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Centering Consumer Dignity Within Volunteer Operations

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Public Policy and Administration

West Chester University

West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctorate in Public Administration

By

Meghan Loftus

5/1/2023

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Wyatt and to all the individuals working in the nonprofit sector day in and day out to make their communities a better place. Wyatt, you inspire me to be a better version of myself every minute of every day. I found my true strength when I became your mother, and taking on that role inspired me to finally pursue the goal I have had for myself since I was 22 years old. I hope this research helps someone, somewhere, to rethink their role as a public administrator and actively pursue more equitable practices within their agency. Here's to making the world a better place for the next generation, one conscious decision at a time.

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

Volunteerism has become so commonplace in the United States that it is often considered the third sector of our economy. To maximize output and stretch every dollar, many nonprofit agencies rely on volunteers to assist with the provision of their direct services. This unfettered access to their service population, without the same trainings and safeguards as implemented with paid staff, potentially create the opportunity for these volunteers to violate the dignity of the nonprofit consumer, either intentionally or unintentionally. The purpose of this study is to explore this phenomenon and determine if it is in fact a shared experience. Through a mixed methods approach and a critical theory framework, the study finds that this experience is in fact a shared one among health and human services nonprofit agencies in the greater Scranton area. It finds that these dignity violations occur in seven common ways (privacy invasion, negative communications, overstepping boundaries, value misalignment, judgement, violated autonomy, and confrontation), caused or allowed by deficiencies in four operational areas (communication, staff, volunteer roles, and training), and effects are felt across all stakeholders (the agency, staff, and volunteers). The discussion offers an alternative approach to public administration theory and an operational framework administrators may use to limit future occurrences of this phenomenon. With a more pointed focus on equity in public administration, future research should confirm the common occurrence of consumer dignity violation, measure its impact on the consumers themselves, and develop best practices to minimize its incidence.

Keywords: consumer dignity, volunteerism, nonprofit administration, critical consciousness

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Volunteerism is a part of civic and social life for many Americans. This act has become so commonplace that it is often considered the third sector of the economy after business and government (Goble & Brudney, 2015). Those participating in volunteerism are labeled *volunteers*, “an individual who, out of free will, acts for the benefit of others without receiving remuneration for that action” (Butcher, 2003, p. 111). While one can volunteer in almost any setting, the common connotation of volunteers places them with a nonprofit agency. Hager and Brudney (2021) consider volunteers, “any person who works on a regular, short-term, or occasional basis to provide services to the organization or to the people the organization serves but is not a paid staff member or consultant” (p. 6). In its 2022 report, the Independent Sector estimated the national value of each volunteer hour at \$29.95, which it calculates using the Current Employment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The hourly wages of nonfarm and nonmanagerial positions are averaged and a 15.7% fringe added to quantify the value of donated labor in the US annually, for which the nonprofit would otherwise have to pay. While this statistic falls short in considering other value added by volunteers, such as technical skillsets or word of mouth marketing, as well as the costs of volunteers such as training and travel, it serves as a baseline illustration of the depth and breadth of volunteerism in the U.S., which the Independent Sector estimates contributes nearly \$200 billion annually to the economy (2022).

Not only do volunteers provide unpaid labor critical to US economic output, but the tradition of volunteerism has become so commonplace that many social safety nets rely upon it. Romero (1987) noted that three cooccurring trends led to a volunteer boom toward the end of the

20th century: government encouraging volunteer work as a substitute for its declining role in providing social services, the increase in frequency of women entering the paid workforce, and the increase in size of the retired population as the Silent Generation began to retire in the 1980s. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Current Population Surveys estimated one in every five Americans volunteered in some capacity throughout the year. That number rose to one in four post September 11, 2001, and continues today (Hayghe, 1991; Boraas, 2003; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Turner et al. (2020) report that approximately 9% of the US population 65 and older volunteer on an average day.

Current estimates are that 84% of registered nonprofit organizations use volunteers in some capacity, up from 80% less than 10 years earlier (Hager & Brudney, 2021; Philanthropy News Digest, 2004). As nonprofit organizations excel at doing more with less and stretching resources impossibly thin, it stands to reason that volunteerism, and individual volunteers, have become more integral to public service provision than ever before. While there are endless tasks volunteers may assume at a nonprofit agency, The National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) (2020) found that 46.8% of volunteer time in 2018 was spent on social service and care activities (24.8%) and administrative and support activities (22%). Nonprofit Source (2023) reports that the average volunteer donates 52 hours of their time per year. Both categories of activities, as well as the frequency averaging an hour per week, put volunteers in direct contact with an agency's consumer population during their volunteer activities on a regular basis.

Statement of the Problem

Though unpaid, volunteers may experience or instigate conflict at the same rate, or with more frequency, than paid staff as they do not face the same repercussions as an employee (Lenski, 2015). Volunteer conflict is not limited to those interactions between volunteers and

staff, however, and may more often arise within interactions between volunteers and those they are serving. Therefore, nonprofit agencies must be aware of the risks they face when utilizing a volunteer in the provision of direct service. By using volunteers instead of paid staff to ration limited resources, nonprofit agencies allow these individuals the same direct access as they would an employee to a vulnerable population without the same safeguards such as maintaining employment.

Miller and Keys (2001) find that consumer dignity can be violated in eight ways: lack of individual identity, poor service, unfair treatment, lack of care, arbitrary rules, lack of resources for basic needs, negative association, and negative physical setting. The authors find that consequences of the invalidation of one's dignity are feelings of worthlessness, anger, and depression. This opens a nonprofit agency to risk in that these consumer feelings, coupled with the volunteer's intentional or unintentional actions that provoked them, create an escalated situation with the potential for physical, emotional, public, or legal ramifications.

Current research on volunteerism, potential conflict, and the risk associated with both centers largely on the experience of the volunteer, the dignity of the volunteer, and implications for volunteer retention rates (Studer & Schnurbein, 2013; Benoit, 2011; Paull & Omari, 2015). There is research available on the dignity of nonprofit consumers, but it is from the perspective of interaction with paid staff, organization policies, fundraising, and so on (Steen et al., 2016; Smith & Sosin, 2001; Proehl, 2007; Eaton et al., 2022; Hoffman & Coffey, 2019). A significant gap exists, then, in that volunteers are heavily relied upon by most nonprofit agencies for the delivery of their daily programming, and yet existing research does not address volunteerism, consumer dignity, and potential conflict between the two. This study begins to fill that gap by

exploring past instances of volunteers intentionally or unintentionally violating consumer dignity while providing a service on behalf of nonprofit agencies in the greater Scranton area.

Purpose & Significance of the Study

In the most general sense, the significance of this study lies in the inextricable nature of the concepts of dignity and equity. The field of public administration is often associated with the letter *E* in that it is said to have four pillars: economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity. Frederickson (1990) is credited with instituting equity as a third pillar behind efficiency and economy, which had theretofore been the sole focus of researchers in public administration. Frederickson (1990) highlights the Constitution's promise of equal protection for all, and he uses this as his justification for the equity pillar. In a similar way, Rohr maintains that social equity is a core regime value of democracy in the United States and therefore a necessary consideration in all aspects of public administration (Rohr, 1989). Gooden and Faulkner (2020) summarize Rohr's theory of regime values as an alternative to a low road and high road dichotomy. The low road for public administrators occurs when we passively enforce the rules of the agency and consider that adequate to eliminating unethical behavior. The high road for public administrators occurs when we actively interpret and enforce rules in ways that promote social equity and justice. Still, neither the low nor high road creates a path for those administrators tasked with making ethical decisions, and so Rohr introduced regime values, and specifically the value of social equity, to fill that gap. Public administrators must understand the most prominent regime values in our governing document, the Constitution, as equality, freedom, and property. As public administrators take an oath to uphold the Constitution, model ethical standards to the public, and participate in public law making, these regime values are seen as the basis for all public decision making. Equity implies fairness, right, and justice (Guy & McCandless, 2012). Social equity

implies greater advantage for disadvantaged groups (Elias & Saffran, 2020). The failure to protect and maintain the dignity of our most vulnerable populations, then, is a direct violation of this core regime value and incompatible with our democratic values as a society.

In a practical sense, the significance of this study lies in our increased reliance on network governance for the provision of public goods and services. For better or worse, present day public administration depends on a third-party system to address public issues to any degree of adequacy (Salamon, 2001, 2012, 2015). Whereas the traditional role of government at our nation's founding was to address public problems and provide public goods for all citizens, the current size, geography, and complexity of our nation requires a network of new and varied organizations to address these topics together with government (Salamon, 2001, 2012, 2015). While this may increase outreach, supply, and mobilization efforts, it also increases the complexity of the system, the challenges of monitoring, and costs and expertise required for sufficient network cooperation. The services required to ensure the Constitution's call for domestic tranquility and promotion of the general welfare have been outsourced to nongovernmental agencies, public and private, with or without government funding attached. Thus, those basic needs we seek, and arguably have a right to as citizens of the United States, may be provided by agencies with little to no oversight by the government. Without said oversight, the active promotion of social equity rather than the passive enforcement of its minimum standards is not guaranteed as those non-governmental actors do not take any oath to the Constitution to uphold such a regime value.

The purpose of this study is to understand how nonprofit administrators ensure the active promotion of social equity insofar as it relates to the dignity of their consumers. Specifically, this study explores past instances of the violation of a consumer's dignity by a nonprofit's volunteer

in the greater Scranton area to begin to fill the literature gap that exists surrounding this aspect of social life and public administration, which has grown in significance as our federal, state, and local governments increasingly rely on systems of network governance for the provision of public goods.

Research Question

As a first step in the research on this topic and to lay the groundwork for future topic exploration, the central research question seeks to describe instances of volunteer violation of consumer dignity. This is done more specifically in two ways:

1. How has consumer dignity been violated by volunteers in the past during their provision of direct service on behalf of the nonprofit agency? For this initial study, this is explored through the perspective of the nonprofit administrator responsible for mission and value implementation and some degree of volunteer oversight.
2. Why or how did this event occur? How did the nonprofit agency respond? What changes, if any, were made to volunteer operations as a result?

Research Design

This study is a mixed-methods design, although it is largely qualitative in nature. Instrumentation includes a survey and semi-structured interviews. Utilizing a participatory action research model, the researcher's own experiences as a nonprofit administrator, general observations of volunteer operations across many varying nonprofit agencies, and academic background in the subjects of philosophy and public administration also inform the data and discussion.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study has evolved throughout the research process. What initially was a constructionist approach quickly became one of critical theory as data collection and interaction with participants commenced. Ultimately, critical theory as developed by those sociologists comprising The Frankfurt School, emerged as the most aligned theoretical framework due to its focus on power and oppression (Bazeley, 2021). Specifically, a social constructionism approach to critical theory guides this study's data collection and analysis. This specific theory serves to remind the researcher that information about the phenomenon at hand exists only in historical and cultural contexts, and that the information collected from participants is only their experience of social processes and interaction, rather than objective knowledge (Mead, 1936; Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2015; Peterson, 2012). Further, knowledge from a social constructionism standpoint is produced by these social processes, such as communication, negotiation, conflict, and rhetoric, most often within an asymmetrical power relation "that define what values and priorities must be supported in a given context," (Rimaioli & Contarello, 2022, p. 182). This parallels the phenomenon and sample in the study due to the implicit power struggle between both volunteers and a consumer and volunteers and agency administrators.

Key Terms

Dignity

Philosophical literature often cites eighteenth century philosopher Immanuel Kant as the "father of the modern concept of human dignity" (Bognetti, 2005. P. 89). In his book *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* and later *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant develops and illustrates his moral philosophy. In the most basic sense, Kant uses both books to argue that rational beings are bound by moral law and therefore free, with *Groundwork*

illustrating the concept from freedom to morality and *Critique* from morality to freedom (Voeller, 1998). Kant's Categorical Imperative, which is his basic principle of human morality, requires rational beings "act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law," (Kant, 1785, in Wood, 2002, p. 37). The second formulation is the practical imperative, where Kant commands, "act so that you use humanity, as much in your own person as in the person of every other, always at the same time as end and never merely as means," (Kant, 1785, in Wood, 2002, p. 46-47). The innovation in this moral philosophy stems from Kant's rejection of honor or social standing as a measure of worth and embracing of the concept of dignity. Thus, Kant's concept of dignity is also the premise for the modern concept of dignity: every human being possesses an equal and inherent worth, grounded in their moral autonomy, and as such deserves respect (Bayefsky, 2013). Kantian ethics then introduces human dignity and its mandate for respect, from "all other individuals, society, and the state. And the details of that respect, especially in its political elements, are specified through human rights" (Donnelly, 2011, as cited in Bayefsky, 2013, p. 811).

Modern researchers continue to utilize Kant's moral philosophies in their frameworks for operationalizing human dignity in social service. Chan and Bowpitt (2005) assert dignity "derives from the innate human capacity for autonomy and mutuality," which can only be furthered when both respect and social participation materialize (p. 23). This theory follows Kant's insofar as rational and free beings are the source of all other values and therefore are the only thing of absolute value. Our commonality regarding our inherent absolute value requires all rational and free beings to categorically respect other rational and free beings as an undisputable ethical duty (Hill, 1998). Concurrent with respect, upholding dignity requires social participation. In this sense, social participation refers to a human being's need for interaction to

develop our unique rational and social capabilities (Chan & Bowpitt, 2005). Dignity, then, enjoys a nearly two and a half century affinity to the concepts of morality, mutuality, autonomy, and respect.

Moody writes that “dignity as a moral category encompasses both *self-regarding* and *other-regarding* behavior” (1998, p. 20; emphasis in original). Jacobson (2007) builds on Moody’s theory when addressing her claim that the contradictory properties of dignity, such as its objectiveness and subjectiveness, unconditionality and contingency, or descriptiveness and prescriptiveness, require a framework to link these contradictory properties of dignity to its component parts. These three component parts are dignity’s bearer, ground, and consequences. For Jacobson (2007), dignity’s bearers are those who are said to possess dignity. Ground is the justification for dignity, and consequences are what occur by withholding or granting dignity. Using this framework, Jacobson finds that dignity has two distinct meanings, which she classifies as human dignity and social dignity. Human dignity is “the inherent and inalienable value that belongs to every human being simply by virtue of being human” (Jacobson, 2007, p. 294). Jacobson (2007) acknowledges that human dignity has both religious and secular forms, but she contends either can be used as justification for sociopolitical ideals of equity and justice. Social dignity is where Jacobson (2007) incorporates Moody’s (1998) theories. Social dignity is a subset of human dignity that highlights the importance of behavior, perception, and expectation. However, unlike human dignity, it is not inherent but contingent. Social dignity encompasses dignity-of-self and dignity-of-relation. Dignity-of-self refers to the dignity we attach to ourselves and how we express our intentionality to the world (Nordenfelt, 2004 and Seltser & Miller, 1993, as cited in Jacobson, 2007). Dignity-of-relation refers to the reflection of individual value through word or deed and the historical sense of dignity as a social status

(Tunstall, 1985 and Kolnai, 1995, as cited in Jacobson, 2007). Hodson (2009) echoes this sentiment with his assertion that dignity as a concept implies both an inherent right as a human being and an achievement through noble action or enduring suffering. Dignity as a general concept, then, encompasses each of these theories and more.

For this study, the dignity of a social service consumer refers to the extent that one's human dignity and social dignity are upheld. The operationalization of this concept is assessed through Chan's (2004) four dimensions of human dignity: equal human value, self-respect, autonomy, and positive mutuality.

Dignity Violation

Jacobson (2009) builds upon her previous research regarding dignity to elaborate on the concept. She explains that every human interaction can potentially be what she terms a *dignity encounter*. A dignity encounter is defined as "an interaction in which dignity comes to the fore and may be either violated or promoted," (Jacobson, 2009, Results section para. 6). She describes dignity encounters as those in which an:

...individual or collective actors engage in a cyclical interaction that involves reading each other's physical and social markers, making gestures that signal the underlying tenor of the interaction, interpreting and then responding to these markers and gestures through social processes constituted by word or deed. It is such social processes that violate dignity. (Jacobson, 2009, Results section, para. 10).

She expands this concept to include dignity violations. In interviewing 64 individuals who are marginalized by their health or social status, who provide health or social services to these populations, or who work in the arena of health and human rights, Jacobson (2009) found that dignity violations are more likely to occur in encounters where one person is in a position of

vulnerability while the other is in a position of antipathy, when the relationship between actors is one of asymmetry, when the setting is characterized by harsh circumstances, and when the social order is one of inequality. From the experiences of the 64 participants, 24 main social processes were identified as common in dignity violation: rudeness, indifference, condescension, dismissal, diminishment, disregard, contempt, dependence, intrusion, objectification, restriction, trickery, grouping, labeling, vilification, suspicion, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, revulsion, deprivation, bullying, assault, and abjection.

Building upon Jacobson's (2009) taxonomy, this study operationalizes consumer dignity violation at the hands of a volunteer as a two-sided interaction, dependent upon both the actions of the volunteer and their interpretation by the consumer. Incidents shared within the data collection phase were only considered dignity violations if a two-sided interaction occurred. The Chan and Bowpitt (2005) framework to advance human dignity and Miller and Keys (2001) explanation of eight ways to violate human dignity are combined to categorize the dignity violations found in the data collection, as explained in Chapter 3.

Consumer

A nonprofit agency's customer can fall into one of three categories: the volunteers or staff who conduct the programming, the donors who financially support the programming, and the clients who benefit from the programming (Kramer, 2001). For this study, the concept of a consumer is that of a nonprofit agency's client or the individuals who benefit from the programming. Within the data collection phase, several participants used the term consumer, client, and participant interchangeably. As it is not the intent of this study to assess dignity in relation to an administrator's use of labels or identifiers, this paper largely uses the word consumer except when referencing a survey or interview response that intentionally utilized a

different label. Some labels used by administrators have been changed to *consumer* as their term could potentially lead to identification.

Further, the nonprofit consumer for health and human services agencies are commonly understood to be a vulnerable population. A vulnerable population includes those at a higher risk for disease or injury, particularly: minorities, undocumented immigrants, children and adolescents, mentally ill, chronically ill, disabled persons, the elderly, impoverished persons, or those experiencing homelessness (Gelberg et al., 2000). The Center for Disease Control also follows this definition in their Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) which attempts to quantify the impact external stresses cause on health (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2022).

Volunteer

In the broadest sense, someone who provides a service without pay is often described as a volunteer (Cnaan et al., 1996). However, the ambiguity inherent in that definition serves only to complicate the consideration of volunteer management. In fact, many nonprofit agencies have a minimum of two types of volunteers that hold very different legal and fiduciary responsibilities. Most often, board members of nonprofit organizations are not compensated and therefore can be considered volunteers. However, these board member volunteers assume additional personal liability with their role as they can be held accountable for various legal or financial misgivings by their nonprofit agency. For this study, the term volunteer refers to an unpaid individual assisting a nonprofit with program implementation. This is operationalized according to Cnaan et al. (1996) by weighing the net cost, or the amount of work done over the level of reward received.

Summary

Nonprofit agencies, specifically those that provide some sort of social service, fill a critical role in our society by delivering public goods to some of the most vulnerable among us where and when our government cannot. These agencies are often tasked with providing these services with little or no financial support from the federal, state, or local network government in which they work. Instead, they fundraise privately, seek gifts from public and private foundations, and become experts in operating on a shoestring budget due to resource scarcity. Providing a service or a public good to those in need inherently means someone must directly interact with the consumer to do so. With resource scarcity, increasing public need, and the ever-present call to do more with less, nonprofits often turn to volunteers to fill their gaps.

The utilization of volunteers to fill service gaps has numerous benefits. Financially, as the projected value of an hour of volunteer time is \$29.95 (Independent Sector, 2022), utilizing a volunteer in the provision of direct service full-time, whether by the same individual or multiple, saves the agency \$63,000 in potential salary alone. Strategically, volunteers can increase diversity and representation within the organization, act as additional advocates for the mission, and boost visibility within the community at large. Operationally, volunteers allow the agency to serve more individuals, in a more effective and efficient manner, than they could without the additional help. Nonetheless, using volunteers in direct service provision comes with numerous risks as well. Should a volunteer, intentionally or unintentionally, violate a consumer's dignity while representing a nonprofit, that agency is exposed to an array of issues that can result in physical or emotional altercations, public scandal, loss of consumers and donors, increased employee burnout, or even moral, legal, and financial ramifications. Any of these risks, or a combination of them, can seriously impede the operations and sustainability of a nonprofit agency, some with the potential to even permanently close the agency's doors.

Balancing the need for volunteers and the risks they pose, then, becomes a nonprofit administrator's challenge. Despite its potential severity and frequent opportunity, the phenomenon of volunteers violating consumer dignity has yet to find its place as a heavily researched topic within nonprofit administration. This study aims to correct that oversight by providing the groundwork through exploratory methods for future research. It also aims to inspire social action, both through research and the actions of the study's participants, regarding centering consumer dignity in volunteer operations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Researchers in the field of Social Work and Public Administration have focused on the concept of dignity in social services largely regarding paid staff, either themselves or in their care of consumers (Nash et. al, 1977; Friedman et al., 2010; Booth et al., 2018; Schmidt et al., 2020; Page et al., 2021), strategic and organizational planning (Paradis et al., 2012; Vissing et al., 2017; Gaechter & Porter, 2018), fundraising (Rahman, 2017; Sheehan, 2021), marketing or media (Kylander & Stone, 2012; Hamilton et al., 2021), and even in upholding dignity within community-based organization research efforts (Woodsum, 2018; Osborne 2021). Despite this extensive and varied research, consumer dignity is often ignored in the other major aspect of nonprofit work: volunteer operations. Nonetheless, before pursuing an understanding of consumer dignity within volunteer operations, it is imperative to establish a comprehensive picture of volunteerism in the United States, from its demographics to its motives all the way to its benefits and potential risks.

Who Volunteers?

Current literature disagrees on the correlation between demographics and voluntarism; however, women, children of parents who volunteer, and those with higher levels of education or wealth are statistically more likely to volunteer (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2016; Schlachter, 2021). The last survey the United States Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) conducted was in 2015. Since then, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which is now known simply as AmeriCorps, sponsors and collects said data. AmeriCorps's most recent data from 2019 showed 26.5% of men volunteered while 33.8% of women volunteered in some capacity throughout the course of the prior year (Schlachter, 2021). Instead of specific age categories, AmeriCorps uses generational breakdowns for volunteer age

demographics, with the Silent Generation volunteering at 34.8%, Baby Boomers at 30.7%, Generation X at 36.4%, Millennials at 28.2%, and Generation Y at 26.1%. Those with bachelor's degrees or higher volunteered at a rate of 44%, while those with less than a high school diploma volunteered at 12% (Schlachter, 2021). Those households with an income higher than \$150,000 are more likely to volunteer at 45%, with households at less than \$40,000 have a 20% volunteer rate (Schlachter, 2021). Finally, those working part-time volunteer at a rate of 37% and those with school-aged children volunteer at a rate of 43%, suggesting that those with more discretionary time tend to be more civically engaged (Schlachter, 2021).

Motivation

Volunteerism has been studied as both a means and an end. As a means, volunteerism is understood for its benefit to the individual, mainly in terms of their exposure and connectedness to a larger political and social society (Bryer, 2014). As an end, volunteerism is representative of a healthy society in which citizens are willing and able to assist one another (Bryer, 2014). This study contextualizes volunteerism as an end in its impact on a nonprofit agency, its mission, its leadership, and its consumers. However, it is first necessary to understand volunteerism as a means.

Motives for volunteerism are often assumed to be altruistic. However, Baston et al. (2002) contend that there are four motives for community involvement: egoism, altruism, collectivism, and principlism. Some nonprofit administrators may add a fifth category to include mandated community involvement or volunteerism, such as those individuals required to do community service via the justice system, educational requirements, or as part of a social group. Despite long-standing assumptions that volunteerism derives from a space of altruism, Wagner and Kotchen (2019) argue that pure and impure altruism are impacted by the level of crowding

out or crowding in by government on the private provision of public goods. With respect to volunteerism, the resources the government does or does not provide a nonprofit social service agency directly impacts volunteer motivation. Thus, government assists in determining whether people volunteer for self-sacrifice, such as helping another person in need, or selfishly, such as to make themselves feel important.

In the field of public administration, volunteer motivation is discussed broadly in the context of Public Service Motivation (PSM). PSM is an established measure of an individual's drive to contribute to society (Vandenabeele & Schott, 2020). Perry (2000) created a model of PSM with six constructs: attraction to policymaking, commitment to public interest (CPI), civic duty, social justice, self-sacrifice, and compassion. This model is based on previous research by Knoke and Wright-Isak (1982) which sought to differentiate between rational, norm-based, and affective motivations. PSM as a concept contains many dimensions which are often subcategorized and studied for their impact on various outputs of public sector employees. However, it is also often used to evaluate the relationship of motivation to volunteerism. Clerkin et al. (2009) narrowed Perry's model to four subdimensions related to volunteer motivation. They found that compassion and CPI have a positive relation to volunteerism, self-sacrifice has no significant relation, and attraction to policymaking has a negative relation to volunteerism (Clerkin et al., 2009).

Volunteer motivations related to PSM vary based on organizational-fit. Coursey et al. (2011) find that compassion, CPI, and self-sacrifice vary in strength and relational direction to volunteerism depending on the volunteer domain under examination: religious organizations, schools, human services, or others. Originally, Coursey et al. (2011) found that CPI is highest in school-based volunteering, closely followed by religious organizations, and trailed significantly

by human services and other. This contradicted their original hypothesis that CPI would be highest in schools and human services. Leisink et al. (2021) suggest this breakdown is due, in part, to organizational-fit (Leisink et al., 2021). Specifically, they purport that the extent to which the volunteer organization espouses public service ideals that align with the volunteer's CPI accounts for the variation in attraction to religious organizations over human services (Leisink et al., 2021). Thus, PSM is a key indicator of who is willing to volunteer as well as where that volunteerism will occur.

In addition to impacting service sites, volunteer motivations as understood by PSM can also determine a volunteer's propensity to work diligently and semi-regularly. Costello et al. (2020) research volunteer motivations, particularly CPI, to predict volunteer effort. First, they find that volunteer time and intensity are not synonymous with effort (Costello et al., 2020). Secondly, they find that volunteer dimensions or motivations are positively related to volunteer time, frequency, and intensity; however, there is significant variation across those motivations (Costello et al., 2020). For example, attraction to policymaking, which Perry (2000) would refer to as a rational motivation, has little relationship with time spent volunteering (Costello et al., 2020). This could be remediated by organization-fit, in that someone with those motivations may spend more time volunteering with a lobbying or political group. CPI, which Perry (2000) considers a norm-based motivation, is related to volunteer intensity; however, it cannot predict frequency as organizational-fit for a CPI-motivated individual is likely that of a natural disaster or other tragedy (Costello et al., 2020). Therefore, it cannot be predicted with any regularity. As such, Costello et al. (2020) suggest a two-fold categorization of volunteer effort for those with norm based PSM: frequency only in non-emergency situations and intensity and frequency in emergency situations. Finally, those with affect based PSM, such as self-sacrifice or compassion,

have an increased likelihood of higher volunteer time, intensity, and frequency (Costello et al., 2020). Therefore, volunteer motivation can indicate the level of benefit an agency will receive from said volunteer before allocating significant resources to their recruitment or training, especially as Huang et al. (2014) find minimal participation, 16.5%, in voluntary programs after training ends.

Benefits of Volunteerism

Generally, the benefits of volunteering to the volunteer are agreed upon and vast. Adults who volunteer experience mental and physical benefits, including longer lifespan and increased self-esteem (Pancer, 2020; Baston et al., 2022). Further, volunteering during adulthood helps shape civic identity and has been shown to increase public participation (Pancer, 2020). For children, volunteering throughout their adolescence increases the likelihood of continued altruism throughout their adult lives (Brown, 2013). Immediate impacts on young people who volunteer include a lessened likelihood of drug and alcohol use, teenage pregnancy, depression, and engaging in delinquent acts (Pancer, 2020). Vecina et al. (2022) list an array of benefits they classify in three categories. First, there is satisfaction related to what is done, for whom, and for what purpose (Vecina et al., 2022). This category benefits the volunteer with increased self-esteem, happiness, and personal identity. The second category comes from sharing values and experiences with similar people, which increases one's understanding of social structures, expands networks, and satisfies the human need for relationships (Vecina et al., 2022). The third category, related to the volunteer activities themselves, increases skillset, knowledge, and marketability (Vecina et al., 2022).

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteerism has been studied in respect to its mutual benefit for the individual and the community. Liszt-Rohlf et al. (2021) explain that many

individuals use volunteering as workforce development. Respondents in this study recognized benefit in learning to delegate tasks, advancing communication and technical skills, learned to network, and exposure to new occupational fields (Liszt-Rohlf et al., 2021). The authors recognize that in this way, volunteering provides individuals education and training on soft skills that are not often taught in school or job training. In this way, those who volunteered while laid-off during the pandemic increased their chances of recall or new opportunities when the market reopened.

Similarly, the pandemic highlighted the mental and emotional benefits of volunteering. Healey (2020) explains that volunteering increases feelings of belonging, combats stress, isolation, and depression, and creates a new or expanded support system with other volunteers. Kulik (2021) reinforces this with a study of three types of volunteers during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic: in-person, virtual, and hybrid. The study found that virtual volunteers felt the least satisfaction and commitment (Kulik, 2021). The author suggests this could be due to the missing mental and emotional benefits reaped from socialization, solidarity, and feeling.

Risks to Nonprofit Agencies

In explaining their concept of the dignity mind-set for nonprofit administrators, Menezes et al. (2017, para. 15) warn that “when confronted with the daily challenge of serving many thousands of constituents, social sector organizations can lose sight of the individual beneficiary, essentially reducing the human experience to numbers on a spreadsheet.” Facing the task of providing a life-sustaining public good with little or no public support puts immense pressure on a nonprofit agency. Nonprofit social service agencies across the country interact with millions of individuals daily in the worst crisis of their lives, often without food, clothing, shelter, or safety. The heightened vulnerability of these consumers means they are more susceptible to abuse.

Further, the crisis each consumer is experiencing creates a tense, potentially hectic, atmosphere which can increase the likelihood of escalated interactions. Kesberg and Keller (2018) note that while human values are supposed to transcend attitude and situation, a person's perception of their current situation can impact their actions in a way that contradicts their typical values. Thus, the nature of the work in providing emergency services to disadvantaged populations inherently impacts the way service providers, paid or volunteer, act.

These variables impacting the way both volunteers and consumers act in any given situation increase the likelihood of conflict between the two. Any argument, belittling, judgment, or confrontation of any sort can impact the agency's reputation among other consumers, donors, and volunteers. It can also alienate the consumer from returning for critical services and have long-term impact on the individual's well-being. If said conflict leads to the volunteer's resignation, the agency faces real economic loss from the individual's free labor. Further, if the conflict rises to levels of harassment or injury, the agency faces legal repercussions as the responsible party. This can have both societal and economic impact, as the agency may be subjected to negative media attention, held responsible for financial restitution, or even face the loss of insurability.

Even without interpersonal conflict, a volunteer may violate a consumer's dignity due solely to negligence. If a volunteer fails to protect sensitive data and consumer privacy, such as by leaving a computer or paper with sensitive personal information on it in public, the agency may be again open to legal repercussion. Continued negligence on the part of an agency's volunteers may have further societal and economic impacts as potential donors and funders withhold their support due to their concerns about the agency's operations. The loss of donations

coupled with the loss of new volunteers can quickly escalate to a programs closure as the agency no longer has the resources required for operation.

Finally, if a nonprofit agency willfully or ignorantly ignores volunteer conflict for the sake of volunteer retention, the agency risks its legal status as a tax-exempt agency. If agencies move away from focusing on their target population to focus on their finite resources such as money and labor, they risk their nonprofit legal status when they begin to provide services that do not fall under their current 501(c)(3) exemptions with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This type of mission creep, if broad enough, can change the organization's National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) Code, which would revoke the agency's nonprofit status with the IRS if the information were not promptly updated.

Chapter 3: Data and Methods

This exploratory study takes a mixed-methods approach as it is one of the first to address this specific topic. Beginning with a survey to produce quantitative data about the frequency of the phenomenon under exploration, as well as data on current volunteer operations within the participants' agencies showed the researcher whether her experiences that prompted this research interest were unique to her agency. Once confirmed that the experience was not in fact unique, the qualitative portion of the study, using semi-structured interviews from those participants reporting a similar experience and indicating a willingness to be interviewed, served to answer the remaining research questions of how, why, and with what frequency does the phenomenon of consumer dignity violation by a volunteer occur, as well as what impact the occurrence had on the agency and its administrators.

Research Questions

The central research question seeks to determine if instances of volunteer violation of consumer dignity are a shared experience among nonprofit agencies providing direct services that warrants further exploration. While the presupposition of this study was that this phenomenon was in fact a shared one, the lack of current research on the topic necessitated the study proves its relevance at the outset. After addressing this concern, the remainder of the data collection focused on answering those questions that could describe the issue, set the stage for future research, and inspire social action in that may, at a minimum, bring attention to a previously underattended topic. As such, the subsequent research questions include:

1. How has consumer dignity been violated by volunteers in the past during their provision of direct service on behalf of the nonprofit agency? For this initial study,

this is explored through the perspective of the nonprofit administrator responsible for mission and value implementation and some degree of volunteer oversight.

2. Why or how did this event occur? How did the nonprofit agency respond? What changes, if any, were made to volunteer operations as a result?

Methodology

A two-instrument case study methodology was used to explore the hypothesized phenomenon of volunteer violation of consumer dignity in the greater Scranton area at nonprofit agencies providing direct service. The first instrument was a mixed-methods survey sent to 75 nonprofit administrators in the greater Scranton area whose email addresses were readily available on the internet. The second instrument was a semi-structured interview with those survey respondents indicating a willingness to provide additional information. Consistent with the critical theory framework, the researcher acknowledges her own understanding of her experiences as a nonprofit administrator and observations of the experiences of her peers as privilege and the basis for her initial venture into this social criticism itself (Spencer, Pryce, & Walsh, 2014). Furthermore, as critical theory necessitates a relationship between the researcher and the participant that is transactional, subjective, and dialectic (Spencer, Pryce, & Walsh, 2014), the researcher acknowledges her expectation that her values influenced both the research process and outcome. By weaving her own values and experiences into the semi-structured interviews to facilitate more detailed and open conversation, the researcher actively pursued one of the study's main goals, which was to empower the participants to seek social equity through a change in their volunteer operational practices.

Additionally, the expectation within this critical theory approach is to document the subjective reality experienced by nonprofit consumers through the lens of the nonprofit

administrator, i.e., a passive participant in the power dynamic between the consumer and the volunteer. The design specifically targeted the nonprofit administrator rather than the consumer as the end goal of the study was to inspire action in those with power that could challenge the prominent societal view of volunteerism that places the value of the volunteer above that of the consumer. The researcher was and remains transparent about this methodological approach to all participants throughout the process to encourage all alternative paradigms for consideration in this initial exploratory pursuit into the concept of centering consumer dignity within volunteer operations (Spencer, Pryce, & Walsh, 2014).

Case Study

In the most basic sense, case study research serves to document a particular complex issue or phenomenon with detail and respect to its unique context (Simons, 2014; Rashid et al., 2019; Baxter & Jack, 2010; Sinha, 2017). For Simons (2014), case study research and evaluation assist the researcher in “trying to understand and represent complexity... puzzling through the ambiguities that exist in many contexts and... presenting and negotiating different values and interests in fair and just ways” (p. 456). As centering consumer dignity in volunteer operations is a broad topic with little established background, case study research provided the most flexibility in terms of methods while also facilitating the generation of the most detail around a breadth of subtopics. Utilizing a model of collective case study, this research explores and synthesizes the experience of the phenomenon of interest across multiple institutions in a particular geographic area. Starting with foreshadowed issues in the survey and allowing the scope to change as necessary based on participant perspective (Simmons, 2014), this collective case study model was created with the intention of determining if issues that arose in one case did so in others, as well as what themes or theories could connect each case. In doing so, the

research determines if volunteer violation of consumer dignity is an isolated incident or one that occurs with a degree of regularity that warrants further attention.

Procedures

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All data utilized in this study emerges from primary sources mined from the same sample. Prior to contacting any individual about participation in the study, an application was submitted to the West Chester University Institutional Review Board (IRB) in January 2023. This application included detailed study information, informed consent documents, and copies of both instruments and sample recruitment emails. It was formally approved on February 6, 2023, as WCU IRB FY-2023-27. A copy of this approval can be found in Appendix A.

Sample & Recruitment

To generate the study's sample, a convenience sampling technique was utilized initially, followed by a theoretical sampling. In the initial phase, a recruitment email was sent to health and human services nonprofit administrators in the greater Scranton area whose emails were readily available online. A copy of this email can be found in Appendix B. As the study focuses on the risks volunteers may pose when providing a direct service on behalf of a nonprofit agency, the recruitment list was crafted by listing all those nonprofits in the greater Scranton area that provide a direct service of some kind to their consumers. An internet search was then conducted via Google for each agency to find the email address of either an administrator whose title related to volunteerism, a particular program or service, or indicated they were part of the agency's leadership. There were 79 individuals targeted in this way, and 31 participated in the survey. All participants had to first answer criteria questions, ensuring they were 18+ years of age, employed by a nonprofit in the greater Scranton area, and had job responsibilities that

intersected with volunteers in some way. Of the 31 responses, no one was considered ineligible based on any of criteria. However, seven did not complete the survey past the eligibility screener despite qualifying. This left 24 eligible participants who completed the survey. The second sample came from a pool of the first, in that the survey ended with a request for further data collection with an interview. Those that indicated they would be willing to participate in an interview were asked to leave contact information that was segregated from their previous responses so as not to identify anyone. Those who indicated they were unwilling to participate in an interview were given one additional, open-ended survey question to add anything else pertaining to their experience not asked on the survey.

Instruments

Survey

Initial data was collected via structured survey on Qualtrics from February 6-24, 2023. No compensation or incentive was offered for participation in this survey. A PDF copy of the survey can be found in Appendix C. It begins with an informed consent document and then asks 11 closed-ended questions to determine eligibility, frequency of experience, and impact of the experience of volunteer violation of consumer dignity. It is important to note that demographic questions were intentionally left out of the survey to protect the identities of the participants as the region and sector are named throughout the study. Four of the questions included sub-questions with short-answer text boxes, and the twelfth question included the same, that allowed participants to expand on their response. This was a conscious decision based on the methodology of the study so that the participant was in total control of what and how much information was shared on any given question. The final question requested participation in an interview to elaborate further on the experiences highlighted in the survey. If the participant

accepted, they were prompted to include contact information that was separately reported to protect the anonymity of their previous responses. Of the 24 respondents that completed the entire survey, nine agreed to an interview.

If the participant declined an interview, they were offered an open-ended text box with instructions to share any other thoughts, experiences, or details they felt may be pertinent to the research. Again, this was done with the intent of putting the participant in control of the level of information shared and to offer space for the inclusion of alternative paradigms not included in the survey by the researcher. However, of the 15 survey respondents that did not opt for an interview, not one added information via the final open-ended survey question.

Interviews

Of the nine participants who agreed to be interviewed, eight followed through with the scheduling and completion of the interview. All eight interviews took place from March 2-16, 2023, in Scranton, PA. A protocol sheet for the semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendix D. All interviews were face to face, taking place at either a coffee shop or the participant's workplace. They ranged from 20 to 45 minutes, and no compensation or incentive was offered for participation. Interviews were audio recorded using the Voice Memos feature on the researcher's iPhone, and field notes were taken during each interview highlighting unique insights, commonalities, questions, and participant emotions.

Data Management

Survey data was secured and stored in the cloud through the researcher's password protected Qualtrics account. After the survey period closed, the responses were exported to an Excel file separately from the responses to the informed consent question and the interview request. This maintained the anonymity of the participants' responses with respect to the

researcher. The Excel file containing the deidentified survey question responses was stored in the researcher's password protected West Chester University OneDrive account in a folder that only the researcher and committee chair had access to.

Interviews were audio recorded using code names only to protect the identity of the participants as much as possible. These recordings were immediately transferred to the researcher's secure OneDrive account and deleted from the iPhone after completion of the recording. These audio files were then uploaded to and transcribed by an online professional transcription service, Scribie. The researcher paid for manual transcriptions rather than automated to increase precision. Further, each completed transcription was checked against the original audio recording for accuracy by the researcher during analysis. These transcriptions were then also uploaded to the researcher's secure OneDrive account for safekeeping.

Data Analysis

The survey data was interpreted using thematic analysis. Creating a thematic network assists in identifying the frequency, severity, and common circumstance surrounding instances of volunteer violation of consumer dignity. This method is appropriate as, due to the limited availability of current research on the topic, the research must first explore and generally define the nature of the phenomenon (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). The interview data was interpreted using critical thematic analysis (CTA). Based on Owen's (1984) criteria for thematic analysis of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness, CTA expands this method of analysis by interjecting critical analysis into each code to determine ways in which it reproduces or reinforces social inequity or oppression (Lawless & Chen, 2019). Analysis for both survey and interview data sets used coding and memoing.

Coding

Many qualitative researchers utilize coding to assign meaning to their volumes of text accumulated throughout their data collection processes. Codes can be descriptive, categorical, or analytical (Bazeley, 2021). As this study moved from a general thematic analysis of the data to a more critical thematic analysis approach, all three types of codes were used in a dynamic process. The researcher read through the qualitative responses to the survey repeatedly, gradually evolving codes and creating networks to assist with interpretation. This allowed for a more general idea of potential themes and suggested additional lines of inquiry for the execution and analysis of the interview data. Although starting with a general idea of codes and themes, the same process was used with the interview transcripts, along with studying field notes and reviewing the audio recordings to include nonverbal or implied responses to research questions. See Appendix E for the study's full codebook.

Memoing

To assist with coding and ensure thorough critical analysis, memoing was used sequentially to each round of coding on each interview transcript. This repeated process allowed the researcher to raise codes from descriptive to categorical to analytical. Further, memoing served as steppingstone between coding and interpretation (Bazeley, 2021). The practice also allowed the researcher to filter her own experience and understanding of the phenomenon to crosscheck potential biases and ensure interpretations included only those themes initiated by participants.

ATLAS.ti 23

The researcher used qualitative analysis software to assist with the storage, organization, and visualization of the data. A student subscription to ATLAS.ti 23 held the survey data and interview transcriptions in one place and allowed for quick content editing to remove data

superfluous to this analysis such as survey completion time, start and end dates, and so on. While the software did allow for automated coding suggestions, the researcher found that those codes were not particularly applicable to this study and therefore removed said feature.

Limitations

Limitations within the context of this specific study include the researcher's personal involvement in the field and the potential for participants to be identified based on the detail of their responses. These limitations were addressed within the study's design by the choice of theoretical framework, practicing transparency throughout the data collection and reporting phases, and removing all potential identifiers from survey responses and interview transcripts from the study's documentation. This did result in the retraction of certain words from the transcripts; however, it was limited to names and proper nouns that directly identified the agency or participant. Further, the focus on the administrator over the consumer, while intentional for this initial study, limits our understanding of the depth and breadth of the phenomenon as administrators may not observe or be informed of every occurrence. The sensitive nature of the topic and the retrospective perspectives from administrators also potentially impact the thoroughness of phenomenon descriptions.

Ethical Considerations

Reliability, Transparency, and Validity

The integrity of the researcher, and her practice of transparency related to her own experiences with the phenomenon to critically assess innate biases, serves to increase reliability and validity of the findings. The study's inclusion of two separate data collection instruments serves as a means of method triangulation (Johnson, 2014). Member checks (Thomas, 2017) were offered to all interested participants prior to final submission of the study as a means of

increasing credibility and continued involvement for participants throughout the research process. As a doctoral dissertation, the study enjoyed some peer review from the three committee members throughout the writing process.

Summary

This study takes a mixed-methods, critical-theory, case method approach to establish basic parameters and common themes surrounding the phenomenon of a volunteer's violation of a nonprofit agency consumer's dignity. Utilizing surveys and semi-structured interviews, this research aims to determine if this phenomenon is a shared one, how common it may be, what happens, why it happens, and what impacts it may have. Although closely connected with both the topic and the sample, which risks serious bias in data collection and interpretation, the researcher uses her proximity to the topic to her advantage and incorporates community-based action research practices into her research methods.

Chapter 4: Findings

The experiences that prompted this research were those of the researcher herself throughout the course of her career as a nonprofit administrator. With limited prior experience in coordinating large groups of volunteers to provide a direct service to a vulnerable population, the researcher held a preconceived notion that those willing to donate their time to a charitable cause would only do so with the best intentions. With that idea, the researcher assumed unwavering empathy on the part of a volunteer in all consumer-facing interactions. However, experience revealed the naivety of this assumption and how it overlooks the human condition. Instead, the researcher had repeated experiences of volunteers violating consumer dignity, largely by words of judgement, removal of the consumer's autonomy, and even the occasional verbal altercation. Setting aside these experiences, this study used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods to find that there are seven common ways in which consumer dignity has been violated by volunteers in the greater Scranton area: privacy invasions, negative communications, the overstepping of boundaries, value misalignments, judgement, violated autonomy, and confrontations. Each instance can be any one or a combination of these seven categories. It then finds that there are four general nonprofit operational areas in which deficiencies lead to these occurrences: communication, staff, volunteer roles, and training. Ultimately, the impacts these instances have on three different stakeholders: the agency itself, the agency's staff, and the agency's volunteers.

A Shared Experience

The initial instrument used in this study, a mixed-methods survey sent to 79 nonprofit administrators in the greater Scranton area, returned 24 completed responses. Of these 24 responses, two were removed as ineligible due to the agency not using volunteers. Of the

remaining 22 responses, 11 indicated they had experienced a volunteer violating their consumer's dignity throughout the course of direct service provision on behalf of the agency. Eight indicated they had not experienced this, while three reported they were unsure if they had or had not had this experience. Of the 11 respondents who shared this experience, only four indicated their agency has a written volunteer recruitment policy, six reported a written volunteer training policy, and two indicated a written volunteer retention policy. Of those contending to have never had the experience of a volunteer violating a consumer's dignity, four had a written recruitment policy, three had a written training policy, and one had a written retention policy. The three respondents indicating they were unsure if they had shared this experience reported that two of them knew the agency had written volunteer recruitment policies, one knew of a written training policy, and none knew of written retention policies.

Of the 11 respondents reporting a shared experience in the survey, 10 indicated in the survey that its occurrence is rare. However, of the eight that agreed to and followed through with an interview, each noted in some manner that it occurs more often than realized. Several made distinctions between severe and minor cases, with minor cases happening more regularly and often unreported. Some suggested it may occur more frequently within large group events or with infrequent volunteers. This is explored more thoroughly in the next chapter.

The Details

Referring to the study's key terms, a violation of consumer dignity refers to a time in which the consumer was not totally respected, or their autonomy was not totally recognized. In the survey, the 11 reported instances of a volunteer violating consumer dignity vary but typically include an invasion of privacy, negative or judgmental commentary, verbal altercations, or the overstepping of the boundaries of the volunteer's role. Table 1 details these instances.

While the interview participants came from the survey sample and therefore their primary reported instances were duplicated, each participant included additional experiences of volunteer violation of consumer dignity they had witnessed or even committed themselves throughout their careers. Table 2 details these instances.

Table 1 Survey Instances of Consumer Dignity Violation

Case #	Question 8c Response*	Codes
51	Volunteer took photos of clients during a private event without prior consent.	Privacy Invasion
53	A volunteer was trying to open a cabinet to retrieve something. A Client was standing in the way. The volunteer gently pushed the client on the rear end. The client said something accusatory to the volunteer and ran off. The volunteer's husband came in when the client was yelling at his wife. He chased the client down and started yelling at them for their inconsiderate behavior.	Privacy Invasion, Confrontation, Negative Communication
55	The volunteer was distracting one of our guests while in a session, steering the conversation away from the intended material and bring up things that are against our statement of faith.	Negative Communication, Value Misalignment
59	As a diverse community, language sometimes poses a barrier. One of the volunteers began yelling at a consumer because the client was asking for milk and didn't understand why there was no more left.	Negative Communication
62	A volunteer began assisting a client with tasks outside of their volunteer duties. The client began a period of mental decline and subsequently accused the volunteer of theft. The family became involved and ultimately the allegations were unfounded.	Overstepping Boundaries
63	A volunteer manger treated a client (member) in a way that wasn't up to our standards and, in fact, made the person leave our program.	Negative Communication, Value Misalignment
67	Those we serve offered to volunteer with us. One of our regular volunteers objected due to their perception of the liability involved. Administrator explained no difference in the liability between the person standing in front of me (regular volunteer, never consumer) and the person who just started to volunteer (also a consumer). Administrator maintains part of recognizing a person's dignity is allowing them to contribute to the cause.	Judgement

Case #	Question 8c Response*	Codes
69	A volunteer who got into a verbal altercation with a consumer. It created fear in others who observed the incident.	Confrontation, Negative Communication
70	Volunteers disrespecting a pathway to recovery, preaching rather than sharing life experience.	Judgement, Value Misalignment
72	Volunteers who were assisting in a consumer's home used profane language, offending the consumer.	Negative Communication, Value Misalignment
73	Volunteer misrepresented themselves as speaking on the agency's behalf in soliciting donations. [Considered a violation of consumer dignity by agency as volunteer utilized consumer stories.]	Overstepping Boundaries

*Responses summarized to remove identifying information.

Table 2 Interview Instances of Consumer Dignity Violation

Case #	Question 5 Response*	Codes
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteer who came to support event was related to clients, creating privacy violation. - Volunteers using inappropriate language or overstepping boundaries. - Volunteers asking questions or responding to questions in ways that don't align with agency's mission and values. 	Privacy Invasion; Negative Communication, Overstepping Boundaries, Value Misalignment
2	A volunteer dictated what individuals coming in for assistance could choose, what was healthy or best for them despite program being "client-choice".	Judgement, Violated Autonomy; Value Misalignment.
3	Volunteers laughing at members of LGBTQIA+ community, asking inappropriate questions; racial discrimination.	Judgement; Value Misalignment; Negative Communication
4	Volunteer went beyond their assigned role and began helping consumer personally inside the home with tasks not related to agency's mission.	Overstepping Boundaries
5	Volunteer made inappropriate comments and jokes during a group interaction.	Negative Communication
6	Volunteer with advanced technical knowledge took over project without including consumer in the process, built/repairs something in way that consumer did not want.	Violated Autonomy

Case #	Question 5 Response*	Codes
7	Volunteer asking intrusive questions to consumer regarding their current circumstance.	Judgement; Value Misalignment
8	Volunteer demeaned participant's chosen assistance program/path, insisting it wasn't right and their way was best.	Judgement; Value Misalignment, Negative Communication

*Responses summarized to remove identifying information.

Analysis of both the survey and interview responses regarding instances of violation of consumer dignity by a volunteer revealed seven common types of dignity violation: privacy invasion, negative communication, overstepping boundaries, value misalignment, judgement, violated autonomy, and confrontation. This is a split of Chan and Bowpitt's (2005) framework to advance human dignity and Miller and Keys' (2001) eight ways in which consumer dignity can be violated. By synthesizing the two and using them as guides in the analysis of this study's data, initially unrelated incidents became interconnected. The Chan and Bowpitt (2005) concept of human dignity centers around equal human value, positive mutuality and social participation, and self-respect and autonomy. Thus, one may summarize that the concept of human dignity in relation to a social service agency's consumer involves the individual, their interactions, and the value(s) placed on them. Miller and Key's (2001) ways to violate consumer dignity fold into this synthesis in violations related to the individual (poor service, unfair treatment, and lack of resources for basic needs), their interactions (lack of identity, negative association, and negative physical setting), and the value placed on them (lack of care and arbitrary rules). The dignity violations found in this study, then, can also be grouped according to the individual (overstepping boundaries and violated autonomy), their interactions (privacy invasion, negative communication, and confrontation), and the value placed on them (value misalignment and judgement).

The Causes

Of the eight respondents indicating they had not experienced this phenomenon throughout their career as a nonprofit administrator in the greater Scranton area, seven attributed this to either extensive volunteer training or direct volunteer supervision. Each respondent who noted supervision as the means of avoiding this phenomenon stressed that supervision always includes paid staff members. Those that did experience this phenomenon attributed their causes to human nature, communication breakdown, or incomplete training. The interview allowed for a more in-depth discussion on the causes of this phenomenon. All eight participants ultimately assigned the cause of their experiences to shortcomings within the areas of communication, staff, volunteer roles, or training.

Communication

Several interview participants referred to communication when describing their experiences and feelings surrounding each instance. Often, a deficiency in communication frequency or lucidity contributed significantly to the instance of consumer dignity violation. Other times, the inability to maintain or initiate communication before, during, or immediately after high-risk situations were believed to either cause or exacerbate the instance of dignity violation. Especially in the case of emergency assistance programs such as food, clothing, shelter, etc., situations can arise to which the volunteer is not accustomed or trained. Without the ability to communicate with the agency directly during their service provision, the volunteer is left to navigate said situation with their own discretion. Several of the dignity violations coded as value misalignment fall into this category. One specific interviewee reported that these instances of dignity violation most often relate to overstepping boundaries. The administrator shared that

volunteers would see a consumer's additional needs during a home visit and take it upon themselves to attend to those needs. They explained:

And as a volunteer, I need you to understand, to communicate the fact that that person may need it [assistance], is the best thing they can do all day or maybe all week. Refer it and give us that information versus doing it themselves. Structural fix over-banding (Interview 4).

Further, several interviewees expressed a difference between using volunteers for regular services and for mass events. In the case of mass events, such as seasonal events or community efforts involving dozens or even hundreds of volunteers, some administrators expressed their belief that nothing could prevent dignity violation due to their size, timing, and involvement of new or infrequent volunteers. Insufficient communication was expressed here as the main cause. Regarding these mass events, one administrator said:

I think our biggest challenge is when we come to one-off volunteers that we don't know their history, their behavior, their triggers, all of that, their involvement there, too...

That's not possible when we're talking about 30 volunteers at a time (Interview 1).

Another administrator explained, "Mass events should just be 'do no harm'" (Interview 7). While different sentiments, both share the belief that large-scale events do not support sufficient communication. Unable to communicate with each volunteer before and during the event, the administrator is forced to allow an unvetted, untrained individual access to their vulnerable population, thus ripening the risk for a dignity violation.

Staff

A second common cause of consumer dignity violation by volunteers is related to nonprofit staff. Failure to empower and encourage staff and their supervision of volunteers were

reported to contribute to instances of dignity violation, particularly in the categories of negative communication and confrontation. The most direct conception of staff contributing to this phenomenon includes staff participating in the misconduct or doing nothing to stop it. When discussing their experience witnessing volunteers discriminate against consumers because of their race, gender identity, or sexual orientation, the administrator in Interview 3 said, “And I think the staff, people from the agency, either shared that culture or they were afraid.” A similar sentiment was echoed in Interview 1 when the participant expressed the need to empower staff and encourage each person’s efforts at volunteer supervision lest these instances go unchecked. They explained, “it would be impossible for me as an individual to catch every volunteer infraction. So, I think that’s [a team effort] important” (Interview 1). The administrator in Interview 2 illustrated the importance of staff supervision to catch these instances as they occur. Their agency believed the referenced incident was an isolated event and did not make any volunteer policy changes as a result. However, after transitioning to more of an oversight role, the administrator had a “broader view than being right in it, where I could see what was happening without people knowing I was seeing what was happening... [and] that happened more” (Interview 2). In their case, closer supervision allowed the agency to realize dignity violations were occurring with more frequency than originally understood, and ultimately that prompted a response. At the same time, close staff supervision of volunteers may prevent these instances from occurring altogether if one assumes the volunteer acts or reacts differently in the presence of a paid agency representative. In fact, half of the survey respondents who reported never witnessing consumer dignity violation at the hands of a volunteer directly attributed their agency’s prevention of the issue to close staff supervision of volunteers. A different yet related concept was introduced in Interview 6. The administrator in this case reported staff’s pre-

established relationships with consumers as critical to preventing serious repercussions from their experiences with volunteers violating a consumer's dignity. They explained:

If they know that we're there to help them and advocate for them, and they have a good enough relationship to talk to us about it, then we're still okay. Because they know us. And so, if they have a bad experience with volunteers, they can talk about that with us, and we can troubleshoot (Interview 6).

In this case, then, the work the paid staff does before the volunteer interactions with the consumer serves to lessen the severity of any potential dignity violation.

Volunteer Roles

The third reported cause of consumer dignity violation surrounds volunteer roles, specifically related to person-role fit, power dynamics, and utilization. Person-role fit was described as the main contributor to their occasional volunteer challenges by the administrator in Interview 7. They shared, “a lot of instinctive conflict may arise just because the member or volunteer ... it might be a peg into a round hole. Not every service experience or volunteer experience is for every person.” In this case, assigning someone to fulfill a role they are not interested in, comfortable with, or equipped to handle leads to the volunteer being in a position of antipathy and the setting for the volunteer becomes harsh. Both conditions increase the risk of a dignity violation. Similarly, the administrator from Interview 5 explained, “One of the challenges we have here is to get volunteers here doing the things we need them to do when we need them [to do it].” Also connected to volunteer roles are the power dynamics inherent in the societal understanding of the roles of nonprofit volunteers versus the roles of nonprofit consumers. The administrator in Interview 7 shared earlier in the conversation that the culture of volunteerism ought to be one of serving rather than fixing. In working with individuals with

considerable and varied life experiences, this administrator found that their volunteers tended to identify issues and jump to resolve them with a sense of immediacy. While that working style could be beneficial in some situations, in direct service with consumers it could create positions of vulnerability and asymmetry in which the consumer's autonomy is trampled in the name of helping. Instead, the role of volunteering should be about presence and journeying with the consumer on their chosen path to whatever success looks like to them. Finally, the notion of volunteer time and effective utilization was introduced by the administrator in Interview 6 as a means of creating "purposeful service." Purposeful service implies that the volunteer's experience is meaningful. It eliminates the typical power struggle commonly assumed in volunteer-consumer interactions because the volunteer is getting as much out of the experience as the consumer may be. Misutilization of a volunteer's skills, such as using someone with an electrical trade certification on a home building site to landscape when the house does not have lights yet, or their time, such as having volunteers sit idly without any assignment or role, signals to the volunteer they are not appreciated or necessary. This may be taken as indifference or dismissal of the volunteer by the agency, which not only violates their dignity but creates the condition of hostility or impatience that the volunteer may then pass on to the consumer. Particularly among the instances of dignity violation in which a consumer's autonomy was restricted, a failure on behalf of the agency to provide the opportunity for meaningful service often contributed to the indiscretion, as the volunteer took it upon themselves to find work, push past any stalling, and create the outcome they thought best.

Training

Far and away, training deficiencies were reported as the main contributor to instances of consumer dignity violation. These deficiencies included the complete lack of training,

inconsistent training, and incomplete training. The administrator in Interview 3 shared that their organization does not have training in place for volunteers or much training for paid staff. They likened this deficiency to throwing the individual, whether volunteer or paid staff, into the deep end of the pool with the hopes that someone is already there to show them how to swim. In the cases that someone was there to demonstrate how to swim, the volunteer still missed training on the soft skills, such as empathy and de-escalation. The administrator in Interview 4 shared similar sentiments about the need for thorough training beyond technical skills. While this administrator maintained that empathy cannot be taught in a training and therefore prevent dignity violations due to antipathy, they did believe that thorough training on what the mission is and is not was crucial to minimizing their risk. The reported instance of dignity violation in this case was one of overstepping boundaries, and the administrator expressed their belief that it occurred because the volunteer did not have a thorough grasp of the agency's mission, values, and expectations. By not understanding the limitations of the mission and the agency's expectations, the volunteer allowed their empathy to cloud their judgement and assisted the consumer in ways beyond the scope of the agency's services. In some cases, this removes personal autonomy; however, in this case, it led to dependence and restriction. It opened the agency to an unexpected risk as the volunteer, purporting to represent the agency, acted in ways outside the scope of its liability coverage. Lastly, even in cases of thorough, standardized training, infrequent training also risks instances of dignity violation. The administrator from Interview 4 recalled that prior to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, their agency held monthly refresher courses for their volunteers and required regular check-ins on the status of their mentorships with consumers. However, in-person restrictions throughout the initial months of the pandemic ended this practice, and it has yet to return.

The Impact

The impact recurring volunteer violations of consumer dignity can cause, irrespective of its frequency, can be substantial. However, these impacts or consequences are not always what one may initially suppose. One survey respondent pointed to the potential for judicial consequences as the reason their agency had avoided the experience so far. In fact, though impact was not directly included in either the survey or interview questions, conversation naturally flowed that way in six of the eight interviews. Conceivably, those who experience this phenomenon directly and therefore suffer most from its impacts are the consumers themselves. Indeed, that is a topic to be addressed in the next chapter. Nonetheless, as seen throughout the data regarding the details and causes of this shared phenomenon, the experience is not one that occurs in a silo, nor is anyone present at the time or responsible for some aspect of the programming during which it occurs exempt from the effects of its outcome. In the six interviews that naturally spurred discussion of impacts, each differentiated between individual and institutional impacts. Upon further coding and memoing of each interview transcript regarding impact, it became clear that each administrator instinctively classified impact into three categories: on the agency (19 references), on staff (5 references), and on the volunteer (5 references).

Impact on Agency

Despite specific conversation regarding impact only occurring in six of the eight interviews, all eight first approached their unique experiences with volunteer violation of consumer dignity as it related to the agency. Rather than assigning blame to an individual for its occurrence, each administrator described the experience as an institutional one. The impacts described were all framed as losses, and each is a hurdle the agency must overcome. However,

interconnected nature of the nonprofit sector, the speed with which stories, especially salacious ones, travel in small cities, and the scarcity of resources to quickly and adequately address the negative encounter mean that each impact has the potential to build upon the next and ultimately create a much bigger fallout than anyone could anticipate.

The Agency's Consumer. The most common code occurring under the theme of impact, outside of *volunteer*, comprised the administrators' references to those the agency serves. Mentions of consumers, participants, clients, and somebody/someone using services, using person/people/somebody in referring to service provision, and the use of two additional codes that were redacted as they may serve to identify an administrator, occurred 47 times throughout the eight interviews during discussions of impact. Six of the eight administrators directly or indirectly referenced the potential loss or alienation of the consumer as one of the most significant potential impacts for the agency. Likewise, six of the eight interviewees noted their prioritization of the consumer above all else. Interestingly, though, the six that reported consumer prioritizations are not the same six that were directly asked about the impact encounters of dignity violation had on their agency. As such, this research finding cannot report the categorical prioritization of consumer well-being across the sample, despite the coincidental inclusion of the sentiment by the two interviewees not directly asked. While expressed differently by each of the six to a degree, they all shared a common understanding that the consumer represented the agency's reason for existence. As such, the administrator from Interview 4 described their prioritization of the consumer in this way:

Finding best practices on the hierarchy of needs, and how to not shout and be aggressive in providing for dignity, ... is a tricky game. You don't wanna offend a volunteer. Right? Because you need volunteers. We can't do what we do without volunteers. But our first

and most important stakeholder is always the client. I could talk about stakeholders forever, but the first and foremost important is the client (Interview 4).

The impact on the agency's consumer that the administrators reported as having impacted the agency as well include consumer alienation, apprehension in returning for services, feelings of humiliation or being unsafe, invasion of privacy, removal of autonomy, and the consumer's separation from the agency and return to a former unhealthy or unsafe way of living.

In the literal sense, the agency is impacted by the consumer's suffering because the diminishing of its service population reduces the agency's effectiveness at fulfilling their intended mission. In this instance, the shrinking of the service population is a negative because the individual(s) still need the service but do not feel safe seeking it. Additionally, this reduction in service population can refer to the loss of the consumer who experienced the dignity violation personally or it could refer to future, potential consumers who desperately need the service but does not seek it after hearing of the dignity violations. In a theoretical sense, the agency is impacted by the consumer's suffering because they must bear a portion of the blame for this suffering, as its action or inaction directly contributed to the permission of the encounter. Thus, the agency suffers secondhand for its failure to fulfill its mission to those most in need as well as its momentary lapse in adherence to its own purported values.

The Agency's Reputation. The next most reported impact an agency feels after a dignity violation encounter relates to its reputation. While this may appear superficial some, many administrators acknowledge that reputation, although intangible, intersects every aspect of operational success or failure in nonprofit management. First, it relates directly to the loss of consumers as word spreads through the community of the agency's damaged reputation. The administrator from Interview 1 sees this impact realized with "hesitancy to seek services, which

already exists in the world, too, [and consumers discussing their negative experiences with other community members] kind of exacerbating that fear of going to seek services that you're eligible for." The administrator from Interview 2 also connected an agency's reputation to its funding.

They shared:

In the non-profit world, the respect of the organization and the work it does is the most important factor. It means that funders respect us and know that we're going to do a good job, and we're going to bring dignity and respect to the clients. Then they continue to fund you. If something like this consistently happens and it gets out there, word of mouth... it's all about reputation and the reputation of the organization would be harmed.

Then we're all out of a job. And people don't have food or clothes" (Interview 2).

In this description, the administrator shared their very real fear of the ripple effect a negative consumer-volunteer interaction could have on their agency. In just a few steps they illustrated, albeit lightheartedly, how this phenomenon and an intentional or unintentional choice to ignore it, could lead to the downfall of the agency. Although many nonprofit agencies diversify their sources of income beyond the public or private grant makers Administrator 2 referred to as *funders*, the same holds true for those individual donors, partner agencies or governments distributing service contracts, and even volunteers. In a tight market with limited resources and growing need, a nonprofit agency cannot afford to lose multiple sources of income and its donated labor due to a damaged reputation and subsequent loss of established supporters. Particularly for those nonprofit agencies already leaning heavily on volunteers rather than paid staff to fulfill their mission due to a scarcity of resources, this potential outcome is both very real and very intimidating.

The Agency's Operations. Despite their thoroughness with the reputational impact on an agency and its varied outcomes, the interviewed administrators did not stop with impact projections there. While most remaining potential agency impacts expressed or implied were largely hypothetical, each was portrayed at least as possible, if not probable, when de-escalating a confrontation between a consumer and volunteer. Administrator 7's first suggestion of a potential agency impact was a violent or physical altercation. Administrator 8 mentioned legal issues initially as an afterthought, but they returned to it to advise that discrimination claims are always possible despite an agency's adoption of and adherence to anti-discrimination policies. All six interviewees specifically asked about agency impacts mentioned financial loss, whether resulting from legal consequences or loss of monetary support. However, none of the six reported experiencing this type of financial impact, or even the threat of experiencing them, throughout their career. The administrator from Interview 6, though, did recognize potential financial loss due to instances of dignity violation that were both practical and probable. They summarized the impact of their disclosed experience of dignity violation on the agency as:

Internally, it's lost time in productivity. Because you are ending up cleaning up an issue and going back and having to spend time and energy smoothing things over with the [consumer]. And it gets to be inefficient, which takes away from something else we could be doing. So, the way I look at it is if I'm spending an extra 10 hours with this [consumer] kind of smoothing that issue over and making everything okay there, that's 10 hours that we're not spending on somebody else who really needs this help. And so that's a real cost (Interview 6).

Thus, the direct impact felt by the agency after an actual consumer dignity violation was operational in that it lost productivity. Yet, it can be connected directly back to agency impacts

regarding reputation in that the administrator must attempt to repair it, as well as the agency's current and future consumers in that former must receive a duplicate service to correct the infraction, making the agency's time and resources unavailable for the latter.

Impact on Staff

Although each interviewee was, and still is at the time of publication, a nonprofit staff member themselves, only three of them discussed the impact these consumer dignity violations had or could have on the agency's staff in general or themselves specifically. It was much more common throughout the interviews for the administrator to frame all experiences, positive or negative, as institutional rather than individual. The impact on staff, then, is not as fully explored as the impacts on the agency and perceived impact on consumers. These three administrators reported three major impacts on staff, namely negative emotion, increased turnover, and moral quandary, as well as their overarching silver lining: motivation to do better.

Negative Emotion. Administrators 1 and 2 reported feelings of failure and disgust after witnessing a volunteer violate a consumer's dignity. Administrator 1 explained that consumer safety and privacy are their main priorities. When recalling each instance of dignity violation, whether the administrator deemed it a major or minor infraction, the privacy of the consumer was invaded. The agency's inability to ever completely prevent the invasion of privacy due to the structure of their programming, the need for volunteer assistance, and the impracticality of thorough volunteer vetting and training at mass events evoked in this administrator these negative personal emotions. However, the administrator's ability to link each occurrence to common causes also served as motivation to continue their programmatic and policy updates, as well as increase honest and direct communication with consumers about potential privacy risks at mass events, to mitigate future harm.

Administrator 2's negative feelings differed slightly in that they reported feeling "awful," but as though they were being disrespected as well. As with the previously expressed common sentiment of institution over individualism, Administrator 2 felt this dignity violation reflected directly back on them as they oversaw the program and department. Again, though, the administrator harnessed those negative feelings into motivation and chose to see the situation as a learning opportunity. Now Administrator 2 focuses more heavily on volunteer vetting and training, regardless of the volunteer role's need for technical skill or frequency of direct consumer interaction, to consistently and clearly communicate the agency's commitment to and expectation of dignity and respect for everyone.

Increased Turnover. Not all negative experiences can be turned into positive ones, though. In discussing additional situations in which they witnessed consumer dignity violation at the hands of a consumer, Administrator 2 and 3 reported feeling fed up and burnt out. Both individuals reported an unwillingness on the part of other staff or their supervisors to address the dignity violations, and so they continued to occur. Administrator 2 explained:

I think that not feeling supported, whether it be in oversight of volunteers or the work that they do, really, exemplifies, not exemplifies, heightens, heightens an employee's burnout. 'Cause they don't feel like they're being heard. I didn't feel like I was being heard that here's this trickle down effect that could happen. Yeah, you get fed up, you get frustrated and, you said it, this is not an easy job as it is. So, if you're not feeling supported, you burn out and you want to go somewhere where you can be (Interview 2).

In both cases, the administrators leaving those positions for new opportunities are a result of feeling burnt out and unsupported. However, both also reported learning from these experiences and carrying the understanding of what not to do into future roles.

Moral Quandary. The final impact on staff was reported by Administrator 3. They responded to the researcher's inquiry on their personal impact and experience with dignity violation with a flight or fight dichotomy: walking away when the racism became too commonplace and even accepted in one instance and doubling down on their efforts to incorporate more individuals with differing sexual orientations into leadership roles in another. When pressed further on agency impact, Administrator 3 took a more philosophical approach. They explained:

So being faith-based, I believe at some point I have to answer to God for what I do. And I have to answer to God for what my agency does. Hopefully that's my ticket into heaven. Right? We did a lot of good things. But I have to answer to the Lord and say, "This is what we did." So that's the biggest punishment right there is that you have to answer for it. And I have to look in the mirror and say, "...today you tolerated bigotry." Sorry, I used my name. "I tolerated that and I shouldn't. I should be a better example," (Interview 3).

Although posed as an agency impact question, Administrator 3's unique response highlights the occasional inseparability of a nonprofit administrator, especially one filling an organizational role near or at the top, and the agency itself. In this manner, Administrator 3 demonstrates how even a secondary connection to a dignity violation can impact an individual through their personal values, or in this case their faith. For Administrator 3, the potential for moral quandary reminds them to actively work to protect their consumers from this experience and as motivation for continued, modeled improvement.

Impact on Volunteers

The impacts a volunteer experiences after violating a consumer's dignity were originally outside the scope of this research. Because of that, there were no direct questions about the

impact on volunteers to any of the administrators. The concept was touched on by two interviewees with a total frequency of five times, the same frequency observed for staff impact. Administrator 2 approached impact on volunteers as referring to the other individuals volunteering at the agency that did not participate in a dignity violation. After illustrating the potential for staff burnout and turnover due to feeling unsupported, the researcher questioned if that turnover theory would hold true for regular volunteers as the administrator had just finished explaining the preferential treatment volunteers received over staff in their previous role. For these individuals, Administrator 2 shared:

Absolutely, in two ways. One, is that whole fed up, like this person should not be treating somebody using services this way. But then also especially younger volunteers are impressionable. So, this instance, if somebody saw that and was impressionable, then they now think that it's okay to treat somebody like that. So, two impacts can happen (Interview 2).

On the other side, Administrator 7 expressed concern for the impacts felt by the volunteer who may have committed the dignity violation. Administrator 7 serves in a more unique capacity related to volunteers in that the volunteer program design welcomes only regular volunteers for a minimum timeframe. As such, a bond is developed between the administrator and the volunteers in much the same way a bond is developed between an administrator and a regular consumer. Acknowledging the role of administrators as mediators in tense encounters, Administrator 7 explains it is often easier for those working in the nonprofit field to empathize with the consumer:

because you're understanding from a consumer side that it can be an experience that feels challenging for them, there are issues of failure, humiliation, unworthiness, loss, along

with there could be dual diagnosis issues in a lot of the consumers that we work with, with mental health issues, with substance abuse issues, with who knows what past trauma issues have been (Interview 7).

For Administrator 7, though, the same holds true for the volunteer:

We encounter individuals who have been wounded and then understanding that the volunteers themselves may be wounded in some particular way. Just because an individual has the opportunity to share their time, it doesn't mean that they too don't have some sort of emotional scars that may arise in a service experience. So, it's an awareness that all of us are just trying to row the boat together in the same direction (Interview 7).

The inclusion of the phenomenon's impact on the volunteer who commits the dignity violation is both necessary and purposeful in that it serves to close the circle on the potential impact instances of dignity violation can have on everyone involved with the agency.

Conclusions

The critical theory approach incorporated into the research methodology, especially within the interview phase of data collection, facilitated a relaxed environment in which the researcher and the respondents held more of a conversation than a question-and-answer session. These personal rather than scientific interactions, each one tailored to the perceived comfort level of that administrator, proved to be transactional, subjective, and dialectic as critical theory instructs. This intentionally flexible framework allowed thick, rich descriptions to generate for a specific subset of nonprofit management research otherwise unexplored.

The survey as the first method of data collection and analysis quickly achieved its purpose in confirming that instances of volunteer violation of consumer dignity were not unique to the researcher's nonprofit management tenure. It also allowed for a more informed approach

when facilitating the interviews as initial critical thematic analysis of survey responses generated six common themes of dignity violation: privacy invasion, confrontation, negative communication, value misalignment, overstepping boundaries, and judgement. Thus, halfway through the deployment of this study's data collection instruments, the main research question and its first sub question were answered.

The second study instrument, the semi-structured interview, attempted to provide some clarity to the broadest of the research questions. From 22 eligible and completed survey responses, the interview phase needed to make the most of each administrator willing to participate. From six hours of recordings, these interviews provided sufficient information begin to address questions of how consumer dignity violations occur at the hands of volunteers (deficiencies in communication, failure to empower staff, mismatched, underutilized, or hierarchical volunteer roles, and training deficiencies), and how agencies may respond (impacts and responses). The final question, what changes or impacts each instance provoked, will be addressed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore a previously understudied area of nonprofit administration, namely the dignity of consumers in relation to volunteer operations. Inspired by the researcher's own experience as a nonprofit administrator, the study was designed to determine if the phenomenon of consumer dignity violation by volunteers could be considered a shared one. Using a mixed methods design with a critical theory approach, the study determined that volunteer violation of consumer dignity is in fact a shared experience amongst the nonprofit agencies in the sample, that its occurrences are varied yet similar, that common causes are deficiencies within four operational areas, that the impacts ripple far beyond the individual consumer and volunteer.

The groundwork, then, has been laid for further study to both confirm these findings and expand upon its understanding in the field. However, the question that remains unanswered is, "so what?" What do these findings mean for public administrators, and why should they receive more attention?

Theoretical Implications

The first chapter of this study explained its significance regarding the concept of equity. In the most basic and yet abstract sense, equity is central to the work of public administration because it is one of the three core regime values to our political society. For Rohr (1989), failure to actively promote and enhance equity equates to a violation of the direct or implied oath to uphold the Constitution held by public administrators. Centering equity in all aspects of public administration, then, is a requirement of the field in both theory and practice.

Seemingly, though, equity has been included as a focus of public administrators since the field's inception. From Woodrow Wilson's (1887) initial essay *The Study of Administration* until

today, the pillars of public administration have been economy, effectiveness, efficiency, and equity, each to varying degrees as time has progressed (Gulick 1937; Stillman, 1995 & 2009; Kaufman, 1956; Ostrom, 2007; Lampropoulou & Oikonomou, 2018; Osborne, 2010; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Though added as a pillar more recently than the other three, equity has enjoyed its place in public administration since the first Minnowbrook Conference in 1968. In fact, Gooden and Portillo (2011) project that equity, and specifically social equity, will take center stage in public administration theory by Minnowbrook Conference IV in 2028. Nearing 60 years of focus in public administration theory and practice, equity has yet to become as routine, and expected, as efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. This study suggests that this is because administrators often forsake the equity pillar in pursuit of the other three. Indeed, a structure may stand more steadily with three walls than with one.

The issue, then, is the dichotomy suggested within these pillars for nonprofit administrators. If they are to coexist, a focus on one cannot necessitate the desertion of the other. When reviewing the causes for consumer dignity violations, nonprofit administrators gave reasons such as training deficiencies, inadequate staffing levels, the inability to communicate, etc. Each cause, as well as the reason the agency utilizes volunteers to begin with, relates back to the agency's efforts to do more with less, in the name of being the most effective and efficient operation possible with the lowest expenditure. Promoting and advancing ethics requires resources, and spending resources beyond the bare minimum needed to accomplish one's mission is neither efficient nor economic from the perspective of many administrators. While the inclusion of equity as a pillar should in and of itself imply its importance and therefore exemption from consideration as superfluous spending, public opinion has not yet caught up.

What is needed, then, is an entirely new approach that moves equity as a pillar beyond afterthought and removes the conflict between it and the other pillars. Meyer et al. (2022) propose this with their four new pillars of public administration: empathy, engagement, equity, and ethics. They explain that equity alone cannot meet the changing needs of our communities in an increasingly global society, and empathy, ethics, and engagement must be sought in tandem with equity. Empathy requires public administrators to meet people where they are, ethics refers to the values administrators must embody, and engagement denotes the way members of the public are incorporated into the actions and decisions of public administrators.

The findings of this current study validate this theory as violations of consumer dignity when distributing public services equates to an equity failure, and these violations occur as a direct result of a lack of empathy, engagement, and ethics. Meyers et al. (2022) suggest that their new 4E theory provide the guidance public administrators need to address the “wicked problems of the 21st century, such as income inequality, climate change, racism, among others” (p. 429). Should those nonprofit administrators sharing the experiences of this study implement this framework, then, they would increase their mission fulfillment not only in their direct service provision but also by decreasing the size of their population, those experiencing these wicked problems.

Practical Implications

While a perspective change will increase administrator awareness broadly and hopefully increase awareness on the importance and injustice of this longstanding phenomenon’s occurrence, it does not necessarily provoke action. For this, we must turn to the administrative critical consciousness (ACC) framework suggested by Wright Fields and Conyers (2022). This framework operationalizes the Meyers et al. (2022) 4E theory and Freire’s (2000, as cited in

Wright Fields & Conyers, 2022) critical consciousness to first identify and then act against societal oppressions. The design of this study as participatory action research, and its critical theory approach to data analysis, serve as the first steps in evoking an ACC approach to centering consumer dignity within volunteer operations.

Wright Fields and Conyers (2022) begin their ACC framework with the concepts of engagement and empathy, which they contend are both necessary as a first step for critical reflection. Though engagement has multiple meanings in public administration, in this case the authors suggest it means direct public engagement. Direct public engagement allows administrators to hear, understand, and validate the ideas, concerns, needs, interests, and values of their constituents. Engagement as a first step is critical as it builds trust between the administrator and the consumer base, but it also is necessary to foster empathy within the administrator.

Empathy is the second step to ACC, both for the individual administrator and the organization. Wright Fields and Conyers (2022) contend that empathy helps mitigate bias, increase self-reflection, and improve interactions. Further, empathy indicates not only recognition and understanding of the oppression of another, but also inspires an active response. The authors maintain that although empathy is often considered an individual emotion, administrators can make it an organizational quality through its culture. A culture of empathy is “imperative for institutions service diverse communities with varied experiences; becoming aware and understanding their lived experiences can lead to administrative critical consciousness by acknowledging the inequities imbedded in the organization,” (Wright Fields & Conyers, 2022, p. 417).

A focus on engagement and empathy within the ACC framework serves to develop critical reflection. Administrators must then turn to ethics and equity for transformative action. While Ethics has been part of public administration literature for decades, the concept of ethics within the ACC framework refers to the new ethics management of public administration as an applied practice through models and influences with emphasis on public values (Wright Fields & Conyers, 2022). This replaces the old concept of ethics within public administration as a list of acceptable and unacceptable actions that assume professional neutrality. This applied concept of ethics is evident in the fourth principle of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) Code of Ethics, which requires administrators to strengthen social equity. This implies action rather than passive observance. Thus, invoking ethics within the ACC framework involves administrators engaging and supporting equitable practices in their respective organizations and the field.

The fourth piece of the ACC framework, equity, does not conclude its operationalization but instead continues it. After engaging consumers to recognize oppressive structures, invoking empathy to understand the plight, and prioritizing ethics to counter the oppressive structures, equity requires administrators constantly engage with their constituents to “remain critically conscious of the inequities manifested and perpetuated in their organizations,” (Wright Fields & Conyers, 2022, p. 419). This approach makes the ACC framework what the authors call a *virtuous cycle*. Its fluidity allows for continued adaptation to all current and emerging social justice issues.

The design of this study and the resulting interactions between the researcher and participants accomplish the first two steps in the ACC framework to an extent. Several interviews also approach the third step in that the administrators state their intention to address

this phenomenon through policy and practice. One major way this has occurred is through a joint funding application to private and community funders for the creation of volunteer training videos. Three of the organizations represented in the interview sample came together to agree on core tenets necessary for a volunteer regardless of the agency they are attached to or the specific role they fill. These videos will dispel common misconceptions of a volunteer-consumer hierarchy, instill the importance of and expectation for practicing empathy, and share de-escalation techniques that may help stop a dignity violation before it occurs or lessen its severity if already occurring. Should the application be successful, the agencies are hopeful to have the videos completed by the end of 2023 and available for use by any other agency in the greater Scranton area that is interested.

Unaddressed, though, by this study alone are the systems in place nationwide contributing to this phenomenon that public administrators have an ethical obligation to address. First, as referenced in Chapter 1's discussion on the study's significance, the complexity and breadth of network governance (Salamon, 2001, 2012, 2015) creates a system in which centralized oversight or regulation on ethical standards is nearly impossible. As our population grows in size and needs, the strain on nonprofit agencies to provide for basic needs rather than governmental bodies will only increase. The increased strain coupled with the longstanding tradition of underfunding and defunding safety net programs will force nonprofit agencies to rely more heavily on volunteers in the same of sustainability. Public administrators must then take an administrative critical consciousness approach to their advocacy and advisement roles as well when working with legislators to address this initial injustice that ripples from the system as a whole down to the individual consumer.

Second, those familiar with the nonprofit field may take for granted the power struggle inherent in the consumer-provider relationship. Hoffman & Coffey (2008) explain that imbedded within the system itself is an injustice that “subjects *both* clients and providers to bureaucratic forms of authority and experiences of disrespect” (emphasis in original, p. 207). The perception of volunteers or the act of volunteering as a gift and the consumer as the recipient frames the relationship as a hierarchal one. Butcher (2003) questions this perspective in her study of Mexican volunteers’ and recipients’ experiences of the benefits received in their relationship. Citing the paternalistic culture common in both Mexico as a country and within nongovernmental organizations, Butcher (2003) asks if attitudes and the element of serving are important to these volunteer-recipient relationships, as well as how organizational culture impacts these relationships. An ACC approach to this categorization of individuals would suggest viewing the relationship as symbiotic instead, with the volunteer receiving benefit inasmuch as any consumer (see Chapter 2, Benefits of Volunteerism). This begins with the reframing of antiquated perspective on volunteerism and continues through education on inclusive treatment for all, from language to programming. Indeed, some of the interviewees unintentionally highlighted an inequity perpetuated by the researcher when referring to those who utilize nonprofit services as consumers. Instead, the framing of these individuals as participants removes the implication of a giver and receiver in the relationship and instead provides a more equal footing. Changes such as these are the responsibility of the administrator and can be achieved through an ACC framework when creating and improving organizational culture. Eaton et al., (2022) define this as a culture of care, one with “dignity and respect, having high expectations for guest independence and accountability, giving space to rest and recuperate, recognizing and accommodating individual needs and experiences, and fostering a sense of

community,” (p. 1793). This type of culture enhances the experience for not only the participant, but the volunteer and administrator as well.

Recommendations

The intent of this exploratory research was to confirm that volunteer violation of consumer dignity is a common occurrence rather than unique to the researcher’s professional experiences. As such, other nonprofit administrators were the targeted sample. Future research should expand upon this underrecognized social inequity by focusing on the consumers as the sample. In keeping with the ACC framework and a commitment to equitable practices, the engagement of the consumer in this research is key and can enhance understanding of the concepts and impacts found here. Based on current findings, this research suggests that the inclusion of the consumer’s perspective could show the instance of dignity violation to be much more frequent than reported by administrators and therefore a wider issue than presented here. Additionally, future research should pay attention to those agencies reporting less frequent violations and determine a set of best practices other agencies may follow to reduce the risk of future dignity violations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Approval

Appendix B: Recruitment Email

Appendix C: Informed Consent & Survey

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Appendix A

IRB Approval

Date: 4-4-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY2023-27
Title: Informed Philanthropy: Dignity-Focused Nonprofit Support
Creation Date: 7-29-2022
End Date:
Status: **Approved**
Principal Investigator: Meghan Loftus
Review Board: West Chester University Institutional Review Board
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Expedited	Decision	Approved
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Key Study Contacts

Member	Meghan Loftus	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	ML986514@wcupa.edu
Member	Meghan Loftus	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	ML986514@wcupa.edu
Member	Angela Kline	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	AKline@wcupa.edu

Appendix B

Recruitment Email

EMAIL RECRUITMENT TEMPLATE

Good morning/afternoon,

This email is an invitation to participate in a research study on nonprofit volunteer operations in the greater Scranton/Wilkes-Barre metro area. The research is being conducted by Meghan Loftus, a doctoral candidate at West Chester University's College of Business and Public Management. Your email was obtained from your nonprofit agency's website. Meghan intends to study if/how a volunteer at a nonprofit social service agency may violate the dignity of that agency's consumers while providing direct services on behalf of the agency. Once determined if this phenomenon occurs with any regularity across a variety of agencies, the research will seek to describe its frequency and risk factors. The end goal is to create an assessment tool for nonprofit administrators to determine their agency's risk level for volunteer violation of consumer dignity. You must be at least 18 years of age, employed by a direct-service nonprofit agency in the greater Scranton/Wilkes-Barre metro area in a role that crosses volunteer operations in some way, to participate.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take an anonymous electronic survey via Qualtrics. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes. There is no compensation available for participation.

Please click on the link below to learn more about the study and to take the survey (https://wcupa.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cUR9dgop6rOZRY2). This study has been approved by WCU IRB FY-2023-27

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at ML986514@wcupa.edu or 570-851-7417.

Respectfully,

Meghan Loftus

DPA Candidate

West Chester University

Appendix C

Informed Consent & Survey

Preamble

Introduction. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey! My name is Meghan Loftus, and I am a current doctoral candidate at West Chester University.

Additionally, some of you may know me from my role at Friends of the Poor in Scranton, PA. It is my professional role and experiences that sparked my interest in this research area, and I am reaching out to you with this survey to determine if my experiences are unique or relatively commonplace.

My dissertation focuses on volunteer interactions with nonprofit consumers (or clients, customers, etc.). More specifically, I am researching the times when those interactions violate consumer dignity. For this research, violating consumer dignity means the consumer's autonomy, access to social interaction, and/or treatment with respect are prohibited or reduced in some way. It can also occur when the volunteer's words or actions towards the consumer do not meet the agency's standards.

The goal of this research is to produce a tool that nonprofits can use to assess their current volunteer policies and procedures and make any changes necessary to decrease the risk of negative volunteer/consumer interactions. I want to assure you that your information will be completely de-identified by this software before I am able to see the results, and therefore everything you share is completely anonymous. **Also, please take special care not to include the names of any individuals or organizations in your survey responses.** This will allow the data to be kept as deidentified as possible.

Thank you, in advance, for your help in making the consumer experience better for all our friends and neighbors. The next page consists of the informed consent, which details more of the study and its protocols for you. The following section includes the survey questions, which end with the option to continue participation via a one-on-one interview. These interviews will assist me with determining common themes across these instances and help create best practices to minimize their occurrence.

Informed Consent

Informed Consent. Informed Consent

Project Title: Informed Philanthropy: Centralizing Consumer Dignity in Volunteer Operations

Investigator(s): Meghan Loftus; Angela Kline

Project Overview: Participation in this research project is voluntary and is being done by Meghan Loftus as part of their Doctoral Dissertation to determine if and how a volunteer at a nonprofit social service agency can or does violate the dignity of the agency's consumers during their role providing direct services on behalf of the agency. Once determined if this phenomenon occurs with any regularity, the study will describe how frequently this occurs and potential factors that contribute to its risk. The goal is to create an assessment tool to help nonprofit administrators determine their agency's level of risk for volunteer violation of consumer dignity. Your participation will take approximately 15 minutes to a half hour to complete the survey. There will be an option to participate in an in-person interview, which is estimated to take an additional hour.

There is minimal to no risk associated with completion of this survey. There is benefit in that the assessment tool created for nonprofit administrators will be distributed to participants first for their use in the course of their professional duties. Additional benefit for the field of

nonprofit administration is that the phenomenon's description will ensure the dignity of nonprofit consumers receives more theoretical and practical attention about volunteer interactions in the future.

The research project is being done by Meghan Loftus as part of her Doctoral Dissertation to determine if and how a volunteer at a nonprofit social service agency can or does violate the dignity of the agency's consumers during their role providing direct services on behalf of the agency. Once determined if this phenomenon occurs with any regularity, the study will describe how frequently this occurs and potential factors that contribute to its risk. The goal is to create an assessment tool to help nonprofit administrators determine their agency's level of risk for volunteer violation of consumer dignity. If you would like to take part, West Chester University requires that you agree and sign this consent form. You may ask Meghan Loftus any questions to help you understand this study. If you don't want to be a part of this study, it won't affect any services from West Chester University. If you choose to be a part of this study, you have the right to change your mind and stop being a part of the study at any time. How will you protect my privacy? Your records will be private. Only Meghan Loftus, Angela Kline, and the IRB will have access to your name and responses. Your name will not be used in any reports. Records will be stored: Encrypted File Password Protected File/Computer. Surveys are entirely anonymous and be assigned numbers for analysis purposes only. If the survey participant chooses to respond to the final question indicating an interest in participating in an interview, that response will be recorded separately from the previous survey questions to ensure no identifying information can be attached to responses. Records will be destroyed after manuscript development, but no less than three years from beginning of study.

Do I get paid to take part in this study? No

Who do I contact in case of research related injury? For any questions with this study, contact:

Primary Investigator: Meghan Loftus at 570-851-7417 or

ML986514@wcupa.edu OR Faculty Sponsor: Angela Kline at 610-436-2650 or

akline@wcupa.edu

For any questions about your rights in this research study, contact the ORSP at 610436-3557.

I, _____ (your name), have read this form and I understand the statements in this form. I know that if I am uncomfortable with this study, I can stop at any time. I know that it is not possible to know all possible risks in a study, and I think that reasonable safety measures have been taken to decrease any risk.

Please type your name and the date in the text box below to indicate your informed consent to participate in this survey.

Survey Questions

Q0. Are you 18 years of age or older?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q1. Do you work for a nonprofit agency operating within the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre metro area?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q2. Does your position include duties or responsibilities for any aspect of volunteer operations?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q3. Does your agency utilize volunteers to assist with providing direct services to your consumers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q4. Does your agency rely, to any degree, on volunteers (instead of or in addition to paid staff) in order to serve the number of consumers you do each year?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q5. Does your agency have a written policy or procedure regarding volunteer recruitment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q5a. Please briefly explain the policy or procedure.

Q6. Does your agency have a written policy or procedure regarding volunteer training or education?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q6a. Please briefly explain the policy or procedure.

Q7. Does your agency have a written policy or procedure regarding volunteer retention?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q7a. Please briefly explain the policy or procedure.

Q8. During your tenure, has your agency ever had an incident where a volunteer was actively serving a consumer and did not act in accordance with your agency's values?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

Q8a. How often would you estimate this occurs or has occurred?

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

Q8b. When did this/these incident(s) occur?

Recently/within the last 6 months

7 months to 2 years ago

- ☐ 3 or more years ago
- ☐ Unsure

Q8c. Please briefly describe the incident and any impacts it may have had.

Q9. If your agency has never had the experience of a volunteer violating a consumer's dignity in any way, why do you think you have been able to avoid it?

Interview Request

Interview Request. If you have experienced the previously described issues with a volunteer at your agency, would you be willing to participate in a one-hour interview with the researcher, where your information would be de-identified, to further elaborate on the incident?

Please note that any response or information you provide here will be removed from your other survey responses so that your answers here will not identify you in any way.


Participation in the in-person interview is entirely optional. It will include coffee or lunch, and can take place at any time or location convenient to the participant. No compensation will come with participation.


- ☐ Yes. Please contact me at the number or email below,

- ☐ No, thank you.

Asynchronous Interview

Q1. If you chose not to participate in the interview portion of this research, but still have input to share regarding negative interactions between volunteers and consumers, please use this open-ended text box to describe the incident. De-identified details such as what happened, when, why, and how are appreciated. I am also interested in the impact this incident had on your consumers, volunteers, staff, and agency. If the agency made any changes as a result of the incident, what were they? Did they seem to prevent its reoccurrence?

Survey Powered By 



Appendix D
Interview Protocol
Consumer Dignity Interview Guide

Topics

Introduction, Consent, & Background on Study

Groundwork Questions

- Participant: job duties, role in policymaking, volunteer interaction
- Agency: mission, policies for recruitment, training, and retention

Incident of Consumer Dignity Violation

- Context, details, impact
- Frequency
- Themes

Outcomes

- Organizational changes
- Participant opinion

Why?

- Participant opinion on why incident occurred.
- Participant opinion on what to do differently.
- Participant opinion on changes made or not made.

Conclusion

- Participant insight on best practices
- Open-ended request for other information & follow-up

Script

Introduction: Hi! This may be a little repetitive as we already know each other, but if you'll allow me, I'd like to go over my quick pre-interview introduction and protocol with you. First, I will be audio recording this session, but I will only be recording your name as a code. So, any documentation or data from this point on will not reference you by name to ensure anonymity. I am asking for your verbal consent so that I can begin the recording....

XX/XX/2023 & XX:XX XM, interview with **CODE NAME**. Ok let's get started. For the record, my name is Meghan Loftus, and I am interviewing you in my capacity as a doctoral candidate at West Chester University's Department of Public Policy and Administration for my dissertation project. The first component of my data collection was an online survey of nonprofit administrators in the social service sector who deal with volunteers in some capacity throughout the course of their job duties. That survey specifically asked if you as a nonprofit administrator had ever experienced a time when a volunteer acted in such a way that violated your consumer's dignity. For the purpose of this study, violating a consumer's dignity refers to any time or event in which the consumer was not totally respected, or their autonomy was not totally recognized. So, it could be anything from a verbal argument or feeling of being negatively judged to infantilizing the consumer and telling them what they can and cannot do, say, believe, etc. In your survey, you indicated that you had experienced this with volunteering at your agency in the course of their direct service at least one time in your career. This interview seeks to elaborate on that incident and its context to understand if, why, and how violation of consumer dignity occurs and potentially illuminate ways in which nonprofit administrators can prevent it. I have eight questions, not including follow-ups, that may naturally come up to clarify some answers. I do not

expect this interview to take more than 45 minutes to an hour. There will also be a secondary, online survey open and available for you to anonymously submit more information after this interview if you feel anything was missed. Do you have any questions for me? If not, then let's get started with the first question!

1.		Describe your role at the nonprofit agency you work for. What is the agency's mission? What are your responsibilities related to volunteers?
	1a.	What are your responsibilities related to the programming or consumers?
	1b.	What are your responsibilities related to the agency's mission and values?
	1c.	What is your role in the policymaking or creation of any type of guidelines for employees or volunteers?
2.		What are your agency's policies and processes for volunteer recruitment?
3.		What are your agency's policies and processes for volunteer training?
4.		What are your agency's policies and processes for volunteer retention?
5.		You indicated in your survey response that you have experienced situations in which a volunteer, intentionally or not, violated your consumer's dignity. Can you elaborate on that instance? (Ask clarifying questions to determine details of incident and fallout)
	5a.	How often would you say this occurs or has occurred?
	5b.	Thinking back on those instances, are there any common themes or occurrences that happened before the event?
6.		Did anything change at your organization after that incident with regard to volunteer policies and procedures? Why or why not, in your opinion?

	6a.	Do you think those changes worked? Were there any similar instances again after that?
7.		Regarding this incident, do you believe the breakdown occurred within the process of recruitment, training, or retention?
	7a.	In retrospect, what would you have changed to prevent this from occurring?
	7b.	(If not ED/CEO) – Do you have the authority to make that change, or do you believe your supervisor would be receptive to your input?
	7c.	Did you request any sort of change? Did you make any unofficial changes – not policy or procedure related – in the way you interact with volunteers and consumers throughout the course of your role? Why or why not? What did it change, if anything?
8.		If you had total control over the situation from beginning to end, what would you envision to be the best practices for volunteer recruitment, training, and retention that would best serve the agency and protect against potential violation of consumer dignity?
9.		Is there anything I've missed or that you'd like to add to the interview?

Appendix E

Data Codebooks

	Categories		
	The Details	The Causes	The Impacts
Codes	Privacy Invasion	Communication	On Agency
	Negative Communication	Staff	On Staff
	Overstepping Boundaries	Volunteer Role	On Volunteer
	Value Misalignment	Training	
	Judgement		
	Violated Autonomy		
	Confrontation		

	Causes - Codebook			
	Communication	The Staff	Volunteer Role	Training
Subcategories	Inconsistent	Fear	Person-role fit	Doesn't exist
	Infrequent	Supervision	Power dynamics	Inconsistent
	Impossible	Trust	Utilization	Incomplete

	Impacts - Codebook		
	The Agency	The Staff	The Volunteers
Subcategories	Consumer	Negative Emotion	Other Volunteers
	Reputation	Increased Turnover	Involved Volunteer
	Operations	Moral Quandary	