The relevance of need concepts in the analysis of societal services*

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1 INTRODUCTION

The place of need concepts in politological and sociological analysis is far from clear. The uses of these concepts are many and varied. They include needs as unspecified referential terms (»needs in society»), as black-box inputs of political systems, as characteristics or properties of different social groups, and as objects to be satisfied or met by public policies. Needs are used conceptually as **explanans** or as **explanandum** of human behavior and action, and as important **criteria** in the evaluation of different public policies and their results. It is not surprising that a concept with so many uses gives rise to problems of un-clarity, confusion and consequential misunderstandings

Recognizing the problems involved with need concepts in social and political research, some researchers have suggested that we should develop alternative concepts or even abandon such concepts altogether (1). Others have defended the relevance of need concepts (2)

In spite of the difficulties in establishing a clear, general concept of needs, most researchers in political and social sciences use some need concepts. Some researchers have emphasized the need perspective as a point of departure in analyzing social institutions and public policies. Ilkka Heiskanen (3), for example, offers the concept of »societal need matrix» as a framework of policy analysis. Several researchers have tried to sketch out the relations between human needs and social structures and institutions (4).

We therefore have some conceptual frameworks for the analysis of needs in relation to social and societal factors. Various systemic models have evidently provided the most usual approach at the level of conceptual frameworks. At a more concrete level, as in policy analysis or in evaluation research, we have more empirical frameworks and analyses for the study of different public policies and social institutions.

Institutional or organizational analysis reminds us of the differences between social subsystems and of the requirement to differentiate between types of institutions (5). The development of a »service state» or »service society» has brought institutional analysis again to need concepts since »services» may be regarded as »services responding to needs». The field of services in a service society is not, however, well-systematized, neither conceptually nor pragmatically

Allardt states (6) that in studying and defining human welfare we usually have to use need concepts as conceptual »anchors». If we abandoned need concepts because of the difficulties involved in using them we would not have any other similar or compensating concepts to replace them.

Since needs can be understood as hypothetical constructs we do not have any direct and simple ways to acquire knowledge about them. Instead of taking one narrow view of needs we could perhaps develop systematic research programs to study needs from different perspectives. Such programs would require both conceptual clarification and empirical data. The perspective of human needs is not yet ready for a final evaluation. We need more elaboration of this perspective.

Many problems in the study of needs seem to originate from the broad and undifferentiated nature of need concepts. It is necessary **to differentiate need concepts** and other related concepts. It is also necessary **to differentiate systematically the field of societal services,** and to do this in relation to human needs.

The conception of human needs has potentially very broad and encompassing implications for many branches of research. Our conception of human needs is evidently a constitutive part of our conception of human nature as well as of our conception of human societies. Needs may be a bridge between facts and values (7). A need implies a value, but it can also be taken as information about reality. This is a challenge to the researcher of human needs — or, even more generally, of the needs of living organisms.

In this article, three steps of conceptual analysis are attempted:

(1) to analyze some ways of systematically differentiating need concepts
(2) to analyze some ways to differentiate between different types of societal services
(3) to develop a tentative framework for relating human needs and societal services to each other

The aim of this article is to develop in this way a provisional scheme for the study of societal services from the perspective of human needs.

2 NEED CONCEPTS AND NEED-RELATED CONCEPTS

There are great difficulties involved in elaborating need concepts. To many researchers, basic human needs are characteristics of human beings. They are regarded as relatively enduring and less subject to change than the various wants from which needs are distinguished. Wants may be manifestations of needs but we cannot infer the existence of needs from wants. Wants may be induced by manipulation from outside. The problem remains of establishing empirically what the needs of human beings are. From what kind of data or material could we infer the existence of human needs?

One factor behind the difficulties in establishing need concepts is the very broadness of the concepts. In speaking about needs, we often speak about very many different things. Even the usual dichotomy of needs and wants is not clear enough for research purposes. Perhaps we should not try to establish universal need-sentences at all, and only try to establish more partial propositions about human needs. These would be partial in that they would not cover all possible needs in all possible circumstances, but instead concern only certain defined needs in certain circumstances.

I would therefore like to move from relatively broad and universal need concepts towards more specific and differentiated need concepts. These could be elaborated by, for example, developing a conception of **different types of needs**. Thus, instead of debating whether needs are biologically inherited or socially learned (8) we could assume that there are different types of needs, some of which are relatively more biologically inherited, some others relatively more socially acquired.

On what bases could we construct useful typologies of human needs? The question is crucial and troublesome at the same time. It seems that we have different possibilities, and the choice between them may depend on e.g. the research interest. In various theories of needs, we have typologies or lists of human needs. The differences in the types of needs established in these typologies are quite great, though some general features may be common to different analyses (9).

2.1. Some conceptions of need research

One factor causing variance in need conceptions is evidently the long history of »need research». Over many generations, different scholars from different disciplines have added their contributions to the »need discourse». Thus, we can trace the discourse back to Aristotle (10), we can study Marx's concept of need (11) and those of other great philosophers.

In more modern times, there are at least two disciplines or research areas which have made an impact on our need conceptions:

— (1) theories of human welfare, in which needs are criteria for welfare, quality of life or the results of public policies
— (2) motivational psychology, in which needs are explanations of human behavior

The two approaches are, of course, partially overlapping. Abraham Maslow's theory of needs, for example, has been used and debated in both contexts.

The difference of approach between welfare theories and motivational theories may be sketched broadly as follows:

— (1) Motivational theories try to explain human behavior and its results (satisfaction,

frustration) by using need concepts (other concepts, such as expectations, are also used)

Needs ⟶ Behavior ⟶ Satisfaction
        cause   cause   or Frustration
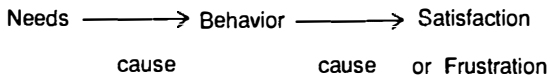
— (2) Welfare theories try to evaluate the results of welfare policies by using need concepts (or other concepts, such as resources)

Policies ⟷ Needs ⟶ Satisfaction
       meet   cause   or Frustration
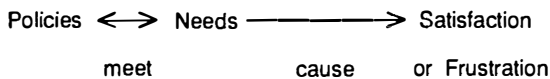
— (3) From these simple diagrams it can be seen that motivational theories and welfare theories have different perspectives on the same phenomena and concepts. Motivational theories start from the perspective of the individual, and mostly omit the perspective of other individuals and of society. Welfare theories start from the perspective of society (or state, or groups) but omit the perspective of individual behavior. Can these two perspectives be united?

Policies ← Needs ← Satisfaction / Frustration ← Individual behavior
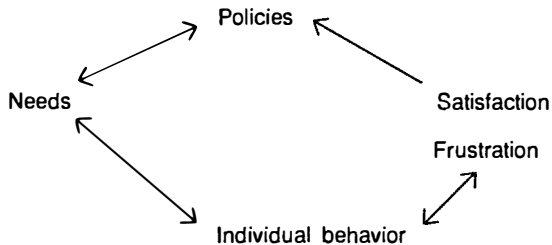
It may be possible to unite the policy view and the individual actor's view, or at least bring them closer to each other. In fact we do not know how close to or how remote from each other these views really are. A useful research project connected with practice would be to develop a parallel framework for describing both individual actors' circumstances and policy outcomes. This would be reasonable, since for the individual actor need satisfaction is a question related both to his own action and to the resources and possibilities in his environment. For an institution executing public policy there are also two principal alternatives: action by the actors themselves or the supplying of services. To elaborate a common framework, the »need language» and the »service language» should be capable of being translated into each other.

The task of developing a common framework is, of course, too vast for small-scale research work. Only some general guidelines can be outlined here. One problem is that both motivational theories and welfare theories include a multitude of need specifications and typologies. At the extremes, we have Henry Murray's list of over 30 human needs in his theory of personality, and in welfare research we have specific »indicators» or »measures of results» in community studies, organizational analyses and evaluation research. In this kind of situation, one easily acquires sympathy for the »grand theories» of needs, such as Maslow's. In fact, Maslow's theory seems to have been the most used common framework uniting, In certain cases, the »need language» and the »service language» (12).

2.2. The differentiation of need concepts

The »need language» is a part of everyday human experience. The word »need» belongs to natural everyday language. Evidently, it embodies an important common perspective of human experience. The everyday use of the word is naturally unsystematic and varied. Generally, »needs» may refer to **deficiencies**, as well as to **strivings**. Everyday speech does not make distinctions between the permanent and casual aspects of needs or between general and specific needs. The researchers of human needs have dealt with this everyday experience with different conceptual devices. Such devices are evidently necessary if we want to clarify the problem of needs.

The different bases on which need concepts can be differentiated include at least the following three aspects:

— (1) Needs can be differentiated by referring to their different **contents**.
— (2) Needs can be differentiated according to **process** concepts related to need satisfaction.
— (3) Needs can be differentiated by means of some essential dimensions which describe the **quality** of needs.

Before trying to analyze the differences between various need concepts we should have a general definition of needs. Many researchers have used the term »needs» without giving any definition. For example, Maslow does not give any explicit definition of his need concept.

On the other hand, the list of definitions of needs which have been proposed is long, too.

In several definitions of needs, the relation of needs to deficiencies, necessities and requirements in human life is maintained (13). In this view, we have a need for something if we lack it and if this lack is detrimental to us. This view may lead to a passive and dependent conception of human needs. Roos (14) has emphasized that needs seem to have two poles. According to Roos: »Needs are the requirements for the existence and development of social and individual life which are expressed and develop historically primarily in the production and reproduction processes».

Roos argues that needs express both the **dependencies** on external conditions and circumstances (needs as deficiencies) and active **strivings** to change and develop those external conditions or relations to them (needs as strivings, forces). We may accept Roos' definition as a tentative guideline. We must, however, ask if all human deficiencies and all human strivings can be characterized as human needs, and the answer, surely, is that they cannot. I would define human needs with reference to the **relatively permanent characteristics** of human beings associated with dependencies on and strivings towards external conditions. Temporary and situational dependencies and strivings do not, as such, have the status of a human need, even if they may be expressions of such need.

Thus, I would construct the need concept on the basis of a quite broad view of human life and action, trying to start from the »whole life picture». Temporary and situational dependencies and strivings can be called **wants** (or desires), and they can be conceptually distinguished from human needs. Priorities between wants may be called **preferences**. No other hierarchies between need concepts are required.

What different substances do human needs have? This question brings us to the problem of the contents of needs. Several researchers have elaborated lists of needs accoding to contents. A review of these lists would be too extensive a task here, so I confine myself to a few remarks.

The lists of needs according to content can be elaborated in different ways. We can describe needs by referring to

— the content of the lack (material, inmaterial)
— the activity required (one's own activity, others' activity)

— the goal implied (change in conditions, an act, an event)
— the result for the individual involved (a consequence, an impact)

We may, for example, speak about a need for food or nutrition, a need to eat, the satisfaction of hunger need, or satiety. All these expressions belong to the »normal need language». The differences between them may imply that needs have a process character in addition to the aspect of contents. The different expressions (hunger, food, eat, satiety) refer to different phases of need-based activities.

I would like to unite the different specific contents of possible needs into a few broad categories. These broad categories of needs could include several alternative deficiencies, activities, goals and concrete results. The works of Alderfer (15), Allardt (16), Mallmann (17) and Nudler (18) are based on this kind of approach (19).

The specific advantages of broad need concepts include flexibility in relation to different manifestations of needs, and relative independence from cultural variation. At a more concrete level, we could speak about wants as manifestations of needs, and about different **satisfiers** of needs. The term satisfier would include the objects (material, nonmaterial) implied by a need or by a want. Quite often satisfiers may be complex combinations of objects and activities. Activated wants typically produce **demands** for satisfiers.

The problem still remains of how to distinguish needs from wants. It is not sufficient to say that needs are more permanent and wants more temporary. It is not even sufficient to add that needs are more general categories while wants are connected to more specific satisfiers. We still have the problem of whether all wants are related positively to needs. Theoretically there are two possibilities

— wants may be manifestations of needs or need-based wants
— wants may be independent of needs or »independent wants» which may be even counteractive to needs (20)

It is simplistic to state that needs are elements of human nature while wants may also be externally induced. This does not help us to distinguish between need-based and other wants. I would suggest a general approach to analyzing the relationships between concrete wants and a broad pattern of human needs. I suggest that the analysis of precisely these

relationships in concrete examples is necessary if we want to clarify the problem of differentiating between needs and wants.

The process perspective on human needs could then be tentatively explicated by the following terms:

— **needs** defined as relatively permanent characteristics of human beings
— **wants** or temporary need states aroused by either activated needs or by environmental stimulation
— **demands for satisfiers** which imply action to achieve satisfaction
— **results**, or, crudely stated, either **satisfaction** or **frustration** of a need or a want

The process concepts of needs describe sequences of human action and their hypothetical dynamics. Thus, »need» is a hypothetical construct, a way of seeing and interpretating human nature. It is also an approach applicable in research.

Needs may be assumed to be both inherited and learned (21). In every case they are relatively permanent characteristics which imply dispositions for human dependencies and strivings. During a person's life, these need-dispositions develop into and manifest themselves in different wants, which are relatively conscious states of the human mind. But wants may also originate from external conditions, which implies that wants are only partially need-based. Wants, in turn, may activate demands for concrete satisfiers. Demands imply action, an approach to perceived or imagined satisfiers. In terms of results, demands may be either successful and satisfying or they may be unsuccessful and frustrating.

Thus, for the process concepts of needs we have the implicit conceptual structure: characteristics — states — activities — results.

A third way to differentiate between need concepts is to analyze dimensions on which needs and related phenomena are different. Some of those dimensions may be relevant to the distinction between needs and wants. We may, for heuristic purposes, identify e.g. the following dimensions or variabes:

— permanent vs. temporary
— characteristics vs. states vs. activities
— visible vs. non-visible
— broad, general vs. specific
— universal vs. unique
— endogenous vs. exogenous

Needs are, within this framework, relatively broad, general, permanent, universal, nonvisible and endogenous characteristics of human beings. The strength of needs may vary according to cultural factors, but the dispositions may be supposed to be present universally. Cultures activate or inhibit needs: i.e. at a more visible level we observe the different wants produced by exogenous factors also.

Wants are relatively temporary, specific, unique (e.g. for a culture), conscious states of human beings which are produced both by endogenous and exogenous factors. Demands are manifestations of wants in action, and thus they are relatively temporary, specific, unique, visible and exogenous activities to achieve specific satisfiers.

At the level of results, we usually speak about satisfactions and frustrations. We do not have different terms for satisfactions of needs and satisfactions of wants/demands. Thus, we evidently must come to terms with these »natural» possibilities. We should, however, distinguish analytically the satisfaction of needs from the satisfaction of wants if we wish to maintain the distinction between needs and wants.

3 TYPES OF SOCIETAL SERVICES

Above, I have elaborated a »need language» while trying to stay sensitive to everyday human experience and to the analytical tools developed by researchers of needs. The next step is to analyze the services available in society. The general purpose of services in a »service society» is to meet the needs of the citizens. The term »responsiveness» is often used in the meaning of »responsiveness to the needs».

3.1. General features of service systems

The term »service society» generally refers to the existence of organized services in modern societies. The various services are offered by »service organizations» or »service systems». This implies that the services have become professional or at least semi-professional. From the viewpoint of needs, services are potential satisfiers. From the viewpoint of organized services, needs are something to respond to, something to take care of.

In principle, we should distinguish between

»organized services» and »unorganized services», or between professional and non-professional services. Organized professional services are offered by formal organizations, either public, semi-public or private. Unorganized services are offered by individuals or groups to each other. It is clear that even in a service society primary groups are important producers of services. From the viewpoint of needs, organized and unorganized services may be real alternatives as satisfiers.

Service is work done for someone's good. When services are organized they are offered for a particular clientele. This implies that organized service systems aim to respond to the needs of their clients. In reality, the term »need» may be too broad in relation to some specific service system. The service systems are specialized for responding to some specific demands; they cannot take care of the broad needs of many clients. It is usual that the »service language» speaks about »responding to the needs», but in that case the language does not distinguish needs from wants or demands. Typically, what is responded to, are different demands by clients. These demands may, of course, be need-based. There are probably services for both need-based demands and other demands.

When a service system is established to supply services in response to the demands of a clientele, what the services are and how they are offered is usually defined. This impies that a service system starts with an initial specification of the services and demands to be responded to. This may take place either within a political decision-making process or within a business decision-making process. Of course, the process cannot include exact information about needs. Often the services are planned on the basis of quite crude prognoses about future demands.

When we speak about the demands of a clientele, a whole range of individual demands is involved. This brings us to the problem of the **aggregation of human needs**.

First, I would emphasize that needs are characteristics of individual human beings. In a similar way wants are basically individual. Second, **needs and wants may be common to many individuals**. These two statements are important because they imply that we should study the needs or wants of different social aggregates, and not make loose generalizations

from one group to another. Thus, needs and wants are rooted at the Individual level. The individual is the subject having needs and wants. **The term »interest»** could apply more properly to common needs and wants. A social group may have common needs and wants, and thus have an interest as a group. Also, an organization may have an interest. The interests of Institutions or organizations are not directly based on human needs since they are »contaminated» by institutional processes.

Thus, it seems plausible to suggest that organized services generally respond to supposed common needs, wants and demands, or to the visible interests of the clientele. The clientele is often said to be »an Interest group» of an organization. Thus, organized services develop mainly in relation to the organized interests of their potential clientele. The organized interests are often interpreted as manifestations of needs. The problem of representativeness is quite often present in these interpretations.

From the viewpoint of needs, **alternative services** evidently provide further resources for satisfaction. There may often be competition between different service systems, and this competition may imply that several alternative wants/demands are potentially satisfied.

Since individual wants develop under the influence of both needs and perceived satisfiers, the policy of service production directly affects the development of individual wants. If we standardize services and diminish competition between services, we also tend to standardize manifest wants. This effect is, of course, relative. Today, individuals are capable of finding out about alternative service systems even in other societies, countries and times. Thus, conscious wants cannot simply be manipulated by service supply regulations, but a certain limited effect is probable.

If we wish to respond to many different wants, it seems plausible to conclude that we should encourage competition between alternative services, encourage flexibility and innovations within service systems, and have a minimum of standardized regulation.

3.2. Differences between services

So far, we have spoken about services as an undifferentiated category. What are the basic dimensions for describing the differences be-

tween societal services? Even for those living in a »service society», it is very difficult to find theoretical classifications of different services. Most often we use classifications developed for statistical purposes. These, in turn, seem to follow quite traditional »fields of activities» or »institutional sectors». Thus, one research task is to develop a more analytically-based typology of services. I would suggest the following to be among the interesting variables:

— organized professional services vs. unorganized services in primary groups
— public services vs. semi-public services vs. private services
— monopolistic services vs. alternative services
— chargeable services vs. services free of charge
— individual services vs. collective services

Organized professional services are typical of »service societies». In other types of societies, a relatively greater share of all services is supplied in primary groups and in immediate relations between citizens. The service professions are intended to raise the quality of the services supplied . In many areas, the extension of professional services is based on increased knowledge and educational qualifications.

»Professionalization» has been a characteristic of service societies. The level of achieved satisfaction is, however, a matter of dispute. While the standard of living has been increasing throughout this century (22), the level of satisfaction has not necessarily risen. Wants have evidently also been increasing, and new problems stemming from living conditions as well as the increased proportion of aged people make the situation difficult to evaluate and compare (23). Also, we do not have very much knowledge about the development of unorganized services in primary groups. Unorganized services surely have effects on the quality of life as well as on the satisfaction of needs and wants. The professional services cannot by any means compensate for all immediate services in primary groups. Take, for example, the need of relatedness (see note 19), which as such implies primary group relations as important satisfiers.

Debates about the relative advantages of public and private service development have been common in the 1980s. In Finland, for example, we know from Gallup studies that people feel that private services offer a better qual-

ity than public ones. One factor behind this attitude seems to be the greater rigidity and standardization of public services. Since many public services are designed, planned and managed centrally for the whole country, the result is less flexibility and less responsiveness to different individual needs and wants than in private services. There is also a difference of opinion between generations as regards the privatization of services: younger generations have a greater preference for private services, while older generations prefer public services. An evident explanation is that old people have become more dependent on the public social and health services, which for them are much cheaper than private services.

Generally, the atmosphere in the 1990s seems to favour the development of alternative services and an increase in competition. Monopolies — either public or private — are regarded negatively in terms of the quality of services.

At present our knowledge about the influence of institutional variables on the quality of services is too fragmentary for a systematic evaluation. There is a need for further research comparing professional services with unorganized services in different areas, and also comparing the infuence of several institutional factors on the responsiveness and quality of services.

There is also the question of the content of the services. The factors mentioned above (professional vs. non-professional, public vs. private, monopolistic vs. alternative, chargeable vs. free of charge) are mainly crude institutional patterns. Is not the **content of the service** a decisive factor? Even here, we lack a clear basic model to describe the whole field of the services. Most classifications have their origins in administrative purposes.

The functions of modern societies are a mix of old and new practices and activities. The following categories offer a crude and tentative typification of societal services (24):

— control activities
— production and transportation activities
— individual service activities

All the activities of modern »service societies» have a service aspect, even though the quality and beneficiary of the services may vary markedly. Some activities imply »an individual service»; they have as their primary beneficiaries individuals or households (in-

dividual service activities). Other activities imply »a collective service», having as their primary beneficiaries communities or the public at large. Typically, this is seen in the cases of control, production and transportation tasks.

As regards the public — private dimension, there is a mix of public and private organizations in each of the three task areas. Control activities are, however, most often public, while production and transportation activities are most often private in Western societies. Individual service activities today are of both institutional types.

Table 1 presents a summarizing overview of the three types of organized activities in Western »welfare societies».

Table 1. Three types of organized activities in welfare societies.

	Control activities	Production and transport	Services
Institutional sphere	Mainly public	Mainly private	Mixed
Principal collective functions	Security	Infrastructure Information	Development of social welfare
Principal individual functions	Administrative services	Collective services	Individual services
	E.g. petitions permissions licenses inspections certificates	E.g physical equipment routine services communication media basic education	E.g. health and social services labour services cultural services

In an interesting report (25), Raimo Nurmi has studied the types of organizations in the »postmodern era». Nurmi states that the traditional prototypes of organizations are the »bureau» and the »factory». Using the categories of Table 1, these two old prototypes may be identified for control tasks and for production and transportation tasks respectively. Both of these prototypes still dominate largely in the area of organizational thinking. The newer types, according to Nurmi, are the »service organizations» and the »information organizations». These new types do not yet have any strong prototype of organization in their developing practices.

It seems that service systems are often designed either as »service factories» or as »service bureaux». Some new lines of thinking are, however, emerging gradually (26). While practices often change quite slowly, the organization of societal services according to traditional prototypes poses structural and cultural difficulties for the development of responsive services.

4 SOME RELATIONS BETWEEN NEEDS AND SERVICES

The relations between human needs and societal services are complex and multilevel. The complexity is evident in several models presented by researchers (27). Therefore, only some crude principal outlines of the relations between different categories can be presented in this article. It may be taken as an example of the possibility of bringing together some crude categorizations of human needs and societal services. It also offers examples of the difficulties connected with the analysis of relations between needs and services.

We have presented above some definitions and classifications of human needs and societal services. What kind of relations could there be between these categories? I shall try to describe the relations from three different perspectives:

— **normative relations** between needs and services
— **structural relations** between needs and services
— **functional relations** between needs and services

Norms are rules which may refer to general principles of action or to concrete instructions. In organized services norms may be either legal, administrative or professional. As »rules of the game», norms either allow or prohibit, they create rights and pose obligations. The rights and obigations may concern both professionals and citizens, either producers or consumers of the services.

Michael Hill (28) has made a distinction between **substantive rules**, which define the content of the activities concerned, and **procedural rules**, which define the ways or modes of carrying out the activities.

In principle, substantive and procedural rules can influence services and the satisfaction of needs/wants/demands In at least four respects:

— (1) Substantive rules define what the services are. Norms have a legitimating function in establishing certain services.
— (2) Substantive rules define who has the right to the services. The right may be either general or selective. In addition, organizational practices often serve as a filter which defines the group of actual customers.
— (3) Procedural rules may define the manner in which the services are offered to the customers. This type of norm concerns especially the division of duties and labour, and the internal organization of the service process.
— (4) Procedural rules may define how the customers should act in relation to the services. The use of some services may, for example, necessitate a petition, while others do not.

The substance and the procedures defined by norms do not necessarily respond to the needs/wants of the customers. The norms and the needs may be quite different, even contradictory.

The quality of the norms is often criticized. It is argued that rigid and inflexible norms constrain the development of the public services. However, norms are not intended to inhibit good practices. When they do, their negative impact can often be regarded as unintended consequences. Norms, as well as social practices, are constituted in a certain goal-rational fashion. The function of norms is to state a social value in a concrete form. Thus, norms are manifestations of values. For example, some norms aim to enhance equality and justice. They may also prevent arbitrariness and subjective interest in social institutions.

The qualities of norms vary. Some norms are more general and flexible, while others are particular and rigid. According to Michael Hill (29) norms have different effects depending on the qualities they possess.

The general idea of service systems in society may be interpreted either as **collective and equal principles** or as **individually responsive and variable services**. These interpretations are clearly distinct, the first aiming at general and uniform principles, and the second aiming at flexible and adaptive action. The two ideas also have different consequences on the ideal practice of the norms.

A collective principle implies that all citizens or customers are treated equally according to stated principles. For example, the system of child subsidies in Finland assigns an equal benefit for all Finnish families. On the other hand, some subsidies are calculated on the basis of individual needs. For example, the need for a new dwelling or unemployment benefit are considered individually.

When a service is viewed as functioning according to a uniform collective principle, the ideal norm is explicit, simple, comprehensible and binding. On the other hand, when a service is considered to be individual catering to citizens according to their needs, the ideal norm is general and flexible. David Miller (30) has argued that in the modern welfare state — which Miller calls a »market state» — the principles of social benefits are controversial. Some systems of benefits are planned as general rights of the citizens. More often, the different services are not considered to be suppliers of rights, but rather responses to individually estimated needs. The situation may often be ambiguous for the citizens.

It may be assumed that control tasks and administrative services should be directed by clear and unambiguous principles, based on the equality of the citizens in relation to government. Also, the distribution of material benefits in public administration ideally has clear »rules of the game». In the area of welfare services proper the activities tend to be more individually adjusted. Thus, it seems that the ideal qualities of the norms may depend on the type of task concerned.

A general function of norms is to establish **services as rights**. When services are need-based, we may say that norms can turn human needs into human rights.

Structural relations between needs and services refer especially to the sufficiency of different services in relation to the needs, wants and demands. This implies the capacity to serve different needs. In principle, the relationship of services to needs and demands should be analyzed separately. Demands are often the visible parts of needs, at least when demands are assumed to be authentic (need-based). Inauthentic demands are also possible, but evidently not as usual. On the other hand, latent needs not actualized in any demands may be a common problem. In other words, there may be an underconsumption of certain services.

Structurally regarded, services may be considered as **resources for needs**. Services are something provided in response to the needs.

Societal services together represent »the structure of welfare provision» in society. This service structure could be presented as a demand/supply of services matrix or as need/supply of services matrix. Such a matrix is quite difficult to construct empirically, since knowledge about needs is usually limited and demands are changing and developing with time.

Yona Friedman (31) has argued that there is a structural scarcity of satisfiers in all societies. She proposes that social structure in itself is a permanent limitation of need satisfaction. She states further that societies do not easily facilitate the satisfaction of needs, but rather they present obstacles to the free access to satisfiers. She does not, however, evaluate the different societal services of »welfare societies». Rather, she seems to share the Freudian tone of **Das Unbehagen in der Kultur**, the view of social structures and institutions as constraints on human satisfaction.

I would like to analyze more concretely the structural reations between needs and services before coming to definite conclusions, since societal services and their contributions should be evaluated on more empirical data. Possibe structural relations are described in Scheme 1.

The scheme distinguishes between latent needs, manifest needs and demands. It also makes a distinction between common needs/demands and individual needs/demands.

My general observation is that organized services are being developed mostly by administrative frameworks and information without a systematic analysis of needs or demands. It is probable that the area of organized services is one of competition between demands. In this competition, common needs/demands usually dominate, and individual needs/demands are relegated to a secondary position. Also, common wants which are not need-based may often be an accepted justification for service delivery.

The division of labour between public and private services is much debated. The role of unorganized services in primary groups, however, is virtually ignored. Consequently, I think, the »service society» does not actually know its service structure systematically. The relations between needs and services are largely unknown, too. The field of services is one of rich resources, but it is a »service jungle», difficult to study, and often also difficult to use.

From the **functional** viewpoint, the question is, what Is the substantive correspondence between needs and services? **Responsiveness** to needs is synonymous with the ultimate external effectiveness of the services. From a general perspective, the question is: how responsively are the needs satisfied in society? From the perspective of a certain service, the question is: how well does the service respond to the needs in question? Or: how good a satisfier is the service?

The measurement of the quality of services is becoming an art of its own. The crucial criterion from the perspective of needs is the responsiveness of the services. Politeness and »soft» treatment in the service should not become surrogates for a true responsiveness. One difficult problem, however, arises from the fact that services are usually compared to demands or wants instead of needs. This problem brings us back to the relation between needs and wants, and responsiveness to wants seems to be the level usually achieved in feedback surveys.

As a synopsis of the relations between needs and services, we may note that
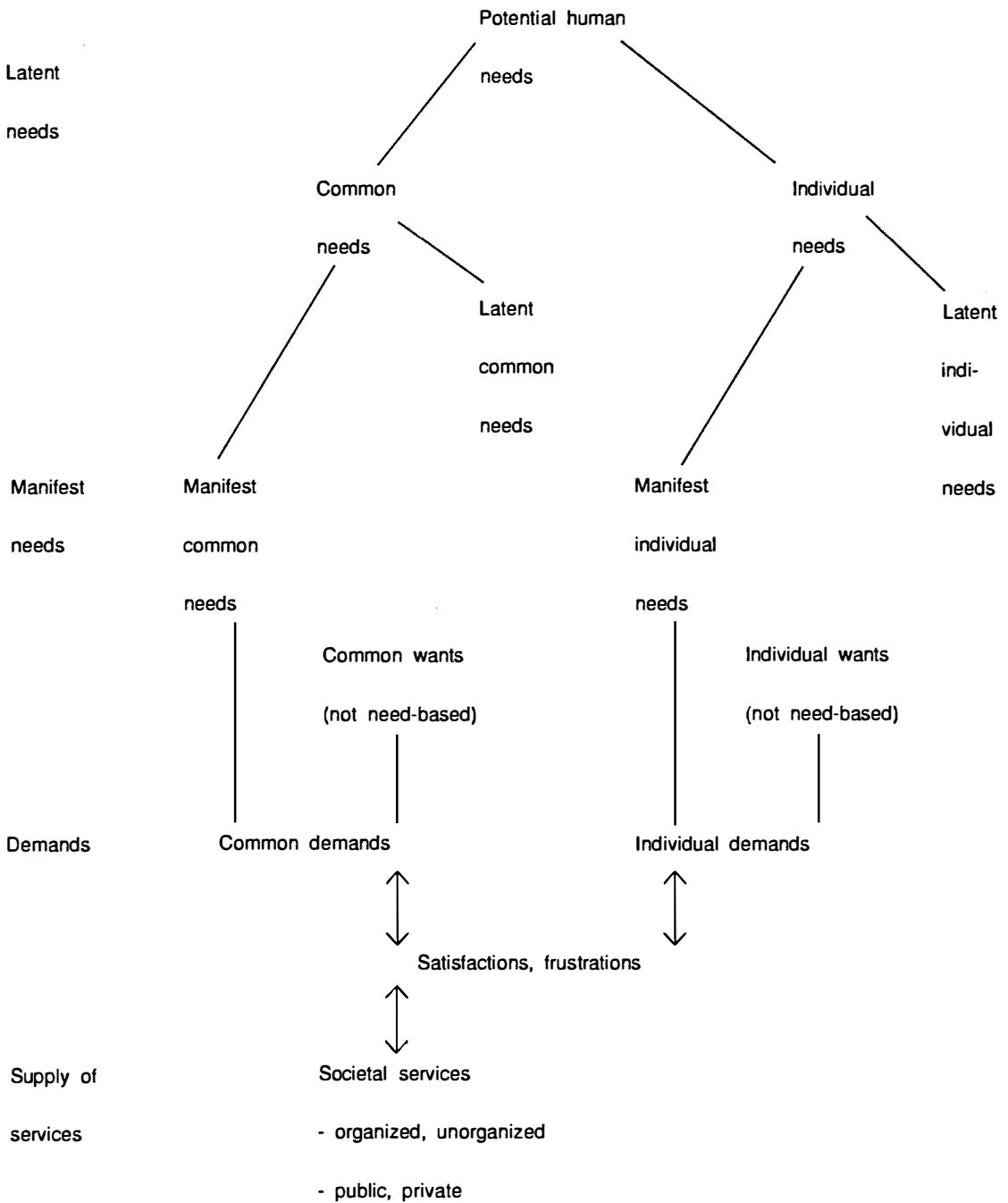
— services may be rights, resources and/or satisfiers in the satisfaction of needs
— need-based criteria of service evaluation would include equality of rights, sufficiency of resources and responsiveness of satisfiers

On the basis of these observations about human needs, services and their mutual relations, I shall try to construct a tentative framework for the analysis of services. The framework is intended to integrate certain aspects of the presentation above. It includes a conceptual outline which should be developed further.

The framework in Scheme 2 aims to present concisely some conceptual perspectives for the analysis of needs and services in relation to each other. It also tries to give a conceptual outline whlch includes the individual, the social and the material aspects. Since the core concept within the individual sphere is need, we could proceed from this outline to a need-based analysis of the services. However, we could also use the social sphere as a point of departure within this outline. Service is the core concept of the social sphere here. Social rights, resources and satisfiers could be analyzed in relation to needs and wants. The material sphere is also Included since the social and the individual spheres may depend on material resources, structures and products.

As to the theoretical inputs, so far we have

Scheme 1. Categories of human needs and societal services

Potential human

Latent

needs

needs

Common   Individual

needs   needs

Latent   Latent

common   indi-

needs   vidual

Manifest   Manifest   Manifest   needs

needs   common   individual

needs   needs

Common wants   Individual wants

(not need-based)   (not need-based)

Demands   Common demands   Individual demands

Satisfactions, frustrations

Supply of   Societal services

services   - organized, unorganized

                  - public, private

some theories of needs and economic theories. Economic theories omit the concept of needs, and need theories do not consider economic factors. Thus, we have a gap in theoretical inputs, which could be the place for theories of service. This suggests that we should analyse social realities more intensively and more systematically.

Scheme 2. A framework for the analysis of relations between needs and services.

Spheres	Main concepts	Theoretical inputs
Individual sphere	Needs , common / individual	"Models of man"
- Latent	- Existence	"Need theo- ries"
	- Relatedness	
	- Growth	
- Manifest	Wants, preferences	
	Demands, expectations	
Social sphere	Interaction, results	
	Supply of services	"Theories of service"
	Service systems	
	- Rights	
	- Resources	
	- Satisfiers	
	Service ideas and ideologies, policies	
Material sphere	Material resources	
	Production	"Economic theories"
	Economic structures	

5 SOME CONCLUSIONS

In this article, the perspective of human needs has been presented as a view based on relatively permanent human dependencies and strivings. Human needs are regarded as broad categories such as Alderfer's existence, relatedness and growth needs.

Needs can be analytically distinguished from wants, which are more temporary states of dependencies and strivings. Wants are often need-based, but this is not necessarily the case. Also, external conditions and stimulations may create wants. Priorities between wants may be called preferences. When wants are directed towards action they turn into demands. These four concepts — needs, wants, preferences and demands — are regarded here as central need-related concepts. The concept of satisfier refers to the material or non-material objects of needs, wants, preferences or demands.

Need concepts constitute a human perspective on social structures, institutions and processes. This perspective tries to capture everyday human experience by utilizing more systematic concepts. The study of needs, wants, preferences and demands is a difficult area. The importance of the perspective, however, outweighs the difficulties involved. Allardt states (32) that we have no direct or immediate methods and means to get knowledge about human needs. The definition of human welfare in terms of need concepts implies a continuously restructuring purpose for research. Allardt suggests that we can study human needs more empirically by systematizing knowledge about human sufferings and their circumstances, about human strivings and demands, and about human values.

In attempting to achieve this, some distinctions in need concepts seem useful. The crude dichotomy of common and individual needs could be specified further by introducing different levels of commonness and individuality. A typification of satisfiers is also needed. This brings us to the questions of social organization of welfare societies.

The concept of societal service may be identified as one category of satisfiers. This is a functional view of services. From a normative viewpoint, services are rights of citizens. From a structural perspective, services are resources supplied for the satisfaction of needs, wants and demands.

At present, we lack a theory of services in »service society». Services are often said to serve human needs, which is their practical justification. Services probably respond to both need-based demands and to other demands. Our knowledge of the structure of welfare provision could benefit from conceptual and empirical studies of societal services. Some important distinctions to begin with might be individual vs. collective services, organized vs. unorganized services, and public vs. private services.

Needs and need concepts are important **criteria for evaluating** the results of welfare institutions. Explanations of results should then be made in terms of other concepts referring to the qualities of the service systems.

Societal services are only one group of satisfiers. A need-based categorization of satisfiers would include various alternative means of need satisfaction. This brings us to the study of the relations between needs and services.

I suggest that the study of welfare should proceed in a direction which integrates need concepts and service concepts. A tentative conceptual framework for this purpose has been presented above. At present, we have more theoretical inputs in theories of needs and in economic theories than in theories of service. I propose that the three theoretical domains be regarded within a general framework. This framework should integrate certain elements from the individual, social and economic spheres. We can, at a conceptual level, sketch out a perspective including need concepts, service systems and material resources. Analyzing the interplay of these spheres and elements would be a challenging research task.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See e.g. David Braybrooke. Meeting Needs. Princeton N.J. 1987, pp. 9 — 18 , and Neil McInnes. The Politics of Needs — or, Who Needs Politics, in *Human Needs and Politics*, ed. by Ross Fitzgerald, Hong Kong 1977, pp. 229—243, and Gerald R. Salancik and Jeffrey Pfeffer. An Examination of Need-Satisfaction Models of Job Attitudes, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22, 1977, pp. 427—456.
2. See e.g. Alderfer's reply to the critique referred to in Note 1: Clayton P. Alderfer. A Critique of Salancik and Pfeffer's Examination of Need-Satisfaction Theories, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22, 1977, pp. 658—669. See also the debate in *Human Needs and Politics*, op. cit. Alderfer (1977,661) assumes that there are needs common to all people. »There are two kinds of arguments for each need category. First, some

degree of need satisfaction is necessary for survival and nonpathological functioning of the human organism. Second, there must be evidence that the needs conceptualized by the theory are basic to the human organism independent of learning».

3. Ilkka Heiskanen. Yhteiskunnan automaattiset mekanismit ja poliittiset prosessit yksilö- ja ryhmätasoisen tarpeitten tyydytyksen säätelyssä (The Automatic Mechanisms and Political Processes of Society in the Regulation of Individual and Group Level Satisfaction of Needs), University of Turku, Department of Political Science, Research Reports C 20/ 1972.

4. The tradition seems to originate in functional analysis. See e.g. Bronislaw Malinowski. Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays. Chapel Hill 1944. Some later examples of studies presenting a frame for the study of needs in relation to societal structures and processes are: Erik Alardt. Hyvinvoinnin ulottuvuuksia (Having, Loving, Being). Porvoo 1976. — McIntosh, W.M., Klonglan, G.E. and Wilcox, L.D. Theoretical Issues and Social Indicators: A Societal Process Approach, *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 8, 1977, pp. 245—267. — C.A.Mallmann. Society, Needs, and Rights: A Systemic Approach, in *Human Needs. A Contribution to the Current Debate*, ed. by K.Lederer. Cambridge, Mass. 1980.

5. See e.g. Nicholas Rescher. Welfare. The Social Issues in Philosophical Perspective. University of Pittsburgh Press 1972, pp. 173—174.

6. Allardt, op. cit. pp. 25—26.

7. See Ross Fitzgerald. Introduction, in *Human Needs and Politics*, op. cit. p. ix.

8. See Katrin Lederer. Introduction, in *Human Needs. A Contribution to the Current Debate*, op. cit. pp. 3—4.

9. See e.g. Ross Fitzgerald. The Ambiguity and Rhetoric of »Need», in *Human Needs and Politics*, op. cit. pp. 203—208.

10. See Jari Aho. Yhteiskunnallistuminen ja tarpeet (Vergesellschaftung und Bedurfnisse), University of Tampere, Department of Sociology and Social Psychology, Research Reports 12/1988.

11. See e.g. Agnes Heller. Theorie der Bedurfnisse bei Marx. Berlin-West 1976. — Lucien Sève. Man in Marxist Theory and the Psychology of Personality. Hassocks 1978.

12. See Ross Fitzgerald. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs — An Exposition and Evaluation, in *Human Needs and Politics*, op. cit. pp. 36—51.

13. See e.g. Karl W. Deutsch. The Nerves of Government. Models of Political Communication and Control. New York 1974, p. 13, and C.A.Mallmann, op. cit. p. 37.

14. J.P.Roos. Welfare Theory and Social Policy. A Study in Policy Science. *Commentationes Scientiarum Socialium.* Helsinki 1973, p. 71.

15. Clayton P. Alderfer. Existence, Relatedness and Growth. New York 1972.

16. Allardt, op. cit.

17. Mallmann, op. cit.

18. Oscar Nudler. Human Needs: A Sophisticated Holistic Approach, in *Human Needs. A Contribution to the Current Debate*, op. cit. pp. 131—150.

19. They all give three or four broad categories of human needs:

— Alderfer: existence, relatedness, growth
— Allardt: having, loving, being
— Mallmann: existence, coexistence, growth, perfection
— Nudler: Identity, growth, transcendence
There are some similarities between these concepts, though we can also find certain differences. I refer here to some parallels between them, using as my starting point Alderfer's terms. These were developed first, but have not been as widely recognized — perhaps because they were developed in the context of studies on work satisfaction;
— Alderfer's existence needs include e.g. survival and security, which broadly correspond to Allardt's having, Mallmann's existence and Nudler's identity needs
— Alderfer's relatedness needs include e.g. belongingness and dignity, which broadly correspond to Allardt's loving and Mallmann's coexistence, and partially to Nudler's identity needs
— Alderfer's growth needs include e.g. development and creation, which broadly correspond to Allardt's being, Mallmann's growth and perfection, and Nudler's growth and transcendence needs
Compare these classifications also with those presented by Braybrooke, op. cit. p. 36 ff.

20. Compare with Antony G.N. Flew. Wants or Needs, Choices or Commands, in *Human Needs and Politics*, op. cit. p. 216.

21. See e.g. Ashley Montagu. The Direction of Human Development. Biological and Social Bases. New York 1955.

22. For Finland, see e.g. Kirsti Vepsä. Muuttuva elintaso. Kuluttajaperheen elintaso 1900-luvun alusta 1960-luvulle (The Changing Level of Living. The Level of Living in Consumer Families from the Beginning of the 1900s to the 1960s), University of Helsinki, Institute of Social Policy. Research Reports 1/1966.

23. For some critical evaluations see e.g. Ian Gough. The Political Economy of the Welfare State. Old Woking 1979.

24. See also Markku Kiviniemi. The Improvement of the Pubic Services. Helsinki 1988. Relevant to these questions is also Richard Rose. On the Priorities of Government, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 4, 1976, 247—289.

25. Raimo Nurmi. Tietoyhteiskunnan organisaatiot: typologinen tarkastelu (The Organizations of the Information Society: A Typological Consideration), Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Reports A 6/ 1985.

26. See e.g. Richard Normann. Service Management. Strategy and Leadership in Service Business. New York 1984.

27. See Allardt, op. cit., Mallmann, op. cit. and McIntosh et al., op. cit.

28. Michael Hill. The State, Administration, and the Individual. Glasgow 1976, p. 81.

29. Ibid. p. 78.

30. David Miller. Social Justice. Oxford 1975.

31. Yona Friedman. About Implicit Limitations on Satisfiers, in *Human Needs: A Contribution to the Current Debate*, op. cit. pp. 151—162.

32. Allardt, op. cit. p. 26.