

ATTRACTING AND SUSTAINING VOLUNTEERS

Leadership Impact on the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers in Nonprofit Organizations, and
Differences Observed when Organizations are Predicated on Faith

by

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Abstract

The term “volunteer” has been formally acknowledged for more than 200 years (Dreyfus, 2018; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). It is synonymous with one who freely offers to participate in a task that benefits others. During the modern era, these tasks have included, but have not been limited to, establishing communal programs, presenting technical assistance, conducting conferences, fundraising, and supporting identified causes or groups (Alfes et al., 2017). In most instances, the tasks are rendered through nonprofit organizations. Therefore, volunteers represent invaluable assets as they are economic resources who contribute to accomplishing stated organizational goals (Tonurist & Surva, 2017). While more than 30% of the United States population was shown to have volunteered in 2018, this was, unfortunately, an aberration, as the previous 15 years had exhibited predominantly declining volunteer rates (Grimm & Dietz, 2018). The ability of nonprofit organizations to recruit and retain volunteers is critical to their respective missions and operations. Therefore, this qualitative research employed a multiple case study approach to examine whether there is a correlation between the leaders of these organizations and general retention data. Each of the three studies consisted of five participants who, through responses to questionnaires and interviews, shared firsthand experiences in relation to their volunteerism in nonprofit organizations. In addition to their direct experiences, they were asked to indicate if and how personal faith may have shaped their involvement in the organization(s). Findings derived from the participant responses indicate that leaders are one of the meaningful elements tied to the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations. This effectuality of leaders is most vivid through their personality, their ability to embolden others, the type of relationship maintained with volunteers, and the various tactics utilized. Additionally, while individual volunteers may be devout regarding their personal spirituality, they are frequently unable to

differentiate between the operations of organizations that are and are not predicated on faith. Hence, faith has limited influence on their viewpoint of the leader or the organization they've selected to provide service.

Key words: Faith, Leaders, Nonprofit Organizations, Volunteers

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Dedication

There's a renowned proverb that asserts that "it takes a village." However, it is not lost on me that each village is responsible for more than rearing children. They represent a communal integration of hearts and minds that toil toward a common goal. To this point, my village has been prodigious and unwavering in their support of my doctoral pursuit. My parents were the fuel and ignition that made this journey imaginable. My wife and daughters were accommodating of my schedule and occasional detachment. My sister and in-laws were continually encouraging of the scholastic voyage. Hence, without their collective support, this endeavor would not have been possible. They've sacrificed of themselves, and I am forever humbled. As such, I dedicate this composition in academic research to my village.

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SECTION 1. FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

Each year, communities across the world experience calamity. In the United States, this includes natural disasters (e.g., floods, hurricanes, tornados, and wildfires), acts of terror (e.g., the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001), periods of economic regression (e.g., the Great Recession in 2007), and environmental crises (e.g., the Flint, Michigan, water crisis in 2014). Also, hardships associated with children, senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the homeless, and a host of other categories frequently present universal needs. As a result of these perpetual scenarios, organizations are designed to address the identified needs. To satisfy their goals, these organizations induce millions of individuals each year to enrich outcomes in their respective communities (Meyer et al., 2019). The individuals (i.e., the volunteers) are instrumental in molding an essential fabric of society.

Though the term is commonly narrowly defined and has only been comprehensively examined through modern history, the term “volunteer” has existed for more than 200 years (Dreyfus, 2018; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). The earliest official account of volunteerism data in 2001 offered a vibrant, rosy image of the arena (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). Since that time, while significant, volunteerism rates have been erratic. This inconsistency has manifested in nonprofit organizations that grapple to satisfy their constructed mission. Attempts to justify the source of this unpredictability have illuminated plausible justifications, one of which is the role of organizational leadership. Leaders assume responsibility for guiding and motivating individuals toward organizational goals (Koohang et al., 2017). Therefore, it is presumed leaders possess direct and meaningful influence.

Volunteers may recognize and be drawn to leaders because of an assortment of personal skills and character traits; however, it is presumed that faith plays a distinctly persuasive function

in volunteerism. When volunteer efforts are entwined with spirituality, the associated acts assume greater significance (Vermeer et al., 2016). To formalize a comprehensive assessment of the topic, this chapter will describe the general contexts around nonprofit organizations, volunteers, and leaders to ascertain current themes, as well as identify differences observed when the actions are permeated by faith. To establish a foundation for the processes that will unearth this evidence, the chapter will employ a theoretical framework discussion teamed with a problem statement, research questions, definition of terms, limitations, and assumptions.

Background of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations are designed to serve and support community interests. They include civic, fraternal, professional, public, religious, and social entities, and so forth, and offer immense value in communities across the United States through the services they render. A small sampling of these services includes managing athletic events, educational instruction, mentorship, ministry, fundraising, and a whole host of philanthropic initiatives. They are structured as tax-legislated entities that operate with no anticipation of profits but rather with a dependency on a host of resources that are frequently unstable and/or insufficient.

The principal source of sustainability for these organizations are their respective communities. Each year, individuals volunteer to enrich the communities in which they reside. The partnerships formed with these organizations offer unique opportunities for individuals to attain and share valuable skills, interact with like-minded peers, and expand their personal self-worth. However, doing so requires these individuals to make personal sacrifices (i.e., family, time, work, income, etc.), to accomplish the tasks of the identified entity (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018).

These individuals serve as invaluable assets. They are cost-effective representatives who assist organizations in delivering their services and achieving their stated goals (Tonurist & Surva,

2017). They institute community programs, offer technical assistance, facilitate seminars, fundraise, and advocate for specific causes or groups of people. Their involvement is viewed as long-term, intentional commitments to formal settings molded by prosocial behaviors. Through these efforts, they represent the backbone of nonprofit organizations, and their volunteerism is performed from a sense of care and concern for their communities (Alfes et al., 2017).

The care and concern for community influences millions of Americans to donate their time and talents to nonprofit organizations each year. The Corporation for National and Community Service (2018) stated an estimated 77.4 million Americans (i.e., 30.3% of the U.S. population), volunteered at least one time during 2018. These individuals accounted for 6.9 billion hours of service appraised at \$167 billion. While the data reflects countless tangible and intangible benefits to the respective organizations, it also represents the only time in nearly two decades that there has been an increase in volunteerism rates. Prior to 2018, the peak of volunteerism was observed at 63.8 million people (i.e., 28.8% of the population), in 2003. While the rate remained stable until 2005, it steadily declined each year until reaching its lowest point between 2015 and 2017, at approximately 63.9 million people and around 25% of the population (Grimm & Dietz, 2018). The calculations illuminate alarming issues.

This volunteerism information presents a multitude of issues for nonprofit organizations. With more than 1.5 million Internal Revenue Service (IRS)–recognized nonprofit organizations stretched across the United States (McKeever, 2018), these organizations likely experience challenges in maintaining resources to complete the necessary tasks. In addition to the aforementioned statistics, research portrays nonprofit organizations as revolving doors. More than 33% of individuals who volunteer with an organization in one year will not return to volunteer the

following year (Hamerman & Schneider, 2017). It is an operational realization that creates sustainability issues for the organization.

As volunteers fail to return to the organizations where they previously rendered service, there are significant expenses assumed. In the short term, organizations enduring these challenges will experience loss of production and funding and will increasingly tax the efforts of the remaining volunteers in hopes of maintaining some semblance of organizational normalcy. On the other hand, in the long term, these organizations will be coerced to continually advertise for, recruit, and train new volunteers. As such, the time required to onboard new volunteers and get them to productive status is likely to be a time-consuming and expensive process.

Research has revealed that individuals who volunteer with an organization over a long period of time are more institutionally valuable than those who do so periodically (Phelps, 2019). In the business arena, approximately 6 to 9 months of salary is required to hire and onboard a new employee. In addition, it is estimated that 2 to 3 years are needed for a new employee to match the production outcome of an experienced co-worker (Merhar, 2019). In the same vein, the value of time invested in volunteers by these organizations is significant.

When viewed cumulatively, the volunteerism data indicates that prudent organizations employ measures to implement recruitment and retention strategies. To be successful, these strategies must be supported by leadership. Therefore, the role of leaders in addressing the issue must be considered. The consideration should include metrics that identify performance standards in selecting and/or accepting individuals for membership and evaluate the preparedness of volunteers to accept specified roles. This is important as the actions taken by leaders have a lasting effect on volunteers and the organization.

Problem Statement

The general problem addressed was the inability of leaders to sustain volunteer resources, thereby challenging organizations to achieve their stated goals. Milbourn et al. (2018) classified volunteers as invaluable resources who enhance sustainability standards and ensure organizations are strategically positioned to satisfy their missions and commitments to the community.

Conversely, during recent decades, organizations have faced increased impediments to sustaining suitable levels of volunteerism (Ceptureanu et al., 2018). The challenges align with studies citing volunteer recruitment and retention as the most commonly neglected facets of the volunteer lifecycle (Merrilees et al., 2020). This neglect, a function of leadership, results in squandered resources, emergent obstacles to accomplishing projected tasks, and the incessant requirement to identify and train new volunteers (Gordon & Gordon, 2017; Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016). The specific problem addressed was the inability of leaders in nonprofit organizations (faith- and non-faith-based) across central North Carolina to recruit and retain volunteers, which resulted in undervalued diversity, diminished volunteerism, endangered resources, constrained performance outcomes, and confounded communities (Stefanick et al., 2020).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to expand comprehension, through interviews (Ataro, 2020), of the role leaders assume in developing measures to enhance organizational outcomes. Specifically, this study identified the effect leaders have on the recruitment and retention rates of volunteers, thereby permeating gaps in current research (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). First, the study offered novel insight from the volunteer perspective. While the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005, 2010, 2013, 2016) has detailed declining rates of volunteerism during the past 18 years, there is limited information available that considers the

role of leaders in volunteerism. Second, this research was derived from qualitative interviews across three case studies. Each case was constructed from discussions with multiple volunteers who currently or had previously (i.e., within the past 3 years) served in a nonprofit organization. The variation amongst entities, as well as volunteers, yielded an increased number of factors from which to assess the interactions between volunteers and leaders (Meyer et al., 2019). This was important, as Alfes et al. (2017) contend that the majority of volunteering research has focused on various single organizations. Third, participants were assembled from faith- and non-faith-based organizations, as Butt et al. (2017) advised that such an analysis would offer greater insight into the ability of leaders to expose and direct volunteer motives. The collective findings sought to contribute to the identification of nonprofit strategies that aid in promoting diversity, molding organizational sustainability, and strengthening communities.

Research Questions

To satisfy the purpose of the study, research questions were designed using the case study structures presented by Creswell (2018). The purpose of the research questions was to ascertain the impact of leadership in the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations. The questions were designed to cultivate a comprehensive exploration of the issue. Each question was inclusive and allowed for multiple interpretations. The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1. What interactions do leaders have with volunteers in nonprofit organizations?

RQ1a. How do these interactions influence volunteer recruitment?

RQ1b. How do these interactions encourage volunteer retention?

RQ1c. How does the faith of volunteers influence the interactions?

RQ2. What obstacles do volunteers encounter while pondering commitment to a nonprofit organization?

RQ2a. How do leadership actions and behaviors assist volunteers in overcoming the obstacles?

RQ2b. How does the faith of volunteers assist them in overcoming the obstacles?

RQ3. What qualities do volunteers believe enhance leadership efforts during recruitment and retention processes?

RQ3a. What do volunteers believe to be a leader's role during recruitment and retention processes?

RQ3b. What type of training do volunteers suggest should be offered to leaders prior to initiating recruitment and retention efforts?

RQ3c. What resources do volunteers believe should be available to leaders during recruitment and retention processes?

Interview questions were strategically aligned with the aforementioned research questions and sub-questions, which maintained the parameters of the multiple case study design. The first research question focused on interactions that volunteers have with leaders. It sought to identify the manner by which leaders encourage volunteer recruitment and retention in nonprofit organizations. The second research question focused on challenges experienced by volunteers prior to becoming and/or while a member of a nonprofit organization. The question furthered the discussion by identifying the strategies utilized by leaders to assist volunteers in managing the obstacles. The third research question rounded out the study by ascertaining volunteer viewpoints regarding the characteristics of effective leaders during the recruitment and retention

process. As such, it explored the volunteer perspective regarding leader ideologies regarding recruitment and retention, as well as training and resources that should be available.

Nature of the Study

The qualitative case study guided exploration into the effect that leaders have on the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations across central North Carolina. The nonprofit organizations consisted of those entities identified as charitable, social-welfare, or faith-based organizations as they embrace the approaches, resources, scientific protocols, and techniques designed to access and assess pertinent evidence. The research paradigm and methodology were critical components to guiding the study.

Research Paradigm

The research was cemented in a constructivist paradigm. Constructivism seeks to grasp reality through the lenses of multiple perspectives. It is entrenched in practices that interpret verbal and physical dialogue. Meaning, the research procured subjective responses from volunteers with experiences in nonprofit organizations. Each perspective was essential as each volunteer possessed practical knowledge from social constructs, which makes their experiences invaluable (Martens, 2019).

The volunteer experiences were formed through the varying roles assumed within or related to their respective organizations. As such, there exists at any point in time multiple narratives that may simultaneously exist within an organization. This ideology infers that each individual embraces a segmented view of the organization, while none possess a universal appreciation of the entity (Peck & Mummery, 2018). These inconsistencies are a natural occurrence across participant responses. However, when viewed in aggregate, that developed a

rich model from which to examine the problem statement. In fact, the varying responses were essential to the constructivist objective of realizing multiple social formations (Martens, 2019).

Meaningful interpretation of the multiple perspectives was achieved through a commitment to language. Language is a negotiated tactical composition through which volunteers understand the nonprofit organizations where they serve. This language is meaningful when participants candidly express viewpoints regarding their experiences, regardless of their capacity to identify and articulate the widespread functions of the organization (Peck & Mummery, 2018).

Methodology

The study was conducted with a flexible, qualitative design; specifically, a multiple case study design was used. The methodology was integral to the research and directed the path for the research to be conducted and the information analyzed.

Flexible Design

A flexible design was appropriate for this study as a flexible design has the capacity to communicate the culture and social constructs of a nonprofit organization. This was achieved through the collection of information detailing volunteer thoughts and feelings regarding leaders. As responses to these inquiries are not easily measured through quantitative practices, a flexible design offered greater autonomy during evidence-gathering stages (Williams, 2019).

Furthermore, the research was dependent upon a singular source. Though inherently limited, such studies reduce the need for standardized processes and accountability. It elicits greater flexibility, but does not imply a lack of planning. Rather, the design is focused on clarity and maintaining the capacity to transition to other perspectives, when necessary. During the

study, responses from volunteers directed the study along unique paths of investigation.

Therefore, flexibility was warranted and paved the way for qualitative methods.

Qualitative Method

According to Peck and Mummery (2018), qualitative research is rooted in individual perspectives. That is, interviews and personal observations are invaluable to assigning significance to volunteer recruitment and retention efforts. As such, the method presented opportunities to identify values that volunteers attribute to organizational leadership by ascertaining, illuminating, and classifying the realities of multiple individuals (Martens, 2019).

Multiple Case Study Design

Within the prescribed method, a multiple case study design emerged as a distinct approach to support the research. The proposed study consisted of three case studies. Each employed qualitative interview techniques to build social constructs that offered access to the social and historical interactions between volunteers and leaders that conveyed the importance of various activities. Each study was comprised of between five and eight volunteer interviews. This multiple case study approach displayed replication that permitted each case to be analyzed independently and compared. The replication allowed for the identification and corroboration of similarities and differences between topics while enhancing the comprehension of overall findings (Ridder, 2016).

To preserve the quality of the responses, the interviews possessed three distinct characteristics. First, the study exhibited descriptive adequacy. The interview transcriptions and notes reflected accurate descriptions of what occurred. Second, the study displayed reactive transparency. This means that the researcher sought to eliminate any potential influence on study participants; however, transparency was extended in instances where the influence could not be

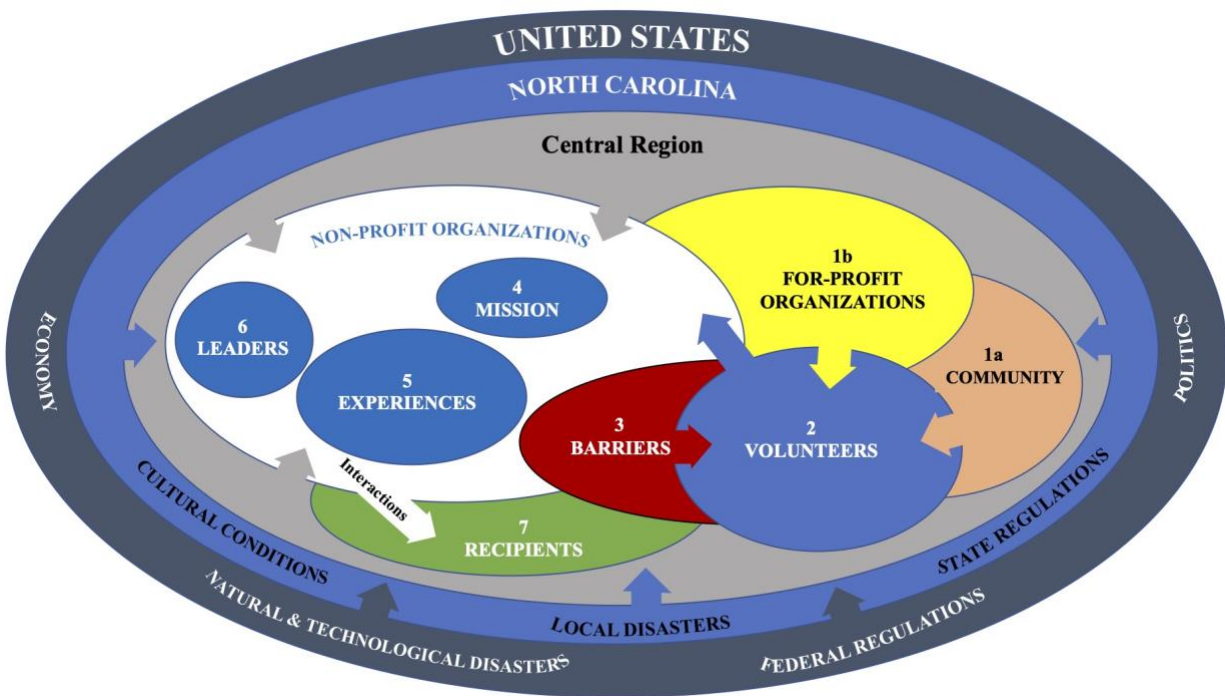
confined. Third, the study portrayed relevance. It utilized qualitative methods; a hypothesis will not be drawn. Rather, research questions were utilized. Therefore, responses from the qualitative interview questions acted as a conduit for satisfying each research question (Zahle, 2019).

Conceptual Framework

The operations of a non-profit organization are greatly influenced by its environment. The environment is defined by factors (i.e., cultural conditions, economy, federal and state regulations, local, and natural and technological disasters, and politics), that fuse together to have a significant effect on local communities. These factors pressure educational, employment, health, religious, and social institutions, which in turn affect every facet of life. As such, the factors that flood into the local community's mold non-profit organizations (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

The Environment Impacting Nonprofit Organizations



Concepts

A research concept engages a method that illustrates, clarifies, predicts and standardizes a phenomena. It is rooted in protocols that establish the objective of the research. That is, it attempts to identify what, why and how of the issue, in order to comprehend a specific issue. The information gathered during the process was acquired through natural settings, which ensured there was minimal deviation from the issue.

Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations assume meaningful roles. As Diagram 1 displays, the organizations are recipients of an assortment of national, state, and local factors (e.g., the economy, natural and technological disasters, federal and state regulations, politics, and culture). These factors present challenges to the services and products available in the community. On the other hand, these factors may satiate voids in the community as social establishments with flexible and varied approaches that offer valuable contributions to community recipients. This is achieved through the organizational mission and efforts to provide value through assorted programs, such as programs concerning arts and culture, civil rights, education, environmental issues, healthcare, religion, and so (Meyer et al., 2019).

Faith-Based Organizations. A faith-based organization is typically considered to be comprised of religious congregations that emphasize worship. However, these organizations include any formal entity whose mission is derived from the teachings of one or more spiritual traditions (Wilk-Mhagama, 2016).

Volunteerism

The programs offered through nonprofit organizations are of extreme interest to community residents. More than 80% of nonprofit organizations in the United States rely on the

support of these individuals. This support typically originates through one of two mediums (see Figure 1). First, community residents identify opportunities to direct their interests. This is often viewed as a way to give back to others in the community who are in need. Second, for-profit organizations frequently encourage employees to donate their time to support corporate philanthropic initiatives. As such, the companies provide financial backing to assist a nonprofit organization in sustaining its mission. Regardless of how volunteering was initiated, there are an immeasurable number of ways that nonprofit organizations offer opportunities to share skills and services (Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Volunteerism, an act in which more than 20% of Americans actively participate, is integral to the fabric of society (Murimi, 2017). Volunteers act of their free will to offer services that benefit others through formal associations that offer them no direct benefit (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018). However, despite the community needs and importance of volunteers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) indicate that volunteerism rates have steadily declined for the majority of the past two decades. This decline is partially a result of barriers to volunteerism, as depicted in Figure 1. Complicating the matter is that only 33% of volunteers remain engaged with a respective nonprofit organization for longer than 1 year (Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Leadership

To appreciate sources of volunteer attrition, attention has been extended to the role of leaders during recruitment and retention initiatives. Mex (2018) argued that leaders often lack the requisite skills and are not prepared to recruit and retain volunteers. The failure does not imply incompetence or a lack of desire. Rather, it results from a lack of training. Consequently, as the leaders have not been trained, they often fail to offer personal development opportunities to volunteers. This lack of experience frequently causes leaders to devalue individual assessments

and evaluations, coaching, and training (Williams & Bush, 2019; Gordon & Gordon, 2017). Englert et al. (2019) extended this assessment by asserting that leaders often fail to align volunteer skills with relevant tasks within the organization.

Theories

Theories are viewpoints that define the existence of guiding principles. They explain relationships between various constructs through a systematic depiction of social behavior. In essence, the theories detail the occurrence of certain activities and events. As such, the study will offer four themes (nonprofit organization, motivation, followership, and leadership) that are essential to the research and offer six theories of significance.

Nonprofit Organization Theories

Nonprofit organization theories define the principles of organizational existence. The theories' range of themes include all things within the entities' sphere. This sphere offers three fundamental premises to organizational existence, behavior, and impact. As such, the theories provide insight into the general character of the entity (Lu, 2020). An example of a nonprofit organization theory is Weisbrod's Theory.

Weisbrod's Theory is an adaption of the public goods theory applied to nonprofit organizations. It suggests that these organizations are fused institutions that depict aspects of for-profit and government organizations. Their function is to satisfy the demands for goods or service that are unfulfilled by the government or to provide substitutes for goods or service that are not available through for-profit organizations. As nonprofit organizations meet these demands, the activities are supported by individuals who are intent on increasing the output of the specified good or service. Hence, the theory offers an economic rationale for the organizations that is rooted in models of demand heterogeneity and the median voter (Lu, 2020).

Motivational Theories

Motivational theories provide perspectives regarding volunteers' personal decisions to offer services through nonprofit organizations. They determine the source of inspiration for individuals to meet specific goals. This is generally achieved through the differentiation of intrinsic and external factors. An example of a motivational theory is the theory of planned behavior.

The Theory of Planned Behavior looks at volunteer actions by considering attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. It was designed to predict the intention of individuals to engage various behaviors at a specific time and place. It explains all behavior through which self-control is exerted. While the theory is based upon individual motivation and abilities, integral to its comprehension are behavioral intentions based on individual attitude (Ajina, 2019).

Followership Theory

Followership Theory illustrates the level to which volunteers are instinctively inclined to follow a leader. It represents the set of actions an individual assumes in accepting a subordinate role. This can be viewed as the combination of skills that complement leadership through behavior that is engaged to assist the organization in meeting its goals. The theory is based upon intentional actions that enrich synergies between followers and leaders (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

The implicit followership theory, developed in response to leader-centric theories, redirected attention to the role of followers in forming leadership. While unrealistic, it is perceived as a viewpoint that leaders maintain regarding their relationship with followers. They conceptually erect an idealized view of followers, which is used to judge their interactions with followers, regardless of how the individuals actually perform. The theory suggests that

leadership viewpoints regarding follower behavior will impact the level to which followership is effective. When followers behave as leadership expects, the outcomes are increasingly successful (Ford & Harding, 2018).

Leadership Theories

Leadership theories illustrate the traits and behaviors adopted by nonprofit leaders to enhance the abilities of volunteers. They offer a rationale for leadership roles as well as shared traits and behaviors that can be adopted to enhance leadership abilities. Leadership theories that have been linked to persuasive influence of followers include the contingency, servant, and transformational theories.

Contingency Leadership Theory. Contingency leadership theory asserts that leadership is situational. While successful in one situation, a leader may be completely inept in another. The leader must acquire the capacity to examine each situation, control the environmental factors, and fit their approach to the necessary factors. As such, there is no single approach that is suited for every situation. Therefore, leaders must be attentive, objective, and adaptable (Wool et al., 2017).

Servant Leadership Theory. Servant Leadership Theory explains the combination of servant-ship and leadership. It describes human interaction whereby the goal is to achieve authority, instead of power. It strives to decentralize organizational structures by allowing leaders to serve followers prior to leading them. The theory is embedded in compassion, dedication, honesty, and respect. This is achieved through highlighting the importance of awareness, conceptualization, empathy, foresight, healing, listening, persuasion,

stewardship, commitment to the growth and development of people, and community building (Wool et al., 2017).

Transformational Leadership Theory. Transformational leadership theory entreats leadership behaviors that encourage followers to achieve beyond expectations. The leader engages and interacts with followers to cultivate a vision that guides issues requiring change. It suggests that leaders and followers simultaneously intensify each other's morality. This is achieved when followers align their identities with that of the organization. The act allows emphasizes changes made by individuals through long-term developments (Wool et al., 2017).

Actors

The study encompassed two sets of actors. The first group consisted of individuals who currently are offering or have previously offered services through a nonprofit organization. These individuals possessed at least 3 years of experience within an identified organization. The second group consisted of individuals who offered their services via a faith-based organization. The services were not directly related to faith; rather, they were performed with a volunteer understanding of the mission of the entity.

Characteristics

The study consisted of seven primary characteristics. As identified in Figure 1, the characteristics were defined by elements within or directly related to nonprofit organizations. First, the source of the volunteers was a central characteristic. Characteristics variables 1a and 1b offer insight into the identification regarding the need for volunteers. Second, the volunteers themselves persisted as an integral focus. Characteristic 2 highlights common features (demographics, expectations, and motivations), exhibited by volunteers. Third, items that challenge an individual's ability to volunteer were integral. As such, Characteristic 3 addressed

the barriers (finances, knowledge, and time) that deter services. Fourth, the organizations were the other primary variable. Characteristic 4 discussed the overall mission (i.e., faith vs. non-faith based) and programs embraced by the organizations. Fifth, volunteer experiences contributed greatly to the study. Characteristic 5 described volunteer fit, personal development, and benefits identified by these individuals as supportive to decisions made as they forecast future volunteer actions within an organization. Sixth, leadership styles (contingency, servant, or transformational) were integral variables to the study. Characteristic 6 offered insight into leadership tools that may be of significance to volunteers. Finally, recipient outcomes and the perceived value of the work performed proved to be an intrinsically significant characteristic. As such, Characteristic 7 reviewed the personal significance of the work performed.

Definition of Terms

This qualitative case study was centered on a number of terms that offer valuable insight into the research. Comprehension of their meaning aids appreciation of the concepts presented by this research. The following terms and associated descriptions characterized the research.

Faith-based organizations—Faith-based organizations are nonprofit organizations whose characteristics and missions are founded on religious or spiritual customs. They operate independently of other organizations to promote philosophies including, but not limited to, public good and have elements of recruitment and retention at national or international levels (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2018; Wilk-Mhagama, 2016).

Leaders—Leaders are representatives of nonprofit organizations who influence volunteers through a process of social influence. Through social influence, leaders are responsible for building relationships in order to motivate, encourage, and enlist the aid and support of volunteers in the accomplishment of identified tasks (Koohang et al, 2017).

Nonprofit organizations—Nonprofit organizations are community-based organizations whose mission is to satisfy a social need by providing a public service. The identified missions add value to their associated communities (Meyer et al., 2019).

Volunteers—Volunteers are invaluable human resources who complement organizational missions. They offer relationships, consultation, labor, and donations of money, knowledge, and expertise to nonprofit organizations (Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Volunteer Lifecycle—The volunteer lifecycle includes the phases through which an individual interacts with a nonprofit organization. The phases include awareness, activation, commitment-building, retention, and the eventual exit from the organization (Merrilees et al., 2020).

Volunteer Recruitment—Volunteer recruitment is the rate at which individuals are inclined to join a nonprofit organization (Shi et al., 2017).

Volunteer Retention—Volunteer retention is the rate at which existing members are inclined to remain active with a nonprofit organization (Merrilees et al., 2020; Shi et al., 2017).

Volunteer Satisfaction—Volunteer satisfaction denotes the gratifying emotional state of a volunteer relating to awareness of tasks that represent fulfillment of important personal values (Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Volunteering—Volunteering is an intentional, formal, long-term prosocial process whereby unpaid individuals, who have no interests or relationships with the beneficiaries, provide a service through an organizational setting (Alfes, et al., 2017; Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Yeung, 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

Studies are often structurally restricted by the manner in which scholarly research is conducted. This includes, but is not limited to, the availability of resources, flawed reasoning, and human deficiencies. However, some level of intentionality is achieved through the recognition of such issues. Therefore, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations have been identified to frame the study.

Assumptions

Assumptions are generally recognized as attributes believed to be valid but that cannot be authenticated. This study contains several assumptions that guided the research. First, it was assumed that leaders possess meaningful influence over volunteers in nonprofit organizations. This impact shapes the level of volunteer recruitment and retention observed in these organizations. Second, it was assumed that a case study design was the most efficient approach to understanding the phenomenon. The process aimed to isolate the population of individuals best suited to unearthing details related to the issue. Third, it was assumed that the research participants would be instrumental to the study. That is, their responses would be authentic and astute while adding definitive value to the research.

Limitations

Limitations acknowledge weaknesses that are prone to affect the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). While the research offered significant insight into the impact of leadership on volunteer recruitment and retention in nonprofit organizations, there were limitations experienced. First, the goal of a case study (i.e., to offer different meanings to different people) limits the generalizability of the volunteer research (Ridder, 2017). While case studies may indicate occurrences in similar organizations, additional research would be needed to validate the

findings. Therefore, extrapolating the data across a larger population is challenging, as biases may exist, and alternative explanations cannot be ruled out. However, as the objective of a case study is to produce varied perspectives distinctive to the selected population and environment, generalization was not viewed as a mandate of the research.

Second, this study utilized a convenience sampling method. This is a common method used to gather data from a relevant population who is readily accessible at a specific point in time (Baxter et al., 2015). Therefore, the collected data may not be inclusive of the entire volunteer population. Additionally, data gathered from participant questionnaires and interviews is not without limitations. While the collected information was specific and insightful, opportunities existed for participants to display bias, reticent, and reflexive viewpoints. Such responses may be attributable to participant perspectives and/or the structure of the inquiries.

Delimitations

Delimitations delineate the boundaries of the study (Coker, 2022). These boundaries include the geographical location, population, and sample size of the study. First, the geographical location of the study was confined to the central region of North Carolina. The region embraces the urban municipalities of the state. Second, the population consists of individuals who are likely to possess greater volunteering opportunities than is offered in rural areas. These opportunities include a greater number of organizations from which to select, as well as individuals with potentially higher salaries and disposable income. Third, the sample size was contained to a regulated number of organizations and volunteer participants. While variety may exist regarding the types of organizations, participant depth was somewhat shallow. As such, the three aspects (i.e., geographical location, population, and sample size) may lack generalizability. While the data may allow leaders to examine contextual variables within an

organization that influence leadership recruitment and retention, it may not be applicable to nonprofit leaders in rural areas and/or other locations across the nation.

Significance of the Study

This qualitative study enhanced literature that investigates leadership in nonprofit organizations. It engaged the recollection of volunteers to examine behaviors exhibited by leaders within the organizations. The research incorporated a spotlight on gaps in current literature to cultivate narratives regarding the topic. Analysis of the information illuminated leadership practices that may be adopted to enhance organizational sustainability.

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

The research expanded comprehension of the influence leaders exude on volunteer recruitment and retention in nonprofit organizations. Through a focus on gaps in current literature, it molded an image of the societal phenomenon by merging volunteer perspectives. The perspectives were ascertained from volunteers across multiple institutions, thereby adding practical quality by broadening the research and presenting a more well-rounded interpretation of the issue. Additionally, the study discerned the consequences of faith when it exists as a guiding principle. The inclusion of faith offered insight into other factors that are likely to directly affect volunteers and organizations through their leaders.

Implications for Biblical Integration

Several Biblical applications emerged from this research. They offer insight into the divine purpose that leaders should espouse on behalf of the nonprofit organization as they guide the work performed by volunteers. Knowledge of this purpose can enrich the activities undertaken and promoted greater outcomes in relation to the organization mission. This

knowledge is best understood through the principles of the Dignity of Work, Work as a Service, and a New Compass for Work.

Dignity of Work

God instructed humans to work. It is the essence of human existence, and everything defined as work possesses dignity. As such, when volunteers offer their service to benefit others, they bring glory to God. Therefore, this work should be performed as if done specifically for Him (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012). For the organizations to promote this ideology amongst volunteers, their leaders must provide reasons (i.e., perceptions of the services and the associated benefits) to be committed to this dignity. They must strategically identify and promote the importance of every task performed. Then, they must ensure that their words and actions support the strategy. Successful implementation of these acts creates a culture where the role of every volunteer is vital to the success of the organization.

Works as a Service

God has a call for all humans in every facet of life, not just in spirituality. These callings are regarded as acts of benevolence, void of self-gratification, and assignments from God (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012). The work performed through nonprofit organizations, regardless of the task, represents a calling. The foundation of such work should be love for one's neighbor. In adopting this mantra, leaders will be competent in managing their responsibilities. Additionally, this adoption will mandate continuous improvement through the use of various tools (i.e., coaching, training, and evaluating).

New Compass for Work

In nonprofit organizations, the service performed should not maximize extrinsic elements for volunteers. God has designed a compass for work that encourages the elimination of money

and power as influential factors. As such, leaders, who are more likely to experience such extrinsic factors, are encouraged to be just, compassionate, devoted, empathetic, tolerant, and generous (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012). When accepted, leaders appreciate that these characteristics are not to be extended solely to the recipients of the organization's services, but also to the volunteers who assist in providing the services.

Relationship to Field of Study

Within every organization, practical skills are needed to adjudicate decisions and execute strategies. The skills must include a sense of social awareness, which emphasizes empathy toward diversity of backgrounds and cultures, an ability to comprehend the social and ethical norms of behavior, and a recognition of community resources and supports. This awareness brings attention to and addresses identified issues through a vision that communicates the direction of the organization as well as the roles and responsibilities of its various stakeholders. The experiences influence leadership as they furnish leaders with knowledge about the differences between success and failure in organizations.

Leadership

Researchers have opined that poor leadership is the primary contributor to barriers of organizational success. Studies acknowledge that this finding extends to leaders at all levels of an organization, not only to presidents or the executive team (Oliver & Schwella, 2018). Leaders must display, through their actions, an ability to meet stated goals, as well as remain disciplined and ethical regarding established policies and principles (Cummings & Williams, 2018). The feedback provided by research participants will offer awareness regarding how leaders can effectively manage a nonprofit organization's greatest resource: its volunteers. As such, the

information will distinguish specific characteristics, leadership styles, and skills/knowledge that prove invaluable.

Characteristics. Characteristics are distinguishing qualities that form and define a person. Effective leaders possess a unique set of characteristics (e.g., competence, ethics, emotional intelligence, courage, etc.). These qualities have the ability to make meaningful impressions and prove vital when assessing organizational challenges and forming decisions that address identified issues (Pugliese & Senna, 2018). While many characteristics are innate, there are many others that can be learned by leaders. Though all qualities are important, the study will illuminate some characteristics that are more effectual to leaders in nonprofit organizations.

Leadership Styles. Leadership styles are methods employed by leaders that stimulate volunteers into implementing organizational plans. They include implicit and explicit actions, as well as any combination of styles (e.g., autocratic, charismatic, laissez-faire, transactional, supportive, democratic, paternalistic, etc.) that may be enacted. Each style serves a specific function and may be beneficial within distinctive scenarios. Therefore, the study will identify the styles that are most conducive to nonprofit leadership.

Skillsets/Knowledge. The world exists in a perpetual state of evolution. As it changes, the reverberations are felt in local communities. While some communities are more adept than others, an organization will only be as successful as the skills and knowledge possessed by its leaders to process the change. Therefore, keeping pace with volunteer movement requires a specific set of skills and knowledge.

Data. Data is viewed as any statistic that can be analyzed, interpreted, and adjudicated. Leaders must be able to contextualize data into organizational purposes. Young et al. (2018) offer Context Data (i.e., policies, resources, culture and infrastructure), Input Data (i.e.,

stakeholder information), Process Data (i.e., process quality, assessment practices, and management), and Outcome Data (i.e., results) as applicable to volunteers and nonprofit organizations. Effective use of this data requires that leaders possess the knowledge, skills, and temperament to acquire, review, and strategically use it. Leaders influence others, reduce anxiety, form productive cultures, and shape strong visions through effective management of data. However, too frequently, leaders maintain a strong reliance on personal experiences, which combined with a common lack of knowledge regarding data, often encourages them to revert to making decisions grounded only in intuition.

Sustainability. Leaders must seize opportunities to comprehend the manner by which their organizational practices impact their community. This knowledge must extend to an appreciation of the future. Therefore, leaders must be devoted to developing and executing plans that value sustainability. As such, the study will identify skillsets including, but not limited to, an ability to transform an organization from one that solely focuses on philanthropic factors to one equally capable of appreciating volunteers, recognizing critical factors impacting them, and intertwining volunteer participation with organizational practices and reporting (Isaksson, 2019).

Summary of the Significance of the Study

Numerous studies have been conducted regarding volunteers and nonprofit organizations. While there are many that address the recruitment and retention rates of volunteers in these entities, research is limited regarding the direct correlation between the rates and the impact of leaders. Therefore, this research adds to the quantity of available literature, as well as satisfies existing gaps by extending the range of organizations explored and reviewing the role of faith. The information gleaned from the study will empower leaders to adopt practices that are more likely to enrich organizational sustainability.

Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This thematic literature review offers a comprehensive view of volunteerism in nonprofit organizations. It utilizes prior research in the domain as ample information to formulate the foundation of the study. The review begins with an assessment of business practices observed across the industry. Then, it transitions to the identification of problems that hinder efficiencies in organizational operations. The summarization of these problems is followed by relevant concepts and theories that further illuminate issues within the business practices. The sections conclude with the recognition of related studies and a presumption of anticipated themes. This literature review represents core elements of the research to secure greater depth regarding the topic.

Business Practices

This literature review recounts recent practices of volunteerism in nonprofit organizations and encompasses discussion of three primary matters. First, it offers broad parameters regarding the purpose of nonprofit organizations in society. Second, there is a focus on the attributes and contributions of volunteers through nonprofit organizations. Third, the various qualities of leaders within the organizations are analyzed to comprehend their influence on volunteers. These three elements of the business practices unite to extend a global perspective of the topic.

Understanding Nonprofit Organizations

The nonprofit sector is recognized as an essential and indispensable factor in a country's economic and social matters. The community addresses social needs including, but not limited to, care for the most vulnerable populations, guidance of youth and adults, development for social change, and spiritual contentment. Additionally, the sector is praised as fostering an innovative environment that is constructive for addressing public problems, as well as being a

meaningful influencer in how public policy is developed and implemented. While the sector displays a multitude of differences across communities and localities, it offers an emboldening environment (Lu, 2020).

Nonprofit organizations are described as social constructs that exist to foster human interaction and support (Conaty & Robbins, 2018). They are discernable from other organizations via their structural benefits (e.g., the ability to accept tax-deductible gifts and not being required to pay federal income taxes). In exchange for these benefits, nonprofit organizations forego the ability to share earnings with stakeholders. Also, they are not allowed to participate in political campaigns (Gratton, 2018). Due to these organizational complexities, nonprofit organizations are best structured through multifaceted, flexible systems. This structure is commonly regarded as an open system that is in perpetual interaction with the environment. The interactions are characterized by the nonlinear, self-organized autonomy of its representatives (Meyer et al., 2019).

It's essential that these organizations are morally and socially grounded. They seek to fill a social mission by providing community or public services that align with a specific community-oriented mission. As missionary enterprises, they are saturated with value systems that express missions that attract and unite devoted members. In addition, the organizations are forged through their members' values and passions, and sustained by the bonds of trust that develop within and between the volunteers. The expressions espoused by these members represent the organization's ethical stance toward the world (Nascimento et al., 2016).

The actions undertaken by these organizations are governed by demand-side stakeholders (i.e., beneficiaries and donors of the goods/service). Beneficiaries anticipate the goods and services needed to replace those of for-profit organizations that are insufficient and/or

compensate for gaps in government provisions. On the other hand, donors offer resources (i.e., time, knowledge, and finances), which they envision to enhance the goods and services offered to those in the community (Abzug & Webb, 1999). The ability to satisfy the demand requires comprehension, acknowledgement, and unification toward stated goals.

To be effective, these organizations must possess accessible resources as well as individuals who are proficient in managing them. Effective management of the organizations resides in an analytical approach applied to intricate issues that surface from ambiguous and unusual circumstances. Addressing the issues generally requires the management of multiple factors that present challenges due to the convergence of the organizational mission, beneficiary and donor expectations, and financial sustainability (Meyer et al., 2019).

Across the United States, there are more than 1.56 million entities registered as nonprofit organizations by the IRS (Gratton, 2018). While the institutional structures and systems of these organizations are similar to for-profit and government organizations, nonprofits address needs that cannot be met by the other organizations. Due to this assertion, a thorough appreciation of these entities is critical to society. Appreciation is achieved through comprehension of the purpose and types of nonprofit organizations in existence.

Purpose of Nonprofit Organizations

The purpose of nonprofit organizations is to improve the quality of life for others in the community at the local, state, national, and international levels. They enhance societal standards by offering services in education, religion, low-income housing, healthcare, the environment, civil rights, the arts, and culture. Distribution of the associated goods and services is achieved through tasks performed to benefit the community rather than organizational owners. Therefore, analysis of these organizations cannot be based on indicators similar to those of organizations

operating in for-profit settings. Through their initiatives, they present goods and services that other organizations are incapable of providing (Meyer et al., 2019).

Types of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations are classified according to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standards. Within the standards are more than 27 types of organizations that are recognized under the nonprofit umbrella. These organizations include, but are not limited to, civic, fraternal, professional, and religious entities. Each entity must meet specific criteria and is subject to different tax rules. Faith-based organizations are a prominent entity identified under this classification.

Faith-based organizations are human-service providers categorized as religious and/or charitable organizations. They are widely viewed as institutions whose missions derive from spiritual traditions and operate independently to promote national or international public good (Wilk-Mhagama, 2016). The organizations engage local communities for donors and beneficiaries of aid by adhering to an ethical imperative to deliver assistance to all people regardless of faith. The acts of these organizations uphold humanitarian standards and reinforce trust in the community.

The organizations are numerous and diverse. It is often assumed that they are local worship centers; however, that is inaccurate. While faith-based organizations do consist of congregations, there are other types that exist. These organizations have been divided into three categories. The first and the most obvious are religious congregations. Congregations represent the local gathering and location of a group of people for religious purposes. Second, certain national networks are identified as faith-based organizations. They include national denominations, social service arms (i.e., Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, etc.), and

networks of related institutions (i.e., YMCA, YWCA, etc.). Third is free-standing religious organizations. These entities are incorporated independently of congregations and national networks but maintain a religious foundation.

Generally, within their communities, faith-based organizations are renowned as secure, permanent, and well-trusted institutions. They represent a place of peace and strength for people during times of illness and stress. As such, they exist in virtually every cultural and ethnic group and represent a place of assembly for large gatherings of people. Traditionally, while these organizations have been focused on addressing the spiritual, social, and cultural needs of their members, the purposes of some of the entities have been expanded. Currently, many of the organizations also focus on the physical and mental well-being of their members, in addition to the spiritual needs. This is achieved by discouraging illegal or reckless behavior and advocating for good health, financial security, and ethical conduct.

Characteristics. Faith-based organizations generally promote the concepts of compassion, sacrifice, love for one's neighbor, and help for those in need (Yeung, 2017). Through these concepts, they overtly convey a moral intent to serve others through faith. The standards result in organizations that possess a defined mission, emphasize non-monetary rewards, endorse social support, and promote the recruitment and retention of volunteers (Erasmus & Morey, 2016).

Manifestation of Faith. Faith is manifested in these organizations through seven elements. The elements place an emphasis on acknowledging and promoting religious viewpoints, encouraging members to openly exercise their religious convictions, appreciating the disciplines used by religion to help or hinder the procurement of organizational resources, expressing gratitude for the manner in which religion shapes the goals, displaying products and

services of the organizations, articulating the impact religion has on decision making processes, revering religious authority and the power of leadership, and promoting the extent to which religion determines inter-organizational relationships (Wilk-Mhagama, 2016).

Types of Faith-based Organizations. Within the faith-based organizational structure are various types of entities. These entities include apex bodies and charitable, socio- political, missionary, and radical/terrorist organizations. Additionally, there are a host of other organizations that are not categorized as they do not affix religious labels to their missions (Wilk-Mhagama, 2016).

Structure of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations are complex entities. They require systems that integrate intertwined relationships between individuals and social participation, are rooted in understanding past experiences, and have a social learning system. There is a symbiotic relationship derived from commitment, participation, and problem-solving techniques. Due to the dependence on individuals, the structure of these organizations is characterized by individual actions, which are unpredictable. However, the organizations are guided by their mission and volunteers, who are stimulated by a strong culture, trust, and leadership.

Culture of Nonprofit Organizations

Regardless of the similarities, every organization is unique. Even those that compete against each other in the same industry, offer identical products or services, use the same vendors, interact with the same clients, and display identical economic standards are immensely distinct. Organizational culture is the primary reason for the difference. Each organization is comprised of individuals with varying experiences, personalities, academic profiles, and goals. As the paths of these individuals are merged, a culture is developed. This is an important facet as

these organizations are grounded in the volunteers' shared values, passions, levels of trust, and ethical perspective of the world (Nascimento et al., 2016). Therefore, these organizations evolve into a reflection of their collective volunteers.

The Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeline of nonprofit organizations. Each year, millions of Americans volunteer their services through nonprofit organizations. Through these partnerships, they intentionally commit to long-term projects that benefit their communities. Many volunteers are specially qualified in the areas in which they provide service, while others serve on an ad hoc basis. The goods and services are offered by volunteers through a sense of free will with no expectation or incentive of financial compensation. Instead, volunteering presents an opportunity for individuals to express prosocial behavior. This social expression assumes greater importance as government agencies continually seek to reduce costs and redefine public spending (Alfes et al., 2016).

Historically, the word volunteer was designated for a person who offered himself for military service; however, over time, it evolved to be equated with community service initiatives. This transition coincided with an awakening regarding the challenges experienced in various communities and the need for assistance. In the 19th Century, citizens suffered consequences of the Great Awakening, Civil War, and Johnstown Flood. The consequences were well documented as citizens banded together to offer support to each of the impacted communities. During this time, few formal charitable organizations existed. This trend was altered during the 20th Century as the United States witnessed significant growth of these organizations, as well as opportunities to volunteer. These volunteers were in great demand as they collected supplies, entertained soldiers on leave, and cared for the injured during the Great Depression and World

War II. Following World War II, the number of volunteers increased when President Lyndon Johnson declared a War on Poverty in the 1960s. Since that time, the need and call for volunteers has strengthened through volunteer centers and new ways to identify opportunities through the internet (Warburton & Oppenheimer, 2000).

The Face of Volunteers

It's important to understand the characteristics and rates of those who perform volunteer tasks. This necessitates a demographic breakdown of volunteers. Volunteers are generally recognized as individuals who are at least 16 years of age and have formally performed some form of volunteer service during the past 12 months (Sterling Talent Solutions, 2019). These individuals are identifiable across a wide spectrum of demographics. Data presented by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics details this information via volunteer gender, age, race, educational attainment, employment status, and family context (Table 1).

Table 1.*Volunteer Demographics*

Demographic	Number of Volunteers per Demographic	Percentage of Population
	62.6 million	24.9%
Sex		
Men	26.4 million	21.8%
Women	36.1 million	27.8%
Age		
16 to 24 years of age	8.4 million	21.8%
25 to 34 years of age	9.5 million	22.3%
35 to 44 years of age	11.4 million	28.9%
45 to 54 years of age	11.9 million	28.0%
55 to 64 years of age	10.2 million	25.1%
65 year of age and older	11.0 million	23.5%
Race		
African American	6.0 million	19.3%
Asian	2.5 million	17.9%
Caucasian	51.9 million	26.4%
Hispanic	6.1 million	15.5%
Educational Level		
No high school diploma	1.9 million	8.1%
High school graduate; no college	9.5 million	15.6%
Some college	15.1 million	26.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	27.6 million	38.8%
Employment Status		
Labor Force	42.5 million	27.0%
Employed	40.7 million	27.2%
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>32.0 million</i>	<i>26.3%</i>
<i>Part-time</i>	<i>8.6 million</i>	<i>31.1%</i>
Unemployed	1.8 million	23.3%
Not in Labor Force	20.0 million	21.4%

More than 62 million individuals volunteer on an annual basis. While these individuals encompass all ethnicities, genders, educational backgrounds, and occupations, there is no one single population of people who are more significant than others. Also, rarely are there direct links between demographics and volunteerism rates as the data is more likely a determinant of the differences between the types of volunteering performed and the influence of various interactions. Rather, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) shares there are certain characteristics that are more common. This research summarizes the probable face of volunteerism, per

statistical data, as an educated Caucasian female parent between the ages of 35 and 44 who is employed part-time and volunteers through a religious entity.

Gender. Data reveals that women are more likely than men to participate in volunteer activities. Twenty-nine percent of females formally volunteer, in comparison to 22.9% of males. It has been reasoned that women are more apt to engage in ethical activities, taking responsibility for others, and embracing a communal approach to life. On the other hand, men are more inclined to seek activities where there are increased opportunities for power to control their own destiny (Bureau of Labor Statistic, 2016).

Age. Volunteerism rates assume a bell-shaped curve when constructed on age. Volunteers in the 35-to-54 age groups represent the peak of the volunteer lifecycle. On one side, individuals in the 16-to-24 age group are the least likely to volunteer, but slightly increase their efforts in the 25 to 34 age group. Then, on the other side of the peak, a steady decline in volunteerism is observed as individuals progress from the 55-to-64 age group into the 65-plus years (Bureau of Labor Statistic, 2016).

Race. Cultural diversity is a valuable component of volunteering. In the U.S., 27% of White offer services to nonprofit organizations. The rate drops precipitously when viewing other ethnic groups. African Americans volunteer at a rate of 19.3%, followed by Asians at 17.9% and Hispanics at 15.5% (Bureau of Labor Statistic, 2016).

Educational Level. Education has been shown to be an important predictor of volunteering, as increases in education correlate to higher volunteerism rates. Forty percent of volunteers possess a bachelor's degree. Only 10% of volunteers have no degree. It is reasoned that individuals who possess higher levels of education form more social connections. These social connections lead to them being invited to participate in various volunteer activities.

Furthermore, individuals with higher education have a greater likelihood of possessing feelings of efficacy and prosocial attitudes.

Employment Status. Data reveals that individuals who are employed volunteer at a greater rate than those who are not employed. Twenty-seven percent of employed individuals volunteer compared to 23% of those who are unemployed and 21% of who are not a part of the labor force. Within these factors, part-time employees volunteer at higher rates than full-time employees. It is reasoned that this difference is a result of time availability.

Other Factors. In addition to gender, age, race, educational level, and employment status, there are other factors that are viewed as critical components. First, on average, volunteers earn higher wages than those who do not volunteer. This is rationalized by individuals with higher levels of education typically being actively employed. Second, whether an individual has children is a significant determinant of volunteering. Approximately 33% of parents volunteer compared to 23% of those without children. Third, volunteers are very specific regarding where they donate their time. Research reveals that 33.9% of volunteers do so through religious organizations compared to 26.2% through educational organizations, 15% through social service organizations and the remainder through an assortment of entities (i.e., healthcare, civic, athletic and other organizations). Additionally, more than 70% of volunteers are affiliated with only one volunteer organization, compared to 19% who are linked to two organizations and 11% with three or more entities (Young, 2016). Finally, individuals volunteer a significant amount of time

with nonprofit organizations. It is estimated that the average volunteer donates approximately 52 hours, annually (Niebuur et al., 2018).

The Role of Volunteers

Nonprofit organizations are a suitable habitat for volunteers as they provide the structure to promote and satisfy individual motivations. These organizations are widely reliant upon volunteers to advance their operations. The functions include, but are not limited to governance, strategic planning, fiscal responsibility, fundraising, and designing, implementing and conducting training (Thelwall-Jones & Stockdale, 2016).

Specific examples of volunteer roles include academic institutions that extract the proficiencies of their alumni population to enhance student and campus offerings; disaster relief agencies that utilize human resources to initiate community recovery efforts; religious entities that influence congregants to perform benevolent acts and/or spiritual rites; political campaigns that solicit individuals for community outreach via personal visits, phone calls, E-mails, and rallies; organizations that hinge on monetary donations to support the homeless, aid the poor, visit the sick, and a host of other activities; and government agencies that receive assistance via court advocates, provide temporary custody to minors, visit criminal or care assisted residents, and other of government related tasks.

Table 2.*Actual Roles of Volunteers*

Volunteer Roles	%
Direct services of engagement to beneficiaries	54.8
Collect, distribute, and serve food	10.8
Tutor or teach	9.3
Provide general labor or transportation	8.2
Mentor youth	6.0
Coach sports teams	5.5
Facilitate religious observance	4.5
Music or arts	3.9
Collect and distribute clothes	3.7
Provide counseling or medical care	2.9
Indirect services of engagement to beneficiaries	21.7
Fundraising or selling items to raise money	10.3
Providing professional or management assistance (i.e., board or committee)	7.1
Providing general office services	4.3
Remaining services	23.5
Other	14.7
Some combination of the aforementioned categories	8.8

Hamerman and Schneider (2016) provide greater insight into the actual roles that volunteers across the U.S. assume within nonprofit organizations. Based on this information, whether building houses, distributing food, caring for animals, planting trees, or coaching athletic teams, it is evident that the vast majority of volunteer efforts are directed through face-to-face interactions with community recipients. Therefore, in addition to the skills necessary for volunteers to perform their assigned task(s), they must also be equipped with the tools to effectively and compassionately collaborate with those who are the recipients of the goodwill. However, regardless of the role, most organizations will agree, there is no limit to the offerings and tasks that can be completed by volunteers to ensure a stable and efficient societal system (Sterling Talent Solutions, 2019).

Volunteer Motivation

Since volunteers do not receive financial reimbursement for their time and effort, it is critical to ascertain the factors that stimulate them to serve in nonprofit organizations. For most volunteers, the attraction to volunteerism is of personal significance. When volunteers invest their time, it is generally derived from a need to collaborate with like-minded individuals to perform good deeds. These actions are continued until their experiences match their personal preferences (Butt et al., 2017).

Types of Motivation. Volunteer motivation is typically guided by three factors. First, a sense of achievement is a crucial altruistic motivational factor. Volunteers take pride in their decisions to share their time, expect to be successful in their community roles and for it to be meaningful. Second, affiliation is an important emotional motivator. Volunteers seek harmonious relationships where their sense of belonging can be validated. Third, power serves as a driving motivational force. Though sometimes hidden, volunteers desire to elicit some degree of influence through their actions. Once they've performed their assigned tasks, there is a desire to sit back and observe the impact of their works. Collectively, the three factors provide the impetus that catapult volunteers into action (Butt et al., 2017).

The Basis of Motivation. Volunteer motivation is derived from three factors. First, achievement in volunteerism is founded upon an altruistic factor. Volunteers believe the time they donate has meaning. Therefore, they express pride in their decisions to serve and expect success in their roles. Second, affiliation with the respective organization is an emotional factor. Volunteers seek agreeable relationships where they feel validated and valued. Third, power is a

piloting factor for volunteers. Though often concealed, these individuals desire some semblance of influence through their roles (Butt et al., 2017).

Volunteer Functions Inventory. Numerous attempts have been made to understand volunteer motives. The most prominent framework to understand this motivation is Volunteer Function Inventory. The approach consists of six functions; enhancement (i.e., volunteering allows individuals to feel useful and improve their self-esteem), career (i.e., volunteering prepares individuals for a career and/or allows them to better expand current roles), social (i.e., volunteering possesses the ability to strengthen personal relationships at home in the community), values (i.e., volunteering provides an opportunity to confront humanitarian and altruistic concerns), protective (i.e., volunteering allows individuals to evade feelings of distress and to defend their ego), and understanding (i.e., volunteering affords individuals a chance to explore personal strengths, encounter new experiences, and attain skills training) (Alfes et al., 2017, Butt et al., 2017, Wu & Li, 2019). Erasmus & Morey (2016) contribute to the concept by sharing those volunteers who have a strong faith or religious beliefs are likely to be guided by the values function.

Volunteers and Faith

In the United States, there are more people who are members of religious congregations than any other nonprofit organization (Son & Wilson, 2011). Additionally, almost all world religions endorse philanthropic activities. The individuals participating in these organizations view volunteering as a normative deed and way to express their religious values. As a result, it explains why individuals of faith volunteer more than other groups of people and why they are compelled to endeavor into specific volunteer opportunities (i.e., religious undertakings, youth development, assisting disadvantaged social groups, and soup kitchens) (Yeung, 2017).

Despite the specific focus of volunteers led by faith, the actions of these individuals extend far beyond activities linked to a congregation. Between 1998 and 2006, Vermeer et al. (2016) indicated that the number of faith-based volunteers decreased by 5%. Yet, 50% of faith-based volunteers are also active in non-faith-based organizations in comparison to only 34% of volunteers who are not led by faith and volunteered at non-faith-based organizations. This data is meaningful as it shows that volunteers led by faith have a higher propensity to donate their time to various types of nonprofit organizations.

Son and Wilson (2011) offer three theories that explain why there is a greater likelihood for people of faith to volunteer. First, people of faith are typically more socially assimilated than those without faith. These individuals belong to multiple volunteer organizations and frequently interact with friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. As such, there are greater opportunities for them to be contacted regarding volunteering opportunities. This declaration is supported by a study that revealed 58% of members of faith-based organizations were asked to volunteer in comparison to 31% of those who were not members of a faith-based organization.

Second, exposure to religious instructions promotes a sense of ethical caring. Since most faith-based organizations promote altruistic behavior, their members are increasingly concerned with the welfare of others. In fact, members of faith-based organizations are not only likely to believe that they have a moral obligation to help others, but that they are likely to deem it within their power to do so.

Third, generativity (i.e., a self-assessment view that one is stimulated by a desire to benefit others), is of great support to individuals of faith. This theory asserts that individuals possess an innate desire to impact future generations and to offer a legacy that enhances current day conditions. Linked to this theory is that faith-based organizations place emphasis on

nurturing generative qualities. Therefore, volunteers in these organizations are encouraged to express generative qualities through their volunteer activities.

Benefits of Volunteering

There are countless benefits experienced as a consequence of volunteering. After all, the purpose of volunteering activities is to make a difference in the world. These benefits come in the form of tangible goods, as well as intangible feelings and services. They can be identified across several clusters (i.e., nonprofit organizations, the community, and volunteers). McKeever (2018) initiates the discussion by providing data on the benefits to nonprofit organizations.

Table 3.

Value of Volunteering

Category	Year 2017
Per Year	
Percent of population volunteering	25.1%
Number of volunteers (in millions)	64.4
Hours volunteered (in billions)	8.8
Average hours per volunteer	137
Per Average Day	
Percent of population volunteering	6.0%
Number of volunteers (in millions)	15.6
Hours per day per volunteer	2.86
Value of Volunteers	
Population age 16 and over (in millions)	256.0
Full-time equivalent employees (in millions)	5.2
Assigned hour wages for volunteers	\$22.13
Assigned value of volunteer time (in billions)	\$195.00

To Nonprofit Organizations. Volunteers represent invaluable assets to nonprofit organizations. Studies disclose that more than 80% of the work performed in these organizations is the result of volunteers (Senses-Ozyurt & Willicana-Reyna, 2016). In 2017, it was estimated that 64.4 million volunteers donated 8.8 billion hours (i.e., 137 hours per person), of freewill to nonprofit organizations. The value of this time has been valued at \$22.13 per hour, which

equates to \$195 billion. Additionally, approximately 80% of volunteers donate financially to charitable organizations. In fact, volunteers donate at twice the rate of non-volunteers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016; United States of Census Bureau, 2020).

To Local Communities. Through the donations and services offered, communities across the country are significantly strengthened by volunteers (Grimm & Dietz, 2018). Studies reveal that volunteer recipients receive numerous benefits including, but not limited to feelings that combat issues with loneliness and viewpoints regarding social interactions. Loneliness is recognized as a psychological state where individuals experience distress as a result of social isolation or outcast. The efforts of volunteers reduce these feelings and upholds positive self-images and viewpoints regarding the environment. Additionally, the interactions between volunteers and the community increases recipient participation, which evolves into enhanced physical and mental health conditions (Gronlund & Falk, 2020).

To Volunteers. While performing acts of goodwill through nonprofit organizations aids the community, volunteers evolve as recipients of numerous benefits. The act of volunteering encourages individuals to participate in civic activities, restrict antisocial behavior, and advocate socioeconomic accomplishments. It allows volunteers to foster social capital with other community residents while they discover conduits to cooperation, compromise and acquire familiarization with each other's differences. In return, the social capital works as a link that facilitates all forms of social interaction. The established capital develops trust that leads to positive ties amongst individuals in the community. The ties ignite increased interactions that promote emotional, mental, and physical strength, earnings, and happiness in volunteers (Grimm & Dietz, 2018; Saxton & Benson, 2005). Through this strength, volunteers unknowingly enhance

their quality of life, feelings of self-worth, and improve consequences while aging (Milbourn et al., 2019).

Another important benefit of volunteerism to volunteers is satisfaction. Volunteer satisfaction refers to one's judgement regarding self-selected standards (Wu & Li, 2019). It is a gratifying emotional state that results from the consciousness of fulfilling an assignment or the fulfillment of one's values; providing the values are compatible with ones needs. This fulfillment quenches an innate desire of volunteers to do good and to feel valued. In fact, it is generally assumed that satisfied volunteers are increasingly encouraged to be more engaged in and commit to volunteer activities (Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Years of research bare out the aforementioned statements. The Corporation for National Community Services (n.d.) offers data to support the findings. Ninety-six percent of volunteers state that volunteering has enriched their purpose in life; 95% of volunteers believe they are improving community outcomes; 94% of volunteers state that volunteering improves their mood; 87% of volunteers shared that volunteering enhanced their people and teamwork skills; 80% of volunteers believe they have control over their health; 78% of volunteers indicate that volunteering reduced their stress levels; 76% of volunteers feel healthier; and 49% of volunteers believe that volunteering has aided their career. In summary, volunteering allows volunteers to feel better about themselves.

Leaders in Nonprofit Organizations

Leadership is renowned as a method of intentional influence exerted over an individual or group of people. The aim of this influence is to direct, construct, and facilitate organizational activities (Ibrahim et al., 2017). Leadership activities encompass steps taken to influence and/or

alter the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of others (Chong et al., 2018). Fulfilling this objective requires specialized skills that enhance individual relationships to achieve organizational goals.

Leaders in nonprofit organizations differ from those in other organizations as they are not compensated for the completion of their formal responsibilities. Despite this fact, these leaders assume responsibility for executing organizational strategies, coordinating projects and programs, assembling community assets, satisfying community needs, and offering volunteers positive experiences upon which to enhance their journey. Additionally, these individuals possess numerous undefined roles. As they become increasingly proficient in their duties, additional demands will be extended to them (Morrison & Greenhaw, 2018).

Effective leadership is essential in nonprofit organizations. In addition to the aforementioned assignments, leaders must be equipped to face a host of global challenges (i.e., sustainability, emergent inequalities, political dissension, terrorism, etc.). This requires that leaders are able to display flexibility by harnessing the persona and foresight necessary to influence others. Each leader is defined by the ability to postulate shared concepts and tactical schemes, as well as the ability to stimulate volunteers through systems void of awards or punishment (Mex, 2018). It is a unique process as the experiences are profoundly dependent upon the actions and donations of volunteers. This dependence is increasingly at risk due to limited resources, competition amongst other industries for talented resources, and greater emphasis placed on mission rather than profit (Allen et al., 2017). However, researchers propose that poor leadership is the primary barrier to successful execution in nonprofit organizations (Oliver & Schwella, 2018). Therefore, leaders must display, through their actions, the capacity to grasp stated goals while preserving principled standards (Cummings & Williams, 2018).

Achieving these objective mandates that specific leadership skills, leadership styles and management proficiencies are possessed.

Leadership Skills

To be effective, a leader should possess a unique set of characteristics. These characteristics are considered invaluable as they hold the power to make meaningful impressions by confronting challenges and adjudicating decisions (Pugliese & Senna, 2018). While many characteristics are innate, others can be learned over time. There are approximately 45 characteristics that are commonly viewed as pertaining to leaders (Morrison & Greenhaw, 2018); however, a small group (i.e., competence, ethics, emotional intelligence, and courage), have shown to be increasingly meaningful.

Communication. Communication is vital to the success of nonprofit organizations. Communication is considered effective when there is a continual flow of information and offers opportunities for feedback (Nogueira et al., 2020). However, this can only be achieved once the direction of the organizations culture has been decided, its stakeholders identified, and there is a complete engagement of its leaders. It is a global process that requires a great deal of time (Cremer & Vandekerckhove, 2017). Once achieved, each volunteer should be aware of and informed of the organizational plans. They should possess in-depth knowledge of the steps including the scope, expected outcomes, and consequences associated with not fulfilling the plans (Rhatigan, 2017). This necessitates a reliance on repeated and internal public statements during short periods of direct observation and presents volunteers with feelings of belonging within the organization. Furthermore, it exposes the ideas, values, and beliefs that provides everyone greater understanding of the organization (Sebastiano et al., 2017). In fact, the ability to

ensure that volunteers are well-informed encourages long-term comprehension, which leads to volunteers who more closely identify with the organization (Bauer & Lim, 2019).

Competence. There are cerebral regions of the brain that assist individuals in formulating competent decisions. The ventromedial and dorsolateral prefrontal cortex aid value-based decisions; the parietal cortex aids probabilistic reasoning decisions; the orbitofrontal, medial prefrontal, caudate, and rostral anterior cingulate cortex's aid decisions regarding risk and uncertainty; and the amygdala, insula cortex, and basal ganglia aid in reward-based decisions. Related to this understanding are that methods can be undertaken to assess and improve a leaders' ability to gather knowledge, make decisions, enhance skills and intrinsic management of feelings (Talukdar et al., 2018).

Courage. Courage is a temporary sacrifice aimed at establishing higher principled goals. Once transformed into a physical act, courage is regarded as being social, moral, creative, and psychological. The courage exhibited by leaders is generally associated to values that embrace high morals, surviving threats, and meeting objectives. It is an act intensified by an emotional attachment. The emotions are recognized as moving leaders from "courage to act" to "courage to be." It purports those emotions, and the cognition of courage are continuously fused during decision making processes (Rijamampianina, 2018).

Emotional Intelligence. Emotional intelligence allows leaders to conserve emotions, increase self-efficacy, and make decisions that aid others. It requires a leader to maintain an ability to recognize emotions and determine whether they are associated to opportunities or issues that impact decisions. This intelligence is accomplished as leaders become proficient in coping with and solving problems that impact the organization. Once proficient, they become better decision makers who can predict organizational success by developing the talents,

formulating the attitudes, and making decisions for those in the organization (Daud & Wan Noordiana, 2018).

Ethics. Annually, roughly half of all U.S. employees confess to observing unethical behavior within their respective organization. While the majority of incidents are unreported, the ones that are can present crippling scenarios. In 2012, organizations remitted \$8 billion in fines due to adjudication of Federal fraud (Olson, 2013). Therefore, ethics are vital. They represent boundaries that encourage individuals to act in a morally acceptable manner. It requires an ability to identify issues, form judgement related to moral standards, evaluate the viability of just components, and act on principle.

When applied across an organization, ethics have proven to enhance trust and reduce turnover. Therefore, organizations have been enticed to adopt relevant ethical standards (Zeni et al., 2016). Mele & Fontrodona (2017) share that ethics are a valuable component in inspiring organizational culture. Diochon, Defiebre-Muller & Viola (2018) add that the absence of an ethical culture promotes ambiguity in acceptable and competent behavior. It's important to note that individuals innately struggle to understand ethical standards when organizations maintain profound assumptions with no opportunities for discussion and/or to ask questions. This can be resolved by a focus on closing the gap between communicated standards and the assumptions that guide behavior. Ignited by its leaders, organizations must develop a value-based culture where there is a high level of internal uniformity between espoused and lived values (Fichter, 2018). This can be achieved through a multitude of theories and approaches.

Examples of theories and approaches that are useful in this regard are Teleological and Deontological Theories, and a Prescriptive Approach. Teleological Theory deals with the determination levels of self-interests, interests beyond self-interests, and actions performed with

no motivational interests, while Deontological Theory highlight organizations that are obliged to perform tasks “the right way.” Both theories require individuals to act in a fashion where thoughts exist beyond their personal desires (Sharaaz, 2014). On the other hand, a Prescriptive Approach instructs individuals regarding the way individuals should act, as well as how they should willingly alter their behavior to align with standards of the organization. The approach is rooted in philosophies of free will where bad people do bad things, but good people do good things due to becoming more rational decision makers (Cremer & Vandekerckhove, 2017). Olson (2013) states this focus on ethics requires leadership attention in four areas (i.e., compliance, fairness, motive-based trust, and ethical working self-concept).

Compliance. Compliance delineates the norms, values, and expectations established by the organization. It is the foundation with which the organizational culture will stand. Therefore, leaders must communicate the norms, values, and expectations in a manner that each volunteer can clearly comprehend. Additionally, the standards must be interposed with every facet of every organizational task. Volunteers must be trained to grasp the ways that the organization protects its mission, in order to enhance the collective contributions. In doing so, volunteers are more apt to adapt to laws and regulations that encourage a higher level of compliance.

Fairness. Fairness embraces individual perceptions regarding policies that direct organizational tasks. Meaning, leaders must promote an atmosphere of fairness that can be accepted by all individuals in the organization. It is based upon, at least in part, decision-making, personal interactions, information sharing, benefits, and resources. Each element addresses characteristics related to compassion, honesty, loyalty, respect, and responsibility. Fairness is an

aspect of culture that requires minimal investment to erect; however, it becomes significantly costly to address when individuals are unable to identify the aforementioned traits.

Motive-Based Trust. Motive-based trust refers to individual assessments regarding their personal interactions with others in the organization. The interactions assist in formulating viewpoints regarding the ethical character of individuals they associate. Normally, the assessments are centered on an individuals' willingness to listen to criticism, accept responsibility for mistakes and request forgiveness while attempting to make amends. The need for this structure implores leaders to utilize positive role-modeling and relationship building training to instill trust.

Ethical Working Self-Concept. An ethical working self-concept emphasizes the degree to which individuals assimilate ethical values of the organization into their personal lives. The concept summarizes the characteristics of the individuals and what is expected of them as valued members of the organization. While this layer of ethics is the most powerful, it cannot be completely constructed without the creation of compliance, fairness, and motive-based trust. Once individuals begin the process of aligning their viewpoints of self with that of organizational values, it is assumed they will adopt actions that are consistent with the identified values.

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles are the methods employed to influence individuals. The styles include explicit and implicit actions assumed by leaders that are used to provide direction, implement plans, and motivate volunteers. A number of leadership styles have been developed over the years. Each utilizes diverse processes and methods to achieve organizational goals and satisfy volunteer needs. Leaders may possess one or several different leadership styles; however, the style utilized may

change based upon the task. There are three styles that project as conducive to structuring a productive organizational culture.

Through these leadership styles, leaders exhibit an ability to promote creativity, recognize individual contributions, and encourage new paths of exploration (Villaluz & Hechanova, 2019). The attributes speak directly to the personality of each leader. Initiating, pioneering, or transforming a culture change requires a leadership style that encompasses a personality that is task driven and capable of simultaneously comprehending the importance of multiple tasks. As such, Sharaaz (2014) and the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (2021) offer situational, transformational, and servant leadership as styles that are most prudent for the relevant tasks.

Situational Leadership. Leaders who display situational leadership evolve along an organizational spectrum by supporting the behaviors of others. The support consists of coaching, directing, and delegating. It is a style that allows for increased flexibility where the position of leaders is altered to suit the situation of the followers. These attributes sit at the core of situational leadership. When successful, the support can be used to steer volunteers towards the completion of intentional goals.

Transformational Leadership. Leaders who display transformational leadership are similar to those who display the situational leadership style in that they both seek to transform others. The transformational style is used to assess the importance of emotions, values, and ethics within the organization. During the process, unambiguous emphasis is applied to intrinsic motivation and the development of others. Through this focus, transformational leaders mobilize others through their vision and by encouraging them to accept new group identities. The leadership style enhances the level of morality and motivation. In doing so, it allows the

organizational goals to be completed, as well as changes characteristics observed in the followers.

Servant Leadership. Servant leadership is an amalgamation of the terms servant hood and leadership. Leaders who display servant leadership are willing to share their power. This is achieved by reversing the traditional leadership structure. It is the goal of these leaders to cultivate others by placing their needs first. Instead of others working to satisfy the leader, the leaders' mission is to serve others. It places emphasis on organizational missions and humanity, as well as a volunteer focus on achieving goals. It is expressed through the practice of doing good for others. As such, servant leadership originates with a desire to serve others, while envisioning them prosper as smarter, healthier, freer, and more self-sufficient. The virtues used to implement these goals are patience, kindness, humility, respectfulness, honesty, and commitment (Allen et al., 2018).

Volunteer Management

The interactions between volunteers and management will determine the future behavior of the volunteers. Managing volunteers is a task that requires numerous skills. Inclusive of these skills is an ability to ensure effective governance, manage resources, oversee finances, provide training, and organize events that enhance the community (Thelwall-Jones & Stockdale, 2016). In addition, studies have shown that volunteers frequently perform tasks that were previously handled by paid staff. This act places pressure on volunteers to complete their duties in a professional manner, which exposes the organization to various risks and liabilities (i.e., personal injury or damage to property). Yet, these skillsets are often lacking or missing across nonprofit organizations (Goble & Brudney, 2016). The skillsets isolated include the ability to shape

organizational culture, volunteer recruitment, selecting and determining fit of volunteers, retaining volunteers, internal marketing, training, coaching, and mentoring.

Shaping Organizational Culture. Shaping organizational culture requires commitment, the construction of new measurements, creation of new job functions, and insight regarding innovative processes. While an arduous process, sustaining the developed culture is equally challenging. It offers valuable competitive differentiation and advantages to the organization, which necessitate a “think tank” mentality. The process forces the organization to anticipate and prepare for failure, as there will be many.

Failure is not a consequence to be avoided. Rather, it occurs when there are not enough questions asked, the selected ideology cannot be implemented, strategies are regarded as too costly and/or systems are frequently inaccessible. It has been stated that failure is a necessary factor in shaping cultures as it results in lessons learned, iteration of facts, adaptation, and the development of new models through interactive learning. That is, most failures are important as they result in new experiences that catapult the organization into success.

Leaders play significant roles in shaping culture and moving the organization beyond its failures. The values and attitudes espoused by leaders are closely related to the organization’s philosophy, values, and culture regarding volunteers. Therefore, a leaders’ viewpoint concerning volunteers greatly impacts the organizations desire to utilize these individuals, defines organizational values regarding volunteerism, and reflects how supportive and open the organization is to new volunteers (Nesbit, et al., 2018).

Several benefits have been associated with shaping organizational culture. A strong culture encourages volunteer engagement. Through this culture can be observed alignments between volunteer initiatives and organizational commitment. It contributes to feelings of

empowerment and ownership and reinforces an environment where individuals freely exercise problem solving, organizing and leadership skills. Through this culture, a pattern is implemented that enhances performance and reduces costs (Villaluz & Hechanova, 2019).

In addition to volunteer engagement, a strong culture enriches organizational sustainability. These organizations are focused on operational standards that develop economic performance, social equity, and ecological preservation. They persistently enact progressive relationships with current and prospective stakeholders. In doing so, they express value of their human capital by increasing volunteer participation in decision making processes, creating collaborative relationships, and promoting creativity (Romanelli, 2018).

There are several other advantages to shaping culture. Nonprofit organizations that invest in their culture and ethical standards perform better, financially, than their peer index of organizations, display more diverse boards, maintain robust and frequent communications with stakeholders, conduct systematic assessments of their ethical programs, offer a broader assortment of topics during assessments of culture, and promote persuasive policies that protect volunteers from retaliation due to reports of misconduct (Hankins & Blass, 2015).

Volunteer Recruitment. Poor recruitment customs lead to unqualified volunteers, poor performance, high turnover rates, and the demoralization of the remaining volunteers. Therefore, not only must leaders possess recruitment strategies, but the strategies must also be organized and purposeful (Sefanick et al., 2020). Recruitment is defined as the rate at which members enter an organization. Research shows that this act is highly reliant upon social interactions between

members and potential members. As a result, organizations must focus on social relationships, as well as the amount of time and energy demanded of volunteers (Shi et al., 2017).

Methods used to attract volunteers include informal mediums (i.e., word of mouth and endorsements by existing members), and formal mediums (i.e., advertising with local media, posters and brochures, and online media) (Febriani & Selamet, 2020). However, since the requirements associated to recruitment are often viewed as limiting, many organizations have decreased the number of tasks related to recruitment (Raposa et al., 2017).

Selection and Fit. Selection is the act of conscientiously recognizing someone as being the most suitable option, while fit occurs when a person's motives, behaviors, and attitudes complement the environment. When fit is achieved it suggests congruence among a multitude of internal, personal elements and assorted external, environmental factors (Englert et al., 2020). It is widely understood that every volunteer is not a good fit for every organization. Therefore, steps should be taken to protect the organization from squandering resources and ensuring that volunteers are apt to remain active. The process begins with the implementation of a screening process. The screening process should include orientation sessions, applications, interviews, background checks, and trial periods. Additionally, leaders of the organization should be positioned to certify that new volunteers clearly understand the purpose of the organization, their role as volunteers, and ways in which the organization benefits from them. When implemented, the selection and fit protocols promote safety, protect constituents, shield the organizations reputation, enhance volunteer experiences, improve organizational compliance standards, and increase retention (Sterling Talent Solutions, 2019; Young, 2016).

Volunteer Retention. Closely aligned to volunteer recruitment, leaders must ensure strategies are identified to retain volunteers. Retention is defined as the rate at which current

members remain within an organization (Shi et al., 2017). It denotes the number of individuals to effectively satisfy their commitment to a nonprofit organization by renewing or continuing to serve as volunteers (Sundram et al., 2018). This skill necessitates that leader's comprehend factors that contribute to volunteerism. Meaning, as Sefanick et al., (2020) affirm, there must be an intent to address volunteer behavioral factors (i.e., personal, interpersonal, attitudinal, situational, and gender).

Personal Factors. Leaders must be able to ascertain the factors that characterize volunteer self-esteem, empathy, and personality. Generally, volunteers exhibit higher levels of empathy and self-esteem. They believe they have something to contribute to society and are more committed to volunteering. In addition, the probability of volunteering increases when pro-social values align with personal factors (i.e., fulfilling a school requirement, enhancing a resume, or presenting networking opportunities).

Interpersonal Factors. Leaders must work to ensure that volunteers maintain strong personal ties with other volunteers. When friends and family are able to attract individuals they know to the organization, it supports credibility and strengthens the culture. The high level of bonding increases the likelihood of continued volunteerism.

Attitudinal Factors. Leaders must comprehend the attitudes of their volunteers. Volunteer attitudes influence the type of programs that are likely to be supported. Understanding these preferred factors allow leaders to better align volunteer tasks with the organizational mission, in order to satisfy personal and organizational goals.

Situational Factors. Leaders must understand the situational factors that face volunteers. These factors include the lack of transportation and time availability. To combat these issues, leaders must be willing to openly discuss and offer training sessions regarding them.

Furthermore, appropriately addressing the issues should include a strategy that focusses on creating a constructive organizational climate, analyzing the needed volunteer tasks, clearly defining volunteer roles and expectations, and understanding the influences that encourage people to volunteer.

Gender—the Missing Factor. Research has shown that women more frequently display altruistic behaviors than men. Furthermore, the volunteer activities that men and women are engaged are distinctly different. Men are more accustomed to volunteering in political, economic, and scientific activities. On the other hand, women are more likely to participate in social and health services activities. Therefore, leaders must be intent on discovering the reason(s) the individuals joined the organization, as well as the conscious areas that volunteers choose to spend their time.

Internal Marketing. Internal marketing is a practice directed towards the volunteers of the organization. The purpose of the marketing is to assist with the attraction, training, retention, and development of volunteers. While there are several phases of internal marketing, each is dedicated to creating accountability between the organization and its volunteers through instruments of empowerment, self-actualization, achievement, and growth (Gross & Rottler, 2019).

Training. While many individuals possess skills to be successful in their employment role, they lack the knowledge to be productive in a volunteer setting. Therefore, leaders must be devoted to providing volunteers with development opportunities. This training allows the organization to share details regarding its identity, culture, policies, and procedures, as well as increase volunteer skill levels. The training should consist of multiple lecture series focused on volunteer responsibilities, learning from experienced volunteers, and options for continual

learning (Campion & Bond, 2018; Morrison & Greenhaw, 2019). Training is important as it provides volunteers with a sense of self-efficacy. The higher a volunteers' self-efficacy, the more confident he/she will feel regarding abilities to successfully complete a task (Wootton, n.d.).

Coaching. Coaching is a collaborative practice that infuses empowerment, encouragement, and support. It provides individuals with personal and professional feedback that would generally not be accessible. It is a manner of opening the gateway to ones' potential, in order to develop skills and maximize performance (Greer, n.d). The process places volunteers in position to actively seek knowledge in areas they are unenlightened, encourages them to systematically grow without fear of organizational ruins, and supports them while making life transformational choices. Through coaching, volunteers are offered continual growth that proposes the greatest opportunity for learning (Johnson, 2017). The enhanced skills and knowledge enhance volunteer vocational outcomes while satisfying organizational goals and objectives. When fused to volunteerism, coaching is considered encouragement through a path of enlightenment that supports essential life-giving and changing decisions (Joo, et al., 2012). Additionally, there are a plethora of statistics that inherently underscore the need for coaching.

Mentoring.

Mentoring in a nonprofit organization is the act of sharing knowledge. Leaders in the organization share opinions about problems and goals, offer tidbits of wisdom, participate in adjudication processes, encourage reflection, and provide feedback to mentees. Effective mentoring requires the mentor to possess, at least, minimal knowledge of the conditions and operations of the organization, as well as special needs and motivations of its members. Also, the mentor should be familiar with diversification structure of the volunteers as it relates to age, education, and experiences (Bortnowska & Seiler, 2019).

The Problem

Though invaluable to communities across the United States, nonprofit organizations have become increasingly accustomed to managing numerous challenges in relation to volunteers. Annual volunteer rates, presented by the Bureau of Labor Statistics through the United States Department of Labor (2005, 2010, 2013, 2016), bares out the historical data regarding volunteering in the United States.

Table 4.

Annual Volunteer Rates in the United States

Year	Number of Annual Volunteers	Percent of Population
2002	N/A	27.4%
2003	N/A	28.8%
2004	N/A	28.8%
2005	N/A	28.8%
2006	N/A	26.7%
2007	N/A	26.2%
2008	61.8 million	26.4%
2009	63.4 million	26.8%
2010	62.8 million	26.3%
2011	64.3 million	26.8%
2012	64.5 million	26.5%
2013	62.6 million	25.4%
2014	62.8 million	25.3%
2015	62.6 million	24.9%
2016	63.9 million	25.2%
2017	64.4 million	25.1%
2018	77.4 million	30.3%

This data offers several problematic statistics associated to volunteers and nonprofit organizations. In 2018, approximately 77.4 million Americans (i.e., 30.3% of the U.S. population), volunteered with a nonprofit organization, at least once. The figure reflects countless tangible and intangible benefits to communities across the nation; however, it also denotes the only time in nearly twenty years that an increase has been observed in volunteerism.

While volunteering rates have fluctuated throughout the years, they were spurred on by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Following the attacks, the rates quickly rose, including repeated historic highs, at that time, between 2003 and 2005 (i.e., 63.8 million volunteers and 28.8% of the U.S. population). Since that time, the rates have descended each year. Between 2005 and 2015, 31 states experienced acute decreases in volunteering rates and no states chronicled a significant increase in volunteering during the period (Grimm & Dietz, 2018). In fact, 2015 represented a 20-year low when based upon volunteers as a percentage of the population (i.e., 24.9%).

While there were slight increases experienced in volunteerism rates in 2016 and 2017 (i.e., 25.1%), rates remained far below the previous peak (Chen & Cheng, 2017; Gratton, 2018). Then, in 2018, record high rates were observed. During the year, 77.4 million people volunteered their time and service. As witnessed in 2001, the years leading up to 2018 were rife with turmoil. The time period included political tension (i.e., government shutdown and DACA), environmental disasters (i.e., Hurricanes Florence, Harvey, Jose, Irma, Maria, and Michael), mass shootings (i.e., Las Vegas, Parkland, Pittsburgh, Orlando, etc.), and various social matters (i.e., opioid epidemic, human trafficking, cultural conflicts and struggles in relation to gender equality (Grief, 2019). With each ordeal there was a greater impetus on volunteering. Collectively, the data exposes a number of organizational threats related to current aspects of volunteering.

Current Aspects of Volunteering

Volunteerism serves a function that most for-profit and government organizations are incapable of offering. However, this factor does not immune nonprofit organizations from plights

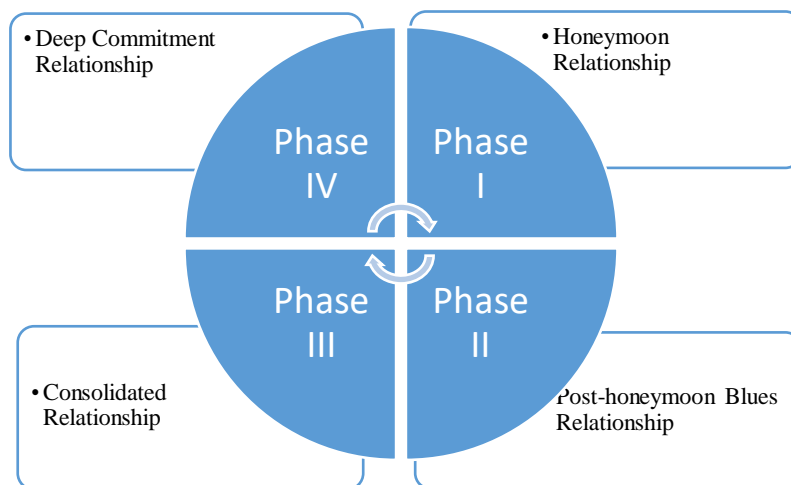
experienced by other organizations. In fact, nonprofit organizations experience greater upheaval as a result of the nature of volunteerism (Wicker & Frick, 2016).

Nature of Volunteerism

Though some volunteers are able to bypass obstacles to volunteering, it does not mean they are triumphant as it relates to all challenges. Due to environmental changes, the volunteer lifecycle is deemed to be a short-term sequence of events. It is defined as the period of time that begins with an individual's awareness of volunteering and ends with the volunteer's eventual departure from the organization. In between the two finite periods are a host of phases that volunteer's cycle through (i.e., recruitment, activation, forming a bond with the organization, and retention), which define their roles, as well as influence the level of satisfaction experienced (Merrilees et al., 2020; Sterling Talent Solutions, 2019).

Figure 2.

The Volunteer Lifecycle



Merrilees et al. (2020) apportioned the volunteer lifecycle into four phases. Phase I, the Honeymoon Relationship, immediately follows volunteer recruitment. It is the period of time

that encompasses volunteer experiences between the 6 month and 1 year mark within a nonprofit organization. It is characterized by medium commitment levels being exhibited by both parties due to the distinct learning process. During this phase, there is a belief that the relationship will be long lasting; however, it has not been fully formulated.

Phase II, the Post-honeymoon Blues Relationship, is a continuation of the Honeymoon Relationship. The period encompasses the volunteer experiences in the second year. During this period, there is little change in relation to volunteer commitment levels, early on; however, as the period progresses, the time commitment levels begin to take shape. Though volunteers have become armed with some organizational experience, this is the period of time in which retention motives are at its weakest level.

Phase III, the Consolidated Relationship, is where volunteer and organizational interactions have matured to a medium-term relationship. This period encompasses the 3rd and 4th year of volunteer experiences. It is the time where both parties understand each other, and volunteers are clearly committed to the organization. Though there will continue to be volunteers who exit the organization for a host of reasons, individuals in this phase are greatly influenced by altruistic motives.

Phase IV, Deep Commitment Relationship, displays a mature and long-term relationship. This period embodies volunteers who have been in the organization for 5 years or more. During the phase, a close bond between the two parties has formed that allows for increased forgiveness when errors are made. The phase is also characterized by altruistic motives that act as a volunteering stimulant.

In addition to characteristics of the aforementioned phases, statistical information presents a deeper image of the volunteer life cycle. For those that enter Phase I, statistics show

that 33% of the volunteers do not return to the same organization the following year (Young, 2016). Also, as individuals have become increasingly transient, experience increased demands on their time, and are encouraged to seek short-term roles, a scenario is developed where nonprofit organizations are cemented in a continual cycle of change.

Obstacles to Volunteering

Obstacles to volunteering consists of any facet or combination of facets that prevent an individual from being able to volunteer or volunteer effectively. These obstacles may be encountered by any volunteer while accessing a role within an organization. In addition, they may be experienced at structural, institutional, or personal levels. Obstacles present themselves at various socio-demographic levels and include, but are not limited to lack of time, limited transportation, negative attitudes towards community members, lack of community support, inadequate training, and self-analysis (No author, 2018; Moghaddam et al., 2018).

Lack of Time

Volunteers may be asked to complete tasks that require more time than what is available. Therefore, meetings should be scheduled only for as long as necessary. Additionally, organizing times that are convenient for volunteers to meet is crucial. Consideration must be given to ensure that tasks do not impinge on volunteer work schedules and/or family obligations.

Employment. Numerous volunteer activities are conducted during weekdays. This timeframe parallels the period of time that many people are at work. Therefore, employer approval is often required for people to volunteer with nonprofit organizations.

Family Obligations. Family responsibilities play a significant role in volunteerism. Prior to donating time at a nonprofit organization, a volunteer must ensure that his/her family arrangements are properly structured. This includes, but is not limited to negotiations with

spouse regarding specific tasks, scheduled appointments for children, care in relation to aging parents, and necessary home repairs. These and other similar items often take precedence and greatly restrict volunteer opportunities.

Limited Transportation

Volunteers are often asked to travel to locations that may not be easily accessible or limited to those with access. Those with personal transportation may not always possess the financial resources to maintain the vehicle. On the other hand, those without personal transportation may not have suitable public transportation or possess the financial resources to secure transportation fees.

Negative Attitudes Toward Community Members

Though volunteers place themselves in a position to assist those in need, they do not always display a positive attitude towards that segment of the community. A pessimistic attitude is frequently unambiguous regardless of the attempts made to mask it. When volunteers are observed with a negative attitude regarding the project, others will be reluctant to invest in the project.

Lack of Community Support

When a nonprofit organization performs acts of goodwill in the community, it is vital that discussions are held with community representatives regarding specific needs. Leaders will often assume they are aware of the needs of the community and develop programs to address their vision. However, inaccurate visions often result in failed programs that cause disappointment for volunteers.

Inadequate Training

Due to a lack of training, volunteers are often placed in settings they are ill-prepared to manage. As a result, volunteers do not always possess the emotional, cultural, professional, and/or technical skills to be effective. Allowing volunteers to exist in such an environment is dangerous to the volunteers and the organization.

Self-analysis

Early in the process (i.e., the recruitment and screening process), is typically the timepoint when people begin to self-identify potential barriers to volunteering. During this period, they analyze the people they will be surrounded, identify organizational activities, and determine how they would be spending their time, money, and efforts. When a potential barrier is recognized, volunteers will self-screen and deem themselves unable or unqualified to fulfill the required role. Often times, they will remove themselves from possible volunteer consideration without discussing possible alternatives with organizational leadership.

Volunteer Attrition

In nonprofit organizations, attrition refers to a decline in resources as volunteers retire or resign from organizations. It is a natural process in which individuals voluntarily exit the organization. There are various reasons that exist for volunteer attrition; most are tied to volunteer satisfaction. Volunteer feelings regarding satisfaction are molded by a host of factors. Milburn et al. (2018) highlight work overload/burnout, lack of autonomy and voice, alienation and cliques, disconnect between volunteer and organizations, and lack of faith in leadership, as well as numerous other factors.

Work Overload and Burnout. While there are many volunteers who enjoy their experiences, there are times where volunteering can represent too much of a good thing.

Membership with a nonprofit organization may come with a heavy workload, which, at some point, heavily weighs on the volunteer. Additionally, in some instances, experiences reveal that there exists an uneven distribution of work, as well as a variability in the willingness of members to complete tasks (Milburn et al., 2018).

Lack of Autonomy and Voice. The internal structure and culture of organizations play a noteworthy role in volunteer satisfaction. While volunteers comprehend the establishment and the need for hierarchy, there are times when the structure is recognized as restrictive. Many find the structures frustrating as they do not have the ability to make any decisions (Milburn et al., 2018).

Alienation and Cliques. Relationships are integral to any organization, especially nonprofits. In many instances, individuals joining these organizations, in addition to seeking a way to contribute to society, are pursuing a place to belong through social connections. However, there are numerous examples of volunteers feeling cynical, disconnected, and disenfranchised. These feelings are typically related to organizational cliques. For example, financial status and length of membership often creates a hierarchical status that leads to alienation (Milburn et al., 2018).

Disconnection Between Volunteer and Organization. Within nonprofit organizations there is often a disconnect between what motivated the volunteer to join the organization and the reality of his/her involvement. Upon officially entering the organization, members often feel disillusioned regarding established protocols and policies, as well as the financial approach to projects instead of a focus on community benefits. Additionally, tension has been observed in

relation to the evolution of values and traditions, and differences between older and younger generations (Milburn et al., 2018).

Lack of Faith in Leadership. Another factor relating to satisfaction revolves around feelings about organizational leadership. When leaders fail to properly address poor behavior displayed by members or fail to appropriately recognize or value the contributions of its members, it leads to a deterioration of trust. In such instances, the actions or lack of actions by leader's place volunteers in opposition with the organization (Milburn et al., 2018).

Other Factors. There are a variety of other factors that impact volunteer satisfaction. They include, but are not limited to the level of volunteers participation, policy conflicts, personality fits, opposition to membership presented by family and/or friends, opportunities for growth within the organization, challenging goals, and the viability of tasks. Additionally, when volunteers view the organization as unstructured and/or their tasks as busy work, they are likely to sever ties with the organization (Chatio & Akweongo, 2017; Milbourn et al., 2019; Young, 2016).

Cost of Volunteer Attrition

The ability to retain volunteers is cost beneficial to organizations. Volunteers who do not return to offer previously rendered services, represent significant expenses that are born by the organization. In the short-term, there is a loss of production and funding, which it hopes is retrievable from future volunteers. In the long-term, the organization must advertise and recruit new volunteers. Once on board, the organization must invest in training the volunteers. The time and finances required to acquire these volunteers and build their level of productivity is a timely and expensive process (Ambrosius, 2018).

While it is presumed that limited finances are expensed during this period, the time invested by volunteers to address the organizations needs are immense and possess value. In the business world, it is estimated that 6 to 9 months of salary is required to replace a salaried employee. In addition, 2 to 3 years are needed for the new employee to fabricate production heights similar to that of experienced co-workers (Merhar, 2019). Per estimates of the value of volunteer time, each hour directed towards identifying and training a new volunteer is worth approximately \$22.18. This figure extrapolated across 2 to 3 years displays the depth of such an investment.

Concepts

This section includes a theoretical belief that espouses the basic building blocks of leadership. It is a concept that is vital in all phases of nonprofit organizations. The concept proposes a philosophical view of leadership that reveals the manner in which leaders possesses the ability to enhance volunteers, as well as the organizations. Understanding this concept has served as a flagship of emerging approaches.

Leadership at All Levels

Mowat and McMahon (2019) share that a concept of leadership at all levels embodies a mandate for every leader to ensure a positive impact by enhancing the qualities of those in their sphere. It is a prototype that, regardless of title or experience, shows that individuals should act as if they own the organization. With this sense of ownership comes the responsibility to conceive ideas and make decisions. The process forms an environment that is framed around self-expression, self-organization, self-management, and accountability. In essence, the concept encourages untapped potential to be released throughout the organization.

Organizational success mandates leadership at all levels. Organizations thrive when they have individuals with the ideas, values, energy, and fortitude to perform the tasks that need to be done at every level. Such an environment requires leadership development. Meaning, the organization must deliberately and systematically cultivate a culture that expects and rewards leaders. It must provide autonomy that allows leaders to express their own points of view to motivate others into action. Through the concept, the organization must take every step to ensure that every leader is personally committed to developing other leaders. The concept exists as the most valuable and least appreciated asset of any organization.

Theories

A collection of unrelated theories related to the topic have been identified. Each theory guides organizations in discovering environmental realities rather than attaining organizational goals. They are rational types of abstract thinking that form a system of ideas to explain nonprofit organizations, volunteer motivations, and leadership styles, respectively. The suppositions offer enhanced insight into experiences at each level related to volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

Weisbrod's Theory

Between 1978 and 2008, Burton Weisbrod developed and enhanced a theory to explain the relative economic behavior of for-profit, government and nonprofit organizations, as well as the source and effect of increasing levels of commercialism in nonprofit organizations.

Weisbrod's Theory, also known as the Public Goods Theory, was the first economic theory that highlighted the role of nonprofit organizations. It purported that nonprofit organizations act as private producers of public goods. These goods are characterized by inclusion and cooperation, and not likely to be available on the market.

The purpose of the organizations is to satisfy a need. Governmental agencies provide public goods to local communities; however, they are not always capable of meeting public demand. As society becomes increasingly more culturally diverse, the population desires more diverse public goods. This demand creates a situation that government agencies are not well equipped to manage (Kingma, 2003). Lu (2020) indicates that government agencies are not structured to strategically adjust for changes in public demand. First, bureaucratic processes create challenges to governmental responses. Second, government decisions are made by politicians, who, in order to enhance their re-election chances, will support provisions that impact the most constituents. Meaning, there will not be sufficient supply to satisfy demand. Therefore, nonprofit organizations enter the environment to fill the specific need. As grassroots organizations based in local communities, these entities have a greater understanding of local needs.

Nonprofit organizations are staffed by volunteers and primarily supported through public sector funding (i.e., grants, private donations from corporations, and program fees), which are used to supplement goods that meet public demand. They are barred from sharing earnings with individuals who exercise control, members do not receive dividends and monetary benefits are not distributed. While these structural traits are characteristic of third sector, the only attribute not accounted for is altruism. While it is expected that volunteers perform based upon non-economic motivations, Weisbrod's Theory does not account for altruism. However, the theory is commonly praised for its wide acceptance across the economic sphere and its ability to justify institutional decisions in context of public shortages. On the other hand, its weakness is that it perceives conflict between the government and the third sector.

Theory of Planned Behavior

In 1985, Icek Ajzen tendered the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It arose from and was developed from Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). In TRA, when an individual's behavior is evaluated as positive (attitude), and the person believes that other people want him/her to perform the specific behavior (subjective norm), the desire (motivation), to perform the behavior will be enhanced. Under this theory, attitudes and subjective norms are highly correlated with behavioral intention, which is correlated with actual behavior.

Ajzen enriched the theory through the recognition that behavioral intention does not always precipitate actual behavior. That is, behavioral intention is not a sole determinant of behavior when an individual's command over behavior is incomplete. Therefore, TPB added a perceived behavioral control to TRA, which allowed for better predictions regarding actual behavior. Under this premise, perceived behavioral control denotes the point at which a person believes he/she can perform a specific behavior. Hence, the control is behavior or goal specific.

TPB suggests that people are more likely to attempt to act out specific behaviors when they feel it can be done successfully. It is a psychological theory that has been extrapolated across studies in beliefs, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behaviors in countless human fields (i.e., advertising, public relations, advertising campaigns, healthcare, sports management, and sustainability). However, within the sphere of volunteering, TPB is viewed through a telescope of attitude, subjective standards, and apparent behavioral controls. It forecasts the ability of volunteers to deploy certain behaviors at a specific time and place. As a result, planned behavior is framed around volunteer motivations and comprehension of individual attitudes (Ajina, 2019).

Implicit Followership Theories

According to Ford & Harding (2018), Implicit Followership Theories are lay concepts that define an individual's personal assumption regarding the traits and behaviors of followers. It offers a cognitive structure and outline regarding the traits and behaviors that distinguishes followers. It embodies the construction of individuals inner viewpoints regarding leadership in a specific cultural context and labels the cognitive structure of leader traits and abilities. Aligned with this labeling, the theory proceeds by describing the cognitive structure of volunteer characteristics and abilities.

Commonly applied to individuals in organizations, the theories explain assumptions made by individuals regarding traits and behaviors that define followers. The viewpoints influence relationships as leaders often equate followers to an unrealistic conceptual vision held in their minds. They then use this perspective to make judgement about followers, regardless of the persons actual performance.

Generally speaking, these theories do not view followers favorably. In an environment in which change is considered a constant, followers are often viewed as resistant to change. The theory views followers through three perspectives; conforming (i.e., compliant to leaderships blueprint), resistant (i.e., a refusal to conform to leadership demands), and dramaturgical (i.e., pretending to be a good follower through the use of various tactics). The proposition adds that followers frequently lack psychological resilience, prefer low levels of stimulation, possess short-term thinking, are cognitively rigid, and hesitant to denounce old habits. This description implies that these individuals have personal shortcomings. Therefore, it is the responsibility of leaders to lead various organizational tasks as they maintain the appropriate resilience, flexibility, innovation, and stimulation.

Servant Leadership Theory

The Servant Leadership Theory was developed by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970. The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (2021) states that his experiences led him to understand that ten specific characteristics (i.e., listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community), were necessary for such leadership. However, more important than the characteristics themselves is the manner in which they are applied during one's interactions with others.

Employing the ideals of servant leadership mandates an exhaustive understanding of the meaning of leadership, which is predominantly viewed as an act of service (Sedlmeyer & Dwyer, 2018). It is founded on the premise that being a good leader requires one to first be willing to serve others, which culminates from a desire to empathize from the perspective of others, to enhance their lives, and to witness their growth. These actions are inclined to exhibit increased engagement, more trust, and stronger relationships amongst team members.

Adding another layer of depth to the term is the acknowledgement of God's will. Regardless of the task, whether immense or diminutive, whether essential or insignificant, there must be recognition that it is being completed to the glory of God. To achieve this mindset, there must be unified sensibilities. According to Blanchard and Hodges (2003), "when the Heart, Head, Hands, and Habits are aligned, extraordinary levels of loyalty, trust, and productivity will result. When they are out of alignment, frustration, mistrust, and diminished long-term productivity are the result."

Performing acts of service requires a leader to commit his/her heart, head, hands, and habits. It evolves from an unconscious desire to perform acts that benefit others while ensuring

that everyone's voice is heard. It is a task that requires a leader to ignore self-interests, and a focus on power and recognition, in order to prepare others for future success. Once a leader's heart has been transformed to service, the feeling is transmitted to the head. The head, which contains the belief system, defines how a leader views their role and those that are served.

Through the commitment of a leader's mind is where others in the organization are provided a global picture of the organization and its future. Following the commitment of the leader's heart and head is physical work and the commitment of his/her hands. A leader's hands should not roam aimlessly without direction or be free of affliction. Rather, leaders must also toil to the glory of God. After the physical tasks have been completed, there is an expectation that the works will be repeated. It's not acceptable for a task to be completed once or twice in a certain manner. The spirit of the act must be continually applied. It must become a habit and professed way of life.

Situational Leadership Theory

The Situational Leadership Theory was initially introduced as the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership; however, it was renamed in the mid-1970s. It emerged from a combination of two theories of leadership (i.e., task and relationship behavior). Its fundamental principle is that there is not a single way to lead. Rather, effective leadership is task relevant and successful leaders are those who are able to adapt their style to one that followers are able and willing to follow. This style of leadership varies dependent upon the person and/or group that is being influenced, as well as the task, job, or function to be accomplished.

Wool et al. (2017) reveals that there are four styles of leadership that encompass the Situational Leadership Theory. Style 1, Telling, Directing or Guiding, is defined by the leader's use of moderate to high quantities of task behavior in conjunction with moderate to low

quantities relationship behavior. It is a short-term method that creates movement and is directed towards followers who possess limited experience/skills. Its goal is to identify signs of progress, which can be used to accelerate continual development. During the process, the flow of communication is from the leader to the follower.

Style 2, Selling, Coaching or Explaining, denotes a method that is high in task and relationship behaviors. It is intended to create buy-in and understanding of the leader. It is directed towards followers who have limited experience conducting the assigned task yet conveys confidence and motivation in response to leader-driven skill development. During the process, the leader dictates what, how, when, why and where of the project, as well as acknowledging the enthusiasm and commitment exhibited by the followers.

Style 3, Participating, Facilitating or Collaborating, references a follower driven method. As such, it is dependent upon high relationship behavior and low task behavior. The method is designed to develop alignment. When a follower is in the process of developing his/her skills, there may be some anxiety regarding completing the assigned tasks alone. On the other hand, if a follower has regressed, it is likely that the follower has lost commitment and/or motivation. In both scenarios, the leader must host discussions to identify the source of the issue and a reasonable solution. From the leader's perspective, the follower is capable of completing the necessary tasks, but requires some additional inspiration.

Style 4, Delegating, Empowering or Monitoring, is another follower driven method. It is denoted by low quantities of task and relationship behaviors. Its purpose is to enhance mastery of the acquired skills and create a sense of autonomy. The method is focused on followers who have substantial experience and committed to excellence. During the process, the flow of

communication is from the follower to the leader as the follower is clearly capable of performing the necessary tasks and is motivated to do so.

Collectively, the four styles iterate that leadership is situational and ever evolving. While a leader may thrive in one situation, it doesn't imply success in another setting. Leaders must procure a capacity to examine each situation, manage the environmental components, and apply necessary influences to achieve the identified goals. As such, leaders must be attentive, objective, and adaptable.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The Transformational Leadership Theory signifies the work performed by leaders to ascertain the need for change, develop a vision to inspire and guide followers through the process, and utilize committed followers to implement the plans. In essence, it is a process whereby followers are influenced by a leader to perform tasks beyond their professed capabilities. During the process, followers are provided autonomy over specific tasks, as well as the opportunity to make decisions regarding them, once trained. This autonomy inspires followers to achieve remarkable results.

The results of transformational leadership prompt constructive modifications to follower attitudes within the organization. Achieving this goal requires leaders to perform four distinct behaviors (i.e., the four I's). The four I's include inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The behaviors aid in enriching follower motivation, morale, and task performance through a variety of instruments. This includes, but is not limited to aligning the follower's sense of identity with a task and the organization; acting as a role model to inspire and increase follower interests in the assigned task; challenging followers to assume ownership of their work; comprehending the strengths and

weaknesses of the followers; and properly aligning followers with tasks that aid in enhancing their performance.

To understand transformational leadership, it is essential to appreciate the qualities that it offers to an organization. Transformational leaders are resilient in their abilities to adapt to different situations, share a cooperative consciousness, can self-manage themselves, and are rousing while leading a group of followers. The leadership style builds the commitment, involvement, loyalty, and performance levels of followers. As followers exert additional effort to display support of the leader, they emulate the leader to emotionally identify with him/her and preserve conformity without displacing any self-esteem.

Transformational leadership influences organizations to navigate change through the development of creative responses to issues (Bouwman et al., 2017). A result of this creativity is that followers develop proficiencies they would not have otherwise. The leadership style nurtures confidence and creativity that is evidenced by open communication, stimulation, fervor, emotional support, and empowerment through shared decision processes.

Related Studies

Numerous studies have been published in journals, magazines, websites, and government reports that address aspects of nonprofit organizations, volunteers, or leadership; however, there is far less research into the comprehensive framework of the impact leadership have on recruitment and retention efforts. The identified studies share details regarding research background and recent trends.

Volunteer Management in Faith-Based Organizations

The study reviews the capacity of faith-based organizations to satisfy their mission with volunteers at the center of their business operations and outcomes. It revealed a host of

challenges (i.e., values, mission, identity, social goals, outcomes, and ideological characteristics), that create difficulties in volunteer management. The research uncovered the importance of inspirational, tactful and nondemanding leaders as keys to retaining volunteers (Coleman, 2017).

Leadership Strategies to Improve Volunteer Retention

The study examines challenges experienced by leaders as they attempt to retain volunteers in organizations. The inability to maintain volunteers often results in nonprofit organizations that are unable to uphold sustainability plans due to the increased cost of providing quality services. Through the research, the researcher identifies transformational leadership as a tool to build collaborative relationships, motivate teams, and improve communication; all of which enhances volunteer retention (Glass, 2018).

Anticipated and Discovery Themes

The documented materials present multiple recurring themes. These ideas (i.e., the impact of leaders on volunteers and leadership qualifications), assist in developing insight regarding the researched problem. The themes will be used to guide segments of the research method and add pragmatic tools that support the identified data.

Impact of Leaders on Volunteers

Bauer & Lim (2019) indicate that the relationship between leaders and volunteers is critical to organizational operations. In fact, it is fundamental to organizational success. While the initial goal of leaders is to develop productive volunteers for the organization, they should also seek to extend relationships beyond the organization. There should be an attempt by leaders to learn about volunteers on a personal level including discovery of their likes, dislikes, passions, and etc.

When leaders authentically enjoy spending time, respect, and aid volunteers they are able to form high quality relationships that directly influence volunteer satisfaction, motivation, engagement, commitment, satisfaction, and retention. By fostering distinct relationships with volunteers, leaders develop volunteers who evolve into long-term supporters. They in turn will grow to form relationships with new members and identify new streams of funding. Hence, the relationships enhance the sustainability aspects of the organization.

Leadership Qualifications

Frequently, leaders in nonprofit organizations are volunteers. It is customary for there to not be a direct link between their vocation and the volunteer work performed. Yet, it is assumed that leaders possess all the required skills to lead these organizations and their members. This includes, but is not limited to the possession of cognitive competencies to develop a requisite mission and vision, the ability to satisfy organizational objectives, and the aptitude to guide and motivate fellow volunteers. However, while not their fault, leaders are rarely provided any formal training prior to ascending into their roles (De Clerck et al., 2019).

Training should be viewed as a required component of the leadership structure within organizations. It should encompass the needs of the specific organization and the age and abilities of its volunteers. To be effective, trainings should be divided into three sections; training orientation, refresher training that is dedicated to reminding leaders of their role in achieving the organizations mission, and team building sessions that gather volunteers to enhance morale and develop cohesion. Unfortunately, training materials regarding volunteer leadership in nonprofit or volunteer led organizations are either vastly lacking or outdated (Morrison et al., 2019).

Summary of the Literature Review

This literature review offers a comprehensive view of factors impacting volunteers in nonprofit organizations. It provides a framework for understanding many factors facing the organizations and volunteers, as well as the impact of leaders. Included in the framework are the parameters for understanding how these factors contribute to negative observations in the recruitment and retention of volunteers, as well as presenting complications to satisfying the mission of nonprofit organizations. Further research on the topic will yield discoveries that hold the key to enriching organizational operations. It will show that increased focus on the various elements of leadership will better equip organizations for sustained longevity.

Summary of Section 1 and Transition

Section 1 established the foundation for the study. Through the background, problem and purpose statements, nature of the study, research questions, and theoretical framework, the need for the study was validated. Analysis of the collected data will not only result in greater insight to the parameters of volunteerism, but it will also arm leaders with strategies that positively influence volunteers, while offering increased benefits to nonprofit organizations. The framework for apprehending this information will be dependent upon the actual project.

Section 2 will expand upon themes presented in Section 1. It will commence with a review of current literature illustrating the impact of leaders on volunteers in nonprofit organizations and differences observed due to faith. Then, the section will outline the design employed by the study. Included in the synopsis will be a framework for the role of the researcher and the selected methodology, participant recruitment, the applicable population and sampling technique, and data collection and analysis. The section will conclude with dialogue regarding the reliability and validity of the data.

SECTION 2. THE PROJECT

Researchers work to interpret their viewpoint of the world. Interpretation requires these individuals to take notice of the world around of them, assign meaning to their observations, and design a course of action to study the subject of interest. Progression in the research required the researcher to assess personal beliefs upon which to further the study. Therefore, researchers understand the behaviors and phenomenon of the world by understanding the perspectives of the internal resources.

This section commences with exploration of the role of the researcher. It explores steps that were taken to develop personal competencies, gather and evaluate data, present outcomes, and minimize personal biases. The steps required an understanding of the proposed study through the researcher's selected research methodology of a flexible design, qualitative method, and multiple case studies. The methodology offered practicality in learning about the general population as well as the study participants. The researcher used data collection tools that supported the methodology and purpose of the study. Once gathered, the data was stored, analyzed, and assessed for credibility. Establishing this credibility is vital as it reinforced the purpose of the proposed research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this proposed qualitative multiple case study was to expand comprehension, through interviews (Ataro, 2020), of the role leaders assume in developing measures that can be enacted to enhance organizational outcomes. Specifically, this proposed study identified the effect leaders have on the recruitment and retention rates of volunteers, thereby filling gaps in current research (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). First, the proposed study offered novel insight from the volunteer perspective. While the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005,

2010, 2013, 2016) has detailed declining rates of volunteerism during the past 18 years, there is limited information available that considers the role of leaders from this viewpoint. Second, this research derived from qualitative interviews across multiple case studies. Each case was constructed from discussions with volunteers who were serving in a nonprofit organization. The variation amongst entities, as well as volunteers, yielded an increased number of factors with which to assess the interactions between volunteers and leaders (Meyer et al., 2019). This was important, as Alfes et al. (2017) contend that most of the volunteering research has focused on a single organization. Third, participants were assembled from faith and non-faith-based organizations, as Butt et al. (2017) advised that such an analysis would offer greater insight into the ability of leaders to comprehend and direct volunteer motives. The collective findings sought to contribute to the identification of nonprofit strategies that aid in promoting diversity, molding organizational sustainability, and strengthening communities.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the person who conducts systematic investigations. As an investigator, the researcher performs independent and meticulous study of a specific topic to distinguish correlated facts and/or theories. This search for knowledge is concentrated on unearthing matters across a multitude of fields (i.e., sociology, medicine, psychology, science, etc.). It requires the researcher to be diligent and devoted and to think critically about a specific field of interest as the approach to unique circumstances, requisites, and dispositions contained in the research are customized (Peterson, 2019).

Expectations

A crucial component to be deciphered in qualitative research is the role assumed by the researcher. The primary focus was to gather information and contribute to the development of

knowledge regarding leadership in nonprofit organizations. This was achieved through the researcher's ability to capture the perspectives and feelings of volunteer participants. This process required the researcher to develop competencies in the chosen method, collect and analyze data, and present the research outcomes.

Developing Competence in Methods

Researchers are commonly not accustomed to conducting qualitative research. Therefore, a need exists to become familiar with and competent in the associated protocols. These protocols include, but are not limited to, describing the research while intently addressing areas of personal bias with potential participants, adhering to strategic approaches while conducting interviews, managing data in accordance with the research design, accurately documenting observations, and presenting unambiguous analysis and interpretation of the data.

The researcher implemented several steps to guide these competencies. First, regardless of previously acquired skills, the researcher accepted classification as a novice researcher until formally designated as skilled by a dissertation committee. Second, the researcher sought training opportunities to enhance research skills. The training consisted of practice interviews and training workshops associated with the actual design. Third, the researcher developed a training plan that identified each of the aforementioned tasks. Completing the planned tasks signaled a conventional level of competence (Mooney-Somers & Olsen, 2016).

Collecting and Analyzing Data

Upon acquiring competency in qualitative research, the researcher initiated the process of collecting and analyzing non-numerical data. An all-inclusive comprehension of the data from verbal testimonies, video presentations, and written statements aided the discovery of relevant details regarding the relationships between leaders and volunteers. Peterson (2019) proposed that

the ability to secure this information is dependent upon the researcher influencing participants to be unguarded as they divulge what may be personal and/or sensitive experiences. As such, caution was prudent as the researcher probed participant memories that may have resulted in volunteers reliving agonizing incidents. Therefore, ethical practices were followed during participant interactions to minimize harm and ensure participants were regarded respectfully.

In keeping with ethical practices, the researcher safeguarded recognizable demographic data from participants and anonymized the acquired data. Safeguarding this personal information called for utilization of specific mechanisms. The researcher was responsible for ensuring the mechanisms had been ethically endorsed by the research board and articulated to each participant. As the information was shared, the researcher thoughtfully sought to build trust with each volunteer.

First, the researcher assumed there was a participant stance of vulnerability. Under this scenario, the participants were knowingly vulnerable but contributed to the study due to a belief that they would significantly influence research outcomes. Second, the research displayed an attitude of goodwill toward participants. The volunteers' interpretations of the researcher's management regarding their well-being determined the degree to which information was shared. Third, voluntariness was assumed. Under this assumption, the researcher was unable to command trust; rather, it was an act of free will. Collectively, participant stance, goodwill, and voluntariness implied the importance of the researcher building trust with each participant (Kerasidou, 2017).

Presenting the Findings

Bush and Amechi (2019) contended that once the data has been collected and analyzed, the findings must be presented. The researcher effectively and succinctly organized

the information in a written format through a process that illustrated the various factors of the study. The organization was initiated through disclosure of the data collection process (i.e., research volunteers and sampling techniques, location of the research and the approval method, and the collection process and timeline). Acknowledgement of these steps simplified the information collection process and ensured the data was applicable to the research questions.

The researcher examined details of the proposed study to check whether the data collection procedures were appropriate. The details revealed reasons for participant selection and the corresponding locations of the nonprofit organizations. Next, the data clarified how the procedures were sufficient for illuminating the interactions between leaders and volunteers in nonprofit organizations. In doing so, information regarding the identified participants and research location aligned with the identified problem. Finally, the researcher developed the narrative of how the selected volunteers in central North Carolina were effective in generating information to address the research questions.

Bracketing Personal Bias

Bias is considered a source of error in research. It enters the study through the researcher and is cultivated from the cumulation of information (i.e., personal experiences, the literature review, and strategies regarding the study). Bias surfaces as an issue when the researcher knowingly or unknowingly conveys the information to research participants. When conveyed, it results in distorted research (i.e., confirmation bias). For example, when bias enters the study, the researcher will only appreciate what they are inclined to visualize when analyzing the data (Galdas, 2017).

Nilson (2016) asserted that combating bias requires the researcher to monitor and reduce the tendency to prematurely interpret information. Several techniques were identified to address this issue. First, the researcher was reflective prior to and during the research process. This reflection allowed the researcher to explain context and understanding to readers while reducing impulsive analysis. Second, rather than ignoring personal biases, the researcher articulated his subjectivities. Disclosure of the researcher's viewpoint allows the reader to grasp the filters more clearly through which inquiries were made, information gathered and analyzed, and findings revealed.

Summary of the Role of the Researcher

Effective and ethical qualitative research can only be undertaken when the researcher maintains the appropriate aptitude, experience, and competence. Upon recognition of these characteristics, the researcher presented a case in which information was interpreted based on supporting documentation that allowed readers to cultivate their own conclusions. While these conclusions may be influenced by biases, the viewpoints of the researcher were unambiguously communicated for complete disclosure. Therefore, the conclusions will lead readers to develop generalizations that align with their personal experiences.

Research Methodology

The proposed study was conducted with a flexible design using a qualitative method; specifically, a multiple case study design was used. This methodology was essential to the research and established a conduit through which the information was examined. The selected design and method offered specific techniques to detect, select, manage, and assess the collected data. Primarily, the methodology will permit readers to critically examine the legitimacy and dependability of the proposed study (Creswell, 2014). As such, the methodology was appropriate

for determining the impact that leaders have on the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

Flexible Design

Research was conducted along a flexible design. This form of investigation encouraged feedback that has the potential to alter how volunteers and leaders in nonprofit organizations are viewed. In doing so, three factors supported the design as appropriate for this study. First, the researcher used the viewpoints of volunteers to characterize the culture and social constructs of non-profit organizations. This was achieved through autonomy during the data collection stage that was used to interpret volunteer thoughts and feelings. Second, flexible designs uniquely managed variables (i.e., culture) that were not quantitatively measurable. This factor was also realized through the designed autonomy. Third, pre-existing theories did not exist or were not entirely relevant to the designated research (Williams, 2019).

The proposed study was rooted in information shared from a distinct group of individuals. Thus, the information was fundamentally limited; however, a flexible design reduced standardized parameters and increased accountability. In doing so, it enhanced the research elasticity without minimizing the designated plans. The design offered greater clarity and opportunities to evaluate whether a shift to another methodology was appropriate. Whether or not to shift was determined by volunteer responses during research inquiries.

Grasping the value of flexible designs requires an acknowledgement that flexibility does not equate to a lack of a planning. Rather, the researcher devises the plan to be prepared to modify perspectives, if and when needed. The change or changes are rooted in observations made during the research and the ability to adapt to the path of the information. Inclusive of the

adaptation was a perceived change in focus, research questions and relevant theories. Therefore, flexibility merited and substantiated the use of qualitative methods.

Qualitative Method

Qualitative research methods are frequently criticized as not easily generalizable, challenging to use to construct quantitative predictions, not applicable to hypotheses, possessing less credibility, and more easily influenced by personal biases. However, Creswell (2013) asserted that qualitative research methods are invaluable tools in the exploration of a phenomenon or when endeavoring to address human experiences. These methods are renowned as a form of inquiry that seeks to understand social issues through holistic views formed by personal expressions. The expressions are formed by language, which is a medium through which human experiences are understood. Since volunteers appreciate leaders through language and symbols, this method was a suitable selection for this research. Additionally, it is a technique that illuminates the process by which value is defined by volunteers (Peterson, 2019).

Qualitative research methods are contingent upon direct observations. As a result, volunteer interviews, questionnaires, reflections, and recordings served as the source for observations. Viewpoints gathered from these volunteer recollections of nonprofit environments yielded rich narratives of the phenomenon. Once harvested, the observations were critical to deciphering the consequences of leadership actions. Peck and Mummery (2018) added that the personal observations are fundamental to unearthing the significance of volunteer recruitment and retention. Therefore, qualitative research presents vast opportunities to understand volunteer realities (Martens, 2019).

As qualitative methods are devoted to appreciating social realities, qualitative data (i.e., interview and questionnaire responses, reflections, and recordings) is generally nonnumerical. In

capturing a multitude of these personal attitudes and perceptions through volunteer accounts, there is an enhanced ability to view leaders and nonprofit organizations through the eyes of volunteers. It is a subjective, multidimensional process that offers multiple and sometimes diverging definitions. Understanding the definitions is likely to require the research to “zoom out” from the individual experiences. In doing so, there will be a capacity to detect the general themes expressed by the volunteers (Peck & Mummery, 2018).

The assessment of each definition and synthesis of themes required progression through the qualitative method. Guiding the progression were the assumptions and conceptual framework of the research. The two elements of the strategy provided context to better grasp the issue. This alignment of strategy and method resulted in increased analytical inferences. To further enrich this alignment, the qualitative research was structured along a constructivist paradigm.

Constructivist Paradigm

Qualitative research methods can be developed across various paradigms. The paradigms represent a qualitative strength as they are flexible and permit the researcher to align with different approaches. The purpose of a constructivist paradigm is to understand social constructs through historical and cultural norms. As such, this study explored the perspective of multiple volunteers to better understand how interactions with leaders impacted their recruitment and/or retention with a nonprofit organization. Through this paradigm, the researcher made broad, open-ended inquiries that were fixated on the context of volunteer interactions, as well as the way personal backgrounds molded the research. It was an iterative process. Therefore, the research was intent on the reconstruction of the numerous ways that volunteers ascribe meaning in their interactions with leaders (Peck & Mummery, 2018; Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016).

Multiple Case Study Design

Deciphering the importance of interactions between leaders and volunteers in nonprofit organizations lends itself to the reconstruction of the phenomenon within real-world contexts (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). This reconstruction is imperative as there are no unique real-world scenarios that function free of human mental activity and symbolic language. Within the nonprofit arena, there exists recurring communal exchanges between activity and language. Ascribing meaning to the interactions is a matter of interpretation that frames volunteer perspectives (Hans-Gerd, 2017).

The ability to interpret this information is a matter that case studies are uniquely equipped to address, as they employ techniques that tolerate nuanced assessments of reality. Within the boundaries of nonprofit organizations, a case study approach will generate a universal view of leadership and volunteer exchanges by focusing on two issues; recruitment and retention. This focus presented enhanced clarity regarding the causes of recruitment and retention problems, instead of looking at the frequency of the issue. As such, there exists an opportunity to examine the perspectives of all relevant groups. It was an approach that is superior to other approaches since human behavior is not neatly governed by rule. Likewise, there are predictive theories available that adequately distinguish social science. In fact, more in social science discoveries are constructed from case study findings than from data applied to large groups (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Flyvbjerg (2006) expounded that while case studies may offer information that supports existing theories or gives way to new discoveries, they frequently lack method reliability and/or fail to provide a foundation for generalizing the findings. Therefore, this research utilized a multiple case study approach. A multiple case study approach allowed for a broader exploration

of the research question. The design presented increased opportunities to grasp the similarities and differences in volunteer experiences, as well as the behavioral conditions that support their personal accounts (Brink, 2018).

The ability to replicate the findings across multiple cases strengthened the validity of the research as it corroborated volunteer responses while enhancing the comprehension of overall findings (Ridder, 2016). It depicted holistic and in-depth information that provided greater insight than quantitative methods would have. Therefore, this research consisted of three case studies (i.e., individuals who are actively volunteering in nonprofit organizations that are not predicated on faith, individuals who previously volunteered in nonprofit organizations that are not predicated on faith, and individuals who are or have previously volunteered through faith-based organizations). While the major benefit of a multiple case study approach is the themes that arise from multiple perspectives, the primary focus remained the determination of how leaders can better use their skills with volunteers for the betterment of nonprofit organizations.

Methods for Triangulation

Significant emphasis in case study research is dedicated to triangulation. Triangulation tests for consistency and improves reliability of the data, analysis, and findings. There were several elements that comprised triangulation including, but not limited to, using numerous data sources, and employing multiple data collection techniques. Triangulation involved gathering data, identifying, and coding themes, and comparing them through various data sources (Peterson, 2019).

By utilizing a multiple case study approach, the data was analyzed separately to attain a nuanced view of the phenomenon by determining how and why a specific issue occurs. Having multiple case studies contributed to diminishing possible effects of the researcher's bias.

Thereby, the triangulation strengthened the credibility of the findings. Interviews and questionnaires were fused into the data collection processes. The dual approach formulated uniformity in the responses while developing constructs and relationships that were magnified within distinct parameters. Once complete, replication was exhibited that permitted each case to be compared (Hans-Gerd, 2017; Peterson, 2019).

Johnson et al. (2017) added that the ability to acquire information from multiple sources across various settings and times is vital to data collection. Multiple sources and information gathering processes offer compound perspectives, which incorporate diversity. Therefore, analyzing data per volunteer-specific scenarios ascertained the manner by which the interactions impact recruitment and retention outcomes. Included in the analysis was the detection of variations in leadership practices and volunteer motivations. Variations across the practices and motivations shed insight into influences on commitment levels.

Summary of Research Methodology

Research into the constructs of nonprofit organizations and the cultural parameters that regulate the interactions between leaders and volunteers entails a methodology that is accommodating to exploration processes that may need to be altered, is based on human experiences, and utilizes language and symbols to understand why certain incidents occur. As such, a flexible design with a qualitative method and multiple case study approach was employed. This methodology generated themes capable of addressing the research questions. Through analysis of the interview responses, support of current theories offered greater insight into leadership impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Participants

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to examine the ways leaders impact volunteer recruitment and retention within nonprofit organizations, as well as to ascertain differences when volunteers operate from a place of faith. It required input from individuals (i.e., participants), who voluntarily contributed their time and experiences. The participants were crucial to the unearthing and development of all discoveries as the research focused primarily on their experiences. Therefore, participant selection was based upon a distinct set of criteria that aligned with the subject.

The ability to utilize multiple sources with firsthand knowledge of the topic while acquiring information strengthened the validity of the research. Therefore, mandatory selection criteria were that participants were able to demonstrate the service they rendered to enhance conditions in the communities they resided. Each had volunteered in a nonprofit organization within the past 5 years. The volunteerism of these individuals had to be recognized as service to organizations in central North Carolina that were designated as a charitable, social welfare or faith-based institution by the IRS.

North Carolina offers a rich platform from which to conduct this research. There are approximately 126,326 nonprofit organizations dispersed throughout the state. These organizations include animal shelters, clinics, eldercare centers, food banks, museums, places of worship, and more (North Carolina Center for Nonprofits, 2021). Data regarding nonprofit organizations in North Carolina indicated that the largest segment of this group was labeled as faith-based (i.e., 28.7%). It further detailed that 21.8% of the organizations consisted of sport, hobby, cultural, or art groups; 12.5% were educational or youth service associations; 3.8% were civic, political, or professional or international organizations; 2.6% were hospital or other health-

related institutions; 1.6% were environmental or animal-care entities; 1.6% were public safety organizations; and the final 23.1% were categorized as other (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2018).

These organizations, regardless of their respective missions, are essential to communities throughout the state. While enhancing the lives of numerous individuals, the organizations offer countless opportunities for volunteer participation. The opportunities result in equally beneficial acts to the organization. Table 5, North Carolina Volunteer Data, displays information from the United States Census Bureau (2020) and Corporation for National and Community Service (2016) that revealed the impact of volunteers within the organizations.

Table 5.

North Carolina Volunteer Data

Demographic	North Carolina
Total residents	10.4 million
Volunteers	2.0 million
Percentage of residents	25.8%
Service per volunteer (in hours)	29.8
Service per all volunteers (in hours)	230.63 million
Value of service	\$5.5 billion
Percent of volunteers who donate to charities	80.9%

North Carolina is recognized as the tenth most-populated state in the United States. This classification is supported by 10.4 million residents who reside in its Coastal, Piedmont, and Mountain Regions. Due to the number of residents, the state has a potentially large pool of volunteers from which to recruit for community efforts. As of 2015, the state estimated that 25.8% of its residents contributed to the efforts of nonprofit organizations. Through these volunteer efforts, the organizations were the recipients of more than 230 million hours of free

service, valued at \$5.5 billion. Furthermore, in addition to the time donated, more than 80% of volunteers financially contributed to the missions of these organizations. In fact, 47.8% contribute at least \$25 to more than one charity.

Population and Sampling

Population and sampling techniques associated with the study are integral to the discovery of new and/or supporting themes. However, the population germane to guiding this study was not easily counted. Therefore, government data was used to define a comprehensive assembly of individuals and their characteristics. These characteristics distinguished the volunteers from other types of volunteers. During the process, sampling denoted that participation from the entire population was not practical. Rather, the ability to select qualities of a proportional section of the population expedited the collection of data and promoted findings that could be used to draw widespread conclusions.

Population

Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010) indicated it is often desirable to target a population based upon geographical boundaries. Aligned with this belief, the focus of this research was narrowed to the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The Piedmont, which means foot of the mountain, is bordered by the coastal region to the right and the mountain region to the left. The North Carolina Center for Nonprofits (2021) highlighted that the area is comprised of 48 counties in the center of the state. The counties include the largest and most populated cities (e.g., Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, and Raleigh) in the state. To this point, 56% (i.e., 5.8 million people) of the state's population reside in the Piedmont region.

Generally, localities with larger populations possess greater resources (e.g., an increased number of nonprofit organizations). North Carolina presents an accurate depiction of this

assessment, as the organizations are not evenly distributed across the state. First, the Charlotte, Durham, and Raleigh areas combined have more nonprofit organizations (more than 5,500) than the other regions. For comparison, northeastern North Carolina, which is located in the coastal region, has the fewest nonprofit organizations (400). Second, a number of the cities in the Piedmont region (e.g., Asheville, Chapel Hill, Durham, and Winston-Salem) maintain at least 10 nonprofit organizations for every 10,000 residents. Third, employment and spending for nonprofits is greater in the Piedmont region than in either the coastal or mountain regions (North Carolina Center for Nonprofits, 2021).

Based on the population and number of nonprofit organizations, there is an abundance of capable volunteers, as well as organizations for them to select, across the Piedmont Region. However, residents in this area are very specific regarding how they prefer to donate their time. It has been theorized that 42% of volunteers in the region volunteer through faith-based organizations. Next on the list are educational or youth programs at 21%; social or community service entities at 14%; hospitals or other health-related organizations at 8%; civic, political, professional, or international groups at 5%; sports, hobby, cultural or arts associations at 4%, and other nonprofit organizations at 4% (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2016).

Further narrowing parameters for each research participant was their volunteer status. Within the identified demographics, the proposed study participants were segregated into three groups. The first group consisted of current volunteers. These individuals were characterized by individuals who had formally volunteered within an organization for at least 1 year. The second group was comprised of individuals who were not actively volunteering. Though not currently active, these individuals possessed volunteer experiences from the past 5 years. The final group

included individuals who had volunteered in faith-based organizations. This grouping included both active and non-active volunteers.

Sampling

Sampling is the process for identifying individuals who will participate in the study. The selected techniques for this proposed study were intimately aligned with the essence of the population and concentrated on the research. They were critical as the procedures ensured that an accurate reflection of the population had been accessed. Additionally, the selected sampling techniques identified samples that formulated assessments that promoted general inferences (Turner, 2020).

Sampling Method. The sample was amassed through two non-probability sampling methods (e.g., purposive and snowball sampling). Acknowledgment of the sampling methods engaged were essential to defining the research. These methods, in conjunction with a multiple case study approach, created challenges related to a relatively small sample size because there might be elements of the population that did not have a possibility of selection or that had a probability of selection that was impossible to determine. As such, the sample was not intended to capture every element of the population. Therefore, it was more likely to generate biases and restrict study generalization.

Despite the recognized methodological characteristics, sampling was performed in a manner that was feasible and sought to minimize the stated concerns. This was achieved through a sample that assumed representativeness. In other words, the sample was as reflective of the actual population as strategically conceivable. This was accomplished through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling has been recommended for sampling for multiple case studies. It is utilized when a researcher seeks specific attributes, and its benefits lie in its ability to capture

the perspective of individuals who possess specific characteristics that are desired for the study. Under this scenario, the selected individuals have preserved a wealth of knowledge regarding the research (Turner, 2020).

The ability to certify the participation of knowledgeable participants aids the legitimacy of the study. By selecting the cases, volunteers, and correlating documents within the case, purposeful sampling offers greater opportunities to focus on a prescribed phenomenon. Detecting and understanding these phenomena was realized through exploration of information-rich cases, thereby offering greater insight into issues that were central to the research (Burkholder et al., 2019).

In addition to purposive sampling, snowball sampling was used to support the targeted approach. Snowball sampling, also known as network sampling, is a recruitment tool that discovers research participants through social networks. In this sampling method, the researcher collects data from participants known to the researcher. At the conclusion of the process, the researcher requests the contact information of others who possess similar experiences and may be willing to share their perspective. In essence, it is a referral that allows the researcher to concentrate on individuals with specific characteristics (Turner, 2020).

Due to the characteristics, the sampling was stratified, meaning it sought to discover volunteers with specific attributes (gender, ethnicity, religion, educational attainment, and employment status). As the techniques were repeated, it was assumed that saturation was achieved. Therefore, the use of snowball sampling offered several benefits; it was expedient in detecting rare or hidden populations who were difficult to identify or contact, it was convenient, and it closely reflected the population as it mirrored the various subgroups of the population (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010; Turner, 2020).

Sample Frame. Within the chosen sample will exist a sample frame. It will define the actual set of units from which the sample is selected. At its core, it is a population list that articulates the researcher's interest. This research employed a constructed frame in which indirect methods were used to supplement the frame (Wilmont, 2005). This was accomplished via characteristics of the research that selected distinct types of individuals, per demographics, to be selected and studied.

There are various factors that can be denoted as units within a study. Table 1, Volunteer Demographics, depicts the statistical information by which volunteers in the study were selected. This information demonstrates the likelihood of individuals, of various groups, to donate their time and efforts to nonprofit organizations. Based on this national data, the units of focus were constructed on gender, age, ethnicity, education level, and work status.

Where possible, the inverse of national demographic ratios was used to determine study samples. Per analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) data, a volunteer in nonprofit organization is likely to be an educated Caucasian female parent between the age of 35 and 44 who is employed part-time and volunteers through a religious entity. Therefore, while individuals composing these characteristics were included in the proposed study, proportional emphasis was placed on those who do not meet these criteria.

The sampling process concentrated on specific demographics. This focus included ensuring there was representation from individuals who are male, are less than 35 and more than 64 years of age, are classified as ethnic minorities, possess at least a bachelor's degree, and maintain full-time employment. The approach enhanced the likelihood of diversification and secure viewpoints from those with lower levels of volunteerism; however, regardless of the sample frame, the intent was to realize saturation across the responses.

Sample and Sample Size. The sample size is the total number of participants who are selected to participate in the study. Sample sizes are commonly rather small in case studies. However, this element is optimal for maximizing the attainment of a well-rounded cluster of information that results in data saturation, meaning closure is attained as new data only exhibits redundant information and the research provides significant evidence associated with the phenomenon (Burkholder et al., 2019).

The central standard of the research was the availability of enough comprehensive information from which to ascertain patterns, categories, and the study phenomenon. A benefit of this study were the volunteers. Their unique experiences in nonprofit organizations presented samples and cases that were abundant and unambiguous. Due to these factors, the sample was projected to include 15 volunteers. The volunteers were evenly distributed (i.e., 5), across the three case studies to better focus and shape discussions. Following a review of the findings and analysis of the data, a determination was made whether data saturation had occurred, and data sampling could be concluded (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Any accomplishments experienced in relation to the sample and sample size was directly attributable to sample access. Gaining access to study participants was rooted in personal relationships. The foundation of this researcher-participant relationship was open and honest communication. This was exhibited when responding to questions regarding the research and discussions about associations with other participants and/or respective organizations. Over time, the openness and honesty resulted in trustworthiness. Getting to this point required two tactics. First, it necessitated a prolonged engagement. Time was taken to build productive relationships as they were a critical research strategy. Second, emphasis was placed on the significance of participant contributions. The participants were led to understand that their experiences and

ability to convey their personal perspective has value. In essence, participant access was fostered through continual acts of respect, expressions of dependence on what they had to offer, and acknowledgement of their time and effort (Shenton & Hayter, 2004; Williams, 2019; Yacob-Haliso, 2019).

Summary of Population and Sampling

Population and sampling are critical components to research methodologies and discoveries. The population for this study encompassed every individual in central North Carolina who had donated their time to a nonprofit organization. The knowledge acquired by these volunteers can address concerns regarding leadership influence on recruitment and retention efforts. Therefore, engaging non-probability sampling techniques that can access these experiences to convert them to generalizable phenomena or new philosophical constructions is invaluable to the research. In identifying 15 participants through purposeful and snowball sampling, data saturation was anticipated.

Data Collection and Organization

Access to data promotes opportunities for analysis; however, access to quality data enhances the capacity to reach informed conclusions based on the analysis. The ability to acquire this data involves specific processes. Qualitative data entails an exploratory process that is intent on gaining access to comprehending the reasons for various incidents. The information is non-numerical and cannot be quantified. Additionally, since the data lacks definition and measurability, largely unstructured data collection methods are used to discover emotional responses (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Data Collection Plan

The primarily unstructured nature of the collection process does not infer a lack of activities undertaken to confine the methods. Magpi, a leader of data collection and visualization tools that support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and Abbott Laboratories, asserted that the collection process should envelop four phases. The phases include identification of collection tools, documentation of objectives and protocols, collection of the data, and processing and storage of the data.

Identification of Data Collection Tools

Prior to initiating collection protocols, a determination should be made regarding the tools that will be utilized. This study employed forms that contribute to encapsulating the information. The forms contained various fields that allowed the information to be recorded. These fields included, but were not limited to, checkboxes, free-text boxes, and coded translations. As the research matured, the process ensured a systematic framework that offered logic and limited interpretation.

Documenting the Objectives and Protocols

Once the system for collection has been decided, it is essential to define the associated objectives and protocols. Determining this aim assisted in shaping the structure of the study and established its boundaries (Bengtsson, 2016). This phase was critical to ensuring quality and control during the collection process. It reduced subjectivity during the analysis process while protecting the integrity of the data and standardizing approaches to perform the research.

Collection of Data

After defining the objectives and protocols of the plan, data collection is performed. Verbal and nonverbal communications conducted between the researcher and participants were

instrumental in shaping the collection of data as well as defining the findings. It was important that the collection of data was appropriately designed for the phenomenon that was researched (Bengtsson, 2016). Therefore, data collection for this study was conducted through direct approaches.

Direct Approach. A direct approach was suitable for this research as it sought to understand the attitudes, assumptions, and feelings of volunteers. It utilized process efficiencies to uncover details regarding personal opinions and beliefs as well as behaviors. However, it was important to note that the approach accepted that the volunteer statements may or may not align with actual behaviors or motivations. As such, multiple direct approach techniques were employed. The primary technique was interviews, while questionnaires and member checking were used as secondary techniques to triangulate the research.

Interviews. Barrett and Twycross (2018) contended that interviews are the most direct technique for gathering qualitative data. Interviews in this study were conducted through a virtual platform (e.g., Zoom). The platform theoretically replicated face-to-face interviews while eliminating many of the in-person logistics. Face-to-face and/or telephone interactions were utilized in instances where participant(s) did not have access to the chosen virtual platform (Heath et al., 2018).

Regardless of the medium, each interview maintained the same structure. Each interview question was semi-structured. There existed a set of predetermined questions that addressed central aspects of leadership impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. However, there was the liberty to deviate from the semi-structured questions and allow participants the opportunity to discuss or share information from a personal perspective (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

The design of the interviews was very specific. First, the focus of the inquiries was to eliminate leading questions and nonverbal signals. This aspect of the design was expected to reduce instances in which the participants were influenced. Second, an interview schedule was developed prior to the initiation of the collection of data. The schedule ensured that gaps were strategically allocated breaks that provided opportunities for revisions that ensured all key issues were addressed (Barrett & Twycross, 2018).

Questionnaire. Braun et al., (2020) indicated that questionnaires are an instrument used to collect data through a sequence of questions and prompts that are administered to research participants. The questionnaires explored each volunteer's experience regarding social situations in nonprofit organizations. Included in the exploration were inquiries into the role that leaders have in stimulating recruitment and retention within the organizations.

The questionnaire was composed of fixed-alternative questions. The fixed-alternative questions proposed one or several possible responses for volunteers to select in reference to the inquiry. The questions were designed to address the nature and scope of the research. Thus, there was a highly structured approach. While the technique may not have allowed the volunteers to completely express themselves, it presented opportunities for statistical analysis.

Member Checking. Immediately following each interview, time was reserved to notate details about the discussions while they remained vivid and fresh. The notes acted as postscripts that identified first impressions and addressed a host of topics (i.e., appearance of the volunteer, his/her disposition, and motivation to be interviewed; the use of gestures, non-verbal signals, and eye contact; volunteer interaction during the interview; difficult phases; duration of the

interview; and the three main points ascertained from the participant). Once complete, focus transitioned to the recordings.

Each of the recorded interviews was transcribed. The virtual interviews were transcribed via digital software while telephone and face-to-face interviews were transcribed manually. Transcription of the data, in conjunction with the postscript, provided the researcher an opportunity to review the process, adjust interview questions, and inquire about previously silent aspects of the phenomenon. As a direct result of this progression, if the researcher was inclined, follow-up interviews were conducted with participants to validate previous responses and/or further delve into new topics that may have been raised.

Instruments

Research instruments are used to collect, measure, and analyze data. The instruments allow researchers to gather information while in close proximity to and speaking directly to participants. It utilizes natural settings to understand the reasoning and complex meanings from the participants. Personal encounters allowed the researcher to genuinely appreciate volunteer experiences by way of the research parameters. This study employed two instruments to support the research.

Interview Guide. The interview guide highlighted topics to be covered during the study. It directed the focus of each interview while ensuring the collection of relevant information. The document used thoughtful, probing questions that steered the discussions. However, since the interviews were semi-structured, the guide exhibited flexibility that allowed the researcher to

make additional inquiries based on individual replies (Adosi, 2020). The interactive discussions were formulated for a duration of 30 to 90 minutes (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Appendix B, Interview Questions for Nonprofit Volunteers, displays a guide developed by Senses-Ozyurt and Villicana-Reyna (2016) that was modified and adapted to fit this study. The semi-structured guide consisted of 15 questions that were divided into three sections based on theory.

The interviews were based on past and present experiences of the volunteers. The sessions were initiated and concluded with general inquiries into the organization and how each participant was able to overcome the complexities of life in order to volunteer. Sandwiched between the general inquiries were two topics. There was a focus on nonprofit leaders and their impact on volunteers. It affirmed the skills utilized to influence others positively or negatively. Then, progression through the leadership questions led to discussions about faith. The topic examined how aspects of faith influenced the organization as well as its leaders and volunteers.

Questionnaire Form. Questionnaires measure the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of participants. They are not used to correct answers; rather, they are designed to extract personal viewpoints regarding the topic. Ensuring that questionnaire responses reflect the actual knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of the participants required the researcher to ask the appropriate questions in an acceptable fashion. This was strategically achieved through the use or adaptation of a previously certified questionnaire (Rubinfeld, 2004).

Appendix A, Nonprofit Volunteer Questionnaire, is an amalgamation of two questionnaires that were revised and adapted to fit this research. The form contains amendments to documents previously presented by Senses-Ozyurt and Villicana-Reyna (2016) and Mason (2016), which were divided into six sections. The sections were segmented per volunteer

demographics, general experiences, motivations, types of work performed, interactions with leadership, and faith.

The first section asked about the demographic information of each participant. The information was used to statistically display responses by specific classifications. The second section assembled general information relating to each participant. It sought to detail the characteristics of each volunteers' experiences. The third section attempted to identify individual motivations for volunteering. It illustrated the factors that led the individuals to donate or to continue to donate their time. The fourth section made inquiries into the work previously performed by the volunteers. The responses to these questions displayed the level of satisfaction maintained by each participant. The fifth section focused on the participants' interactions with their leaders. The section specifically addressed viewpoints held regarding leadership functions and decisions. The sixth section addressed the various levels of faith. It pursued comprehension of volunteer expectations in relation to the role that faith should have within nonprofit work.

Processing and Storing the Data

Upon collecting the data, it was necessary to ensure that it was safely stored. Storage included but was not limited to encryption of volunteer information. The confidential safeguarding of this information was a crucial feature of the collection process. The need to preserve the data was vital as there were instances where it may have been necessary to review and evaluate it. Creswell and Poth (2018) highlighted several principles that should be used to process and store data. They included creating backup copies of computer files, utilizing high quality recording devices, developing a master list of the data collected, protecting the anonymity of study participants by masking personal information, and designing a data collection matrix to visually identify information in the study.

Data Organization Plan

For the collected data to be effective, it must be organized. Unorganized data lacks a predefined model and/or is not structured in a predefined manner. Additionally, it often results in researcher disorientation due to an abundance of written and oral responses. To address this matter, data in this study was organized along multiple paths. This organization enhanced efficiency in analysis.

The research was documented per study parameters. All the information associated with the research was saved on a personal computer and backed up on a storage device. Within the file, a folder was created to represent each of the case studies. The folders were labeled and coded according to the parameters of each case study. For example, the case that comprises active volunteers was marked C1, while those that comprised non-active and faith-based volunteers were displayed as C2 and C3, respectively.

Once the case folders were structured, focus shifted to the volunteers. The volunteers were classified according to their experiences. Each possessed a folder within the relevant case study folder. Once complete, the name of each individual was de-identified and assigned a participant code. For example, the first volunteer interviewed in the case study that comprised active volunteers was recognized as C1V1.

The participant folder for each volunteer was composed of four types of data. First, each folder contained a PDF file of the volunteer's completed questionnaire. Second, each interview was recorded, and the audio file of the recording was saved to the folder of the respective volunteer. Third, the complete transcription of each volunteer interview was placed in the associated files. Fourth, the postscript, which summarized the researcher's perspective of each interview, was saved to the appropriate folder.

Finally, a folder was designed to hold summarizations of the data. The folder contained many items; however, the principal file was the spreadsheet that logged responses to questions contained in each questionnaire and interview. The data in the spreadsheet was organized by question. This spreadsheet displayed comprehensive data that increased efficiencies in analysis.

The aforementioned plan aligned with recommendations from Creswell and Poth (2018). The authors exposed the importance of researchers making organizational decisions early in the research process as they directly impact analysis. As such, the steps to organize this research was validated through Creswell and Poth's discussion of digital storage files, file naming system, and a searchable master spreadsheet.

Summary of Data Collection and Organization

This study utilized proven methods to collect and organize data. The instruments employed to accumulate the information included questionnaires and interviews. These instruments mirrored those of previous studies but were adapted to align with the identification of impact that leaders have on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. The collected non-numerical information was stored on an electronic file. The storage process grew, where specific files for specific participants were labeled and saved to specific folders. Satisfying these tasks set the stage for efficient data analysis practices.

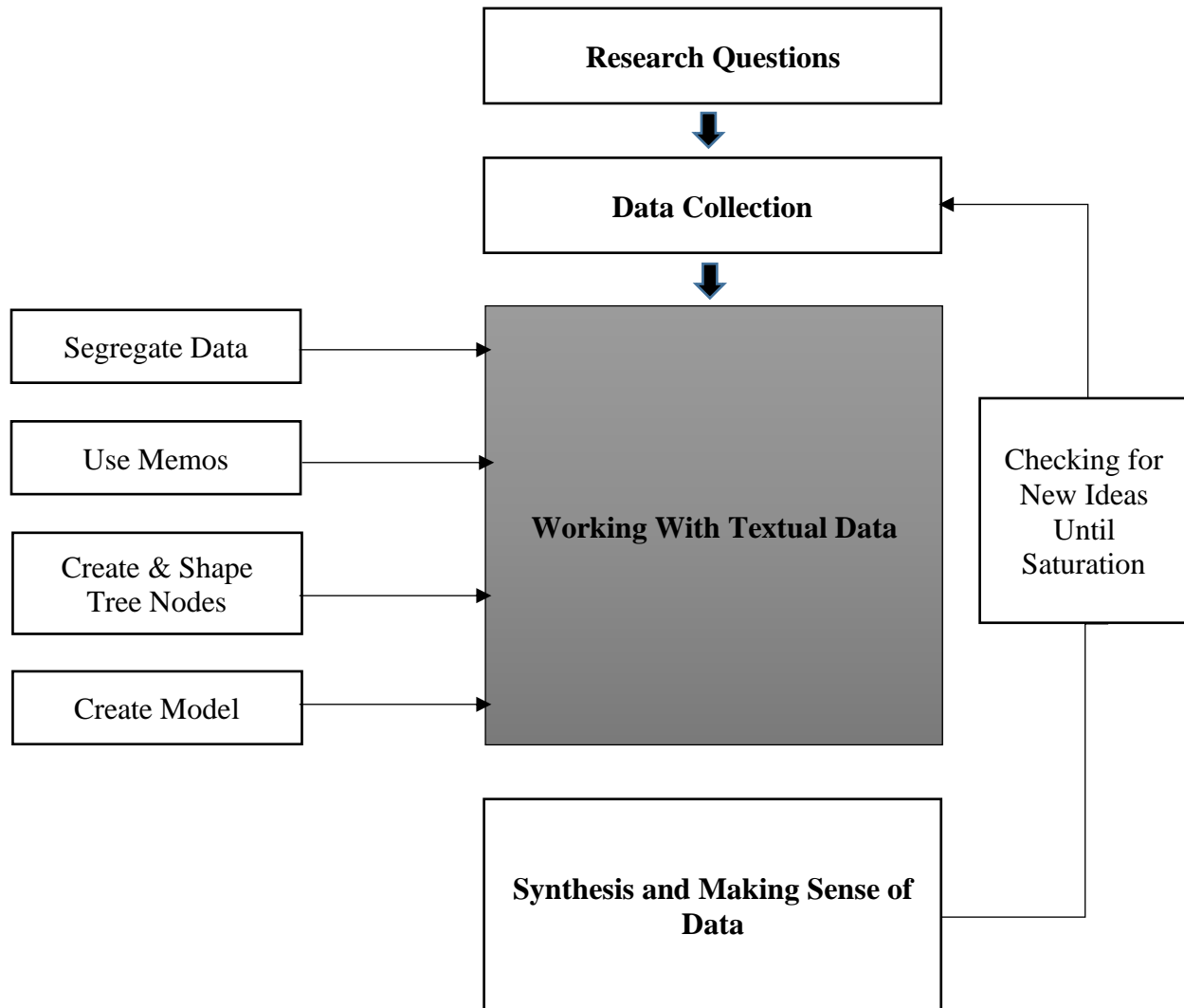
Data Analysis

Data analysis is an act that uniquely differentiates qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data analysis for this study involved active and perceptive processes that utilized inductive reasoning and hypothesizing. As such, the research concentrated on the assessment of personal characteristics (i.e., the attitudes, values, meanings, principles, thoughts, and

experiences) of the volunteers. Wong (2008) offered a strategic map by which to analyze the data.

Figure 3.

The Data Analysis Process



The foundation of the study was entrenched in the research questions. The research questions defined the path upon which the study occurred. As a qualitative study, it yielded primarily unstructured textual data. The textual data was presented through audio and video

recordings, interview transcripts, observations, researcher notes, journal entries, and archival material. Once all relevant data was acquired, the analysis began. Though the analysis of qualitative data was viewed as a repetitive nonlinear process, establishing a process of sequences with overlapping phases was beneficial. It was a systematic process that maintained a sense of flexibility.

Structuring the analysis in this fashion promoted transparent procedures that could be more easily understood by readers. As such, this structure consisted of several phases. The phases were suited for thematic analysis in which descriptive comprehensive statements were used to explain responses to the research questions (Wong, 2008). These phases (i.e., data segregating, memoing, creating and shaping tree nodes, creating a model, and synthesizing and making sense of data), were expressed through emergent ideas, coding themes, interpretations, and data representation, which was enhanced through triangulation and qualitative analysis (Lester et al., 2020).

Emergent Ideas

Emergent ideas encompass the foundational pieces to qualitative research. Derived from the lived experiences of the research participants, the ideas are formulated by coding processes. They are connected to investigative frameworks and rooted in the resulting data. The ideas reinforce the need to adjust to new philosophies as they evolve. As such, the process routinely embraces unanticipated data (Creswell, 2014). Determination of the unanticipated data was built upon assessments made during the data segregation and memoing phases.

Data Segregation Phase

Lester et al. (2020) indicated that the transition to analysis is operationalized through various phases. Data analysis initiates when data is prepared and organized. During this phase, it

was evident that there was an abundance of data accumulated. This data was inclusive of, but not limited to, the transcription of interviews, researcher notes, and archival materials. As such, organizing the information for thematic analysis was critical. Systematizing this information was achieved through grouping the recorded audio and/or video files in one location, converting the researcher notes to an electronic design such as a Microsoft Word document, and scanning and saving physical documents to one location. An important factor during the phase was the chance to set the data in a format that could be imported to a qualitative data analysis software program.

The next task encompassed transcribing the data. It was expected that there would be an abundance of audio and video data to be transcribed. Transcribing the data was important as it presented an opportunity to deepen the researcher's understanding of the issue. However, it was estimated that for every hour of audio for an interview, 5 to 6 hours was required to transcribe the information. It was an arduous task that aimed to accurately capture every exclamation from the participant. Therefore, electronic transcription tools were utilized where possible.

Following successful transcription of the data, the researcher became familiar with the information. This task was thought of as the earliest step of analysis whereby the researcher became progressively more attentive to participant expressions. The initial assessments aided in framing ideas that surfaced during more detailed analysis. Therefore, it was critical that the researcher detail these reactions, as well as identify any gaps that inspired additional exploration.

Memoing Phase

The memo phase is defined by the development of categories through memoing. Memoing, or the researcher's personal notes that chronicle things learned from interactions with the volunteers, is important to development of the study. The notes related to this study contained initial thoughts regarding volunteer responses and captured emergent themes and

potential biases that influenced interpretation of the data. In doing so, there was an acknowledgement of statements and experiences that were potentially instrumental to the phenomenon, as well as their connection to other areas of the study. Additionally, the memos were suggestive of and encouraged further analysis (Lester et al., 2020).

Coding Themes

Coding themes imposed credibility on the research. Coding captured the emergent themes and characterized them according to experiences that participants identified as relevant to the research questions. It involved the detection of connected texts and assigning labels, which were indexed. Through the process, a structure of thematic ideas was developed (Creswell, 2014). The coding themes were molded during the create and shape tree nodes phase.

Create and Shape Tree Nodes Phase

The create and shape tree nodes phase is classified by the need to code selected data per established categories. Coding is considered the most important phase of the data analysis process. A code is a concise illustrative word or phrase that assigns meaning. The coding process involves segmenting large amounts of raw data to categorize them. The labels that were placed on the data through this categorization allowed the researcher to allocate identified themes (Wong, 2008). As suggested by Lester et al. (2020), the coding process was performed in steps. First, codes were assigned to all the data. This step identified valuable statements, experiences, and reflections. It sought to reduce the abundance of data and represent a moderate level of conjecture. Second, additional codes were assigned to data from the first step. This step increased conjecture as there was increased reflection regarding concepts that were more closely related to the focus of the research. As such, the codes initiated the process of linking the statements, experiences, and reflections provided by each volunteer. Third, precise connections

were made to the theorized elements of the study. This step offered the highest level of conjecture through codes that linked statements, experiences, and reflections to specific concepts.

Interpretations

Interpretation in qualitative research offers broad meanings. It signifies inferences made about the coded themes. This was important as it allowed the researcher to appreciate and better inform others of the research significance. In fact, the interpretations depicted the frequency of particular characteristics while providing context through which volunteering could be understood (Creswell, 2014). Understanding in the study occurred during the create model phase.

Create Model Phase

The create model phase is characterized by the retrieval of data coded per categories and the development of associations between the various categories. Developing the links is dependent upon researcher interpretations. While research software in qualitative data analysis expedites the process of grouping information along categories and identifying coded themes, it does not analyze the data. The researcher synthesized data and interpreted the meanings (Wong, 2008). Interpreting this information required inductive thinking that moved from isolated cases to broader clarifications. It demanded the use of established codes, which developed research categories. The codes represented the initial stage of the analytical process and contributed to the portrayal of the information. To gain a complete picture of the data, the researcher became intimately familiar with the way the codes related and contrasted with each other through the accumulation of categories (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

The accumulation of categories was a transitional stage to establishing research themes. The process required two steps. First, related categories were aligned. This offered opportunities

to identify similarities, disparities, and related ideas. Second, once aligned, a statement was ascribed to each category. The theme was inclusive of the underlying categories. Each theme was designed to fit the focus of the primary research questions (Lester et al., 2020).

Data Representation

Qualitative data is represented by descriptive quotes. Once gathered, they were presented side by side in an unambiguous manner. In addition to their compilation, the quotes were analyzed. Hence, there was comprehension of the factors that influenced selection of the identified quotes, as well as how they are labeled. These factors, as they relate to research, required conscious deliberation as they impacted the global significance of the study (Langley & Klag, 2019). The synthesis and making sense of data phase contributed to this representation.

Synthesis and Making Sense of Data Phase

The synthesis and making sense of data phase has three aims: to explore the relationships between categories, detect patterns and relationships, and map the interpretations of findings. The goals were based on the representation of data. Representing and visualizing the data required thematic analysis that was unambiguous and supported. This was accomplished through a detailed audit trail. The trail depicted links among the data, codes, categories, and themes. It comprised a process of selecting segments of the data, sharing the codes that were applied, and articulating the associated categories and themes. It ensured that the interpretation and coding procedures were discernable to readers of the research report. Additionally, the process formulated trust in the interpretation of the data (Lester et al., 2020).

Establishing this trust was gleaned through examining repetition in participant responses. The responses were collectively reviewed and compared. During the comparison, it was noted whether new experiences continued to be identified or whether there was a saturation of themes.

Once saturation occurred, research inquiries were effectively halted as new data failed to provide original insight (Creswell, 2014; Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Analysis for Triangulation

Triangulation is applied in research to enhance the credibility and validity of research discoveries. It refers to the use of two or more research approaches to strengthen the research findings (Suharyanti et al., 2017). Noble and Heale (2019) corroborated the importance of triangulation by characterizing credibility as the believability of the research and validity as whether the research adequately evaluated the concepts that were being investigated. These factors were engaged as theories, methods, and observers in research were combined to ensure that fundamental biases found with single methods or researchers were not evident. It was a practice that facilitated the validation of information in quantitative and qualitative research.

Triangulation can be accessed through theoretical perspectives, methodical approaches, data sources, investigations, and data analysis methods. This research employed two triangulation methods. First, it used methodical triangulation. This approach was observed as the study acquired participant data through questionnaires and interviews. Second, several data sources were used. By employing a multiple case study approach, there were three different methods available to explore relationships between volunteers and leaders (Suharyanti et al., 2017).

Qualitative Analysis

Bhattacharjee (2012) defined qualitative analysis as the review of qualitative data. This analysis is reliant upon the researcher's analytic and integrative proficiencies and personal knowledge of a social phenomenon. It emphasizes the ability to make sense of the phenomenon

instead of attempting to predict or explain it. Accomplishing this feat requires a tool that is capable of data extraction.

Creswell and Poth (2018) asserted that qualitative analysis necessitates a customized tool that is capable of interlacing data collection, data analysis, and report writing. Therefore, software programs have become an essential tool in qualitative research. These programs simplify the participant feedback phases by assigning codes to words or phrases and speedily establish meaning for large amounts of data, which enhances validity. This technology results in increased flexibility, reduced use of resources, and saved time.

NVivo has been identified as a tool that assists in research. NVivo is a computer-supported qualitative data analysis program. It can manage vast amounts of data while synthesizing information and administering statistical outcomes. It facilitates units of analysis and observation, groups evidence together without merging them, and records the information to assist with analysis (Houghton et al., 2016). In addition to the benefits, it adds in relation to the coding, sorting, and retrieval of information, it integrates the coding to qualitative shapes and models (Wong, 2008).

To support this research, NVivo was utilized in several facets of the proposed study. First, the responses from each questionnaire were saved as individual PDF file. Each file was uploaded to NVivo, where the program coded queries and crosstabs to examine data and uncover potential statistical patterns across various demographics. Second, the audio files from each interview were uploaded to NVivo. Once secured, the interviews were transcribed. This was a strategic phase in the process as QSR International (2021) touted the program as being 90% accurate in transcribing audio. Following the transcription, coding occurred to detect relevant themes. Third, the postscripts and journal entries, which were saved as Word documents, were

uploaded to NVivo. These documents were coded and used to support themes arising from the PDF and audio files. Fourth, the inter-coder reliability feature of the program was employed. This software element allowed for the use of cluster analysis to assess parallels throughout the texts and codes.

Summary of Data Analysis

The analysis of data for this study was an inductive process that sought to identify a social phenomenon between leaders and volunteers. It required the structuring of non-numerical information in a manner that allowed for the classification of findings. Once classified, a process of saturating and triangulating the data was implemented. The analysis was then enhanced using a software program that reduced complexities in managing the data and permitted more efficient assessments.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are important factors in research. On one hand, reliability indicates the stability across various data sets. It is enhanced by detailed notes and the use of recorded files that can be transcribed. On the other hand, validity refers to the trustworthiness of the research. It relates to the internal validation and external reliability and objectivity that is realized through credible, authentic, transferable, and dependable characteristics in the research. Both terms require significant engagement and triangulation of the data sources and methods to authenticate credibility (Rose & Johnson, 2020).

Reliability

Reliability is more applicable to quantitative research than qualitative research. In qualitative research, human behavior is never based on static interactions, meaning attempts to measure and adjudicate these interactions can repeatedly result in errors. Therefore, this study

did not seek to establish reliability in the historical context, as reliability may have been misleading and had no relevance to qualitative computation methods. Additionally, the research did not seek to apply meaning through statistical procedures or quantification and instead relied on a process of intersubjectivity.

This research pursued opportunities, through multiple case studies, to understand the phenomenon in a specific setting. Thus, reliability was rooted in the consistency and care applied to the research practices (Cypress, 2017). Creswell (2014) explained that reliability in qualitative research should be associated with two tasks for a single researcher. First, the researcher must verify that the interview transcripts do not display apparent errors. Second, the researcher must ensure that the meanings of specific codes do not waver during the coding process. This research was aligned with the preceding philosophies as reliability was reflected through the mindfulness of limits in research findings.

While the research was based on intersubjectivity, rather than reliability, it did not minimize the need for trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in qualitative research is recognized as rigor or the ability to appraise the credibility (i.e., internal validity); transferability (i.e., external validity); dependability (i.e., reliability); and the confirmability (i.e., objectivity) of a study (Morse, 2015). Connelly (2016) indicated that Guba and Lincoln added authenticity (i.e., fairness) as another strategy. The developers of the strategy encouraged researchers to employ at least two of the strategies during research. As such, in alignment with these parameters, the study utilized authenticity and transferability to build trustworthiness. First, authenticity was exhibited through the range of different realities conveyed by the participants. The rich and detailed description from the researchers offered a rich and in-depth meaning to the phenomenon. Second, transferability allowed the reader to determine the applicability of the findings to other

similar scenarios, while the restricted number of participants limited generalization, focused on participant experiences without indicating it may be relatable to all, and supported transferability by being transparent.

Validity

This study offered validity through reasonable, relevant, and quality research methods. While validity is traditionally best suited to quantitative elements of law, evidence, and mathematical data, it can be appropriately applied to qualitative research. As such, this study promoted quality, rigor, and trustworthiness through investigating, questioning, and theorizing of responses from volunteers. Through this process, knowledge of the meaning, attributes, and characteristics of the phenomenon were attained. In doing so it identified a typical phenomenon and/or ascertained ways to be differentiated from others (Cypress, 2017).

Several techniques were utilized to establish validity in the study. First, the data was triangulated. A multiple case study approach provided opportunities to compare and contrast information across analogous groups. Second, saturation was sought in the data. There was an attempt to ensure that additional data could not be attained by increasing the quantity of participants. Third, bracketing was employed. Bracketing attempted to restrict any possible influence over the study participants. These techniques were collaboratively engaged to diminish threats to validity.

Bracketing

Bracketing occurs when there is an attempt to, at a minimum, reduce the effects of unspoken prejudices associated with the research. Tufford and Newman (2010) explained that based on the presumed relationship between the researcher and the topic, bracketing shields the researcher from emotionally challenging information. As such, the research and associated

interpretations were protected from distortion. This resulted in greater levels of deliberation in all phases of the research (i.e., the selection of the population, interview design, collection and interpretation of information, and research discoveries). Therefore, it stimulated more thoughtful and complex analysis.

To protect the authenticity of the research, this study employed multiple bracketing techniques. Exercising such a process is not uncommon, and the techniques were not mutually exclusive. Additionally, they were comfortable for the researcher, as well as appropriate for the research. First, the researchers' viewpoints regarding nonprofit volunteering and the roles that leaders play in recruitment and retention were shared with each participant prior to each interview. While the questions were not leading, the researcher did share brief personal viewpoints to set the scene for open communications. Second, memoing was applied immediately following each interview. This tactic allowed the researcher to confront personal viewpoints throughout the research as learning occurred. Third, reflective journaling was used as a bracketing tool. Maintaining a journal heightened the researchers' awareness of the impact leaders impress on volunteers and raise levels of consciousness (Tufford & Newman, 2010).

Summary of Reliability and Validity

The ability to ensure the reliability and validity of research was important. While traditional methods of accessing these features do not apply to qualitative research, there are aspects of each that can be undertaken. To support the reliability of the research, this study ensured the interview transcripts were accurate and codes were applied consistently. To ensure the validity of the research, triangulation, saturation, and bracketing techniques were applied. The global use of these techniques enriched research credibility.

Summary of Section 2 and Transition

Section 2 defined the parameters of the study. Examination of the role of the researcher, the participants, and population and sampling techniques offered a glimpse of the importance of each role and the significance that selection assumed in the process. Progression through the data collection and organization plans associated with the participants aided in the interpretation of invaluable data. The data was coded through reliable practices that were used to discover relevant themes. Competencies to actualize the parameters were contingent on Section 3.

Section 3 will build upon Section 2 and highlight findings from the research. The highlighted data displays relationships among the variables, while emphasizing the interpreted themes. The themes offer strategies that may enhance the manner by which leaders recruit and retain volunteers in nonprofit organizations. Additionally, as volunteers play meaningful roles in faith-based organizations, the study contributes to factors that promote missions of benevolence in communities across Central North Carolina. Distinguishing the themes uncovered gaps and/or areas to be addressed during future research.

SECTION 3. APPLICATION TO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Overview of the Study

This study researched volunteer experiences in nonprofit organizations. Past and current volunteers located in central North Carolina were identified through purposive and snowball sampling, then contacted regarding participation in the study. Upon consenting to the study, each individual was presented a questionnaire, as shown in Appendix A. The intent of the questionnaire was to explore firsthand accounts regarding social situations that impact recruitment and retention, as well as those that may be influenced by faith.

Following a review of the questionnaire responses, individual interviews were scheduled with each participant. The focus of the interviews was to generate open discussions of the complexities of volunteerism including, but not limited to, leaders and faith. This was achieved through the list of open-ended questions presented in Appendix B. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and uploaded into the NVivo system for analysis. The transcribed data was then coded according to emerging themes. This data, as well as the questionnaire responses, was used to compile the findings of the study. The findings were checked via a manual review of the data and triangulated across the three cases, for accuracy and reliability.

Presentation of the Findings

The researcher intended this qualitative multiple case study to be a practical means of exploring the impact that leaders have on the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations, as well as to determine the importance of faith. The cases were rooted in the responses to questionnaires and semi-structured interviews that examined the personal experiences of volunteers who had been segmented into three groups (e.g., cases).

The case studies were composed of five research participants each. However, prior to being formally classified as a participant, each individual was emailed the approved research materials and an online link (e.g., Survey Monkey) to review and use to provide participant consent. The consent forms identified details regarding the study including, but not limited to, audio/video permission, interview transcription, and the process for terminating participation in the research. Following consent, the forms were stored electronically through the survey platform, which requires password access; no physical copies of the forms were retained.

Following participant consent, each individual was assigned a group (i.e., case), depending upon whether they were currently engaged as a volunteer, were not engaged, or had

volunteered via a faith-based organization. The participants were tagged with an “E” (engaged), “N” (non-engaged), or “F” (faith). Then, a number was assigned to each participant based on the order in which they had consented. For example, N4 represented the group of non-engaged volunteers and the fourth participant.

Upon creation of the participant codes and folders, each participant was emailed an online link (through Survey Monkey) to complete a participant questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 18 questions and was divided into six sections. Each section maintained a different theme and was designed to acquire multiple sets of volunteer data including, but not limited to, personal demographics and profiles, reasons for volunteering, feelings regarding organizational leaders, and satisfaction level in relation to volunteering efforts. Completion of the survey, on average, required approximately 14 minutes. Following completion of the questionnaire, the documents were stored electronically through the survey platform, which requires password access; no physical copies of the forms were retained.

After completing the questionnaire, a time was scheduled for each participant to be individually interviewed. The interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. They were intended to support the data that was obtained during the questionnaires; however, it provided participants the opportunity to expound on their thoughts, as well as to share additional insights that were not covered. To this end, the primary focus of the interviews was to better understand viewpoints regarding leaders and faith in nonprofit organizations. At the conclusion of each interview, the audio and video files were saved to a personal computer that requires a password for access. Once saved, the audio file was uploaded into Microsoft 365, where it was transcribed and saved as a Word document on the personal computer.

Processes outlined by Marshall and Rossman (2006) were utilized to analyze the qualitative data. The steps included organizing the data, immersion in the data, generating categories and themes, coding the data, offering interpretations through analytic memos, searching for alternative understandings, and writing the report. The organization of this data was initiated as the source data (e.g., questionnaires and interviews), entered the NVivo system, and was marked with an alphanumeric code.

Immersion into the data required several steps by the researcher. First, data from the questionnaires were placed in a spreadsheet in accordance with each research participant's grouping. Second, notations related to the questionnaire data were made for journaling purposes and to begin theme formation. Third, the transcribed interviews were reviewed multiple times. From this review, the participants' language was used to label and apply meaning to the data in the NVivo system (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coding refers to the process of labeling data in order to organize and analyze data. The coding process was initiated through in-depth analysis. Fourth, notations regarding the interviews were made for journaling purposes, in order to build upon the themes that arose from the questionnaires, discover new themes, and begin to merge some ideals for the purpose of forming main themes. Fifth, as a means of manual coding, the interview questions across each case were grouped together to better summarize and identify common themes. Sixth, once each interview question was summarized, the coded data in NVivo was matched back to the manual data for validation.

The supporting information associated with the process was displayed across the discovered themes, interpretation of the themes, and representation and visualization of the data, as well as a deeper examination of the individual case studies through a review of the research questions with analysis of the associated questionnaire and interview responses. The section

concludes with a series of sections that seek to offer greater insight through the conceptual framework and reiterate how the research findings are linked to the framework, as well as the anticipated themes and any observed differences, unanticipated or missing themes, the literature that examines the way findings correlate to the literature, and the problem that draws conclusions between the findings and the stated problem.

Themes Discovered

This section offers a narrative of themes constructed from the lived experiences of volunteers. The discovery of themes occurred during the data analysis phase of the research. The themes emerged because of meaningful and recurring ideas expressed throughout the research. The themes were developed from information contained in the completed questionnaires and transcribed interviews of 15 research participants. Once collected, the data was coded to identify common concepts.

The coding process began with an in-depth analysis of the data collected. It included the identification of common words and phrases that could be grouped into themes. Through this process, eight themes were discovered. Each theme is presented via thoughtful analysis and supporting documentation. Hence, the themes revealed concepts that may be helpful in expanding current beliefs regarding volunteering and leadership.

Theme One: Volunteering Is a Calling

A calling has been described as the passion exhibited by an individual toward a specific type of. It is a type of work the individual considers to be purposeful and important. Studies show that 30% to 50% of workers identify their work as a calling. When these individuals are called to work, they share their skills to enhance the life of others. In doing so, they experience a sense of intrinsic joy (Ehrhardt & Ensher, 2021).

While many volunteers profess that they are individuals of faith and are often led to nonprofit organizations as a matter of their faith, their volunteering efforts are rarely defined by faith. Rather, they perceive volunteering as a desire to perform good deeds. Though there may be a practical relationship between faith and the performance of good deeds, for the purpose of this research, they were viewed as separate attributes. To this point, the participants stated that they had been helped at some point in their life and now was their time to do the same, where possible. They viewed it as an unspoken responsibility, something that there was a deep desire to achieve.

Regardless of the case, all the research participants implied that volunteering was a calling. Participant F5 shared, “It’s almost one of those things that is innate. I just get joy out of doing stuff for other people. I know that it’s the right thing to do.” Participant E5 added, “A lot of it is my belief in being a servant. It gives me an opportunity to give back and help others.” Then, Participant E4 shared, “I’ve got to do something. I have to give something back. They don’t expect to get anything back, but it’s what I’m looking for. It’s common courtesy, in my opinion.”

The comments continued. Participant E2 had a profound take on the topic:

It’s a mission aligned with things that are important to me . . . so, that’s what keeps me motivated. Also, kind of the need, like if I see I can provide a need, even if it’s not something that popped in my head naturally, if I can kind of fill a gap, I’m interested and always willing. I’m willing to serve.

Finally, Participant E1 concluded the discussions by stating, “I believe that I am here on this earth to give back to others what God is giving me talents to do.”

Theme Two: Volunteering Is a Family Affair

There are a host of reasons why an individual may volunteer with a nonprofit organization. However, according to the research participants, a strong indicator of desire for this

type of service is tied to family involvement. Individuals whose parents had consciously and intentionally engaged them with volunteer activities are more likely to be engaged with volunteer activities as adults.

It must be noted that the research questionnaire and interview questions did not directly allude to the influence of family members during volunteering; however, the research participants readily shared their related experiences. Participant F3 explained, “As for me, I’ve always said, well, there’s something that I wanted to do, and I know it’s something that’s valuable. I encourage my daughter who’s a nurse to also be involved.” Participant N2 spoke about his parents as being a source of personal motivation:

I think for me, coming up, didn’t have a lot and seeing my parents work hard; they didn’t finish the 8th grade. So, me wanting to be better, have to be better than they were and then get to a point where you have surpassed what your parents had. Then, you see other people that are going without, and you have to help.

While some forms of parental motivation arise from personal plight, others originate due to other factors. Participant F1 shared such a factor: “So, we were thinking, and I think my mom might have been talking to Sister Gentry one day, and she was like, you know, come, come volunteer.” Participant F2 added, “My roots are in volunteering. Where I come from, that’s all we do. If anybody calls; what do you need? We’re always volunteering.”

The personal testimonies continued. Participant E2 stated, “I was molded by my mother, and so I just kind of do it as a kind of a natural reaction.” Participant N4 chimed in, “Growing up in church, we were always helping each other. So, we kind of spread beyond our church. My grandfather was trying to make sure he helped the next person out.” Participant F4 concurred: “My grandparents actually founded the church that I belong to now. So, I’ve been involved in that kind of work for some time now.” And Participant E4 concluded, “My dad. My dad

encouraged my brother and I to become youth coaches. It's one thing to be an alumnus, but to be an alumnus and still participate; that's different."

Theme Three: A Leader's Faith Is Not Meaningful to Volunteers

In its simplest form, faith refers to trust. However, when further examined, faith can be viewed as the unquestioning belief in the reality of a spiritual being (Bishop, 2016). It is a characteristic of leaders with intense beliefs regarding the world, people, and the purpose of work. As such, it inspires leaders to utilize non-traditional solutions to address challenges experienced in organizations. Interestingly, the faith of leaders was not a prominent factor for volunteers.

When presented in the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire with a question regarding their desire to be led by a person of faith, 53% of the research participants stated it was not important for the leader or leaders to operate from a place of faith. Included in that statistic is that 40% of faith-based participants indicated that the leader's faith was not meaningful to them. Rather, it was more important that leaders appear to be good people who display a heart for improving the lives of those in their community.

This perspective was supported by participant comments. Participant N3 shared,

I think an important part of being a leader is kind of just being a good person. Knowing that you're not always right or knowing that there's other situations, other ways that situations should be handled. . . . Sometimes people get in a position of power, and they're like I'm in charge, I'm great, so I have to do everything.

Participant N5 added, "Be a genuine person. Just be a person that people just love to be around."

Theme Four: Without A Leader's Encouragement, Volunteers Become Disengaged

While each of the participants had volunteered at least once during the past 5 years, there was one difference amongst the cases. That is, the participants in Case 2 were not currently engaged in volunteering activities. They possessed similar experiences to other participants, but

for a multitude of reasons had discontinued their volunteering efforts. This emerged as a revealing characteristic in its correlation to the encouragement offered by leaders.

While each of the participants in Case 2 acknowledged appreciation for the work performed by their respective leaders, there appeared to have been limited interactions between the parties. According to responses to the volunteer questionnaire, this group was the least likely to affirm that a leader had either encouraged them to volunteer or that they wanted to continue volunteering due to a good relationship with the organization's leader (60%). Texture was added to the topic through participant interviews.

During the interviews, the vast majority of the participants expressed a similar viewpoint regarding encouragement from leaders. Participant N3 stated, "I wouldn't say they made me want to or not. I just kind of did. So, it wasn't like they really influenced me in any way." Then, Participant N5 added, "Not really. It was just really more on my own. Just something I had wanted to do myself." Participant N2 concluded the discussion by stating,

I think once I volunteered, they took my information. They reached out to me monthly to inform me of the need they have and if there was anything I could do, they would truly appreciate it via monetary donations or by volunteering my time. They only sent me notifications.

Furthermore, there was little expectation of interactions with the organization's leaders. When asked if volunteers should receive a visit or phone call from leaders for recognition of their accomplishments, only 40% of the participants affirmed the statement in the volunteer questionnaire. Participant N1 stated, "If we have to encourage you to volunteer, then maybe I'm not sure you should be doing it. So, I never really had to be encouraged by one of the leaders or anything like that." And while that may be a valid point, Participant N3 shared a much deeper analysis of the topic.

I think that, well, some people are great leaders and just have the ability to get people to do whatever they want them to do, regardless. But there are a lot of people who are good leaders but think they know everything and/or think they have knowledge that other people don't have...And taking criticism from other people is really important. Like, yes you are the leader, but just because you're the leader doesn't mean that it has to be end all be all with you. Being able to utilize the people you have will help the whole, knowing that the organization doesn't thrive just off of you. It thrives off of everyone that's involved. I think that sometimes people get in a position of power and they're like, I'm in charge. I'm great, so, I have to do everything. Whereas there might be someone else who knows something that could help them that could change their perspective and make the organization better as a whole. So, I just think that leaders need to be aware, just because they're in charge, doesn't mean that the little people can't help them.

Regardless of the reasons that a leader may not offer encouragement or attempt to build relationships with volunteers, what is clear is that when they don't, volunteers are more likely to become disengaged with the organization.

Theme Five: Views of Leadership Through the Age of Volunteers

A common initiative in many organizations revolves around the need for diversity in relation to human resources. While important, this diversity creates the need for different forms of motivation. This includes leadership styles. Specifically, participants in different age groupings maintained varying perspectives regarding the qualities that should be possessed by leaders.

Participants between 18 and 35 years of age maintained different viewpoints to those above the age of 35. Those between 18 and 35 preferred a leader who is relatable. They desire someone who understands their social plights and is empathetic to their personal challenges.

Participant F1 offered meaningful insight into the topic:

Be relatable to the people that are working under you as volunteers. I know sports, so I kind of reference it to a professional coach in the NBA or NFL, like a "Player's Coach." Of course, players are going to love and play hard for them because there's somebody that values the voice and the plight of the players. So, they're going to dive on the floor for that loose ball, they're going to grind out every minute of the game because their coach truly cares about them. It's not a hierarchy, or the coach is above them and the players are down here where they don't really feel any connection. There's really no

motivation to want to play for that coach, right? If a leader in a nonprofit can somehow make themselves relatable and put themselves on the same level as the volunteers around them, but of course still lead them, you could still lead them even though you put yourself on the same level of your volunteers and make yourselves relatable to them. If they can do that, I think that'll change the game for a lot of nonprofit organizations and volunteer efforts.

Each person in this age group shared this sentiment. Furthermore, regardless of other demographic factors (i.e., gender, marital status, ethnicity, religion, education, employment status, etc.), the viewpoint was pervasive in the age group.

On the other hand, volunteers over the age of 35 desired a leader who is willing to get their hands dirty. While they desired a leader whom they view as a good person, the work being done was more important to them. Hence, their focus was on leaders who are willing to roll up their sleeves and stand side by side with other volunteers to complete the chosen tasks.

Participant F4 explained, "A leader won't possess all leadership traits in working with a team. It's very important that they contribute to the meaningful contributions." Participant F5 expanded the discussion of the topic. There must be a,

willingness to step in and assist the volunteers themselves. I think that means a lot. When I think about the professional aspect of it, my employer, my boss, doesn't ask us to do anything that he's not willing to do himself. So, just the willingness to get in the trenches and be on the front line right along with everybody else.

It's not enough to be committed to commit and complete good works. Rather, these participants indicated they don't want to be in the "fight" by themselves. There are greater all-around benefits when everyone shares the work.

Theme Six: Faith, No Faith; Who Can Tell?

Volunteers identify and understand when an organization is rooted in principles of faith. In such instances, they expect that attributes of faith will surface during organizational activities;

however, that is not always the case. Eighty percent of the research participants indicated there is no discernable difference between faith-based organizations and those not predicated on faith.

Participant N1 clarified,

No, you don't necessarily readily observe it in the faith-based one. You don't necessarily readily observe it. Sometimes it might be at a church. So, that kind of lends itself to that. But if it's not at a church and it's faith-based, there's not anything telling you that it is.

Participant F3 shared, "Well, there's not really a difference in them because all the volunteers are committed to what they were doing. They're giving their time, and you know it's something they really want to do." Participant N1 added, "There's no difference to me. They're both doing the same thing. The non-faith-based ones, they're not better or worse. The faithful ones aren't better or worse."

Despite the admitted lack of difference between the organizations, the research participants believed it's not an issue with the organizations. Rather, the determining factor is the character of the respective leaders. Participant F5 stated, "I really think it falls back onto the individual that is spearheading or that is leading that actual project." Participant F2 shared additional insight on the topic:

You can have a church-based or a Christian-based or whatever, a faith-based organization. But it's the person that's leading the organization. It's not that I'm always around church people, so, if it's faith-based and I'm dealing with it, I don't always know if it's that type of organization. But I once volunteered for the Special Olympics, that's not faith-based, but the leader had so much faith.

It's undeniable that individuals are unique and possess differing beliefs regarding organizational processes. Hence, it's reasonable, even in faith-based organizations, for there to be differences regarding expressions of faith.

There is a practical justification for this occurrence. Participant E5 shared personal experiences as to why this may be a strategic tactic employed by some faith-based organizations.

The difference between the two, ironically, is sometimes in the faith community that can be a hindrance. Because sometimes [when] I'm working with various religious backgrounds and denominations, it can be a hindrance. Meaning, if you're going out and specifically waving the flag of your denomination, it can be a turnoff. You can have an excellent product, you can be doing great work, but if you are not willing to meet people where they are currently in their own beliefs, you basically build up a wall. And people are oftentimes reluctant to go to houses of faith because they believe that it's an opportunity to be converted or badgered because they don't believe a certain way or are not being accepted because of their lifestyle. So, with a non-faith organization, individuals tend to be more free. Use example of food distribution. They may be more apt to come to an organization that is not faith-based because they see it as I'm just driving in to get food versus if I go to this church, what's going to be on the other end of me receiving this food?

This assessment points to the notion that while people often desire to have their faith acknowledged, they are often sensitive to the way in which their faith may be perceived. Hence, the faith of volunteers is not always acknowledged.

Theme Seven: Volunteers Prefer Short-term Projects

Though volunteers authentically desire to devote their time and skills to nonprofit organizations, there are often a multitude of challenges that converge to deter a high level of commitment. As a result, many volunteers are hesitant to join organizations where there is an expectation of frequent meetings and/or a seemingly never-ending list of community service events into the foreseeable future. Instead, in response to a questionnaire statement, 87% of participants stated they would prefer short-term, project-based opportunities.

One participant, E3, spoke directly to the issue and emphasized how organizations could strategically employ short-term projects to influence greater participation:

I think a big part of the challenge is people being willing to give up their free time. It's like, well, how do you get past that to somehow reach potential volunteers and get them engaged in a way they don't have to commit to a long-term period? But sort of get a taste of it. Get the experience to see what it's like for more success and converting them to full time volunteers. I think everybody is afraid to make commitments these days. So, I think yeah, they need to look at programs and say, well, how do I get people in here just to kind of let them get some experience? And they probably will come back and say, hey, I enjoyed it.

The implementation of short-term projects would not only entice volunteers to be more active, but it would also eliminate some of the obstacles related to long-term commitments.

Theme Eight: Word of Mouth Versus Technology

Modes of communication emerged as a significant theme amongst the research participants. When questioned about how they initially became aware of the volunteer opportunities they were engaged, the research participants were in 100% agreement regarding the medium used to attract them. Their recruitment had been conducted through personal discussions. Whether with family, friends, or one of the organization's leaders, information was shared by "word of mouth."

Participants N2, N3, and F5 each simply stated, "word of mouth." However, Participant N1 added, "I don't know if they made efforts, it was through friends that were either doing it or heard about it and said, 'Hey, come, you want to do this,' or 'Hey, this is something I think you would like 'cause you've done it'" previously. Then, Participant E3 concluded the discussion by stating, "Really word of mouth. After expressing interest, I was able to get references in place to look at some of the opportunities and apply."

Though the volunteers were all recruited through the same tactic, some offered opportunities for enhancement that may be more beneficial. As a result of technological advancements and the dependence on them by such a vast majority of the population, there exists a multitude of communication platforms that could be utilized to share information with more people at a quicker rate.

Participant F5 indicated, "You have to be aware. An email is not always the best way to communicate when you're looking for volunteers." Participant N4 discussed the importance of "being able to relate to everybody. To be able to tap into everybody that's out there through

social media. Like hey, we're out here, we need you. You know how it is with Facebook or Instagram." Participant F4 shared why the technology feature is so important:

Change with the times. Make sure that you are aware of the trends of the future. It's very important if you're dealing with young people, specifically, youth or young adults. Make sure that you know what's happening in the future, how they live, what they do day-to-day. A communication scheme talking to people of all ages, people from different cultures, people from backgrounds different from yours, that could be very important.

There's an age-old idiom in business that one either adapts to changes in the environment or gets left behind. The notions expressed would seem to imply that while nonprofit organizations are not held to the same standards as for-profit entities, there are some elements that are applicable.

Interpretation of Themes

The discovered themes led to the interpretation of the collected data. The interpretation of the themes entails investigation of the themes to glean a greater comprehension. The interpretations are an inference from the research materials that is validated by the shared experiences of multiple participants. The interpretations were based on and used patterns and reasonableness to make conclusions, as well as identify areas of the research that might be lacking (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Hence, the discovered themes identify tools that may be beneficial to leaders while recruiting and retaining volunteers for nonprofit organizations.

From the participants' perspective, volunteering is about goodness. In other words, nonprofit organizations should be filled with good people who attract other good people to perform acts of good deeds in the communities in which they reside. This theoretical viewpoint places more value in the perceived goodness of people than personal attributes (e.g., expressions of faith). Goodness ties into the belief of these individuals that they have been called or possess a stout inner compulsion toward a precise course of action.

The organization must have a strategic intent to recruit and retain volunteers. There are millions of people in the United States, and many are likely to be unfamiliar with most nonprofit organizations. Therefore, organizations must devise modern techniques to identify the individuals who are a good fit and aligned with their mission. First, they must utilize social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.), to attract potential pools of volunteers. While less personal, social media allows for broader, more immediate, and more effective processes by utilizing tools that are already available to a significant portion of the population. Second, the organizations must intentionally target family members of current and past volunteers. These individuals are likely already familiar with the organization's mission and protocols, as well as being acquainted with some of the current members.

Upon joining the organization, the strategic intent to retain volunteers must be equivalent to the efforts used to recruit them. The retention efforts should be concentrated on two initiatives. First, the organization should take note of the demographics of its volunteers. The purpose of this process would be to devise a course of action for leaders in interacting with volunteers (e.g., being relatable, working side by side with volunteers). Second, projects must be devised that have finite parameters. There should be structured and measurable steps, as well as a short-term estimated completion date. Explaining of the parameters allows volunteers to better slot organizational activities in their personal schedules.

Overall, the themes discovered during this study represent feedback that can be shared with leaders in nonprofit organizations to enhance their strategic plans and operations. However, whether during recruitment or retention initiatives, there is one component that should not be taken for granted or dismissed: the role of leaders. Leaders must be actively engaged in the continual process of building relationships with and encouraging volunteers. While the ultimate

desire for volunteers is to do good, they also want to build relationships with other volunteers, especially leaders. It is these relationships that maintain volunteer engagement.

Representation and Visualization of the Data

Visualization of the data aid in understanding the findings. The data used to support the research is presented in several formats using Microsoft software. The formats allow for intuitive exploration of the data in order to effectively grasp correlations and causalities surrounding volunteers, leaders, and faith (Li, 2020).

The first visualization of the data relates to the demographics of the participants. The demographics, including gender, ethnicity, age, and marital status, highlight characteristics that assist in describing each participant. Each reflects the varied backgrounds and perspectives of the participants. The data of each factor is visualized across each case and examined cumulatively.

Table 6.*Participant Demographics*

Gender	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Male	60%	2	4	3
Female	40%	3	1	2
Other	0%	0	0	0
Ethnicity	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
African American	53%	2	2	4
Asian	7%	0	0	1
White	13%	1	1	0
Hispanic	20%	2	1	0
Indian	0%	0	0	0
Native American	7%	0	1	0
Other	0%	0	0	0
Age	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Under 26	20%	1	1	1
26–35	13%	0	1	1
36–45	20%	1	2	0
46–55	27%	2	1	1
56–65	7%	0	0	1
Over 65	13%	1	0	1
Marital Status	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Single	46%	2	2	3
Married	46%	2	3	2
Separated	8%	1	0	0
Divorced	0%	0	0	0
Widowed	0%	0	0	0
Parental Status	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Children	47%	2	2	2
City Of Residence	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Burlington, NC	7%	0	1	0
Charlotte, NC	27%	1	1	2
Durham, NC	33%	1	1	3
Fayetteville, NC	13%	0	2	0
Greensboro, NC	7%	1	0	0
Raleigh, NC	7%	1	0	0
Winston-Salem, NC	7%	1	0	0

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) indicates that the average volunteer in a nonprofit organization is a White female between the ages of 35 and 44 with children. Therefore, a conscious effort was made to recruit participants who were not aligned with the traditional attributes of volunteerism. Though it would have been challenging to balance and capture every demographic facet, the participants embody meaningful diversity. The data shows that 60% of the participants were male, 87% were of an ethnic minority, 80% were outside of the 35- to 44-year-old age group, and 53% did not have any children.

The second visualization of the data relates to the personal profiles of the participants selected to develop the findings. The profile offers insight into the attributes that define each individual. Table 7 exhibits these attributes as education, occupation, income, and religion. As with the demographics, the profiles re-affirm the broad experiences of the collective group of participants. The data of each attribute is visualized across each case and examined cumulatively.

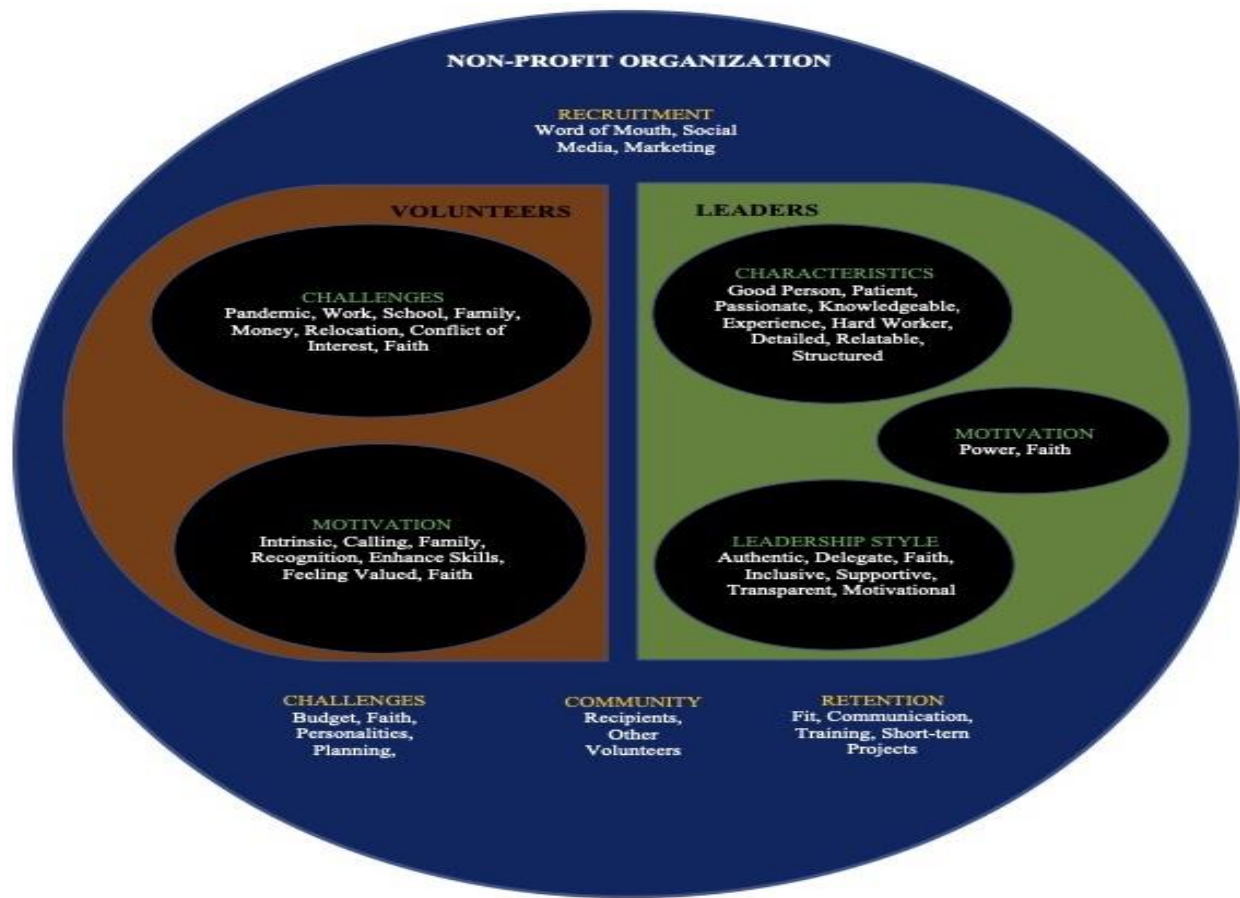
Table 7.*Participant Profiles*

Education	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
High School Diploma	0%	0	0	0
Some College	27%	1	1	2
Associate's/Vocational Degree	0%	0	0	0
Bachelor's Degree	53%	2	4	2
Master's Degree	13%	1	0	1
Doctorate/Professional Degree	7%	1	0	0
Occupation	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Homemaker	0%	0	0	0
Business/Entrepreneur	13%	1	1	0
Teacher	7%	0	0	1
Professional	40%	2	2	2
Military	7%	0	1	0
Retired	13%	1	0	1
Student	20%	1	1	1
Other	0%	0	0	0
Gross Income	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
< \$25,000	20%	1	1	1
\$25,000–\$95,000	40%	1	3	2
> \$95,000	40%	3	1	2
Religious Affiliation	Total	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Atheist	13%	1	1	0
Buddhist	0%	0	0	0
Christian	80%	4	3	5
Islamic	0%	0	0	0
Jewish	0%	0	0	0
Other	7%	0	1	0

As with volunteer demographics, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) offers details into the average profile of a volunteer within a nonprofit organization. The average volunteer is educated, is employed part-time, and volunteers through a religious entity. Once again, there was an intent to recruit individuals with varying profiles. While there was limited diversity regarding the religious affiliation of the participants, the other categories are captured well. The data shows

that 27% of the participants did not possess a college degree, 13% were unemployed, and 13% identified themselves as atheist.

The third visualization of the data relates to coding that was used to construct the findings. The coding was developed from themes that were revealed throughout the research. Figure 4 illustrates the codes designed at each level. The nonprofit organization level, while containing volunteers and leaders, has direct level codes (e.g., recruitment, challenges, community, retention). The Volunteer-level codes include challenges and motivation, while the Leader-level codes include characteristics, motivation, and leadership style. Under each direct level code, there is a further narrowing of the topic to lower levels. For example, Motivation under Leaders was divided into the categories of Power and Faith.

Figure 4.*Coding Diagram*

The coding was developed in accordance with primary themes discovered during the research. Each theme depicts a governing category (e.g., Nonprofit Organization, Volunteers or Leaders), which was narrowed further. For example, Challenges and Motivation narrowed the focus for Volunteers. Then, maintaining the same path of explanation, Pandemic, Work, School, Family, Money, Relocation, Conflicts of Interest, and Faith have been identified under Challenges.

Relationship of the Findings

A multiple case study approach was used to collect, analyze, and compare information pertaining to volunteers in nonprofit organizations. The results of the three case studies are structured in the same format. Each will detail the research questions and findings per the respective responses to the volunteer questionnaires and interviews. Each description is supported by volunteer statements that can be compared across cases.

Case 1. Engaged Volunteers

The research participants of this case study consisted of individuals who were actively engaged as volunteers in different nonprofit organizations that are not predicated on faith. It includes five research participants who shared their firsthand experiences regarding nonprofit operations, the impact of leaders, and the importance of faith. The data collected was summarized and used to address each research question. Moreover, the responses were encapsulated to identify emerging themes on the topic.

RQ1. What interactions do leaders have with volunteers in nonprofit organizations?

Participant selections offered in response to questions 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 18 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaires addressed the role that leaders are likely to perform in a nonprofit organization. The questions related to actions performed within the leader's formal capacity and volunteer expectations of those actions. To develop an understanding of the topic, each participant was asked to affirm the scenarios that were applicable to their personal experiences as a volunteer.

Table 8.*Engaged Volunteer Interactions with Leaders*

Statement	Affirmative Response
A leader first asked you to volunteer.	40%
I became a volunteer because a nonprofit organization leader encouraged me.	100%
I want to continue my volunteer work because I have a good relationship with my nonprofit organization leaders.	100%
Volunteers should receive recognition through letters from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	80%
Volunteers should receive recognition through visits from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	60%
Volunteers should receive recognition through phone calls from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	60%
The leader of my nonprofit organization performed at a high level.	60%
I expect my leaders to operate from a place of faith.	40%

Though only 40% of the engaged volunteers stated they were initially approached by an organization's leader regarding volunteering efforts, they each confessed to having a good relationship with the leader, as well as the leader playing a significant role in encouraging them to volunteer. Despite the camaraderie and encouragement experienced between leaders and volunteers, the participants had limited expectations of their interactions with leaders. The majority of engaged volunteers noted that volunteers should receive formal recognition for their volunteer efforts. Eighty percent indicated this could be achieved through a letter from the leader of the organization; however, the percentage fell to 60% when the form of recognition changed to phone calls or personal visits.

Another aspect of the relationship that is important to consider is how leaders are viewed by volunteers. When questioned whether the leader or leaders of the organization performed at a

high level, only 60% affirmed the statement. Moreover, only 40% of the volunteers expected these same leaders to guide the operations of the organization from a place of personal faith.

RQ1a. How do these interactions influence volunteer recruitment? Participant statements made in response to question 5 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews corresponded to the level of influence they experienced during volunteer-leader interactions. The question examined feelings of self-worth. It asked participants to reflect upon their emotions while volunteering. In doing so, the inquiry centered on how leaders made volunteers feel.

The participants affirmed that it was the intent of leaders in nonprofit organizations to make volunteers feel valued. In most instances, this was achieved through verbal proclamations. For example, words such as “thank you” or “we appreciate you” were used to convey gratitude. However, on the rare occasion that funding was available, leaders may have expressed their appreciation by offering items of monetary value (i.e., coffee, donuts, lunch, etc.). Even more rare were instances in which volunteers were awarded with larger gifts (i.e., gift cards, scholarships, etc.).

RQ1b. How do these interactions encourage volunteer retention? Participant statements made in response to question 4 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews corresponded to the interactions between both leaders and volunteers. The question explored the volunteers’ personal reflections on the connection between their desires and the organizations leadership. It placed additional emphasis on whether the interactions encouraged volunteer retention, and if so, how this was achieved.

Committing to volunteer with an organization begins with personal desire. Simply stated, if a volunteer does not intrinsically want to be associated with the organization and/or activities, they will not be involved, regardless of who offers encouragement. Participant E2 opined,

I don't know that I would align what I would be doing to the leadership in particular, other than the fact that they asked me to serve. Either I'm going to do it, or I'm not interested in what's going on and I'm not. So, I'm not sure the leader themselves is impactful.

However, once the volunteer is invested, the interactions with leaders can offer meaningful benefits. Their words of encouragement can result in a volunteer feeling wanted, which may translate into an increased desire by the volunteer to remain active.

Participant E4 shared, "They were excellent leaders who came, who helped us grow in many ways!" Participant E3 added,

They were very appreciative of the skillsets brought to the table. At one point, I even mentioned that I think, just because of availability, I would step down. They came back and said we want you to be the vice chair. So, I think some of these things were just go there and kind of give it your all. You want to do a good job and actually contribute. They were always very appreciative of it. They definitely would work around schedules too. They were very understanding of your work commitments and meetings and stuff that you were trying to work around, even personal family commitments.

This perspective shows that it's not enough to be thoughtful regarding topics directly related to the organization. Rather, leaders of the organization must be sensitive to and considerate of volunteers' personal lives.

RQ1c. How does the faith of volunteers influence the interactions? Participant statements made in response to questions 8, 10, and 13 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to the ways that faith impacted volunteers. The topic is initiated through inquiries associated with aspects of the leader's and organization's faith. The narrative then transitions to the volunteer's faith and the need for support from the organization.

There is an obvious correlation between volunteer activity and a leader operating from a place of faith when they lead a faith-based organization. In such instances, it is expected that faith will be a driving force of the organization's activities. However, regardless of the type of nonprofit organization, the faith of nonprofit leaders is often veiled. Rather, volunteers tend to

have a sense or feeling that leaders operate in this fashion. Participant E1 shared while it is recognized that “certain leaders are spiritual, they generally do not promote their faith and/or make decisions from a spiritual perspective.” Rather, Participant E5 said, “The faith of the leader can be observed through the level of service and how they approach those that they are serving.”

Interestingly, in moving to the point that leaders do not outwardly exhibit their faith to volunteers, 80% of the case participants stated they could not recall a time when a leader was supportive of their faith. However, the remaining 20% were able to share more insight on the topic. Participant E5 reflected on this type of support, as well as the associated influence:

Doing work in a faith community, as well as the government work that I do in the community, it has been so refreshing when another leader can recognize me by my faith. They won't ask me to do certain things. They have been very accommodating and very respectful of who I am.

While a leaders' faith is not readily on display in nonprofit organizations, when presented, it may enhance the leader-volunteer relationship. In such a scenario, the strengthened relationship may potentially further ingratiate the volunteer to the organization.

RQ2. What obstacles do volunteers encounter while pondering commitment to a nonprofit organization?

Participant selections offered in response to question 3 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire addressed obstacles encountered by volunteers. The question highlighted factors that are traditionally recognized to have presented challenges to volunteers. As such, each participant, based on their experiences discontinuing volunteering, was asked to select from a list of prescribed reasons for discontinuing.

Table 9.*Obstacles Experienced by Engaged Volunteers*

Statement	Justifications					
If you have ever discontinued volunteering, what was the reason?	Residence Change	Family Circumstances	Work Status Change	Lack of Interest	Lack of Time	Project Ended
Affirmative Responses	20%	0%	0%	0%	20%	40%

Though the case includes only those individuals who are currently involved in volunteer activities, it's safe to assume that at some point they've experienced a situation in which they've thought about discontinuing their volunteering efforts. In response to the question, 40% of the volunteers stated they stopped volunteering because a project had ended. Then, 20% of the volunteers stated their association with the previous organization terminated because of a residence change or a lack of time. The final 20% of the volunteers insinuated that there had never been a discontinuation of volunteering efforts.

RQ2a. How do leadership actions and behaviors assist volunteers in overcoming the obstacles? Participant statements made in response to questions 3 and 6 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to ways that leadership actions may counter the effects of volunteer obstacles. The interview questions examined potential factors of volunteer motivation. It then explored the motivations to understand methods that may be used to catapult volunteers beyond the obstacles.

The research participants confirmed that there are a multitude of obstacles that may impinge on an individual's ability to engage in volunteer activities. But despite the potential long lists, they were able to narrow it down to a handful of causes. First, conflicts of interest can have a momentous effect. In a scenario where a volunteer is in position to secure personal benefits from decisions made by the nonprofit organization or when the volunteer's professional

affiliations are incompatible with those of the nonprofit organization, the volunteer may have to be recused from specific activities, as well as be forced to make a determination regarding their level of commitment.

Second, many volunteer entities, especially governmental nonprofit organizations, maintain stipulations that an individual must reside in the same county of the organization. Hence, living in a world where one's residency is often transient, it's not uncommon for there to be individuals who are not qualified to volunteer. Such an obstacle is commonly met with a restricted number of resolution options.

Interestingly, while the question specifically inquired about challenges external to the organization, the volunteers also referenced internal obstacles. For example, some responses indicated that the work performed was publicly criticized. Such an occurrence may cause the volunteer to devalue the worth of the organization and/or the work being performed.

Additionally, the proposed budget in many nonprofit organizations is not sufficient to support the work being performed. This means that the organization will have to eliminate resources or request volunteers to assist in funding the efforts. Participant E2 shared, "It can become a little bit frustrating. You kind of have to remind yourself of the space that you're in and the mission that you're trying to complete."

In the face of such obstacles, the question pondered is what leaders can do to minimize the effects. To this point, the participants did not view leaders as being a motivational factor in their commitment to nonprofit organizations. They did not make decisions based on the leaders' viewpoints and/or with the leaders in mind. Rather, overcoming the obstacles was personal and directly related to one's intestinal fortitude. Participant E2 stated that volunteering is a personal

“mission.” Added to the statement were thoughts from Participant E4: “I’ve got to do something; I have to give something back!”

RQ2b. How does the faith of volunteers assist in overcoming the obstacles?

Participant statements offered in response to questions 11 and 12 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to volunteer faith. The questions revolved around the role of faith and challenges related to it. It explored the impact that volunteers believe their personal beliefs have in various facets of their life. Sixty percent of the participants indicated their faith had never been challenged while volunteering; however, the remaining 40% shed some light on the topic with examples. The identified challenges arose from two sources. First, the emotions surrounding daunting decisions can lead one to ponder whether their volunteering efforts are truly of God’s will. Participant E2 revealed that, as a volunteer, having to release or terminate the executive director, who was also the founder of the organization, was an emotionally arduous task. It was a decision riddled with doubt and introspection. However, the belief that the appropriate decisions are being made allowed the participant to stand strong.

Second, though volunteers may join the same organization with the intent of achieving the same goals, it does not guarantee that each will endorse the same path to reaching the stated goals. Hence, volunteers often challenge each other’s viewpoints. Participant E5 stated that opposing viewpoints from fellow volunteers often challenged their faith. For example, there were times when questions about the implementation of new community initiatives were the best course of action, and if support would be offered by other volunteers. The participant added, “I’m a Christian who believes in the act. . . . It’s about my relationship with Christ. I’ve been challenged on so many occasions.”

To this point, 40% of participants were steadfast in their belief that faith had no significance in the ability to overcome obstacles and remain committed to a nonprofit organization; however, the remaining 60% insisted their faith was of vital importance.

Participant E2 addressed the topic by stating,

I have lived my adult life by “to who much is given, much is required.” So, I think it is your responsibility, when given opportunities to do so, to help. I was molded by my mother and I just kind of do it as a natural reaction. But I do know that it is faith based.

Participant E5 concludes the discussion by offering the assertion that volunteering,

allows us to really explore what we believe in. You can go to church all day long and you can be in the word [Bible], but until you believe it, and then you actually live it, there’s no substance to it. So, for me, with my faith, if I say I want to be a servant, if I say I want to be a follower of Christ, then I have to go into areas that are not the most desirable communities. I have to eat with those who do not look like me.

These participants acknowledged that everyone, at some point, comes to a crossroad where they must decide whether to do what may be easy or to act according to their faith.

RQ3. What qualities do volunteers believe enhance leadership efforts during recruitment and retention processes?

Participant selections offered in response to statement 17 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire address factors that may enhance leadership efforts. The statements correspond to characteristics and actions that leaders may be employed. Each participant was asked to affirm attributes that support retention processes.

Table 10.*Engaged Volunteer Assessments of Leadership Characteristics*

Statement	Affirmative Response
The leader is open to hearing new ideas.	100%
The leader is open to changing processes.	100%
The leader is open to discussing goals.	100%
The leader is available for consultation on problems.	100%
The leader is readily accessible.	100%
The leader listens to suggestions from others.	100%
The leader encourages me.	100%
The leader assists in doing the work.	80%

The statements were designed to identify the skills with which are characteristics of effective leaders. According to the responses, the participants unanimously indicated that the leaders are approachable, flexible, accessible, listen, and encouraging. In fact, the only area where there was not complete agreement was that leaders assist in performing the necessary tasks.

RQ3a. What do volunteers believe to be a leader's role during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 7 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to viewpoints regarding the role of leaders during volunteer recruitment and retention. The question requests participants to reflect upon their personal experiences. This reflection focuses on specific events in which leaders acted in ways that aligned with productive volunteer recruitment and retention efforts.

The participants identified several characteristics that could be deployed by leaders to better promote recruitment and retention efforts. First, and above all else, leaders must have

charisma. They must possess a level of charm that attracts and inspires others to perform. In essence, leaders should be people with whom volunteers want to be associated and who they want to follow. Second, leaders must be enthusiastic about the work being performed. This enthusiasm should be infectious and motivate others to share their time, expertise, and money. Third, leaders must have a plan of action. They must know what they want to do and how they are going to get there. In addition to having the plan, they must be skilled at communicating the plan to others, as well as at transitioning the plan from paper to action. While implementing the plan, leaders should be willing to roll their sleeves up and join side by side with volunteers to complete the tasks. Fourth, leaders must be observant. They should be able to identify areas of concern, as well as to comprehend the strengths, weaknesses, and viewpoints of the volunteers.

RQ3b. What type of training do volunteers suggest should be offered to leaders prior to initiating recruitment and retention efforts? Participant statements made in response to question 15 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to training that should be offered to leaders. Question 15 was an open-ended question that was developed from preceding questions to ascertain opportunities that should be made available to leaders. It asked the participants to pinpoint any ideas about recruitment and retention, whether directly related to training or not.

While leaders should be armed with a host of skills to be successful in the recruitment and retention of volunteers, there are three that are paramount to these efforts. First, leaders should enroll in an orientation program that trains them on skills to successfully lead an organization. Included in the presentations should be the importance of delegation of responsibilities and the creation of defined roles for each volunteer. Second, the participants believed that leaders should be required to participate in programs focused on enhancing their

personal skills. The programs should focus on leaders being authentic and enthusiastic in their interactions with volunteers. Third, a training program should be offered regarding personal interactions. It must be noted that there is not a one-size-fits-all philosophy when it comes to guiding people. Rather, volunteers enter nonprofit organizations with various backgrounds, experiences, and desires. Therefore, leaders should be prepared to offer different approaches to different types of people.

RQ3c. What resources do volunteers believe should be available to leaders during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 9 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews relate to resources that should be made available to leaders. It examined the tools that are made available in faith-based organizations versus those not predicated on faith. It required participants to consider the differences between the types of tools offered to identify best practices that may be adopted.

The participants indicated that the primary resource that should be made available is one that leaders already possess. That is, while each leader should be able to eloquently articulate the mission, purpose, and goals of the organization, they should also be armed with personal stories and testimonies. Volunteers need to be familiar with the policies and operations of the organization, but real-life narratives have the potential to draw them closer to the organization. Hence, the ability to draw testimonials from those who have served is integral to expanding ties to the organization and validating the importance of the work being performed.

Case 2. Non-engaged Volunteers

The research participants in this case consisted of individuals who were not currently engaged as volunteers but had previously volunteered in a nonprofit organization that is not predicated on faith. The case included five research participants whose firsthand experiences of

nonprofit operations, the impact of leaders, and the importance of faith had been obtained within the past 5 years. The data collected was summarized and used to address each research question. Moreover, the responses were condensed to identify emerging themes on the topic.

RQ1. What interactions do leaders have with volunteers in nonprofit organizations?

Participant selections offered in response to questions 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 18 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaires addressed the roles that leaders are likely to perform in a nonprofit organization. The questions related to actions performed within the leader's formal capacity and volunteer expectations of those actions. To develop an understanding of the topic, each participant was asked to affirm the scenarios that were applicable to their personal experiences as a volunteer.

Table 11.

Non-Engaged Volunteer Interactions with Leaders

STATEMENT	AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE
A leader first asked you to volunteer.	20%
I became a volunteer because a nonprofit organization leader encouraged me.	60%
I want to continue my volunteer work because I have a good relationship with my nonprofit organization leaders.	60%
Volunteers should receive recognition through letters from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	80%
Volunteers should receive recognition through visits from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	40%
Volunteers should receive recognition through phone calls from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	40%
The leader of my nonprofit organization performed at a high level.	100%
I expect my leaders to operate from a place of faith.	40%

Across the board, the affirmative responses in relation to the aforementioned statements were lower amongst the participants who were no longer engaged in volunteer activities than amongst currently engaged participants. Only 20% of the participants indicated they were initially approached by the organization's leader regarding volunteering efforts. This lack of familiarity or interaction with the leaders did not impact the participants' opinions of leaders, as 100% of them believed their leader performed at a high level. However, the viewpoint did not significantly impact commitment levels, as only 60% of participants stated the leader either encouraged them or that their relationship had any influence. Furthermore, the participants had limited expectations for interactions with leaders when assigned tasks were accomplished.

RQ1a. How do these interactions influence volunteer recruitment? Participant statements made in response to question 5 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews cover the extent to which volunteer-leader interactions influenced the volunteers' recruitment. The question examined feelings of self-worth. It asked participants to reflect upon their emotions while volunteering. In doing so, the inquiry centered on how leaders made volunteers feel.

Usually, leaders make volunteers feel valued through common courtesies. These common courtesies consist of verbal acknowledgements of the work performed. For example, words and phrases such as "thank you," "we appreciate you," or "we'd love to see you at our next event" seem to be the acceptable form of praise for many volunteers. However, there are times when the organizations are able to do more to enhance volunteer retention.

While nonprofit organizations operate on limited budgets, certain allowances can be made. The allowances often manifest in the form of refreshments. Additionally, some organizations, in a maneuver to promote volunteering and add value, allow the children of volunteers to attend the events. In such instances, older children may be allowed to participate in

the activities, while younger children gather in a supervised area to play games or watch television.

Participant N5 added,

Some folks provide breakfast and refreshments. They allow us to bring our kids there. They have a little area for kids to hang out. While we do community service, some kids are actually allowed to help, so that's a big help. A lot of my soldiers have kids and they're a certain age. They're allowed to help, but they also had little kids there. We can see them watch TV cartoons. They have snacks and drinks in the vending machines. So, we like it.

Generally, volunteers do not expect to be given lavish gifts from nonprofit organizations; however, when opportunities are taken to accommodate personal needs, volunteers are appreciative and more likely to participate in activities.

RQ1b. How do these interactions encourage volunteer retention? Participant statements made in response to questions 4 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to the interactions between both entities. The question explored the volunteer's personal reflections on the connection between their desires and the organization's leadership. It placed additional emphasis on whether the interactions encouraged volunteer retention and if so, how this was achieved.

The participants shared that they do not believe leaders play a significant role in volunteer engagement. Rather, these participants believed that one's actions begin with their own personal wants and desires and that while others may have some influence, it does not play a significant role in the decision-making process. Hence, the participants believed a volunteer commitment is based upon factors of intrinsic motivation.

RQ1c. How does the faith of volunteers influence the interactions? Participant statements made in response to questions 8, 10, and 13 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews relate to the ways that faith impacts volunteers. The topic was initiated through inquiries

associated with aspects of the leader's and organization's faith. The narrative then transitioned to the volunteer's faith and the need for support from the organization.

The volunteers were completely unified in their response to the question. While not currently involved in volunteer activities, there was not a time they could recall when a leader needed to be supportive of their faith. Although they believed that their leaders operated from a place of faith, there was little reflective evidence to support the collective viewpoint. There were times when leaders would offer prayer at the beginning of a meeting or share a seemingly spiritually based personal testimony during it. But, other than that, there was little tangible evidence of leaders operating with faith. Rather, it was more a feeling or sense that volunteers possessed.

The research participants noted obvious yet distinct differences between the missions of the organizations. Faith-based organizations (i.e., churches) utilize monikers of spirituality. These organizations are straightforward in their placement of faith in leading organizational initiatives. However, once the stated mission is removed from the equation, the visions and ways of implementing the mission are the same between the two types of organizations. There is a sense of people just wanting to do good deeds.

Research Participant N3 concluded the discussion by saying,

You have folks who do things. They are motivated spiritually to do things, whether it be from up above, their pastor, or their congregation. With that being said, you also have folks who may not have the backing from the government, the donations aren't coming in, and they are trying to do anything they can to make a difference. I think to some degree they're doing it from a spiritual place, from the bottom of their heart. To me, it is still a little bit spiritual in itself.

Unless overtly stated, it may be a challenge to determine another person's level of faith. As such, people naturally make assumptions based on observations. The observations assign meaning to

the volunteer work being done, how it is carried out, and the likely reasons for the volunteer performing the acts.

RQ2. What obstacles do volunteers encounter while pondering commitment to a nonprofit organization?

Participant selections offered in response to question 3 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire address obstacles encountered by volunteers. The question highlighted factors that are traditionally recognized to have presented challenges to volunteers. As such, each participant, based on their experiences, was asked to select their reasons for discontinuing volunteering from a list of predetermined reasons.

Table 12.

Obstacles Experienced by Non-Engaged Volunteers

Statement		Justifications				
If you have ever discontinued volunteering, what was the reason?	Residence Change	Family Circumstances	Work Status Change	Lack of Interest	Lack of Time	Project Ended
Affirmative Responses	40%	0%	20%	0%	60%	20%

As this case revolves around volunteers who are no longer engaged, there was a reasonable expectation that more and a greater accumulation of obstacles would be observed. To this point, 60% of participants confessed as the lack of time as being a major obstacle. This was followed by residence changes at 40%, and work status change and the conclusion of the project, both at 20%.

RQ2a. How do leadership actions and behaviors assist volunteers in overcoming the obstacles? Participant statements made in response to questions 3 and 6 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews demonstrate ways that leadership actions may counter the effects of

volunteer obstacles. The interview questions examined potential factors of volunteer motivation. It then explored the motivations to understand methods that may be used to catapult volunteers beyond the obstacles.

Eighty percent of the participants stated their faith had not been challenged while volunteering. However, the remaining 20% offered a different lens with which to view the topic. These participants showed that the type of volunteer activity plays a crucial role in the impact on one's emotions and faith. Participant N4 shared,

When you are a volunteer firefighter and you see different kinds of things, it does make you question why things happen or why this happened to this person or that person. So, I would say yeah it had; it has been questioned because of it.

The participants experienced three types of challenges while volunteering. First, they faced interorganizational challenges, which resulted from a lack of operational logistics and/or resources. The issues resulted in volunteer inability to comprehend organizational protocols or in volunteers having to reach into their own pockets to secure funds in support of organizational initiatives. Quite often, the challenges were not anticipated and were more than they are willing to accept.

Research Participant N1 stated,

I mean challenges always come with logistics or not enough product for what you're trying to serve to a certain group. I mean, you just, you get it done. Whether you have to run to the store and get some more stuff or maybe you have to do a little bit more; stay a little longer than you intended, but it always gets done 'cause it has to get done.

While volunteers seek to assist the organizations wherever possible, leaders must consider the burdens placed on volunteers and the limits of their goodwill.

Second, they faced challenges external to and out of the control of the nonprofit organization. The greatest, and most obvious, example of this related to the current environment. Volunteers remained hesitant to live their lives in the same manner they'd done previously.

COVID-19 has caused individuals to reconsider their actions and the people with whom they will be physically interacting with during volunteering, as well as the possible ramifications. As such, volunteering has become a risk that many volunteers are not willing to accept.

Participant N2 shared,

In my experience, the only thing that I would say that made me hesitant about volunteering would be the pandemic. Once the pandemic hit, I think the organization kind of scaled back on the in-person volunteers, out of an abundance of just making sure everybody was safe from the pandemic; not knowing if people had they been tested. That was the only thing that made me hesitant, and it was 'cause they scaled back.

While creating plans for organizational activities, leaders must consider the environment. In doing so, they must develop an environment that makes volunteers feel safe. Regardless of their viewpoint about the importance of the work being performed, few volunteers will engage in activities where there may be a significant physical risk.

Third, for volunteers who were willing to contend with a COVID-saturated environment, they had to address other external realities. Each volunteer had to deal with their own personal responsibilities. This included, but was not limited to, factors such as work or school. Additionally, other factors, such as changes in living arrangements (i.e., changes in residency or military deployment) could significantly alter availability. Participant N5 stated, "With schoolwork, that's really my only thing that will stop me right now. And I do summer school. So, my schedule is pretty busy. But when I have free time or whenever, I can help."

Interestingly, regardless of the types of challenges managed, the participants experienced the same outcomes. As individuals who are not currently engaged in volunteer activities, they had been unable to overcome the obstacles despite any encouragement or motivation that may have been offered by leaders. As such, the ability of volunteers to overcome challenges requires a two-pronged approach. First is the volunteers' personal experiences and viewpoints.

Participant N2 stated,

I think for me, coming up, I didn't have a lot and seeing my parents work hard because they didn't finish the 8th grade. So, me wanting to be better than they were and then when you get to a point where you have surpassed what your parents had, then you see other people that are going without and you. . .for me, I just thought about the times where we didn't have a lot of stuff. So, when I was able to get myself situated, then being able to do something, anything, and seeing it for the first time really got me excited and made me passionate about wanting to help people.

In many cases, volunteers need to have an emotional tie to the organization, or the work being performed. This emotional tie creates a bond between the organization and the volunteer.

Next, motivation must be cultivated and guided by the organization's leaders. To be successful, leaders must be able to fuse the volunteers' desire to spread goodwill with their feelings of appreciation. While volunteers want to make a difference in the world by helping others, the work performed can be exhausting and require skillsets that the volunteers may or may not have fully developed. Once these motivational efforts are initiated, leaders must acknowledge them. Upon devoting time to a nonprofit organization, volunteers do not want to feel as though they are being used. They need to know that their efforts were productive, needed, and appreciated. Therefore, the ability of leaders to express sincere gratitude is of vital importance. It is through this acknowledgement that the likelihood of volunteer commitment increases.

RQ2b. How does the faith of volunteers assist in overcoming the obstacles?

Questions 11 and 12 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews revolved around the role of volunteers' faith and challenges related to it. The question explored the impact that volunteers believe their personal beliefs have on their volunteerism.

The research participants were mixed on their responses regarding faith and its impact on volunteerism. Sixty percent of the participants indicated that faith played no role in their

volunteer activity. In other words, it was not a determinant in their selection of organizations and/or decision to remain committed. However, the remaining 40% offered an opposing viewpoint. They stated that attending church was a common activity when they were reared. Hence, faith was an integral component of their life. It was at the forefront of everything they did and provided them the discernment to recognize it was their responsibility to help others in need.

Participant N4 stated faith

plays a big role. I believe in giving back to the community, and you know, growing up in church, we were always helping each other. So, we kind of spread beyond our church to make sure you help the next person out.

While most nonprofit organizations have a mission, when intertwined with faith, the organization assumes a greater purpose.

RQ3. What qualities do volunteers believe enhance leadership efforts during recruitment and retention processes?

Participant selections offered in response to statement 17 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire address factors that may enhance leadership efforts. The statements reflect characteristics and actions that may be employed by leaders. As such, each participant was asked to draw upon their experiences to affirm attributes that support their perspectives.

Table 13.

Non-Engaged Volunteer Assessments of Leadership Characteristics

Statement	Affirmative Response
The leader is open to hearing new ideas.	100%
The leader is open to changing processes.	100%
The leader is open to discussing goals.	100%
The leader is available for consultation on problems.	100%

The leader is readily accessible.	100%
The leader listens to suggestions from others.	100%
The leader encourages me.	100%
The leader assists in doing the work.	100%

Designed to identify the skills with which are characteristics of effective leaders, the participants indicated that the leaders were approachable, flexible, accessible, listen, encouraging, and assisted in doing the work.

RQ3a. What do volunteers believe to be a leader's role during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 7 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews share viewpoints regarding the role of leaders during volunteer recruitment and retention. The question requested participants to reflect upon their personal experiences. This reflection focused on specific events in which leaders displayed actions that aligned with productive volunteer recruitment and retention efforts.

The participants indicated that leaders should be good people. They should be people that others enjoy being around. Being a good person is associated with being honest, caring, and passionate. Participant N5 added, "You have to be a team leader. You have to be passionate about being a leader. Just be a person that somebody wants to be around. And before you can be a leader, you have to be able to follow."

Next, there should be a desire to guide volunteers. Leaders should recognize that each volunteer is different and comes to the organization with their own set of perspectives and interpretations. Therefore, leaders, regardless of their personal viewpoints, must be clear and unbiased in their interactions. They must be able to offer productive criticisms through teachable communications that do not disparage volunteers. Finally, leaders should be hard workers. They

should want to join in on the work being performed. Participant N2 validated this viewpoint by stating, “A leader is one who is hard working.” Participant N4 said, “All that matters is they’re out there helping the community and being visible.”

RQ3b. What type of training do volunteers suggest should be offered to leaders prior to initiating recruitment and retention efforts? Question 15 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews asked about training that should be offered to leaders. It was an open-ended question that was developed from preceding questions to discover opportunities that should be made available to leaders. It requested the participants to pinpoint any ideas whether directly related to training or not.

Prior to discussions regarding training for recruitment and retention, it must be noted that there is no training or skillsets that will assist a leader in these efforts if the volunteer is not willing to be recruited and/or retained. However, if a willing audience is identified, a leader’s focus should be placed on advertising and marketing. Most people are made aware of volunteering opportunities via personal references. However, more can be accomplished if organizations use other ways to make people aware. Participant N4 shared,

I see everybody knows about Saint Jude’s Hospital and the March of Dimes, and the things they do. You know they’re out there because you see them on TV. But some of these organizations are not on TV. I feel like if they were, organizations would probably get a lot more volunteering help.

It’s understandable that large nonprofit organizations can secure sizeable numbers of volunteers and collect vast amount of funds; they have national marketing campaigns and are often supported by for-profit organizations.

Participant N4 continued,

Just probably being out there a little bit more because some folks may not know if you know you’re in the community. So, I would say, more marketing. Being able to relate to everybody, be able to tap into everybody that’s out there. Like through social media. Like

hey, we're out here and we need volunteers if anybody is available. You know how it is with Facebook or Instagram.

While most nonprofit organizations do not possess the capital to bring attention to their missions through television and radio advertisements, they do have other mechanisms at their disposal. Social media represents an inexpensive and practical tool that can accomplish the same goals.

Finally, leaders should receive training in reference to skills development. The focus of the skills enhancement should be to improve personal skills. An example of this could be through the development of listening and delegation curriculums. Participant N1 shared, "I would love to see more workshops. That way, when you get volunteers, you are better able to pique their interests through the skills."

RQ3c. What resources do volunteers believe should be available to leaders during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 9 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to resources that should be made available to leaders. The question examined the tools that are made available in faith-based organizations versus those not predicated on faith. It required participants to consider the differences to identify best practices that may be adapted.

Eighty percent of the participants believed there is no difference between faith-based and organizations not predicated on faith. Rather, what's important is for each organization to have a solid structure, meaning the leaders should have access to a governing body that is able to provide finances and human capital, if needed. Participant N4 stated, "there's no difference to me. They're both doing the same thing. The non-faith-based ones are not better or worse. The faithful ones aren't better or worse."

Case 3. Faith-based Volunteers

The research participants in this case consisted of individuals who had volunteered through faith-based organizations. It included five research participants whose firsthand experiences of nonprofit operations and the impact of leaders had been directly influenced by attributes of faith. The data collected was summarized and used to address each research question. Moreover, the responses were condensed to identify emerging themes on the topic.

RQ1. What interactions do leaders have with volunteers in nonprofit organizations?

Participant selections offered in response to statements 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 18 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaires addressed the role that leaders are likely to perform in a nonprofit organization. The questions related to actions performed within the leader's formal capacity and volunteer expectations of those actions. To develop an understanding of the topic, each participant was asked to affirm the scenarios that were applicable to their personal experiences as a volunteer.

Table 14.*Faith-Based Volunteer Interactions with Leaders*

Statement	Affirmative Response
A leader first asked you to volunteer.	40%
I became a volunteer because a nonprofit organization leader encouraged me.	100%
I want to continue my volunteer work because I have a good relationship with my nonprofit organization leaders.	100%
Volunteers should receive recognition through letters from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	40%
Volunteers should receive recognition through visits from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	20%
Volunteers should receive recognition through phone calls from the leader of the nonprofit organization.	60%
The leader of my nonprofit organization performed at a high level.	100%
I expect my leaders to operate from a place of faith.	60%

Responses from participants who had volunteered in organizations predicated on faith were in some ways similar to participants in the other cases. As with the other cases, a low percentage (i.e., 40%) of participants were initially approached by an organization's leader. Also, though higher than other cases, only 60% of faith volunteers expected the leaders of faith-based organizations to operate from a place of faith. However, the participants of faith-based organizations unanimously state that their leaders performed at a high level, that they were encouraging, and that the volunteers committed to the organization due to the relationship. Additionally, despite the relationships, the volunteers expressed fewer expectations for interactions with leaders when identified tasks had been completed.

RQ1a. How do these interactions influence volunteer recruitment? Participant statements made in response to question 5 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to the

level of influence experienced during volunteer-leader interactions. The question examined feelings of self-worth. It asked participants to reflect upon their emotions while volunteering. In doing so, the inquiry centered on how leaders made volunteers feel.

First and foremost, the ultimate value of volunteering arises from the benefits observed in and feedback received from those in the community. Generally, volunteers are aware of the work that needs to be performed. In completing their assigned tasks, the volunteers feel some level of personal value. And while the participants acknowledged that there may be some volunteers who clamor for public or elaborate forms of recognition, due to this personal sense of volunteering, copious amounts of recognition are not needed from the organization or its leaders. Rather, a simple “thank you” is impactful. Those two words allow volunteers to know that the work performed was noticed and appreciated.

RQ1b. How do these interactions encourage volunteer retention? Participant statements made in response to question 4 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to the interactions between both entities. The question explored the volunteer’s personal reflection of the connection between their desires and the organization’s leadership. It placed additional emphasis on whether the interactions encouraged volunteer retention and, if so, how was this achieved.

According to the participants, there are two methods used to encourage volunteers. First, it’s important for leaders to model the behavior they want to see from volunteers. Participants mentioned that they’d been able to work side by side with and/or observe the work performed by leaders. Participant F1 recalled that in doing so, “he brought me out to deliver some food to people in [a low-income housing community]. That was just one of many examples of me watching him over the years just tireless working at providing food for the community.” The

participant added that the leader was always “making sure people were straight and that they had what they needed. He definitely was a big example of leaders within that nonprofit that impacted me and motivated me a lot.”

There were multiple sentiments that supported this viewpoint. Participant F2 expounded on the topic:

Their enthusiasm; how much work they put into the organization. Their joy; it wasn't no attitude, nothing negative, everything was positive. And it just made me want to help more and maybe want to do more. And I like independence. It may be a weird thing, but I like independence. I like to see leadership being able to control their organization, control their events, being able to delegate, and having some type of structure. It wasn't out of whack, it wasn't discombobulated. Everything just ran smooth.

There's an adage that a picture is worth a thousand words. The saying is relevant to volunteerism as being able to observe the physical work performed by a leader speaks volumes.

Second, leaders can encourage volunteers through activities that engage them. They can entice volunteers by speaking to their interests and utilizing their various skillsets for the betterment of the organization. Participant F5 shared,

I was always that person to be involved in in that piece of it. So, I was pulled to the table as an active participant to work administratively. It's been my strong point, being nurtured, gaining knowledge in that way.

There is a high level of satisfaction achieved when volunteers can use their previously developed skills for the betterment of the organization. Not only does it add value to the organization and community, but it validates the volunteers' self-worth.

RQ1c. How does the faith of volunteers influence the interactions? Participant statements made in response to questions 8, 10, and 13 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews reflect the ways that faith impacted volunteers. The topic was initiated through inquiries

associated with aspects of the leader's and organization's faith. The narrative then transitioned to the volunteer's faith and the need for support from the organization.

The research participants agreed that there was never a time when a leader of a nonprofit organization needed to be supportive of their faith. Despite this admission, they intimated that when offering service through a faith-based organization, they expected that those in leadership positions would be individuals of faith. However, they did not expect for the leaders to wear their faith on their sleeves. Instead of openly displaying attributes of their faith, leaders should demonstrate quality characteristics in their interactions with volunteers. The research participants identified multiple traits that leaders should maintain.

First, leaders should be fair or have an ability to treat everyone in an equitable fashion. Second, there should be some semblance of intestinal fortitude or the ability to remain true to their word and stand strong in their values. Participant F1 stated, "It's really easy for environments to be created or for people to challenge your morals and your values." The leaders "were able to stand strong and were able to not be pushed around. They were able to run everything smoothly within our volunteer efforts. So, it is a leadership quality exhibited that every good leader should have."

The participants agreed that in its simplest form, differences in relation to the mission are obvious. That is, faith-based organizations maintain missions that explicitly mention some aspect of faith, while other nonprofit organizations are specifically focused on community with no mention of faith. However, true aspects of the mission are very subtle. The real differences relate to the way the missions are carried out, which is dependent upon its leaders. If the individuals leading the organization do not make plans or manage the organization with aspects of faith

intermingled, there is generally no apparent difference between the missions of the two types of organizations.

RQ2. What obstacles do volunteers encounter while pondering commitment to a nonprofit organization?

Participant selections offered in response to question 3 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire address obstacles encountered by volunteers. The question highlighted factors that are traditionally recognized to have presented challenges to volunteers. As such, each participant, based on their experiences discontinuing volunteering, was asked to select from a list of prescribed reasons for discontinuing.

Table 15.

Obstacles Experienced by Faith-Based Volunteers

Statement		Justifications				
If you have ever discontinued volunteering, what was the reason?	Residence Change	Family Circumstances	Work Status Change	Lack of Interest	Lack of Time	Project Ended
Affirmative Responses	20%	0%	20%	0%	20%	20%

As observed with engaged volunteers in Case 1, participants who volunteered in faith-based organizations offered limited examples of volunteering obstacles. Twenty percent of participants acknowledged previously discontinuing their volunteering activities due to multiple challenges (i.e., change in residence, changes in work status, lack of time, and a completed project).

RQ2a. How do leadership actions and behaviors assist volunteers in overcoming the obstacles? Participant statements made in response to questions 3 and 6 of the nonprofit

volunteer interviews correspond to ways that leadership actions may restrict the effects of volunteer obstacles. The interview questions examined potential factors of volunteer motivation. It then explored the motivations to understand methods that may be used to catapult volunteers beyond the obstacles.

There are multiple factors that impact volunteers of nonprofit organizations. First, personal interest or responsibilities are the main culprit in derailing volunteer plans. Though volunteers enjoy giving of their time, they recognize that it is secondary to their responsibilities related to work and family, which take precedence and must be stable prior to any form of volunteerism.

Participant F2 offered an additional perspective on the topic:

Yeah, my personal life. I mean volunteering can be overwhelming because you want to do so much, and you know you still have to deal with your nine-to-five. You still have to deal with your family. You're going out into the community; you're still working. It's volunteer work, so you don't know when those hours start and stop. And if you make yourself very open, your phone is ringing, emails are coming, people are just like I need you right now, and it's like, OK, I'll be there. You go finish dinner and say I'll be right back. So, externally it would be personal life.

Volunteerism often takes a backseat to an individuals' family and work. Once they've taken care of their family and work responsibilities there may be little time or desire to perform acts on behalf of others.

Second, Participant F5 stated, "One thing that would deter or that may have deterred me in the past was a lack of organization." The participant continued, "It's just poor organization; poor leadership. . . . Something that would deter me, it would definitely be the lack of organization or just lack of professionalism." The structure and/or culture of the organization can present challenges to volunteers. Due to personal involvements, these individuals generally have a limited amount of time to offer nonprofit organizations. As such, volunteers expect activities to be thoughtfully planned and strategically implemented. When volunteers experience

activities that are not organized, it signals to them that the organization and the tasks being performed are not worthy of their time, thereby drastically reducing volunteer retention.

The research participants noted several dynamics that motivated them to remain active with a nonprofit organization. First, there was an intrinsic desire to do good. Volunteers wanted to make a difference in people's lives, whether it was talking to them, serving food, or doing various other jobs. To this point, Participant F5 stated, "my biggest motivation is just being able to help others and seeing that there are others that are less fortunate than myself and just the internal feeling that you feel when you are helping someone that is a little less fortunate than yourself." Participant F2 added, "Serving, helping, being able to help, having the tools to be able to give back, I love it." The participant continued,

When I see there's a lack, especially in our low-income families and neighborhoods, I always want to help. I want to make sure they are good. . . . I love to help. I love to get my hands dirty, and I'm a hands-on person. So, I love to be in the mix of stuff.

The intrinsic feelings of joy resulting from performing acts of goodwill are unmatched. It causes people to do things they wouldn't attempt to perform under normal circumstances.

Another motivation is being surrounded by friends or like-minded individuals whom you like to be around. People naturally are drawn to people with whom they share similar interests. Therefore, the ability to volunteer side-by-side with friends makes the experience more enjoyable. Additionally, having this person there increases accountability. Hence, the trust that's shared between the individuals is extended to the organization. As this trust is extended to the organization, opportunities arise for greater levels of personal affinity with the organization to be experienced. Thereby, increasing volunteer commitment and outcomes.

RQ2b. How does the faith of volunteers assist in overcoming the obstacles?

Participants' statements offered in response to questions 11 and 12 of the nonprofit volunteer

interviews correspond to volunteer faith. The questions revolved around the role of faith and challenges related to it. It explored the impact that volunteers believe their personal beliefs have on various facets of their life.

Eighty percent of the research participants could not recall a scenario in which their faith had been challenged through their volunteer efforts. However, the remaining 20% were able to shed some light through a related illustration. An example provided by Participant F2 expressed doubt regarding whether the volunteer efforts would be successful:

It's the small things that challenge my faith. It's not even the big things. It's not even about the event coming together. It's little things, like are people coming? Did they hear about the event? It's not even the big things, because the big things I can control. It's just the people coming. And trusting and having faith, not knowing me, to support or to think that I'll be able to provide what's needed for the events.

Despite the lack of overall recollections, the participants in this case all agreed that faith has underscored everything they've done as volunteers. For some, they were indoctrinated with faith at a very young age. It is something that gave meaning to their actions. As such, the ultimate expectation was that their works brought glory to God.

Participant F4 established the foundation of the collective perspective. He shared,

My parents were very strong in the Christian faith, very involved in the church, and we really had no choice in being around them and being involved in what they were bringing to the table. It has really strengthened my faith. Through the years, even since they have gone on, I wanted to make sure that I continued to work and do the things they were very passionately involved. Faith has played a very strong role in that.

Very often, when people have fond memories of childhood experiences, they reminisce and glorify the recollections. This has the potential to make them want to re-enact the activities in adulthood to regain or develop similar feelings.

Participant F1 added to the discussion:

That was around the time when I started really understanding what it means to be disciples for God. I think that was a time where I realized that volunteering is . . . about

discipleship and serving God's children. I don't know if I can think of a certain verse in the Bible off the top of my head that backs it up, but faith was huge and factored in my motivation to volunteer as hard as I did.

As the positive experiences are blended with a thoughtful comprehension of faith and the purpose of serving others, the attraction to volunteerism is strengthened.

Research Participant F5 concluded the discussion. Faith is

almost something that you do without question. It's almost one of those things that is innate. I just get joy out of doing stuff for other people. I know that it's the right thing to do. I don't do it with the expectation of getting anything in return, so that way, I think matters the most because I know I'm doing it for the right reasons. I just know that if I'm pleased, then hey, the God I serve is pleased and everybody else is pleased 'cause I go in there with the right frame of mind, the right heart and just know that I'm there to make a difference. I'm there not because I have to, but more so, because I want to.

At a certain point, volunteerism performed by persons of faith becomes a calling that represents a greater significance than the work performed.

RQ3. What qualities do volunteers believe enhance leadership efforts during recruitment and retention processes?

Participant selections offered in response to statement 17 of the nonprofit volunteer questionnaire addressed factors that may enhance leadership efforts. The statements correspond to characteristics and actions that may be employed by leaders. Participants were asked to draw upon their experiences to affirm attributes that support their perspectives.

Table 16.*Faith-Based Volunteer Assessments of Leadership Characteristics*

Statement	Affirmative Response
The leader is open to hearing new ideas.	100%
The leader is open to changing processes.	100%
The leader is open to discussing goals.	100%
The leader is available for consultation on problems.	100%
The leader is readily accessible.	100%
The leader listens to suggestions from others.	100%
The leader encourages me.	100%
The leader assists in doing the work.	100%

As observed in Case 2, the participants who have volunteered in faith-based organizations were in complete agreement regarding the skills with which leaders are effective. Once again, the participants indicated that the leaders were leaders approachable, flexible, and accessible and listened, encouraged, and assisted in doing the work.

RQ3a. What do volunteers believe to be a leader's role during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 7 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to viewpoints regarding the role of leaders during volunteer recruitment and retention. The question requested participants to reflect upon their personal experiences. This reflection focused on specific events in which leaders displayed actions that aligned with productive volunteer recruitment and retention efforts.

The participants expressed a host of characteristics they believed are conducive to leaders in their attempts to recruit and retain volunteers. However, there were three groupings that stood

out as having the most agreement amongst volunteers. The first grouping describes how leaders must be energetic, passionate, and inspiring. Participant F2 stated,

You have to have personality. You have to be motivated, you have to be energetic, and you have to be youthful. You can be 21 or you can be 81; you still have to be that that kid at heart. You still have that kid like mind, but you know how to turn it off and turn it back on.

While volunteers are called to service, they are attracted to leaders who are engaging and able to bring the organization to life through personal stories and testimonies.

Second, leaders should possess a desire to lead by example. Participant F5 stated there must be a

willingness to step in and assist volunteers themselves. I think that to me means a lot. When I think about the professional aspect of it. When my employer, my boss, doesn't ask us to do anything that he's not willing to do himself. So, just the willingness to get in the trenches and be on the front line, right along with everybody else. To me, that says a lot about that person, their character. They're doing it because they really want to, not because they have to.

Volunteers, especially new volunteers, are appreciative when leaders take a hands-on approach to train them in the appropriate ways to perform tasks. Later, as the volunteers have gained experience, they are grateful to leaders who assist to reduce the workload.

Third, leaders must possess a combination of high morals, patience, and compassion.

Participant F1 shared,

Yeah, I think one is a fairness, you know, treating everybody fairly. If you treat everybody fairly you increase the chances of you gaining the favor of every of everyone...another trait is being true to your word or being able to stand on your values and morals, because if you're not strong on those, then you could easily be pushed around.

Participant F4 concluded the topic by stating, "patience, by all means infinite patience if you will...it's very important as you contribute to a meaningful contribution." The combination of these characteristics that volunteers respect while creating an atmosphere of trust.

RQ3b. What type of training do volunteers suggest should be offered to leaders prior to initiating recruitment and retention efforts? Participant statements made in response to question 15 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews correspond to training that should be offered to leaders. It was an open-ended question that was developed from preceding questions to discover opportunities that should be made available to leaders. It requested the participants to pinpoint any ideas whether directly related to training or not.

The participants offered several suggestions that could be used to increase volunteer recruitment and retention within nonprofit organizations. First, leaders should utilize social media platforms. Participant F4 shared that leaders must

change with the times. Make sure that you are aware of the trends of the future. It's very important if you're dealing with young, specifically, a youth or young adult organization, make sure that you know what's happening in the future, how they live, and what they do day-to-day. A communication scheme talking to people of all ages, people from different cultures, people from backgrounds different from yours that could be very important.

A part of being relatable is being able to meet people where they are. Extrapolating this philosophy to nonprofit organizations means that leaders learn to communicate with volunteers through their socially accepted and preferred mediums.

Second, leaders should be relatable, having the ability to speak to people on a level that they understand. To do so requires organizations to de-emphasize their hierarchy. Regardless of position or status within the organization, there needs to be a free flow of relationships and communication amongst the volunteers. Third, leaders should offer intentional training to volunteers. Participant F3 stated,

I think the main thing is to keep them informed of goals and make sure that you do that education piece, too, so they can't say, well, you didn't tell me this. If you give people an orientation and allow them to ask questions and be encouraging of them, I think that's a good way to reach them. Encourage people and encourage them to share with others so you'll get more volunteers, as well as retain them.

Frequently, when volunteers enter a nonprofit organization, there is no official training. Rather, the volunteers are expected to fit in where comfortable and learn while ‘on the job.’ However, different people have different learning preferences. Additionally, when left to their own devices, there is no one to fill in the knowledge gaps and/or bad habits can arise.

RQ3c. What resources do volunteers believe should be available to leaders during recruitment and retention processes? Participant statements made in response to question 9 of the nonprofit volunteer interviews pointed to resources that should be made available to leaders. It examined the tools that are made available in faith-based organizations versus those not predicated on faith. It required participants to consider the differences to identify best practices that may be adapted.

Eighty percent of the research participants in Case 3 have volunteered in both faith and non-faith-based organizations. They each agreed that there is no difference between the organizations. Each organization is focused on supporting the people in their respective communities. Rather, any differences observed are among the people who are in both types of organizations.

The individuals who assemble to complete the assigned tasks make the difference. While not always readily apparent, the volunteers of faith-based organizations tend to serve from a greater sense of honor. They volunteer for the right reasons; not to check a box or to boast about a specific task or because they are forced. Rather, they truly care. Participant F5 stated,

Faith based organizations seem to have more, it's not apparent, they're doing it for the right reasons. Not just to say oh we went out and helped the homeless or we went out and volunteered in the less fortunate neighborhood. I just think that when faith is involved, it does add a little extra oomph to it and you can just tell that the people that are there, the organization itself as a whole, is more willing to do it, and they're not forced.

It's as if their personal mission is either aligned with that of the organization or was part of the organization's actual mission.

The Conceptual Framework

Nonprofit organizations are framed by the country, state, and community in which they were established; they are supported by the community and for-profit organizations that provide human resources; challenged by the barriers that reduce their opportunities for success; culturally defined by the volunteers who commit to them; guided by the governance features that police them; and have their level of success marked by the ability of their leaders to understand elements of the Contingency Leadership Theory. This theory is a conceptual framework which offers a practical means to analyzing qualitative research (Varpio et al., 2020). Providing a rationale for the study, the fundamental concept of nonprofit organizations is the conceptual framework for this qualitative study. Secondary concepts of the framework are the geography, community, and for-profit organizations, barriers to volunteering, and volunteers. Each plays a necessary role in developing the organization.

United States, North Carolina, and Central North Carolina

The conceptual framework displayed seven elements (i.e., Politics, Federal Regulations, Natural and Technological Disasters, Economy, State Regulations, Local Disasters, and Cultural Conditions) between country, state, and community that are likely to influence nonprofit organizations. However, the only element directly associated to the research findings was Natural and Technological Disasters. National disasters are commonly fires, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes, while technological disasters are generally recognized as chemical spills, explosions, gas leaks, building collapses, air quality dilemmas, and transportation accidents. Though not technically qualified as a Natural or Technological Disaster,

for this study, pandemics were affixed to this grouping. COVID-19 was a common topic of discussion with participants.

As a result of COVID-19, nonprofit organizations across the United States experienced operational challenges. In central North Carolina, these national challenges led to significant change. Due to concerns regarding contagion and potential health risks, many nonprofit organizations decided to suspend their operations. As more was learned about the virus, leaders began to identify alternative means (e.g., virtual) to complete their goals. Then, as more time passed and organizations slowly returned to some form of in-person activities, many individuals remained hesitant about re-engaging in volunteer efforts.

Community and For-Profit Organizations

Individuals are typically attracted to nonprofit organizations through their communities or companies. In this study, 13% of participants had joined a nonprofit organization due to a relationship with their respective employer. Regardless of the scenario, the individuals had been made aware of the volunteer opportunities primarily through personal interactions. Whether this was through discussions at the proverbial water cooler at work, the prodding of a family member while talking on the phone, or the encouragement of a friend while out to dinner, volunteering was generally initiated through word-of-mouth initiatives.

Barriers

As expected, in lieu of current environmental conditions, barriers to volunteering were disastrous to the plans of nonprofit organization; however, the research pinpointed other obstacles that either deterred or challenged volunteers from being engaged. While there were no new revelations in the research regarding the obstacles encountered by volunteers, the research added texture to those obstacles that were most common, as well as those that are not always

recognized. The primary obstacle cited was personal desires, meaning volunteer activities didn't always fit into the participant's schedule due to conflicts with other activities. In addition, other obstacles identified in the research include life changes (e.g., health, residence, and employment), emotional distress, poor organizational structure, ineffective leadership, conflicts of interest, and a lack of funding. These elements, while not an exhaustive list, account for most barriers.

Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofit organizations can be defined by their missions, experiences, and leaders. The mission expresses the purpose and goals of the organization, while the experiences emphasize the operational actions that will be employed to achieve the volunteer work. The first element, mission, is tied to attributes of community needs that fulfill its purpose. This purpose is crucial to the development, coordination, and organization of activities.

The second element, experience, is the actionable aspects of the entity. It consists of the steps required to transform components of the mission into acts of service. As such, it incorporates the interactions amongst the volunteers. Volunteers can be observed across all genders, ethnicities, and age groups. They define the culture and represent inimitable diversity throughout a vast populace of millions of individuals who chose to commit their time to service. Though the official data has yet to be released, unofficial reports indicate that volunteering rates have decreased during the past few years. It is estimated that volunteerism rates fell from 64% in 2017 to 58% in 2020 and 56% in 2021 (Philanthropy News Digest, 2022).

Leaders, the third element, are the face of the organization. They add a human element that is assumed to embody the spirit and ideologies of the organization. When leaders are observed making decisions and/or completing tasks, they do so as an extension of the

organization. Therefore, leaders must understand that their every action, whether good or bad, will be linked to the organization.

Anticipated Themes

The existing literature recognized two prospective themes related to the impact of leaders on volunteers in nonprofit organizations. The first theme, Impact of Leaders on Volunteers, explained that while the goal of a leader is to develop industrious volunteers, this is best achieved through the evolution of genuine relationships (Bauer & Lim, 2019). The theme proved accurate when analyzing participants of Case 2, who seemed to lack authentic relationships with leaders and were no longer engaged with a nonprofit organization. Interestingly, attributes of participants in Cases 1 and 3 were not anticipated. These participants did not, in each instance, maintain strong personal relationships with their respective leaders. Instead, the leaders were respected individuals who were keen on working side by side with the volunteers. Despite the lack of true relationships, these actions did not deter volunteer satisfaction, motivation, engagement, commitment, or retention.

The second theme, Leadership Qualifications, acknowledges that leaders are rarely formally trained and prepared for their assumed roles (De Clerck et al., 2019). However, training should be viewed as a prerequisite of leadership. In accordance with the research, volunteers recognize that no leader will possess all the skills identified to be a great leader; nevertheless, they should be trained. The training should include, but not be limited to, skills necessary to increase volunteer recruitment (e.g., social media), leadership styles that are conducive to various demographics (e.g., age groups), and tactics that influence volunteer retention (e.g., short-term projects). Opportunities to enhance the personal skillsets of leaders through such trainings would solidify human resources and enhance the contributions of the organization.

The Literature

Through attentive analysis of the literature, similarities and differences were observed in relation to the findings of this study. The development of this literature review reflects upon the customs of volunteers in nonprofit organizations and embraces dialogue of six key findings. The literature matters include volunteer recruitment, volunteer motivation, characteristics of faith-based organizations, volunteer obstacles, volunteer retention, and Contingency Leadership Theory. Examination of the literature will discuss similarities and differences between the research findings and the literature.

Literature reveals that poor recruitment strategies have a direct correlation to less qualified volunteers, high attrition rates, and pedestrian outcomes. Therefore, organizations must be thoughtful regarding their recruitment efforts (Sefanick et al., 2020). Recruitment efforts should be framed around informal social interactions and formal marketing (Febriani & Selamet, 2020). However, this research paints a somewhat slanted picture of recruitment. One hundred percent of the participants were recruited to a nonprofit organization through verbal (i.e., word-of-mouth) discussions held with individuals they knew. There was no mention of social gatherings held for meet-and-greet opportunities amongst the volunteers. Additionally, while many of the organizations do not possess the budget to initiate a heavy recruitment campaign, many volunteers stated that efficiencies could be realized through volunteer use of social media platforms for this purpose.

Studies argue that volunteer motivation is comprised of three dynamics. This includes the altruistic aspiration to support the community, affiliation with an organization whose mission is aligned with one's personal ideologies, and a craving for power that manifests through the opportunity to sit back and observe the impact of completed undertakings (Butt et al., 2017). As

the literature denoted, the research participants volunteered from an unadulterated sense of wanting to improve the world around them. To achieve this goal, volunteers partnered with entities that could be impactful in implementing their personal desires. There was no hint that power was a factor in the process. Rather, there was a desire to ensure the services performed were needed and valued as to support a philosophy of communal goodwill.

Literature indicates that faith-based organizations are governed by characteristics of empathy, sacrifice, cooperative, and love (Yeung, 2017). As a result of these characteristics, Erasmus and Morey (2016) expect that organizations place increased emphasis on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Interestingly, the research did not support the literature. Rather, while faith-based organizations do emphasize recruitment and retention, organizations not predicated on faith do, as well. As such, the overwhelming sentiment was that other than obvious signs of faith (e.g., prayer), it's impossible to identify differences between the organizations. Additionally, volunteers placed more importance on leaders displaying characteristics of goodness than of faith. Collectively, these findings reveal that faith-based organizations may not be any more advanced with recruitment and retention efforts than other nonprofit organizations.

A volunteer committing to a nonprofit organization commonly understands that obstacles will surface. The obstacles may present themselves as limited transportation, attitudes regarding service recipients, or lack of time, community support, and/or training (No author, 2018; Moghaddam et al., 2018). These obstacles, in conjunction with burnout, feelings of disconnection, or a lack of faith in the leadership, lead to attrition (Milburn et al., 2018). The research gave credence to each these factors as reasons for volunteer challenges and attrition.

Despite these circumstances, volunteer challenges can be overcome. This can be accomplished through volunteer and leader interactions. The type of relationship that a volunteer maintains with their leader has immense impact on volunteer attrition. Volunteers who maintain good communications and relationships with leaders are better positioned to overcome obstacles. Not only are they able to overcome the obstacles, but they are also significantly more likely to remain engaged with the nonprofit organization. These relationships suggest that leaders should be aware of factors that contribute to volunteer satisfaction and purposely seek situations to engage volunteers (Sefanick et al., 2020).

The Contingency Leadership Theory encourages leaders to possess a multitude of leadership skills. In doing so, they can employ the appropriate skills at the appropriate time, depending upon the situational need. This fluidity in leadership requires a leader to be attentive, intentional, and flexible (Wool et al., 2017). This was a theory that was continually supported during the research. The theme surfaced as the participant age was a determinant for the preferred style of leadership (i.e., relatable for volunteers 35 years of age and younger, and hardworking for those above 35 years old). This lends credence to thoughts that other demographics may factor into the theory, as well as the needs related to different types of volunteer efforts.

The Problem

The emergent themes revealed in this study distinctively addresses the largely unstable and regularly declining rates of volunteerism experienced in the United States during the past 20 years (Grimm & Dietz, 2018). The data gathered as a result of participant experiences highlights the reasons for volunteer withdrawal. More importantly, it offers insight regarding tactics that can be employed by leaders to overcome the reasons for the withdrawal. In doing so, the

expectation is that volunteerism rates would stabilize, ensure more productive nonprofit organizations, and strengthen local communities.

Participants detailed obstacles to volunteer attrition. The list included conflicts of interest, personal desires, changes in employment or residence, and poor organizational structure as volunteer obstacles; however, more impactful and subtle was the identification of training and personal relationships. First, training would be useful in building leader skillsets. The training must incorporate aspects of technology and personal development. By utilizing the skills, leaders would be better suited at recruiting volunteers. Second, leaders must be intent on building relationships with volunteers. The ability to develop personal connections is the key to enhancing the organizational culture. The culture would result in volunteers who are able to surmount other factors to remain with the organization.

Summary of the Findings

In summary, the research resulted in meaningful observations. This was achieved through a sanctioned volunteer questionnaire and interview questions that were designed to address specified research questions. Responses to the questions presented data that could be coded and analyzed along research parameters. Analysis of the data led to themes that emerged through recurring participant assertions.

The third visualization of the data depicted the primary and ancillary codes of the research. Eight themes emerged from the coded data. First, volunteers are called to participate in collective acts that accomplish missions that are beyond what the individual could do on their own. Second, many volunteers have been reared to identify volunteering as an essential component of humanity. Third, though volunteering was acknowledged as a calling, it is more important for leaders to be good people than for them to openly operate from a place of faith.

Fourth, leaders who actively embolden volunteers effectually increase chances for retention. Fifth, based on demographics (i.e., age), volunteers require different skillsets from their leaders. Sixth, in most instances, there are no observable differences between the operations of organizations not predicated on faith and faith-based organizations. Seventh, a strategic tactic to increase volunteer retention would be to implement short-term measurable projects. Eighth, the recruiting and retention efforts of nonprofit organizations can be transformed using technology.

Though each theme maintains a distinct emphasis, collectively they offer broad insights into tackling the research problem. They do so by outlining strategies that can be utilized to enhance organizational resources. The findings suggest that all nonprofit leaders, with the appropriate attitude and skillsets, are capable of positively impacting recruiting and retention outcomes. While self-serving in that the outcomes directly benefit the organizations, they also add value to leaders, increase volunteer satisfaction, and support communal advancement. Therefore, examination of these themes points to additional investigative opportunities.

Application to Professional Practice

This study offers several applications to professional practices. It possesses the possibility of providing leaders of nonprofit organizations with the tools necessary to strengthen operational efficiencies. Additionally, the study has broad appeal. Though the research was directed toward practices in organizations generally defined as nonprofits, there are specific takeaways for those based on faith. The study can be used by leaders of faith-based organizations to strategically develop brand mechanisms whereby this subset of organizations can be differentiated from the organizations not predicated on faith.

Improving General Business Practice

Research cultivated from this study can be employed to improve general business practices. This can be achieved through cultural changes. First, current literature indicates that leaders are integral to influencing individuals and groups of people (Ibrahim et al., 2017). This ability requires leaders to demonstrate a plethora of skills that infuse volunteers with fervor for the organization. The leaders then use this passion to guide, assemble, and enable volunteers to successfully complete organizational tasks.

The skills generally envisioned for such leaders include strategic planning, program implementation, effective resource allocation, and fulfilling community gaps (Morrison & Greenhaw, 2018). However, rarely is there a discussion regarding the importance of building relationships with volunteers. This research shows that not only should leaders be authentic regarding their desires to impact their community, but they should also express similar sentiments in their interactions with volunteers. The leader's ability to adopt this principle as a general business practice may be transformative to the nonprofit organization. It can improve general operations by redefining an organizational culture that is inclusive and accepting and values the input of all members, thereby increasing the likelihood for volunteers to be recruited and retained.

Improvement in this area is needed due to volunteerism trends. As presented in the literature, excluding periods of national calamities, the number of individuals who donate their time and expertise to nonprofit organizations has generally decreased in past decades. Additionally, in many instances, while an individual may continue volunteer efforts from year to year, the efforts may not always occur through the same organization. Therefore, developing good general business practices is crucial to developing successful nonprofit organizations.

Second, current literature reveals that faith-based volunteers represent the largest contingent of nonprofit volunteers. They are an assembly of individuals unified by their beliefs in a higher power. This fusion of like-minded ideologies is inherently committed to promoting the engagement of philanthropic deeds (Yeung, 2017). Therefore, to leaders, faith-based volunteers represent a fervently engrossed collection of personalities who are expected to eagerly devote themselves to the mission of the organization.

Despite the mission professed by faith-based organizations, this research indicates that characteristics of faith often go unnoticed by the volunteers in these organizations. That is, these volunteers who are brought together by their faith to perform works of faith rarely are offered or observe definitive expressions of faith. There are several reasons for this occurrence, some of which were born out during the study. As such, persons of faith cannot rest their laurels on the espoused purpose of the organizations they represent. Rather, emphasis should be placed on insulating every component of the organization with aspects of faith. The organizations' ability to implement this quality as a general business practice may be enlightening. It can improve general operations by furthering God's calling, thereby leading volunteers to use their gifts to lead others to Him.

Improvements in general business practices are crucial to faith-based organizations in expanding the Kingdom of God. Effective spiritual practices are essential to encouraging others to a relationship with God. If, as suggested by the research, that volunteers of faith-based organizations cannot assuredly identify spiritual elements in the people and/or work being performed, then the outcomes produced by the organization may not be aligned with the mission or as valuable as imagined. Therefore, developing good general business practices is foremost to the operations of faith-based organizations.

Potential Application Strategies

There are several prospective application strategies that nonprofit organizations can introduce to enhance volunteer recruitment and retention. These strategies are broad in scope and largely cost effective. One strategy that should be considered by nonprofit organizations centers on leadership training. As the research demonstrates, volunteer interactions with leaders are vital to recruitment and retention. Therefore, organizations should ensure that leaders not only possess the requisite interpersonal skills to be effective in their relationships but are continually attempting to build upon them. This can be achieved through leadership training programs. The training should include a mixture of themes: knowledge attainment, skill development, experience, coaching, and mentoring (Kouzes & Posner, 2016). Through the trainings, leaders would acquire opportunities for self-improvement, as well the chance to attain honest feedback from others.

Another strategy that would prove important to nonprofit organizations is the implementation of orientation sessions. Face-to-face comprehensive sessions held prior to volunteers being assigned tasks would improve retention outcomes. Research signifies that these sessions provide individuals with opportunities to form connections with the organization and increase personal confidence levels (Herrera, 2020). First, the sessions would allow new volunteers an opportunity to meet and form social bonds. Second, it would allow them to attain in-depth knowledge of the organization including, but not limited to, its policies, structure, culture, and responsibilities. Third, the sessions would present volunteers a glimpse into the organization to determine if it's a good fit prior to investing significant time and energy into the process.

A third strategy would be to ensure there are ongoing assessments of the organization's programs. Assessments can be executed through a variety of applications (e.g., SWOT Analysis). Generally, the assessments assist organizations in comprehending their structure through the lens of the current environment (Krupka et. al, 2018). In applying the strategy to nonprofit organizations, the inclusion of volunteers as an element of the process could prove valuable. The assessment should determine volunteers' satisfaction regarding their needs. Hence, a primary topic of discussion should include ways that short-term projects and the rotation of responsibilities amongst volunteers could increase engagement.

A fourth strategy should revolve around social gatherings. During organizational events, leaders are often focused on giving instructions and/or performing necessary tasks. Rarely is there time available to maintain in-depth or meaningful conversations. Therefore, social gatherings would foster opportunities to build personal relationships. The gatherings would offer volunteers an extended period to become acquainted; related to this research, it would allow volunteers chances to socialize with leaders outside of the typical organizational structure. These interactions influence volunteers by allowing leaders to be viewed as relatable, which ultimately enhance ties amongst volunteers and leaders.

A final strategy would address the way that nonprofit organizations communicate with potential and current volunteers. The primary medium of communication for these organizations is through word-of-mouth conversations. However, this research has emphasized the need to utilize technology in marketing and communicating organizational information to individuals. The primary technological element identified was social media. Social media provides its stakeholders (e.g., donors, volunteers, and the community) an opportunity to collaborate with the organization. It expands relationships and allows individuals the ability to self-organize around

areas of interest. Through this process, populations, especially younger stakeholders, become actively engaged with and can interact with organization representatives (Vodopyanova, 2020).

Summary of Application to Professional Practice

The findings gleaned from the research in this study can improve general business practices. The research revalidates the importance of leadership training and volunteer orientation programs, it encourages the importance of self-assessments, it emphasizes the value of personal relationships, and it supports use of current technology to strengthen the organization. Through these practices, the organization will be capable of implementing strategies that alter and vitalize organizational culture.

Recommendations for Further Study

The objective of this research was to explore the impact that leaders have on volunteers in nonprofit organizations and to determine whether faith plays a role in the process. As a result of the study, opportunities for further research were revealed. One recommendation for future research would be to expand the geographical boundaries of the participants. The study was designed to highlight urban areas in North Carolina (i.e., the central region of the state). However, the ability to include rural locations in the study would increase diversity amongst the types of organizations and participants. Additionally, it would increase generalizability to the collective of nonprofit organizations, as well as applicability to organizations in other states.

Another recommendation for further research would be to select an alternative sampling method. This study employed purposive and snowballing sampling methods to identify research participants. The methods, while more efficient in gathering data from a readily accessible population, may result in a less inclusive process than other strategies would. In fact, the methods in this study may encourage targeting of individuals who share similar ideologies.

Therefore, another sampling method may increase the randomness of the participants, as well as expand the responses amassed during exploration.

A final recommendation for further research would be to expand the exploration of the influence of faith. Eighty percent of the participants in the study self-identified as Christians. As such, if the spiritual backgrounds of the participants were expanded to recognize other religious backgrounds (i.e., Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mormon, etc.), it could offer further insight into other influencing factors. Additionally, the inclusion of more religions would make the study increasingly applicable to other demographics.

Reflections

The researcher's interest in examining the impact of leaders in the recruitment and retention of volunteers was born from personal observations while performing service in nonprofit organizations. As such, the study was entered into with preconceived notions regarding volunteer expectations and experiences in relation to leaders. However, upon listening to and digesting the participant viewpoints, the researcher's perspective on the topic was enhanced. These changes are related to new perspectives pertaining to organizational opportunities and volunteer needs.

The first preconceived notion was centered around nonprofit organizations. It was perceived that once volunteers were attracted to and joined an organization, they were fully aware and committed to the purpose of the entity. Additionally, it was thought to be common for organizations to furnish volunteers with formal training, as well as guided field experience upon entry into the organization. Based on these assumptions, other assumptions were developed.

The second preconceived notion revolved around volunteers. If the premise of the first notion was true, then concerns associated with low volunteerism rates would suggest issues with

the volunteers, meaning a lack of volunteer commitment would be equated primarily to the personal deficiencies of volunteers. Such deficiencies might include bloated egos, timidity in being fully immersed within the organization, cynicism regarding the impact of the organization, lethargy pertaining to organizational events, and/or pessimism regarding the possible outcomes. However, despite these theories, the knowledge acquired through the research has presented opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Personal and Professional Growth

Research is a reliable tool that can be used to enhance knowledge. It provides opportunities to comprehend the complexities of multifaceted issues. Through the identification of the challenges and outcomes experienced by volunteers, the research allowed the researcher to recognize strategies that assist in reducing undesirable outcomes. Therefore, the research project offered enormous opportunities for growth.

While this growth was initiated through personal and professional mediums, another form of growth, spiritual growth, materialized during analyzation of the research. The three segments of growth fused together to generate a holistic awareness of the topic. The expectation is that this growth will bring forth meaningful clarity and considerations for alternative practices in relation to leadership styles and conclusions drawn regarding volunteers.

Personal growth signifies any type of behavioral expansion that contributes to the process of self-improvement in consequential ways. The researcher defines himself as an avid volunteer, and the research will persist as a constant reminder that relationships are the foundation of multimember organizations. While nonprofit organizations are focused on completing the task at hand, the researcher will make it a mission to never lose sight of volunteers, as organizations are

incapable of realizing their full capabilities without these individuals and the internal synergies they offer.

The synergies should be exhibited across several spheres. Organizations should mold a culture in which the collective group of volunteers are accepting of each other, exhibit an authentic desire to be acquainted, and seek to socialize outside of volunteer activities. Through these interactions, they learn about each other's families, likes, dislikes, goals, and so forth. Hence, a true bond is formed that may decrease the likelihood of volunteers succumbing to challenges to their volunteerism efforts.

The parameters of personal growth are parallel to those of professional growth. Professional growth signifies the attainment of new skills and work experiences that assist an individual in realizing vocational goals. In addition, the skills remain with the individuals and are transferrable to other organizational efforts. These skills are invaluable as they allow individuals to remain apprised of current trends and changes, which makes them distinguishable from other individuals.

Though employees, for example, have different motivations to remain at work, their leaders' traits are important in work settings. They are a constant reminder that while relationships may have already been established, continual efforts to maintain relationships are necessary. Relationship-building is a process defined by an ability to forge open lines of communication that include, but are not limited to, listening and memorization skills. Though simple practices, they allow employees to feel valued.

In addition to the areas of personal and professional growth, the research has presented a bonus area of growth. The researcher's spiritual growth has increased because of the study. While faith-based organizations are generally viewed as upholding internal controls that allow

them to better focus on their mission (serving the community in the name of Jesus), more emphasis should be applied to the inclusion of faith in the activities. Leaders in these organizations must be increasingly purposeful in these efforts.

When operating from a place of faith, there must be a conscious effort not to alienate others. To achieve this goal, faith-based leaders must recognize that others may not be as committed to their faith. Therefore, an approach that is wrapped in love, but is not aggressive or burdensome, is necessary. This added layer will further differentiate faith-based organizations from those that are not predicated on faith. As such, the purpose of the organization is re-emphasized, and better outcomes experienced in relation to the organizational vision.

Biblical Perspective

This research offers a multitude of practical applications. The business functions of the research possess an unequivocal association with the Christian worldview. It expounds on the importance of volunteering by emphasizing the purpose of people as commanded by God. Three biblical verses are highlighted to support this worldview. The first verse promotes principles of volunteering to support God's viewpoint of service, the second verse is a reminder of the attitude that leaders should maintain when leading others in service, and the third verse reiterates the importance of the leader's recognition of various roles and how to utilize them. Collectively, the verses exemplify a global perspective that should be seamlessly infused into organizational operations.

The first verse, 2 Corinthians 9:6–7, illustrates God's purpose for mankind. The Bible shares,

He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

God calls us to a life of charity. In using our gifts, talents, and time to serve others, we serve God. To this point, there should be no surprise that millions of individuals across the United States are drawn to acts of volunteerism each year. It is a deed based in a sense of direction that has been implanted by God. Hence, it is an innate act.

Volunteers, in many instances, especially those in this study, are “called” to perform acts of goodwill in their community. They yearn to utilize their God-given talents in a manner that produces observable positive outcomes. Hence, leaders must recognize that volunteers are a captive audience. Though willing and engaged, volunteers still desire to be acknowledged and valued. Leaders must make it their responsibility to foster a culture that is conducive to volunteer needs and desires.

The second verse, Philippians 2:3–4 (NIV), shares God’s viewpoint regarding leaders. The Bible states, “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” From this verse, God instructs leaders to lead with a focus on others. Whether it was Moses leading the Israelites to the Promised Land Nehemiah serving King Artaxerxes or Deborah taking instructions into war, God has continually presented a model of the behavior that should be displayed by leaders: servant leadership.

Leaders must possess an ability to adopt the resolve of God. They must comprehend that in the same fashion that God demonstrated acts of love to them, they must display similar acts to volunteers. Leaders must be consumed by a caring spirit. They must eagerly embrace the tasks that have been placed in front of them. In doing so, they must fulfill the will of God by strengthening the weak, empowering those entrusted in their care, and showing compassion to all. Rather than only sending volunteers out to complete challenging tasks, leaders must be

willing to do the work themselves. As volunteers observe the work of the leaders, they will be engaged to join in and perform the same tasks.

The third verse, Ephesians 4:32 (NIV), emphasizes that all individuals have been blessed with distinctive gifts. The Bible asserts, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers.” This verse has immense application to nonprofit organizations. Though volunteers are destined to walk their individual paths, unification is formed when the paths intersect. Through the multitude of intersections is a reliance on teamwork. This teamwork is predicated on each person knowing their specified role and fulfilling it.

While acknowledging this factor, it’s important for leaders to note that roles are finite and interchangeable. Volunteer roles are not expected to exist into perpetuity. They may be altered or shifted because of organizational, personal, or environmental factors. Therefore, leaders must ensure that volunteers possess the tools needed to be successful. Through the gifts that God has bestowed, volunteers must be trained in the ways they can assist the organization. Additionally, leaders must be prepared to interact with different demographics of volunteers in different ways. It is through these interactions that leaders can assist volunteers in fulfilling the roles that God has set forth for them.

In summary, volunteering is an act of God. His words and actions are clear regarding the expectations and significance of volunteering in relation to the Christian worldview. While no one is perfect, leaders must ensure they uphold and, to the best of their ability, model tenets of God. Leaders who can ignite the same actions in volunteers can transform the organization. These organizations, as they can sustain volunteers to perform necessary tasks, are a

confirmation of God's radiance gleaming in the leaders, as well as the organization. As such, they bring glory to their respective communities and the Kingdom of God.

Summary of Reflections

Reflections upon this research study reveal building blocks to several areas of evolution. The study has resulted in personal, professional, and spiritual growth that will significantly enhance future strategies, assessments, and decision-making in nonprofit settings. The source of this enhancement is grounded in the depth of relationships as the key to success in relation to volunteers and organizations. In addition, the research has prompted me to decipher how these relationships have applications to Biblical principles. Hence, the reflections have sown a lasting memory of processes that can transform the viewpoint of leaders in nonprofit organizations.

Summary of Section 3

This qualitative multiple case study focused on the impact that leaders have on the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations, as well as the influence of faith. Data to support the research was attained through purposive and snowball sampling. Through this data, eight themes emerged: volunteering is a calling; volunteering is a family affair; a leader's faith is not meaningful to volunteers; without a leader's encouragement volunteers become disengaged; the views of leadership change with the age of volunteers; there is not always an obvious difference between faith-based organizations and those not predicated on faith; volunteers prefer short-term projects; and technology should be utilized to communicate with volunteers and potential volunteers.

Each theme was supported by the research with multiple references to participant questionnaires and interviews across the cases. While the findings were connected to the literature, conceptual framework, and research questions, additional research is needed. Further

research would increase the generalizability of the research, explore findings built on alternative samples that offer increased randomness in the selection of participants, and glean insight into the possible influence of religions other than Christianity. However, despite these opportunities for further research, the current study was warranted as it offers enhancements to general business practices through processes for improving volunteerism trends and expanding the Kingdom of God.

The potential improvements have led to the identification of strategies that could be utilized for support. The strategies include ongoing training for leaders, orientation sessions for new volunteers, periodic organizational assessments, regular social gatherings for volunteers and leaders, and the use of technology. Though these findings are viewed as significant, the researcher acknowledges that steps could be taken to expand the research. This would include a deeper look at the experiences of volunteers in rural locations, securing participants through less targeted methods, and examining the influence of other religions in volunteer experiences.

Concluding the study were reflections on preconceived notions that were quieted by personal and professional growth, and Biblical perspectives. The research advanced the researcher's knowledge by amplifying the concept that relationships can strengthen personal well-being and organizational culture. This is accomplished through emotional connections formed through meaningful interactions and shared experiences. Furthermore, the research conveyed the importance of faith-based organizations ensuring that their programs are integrated with components of spirituality. Through this Biblical perspective, the collective findings of the research have shined a light on leaders and their expected role with volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

SUMMARY AND STUDY CONCLUSIONS

Imagine there were no volunteers in the United States. While difficult to completely conjure in one's mind, it is an occurrence that would result in increased disparities in socialization and provisions for confined seniors and disabled persons, less access to infant supplies for the impoverished, an accumulation of debris on roadsides and waterways, a lack of support for public parks and recreational areas, and a host of other issues. Just imagining these complexities is enough to shed light on challenges faced by nonprofit organizations during periods of declining volunteerism rates. Therefore, this study examined reasons that dissuade or enhance volunteer participation, with emphasis on the characteristics of organizational leaders. The findings gleaned from this research validated the importance of leadership in the recruitment and retention of volunteers in nonprofit organizations.

The process of gathering information for this study was unique in several ways. First, the study was built upon responses from diverse demographic groups. The data was accumulated across a wide range of ages, educational and employment levels, and ethnicities. Hence, it offers a comprehensive assessment of the volunteer experience. Second, proportional emphasis was placed on demographics that are contrary to those most statistically observed in volunteers, meaning experiences were sought from individuals who, research has confirmed, are less likely to donate their time. By gathering information from individuals who are and are not viewed to be prospective volunteers in the general population, increased balance is observed in the overall assessments. Third, the study assessed the role of faith in recruitment and retention efforts. It offers evidence of the ways in which faith permits volunteers to circumvent obstacles to volunteerism, as well as to identify if faith, or the lack of, in leaders and/or the organizations impacts volunteer engagement.

Through this research, findings have surfaced that contribute to the nonprofit sector and beyond. The study arms leaders with information that may strengthen their interactions with volunteers, as well as presents tools that allow them to enhance organizational operations. Additionally, it presents leaders in faith-based organizations with evidence that suggests more could be done to differentiate the service rendered by faith-based organizations from other entities, thereby enriching the purpose of the work performed. Furthermore, the contributions extend to Biblical insights. Several of the findings re-emphasized the theme that we are called to a life of service. Through this service, God is pleased, and our respective lives assume greater purpose. However, despite these contributions, the findings have divulged areas where future research may be valuable. This additional research could be concentrated on areas of expansion (e.g., types of sampling, volunteers in rural locations, and the religious affiliations of volunteers). Extending the research to these identified areas would increase the randomness and diversity of the sample and the generalizability and applicability of the research topic.

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APPENDIX A
NONPROFIT VOLUNTEER QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I

To appropriately interpret survey responses, information is needed regarding you and your volunteer efforts. This information has been shown to be significant to volunteerism within nonprofit organizations. Please answer each of the following questions by selecting the option that best represents you.

What was your age at your last birthday?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 26 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26–35 | <input type="checkbox"/> 36–45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 46–55 | <input type="checkbox"/> 56–65 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65 |

What is your gender?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

What is your marital status?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single | <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed | |

What is your ethnic group?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

What is your religious affiliation?

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist | <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Islamic | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What is your highest level of education completed?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than H.S. Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> H.S. Diploma/GED | <input type="checkbox"/> Some College |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Associates Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate/Professional Degree | |

What is your current occupation?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

What is your gross family income?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 – \$95,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> More than \$95,000 |
|---|--|---|

Part II

The following items address your general experiences regarding volunteering. Please answer each of the following questions by selecting the option that best represents you.

1. What type of nonprofit organization have you volunteered in the past 5 years?

- ☐ Athletic Organization
- ☐ Civic League
- ☐ Faith-based Organization
- ☐ Government Entity
- ☐ Social Club
- ☐ Other

2. Is this the only nonprofit organization with which you have volunteered in the past 5 years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Are you currently volunteering?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. If not, have you volunteered during the past five years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. If you have discontinued volunteering, what was the reason(s)?

- ☐ Changed residence
- ☐ Changed work status
- ☐ Lack of interest
- ☐ Family circumstances
- ☐ Volunteer project ended
- ☐ Lack of time

4. In what capacity have you served as a volunteer? (Please check the item in which you are most involved)

- ☐ Organization capacity building (i.e., training, setting up management systems, etc.)
- ☐ Assisting in program implementation (i.e., teaching, organizing, etc.)
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Marketing and communication (i.e., developing websites, brochures, etc.)
- ☐ Administrative
- ☐ Other

5. What was the period of engagement in your last volunteering assignment?

- ☐ 1 day
- ☐ 1 month
- ☐ Less than 3 months
- ☐ 3 – 12 months
- ☐ 1 year and above

6. What kind of engagement would you prefer for your next volunteering assignment?

- ☐ One day events
- ☐ Less than 3 months
- ☐ More than 3 months
- ☐ Project/task based
- ☐ Don't know

7. How many hours per week do you now spend in your volunteer activities per week?

- ☐ 1 - 5 ☐ 5 - 10 ☐ 11 - 15
☐ 16 - 20 ☐ 21- 25 ☐ 25+

8. How many hours per week do you travel on your personal time to volunteer?

- ☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ 1 – 3 hours ☐ More than 3 hours

9. During the course of a year, how much of your personal money do you spend to volunteer?

- ☐ Less than \$100 ☐ \$100 - \$500 ☐ More than \$500

10. Who first asked you to serve as a volunteer?

- ☐ NPO Volunteer ☐ NPO Leader ☐ Family/Friends
☐ Self ☐ Academic Institution ☐ Employer

11. How were you contacted to volunteer for the first time?

- ☐ Home visit ☐ By letter ☐ Phone call
☐ Community meeting ☐ E-mail ☐ Other

Part III

The following statements relate to your general viewpoints regarding volunteering. Please respond to each statement with whether you agree or disagree. If the statement is not applicable or you are indifferent to it, please select N/A.

12. I became a volunteer because:

	Agree	N/A	Disagree
My parents were volunteers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My NPO is a great organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NPOs are good for community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have extra time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted to make new friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Someone asked me to volunteer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A NPO leader encouraged me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to share my talents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to help others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel a sense of obligation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I hoped it would lead to employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to improve myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoyed my NPO as a youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It helps me with my profession.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel less lonely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People I am close with value volunteerism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can learn to work with different people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. I want to continue my work as a volunteer because: **Agree** **N/A** **Disagree**

I feel a sense of accomplishment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like the social aspects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like the tradition of volunteering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My NPO has a strong program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family/friends are/were involved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel appreciated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am making a difference.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get to enhance my personal skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It increases my self-esteem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good relationship with NPO leader.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy watching the community grow and develop.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Volunteers should receive recognition through: **Agree** **N/A** **Disagree**

Formal lunches and dinners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coverage in the newspaper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition by employer/institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receipt of plaques, certificates, pins, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At a ceremony held in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letters from the leader of the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit from the leader of the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone call from the leader of the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteering should not be for recognition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. How would you rate performance of the following: **High** **N/A** **Low**

The performance of the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your performance as a volunteer with the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The performance of the NPO leader.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part IV

The following statements relate to your level of satisfaction with characteristics of the nonprofit organization and your volunteer role. Please respond to each statement with whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied. If the statement is not applicable or you are indifferent to it, please select N/A.

16. Statement: **Satisfied** **N/A** **Dissatisfied**

Progress seen in community served by NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of challenge the volunteer tasks offer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of access to information about the NPO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation initially provided about the volunteer work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of freedom available to make decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to effectively help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resources available to complete tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The amount of interaction with other NPO volunteers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support network to assist in solving volunteer issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The flexibility given to fit volunteering into schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of interest/excitement related to tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities to learn new things.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The way in which other volunteers relate to you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The amount of time spent with other volunteers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of support received from other volunteers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of appreciation from the community for efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How the NPO acknowledges the work done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My contributions are viewed as worthwhile.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The training that has been made available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The degree to which there is a feeling of belonging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part V

The following statements relate to your general viewpoints regarding the nonprofit leader. You should only consider your immediate leader (i.e., the person responsible for your assigned tasks). Please respond to each statement with whether you agree or disagree. If the statement is not applicable or you are indifferent to it, please select N/A.

17. Statement:	Agree	N/A	Disagree
The leader is open to hearing new ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader is open to changing processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader is open to discussing goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader is available for consultation on problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader is readily accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader listens to suggestions from others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader encourages me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader assists in doing the work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part VI

The following statements relate to your general viewpoints regarding faith. Please respond to each statement with whether you agree or disagree. If the statement is not applicable or you are indifferent to it, please select N/A.

18. Statement:	Agree	N/A	Disagree
I am a person of faith.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith is reflected in most aspects of my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith should be a factor of NPO programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith dictates my selection of volunteer tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith motivates me to volunteer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Faith influences my commitment to volunteer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I expect my leaders to operate from a place of faith.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX B**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS**

1. Briefly describe your level of satisfaction regarding your nonprofit organization experiences.
2. How were you made aware of your volunteer opportunity? What efforts did the nonprofit organization make to recruit you?
3. What are your thoughts on volunteer motivation and retention? What factors impact engagement and commitment to nonprofit organizations?
4. How does the leadership of the nonprofit organization encourage volunteers to commit?
5. Did the leadership of the nonprofit organization make you feel valued and how?
6. How would you describe external factors that directly affect the organization and its volunteers? How have organizational leaders responded to the factors?
7. What characteristics have leaders of the organization displayed that are conducive to the recruitment and/or retention of volunteers? What characteristics do you feel are vital in these efforts?
8. How have leaders of your nonprofit organization operated from a place of faith?
9. During the past 5 years, have you volunteered in other nonprofit organizations? Have you volunteered in faith and non-faith based organizations? If so, what have been the differences between them?
10. How are aspects of faith intertwined with the mission of both types of organizations?
11. How has faith played a role in your volunteerism?
12. How has your faith been challenged while volunteering?
13. How were leaders in the organization supportive of your faith?
14. What do you perceive as your future volunteerism role(s)?
15. Do you have any additional insight you want to share regarding volunteer recruitment and retention efforts of leaders in nonprofit organizations?