the exercise of discretion by two sets of actors in the TANF implementation process: (1) local TANF supervisors and regional policymakers, whose discretion in TANF implementation has increased significantly in many states due to second-order devolution, and (2) TANF case managers, who are charged with the responsibility of monitoring client behavior and initiating sanctions when TANF rules are violated. Below, we discuss each source of discretion, along with hypotheses regarding their collective impact on the implementation of sanctions.

Second-Order Devolution

Public and scholarly debate has most often focused on "first-order" devolution of policy authority from federal to state governments (Conlan 1998; Osbourne 1988). In the welfare arena, significant first-order devolution began during the George H.W. Bush administration when states were encouraged to apply for AFDC waivers to experiment with policies such as time limits, family caps, and "workfare." Devolution accelerated in 1996 with the adoption of the TANF program, as evidenced by a number of important changes: the shift from a matching grant to a block grant, increased state discretion in eligibility determination, and greater flexibility in the range of services states can provide to welfare recipients.

Under welfare reform, these patterns of first-order devolution have been closely followed by "second-order" devolution, defined as the transfer of policy authority from state governments to counties or other local governing bodies (Nathan and Gais 1999). Second-order devolution has taken two general forms. In the most common model, 14 states have devolved policy authority to county governments. Ten of these states previously shared AFDC administrative duties with counties, suggesting that stronger capacities at the county level may have encouraged some states to devolve authority. These 14 states have varied in the types of duties they have devolved. In states with the most significant devolution, counties have gained substantial control over spending (through block grants) and now enjoy significant discretion over TANF work requirements, sanctions, time limits, and the use of one-time diversion payments (Gainsborough 2003). In the second model of second-order devolution, implemented in six states, policy authority has been devolved to local/regional governing boards rather than county governments. In all six states, welfare services have been linked to state workforce development programs operating under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Welfare and workforce development programs are collectively administered through a statewide system of one-stop centers, which are overseen by regional workforce boards. These boards, which are mandated by WIA, consist of a mixture of public and private officials. The states vary in their exact rules for board composition, but in most states at least half of the board's members must come from the local business community (Gainsborough 2003). As with the delegation of authority to counties, there is some variation in the power these boards have over TANF policy. According to Gainsborough (2003), Florida, Michigan, and Texas have ceded significantly greater amounts of authority to their regional workforce boards than have Arkansas, Tennessee and Utah.

Case Manager Discretion

As the frontline workers in the public welfare system, case managers have always enjoyed significant discretion in their interactions with clients. This discretion has increased considerably under TANF due to the increase in the number of rules governing client behavior, and the proportion of clients to which these rules must now be applied. Thus, today more than ever, case managers exercise a considerable degree of choice as they process clients' cases, and their choices shape what public policies actually mean and do in practice (Lipsky 1980; Prottas 1979).

In principle, *supervision* may be used to limit or guide case manager discretion. Caseworkers, however, rarely operate under the direct watch of supervisors (Prottas 1979). They handle cases that are too complex and idiosyncratic to fit neatly under a supervisor's *a priori* directive, and they process cases at rates that make continual consultation impractical (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). *Administrative rules* offer a second source of constraint. But while general rules do place broad limits on caseworkers, they cannot be designed to cover all conceivable situations, nor can a rule "itself step forward to claim its own instance" (Hart 1961: 123). Choices must be made about how and when to apply a given rule, and as the number of rules grows, so too does the scope of frontline decision making. Rather than eliminating discretion, "a profusion of rules can lead to greater freedom because… the bureaucrat must choose which rules are appropriate in the present [case]" (Feldman 1992: 166; Lipsky 1980: 14).

A third possible check on caseworker discretion comes from *program clients*, who may use formal or informal means to limit decisions contrary to their interests. Here again, however, theory and evidence suggest a weak constraint. Political economy approaches to social work theory argue that welfare clients occupy a dependent position in a relationship defined by unequal control of power resources (Hasenfeld 1987). To be sure, clients are active participants in welfare interactions who do what they can to subtly influence outcomes, but field research suggests that welfare clients feel a keen sense of their dependence on case managers: most report that they avoid explicit opposition because they view it as a risky and ineffective maneuver (Soss 2000). Under the TANF program, moreover, clients have lost entitlement status as well as some formal rights of appeal – developments that seem likely to have further weakened clients' abilities to impose limits on caseworker discretion (Mink 2002).

In light of these weak constraints, it has become conventional wisdom that “discretion is inevitable” in street-level work (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000: 329). Decision making on the frontlines is widely recognized as a political process that elaborates, transforms, and sometimes subverts the policy intentions of lawmakers (Meier 1999). Such discretion may serve as an entry point for unjust and unequal treatment or, alternatively, may permit the tailoring of more equitable and humane responses than one would expect based on the rules alone (Keiser 1999: 88-89). In either case, empirical research suggests that frontline discretion can produce wide variation in policy implementation even across a unitary federal program (Keiser and Soss 1998) or within a highly centralized state welfare program (Riccucci 2005).

Despite this fact, it remains unclear if or how this discretion might be affecting the implementation of TANF sanctions. Based on existing research, there appears to be ample opportunity for the exercise of discretion in sanction implementation. This is clearly the case in states where important decisions about the structure of sanction policies have been delegated to local governments through second-order devolution. However, in the most comprehensive review of TANF sanction research to date, Pavetti, Derr and Hesketh (2003: 6) find that even when TANF offices operate under a common set of state guidelines, local actors are able to exercise considerable discretion at a number of key points in the sanction implementation process. These include:

- the process by which clients are informed of TANF rules and the consequences for breaking them
- the assessment of client needs and identification of clients unable to participate in regular work activities
- the process by which participation in required activities is monitored

- the interpretation and application of "good cause" exceptions, which essentially grant clients an "excused absence" from participation in required work activities
- the process by which sanctions are initiated, including the method and timing of contact with clients informing them of an impending sanction
- the process by which clients are re-engaged, including the requirements for curing a sanction.

While all of these points in the implementation process offer an opportunity for local policymakers to exercise discretion, perhaps the most important is the interpretation of "good cause" exceptions. In addition to federally mandated reasons for excusing violations of work requirements, such as the lack of child care, lack of transportation, or illness, good cause exceptions may also be granted due to "circumstances beyond the client's control." The definition of such "circumstances," at least to some degree, is left to local TANF administrators and case managers. Along with other opportunities for exercising discretion, this offers local policymakers significant control over the use of sanctioning, as sanction policies may be either loosely or narrowly interpreted and applied. Consequently, we expect to see significant differences in the implementation of sanctions across local communities due to the exercise of local discretion.

Politics and the Implementation of Sanctions

Theories of organizational culture emphasize that bureaucratic norms and understandings should not be seen as autonomous, insider worldviews, disconnected from their broader social milieus; rather, organizational cultures derive from, elaborate upon, and reflect commonsense understandings in the broader communities in which they are embedded (Martin 1992; Feldman 1989; Herzfeld 1992). Local environments may affect organizational operations through democratic pressures, because policymakers respond to local social conditions and needs, or because officials share the ideological values of the community at large. Consistent with this thinking, a number of studies have found local implementation of public policy to be influenced by the local political environment (e.g., Cho et al. 2005; Goggin et al. 1990; Weissert 1994). We expect this to be no less true with respect to the implementation of TANF sanctions, especially in states that have devolved significant authority over TANF to the local level.

Our conceptualization of the "political environment" in this study is based on the classic liberal-conservative dimension, which has repeatedly been shown to be an important determinant of support for welfare generosity in state-level studies of AFDC and TANF (e.g. Barrilleaux, Holbrook and Langer 2002; Fording 1997; Soss et al. 2001). In states with significant local control, the political characteristics of local environments might affect sanctioning outcomes in different ways through the actions of three important local actors in the TANF implementation process: case managers, local TANF policymakers, and local advocacy groups. First, local political culture could influence the sanction decisions of case managers who are likely to share the political values of the larger community (Riccucci 2005). Survey research has consistently found that liberals are generally more likely to attribute the causes of poverty to structural explanations and to support welfare assistance (Cook and Barrett 1992). Accordingly, one would expect liberal case managers to be more sympathetic to TANF clients in their interpretation and application of TANF rules (Morgen 2001). Case managers in more conservative environments, on the other hand, may be more likely to attribute poverty to individual shortcomings, and therefore be less sympathetic to TANF clients who have fallen out of compliance with TANF rules (Keiser, Mueser and Choi 2004). Thus, we should expect that conservative case managers will be more willing to issue sanctions to TANF clients than liberal case managers.

Second, in a decentralized policymaking environment one might also expect the political orientations of local environments to generate differences in the makeup and behavior of local agencies that are responsible for interpreting state sanction policies and guiding the activities of case managers in their jurisdiction (Cho et al. 2005). In some states, county government officials may have a significant role in this regard, while in states that have merged their TANF and workforce development programs, local employers and community leaders may have significant influence through representation on local workforce boards (Gainesborough 2003). In either case, we expect the degree of local conservatism to be positively related to stringency in the local operating procedures that govern sanctioning, thus leading to higher levels of sanctioning.

Third and finally, local political environments may influence the overall sanction rates through their effects on the presence and strength of local advocacy groups for the poor. Such groups could potentially exert influence on local operating procedures, either indirectly through advocacy aimed at local TANF policymakers or directly (in some states) through their representation on local workforce boards. In addition, contact with liberal welfare advocacy groups provides welfare clients with a crucial source of information and support (Handler 1992), a factor that some field research suggests can positively affect client-worker interactions (Soss 2000). Thus, whether the effect is through the actions of case managers, local administrators, or local advocacy groups, we expect that the level of local conservatism should be positively related to local sanctioning.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Case Selection: Why Study Florida?

We have chosen Florida as the setting for our study, not because it is typical, but because it offers a superb opportunity to examine relevant policy arrangements in strong form, as they intersect with one another to form a dynamic policy transaction (on this logic of case selection, see Yin 2003; Ragin 2000). Three kinds of characteristics stand out. First, Florida has pursued one of the strongest forms of second-order devolution in the country, blending transfers of authority to local actors, program integration, and widespread privatization. Since July 1, 2000, the Florida TANF program (Welfare Transitions, WT) and operations related to the WIA program have been co-located in one-stop centers and subject to integrated implementation. Frontline services have been contracted out to public, non-profit, and for-profit providers throughout the entire state. Policy authority for these programs has shifted to the local level in a group of 24 public/private partnerships called Regional Workforce Boards (RWBs). These RWBs are responsible for strategic planning, policy development, contracting, and oversight of local one-stop delivery systems. They are overseen, not by state agencies, but by a statewide public/private partnership called Workforce Florida, Inc. (WFI). The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), a conventional state agency, receives the federal TANF block grant and maintains responsibility for eligibility determination. But otherwise, Florida is a standout among American states for its strong emphasis on local control and privatization within an integrated work-oriented policy system (Botsko et al. 2001: 7).

Second, Florida scores high on factors that raise the importance of sanction implementation. After 1996, Florida adopted “some of the strictest time limits and work requirements in the nation” and broadened the pool of clients subject to sanctions by creating “few possibilities for exemptions” (Botsko et al. 2001: 4). The sanctions themselves also fall at the strong end of the continuum, resulting in an immediate, full-family loss of TANF benefits and a reduction of Food Stamp benefits to the fullest extent permitted by federal law (Botsko et al. 2001: 6). Moreover, while cross-state comparisons are complicated by the diverse methods used to calculate sanction frequency, as we will detail below, our analysis of Florida administrative data suggests that Florida employs sanctions at an extremely high rate. Indeed, Florida DCF identified sanctions as the most common cause of TANF case closings in fiscal year 2003, accounting for 31 percent of closings vs. 21 percent for increased earnings.

Finally, Florida is an ideal choice for our analysis because it offers significant variation for one of the most important variables thought to influence sanctions implementation – the local political environment. In addition, Florida displays great diversity in local economic and social conditions. In combination with Florida's heavy emphasis on sanctioning and its decentralized approach to welfare reform, this variation in political, social and economic characteristics across the state provides an ideal setting for a study of the joint effects of these characteristics on local sanction implementation.

Data and Hypotheses

To examine the determinants of sanction usage, we employ an event history analysis of the initiation of a sanction. Our sample consists of individual-level administrative data for all adults receiving TANF in Florida, supplemented with contextual data indicating how local implementing environments vary across 66 of the state's 67 counties.[1] Using these data, we estimate event history models of TANF sanctioning, where a dichotomous dependent variable indicates whether or not a client has been sanctioned, and the independent variables include individual-level measures capturing client effects, and county-level measures capturing community-context effects.[2] Based upon past research on sanctions, we include a number of variables to control for variation in clients' individual characteristics. These include gender, age

[1] Administrative data for Glades county are unavailable.
[2] We provide detailed variable descriptions in the appendix, including data sources and descriptive statistics for each variable used in the analyses that follow.

of client, single parent status, wage income, and education level. We also control for a client's race/ethnicity by identifying clients as belonging to one of three mutually exclusive racial/ethnic group combinations: black, Hispanic, and white (non-Hispanic).[3] Most of these variables have been found to be important determinants of individual sanctioning outcomes in past research (Wu 2004; Born, Caudill and Cordero 1999; Hasenfeld, Ghose and Hillesland-Larson 2002; Kalil, Seefeldt and Wang 2002; Koraleck 2000; Mancuso and Liner 2001).

To capture the effects of the local political environment, we rely on a measure of local political ideology, conceptualized in traditional liberal-conservative terms. Unlike the case for individual or state-level research, estimating the relationship between ideology and welfare generosity at the local level poses a difficult challenge due to the lack of a readily available measure of local ideology. In light of this, the most common strategy used to measure local ideology is to rely on county partisanship, as reflected in election returns (e.g. Keiser, Meuser and Choi 2004; Cho et al. 2005). However, it is well-known that partisanship tends to be imperfectly related to political ideology (Miller 1999), and therefore this strategy is likely to introduce measurement error into our analysis. As an alternative to relying on local partisanship, we construct an original measure of local political ideology which we believe comes closer to measuring the concept we are truly interested in measuring. For each county, we coded election results for 18 ideologically relevant constitutional amendments that appeared on the ballot throughout the entire state between 1996 and 2004.[4] Based on the results of a factor analysis of support for all 18 amendments, we then used the factor scores to create an index of county ideology for our analysis of sanctioning outcomes. The index is scaled to range from 0 to 1, with

[3] A very small percentage (<2%) of cases are classified as "other race" by the state. We omit these individuals from our sample. We also restrict our analysis to citizens, due to the unique challenges faced by noncitizens on TANF.
[4] A list of the subjects of these amendments is presented in the appendix.

0 representing the most liberal county (Gadsen), and 1 representing the most conservative county (Clay).

We validated our measure of county conservatism in two ways. First, if our measure of local ideology is valid, we expect that it should be at least moderately related to local partisanship. This proves to be the case as the simple correlation between our measure of county conservatism and a measure of the average Republican vote share in recent presidential elections is reasonably strong at .65 ($p < .05$, N=67).[5] Second, we merged survey results from two different statewide surveys that measure liberal-conservative self-identification at the individual level. We then calculated county means across these survey responses for the 8 counties with at least 50 respondents represented in the merged sample.[6] The relationship between our amendment-based measure of county conservatism and the survey-based measure for these 8 counties is presented in the scatterplot shown in Figure 1. As can be seen, our conservatism index corresponds well with the survey-based measure as the two measures are correlated at .85. Thus, we are confident that we have constructed a valid measure of local ideology.

(Figure 1)

In addition to the effects of local ideology, we also consider one additional dimension of the local political environment: the local racial context. Studies of racial politics and policy outcomes have often found that the racial context has a significant impact on racially relevant policy outcomes, either through the effects of a "racial threat" felt by the white majority (Blalock 1967; Key 1949), or the effects of increased minority political power (Keech 1968). While we

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[5] Specifically, our measure of the Republican vote share is a measure of the two-party vote share in the presidential elections of 1996, 2000, and 2004.

[6] The surveys used to create these scores were the Florida Voter Panel Study conducted in 1999 (ICPSR 3435), and a CBS/New York Times survey of Florida voters conducted in 2000 (ICPSR 3223). The average sample size for the eight counties used in this analysis was 95.

expect that either effect might exist, if Keiser, Mueser and Choi’s (2004) results for Missouri offer any guidance, we should expect that sanction rates will be lower in counties with larger minority populations. Accordingly, we include the percentage of the county population that is black and Hispanic, respectively.

In addition to variables representing the local political environment, we also include additional contextual measures to capture the effects of local labor markets and the extent of local employment opportunities, which are expected to affect sanctioning outcomes in one of two ways. First, where employment opportunities are relatively numerous and attractive, TANF clients may be more likely to work enough hours to avoid falling out of compliance with TANF rules. Alternatively, local labor market conditions may also influence sanctioning outcomes through their effects on local administrators and case managers who may be more sympathetic to TANF clients, and thus less supportive of stringent enforcement of TANF rules, when job opportunities are less numerous or less attractive. To capture these potential effects, we include the county unemployment rate, the poverty rate, the level of urbanization (as measured by county population), and the annual local wage in food service/drinking establishments.

We also include a measure of the local TANF caseload, measured as the number of TANF adults (per 1,000 county population). As the caseload size increases, we might expect that, all else equal, administrative pressures to reduce the caseload would result in an increase in sanctioning. Alternatively, as the caseload size increases, if the number of case managers remains fixed, individual case managers may have less time to closely monitor TANF clients for violations of rules, thus resulting in a lower rate of sanctioning. Finally, we control for possible seasonal effects in sanctioning by including dummy variables for each calendar month.

RESULTS

As background to our analysis, we first provide a detailed description of the Florida TANF population, followed by an examination of aggregate trends in sanctioning across time and across counties. We then present the results of our multivariate analysis, which relies on an event history model of TANF sanctioning to estimate the individual and contextual determinants of TANF sanctioning.

Florida's TANF Caseload

Our TANF administrative data span the period January 2000 through early 2004. During this period, the size of the adult caseload decreased significantly, as it has in many other states. This can be seen by examining Figure 2, which displays monthly caseload trends for the entire state. In panel A of the figure, we see that in early 2000, the TANF caseload exceeded 40,000 adults. However, the caseload steadily decreased in size throughout 2000 and early 2001, reaching a period low of just under 25,000 adults in mid-2001. Since that time, the average monthly caseload has remained relatively stable, displaying seasonal fluctuations around a mean of approximately 27,000 TANF adults from mid-2001 through the first quarter of 2004.

The lower panel (B) of Figure 2 displays monthly TANF caseload trends by ethnic/racial identification. The figure clearly indicates that throughout the entire period, black adults have comprised the largest share of the adult TANF population, representing nearly half of all TANF adults in the early months of 2000. After 2000, the monthly percentage of black TANF adults declined and has averaged 43-44% since 2001. White and Hispanic TANF recipients have comprised nearly identical shares of the TANF population, although in recent years the number of white adults has slightly, but consistently, outnumbered Hispanic adults on a monthly basis. Given these changes in the relative shares of each racial/ethnic group since 2000, this suggests that a slightly disproportionate share of the decline in the TANF caseload that was experienced during this period was due to a greater number of blacks, and to some degree Hispanics, leaving the TANF rolls.

(Figure 2)

Our data indicate that approximately 268,000 adults received TANF for at least one month during the period spanning January 2000 – April 2004. In Table 1, we present a snapshot of selected characteristics of these adults, along with comparative figures reported by the federal government for the national TANF population during fiscal year 2002. Like TANF clients in other states, TANF adults in Florida are overwhelming female, single, and disproportionately populated by racial and ethnic minorities. The average age of TANF adults in Florida was approximately 31, which is almost identical to the national figure. In contrast to national figures, our data suggest that Florida’s TANF population is slightly less educated and somewhat more likely to consist of noncitizens than the national TANF population. Overall, however, Table 1 suggests that Florida’s TANF population is highly representative of the national TANF population and thus provides for an ideal laboratory for exploring the correlates of sanctioning.

Statewide Sanctioning Rates

Along with many other states, the state of Florida employs immediate, full-family sanctions to penalize clients who fall out of compliance with TANF requirements. In addition to having a relatively strict written policy, an inspection of statewide sanctioning data suggests that sanctions are rather frequently enforced in Florida as well. We begin our analysis of sanctions by examining aggregate trends in sanctioning over time. These trends are displayed in panels A and B of Figure 3. In panel A, we can see that the number of sanctions issued each month was relatively stable between 2000 and 2004, with occasional fluctuations around a mean of about

3200 sanctions per month. To provide some perspective on this figure, Figure 3A also displays the number of TANF exits that occurred for reasons unrelated to sanctions, or what we refer to as non-sanction exits. Since 2001, non-sanction exits have remained stable, averaging approximately 5800 exits each month. This therefore implies that from 2001 through 2003, sanction exits averaged slightly more than one-third of all monthly TANF exits in Florida. Panel B of Figure 3 provides additional perspective and displays sanctioning frequency as a percentage of the entire TANF adult caseload. Since the stabilization of the caseload in 2001, the percentage of TANF adults sanctioned each month has averaged just over 11 percent.

(Figure 3)

While Florida does appear to rely heavily on sanctions as a policy tool, this conclusion would be further supported by a comparison of sanction rates in Florida to sanction rates in other states. This task is complicated, to some degree, by inconsistencies in the severity of sanction policies across states. That is, in states that impose some form of partial sanction, TANF case managers may be more willing to issue a sanction because the consequences for TANF clients are less severe. However, despite the fact that Florida's sanction policy is the strictest allowed by federal law, sanction rates in Florida appear to be quite high when compared to other states. The most commonly reported sanction statistic is the percentage of *cases closed* due to sanctions. As we have seen, over the period of our study, approximately one third of all case closings in Florida are due to sanctions. In contrast, the most recent data reported by the federal government (for fiscal year 2002) show that nationwide, only 7 percent of all case closings were due to sanctions.[7]

[7] These data are reported by the Office of Family Assistance in their Sixth Annual Report to Congress (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/annualreport6/chapter10/chap10.htm).

Recognizing the fact that such statistics are in part a function of the number of non-sanction exits, Pavetti et al. (2004) recommend a "purer" measure of sanctioning which is based on the cumulative incidence of sanctioning for a panel of clients over a significant period of time. Using this method, they measured the sanction rate in three states that use immediate, full-family sanctions – Illinois, New Jersey, and South Carolina. For Illinois and New Jersey, they observed the cohort of adult TANF recipients who entered TANF in November of 2001 and found that after 18 months, 13 percent of the New Jersey cohort, and 17 percent of the Illinois cohort, had been sanctioned. In South Carolina, they could only observe clients for 10 months and found that 5 percent were ultimately sanctioned. We estimated comparable sanctioning rates in Florida by relying on the same panel method utilized by Pavetti et al. (2004). Based on the cohort of Florida's adult TANF recipients who entered TANF in November, 2001, we found that after 10 months, 43 percent had been sanctioned at least once, and after 18 months, the sanction rate increased to 47 percent. Given the magnitude of the difference in the sanctioning rates between Florida and these three other states, there is good reason to believe that Florida is among the leaders in the use of sanctions.

Local Variation in Sanctioning

Although it appears that the mean sanction rate in Florida may indeed be relatively high compared to other states, we expect that there has been significant variation around that mean due to the highly decentralized nature of TANF implementation in Florida, To test this expectation, we calculated county sanction rates using a method similar to the panel method advocated by Pavetti, et al. (2004), but with a few modifications. First, rather than relying on one specific cohort, we observed sanctioning outcomes for the 24 cohorts entering TANF from January 2001 through December 2002. Second, within each cohort we limited our observation to "new" TANF clients, defined as clients who did not receive TANF for a minimum of 12 consecutive months prior to entering TANF. Third, we focused exclusively on the first TANF spell for each cohort, where we defined a spell as continuous months of TANF receipt. And fourth, we examined each cohort for a maximum of 12 consecutive months. To calculate a county's sanction rate, we first calculated the sanction rate for each cohort as the percentage of the cohort that exited TANF due to a sanction. We then calculated the average sanction rate across the 24 cohorts to arrive at a final county sanction rate for each of the 66 counties in our dataset.

Based on these calculations, the mean sanction rate across all 66 counties was 39%. This means that for the 24 cohorts of new TANF clients entering TANF in 2001 and 2002, at least 39% were sanctioned off TANF during their first TANF spell.[8] As anticipated, there has been significant variation in county sanction rates during our study period. This is evident in Figure 4, which displays county sanction rates for the upper and lower quartiles of the county distribution. As can be seen in the figure, four counties display a sanction rate of less than 30%, with Hamilton county exhibiting the lowest sanction rate in the sample at 22%. In contrast, three counties sanctioned at a rate of at least 50%, with Okeechobee displaying the highest sanction rate of all counties at 53%. Thus, the maximum sanction rate in our sample exceeded the minimum sanction rate by 141%. These differences are both statistically and substantively significant, and suggest that sanction implementation is carried out in fundamentally different ways across the state.

(Figure 4)

[8] As these calculations are based on a maximum spell of 12 months, we underestimate the first spell sanction rate to the extent that clients were sanctioned after 12 months. However, we find that spells of more than 12 consecutive months in Florida are extremely rare.

Before proceeding to the multivariate analysis, we provide a preliminary test of the influence of the political environment on sanctions implementation by examining the bivariate relationship between the local sanction rates presented in Figure 4 and our index of county conservatism. This relationship is displayed in the form of a scatterplot in Figure 5, and provides some initial evidence of a relationship between local sanctioning outcomes and the political environment. This relationship is also confirmed by the estimated regression line (b=.08, p=.03), which is also plotted in the figure. Despite the statistical significance of this relationship, it is clearly far from perfect and suggests that there are likely many other factors that may be influencing sanctioning outcomes as well. Thus, we now move to a more detailed and rigorous multivariate analysis of sanctioning outcomes that relies on individual level data.

(Figure 5)

An Event History Model of Sanction Initiation

Our event history analysis relies on individual level administrative data on TANF adults provided by the Florida DCF, supplemented with data on county political and socioeconomic characteristics. Specifically, our sample consists of all new adult TANF clients entering TANF during the 24-month period from January 2001 through December 2002.[9] Thus, our entire period of analysis extends from January 2001 (first cohort enters) through November 2003 (12th month of spell for last cohort). The dependent variable for our analysis is a dichotomous variable that takes on a value of 1 in the month that a client is sanctioned. We follow each of the 24 cohorts for up to a maximum of 12 consecutive months, ending our observation of the case at the spell's termination or at the 12-month mark, whichever comes first. Clients who exit for reasons other than sanction, or who are not sanctioned by the 12th month of the spell, are treated as right-

[9] We define "new" TANF clients as those clients who have spent at least twelve continuous months without TANF benefits.

censored. For the purposes of this paper, we restrict our attention to the first TANF spell for each individual during this period, where we define a spell as continuous months of TANF receipt. As defined, and accounting for a small percentage of cases for which values of some variables are missing, our total sample size exceeds 64,000 individuals and 183,000 person-months.

We estimate our models using the Cox proportional hazards model. The advantage of the Cox model is that it allows for flexible, nonparametric estimation of the baseline hazard, or what we might think of as the effect of spell duration on the probability of sanction (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004).[10] For each of the variables in our models, we report the estimated hazard ratio, which reflects the proportional change in the risk of sanction given a one-unit increase in the independent variable of interest. Given the multilevel character of our data, the p-values reported in Table 2 are based on standard errors that are adjusted for error correlation within counties.

The results for our event history model are presented in columns I-IV of Table 2. We limit our attention for the moment to column I, which displays results for a model which is restricted to the effects of individual-level variables. Much as we would expect, we find that sanctions are significantly related to clients' individual traits. Specifically, TANF sanctions are significantly more likely to be applied to the small number of men in the program, relative to the large majority of adult women in the program. We also find that the probability of being sanctioned is higher for clients who are younger, who are heads of two-parent families, and who have less than a high school or college education. These results are largely consistent with the results of past studies (Born, Caudill and Cordero 1999; Hasenfeld, Ghose and Hillesland-Larson 2002; Kalil, Seefeldt and Wang 2002; Keiser, Mueser and Choi 2004; Koraleck 2000; Mancuso

[10] We have replicated our findings using other estimation methods as well, including parametric methods (Weibull), and a discrete-time (logit) model.

and Liner 2001; Westra and Routely 2000; Wu et al. 2003). In addition, these effects are consistent across the alternative specifications presented in Table 2 (which we discuss in more detail below).

(Table 2)

The effects of race and ethnicity are more complicated, as model diagnostics determined that these effects vary in magnitude across the TANF spell. We deal with this issue by including multiplicative terms that include the race/ethnicity of client and a simple counter variable (1-12) representing the month of the TANF spell (*Black*Month of Spell*, *Hispanic*Month of Spell*). We find that in the earliest months of a participation spell, white clients are significantly more likely to be sanctioned than black or Hispanic clients. However, as the length of the spell grows longer, black and Hispanic clients become more likely to experience a sanction than their white counterparts (however in the case of Hispanic clients, the difference at the upper range of the spell is not statistically significant). Indeed, by the 9th month of the spell, black clients are predicted to be sanctioned at a rate that is anywhere from 22-35% higher than that of whites (depending upon model specification). This interaction between race/ethnicity and month of spell is extremely robust and underscores the importance of employing a longitudinal design, such as event history analysis, to study racial dynamics in TANF sanctioning.

We now move to the effects of the local political climate, which are reflected in models II-IV. Model II adds our local conservatism index to the specification presented in model I and finds that the risk of sanction is significantly higher in conservative counties, even after controlling for clients' individual traits. Specifically, the hazard ratio suggests that holding individual traits constant, the risk of sanction in the most conservative county is 67% higher than in the most liberal county. Model III adds the rest of our contextual variables to the specification, and finds that local ideology is still significantly related to sanctioning, though the effect is diminished to some degree. Finally, model IV reflects the same specification as model III, but drops Dade county from the sample as a test of robustness. Dade county is by far the largest county represented in our sample, claiming 14% of all TANF clients in our estimation sample, and 17% of all person-month observations. In addition, Dade county is atypical of Florida counties in many important respects due to its racially mixed population and the diversity of organizations (i.e. public, private and nonprofit) involved in TANF implementation. Overall, the results for model IV are very similar to those for model III, suggesting that the presence of Dade county in the sample does not bias our conclusions. In fact, the effect of local ideology is even stronger when Dade county is removed from the sample.

While the results presented in Table 2 suggest that the effect of local ideology is statistically as well as substantively important, an important weakness of the hazard ratio is that it is limited to describing the relative risk of sanction at a single point in time (i.e. a given month within the TANF spell). We therefore provide further perspective on the magnitude of this effect in Figure 6 by examining the cumulative impact of local ideology over the course of the entire TANF spell. Specifically, Figure 6 plots cumulative survival rates across two contexts – the most liberal county and the most conservative county – for a typical TANF client. Based on our results, the probability that a typical TANF client residing in the most conservative county will survive through the 12th month of a TANF spell without a sanction is approximately .20. In contrast, the probability that the same (hypothetical) client will survive through the 12th month without a sanction in the most liberal county is approximately .40, or twice that of the survival rate in the most conservative county. Of course, very few clients will ever experience a 12 month

TANF spell, but this simulation does provide additional perspective on the substantive impact of local ideology on sanctioning outcomes.

(Figure 6)

Returning to the effects of other variables in our model, the effects of the local racial/ethnic context provide some evidence that sanctioning is reduced in areas where the minority population is large. This provides support for the notion that racial/ethnic minorities are able to exert influence over TANF policy outcomes, however we are unable to determine if this effect is due to indirect pressure on TANF officials, or through greater representation among case managers and TANF administrators. The results are strongest for Hispanic%, as the coefficient reaches statistical significance in model III. However, when Dade county is dropped from the sample, this coefficient falls just below the threshold for significance. The coefficient for Black% is consistently negative, and while it does not reach the .05 threshold for statistical significance in any of our specifications, it consistently comes close to significance in each model in Table 2 ($.10 < p < .20$, two-tailed).

In addition to the local political environment, the results in Table 2 suggest that sanctioning outcomes are also influenced by the socioeconomic environment in which TANF is implemented. We find that all else equal, the risk of sanction is greater in large urban counties, and where poverty rates are relatively higher. These results may reflect the effects of environments in which jobs are less accessible, or for other reasons specific to the local environment, TANF clients find the demands of the program more difficult to meet. Interestingly, the size of the TANF caseload is negatively related to sanctioning. This lends some support to the possibility that case managers with heavy caseloads have less time to spend monitoring their clients, or that they find it more difficult to follow through with the administrative burden of the sanction process. Contrary to expectations, we find relatively weak effects for two aspects of local labor markets, as neither unemployment rates nor local wage levels proved to be significant predictors of sanctions.

Finally, in addition to the effects of individual traits and variables reflecting characteristics of the local community, we also find evidence of a seasonal pattern to sanctioning, as reflected in the set of coefficients reflecting the effects of each calendar month. This seasonal effect is graphically displayed in Figure 7, where the bars in the figure represent the hazard ratio associated with each monthly effect. As the omitted (i.e. baseline) month in the analysis, the hazard ratio for August is set at 1.0. Thus, the values of the remaining hazard ratios represented in the figure can be interpreted as the proportional increase in the risk of sanction in that month, compared to the risk of sanction in the month of August. The pattern of the bars in Figure 7 suggests that the risk of sanction is higher during the winter months and early spring, peaking in the month of March. The risk of sanction then declines during the summer and early fall, reaching its minimum level in August. This pattern corresponds almost exactly with fluctuations in the tourist industry, a fact which is confirmed by the line in the graph representing monthly (statewide) taxable sales generated from tourism and recreation. The relationship between these seasonal effects and tourism sales is extremely strong (r = .95), suggesting that sanctioning patterns may, in some way, be related to labor market demands that are driven by the tourist economy. The causal mechanism connecting sanctioning and tourism remains undetermined, and certainly deserves further investigation.

(Figure 7)

CONCLUSION

Within the TANF program, sanction policies have become the key tool for signaling clients that they must take the welfare-to-work philosophy seriously and meet the slate of obligations detailed in their Individual Responsibility Plans, or they will lose access to cash assistance. Given the importance of sanctioning to clients' well-being, a number of studies have examined the determinants of sanctioning to gain a better understanding of who is being sanctioned, and why. Although this literature has furthered our understanding of the impact of sanctioning, it has been almost exclusively "client-centered" in its theoretical approach by neglecting to consider the effects of the welfare system and implementation. Our analysis attempts to shed some light on these effects by examining local variation in sanctioning across the state of Florida, which stands as a leader in the use of sanctioning. Based on our findings, three issues strike us as meriting special attention.

First, several studies have shown that states have used the discretion granted to them through first-order devolution to tailor their welfare programs to the ideological tastes of their citizens (e.g. Fellowes and Rowe 2004; Soss et al. 2001). As we have seen, however, welfare reform has also been characterized by second-order devolution, thus increasing the importance of local discretion in welfare reform outcomes. Has second-order devolution had a similar effect? Our analysis suggests that at least in one state, second-order devolution may indeed be working in a similar fashion. Based on our analysis of sanctioning outcomes in Florida, we find significant variation in local sanctioning practices, even after controlling for such important individual traits as education, race, and income. More importantly, we find strong evidence that local differences are not random, but instead are strongly tied to local political values. We cannot pinpoint the causal mechanism that is driving this finding, yet there is good reason to believe it is rooted in the decentralized nature of TANF implementation in Florida, along with the inherent discretion present in the sanctioning process.

A second important finding that emerges from our analysis is the importance of social class variables in determining sanctioning outcomes. Consistent with prior research, we find that individuals with lower levels of human capital, as reflected by lower education and income levels, are significantly more likely to be sanctioned. In addition to these individual level effects, however, we also find evidence that class exhibits a contextual effect, as the probability of sanction is higher among clients who live in poverty-stricken areas. Further research is needed to pinpoint the causal mechanism that is driving this effect, but to the extent that it is due to local variation in economic opportunity, this suggests that policy solutions which take the local economic context into account may be warranted.

Finally, our analysis underscores the potential importance of using a longitudinal design to study sanctioning outcomes. This conclusion is supported by at least two important aspects of our findings - the existence of a seasonal pattern to sanctioning, and the relationship between race and sanctioning. Our analysis suggests that holding other variables constant, the overall rate of sanctioning in Florida is higher during the peak tourist season than it is during the summer months. This suggests that cross-sectional studies, which are conducted in a relatively short period of time, may reach conclusions that cannot be reliably generalized to rest of the year. Similarly, we also find that racial and ethnic differences in sanctioning are related to the length of the TANF spell. This suggests that sanctioning disparity may be a more complex phenomenon than we have thus far understood, and is therefore best studied using a longitudinal design.

APPENDIX A

Variable Definitions, Sources, and Descriptive Statistics for Analyses Presented in Table 2

Independent Variables	Definition	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum & Maximum
Individual Characteristics				
Gender	0=Female, 1=Male	.136	.343	0-1
Age	Client age, in years	30.7	9.04	18-102
Single-Parent	1=Single parent, 0=otherwise, based on # of adults in family	.797	.402	0-1
Wage Income	Wage income, from previous quarter	562.578	1336.728	0-76013
Education (reference = >12 years)				
Less than H.S. Education	1= <12 years education, 0 =otherwise	.464	.499	0-1
H.S. Education	1= 12 years education, 0 =otherwise	.345	.475	0-1
Race/Ethnic (referece=white, non-Hisp)				
Black	1=black, 0=otherwise	.407	.491	0-1
Hispanic	1=Hispanic, 0=otherwise	.190	.392	0-1
Month of Spell	Month of Spell for each client	2.895	2.386	1-12
Political Environment				
Local Conservatism Index	See appendix B	.461	.220	0-1
County Black Population %	% black in county of client (Census, April 2000)	15.613	7.288	2.1 – 57.1
County Hispanic Population %	%Hispanic in county of client (Census, April 2000)	18.148	18.939	1.5 – 57.3
Economic Environment				
Average Wage – Food Service/Drinking Places	Average annual income for employees (2002) (NAICS 722)	12624.76	1888.585	7795- 16674

County Unemployment Rate (t-1)	Unemployment rate in county of client, measured each month (Florida Research and Economic Database)	5.344	1.635	1.7 - 19.7
County Poverty Rate	County poverty rate for all persons in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates)	12.583	3.298	6.9 - 24.2
TANF Caseload (per 1000 county population)	Ratio of county TANF caseload to total county population * 1000	2.092	1.083	.142 - 6.907
Total Population	Total Population for Each County (2000), in millions	.899	.753	.007 - 2.253

APPENDIX B

Construction of Index of County Political Ideology

To construct our index of local ideology we collected data on 18 ideologically relevant constitutional amendments that appeared on a statewide ballot for ratification from 1996 through 2004. We computed the percentage of "yes" votes for each amendment, for each county, and conducted a factor analysis using all 18 amendments (thus 18 variables, N=67 counties). The subjects of these amendments are listed in the table below.

Year	Amendment
96	Tax Limitation
96	Pollution Costs
96	Sugar Fee
98	Death Penalty (For)
98	Tax Exemption
98	Public Education
98	Basic Rights
98	Election Reform
98	Gun Control
00	Public Transit
02	Smoking Ban
02	Universal Pre-K
02	Class Size Reduction
02	Animal Cruelty
04	Abortion Rights (Limit)
04	Minimum Wage
04	Medical Compensation Limits
04	Slot Machines

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Table 1. Selected Characteristics of the Florida and U.S. Adult TANF Populations

Client Characteristics	**Total Florida Adult (2000 – 2004)**	**Total U.S. Adult (FY 2002)**
Ethnicity / Race		
White	33.7	31.6
Black	36.2	38.3
Hispanic	28.5	24.9
Gender		
Female	83.6	90
Male	16.4	10
Single-Parent[a]	73.7	75.5
Citizenship		
Yes	83.3	92.5
No	16.7	7.5
Age[b]		
18-19	7.1	7.5
20-29	43.1	44.9
30-39	32.5	29.9
40+	17.5	17.7
Average	30.9	31
Education		
<12 years	52.8	45.2
12 years	34.3	51.4
>12 years	12.9	3.3
Median	11	12
Residence		
Broward (Ft. Lauderdale)	7	---
Dade (Miami)	26.4	---
Duval (Jacksonville)	3.9	---
Hillsborough (Tampa)	4.9	---
Orange (Orlando)	8.2	---
Palm Beach (West Palm Beach)	4.2	---
Pinellas (St. Petersburg)	5.7	---
Rest of State	39.7	---
Total Adult Unduplicated Caseload 1/2000 – 4/2004	**268,620**	---

Source: For Florida statistics, data are calculated from TANF administrative data provided by the Florida DCF. For national statistics, see Office Family Assistance, Sixth Annual Report to Congress: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/annualreport6/chapter10/chap10.htm

[a]Defined in Florida as only parent in TANF family. For U.S., it is defined as unmarried TANF adults.

[b] In Florida, based on age at first month of TANF receipt during study period.

Table 2. Cox Proportional Hazard Models of Effect of Individual and Community-Level Characteristics on Sanction Initiation

Independent Variables	**I**	**II**	**III**	**IV**
Individual Characteristics				
Gender (male)	1.209**	1.201**	1.196**	1.182**
Age	.988**	.989**	.990**	.990**
Single-Parent	.888**	.876**	.857**	.840**
Wage Income(t-1)	.989**	.991**	.990**	.990*
Education (reference = >H.S.)				
Less than H.S. Education	1.454**	1.465**	1.456**	1.442**
H.S. Education	1.122**	1.128**	1.128**	1.120**
Race/Ethnicity (reference=white)				
Black				
3 months	.876*	.943*	.953*	.954*
6 months	1.035	1.123**	1.134**	1.129**
9 months	1.223*	1.338**	1.349**	1.336*
Hispanic				
3 months	.781**	.867*	.931**	.925**
6 months	.866	.967	1.042	1.076
9 months	.960	1.078	1.165	1.251
Political Environment				
Local Conservatism Index	---	1.668**	1.405**	1.636**
Black%	---	---	.997	.996
Hispanic%	---	---	.990**	.996
Socio-Economic Environment				
Annual Wage -				
Food Service/Drinking Places	---	---	.974	.963
Unemployment Rate(t-1)	---	---	1.014	1.010
Poverty Rate	---	---	1.035**	1.038**
Population (in millions)	---	---	1.278**	1.351**
Per Capita TANF Caseload (t-1)	---	---	.847**	.866**
Month of Year	---	---	(see Fig. 7)	(not reported)
Number of Subjects	64,630	64,630	64,630	55,354
Number of Failures	25,337	25,337	25,337	22,511
Time at Risk (Person-Months)	183,111	183,111	183,111	152,338

*p<.05, **p<.01

Note: The sample for this analysis is consists of all new TANF clients who entered TANF from January 2001 through December 2002. All clients are observed for a maximum of twelve months (clients who exit without being sanctioned, or who were sanctioned after twelve months, are treated as censored). Cell entries are hazard ratios, and reflect the proportional change in the hazard of sanction, given a one-unit increase in the independent variable of interest. P-values are based on robust standard errors (adjusted for error clustering at the county level).

Figure 1. Relationship between County Conservatism Index and Average County Conservative Identification (Survey-Based)

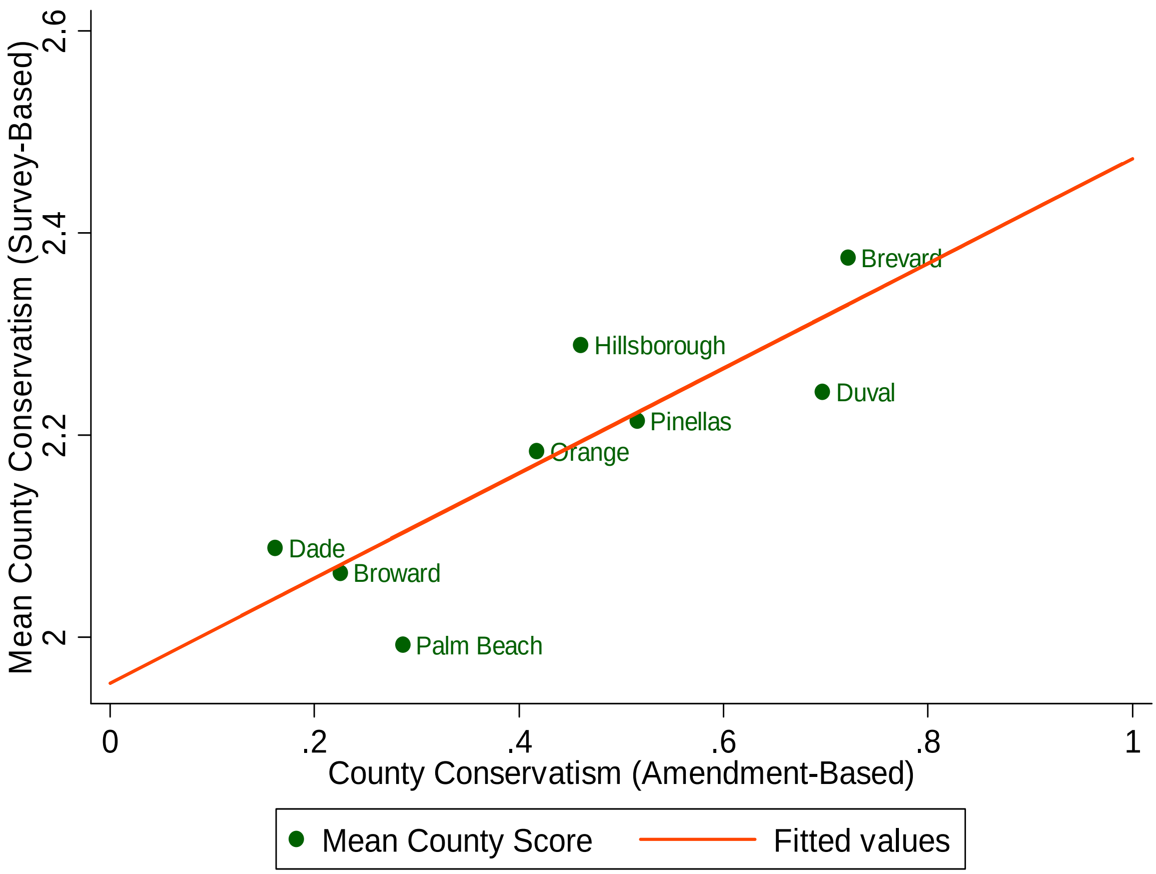
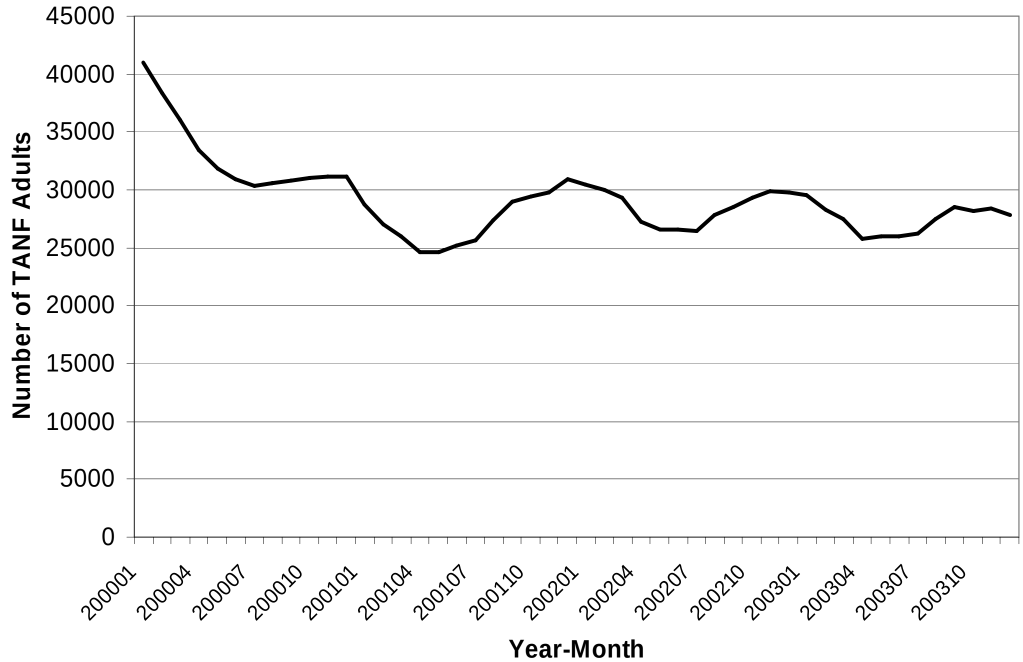


Figure 2. Total Adult TANF Caseload by Race/Ethnic Identification, January 2000-December 2003

A. Total Adult Caseload



B. Adult Caseload, by Race/Ethnicity

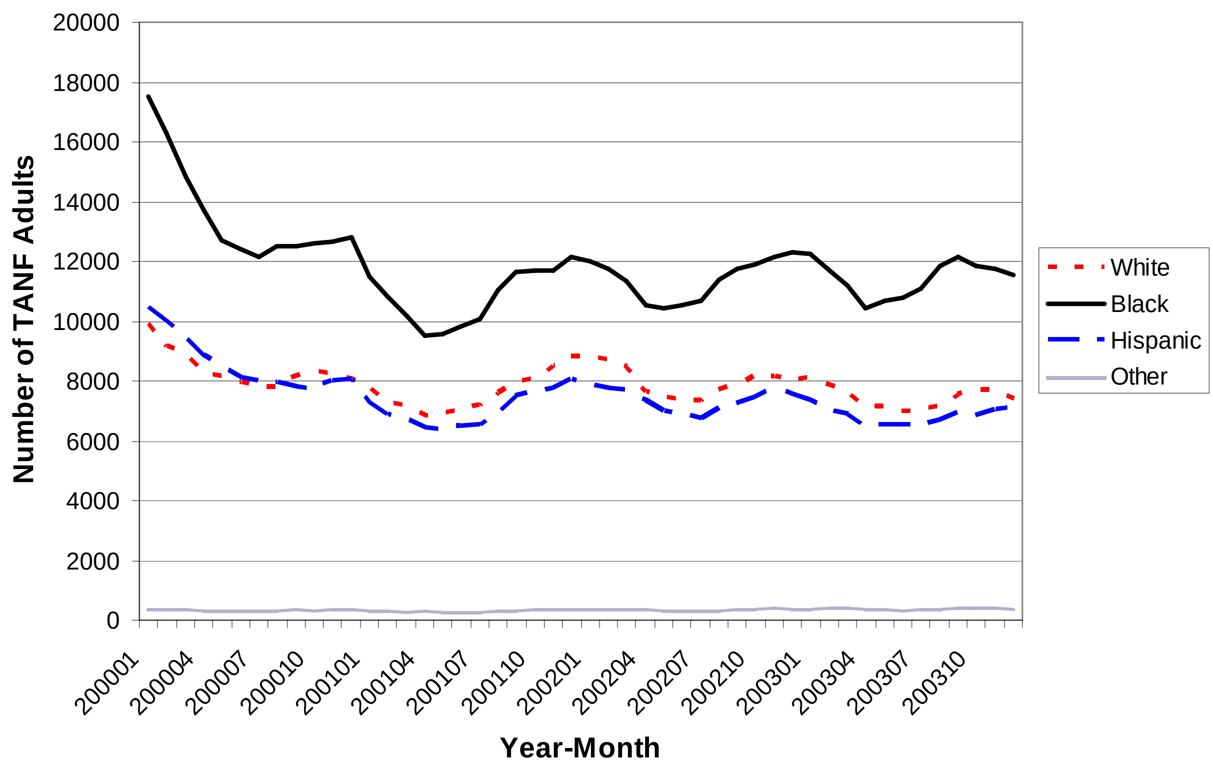
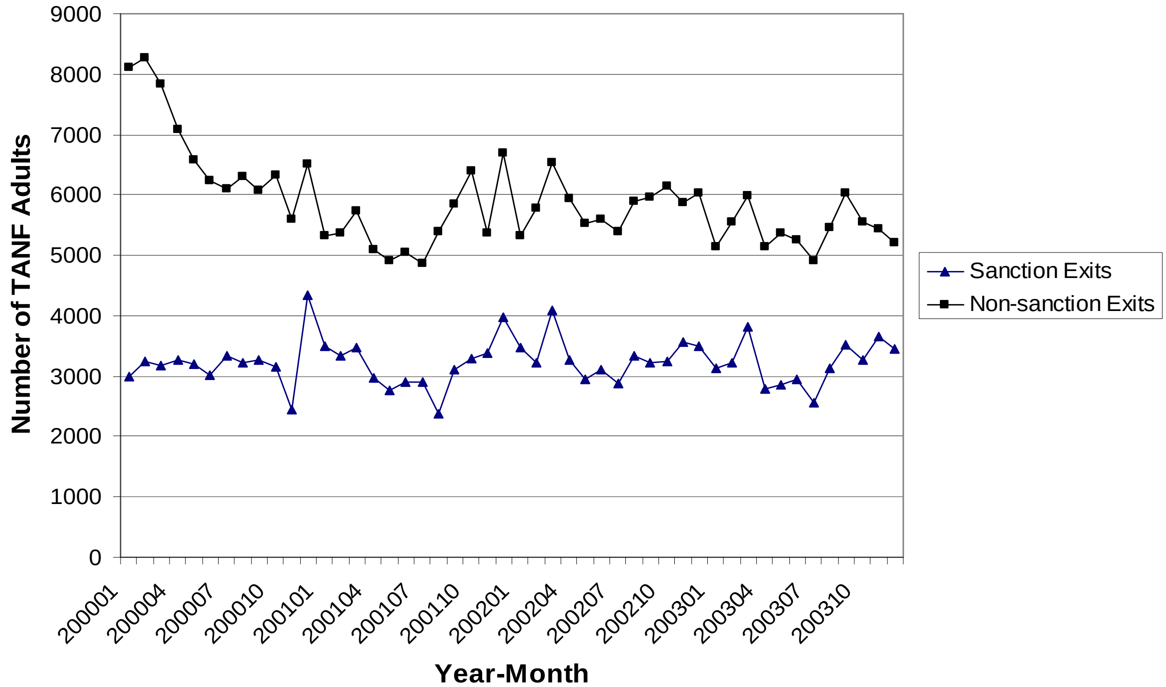


Figure 3. Monthly TANF Sanctions, Exits, and Sanction Rates in Florida, January 2000 – December 2003

A. Total TANF Sanctions and Non-Sanction Exits



B. TANF Sanction Rates (% of TANF Adult Caseload)

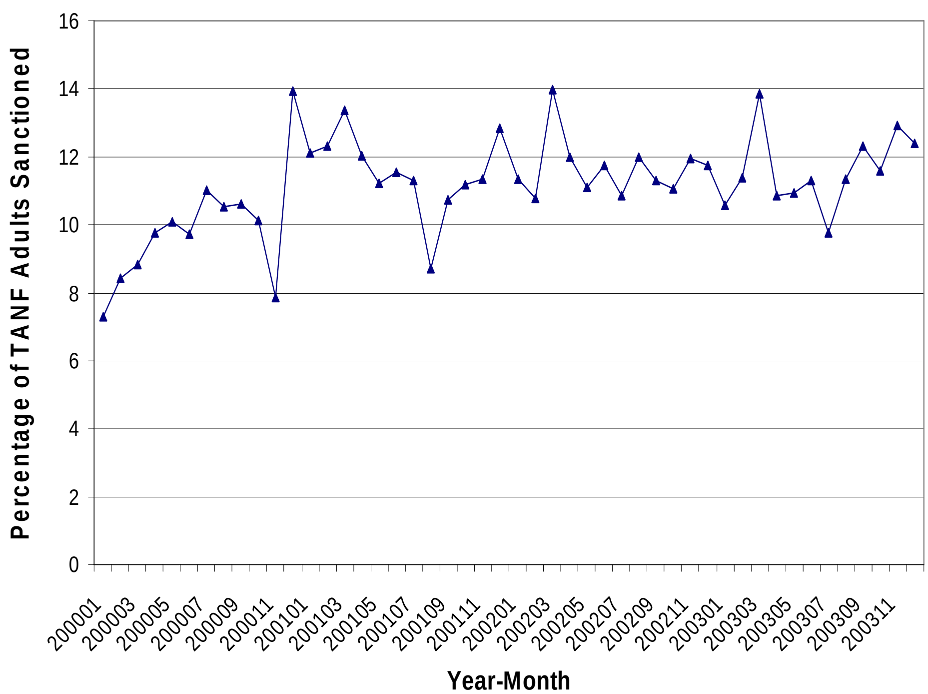


Figure 4. Percentage of TANF Adults Sanctioned During First TANF Spell (Average of 24 Cohorts Entering TANF from January 2001 – December 2002)

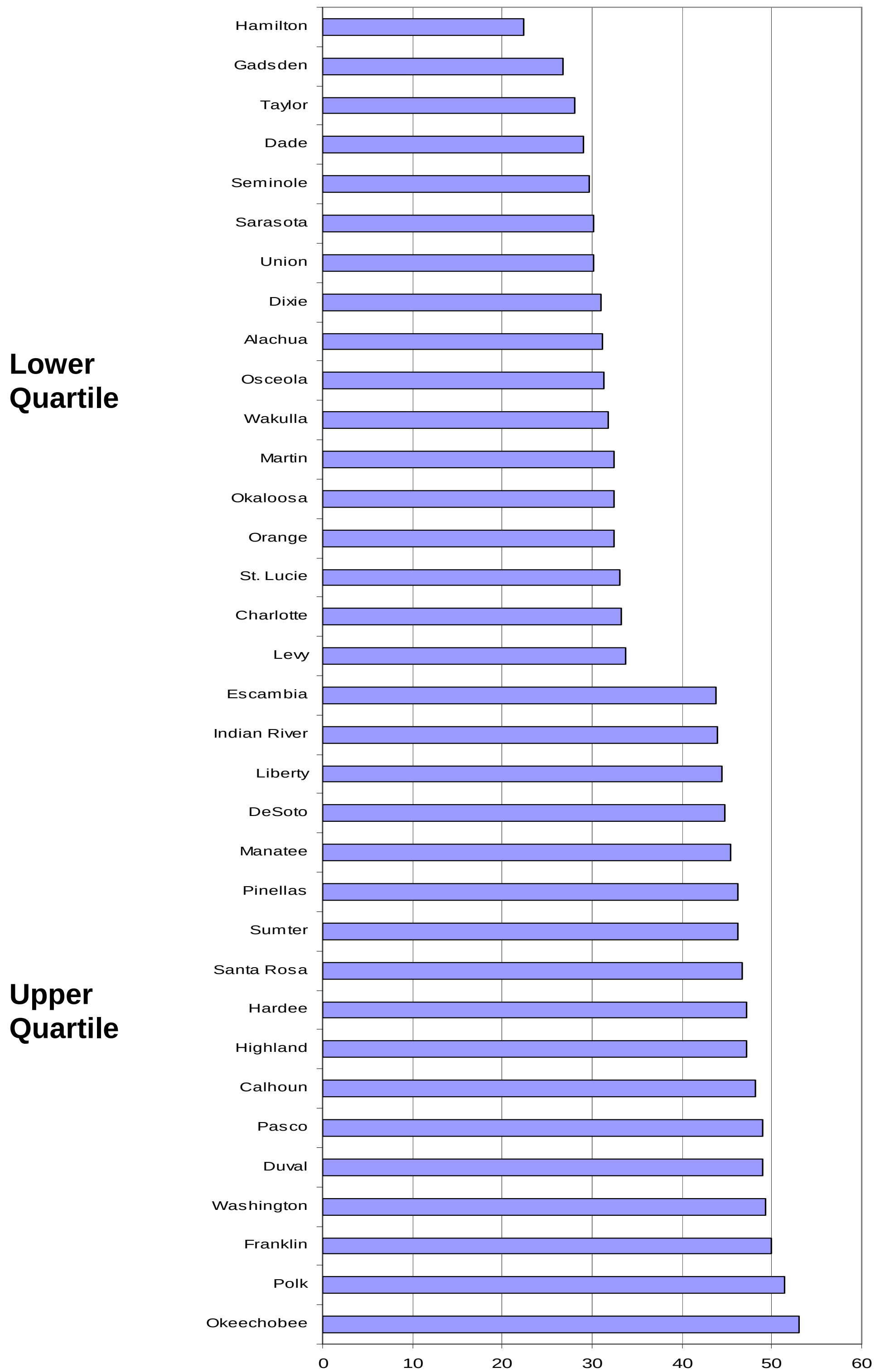


Figure 5. Relationship between County Sanction Rate and Local Conservatism

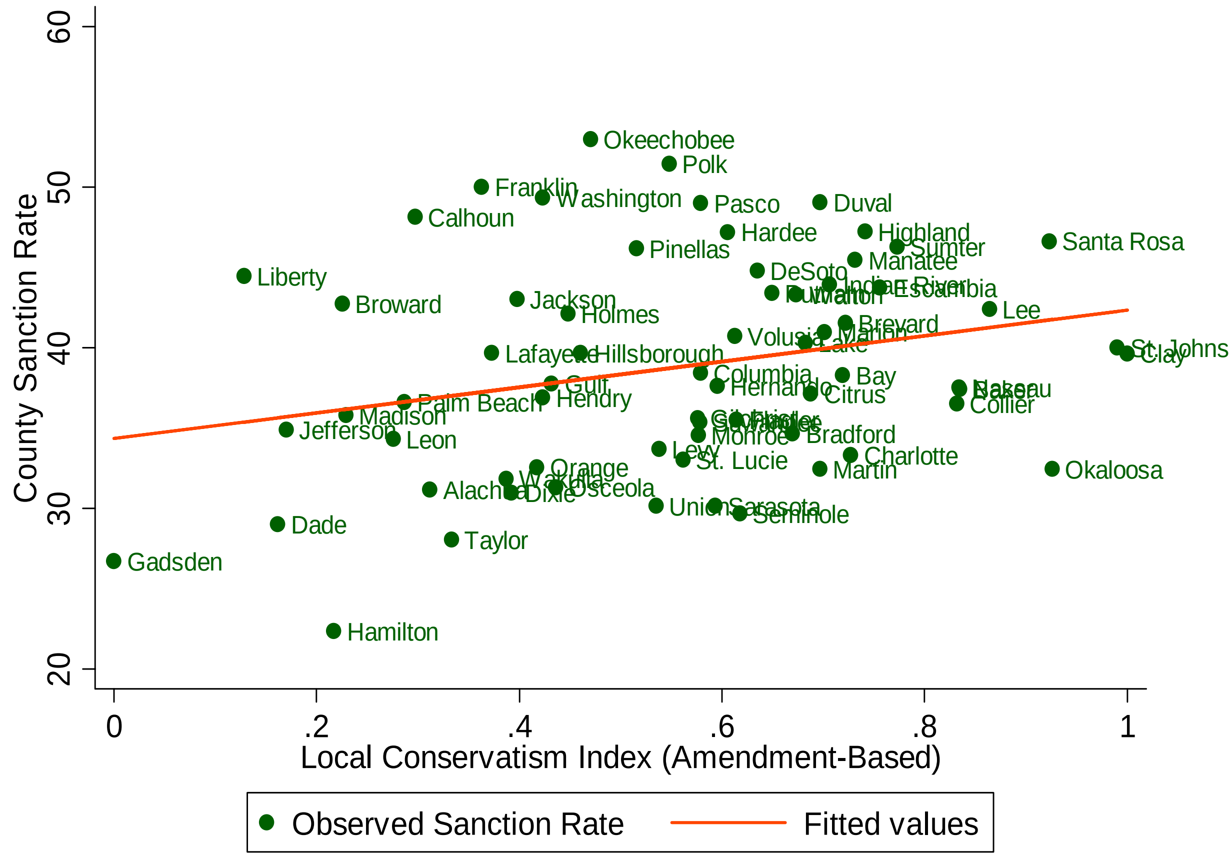
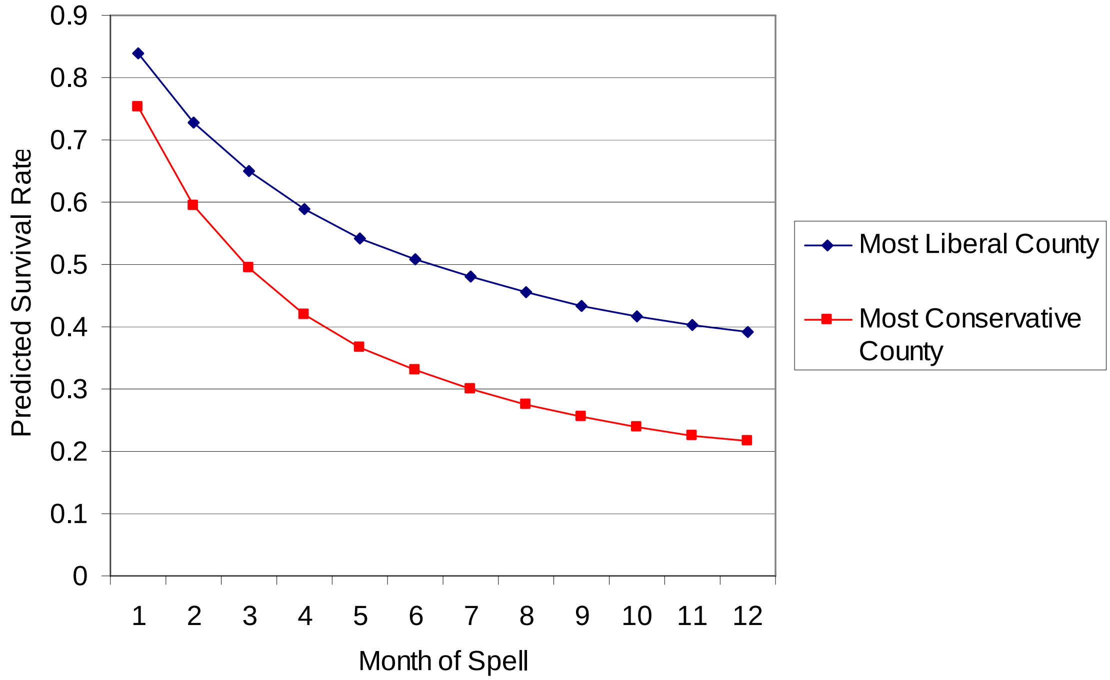
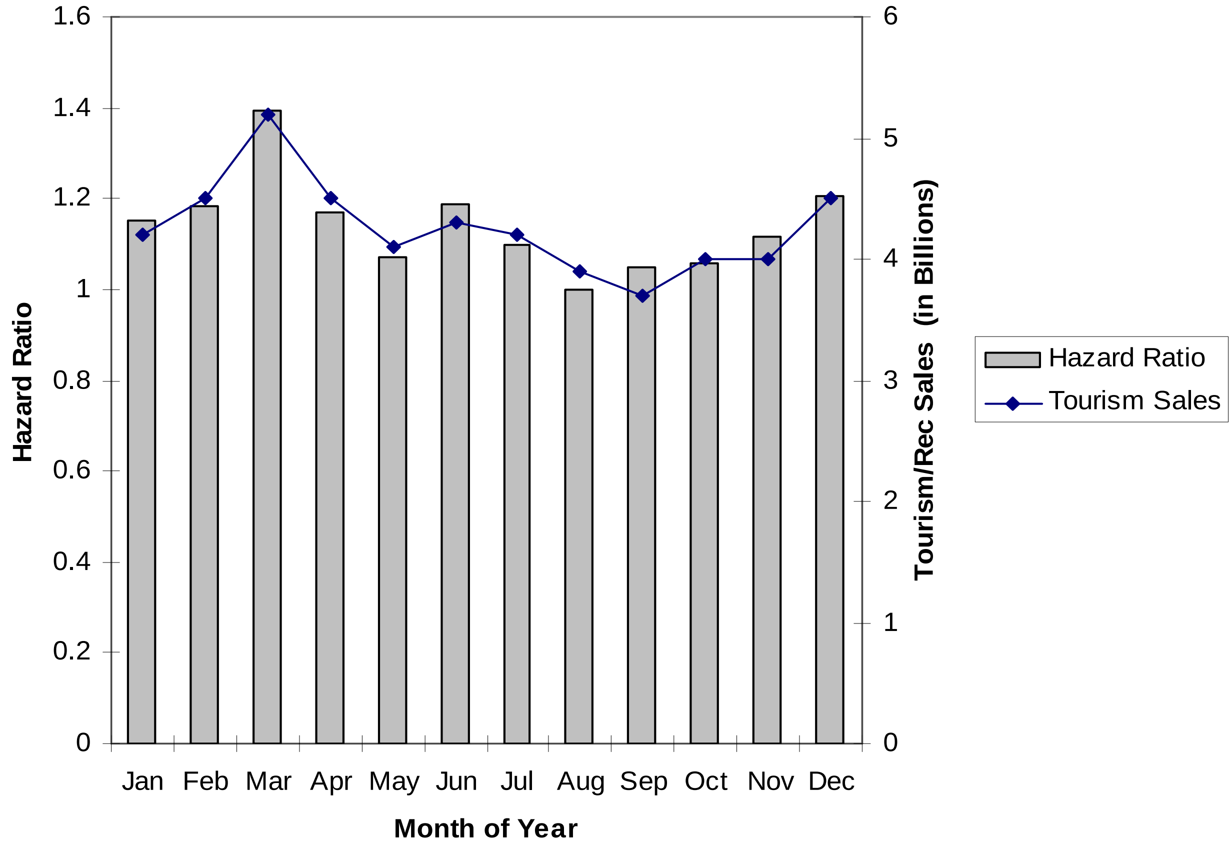


Figure 6. Cumulative Survival Rates for a Typical TANF Adult, by Local Political Ideology



Note: Survival rates are estimated for a 31 year-old white woman with 12 years of education and average level of wage income. These estimates are based on the results presented in column II of Table 2.

Figure 7. Estimated Hazard Ratio and Total Tourism/Recreation Taxable Sales, by Month of Year



Source: Hazard ratios are taken from the model reflected in column III of Table 2. Sales data reflect 2002, and are reported by Visit Florida (Florida Visitor Report 2003).