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Who's in Charge Here? Exercising Authority in the Organization-Volunteer Relationship

Patricia A. Groble
Cleveland State University

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WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE? EXERCISING AUTHORITY IN THE

ORGANIZATION-VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP

PATRICIA A. GROBLE

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

University of Illinois at Chicago

June 1974

Juris Doctor

The John Marshall School of Law

June 1977

Master of Nonprofit Management and Leadership

Cleveland State University

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We hereby approve this dissertation for

Patricia A. Groble

Candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Studies and Public Affairs

for the

Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

and the

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Graduate Studies by

_____

Dissertation Chairperson, Nicholas Zingale, Ph.D.

_____

Department & Date

_____

Dissertation Committee Member, Jeffrey L. Brudney, Ph.D.

_____

Department & Date

_____

Dissertation Committee Member, Joseph Mead, J.D.

_____

Department & Date

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ABSTRACT

One facet of being a volunteer is the freedom to choose one's work and schedule. When this ability to choose conflicts with the organization's need to ensure that volunteers' work activities fulfill its mission, it creates tension between staff members and volunteers and presents a challenge to the organization's ability to exercise authority over its volunteers.

Existing research on volunteerism studies volunteer engagement, motivations, and best practices for managing volunteers, as well as how volunteers can be considered a sustainable resource. The volunteer management literature pays little attention, however, to authority's role in the relationship between organizations and their volunteers. This study sought to fill the gap in the literature by asking what the authority relationship between organizations and volunteers looks like, what kind of tools and practices are used by organizations to exercise authority, and the impact of the difference between staff members and volunteers within the authority relationship on volunteer management.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with volunteers and paid staff members of nonprofit organizations which provide specialized community services. Questions were designed to elicit answers relating to one or more of the research questions. I also obtained documentation in the form of volunteer handbooks (or the equivalent) from each participating organization. The analysis was a multi-step process. Interview responses were coded and sorted out according to the applicable research question. The responses to

each research question were then examined for patterns relevant to the study. The handbooks were then compared to the interview transcripts.

The responses from the interviews revealed that the authority relationship can be described in terms of a model of volunteer authority made up of three components and six categories of tools or practices used by organizations in exercising authority over volunteers. The results also provided a means for nonprofit leaders to identify those instances of tension in the relationship and more effectively manage volunteers.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand how authority operates in the organization-volunteer relationship and how authority impacts volunteer management. There is a real need for volunteers within the nonprofit organization community, as evidenced by the fact that an overwhelming majority of nonprofits utilize volunteers in some capacity (Brudney, 1999) and rely heavily on them as a major source of staffing (Chum, Hook, Handy, Schurgurensky, & Quarter, 2013). Those who manage volunteers in these organizations need to exercise authority over these unpaid workers, no matter how large the organization, the configuration of its organizational structure, or its mission. They often rely on something that looks like Weber's legal-rational model of bureaucratic authority, perhaps including some sort of formal hierarchical structure, rules set forth in volunteer handbooks, and some knowledge of or interest in the organization's mission. Research on volunteer management practices often aligns itself with this model. Managers' efforts at exercising authority within this model are made more difficult by the inherent differences between paid staff and the volunteers (Pearce, 1993). While it might be expected that this model of bureaucratic authority acts in the same manner as in the

paid employment environment, I propose that this model operates differently within the volunteer setting.

Volunteering is more than merely an affiliation with an organization. It is a social relationship between the individual and the organization which can help or hinder the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission (Powell & Wrightson, 2006). This relationship is also collaborative and requires planning as well as a shared vision; when applied to the volunteer context, is characterized by a shared commitment to the organization's mission (Powell & Wrightson, 2006).

This social relationship can either help or get in the way of mission fulfillment (Powell & Wrightson, 2006). One way is through tensions created by differences between volunteers and paid staff, which can negatively influence the organization's ability to operate effectively (Pearce, 1993). These tensions have many sources. First, there are different types of goals and purposes. An organization by definition has specific goals or purposes (Cambridge Dictionary; Weber, 1947). For example, a nonprofit organization has a mission to fulfill but has discretion in how it goes about fulfilling it. Public agencies may have specific purposes, but they may also have legislative mandates within which to operate. As a result, a volunteer's goals may not always coincide with the organization's goals and its approach to meeting those goals (Pearce, 1993).

A second source of tension between organizations and volunteers has to do with the very nature of being a volunteer versus being a paid employee. Volunteer work tends to be structured differently than the work of employees. The work is usually part-time, the rate of pay is equal (that is, they are all unpaid) and thus, there is little need to make

the fine status distinctions characteristic of many employee-staffed organizations (Pearce, 1993, p. 10).

Researchers have noted other sources of tensions between volunteers and the organization (represented by paid staff) (Kreutzer & Jäger, 2011). Tensions may arise out of the assumption that use of volunteers may help ease budget woes and help expand service programs (Brudney & Gazley, 2002), the way in which volunteers are managed (Jacobs, 2017), or uncertainty in how volunteers see their role in the organization (Pearce, 1993).

Structural conditions within the organization's hierarchy can lead to volunteer uncertainty (check Jacobs, 2017). Volunteer uncertainty has been identified as a contributing factor in the volunteer experience (Pearce, 1993). There are three types of uncertainties that volunteers may face in their activities as volunteers: role ambiguity, rule ambiguity, and volunteer isolation. The first, role ambiguity, stems from the lack of a specific job description (Pearce, 2013) or unclear distinctions between the staff and the volunteers (Jacobs, 2017). Rule ambiguity, the second source, arises in situations where volunteers face mixed messages or experience multiple roles (Pearce, 1993) or when important terms in an organization's guidelines or handbook are not clearly defined; for example, volunteers in a well-woman clinic were told they could make suggestions to clients but were not to give advice; yet neither term was clearly defined (Jacobs, 2017). The third source, volunteer isolation, refers to the failure of an individual to identify with the organization or with other volunteers (Jacobs, 2017).

Volunteer uncertainty can create conditions that lead to disruptive behavior on the part of volunteer (Jacobs, 2017). The literature on volunteer management generally

addresses issues of training, rewards, recruiting, supervision, communication, and team environment (Ferreira et al. 2009, in Jacobs, 2017). Jacobs (2017) examined disruptive behavior in volunteers and how to address it and found that disruptive behavior may require the organization to exercise authority in response to that behavior and that the lack of organizational control contributes to volunteer uncertainty that is common in such situations).

The way in which leaders of organizations manage their volunteers may depend upon whether they acknowledge the existence of tension, recognize the need to exercise authority, and prepare for that possibility. There is little if any research that focuses on behavior of volunteers and how the resultant exercise of authority affects the relationship of an organization with its volunteers. Jacobs (2017) specifically noted that her study, which focused on disruptive behavior by volunteers, was not framed as a management piece. An organization is really the aggregate of its members, both paid and unpaid. Therefore, studying this relationship involves studying how paid staff and volunteers interact

My research takes a qualitative look at the volunteer-organization relationship through the examination of how authority fits into that relationship. The purpose of this study is to identify its make-up and determine how various aspects of the authority relationship impact the day-to-day management of volunteers. There is a scarcity of literature on the subject of authority and volunteers and it is my aim to help fill that gap.

Research Question 1

This study first examines the authority relationship itself. My first research question asks:

What are the characteristics of the organization-volunteer authority relationship?

The answer to this question will be found in the patterns and connections between the individuals in each organization.

Research Question 2

The next step is to find out if organizations prepare to exercise authority and the means by which they assert their authority. My second research question asks:

What tools and techniques does an organization utilize to exercise authority over its volunteers?

This question explores the processes and procedures used by organizations to exercise authority and looks at how those procedures are interpreted by the parties involved.

Research Question 3

There are some basic differences between volunteers and paid staff: in how they approach their work (Handy & Brudney, 2007), their financial compensation (Pearce, 1993), and their attitudes (Pearce, 1993). These differences may have an impact on how organizations assert authority over individual members. My third research question looks for differences in the organization's relationship with volunteers and paid staff and the exercise of authority over each group and asks:

What do differences in the authority relationship between paid staff and volunteers mean for volunteer management?

This question looks at the interactions between staff, especially managers, and volunteers for patterns that indicate how authority is exercised.

My approach for this research is qualitative, through the use of semi-structured interviews of paid staff members and volunteers of several organizations. Qualitative research requires broad questions to be answered, rather than specific hypotheses to be tested, in order to identify the initial focus of inquiry (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002). Qualitative research questions focus mainly on three areas: language as a means to explore processes of communication and patterns of interaction with particular social groups; descriptions and interpretations of subjective meanings attributed to situations and actions; and theory-building through discovering patterns and connections in qualitative data (Fossey, et al., 2002). This study has a theoretical basis in Weber's models of bureaucratic authority. I also examine the relationship in the context of psychological contract theory.

Chapter two examines the literature on volunteerism and the nonprofit sector generally. It gives an overview of the nature of volunteering, types of volunteers, the importance of volunteers to organizations, volunteer management, and the differences between paid staff and volunteers. Chapter three discusses the nature of authority, Weber's three models of bureaucratic authority: charismatic, traditional, and legal-rational, including subsequent research as it applies to volunteers. This chapter looks at psychological contract theory and how it applies to volunteers. In Chapter four, I explain my methodology, which consists of semi-structured interviews and some document analysis. Chapter five describes my findings. In this chapter I describe my volunteer authority model and identify the tools used by organizations in the exercise of authority. Finally, in Chapter six I point out how authority differs from control and why that matters in the volunteer experience. I show how Weber's three models of bureaucratic authority

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and the three layers of psychological contract theory all contribute to my concept model.

I then discuss the practical impact of this research on volunteer management practices.

CHAPTER II

VOLUNTEERS AND VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteerism and the Nonprofit Sector

In order to fully understand the organization-volunteer relationship, I first examine the scope and nature of volunteerism and its importance to social policy. Volunteerism in America is as old as the country itself. In fact, it could be said to predate the founding of the country (Groble & Brudney, 2015). Colonists adapted Great Britain's Elizabethan Poor Law to create informal means to assist persons in need. Formal charities evolved from this tradition; their numbers rose dramatically in the 19th century as they sought to assist an increasing immigrant population (Powell & Wrightson, 2006; Ellis & Campbell, 2005). Charitable endeavors continued throughout the 20th century.

Volunteerism ultimately migrated into the public sector and became an established part of government through such programs as ACTION (a 1970's-era program aimed at consolidating all federal volunteer programs), the Peace Corps, and other federally sponsored programs (Brudney, 1990). Today, there are government programs operating almost entirely on volunteer efforts, for example, the Community Emergency Response Team program (CERT website).

Organizations across all sectors of society rely on volunteers in some capacity (Brudney, 1999). In the nonprofit sector, approximately eighty percent of nonprofit organizations utilize the services of volunteers (Hager & Brudney, 2004). Although estimates on the number of public sector volunteers are difficult to find, government agencies make use of a significant amount of volunteer activity (Brudney, 1990). There is also evidence that officials at all levels of government understand the importance of volunteers in providing services to their constituency. In 2013, President Obama issued an executive order creating a task force to improve the volunteering efforts of federal agencies (Katz, 2013). State and local governments have enacted laws or policies to encourage volunteering and to facilitate volunteer management. Examples include Arkansas's State and Local Government Volunteers Act (Ark. Code §21-13-101, Virginia's State Government Volunteers Act (Va. Code Ann. §2.2-3600), and Washington State's Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC), which provides resources for local governments in that state seeking to utilize volunteers (mrsc.org.2016). On a global basis, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), whose mission is to support local government professionals, provides information on volunteers (ICMA, 2016).

Modern volunteerism emerged from social work, which itself evolved from the efforts of a mostly homogenous group of individuals volunteering to fill their leisure time and then evolved into its own profession (Brudney & Meijs, 2014). In the past, managers in social service organizations sought to limit the work of volunteers to that of support positions (Brudney & Meijs, 2009). This practice has changed over the years as the needs of organizations and their clients have changed. Now, the use of volunteers for both

behind-the-scenes tasks and service delivery is widespread. It is not uncommon for volunteers to take on positions of trust in which they have access to private information and/or money and other valuable property (Graff, 2006).

The nature of the nonprofit sector is continuously changing, both in who is getting involved and how that involvement takes place. The number of corporate volunteer programs is increasing, as the private sector tunes into caused-based marketing and encourages employees to take part in community service (Graff, 2002). Technology advances are changing the way organizations operate. The tools of technology can facilitate the flow of information through traditional channels, such as newsletters, but at a faster rate. Administrative tasks such as volunteer check-ins not only can be accomplished quickly online but software applications can expedite the analysis of such data (Graff, 2002).

The presence of the nonprofit sector is felt everywhere – in the presence of neighborhood groups such as Girl and Boy Scout troops and Goodwill Stores and in the impact of volunteer work that changed policies on social concerns such as child labor laws and civil rights and led to the establishment of public radio and television (O'Neill, 2002). But there is no universal definition of the nonprofit sector. It seems to be defined by what it is not: it is not government and it is not business (O'Neill, 2002). The same is true for defining a nonprofit organization. Salamon and Anheier (1992) et al come the closest by listing six basic characteristics: formal or institutionalized organization, private (not part of government), non-profit-distributing, self-governing, voluntary and involving some degree of voluntary participation, and serving some public purpose and/or contributing to the public good. The federal government, which defines nonprofit

organizations in terms of exemption from federal corporate income tax, recognizes more than thirty categories of "charitable" organizations (IRC§501; O'Neill. 2002). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in its census data groups volunteer organizations into eight categories: civic- political: education/youth service; environmental or animal care; healthcare-related; public safety; religious; social/community service; sports/ hobby/cultural; plus other and undetermined (BLS, 2015). These official counts do not include the small groups that fall outside the spectrum of family or government. Such groups may include all of Salamon's components, but they have somehow escaped the notice of researchers and government statisticians (O'Neill, 2002). It is clear that, as Ferris notes, "[n]onprofit organizations are a heterogeneous lot" (Ferris, 1998, p. 139).

One might expect that research on the question of authority over volunteers would be found within the volunteer management literature. This chapter takes a look at the relevant literature covering topics such as the types of volunteers, volunteer motivations, the nature of volunteering and volunteerism, staff and volunteer relations, and volunteer management generally. Given the absence of research directed specifically at authority over voluntters, literature involving organizational structure is included, since authority and structure are linked (Weber, 1947).

The Nature of Volunteering

There is no standard type of volunteer (Bussell & Forbes, 2001). The term generally implies a lack of compensation (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996), but definitions vary depending on the source and may not always be consistent. Federal and state governments have their own definitions, which often vary, depending on the context. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which employs a broad definition, defines

volunteers as "persons who did unpaid work (except for expenses) through or for an organization" (BLS, 2016). The federal Volunteer Protection Act, which immunized volunteers for liability from accidently injuring someone, defines volunteer more specifically. For purposes of that law, a volunteer is an individual who performs a service (or services) for a nonprofit organization or government entity and does not receive compensation or anything of value in lieu of compensation (see full statute at 42 U.S.C.A. § 14505).

In an attempt to refine the term, Cnaan and his co-authors conducted a meta-analysis of the research and found 11 commonly used definitions (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996). Within these definitions they identified four dimensions inherent to being a volunteer: free choice (voluntary nature), remuneration (reward), structure (formal or informal), and intended beneficiaries (personal connection) (Cnaan, et al., 1996). To further underscore the variations in volunteers, each of these dimensions reflect multiple categories that form a continuum. The dimension of free choice ranges from "free will" to "obligation to volunteer;" remuneration ranges from none at all to stipend or low pay; structure is formal or informal; and intended beneficiaries include helping strangers, friends and even oneself (Cnaan, et al., 1996). Other researchers followed these criteria when they defined volunteers as people (a) performing activities out of free will, (b) without remuneration, (c) in a formal organization, and (d) benefitting others (Vantilborgh, Bidee, Pepermans, Willems, Huybrechts & Jegers, 2012).

The definition of volunteering is even more fluid than that of volunteer. One definition refers to volunteering as "unpaid work provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familial or friendship obligations" (Tilly & Tilly, 1994, quoted in

Wilson & Musick, 1997, p. 694). Nichols (2013) describes three ways to view volunteerism: as unpaid work (the nonprofit model used by most researchers in management studies); political or social activism (an example might be community organizers); or "serious leisure," where participants take their involvement in an organization so seriously that it becomes a career of sorts.

Activities falling under the volunteerism umbrella have changed over the years, reflecting changing societal needs and priorities. Volunteers today are just as likely to take on jobs that require more advanced training and skills (such as accounting, case management, and counseling) as they are to take on the more traditional roles (such as coaches, fundraisers, and clericals) (Chum, et al., 2013; Grossman & Furano, 1999). This duality in function, while helpful to organizations, presents management challenges. These challenges have been identified as acceptance, in which paid staff must learn to accept and accommodate volunteers; recruitment, in which volunteers are not only attracted to the agency but placed in positions compatible with their skills and interests; accountability, which entails procedures to make sure the volunteer program is in line with its mission and values; management, the administration of the program ensures that volunteers are acting competently and professionally, despite lack of monetary incentive; and evaluation, which requires regular performance assessment and feedback (Brudney, 2010).

Types of Volunteers

There seem to be almost as many types of volunteers as there are types of organizations, people, and circumstances. Examples from the literature include 14 types of volunteers, including assigned, floating, transitional, drop-in, and family volunteering

(McCurley & Lynch, 2011; Graff, 2002). Notable in this list of categories is "mandatory volunteers" who include individuals who are part of alternative sentencing and assigned community service (often part of school or religious programs).

Table 1. Type of volunteers

Volunteer type	Definition	Source in literature
Traditional	Ongoing commitment to organization on a regular basis	Graf, 2002 Handy & Brudney, 2007
Episodic	One-time or short-term volunteering	Graf, 2002 Handy & Brudney, 2007
Spontaneous	Appear at disaster site; unaffiliated with any organization	Fernandez, Barbera, & Van Dorp, 2006 Wachendorf & Kendra, 2004

It is common to classify volunteers according to level of commitment: traditional, episodic, and spontaneous (see Graff, 2002; Wachtendorf & Kendra, 2004). Table 1 summarizes these three types.

Traditional volunteers are what generally come to mind when talking about volunteers. Traditional, or long-term, volunteers are individuals who make an ongoing commitment to an organization on a regular basis (such as weekly) (Graff, 2002) and perform a specific task (Handy & Brudney, 2007, p. 13).

An episodic volunteer is often defined as an individual who engages in one-time or short-term volunteer opportunities, such as volunteering for one or two hours at a fundraising event (Cnaan & Handy, 2005, p. 30). This limited time frame may be what differentiates episodic volunteers from the traditional volunteer. However, Cnaan and Handy (2005), in their review of the literature on episodic volunteers, suggest that rather than being two distinct types of volunteers, traditional volunteers and episodic volunteers are points on a continuum. They go on to question whether episodic volunteering activity can even be considered part of volunteering and conclude that while it is a form of

volunteering, it represents a low level on the volunteering spectrum (Cnaan & Handy,

2005). But no matter whether they represent a distinct type of volunteer or are part of a

spectrum, episodic volunteers can be extremely useful when an organization needs a

large number of volunteers for a short period of time (Hyde, Dunn, Bax, & Chambers,

2016). The downside is that these short term volunteers may not remain with an

organization long enough to form any allegiance to the organization, thus posing a

potential threat to the organization's authority and thus its ability to effectively carry on

its work.

A third type of volunteer is the spontaneous volunteer. These are individuals who

flock to the site of a disaster wanting to help in any way (Wachtendorf & Kendra, 2004),

are generally not affiliated with a specific organization, are not assigned to a specific

resource or activity or were not specifically recruited to help (Fernandez, et al., 2006).

Skill levels range from relevant and useful skills, such as emergency responders from

other parts of the country, to untrained but well-intentioned individuals who feel

compelled to help in some way (Barsky, Trainor, Torres, & Aguirre., 2007). Spontaneous

volunteers can supply resources that the professional responders cannot, and may be

close enough to the scene to provide immediate assistance (Wachtendorf & Kendra,

2004). As a result, they are able perform a variety of basic but necessary tasks, from

clearing debris to collecting food, supplies and money (Barsky, et al., 2007) and allowing

trained personnel to focus on more specialized tasks (Sauer, Catlett, Tosatto, & Kirsch,

2014). Because they are generally not affiliated with any organization, or at the very least

not affiliated with the organization working at the disaster site, spontaneous volunteers

represent the least amount of commitment or allegiance to the organization (Fernandez, et

al., 2006). One characteristic of spontaneous volunteers is their capacity to self-organize and respond to what they perceive as a total lack of action (Salamon, 1987). While this tendency may have advantages such as immediate responses to specific needs, it can result in opposition to authority once an organization takes charge of the activity and may represent a type of authority that differs from the authoritative structure found in traditional organizations.

Usefulness of Volunteers

Volunteers are a primary human resource for nonprofit organizations (Chum, et al., 2013) and government agencies (Brudney, 1999). Organizations engage the services of volunteers because they see advantages to doing so. One frequently cited advantage is cost. There is a general perception that volunteers are a source of free labor (Graff, 2006; Brudney, 1999). But this is not really the case. Volunteers can be cost-effective but are not free, as time and effort must be spent coordinating their activities, a responsibility that itself involves numerous tasks and reduces organizational resources (see Graff, 2006; Brudney, 1999). External funding requirements may drive the cost considerations in the use of volunteers (Chum, et al., 2013). Volunteerism is described as creating benefits that extend beyond individual effort; as a result, volunteers are expected to produce something of value, often more than their cost (Graff, 2006).

The need for volunteers varies from organization to organization, but several factors affect those needs. Vinton (2012) lists four recent developments impacting an organization's need for volunteers: (1) national, state and local economies have caused a reduction in the number of volunteers; (2) social service agencies, which rely heavily on public dollars, have seen a decrease in government funding as well as private donations;

(3) more people need the help of social service agencies as a result of rising

unemployment rates combined with incomes remaining stagnant thus causing a rise in the

poverty rate; and (4) an increase in the number and percentage of older persons who may

need the assistance of social service agencies (Vinton, 2012). The presence of these

conditions emphasizes how important it is that organizations effectively use the

volunteers they have, given the fact that the BLS data for 2015 (the latest data available)

shows that the volunteer rate was the lowest it has been in the previous ten years (BLS,

2015).

There are non-monetary advantages to the utilization of volunteers. Ellis (2010)

lists several that are related to a general perception of independence that others see in

volunteers. Volunteers have more perceived credibility than paid staff when they

advocate for their organization because they are unpaid; service recipients are more

trustful of volunteers; volunteers are considered community representatives and may

bring a wider perspective to the organization; they extend the organization's sphere of

influence into other sectors of society; they can serve as objective policy makers; they are

able to focus on one specific task or aspect of the mission; as private citizens, they can act

as advocates for the mission or cause in ways paid staff might not be able; they are a way

for an organization to meet community service goals; they approach their tasks with less

stress as they are not dependent on the organization financially; they can provide unique

services that might not be available otherwise (for example, a bilingual volunteer may act

as an interpreter); and they may be the source of new ideas and/or services (Ellis, 2010).

There is a downside to volunteers' independence: because they are unpaid and therefore

have nothing to lose by "telling the truth" as they see it, it cannot be assumed that

volunteers will engage in only positive advocacy and discourse regarding the
organization (Ellis, 2010). Another advantage to utilizing volunteers, especially for social
service agencies, is that the use of volunteers can facilitate the formation of social
networks, which can lead to a community's increased access to those agencies
(Schneider, 2003 in Powell & Wrightson, 2006).

There are some disadvantages to using volunteers, ranging from the theory-based
to the practical (Powell & Wrightson, 2006). Theory-based scholars believe that
widespread use of volunteerism substitutes the ideal of altruism for the fundamental right
of an individual to pursue his/her own happiness by promoting service, obedience, and
duty above virtues such as honesty, productivity, or independence (Benson, 1999, cited
in Powell & Wrightson, 2006). Practically speaking, administering volunteer efforts takes
organizational resources away from other areas of the operation (Powell & Wrightson,
2006; Brudney, 1999).

Volunteer Management

The concept of volunteer management is a modern development within the
history of volunteerism, having first been identified as a field of study in the literature in
1967 (Brudney & Sink, 2017). Much of the research on volunteer management has its
roots in management of paid staff. For example, Halaby (1986) examined the relationship
between an employee's perception of the legitimacy of the organization's authority and
the employee's attachment to his or her workplace, defining attachment to an
organization in terms of likelihood to quit. Kahn (1990) looked at how people brought
themselves into their roles at work. He defined personal engagement as "the simultaneous
employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviors that promote

connections to work" (Kahn, 1990, p. 700).

The role of volunteers has evolved from "back room" support functions to the front lines of service delivery. Today, it is not uncommon for volunteers to take on positions of trust in which they have access to private information and/or money and other valuable property (Graff, 2006). Yet those who plan and manage volunteer service providers do not consider them in their planning and development (Brudney & Meijs, 2009; Graff, 2006). As volunteer programs become increasingly complex, oversight is more important than ever (Graff, 2006). Informality in managing volunteers results in structural uncertainty in the organizational setting and ambiguity in volunteers' responsibility (Pearce, 1993). This results in the need for a more formal volunteer structure.

Recruitment, engagement and retention are all important components of successful volunteer programs (Harp, Scherer, & Allen, 2016). Keeping volunteers engaged is a challenge faced by both government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Engagement in one's work is defined as a "positive, fulfilling state of mind as this relates to one's work" (Huynh, Metzer & Winefield, 2012, p. 1060). Engagement is what keeps volunteers coming back; it is defined as a positive state of mind in which volunteers are fully vested in the organization and committed to their roles (Harp, et al., 2016). Engaged volunteers are more likely to stay with the organization (Huynh, Xanthopoulou, & Winefield, 2014) and to be satisfied with their volunteering experience (Huynh, et al., 2012). The concept of connectedness as part of volunteer retention efforts also arises in the volunteer management literature. Connectedness is a positive state of mind that comes from a strong identification and belonging with coworkers or agency clients

(Huynh, et al., 2012). While connectedness and engagement may sound the same, they are separate constructs, with the common denominator of having a positive impact on a person's intention to remain with the organization (Huynh, et al., 2012).

Volunteer managers and coordinators often do not recognize the fact that volunteers constitute a resource that must be sustained in order to be effective (Brudney & Meijs, 2009; Graff, 2006). This attitude was reflected in the relaxed approach to volunteer management practices in the past, in which asking for help simply meant reaching out to one's friends or family. Sustaining a volunteer program means retaining existing volunteers (also known as engagement, see Huynh, et al., 2014) and replacing those who have left the organization.

Today, nonprofit organizations are adopting management methods based on business-sector efficiencies, often at the urging of their board members (Hager & Brudney, 2004). Hager and Brudney (2004) list nine best practices culled from the literature. The practices relevant to this study are:

- Regular supervision and communication with volunteers

- Liability coverage or insurance protection for volunteers

- Regular collection of information on volunteer numbers and hours

- Screening procedures to identify suitable volunteers

- Written policies and job descriptions for volunteer involvement

- Recognition activities, such as award ceremonies, for volunteers

- Annual measurement of the impacts of volunteers

These practices may not fit the structure of every organization, so they recommend that an organization utilize those practices that best fit its needs (Hagar & Brudney, 2004).

Successful volunteer management depends upon knowledge of all the elements of

volunteer management practices as well as the ability to adapt to the situation in front of

them (Brudney & Sink, 2017). Even after ten years of research, the volunteer

management literature is still taking a "one-size-fits-all" approach (Brudney & Meijs,

2014).

Organizational attitudes and values, including implicit assumptions and

expectations of volunteers, can influence whether or not a volunteer feels welcome in the

organization (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012). The research they studied found

statistically significant relationships between low levels of role ambiguity and

organizational commitment (Nelson et al., 1995, in Studer & von Schnurbein, 2013) and

found that task ambiguity resulted in lower levels of volunteers' satisfaction with their

jobs (Kulik, 2007, in Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012, p. 415). Harp et al. (2016)

confirmed this relationship in their study on volunteer engagement in which they

examined the effects of organizational constraints on volunteer engagement. They found

that organizational constraints, defined in the employee-employer research as aspects of a

work situation that interfere with the process of converting ability and motivation into

effective performance, negatively impact volunteer engagement (Harp, et al., 2016).

Moreover, they found that the specific constraint of role ambiguity, when expectations

for a specific position are poorly defined and the expected outcomes are unclear, has a

negative influence on engagement (Harp, et al., 2016). Volunteering is a value-based

activity (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal, 2008) and therefore people gravitate towards

organizations embracing values similar to their own and creating a sense of identity with

the organization (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012).

Volunteers versus Paid Staff

Part of volunteer management involves forming a partnership between paid staff and the volunteers (Handy, Mook & Quarter, 2008). There are differences between the two groups that make such a partnership a challenge (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012). These differences include how individuals approach their jobs, their attitudes toward the organization, motives, time-commitments, and authority distribution (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012).

One fundamental difference between volunteers and employees is that volunteers receive no financial remuneration for their organizational work (Pearce, 1993, p. 8). Whether or not organizational workers are paid for their work has powerful effects on the workers' own and others' expectations of their behavior. Since volunteers do not receive wages for their efforts, their incentive to work may be completely different from paid staff members who depend on their wages to support themselves (Handy & Brudney, 2007). Volunteers do not rely on their position in the organization for financial support and do not face the same cost of employment termination as paid staff. As a result, volunteers may be driven more by passion and may be more productive (Handy & Brudney, 2007).

Other differences that impact volunteer-staff relations include motives, satisfaction needs, meaning of activity, time investment, source of legitimacy, commitment/job attitudes, dependence/independence, contractual obligations, and distribution of authority (Table 2, Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012). Another difference may lie in the services that are provided by volunteers (Handy & Brudney, 2007).

The behavior of staff towards the organization's volunteers is often based on implicit and explicit conceptualizations of the relationship between the two groups, exacerbated by the differences in attitudes, motives, and commitment as outlined in Studer & von Schnurbein (2012). When behavior deviates from those preconceived notions, tensions result (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2012). The literature on volunteering and volunteer management makes reference to these tensions, but offers little substantive advice (Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). Causes of this tension include use of volunteers to solve budget problems (Brudney & Gazley, 2002), volunteer management techniques (Jacobs, 2017), differences in understandings of the organizational identity (Kreutzer & Jager, 2011), and uncertainties felt by the volunteer (Pearce, 1993). The latter two are particularly relevant to this research.

Differences in the attitudes of volunteers and staff towards their organization depend on the organization. Research on these attitude differences is mixed. Pearce (1993) found numerous differences in attitudes and behavior across different organizations, but her key finding was that attitudes regarding jobs were similar for both volunteers and paid staff (Pearce, 1993). Liao-Troth (2001) noted that Pearce's sample consisted of organizations made up of either all paid staff or almost entirely of volunteers. His study examined the impact of employment status in organizations that employed both paid staff and volunteers for similar jobs (Liao-Troth, 2001). He found no significant difference based on employment status with regards to volunteers' relationship to staff members (organizational commitment) and volunteers' perceptions of workplace fairness (organizational justice) (Liao-Troth, 2001). However, he found

significant differences in volunteers' expectations (the psychological contract) regarding the organizations' promises as to benefits (wages, promotion, etc.) (Liao-Troth, 2001).

Differences in attitudes and understandings about the organization's identity can lead to tensions and conflict (Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). An early definition of organization identity stated that it consists of characteristics that members feel are cultural, distinctive, and enduring (Albert & Whetten, 1985, in Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). Later researchers took a social constructivist approach and asserted that it consists of collectively shared beliefs regarding the central features of the organization, the result of sense-making processes (Corley & Gioia, 2004, in Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). Organizational identity, especially on the part of volunteers, has important considerations for nonprofit organizations, since organizations are often responsible to multiple stakeholders with differing and perhaps conflicting viewpoints (Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). This difference in organizational identity may give rise to conflicts and differences of opinion as to who makes what decision and when.

Management ambiguities, such as unclear instructions or roles, may create conditions that lead to disruptive behavior on the part of their volunteers (Jacobs, 2017). Such behavior may then require the organization to exercise authority in response. Three sources of uncertainty have been identified in the literature. The first, role ambiguity, stems from the lack of a specific job description (Pearce, 1993) or unclear distinctions between the staff and the volunteers (Jacobs, 2017). Role ambiguity is typically perceived when expectations for a specific position are poorly defined and the outcomes of performing one's role are unclear (Van Sell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981 in Harp, Sherer & Allen, 2016).

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Interchangeability of tasks may result in role ambiguity. Handy and her colleagues studied interchangeability, in which jobs were transferred from paid staff to volunteers and then back again (Handy, et al., 2008). Reasons given for such changes include catching up on backlogged tasks and the awareness that some jobs are interchangeable. Factors that contributed to this "permeability of task boundaries" included level of skill, level of risk, legal liabilities, last minute needs, and union agreements (Handy et al., 2008, p. 85). The more a nonprofit organization relies on volunteers for its operations, the more likely it is that interchangeable tasks exist, especially among expressive nonprofit organizations (Handy, et al., 2008, p.88).

The second type of volunteer ambiguity is rule ambiguity. Rule ambiguity arises when important terms in an organization's guidelines or handbook are not clearly defined (Jacobs, 2017).

The third type, volunteer isolation, refers to the failure of an individual to identify with the organization or with other volunteers (Jacobs, 2017).

Another source of, or perhaps the result of, these tensions is disruptive behavior. Researchers found that disruptive behavior occurred when the goals of volunteers conflicted with those of the organization (Jacobs, 2017). There are two types of disruptive behavior: actions which result from uncertainties, such as role ambiguity, and rule-breaking behavior resulting from a mismatch of goals, making the volunteers uncomfortable (Jacobs, 2017). Rule-breaking refers to direct breaches of volunteer guidelines (Jacobs, 2017).

The literature on volunteers and volunteer management covers a wide range of volunteer management issues that can negatively affect a volunteer. Organizational

values and identity, role and rule ambiguity or clarity, and the relationship between staff and volunteers are factors or conditions that impact the volunteer experience. If the experience is negative, disruptive behavior may result. Researchers have not directly examined volunteers' roles within the context of organizational work and how that impacts control over volunteers' activities. Pearce applied the research on how associations and churches control their members to her study on how member-based volunteer associations controlled their volunteers (1993, p. 113). From this data Pearce (1993) identified four value-based theories of control: exercise of control through (1) shared values, arising from Weber's rational model of authority and based on the importance of the value itself; (2) esteem, both normative and social, based on Etzioni's writings; (3) self-selection, based on the argument that volunteers will not donate their time to organizations they have no affinity for; and (4) control of values by leaders, in which leaders frame the policies of the organization to reflect fundamental values and then use those values to legitimize their policies. These theories can help volunteer managers exercise authority and control over their volunteers in a positive manner. What is missing is how authority enters into the relationship between volunteer and organization.

CHAPTER III

THEORY OF ORGANIZATION-VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP

Introduction

There is some debate within the social sciences as to whether it is useful to distinguish between applied and theoretical research (See Ritchie, 2003). Ritchie suggests that all social science research is based on certain theoretical assumptions and that social science research contributes to "theory" by providing greater understanding about the social world. The goal of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the authority relationship between an organization and its volunteers. To that end, it is based on two principal theories: Weber's theory of bureaucratic authority, to discover how his description of organizational structure applies in the volunteer context, and psychological contract theory, to ascertain the effects of expectations on the volunteer authority relationship. Weber's bureaucratic types were based on composites of various institutions, including the military and church, and he intended that they serve as ideals and not as descriptions or classifications (Weber, 1947). Psychological contract theory has its roots in the paid employee literature but is now being applied to volunteers (see Nichols, 2013). To shed more light in a practical sense on how authority operates within

a bureaucracy, I have included two studies of large-scale institutions, one by Michele

Crozier (1964) and one by Herbert Kaufman (1960).

The Nature of Authority

It is commonly assumed that authority means one person telling another what to

do in a specific situation or making a decision when confronted with conflicting options.

That constitutes only part of the concept. Authority exists when "an individual accepts

another individual's judgment, a norm, or a standard as a directive legitimately governing

his behavior" (Anderson, 1966, p. 8). There are two concepts within the general

framework of authority: formal and real. Formal authority is the right to decide; real

authority is actually deciding (Aghion & Tirole, 1997). Sometimes they are the same and

sometimes they are not (Aghion & Tirole, 1997). In an employment relationship,

authority over a worker means that the worker is allowing the boss to select an action for

the worker to take (Aghion & Tirole, 1997). In the context of volunteerism, a volunteer

allows the organization's agent (either the volunteer coordinator or other manger) to

assign specific tasks to the volunteer.

Benoit-Barne and Cooren (2009) identified three views of the nature and

achievement of authority in organizations in the literature. First, authority can originate in

a hierarchical structure, such as Weber's legal-rational bureaucracy; it can be viewed as a

personal characteristic of the person in authority, seen as a trait that allowing a person to

take charge of a situation; and it can be the result of consent of those who submit to the

person regarded as in authority (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009). Second, authority can be

viewed as a personal characteristic, either an inherent trait or an acquired ability, but in

either case, the actor is the source of the authority (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009). Third,

authority can be viewed within the context of consent, specifically, how a group of individuals reacts to a person in authority (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009). They add a fourth view, that of presentification, ways of speaking or acting that influence how a situation unfolds (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009).

Kahn & Kram (1994) found two types of factors influence authority relationships: situational and individual. Situational factors focus on how the social structure of the organization compels members to create and obey hierarchical rules. Individual factors that account for the superior and subordinate roles include personality concepts such as authoritarian and Machiavellian personality types. These concepts may help explain particular types of behaviors and may offset the effectiveness of situational factors (Kahn & Kram, 1994).

The extent of authority is determined by how the subject is influenced, e.g., sanctions or persuasion however, the relationship only becomes one of authority when the legitimacy of the authority is acknowledged by the subject (Anderson, 1966, p. 8). In an organizational context, authority resides within the structure and is delegated to someone because of his or her ascribed position within that structure (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009, p.8).

There is a difference between power and authority. Power is the ability to compel another to act against his/her will (Miller & Fry, 1973) and is primarily tied to the personality of the individual. Authority is always associated with social positions and roles (Smith, 2002). Authority is a legitimate relation of domination and subjection and is sometimes described as legitimate power (Smith, 2002) that creates a sense of integration, predictability, and order within the organization (Kahn & Kram, 1994;

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Weber, 1947) and as a result has been linked to organizational stability (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009).

Traditionally, those in authority exercise power because the position they hold is granted such authority through written rules which specify who is to be governed and by whom (Kahn & Kram, 1994). Bureaucratic structures often change and thus change the ways power and authority are distributed (Kahn & Kram, 1994, p. 18). This means that the parameters of task performance (who does what and when) are difficult to ascertain and often lead to conflict, requiring collaboration between leaders and subordinates to negotiate the bounds of duty and authority (Kahn & Kram, 1994, p. 18).

Communication also plays a role in establishing and exercising authority. First, authority can emerge from the interactions of superiors and subordinates (Kahn & Kram, 1994; Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009). Nonverbal communications; including written documents such as notices posted on a wall or how one shakes hands, play a part as well. This concept, called presentification, facilitates the emergence of authority (Benoit-Barne & Cooren, 2009).

However authority is manifested, both leaders and followers separately interpret the nature of the leader's authority, which does not translate into power and influence without acknowledgement by the followers that it is valid (Kahn & Kram, 1994, p. 19)

Weber's Theory of Bureaucratic Authority

Weber is credited with establishing the discipline of sociology, defined as the science which attempts an interpretive understanding of social action (human behavior) in order to arrive at a causal explanation of those actions (Weber, 1947, p., 88). An action becomes a social action when the actor attaches a subjective meaning to it (Weber, 1947).

Thus, social actions are understood through the context of the observer's experiences and values and take place within the context of social relationships (Weber, 1947). Social relationships consist of the behavior of actors which take into consideration the actions of each one individually (Weber, 1947). This philosophical concept makes Weber an appropriate theorist on which to base my research, since my aim is to interpret the actions of individuals within organizations in the context of exercising authority.

Bureaucratic authority by definition takes place within the context of an organization. Weber (1947) defines "organization" as a system of continuous purposive activity of a specified kind. He further sub-divides it into voluntary associations and compulsory organizations. A voluntary association is a group initiated by a voluntary agreement in which the established order claims authority over members only by a personal act of adherence. A compulsory organization is one in which an established order within a specific sphere of activity has been successfully imposed on every individual who conforms to certain specific criteria (Weber, 1947, p. 151).

Weber traced the roots of bureaucracy to military discipline, but conceded that there is no direct link to economic institutions such as factories (O'Neill, 1986, p. 54). He took note of the rational discipline achieved through American systems of scientific management but never developed those topics. By focusing on the more general aspects of bureaucracy, he also ignored the topic of industrial discipline, leaving the impression that brute force as a primary means of exercising authority is used only by the state, allowing modern organizations to be portrayed as more liberal in their exercise of authority in the early 20th century (Weber, 1947; O'Neill, 1986).

Weber describes social action as actions aimed at other persons (not inanimate objects) and including intentional behavior, failure to act, and passive acquiescence, which is influenced by past, present, or future actions (Weber. 1947). He divides social actions into four types: (1) rationally oriented actions to a system of discrete ends; (2) rational orientation to an absolute value; (3) affectional orientation; and (4) traditional orientation (Weber, 1947). Rationally orientated action to a system of discrete ends operates through the individual's expectations and takes into account the end, the means, and secondary results of the intended action. The individual actor weighs and chooses between means and ends (Weber, 1947). In rational orientation to absolute value, action is taken in the conscious belief in a specific value, without regard to the possibility of success. Affectual orientation is defined by the emotional component of the behavior. Traditional orientation is characterized by an almost automatic reaction to a specific set of circumstances (Weber, 1947).

Social actions take place within social relationships (Weber, 1947). The term "social relationship" suggests the behaviors of groups of individuals and requires a mutual understanding among the actors of the purpose or meaning of the action (Weber, 1947). This meaning does not have to be the same for all parties, as individuals may ascribe different meanings to the same concept (such as friendship, love, or loyalty) and is thus subjective, not absolute or "true" (Weber, 1947).

The focus of social action based on social relationships is a belief by the actors in the existence of a legitimate order (Weber, 1947). This order is more than mere uniformity of action based on custom or self-interest. It is driven by an individual's

subjugation to an institution whose rules he is driven to obey out of a sense of duty (Weber, 1947).

The central part of Weber's writing on social and economic organizations is the identification of three types of bureaucratic authority: charismatic, traditional, and legal-rational (Weber, 1947). They share a common characteristic in that authority on the part of the individual is defined by the position the individual occupies within the organization (O'Neill, 1986). Distinguishing features include the nature or position of the persons exercising authority and internal differences in the roles those persons play (Weber, 1947; O'Neill, 1986). Table 1 provides an overview of the three types of authority and compares each type in the areas relevant to this study: decision-making, as that is a key component of authority (Anderson, 1966; Miller & Fry, 1973), and control, as that is how Weber sees the exercise of authority (Weber, 1947).

Weber's work is all about how organizations get individuals to act in order to further the organization's goals. He traced the historical roots of bureaucratic discipline back to the military, with its uniformity of obedience and command in an impersonal setting (Weber, 1947; O'Neill, 1986). Discipline is the means by which the organization exercises its authority (Weber, 1947). Within his theory of authority, Weber created a basic structure, applicable to groups of any size and complexity and to all aspects of human relations, which divides members of the organization into groups according to their roles: a "chief" who holds the highest level of authority and "administrative staff" (Weber, 1947, p. 56). His theory is based on the recognition of the legitimacy of both structure and rules.

Table 2. Weber's types of authority

Authority	Basis for Legitimacy	Nature of Decision-making	Basis of Control
Charismatic	Emotion-based devotion to single individual	Decisions issued as mandates	Emotional relationship
Traditional	Pre-existing system coupled with personal right of officeholder	Actions/decisions determined by tradition	(1) Elders or (2) Individual thru rule of inheritance
Legal-rational	Normative rules give leader right to act	Actions/decisions based on norms and rules	Position in organization, obtained through knowledge and training

Charismatic authority is based on certain exemplary characteristics possessed by an individual that sets him or her apart from the other members of the group. Weber describes it as being of "divine origin" (Weber, 1947, p. 359). Charismatic authority requires recognition of the individual leader's authority by the group, which in turn is based on an emotional form of communal relationship. This relationship is based on devotion to the individual because of certain personality traits and/or qualities, which Weber sometimes refers to as "powers" (Weber, 1947, p. 358). These qualities cause the members of the group to set the leader apart from the rest of the organizations and to treat him/her as "superhuman" (Weber, 1947, p. 358). Control within a charismatic organization is viewed as being of divine origin (Weber, 1947, p. 359), implying that control is emotionally based. There is no definite sphere of authority in such an organization (Weber, 1947, p. 360); thus the reach of the leader's power would appear to be limitless.

Charismatic authority is validated by the group freely consenting to being governed. It is often validated by proof or a "sign" (a miracle, perhaps?). The failure of this proof to appear for a lengthy period of time may cause the leader to doubt his/her powers and may cause the supporters to lose faith in his/her leadership; as a result, his/her authority will disappear (Weber, 1947). If the organization requires administrative staff, those individuals are chosen on the basis of "charismatic" qualities such as loyalty to the chief, not technical expertise. Leaders exercise their authority through inspiration, challenging the status quo, taking personal risks to show commitment, and engaging in unconventional behavior (Conger & Kanungo, 1994).

One example of the charismatic model is a religious group headed by a single individual or a hand-picked successor. Legitimacy of this type of authority rests on devotion to that one specific individual based on perceived sanctity or heroism and devotion to the normative order demanded by that individual (Constas, 1958, p. 401). However, Weber recognized the instability of this order and thought that it must necessarily transform itself in order to serve as a durable political system (Weber, 1947; Constas, 1958).

The second type of authority is traditional, or the system of order (Weber, 1947). This kind of authority is grounded on the belief in the sanctity of the order (structure) of the organization and the power to control it, which in turn is based on the fact that the system has always existed and has always been binding (Constas, 1958, p. 401). Authority of the head of the organization is based on personal obedience or loyalty because the office he/she occupies has always been one of authority (Weber, 1947). The leader's authority is legitimized in one of two ways: partly through the traditions, which

directly determine the content of the leader's commands and which are accepted as if they have always existed (Anderson, 1966) and partly through the traditional personal prerogative of the leader to issue those commands, which are also accepted as if they have always existed (Weber, 1947).

Traditional authority is characterized by the substance or content of the commands. In a traditional bureaucracy, there can be no new "legislation" or rule governing the conduct of members, as the operation of the organization is based on how things have always been done. Persons exercising authority are part of a pre-existing system of statuses which specifically define who can legitimately exercise that authority (Weber, 1947, p. 60). Such a person is not merely a superior to other members but a "personal chief." Traditions directly determine the content of commands, objectives, and the extent of authority. Personal prerogatives of leaders and obligations and obedience by the followers are unlimited (Weber, 1947). Feudalistic or paternalistic cultures are examples of traditional authority. Religious leaders, who often appear to exercise charismatic authority, may base their authority on tradition as well. No rational or technical training is required for an administrative position in a traditional organization (Weber, 1947). Tasks are assigned when needed, also without regard to expertise or knowledge. Control is exercised by "elders" (in a gerontocracy) or by an individual under a defined rule of inheritance (in a patriarchy) (Weber, 1947, p. 346).

Legal-rational authority, Weber's third type of authority, is found in an organization that was established for a specific purpose, in which the individual participants are bound by specific rules. Legal-rational authority rests on a belief in the legitimacy of the normative rules and the right of those who hold positions of power

under those rules to act (Constas, 1958). Today we refer to this tenet as the rule of law. Rules and decisions are set forth in writing, even when they are the result of informal oral discussions. The positions or jobs within the organization are set out in a hierarchical order, with each level reporting to the level above. There is a complete separation of activity within the organization from the official's personal life. Legal-rational authority requires conduct from motivated or disciplined individuals whose sole concern is their specific role in the organization (O'Neill, 1986). Each member of the organization is subject to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of his/her office or position (Weber, 1947).

Weber laid out specific attributes of the staff in a legal-rational bureaucracy. Expertise and knowledge on the part of staff members is an important component of this model (Weber, 1947; Miller & Fry, 1973). He described bureaucratic administration as fundamentally the exercise of control based on knowledge (Weber, 1947, p. 339). According to Weber, knowledge is acquired through formal training, which leads to a greater understanding of the organization (Weber, 1947; Miller, 1970). Individuals with superior training (and thus knowledge) are more likely to exercise control in the organization (Weber, 1947).

According to Weber (1947), the staff is subject to the authority of the organization only with regard to their official duties. The staff is organized according to a clearly defined hierarchy. Each office or position has a clearly defined set of responsibilities. The position is contractual in nature, implying the existence of some free will on both parties. Candidates are selected on the basis of specialized qualifications and compensated by way of a fixed salary, generally graded according to rank in the hierarchy, and often

accompanied by the right to a pension. Officials are subject to systematic discipline and control in the conduct of their office (Weber, 1974). Each position in the organization is presumed to be the sole or primary occupation of the officeholder and constitutes that person's career (Weber, 1947).

Since Weber's model states that the organization must provide the officeholder with the means to carry out his duties (Weber, 1947), those means must be clearly spelled out (Anderson, 1966). This results in a system of authority which exists within a set of formal, impersonal rules that govern all operations (Anderson, 1966). Trying to reconcile a set of all-encompassing rules with officeholders' activities outside of their positions, pressures on the organization from without, and the historical perspective of goals and the methods of reaching them makes the legal-rational bureaucracy not only inefficient but unstable (Anderson, 1966; Weber, 1947). A legal-rational organization must "balance acquiescence and authority against individual initiative" (Anderson, 1966, p. 13). In other words, an organization needs to have some flexibility to achieve its goals.

The word "bureaucracy" often conjures up images of massive and complex government agencies, especially in the context of legal-rational authority. Weber based his work on organizations such as the military, the church, and political parties. Weber's concept of the legitimacy of the modern state was formal: laws are legitimate if created by the correct procedures and any correct procedure is legal (O'Neill, 1986). Weber also thought that public administration should be kept separate from politics (Sager & Rosser, 2009). His view was that rational public administration is based on written rules, an impersonal order, a clear division of labor, and appointment of officeholders based on skills not family ties (Sager & Rosser, 2009, p. 1127). Thus, Weber's legal-rational

authority model is relevant to the discussion of authority over volunteers in public agencies.

Weber's views on authority are equally relevant in the nonprofit sector. Nonprofit organizations may be more informally structured than public agencies. This informality may lead to authority structures that more resemble Weber's other models. In any case, these organizations are formed around missions involving allocation of resources and labor, which needs some system of authority to carry out. The social relationship between the individual volunteer and the organization has the potential to be beneficial or detrimental to its mission and programmatic goals (Powell & Wrightson, 2006).

Although Weber created his models to serve as describing ideal types of authority (Weber, 1947) and not as descriptions or classifications, his work provides a pathway to explore authority in the context of volunteerism.

Subsequent Research

Researchers since Weber have sought to expand and explore the concept of authority within the organization. Peabody (1962) found four types of authority relationships: authority of legitimacy, authority of position, authority of competency, and authority of person. Authority of legitimacy is based on the hierarchy of the organization and arises out of obedience to and respect for it. It is the basis for Weber's legal-rational bureaucratic model (Peabody, 1962). Authority of position arises from the individual's place within the organization; authority is based on respect for the position not regard for the individual himself (Peabody, 1962). Authority within Weber's legal-rational bureaucracy is based on this concept (Weber, 1947). Authority of competency is based on both technical expertise and experience. This characterization is based on regard for

personal traits, rather than the position the individual holds, and is not limited to a formal hierarchical organizational structure (Peabody, 1962). Finally, authority of person is, as one would expect, based on regard for the individual. Weber uses this type to distinguish charismatic and traditional authority from legal-rational (Peabody, 1962; Weber, 1947). The terms "personal authority" and "leadership" have been used to describe this type of authority (Peabody, 1962). Several years later, Miller and Fry would uncover evidence of what they called unofficial control, which was based on personal relationships and regard for the individual (Miller, 1970; Miller & Fry, 1972).

Two longitudinal studies illustrate how large and complex organizations exercise authority over their workers. Michel Crozier (1964) examined two French bureaucratic institutions; one was a clerical agency and the other a government-sanctioned industrial monopoly. Herbert Kaufman's (1960) case study took an in-depth look at the U.S. Forest Service. Both studies illustrate how the bureaucracy or structure of an organization impacts authority. Although both involved paid employees, there are some concepts that can be applied to the organization-volunteer relationship.

Crozier (1964) states that cultural analysis is an important component of studying the pathology of an organization, allowing the researcher to establish the limits and application of theory in different contexts. Studying bureaucracy highlights how social control used within each cultural system to arrive at ends necessitated by techniques which have become universal (Crozier, 1964, p. 8).

Power refers to a kind of relationship that is neither one dimensional nor predictable and has a value connotation (Crozier, 1964). Crozier (1964, p. 159) defines power as the ability of person A to convince person B to do something that B would not

have done otherwise. This is consistent with other definitions of power (e.g., Weber, 1947). The main rationale of the development of a bureaucratic organization is the elimination of power relationships and personal dependencies (Crozier, 1964). This might seem contrary to the vision most people have upon hearing the term "bureaucracy." But he points out that the purpose is to administer things and not to govern people Crozier, 1964). In an ideal situation, people are bound by impersonal rules and not by personal influences and arbitrary commands (Crozier, 1964).

Kaufman's study focused on organizations at the individual level, noting that the "operative" employee must be the focus, because the success of the structure of the organization will be judged by how the individual performs within the structure (Simon, 1945 in Kaufman, 1960). His study concentrated on the U.S. Forest Service and the Forest Ranger level. He looked at how employees who worked "in the field," that is, away from the organization's physical building, and who resided at the lower end of the organizational structure (i.e., the Forest Rangers) were persuaded to carry out the arrangements made by their area superiors. His purpose was to analyze the way their decisions and behavior are influenced within and by the greater organization (Kaufman, 1960). Rangers are subject to influences pushing and pulling them in various directions, yet they have a steadfast relationship with the larger organization. Kaufman sought to understand how the larger organization ensures that its far-flung members adhere to the rules and procedures (Kaufman, 1960).

Kaufman observed that while the general polices are generated in and announced from the main headquarters in Washington D.C., the rangers themselves are influential in adapting them to local conditions to such an extent, and with enough success, to earn the

public acknowledgement of the Forest Service chief (Kaufman, 1960). The substantive content of those national policies is shaped by the day to day actions of the rangers. The rangers' actions reflect their interpretations and balance the decisions made among the many functions of the office. This balancing act may result in the modification of existing policy or may end up creating new policy (Kaufman, 1960).

Kaufman describes the Forest Service's ideology of decentralization as being grounded on the premise that resource management (the purpose of the organization) begins and belongs on the ground level. Thus, most of the work is delegated down to the supervisors and rangers, making rangers for all practical purposes their own bosses (Kaufman, 1960).

The Forest Service uses specific techniques that result in the integration of the individual into the organization. Authorization consists of formal procedures for decision-making, including sanctions for going against policy (Kaufman, 1960). However, if a ranger makes an authorized decision and is attacked for it, the ranger's decision is backed up and no sanctions will be imposed. This gives the ranger the freedom to make on the spot decisions without checking with his superiors as long as it falls within prescribed parameters, but it also limits behavior to those parameters. The technique known as "directions" describes allowable courses of action, leaving no options to act or refrain from acting. In a word, they are simply directions that must be followed under particular circumstances. "Prohibitions" supplement authorizations and directions. Rangers are given four volumes of a seven-volume manual that governs almost every official action and or decision that can be made by a ranger. This is their source for what they are authorized, directed, and forbidden to do. Deviation from the

rules is controlled by detailed reporting requirements that act as flags for noncompliance (Kaufman, 1960).

Rangers are required to submit detailed reports about their activities and transactions. Kaufman claims that the sheer amount of detail required in these reports generally serves as a deterrent against falsification. In addition, the incentives to falsify a report are very low, as the penalties for poor performance are less severe than for lying and the organizational culture and ethos discourages falsification. Other deterrents include frequent inspections, public complaint hearings, frequent movement of personnel, and sanctions if all else fails (Kaufman, 1960). What Kaufman discovered, in the end, is that not only are Forest Rangers mission-driven, but they are also accepting of the constraints imposed by the agency's legal-rational hierarchy (Kaufman, 1960).

Psychological Contract Theory

The relationship between volunteers and their organization is based on a set of expectations held by both parties (see discussion of organizational attitudes in Studer & von Schnurbein, 2013). For example, volunteers may come into the organization anticipating certain real or imagined experiences. Volunteer management research does not directly focus on the expectations organizations have of their volunteers. It is normally directed toward specific issues that arise when dealing with volunteers. In one study, Cnaan and Cascio (1998) identified and assessed three variables in volunteer commitment and performance (demographic, personality, and situational) to provide guidance to volunteer managers. Other expectations are implied throughout the discussions of best practices. Job descriptions, when utilized, may be the most direct indication of what an organization expects from its volunteers (Brudney, 1999). The

problem with expectations is that they are subjective, making them difficult to recognize, manage, and address. The psychological contract theory is based on those expectations.

Psychological contract theory originated in the business organization literature but is making its way into the nonprofit organization field. The concept was first introduced in the literature in the early 1960s, when researchers used interviews to create descriptions of a psychological contract (Argus, 1960 & Levinson, 1962, cited in Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Later research utilized quantitative measures (to create descriptions of a psychological contract (Argus, 1960 & Levinson, 1962, cited in Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998).

Psychological contract theory in its original iteration refers to the perceptions of mutual obligations that both parties (employer and employee) bring to an employment relationship (Herriott, Manning, & Kidd, 1997, p.151). Subsequent researchers argued that those perceptions originated solely from the employee's perspective (Rousseau, 1990). Representatives of the organization may contribute to those perceptions by sending different messages regarding obligations or expectations (Herriott, et al., 1997).

The original description of this concept included two dimensions: relational, which exists at the individual level, and focuses on an exchange of socioemotional currency, that is, the personal relationships formed within the organization, and transactional, which has an economic-based currency aspect (Vantilborgh, et al., 2012). In the paid-employee setting, the currency consists of monetary compensation. Since volunteers are not compensated for their efforts by wages, scholars interpreted this exchange as consisting of reimbursement of expenses incurred while volunteering. Because the psychological contract is a way of expressing what the employees feel they

owe the organization and what they feel the organization owes them, beyond the formal employment contract (Liao-Troth, 2005), the transactional dimension could also be described as a volunteer's expectation of some sense of satisfaction by helping others. A third dimension, value-based, was added later, defined as "credible commitments to pursue a valued cause or principle" which are at the heart of the individual-organizational relationship (Vantilborgh, et al, 2012, p. 1074). Volunteers' identification with or attraction to the organization's mission falls within this dimension.

Psychological contract theory applies to volunteers based on the idea that people volunteer for specific reasons or motives and thus hold certain expectations regarding their volunteer experiences (Farmer & Fedor, 1999, cited in Vantilborgh, et al., 2012). In the volunteer context, volunteer recruitment is often driven by the communications methods of agents of the organization. Liao-Troth (2005) describes the process like this: the volunteer signs up, motivated by personal characteristics that may be triggered by her communication with the organization's agent. The organization, through its agent, may want its volunteers to serve in various positions at different times, may want the volunteers to change functions several times over the course of their volunteer career, and may also want volunteers who serve only one function with their organization (Liao-Troth, 2005). These desires on the part of the organization may often conflict with each other and cause the role uncertainty described by Pearce (1993). On the other side of the relationship, what volunteers want from their volunteer experiences vary in importance and as a result, in situations of role uncertainty, the psychological contract may be the only way a volunteer can figure out his/her place in the organization (Liao-Troth, 2005).

Using the psychological contract as a point of reference when working with volunteers can be helpful to managers, given its relevance in uncertain or ambiguous situations (Vantilborgh, et al, 2012). Nichols contends that it is particularly relevant to volunteers, because they are less likely to enter into written contracts with their organization than paid employees (Nichols, 2013). For volunteers in poorly defined roles and loosely structured organizations, the psychological contract may be all they have to understand their relationship with their organization (Liao-Troth, 2005). In situations where there is a more formalized organizational framework, the psychological contract serves to fill in the gaps left undescribed by the existing organizational structure (Liao-Troth, 2005).

Certain assumptions underlie the research on employees that may impact comparisons to volunteers:

- Expectations flow only from the employee;

- Unilateral focus on employees, not a juxtaposition of perspectives;

- The relationship is one of consensus not conflict, thus power relationships do not get studied;

- Generalizations can only be made from quantitative data (epistemology); and

- The psychological contract is an objective fact (ontology) (Nichols, 2013).

The presence of these assumptions may inhibit the influence of the perceptions of volunteering as an activity that allows greater freedom than paid employment (Nichols, 2013).

In addition, some research indicates that the formation of a psychological contract is not necessarily related to motivation on the part of the volunteer but instead to certain

personal characteristics, such as conscientiousness and agreeability (Liao-Troth, 2005). Other research confirms that volunteers develop a psychological contract with their organization, but more importantly, they perceive when that contract is breached (Starnes, 2007). Interestingly, Starnes' research found no relationship between a perceived breach and intention to remain with the organization. The awareness of a breach of the psychological contract was evidenced by reduced numbers of hours spent volunteering and reduced quality of work (Starnes, 2007).

Psychological contract theory has its detractors. Guest (1998) points out some problems with this concept. First, the key words use to describe the psychological contract vary from definition to definition; researchers used such terms as implicit, perceptions, and beliefs, all of which imply different levels of psychological engagement (Guest, 1998). This creates some ambiguity in what exactly is meant by this concept. The second problem is whether everyone in an employment situation has a psychological contract (Guest, 1998). Issues to consider here are the different ways socialization into an organization takes place at the individual level, the fact that all employment contracts have gaps, and the difficulty in establishing at what point the psychological contract comes into existence (Guest, 1998). A third consideration is the appropriateness of what is in fact a legal metaphor (Conway, 1996, cited in Guest, 1998). Contracts require mutual consent and specificity, among other requirements, and the psychological contract can be described as being in the "eye of the beholder" (Guest, 1998, p. 652). Other issues Guest considers include difficulties in determining the agency relationship, key dimensions that distinguish it from a conventional employment contract, the contents of the psychological contract, and perceived violations (Guest, 1998). Despite all this, he

concludes that it should be taken seriously, as it can be used to examine power

relationships within an organization (Guest, 1998).

It is important to note that Guest's article is centered in the employer-employee

relationship. But his concerns can easily be applied to volunteers, perhaps more so, since

the status of a volunteer within an organization is subject to more ambiguity than a paid

employee (Pearce, 1993). And subsequent research has addressed some of Guests'

concerns, such as whether a volunteer recognizes not only that a psychological contract

exists but that a breach of that contract has occurred (Starnes, 2007).

Control and Authority

The concepts of authority and control (or power) appear throughout Weber's

model and subsequent literature. While Weber and Crozier spoke of power, subsequent

researchers used the term control (see Smith, 2002). All were speaking of the same

concept: the ability to convince an individual to obey an order even if that person does

not want to act. To avoid confusion I will use the term control, since more recent research

uses that term.

Weber defined authority as "the probability that one actor within a social

relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance" (Weber,

1947, p. 152). Control is the probability that one will be in a position to carry out his own

will, despite resistance and regardless of the basis on which this probability rests (Weber,

1947, p. 152). Weber believed that all power required a belief in its legitimacy in order to

stabilize itself (Constas, 1958) and that legitimacy may be maintained in two ways:

through purely disinterested motives or through self-interest (ulterior motives) (Weber,

1947). He set out four variables he believed to be present within an organization's

structure: expertise, control, legitimacy, and authority (Weber, 1947, p. 339; Miller, 1970, p. 92). He theorized that they would be distributed among individuals according specific rules, and that they will be closely related to each other. Expertise (or knowledge) consists of two dimensions, (a) formal training in the skills essential to the organization and (b) the knowledge of facts and documentary material a member possesses about how his organization carries out its activities (organizational knowledge). Control (or power) is defined as the probability that one actor will be in position to carry out his will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests (Weber, 1947, p.152). Legitimacy is the presence of attitudes that validate or confirm the positions exercising authority (Weber, 1947, p. 326).

Control seems to be a crucial component of authority. Weber viewed control through the acquisition of knowledge (also referred to as expertise) as important to the functioning of an administrative bureaucracy (Weber, 1947). Technical knowledge, that is, those formal skills crucial to meeting the organization's goals, was also crucial to Weber's theory (Etzioni, 1959). Expertise leads to control, which creates a sense of authority, thus granting legitimacy to the position or individual (Weber, 1947).

Other researchers link authority and control. Peabody (1962) refers to Weber's definition of authority to describe control. Smith (2002) includes the concept of control throughout his discussion of various types of job authority. Miller (1970) posits that the relationship between authority and control reflects the extent to which an organization balances formal rules and actual behavior.

The legal-rational model has two goals. One is to ensure that the people who control the organization are the same people in charge of the organization's activities.

The second goal is that decisions be made on the basis of the best possible information (Weber, 1947). What follows, according to Weber, is the increased formalization of the organization's structure and rules as well as increased attempts to allocate expertise, control, and authority among various members of the organization in a way that legitimizes these arrangements (Weber, 1947; Miller, 1970).

Miller (1970) examined the relationship among Weber's four variables of legitimacy, authority, control, and expertise by surveying nonteaching personnel in five public schools. He found strong relationships among them all, with one exception. Miller divided expertise into two components: formal training and organizational knowledge (defined as someone the respondent would most likely go to with a question). He confirmed Weber's theory that those with formal training are more likely to occupy positions of authority and to exercise control than those with high amounts of organizational knowledge (Miller, 1970). Because this research was conducted within a school system, it is possible that these results reflect a cultural bias in favor of formal training.

Miller (1970) disputes Weber's claim that an effective bureaucracy must be an impersonal one. The participants in his study showed some deference to those individuals they liked or considered to be friends, even if those persons did not hold a position of authority (Miller, 1970). Contrary to Weber's requirement of impersonality, Miller found that friendships within the organization did not affect the organization's ability to accomplish its objectives. He also found evidence of "unofficial control" exercised by persons who were not only highly trained but also popular and highly thought of (Miller, 1970).

In a follow-up study, Miller and Fry (1973) performed the same analysis on

Weber's contention that control exercised by an organization's officials directly impacts

the organization's activities. They conducted case studies of four organizations looking to

see if the close interrelationship among authority, control, training, and legitimacy,

existed not only within their sample organizations but also across the sample population.

They also examined the relationships among organizational knowledge, unofficial control

and friendship and how those variables related to the first four. They theorized that

Weber's model of ideal bureaucracy did not take into account the concept of unofficial

control, that is, control exercised by someone not in an official position of authority

(Miller & Fry, 1973).

Their findings in the second study were for the most part consistent with those of

the first. They found that individuals in positions of authority were perceived to exercise

effective control and to possess sufficient expertise to legitimize their authority. This

relationship between authority and control supports Weber's determination that a

successful organization ensures that those individuals officially designated as being in

control are actually directing the organization's activities (Miller & Fry, 1973). Persons

in a position of authority rarely lacked control (Miller & Fry, 1973). In highly

professionalized organizations, actual control closely paralleled the official structure of

authority, possibly because they reflected the occupational objectives of the members

(Miller & Fry, 1973). Legitimacy was more a function of being seen as exercising control

than a feature of official authority, but that still did not explain the close connection of

authority and control (Miller & Fry, 1973, p. 312). When controlling for the other

variables, formal training had some impact on legitimacy, but little direct influence on

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authority and on control. Authority is a good predictor of control, but control is a better predictor of legitimacy when controlling for the other variables (Miller & Fry, 1973).

The impact of expertise on authority is contingent upon the distribution of control and legitimacy. Where control and legitimacy are absent, there is a strong connection between expertise and authority; where they are present, the influence of expertise on authority wanes (Miller & Fry, 1973). In addition, if the amount of formal expertise is prominent (or required for specific staff positions) within an organization, the impact is not great. When existence of expertise is low, Weber's model of its impact on control is more accurate than what Miller and Fry found in their study (1973).

When Miller and Fry looked at the distribution of unofficial control, they found that persons seen as exercising unofficial control were far less powerful that those with authority, based on the number of respondents who judged them as influential (Miller & Fry, 1973).

The authors noted some implications for Weber's model. Weber posits that control is only possible if there is legitimate authority. Miller and Fry (1973) suggest that authority is legitimated where there has been effective control. Weber implied that authority is reflected in the exercise of effective control if both the organization and those individuals holding positions of authority are legitimized. Miller and Fry (1973) show Weber's causal chain as:

<div align="center">AUTHORITY →LEGITIMACY → CONTROL</div>

The authors interpret the results of their study as putting a different spin on that causal chain. They claim that authority is reflected by the exercise of control, which leads to legitimization. Miller and Fry view the causal chain as:

AUTHORITY →CONTROL →LEGITIMACY

Either way, control appears to be an indicator of authority (Miller & Fry, 1973, p. 318).

Authority within Organizations

No matter how complex or simple an organization's structure is, bureaucratic

theory assumes that all branches lead to one center of authority where decisions are made

and conflicts resolved (Etzioni, 1959; Weber, 1947). Researchers have identified four

types of authority relationships: authority of legitimacy, authority of position, authority of

competency, and authority of person. Authority of legitimacy is based on the hierarchy of

the organization and arises out of obedience to and respect for it. It is the basis for

Weber's legal-rational bureaucratic model (Peabody, 1962). Authority of position arises

from the individual's place within the organization; authority is based on respect for the

position not regard for the individual himself (Peabody, 1962). Authority within Weber's

legal-rational bureaucracy is based on this last concept (Weber, 1947). Authority of

competency is based on both technical expertise and experience, with regard to personal

traits, rather than position in the organization, and is not limited to a formal hierarchical

organizational structure (Peabody, 1962). Finally, authority of person is, as one would

expect, based on regard for the individual. Peabody (1962) points out that the literature

describes this type of authority in many ways. Weber uses it to distinguish charismatic

and traditional authority from legal-rational (Peabody, 1962; Weber, 1947). The terms

"personal authority" and "leadership" have also been used to describe this type of

authority (Peabody, 1962). Several years after, Miller and Fry would uncover evidence of

what they called unofficial control, which was based on personal relationships and regard

for the individual (Miller, 1970; Miller & Fry, 1973).

Authority and Nonprofit Organizations

Little research directly addresses the concept of exercising authority over volunteers within nonprofit organizations. The literature on general organizational authority is based on paid employees, as is the foundation of psychological contract. In the volunteer management literature, discussions generally revolve around concerns of engagement (Huynh, et al., 2012) rather than authority, control, or legitimacy. No literature examines what happens within the authority relationship when conditions change and whether organizations change volunteer management procedures as a result. Nor does the literature look at the exercise of authority over volunteers in terms of Weber.

The exercise of authority by an organization over its volunteers is a two-sided quandary. On the one hand, organizations need to ensure that volunteers stay focused on the mission. On the other hand, volunteers are non–paid workers and not subject to the same loyalties and incentives as paid staff. Volunteers can have the reputation of being unreliable, both in attendance and in job performance, as they are often viewed by paid staff as free to come and go as they please. Paid staff have rules to follow and can be coerced into obeying those rules, while volunteers can choose to not comply (Pearce, 1993, p. 111). This perception of unreliability and freedom to act as one pleases is the dominant characteristic that distinguishes paid staff and volunteers (Pearce, 1993). It may arise from two sources: ambiguity regarding volunteers' role in the organization and the fact that volunteers have less powerful incentives than paid staff to remain with the organization, thus contributing to a sense of unpredictability which affects the

organization's relationship with the volunteers and its ability to exercise authority over them (Pearce, 1993).

The uncertainty of being able to achieve that balance and to control the actions of volunteers is what differentiates nonprofit organizations from other organizations, both private and governmental. Weber sees the process of exercising control as a continuous struggle between technical control over the work process and disciplinary and punitive control over the social relations of production (O'Neill, 1986, p. 55). Bureaucratic authority differs from other types of control systems in that it creates incentives designed to produce desired behaviors (Edwards, 1979, cited in O'Neill, 1986). Although volunteers are not subject to the same economic incentives as paid staff (Pearce, 1993), nonprofit organizations may retain technical control over their volunteers' work processes through such practices as instituting formal check-in procedures or providing checklists of tasks to be performed. One might argue that control is a necessary component of volunteer management, partly to avoid mission creep, partly to ensure compliance with conditions imposed from outside the organization (by funders or government agencies), and partly to shore up the psychological contract relationship between the organization and the volunteer. Most nonprofit organizations are reluctant to impose punitive control over volunteers' actions except in extreme circumstances, where safety or legal concerns arise. Government agencies, by virtue of their legislative mandates, may be able to exercise more control over their volunteers simply because their operations are regulated.

Control is also present in the context of volunteer management. McCurley and Lynch (2011) discuss four levels of control that volunteer managers allow their

volunteers, but their descriptions of those levels imply a certain amount of control exerted by the organization with varying levels of authority granted to the volunteer. The authors define the levels of control in terms of the amount of discretion the volunteer and the volunteer's supervisor each have in determining how the volunteer's job is to be completed, based on the supervisor's degree of confidence in the volunteer and how much discretion is allowed to the volunteer and found an inverse relationship between the two variables (McCurley & Lynch, 2011). The more authority the manager exercises, the less discretion rests in the volunteer. In the lowest level of control, the supervisor (and by extension the organization) gives unfettered discretion to the volunteer and exercises little if any authority. Each level requires a little more authority on the part of the manager. At the highest level of control, the supervisor is exercising high levels of authority and the volunteer has practically no discretion (McCurley & Lynch, 2011).

The common characteristic in Weber's three authority models (charismatic, traditional, and legal-rational) is the recognition by members of the organization of the authority on the part of the leader(s) to make decisions. Even in organization types where the structure is informal or not written but still known and followed by the members, Weber's descriptions indicate some level of certainty in the chain of authority.

The literature review reveals a dual gap in coverage. There is a considerable amount of coverage of volunteer management issues. These include motivations, volunteer engagement, attitudes toward their roles, attitudes toward the organization, and organizational structure. But a discussion on bureaucratic authority and how it influences the volunteer-organization relationship is missing from the volunteer management literature.

A few studies seek to apply Weber's bureaucratic authority model to the public administration (see, e.g, Bartels, 2009), but nothing applies directly to volunteers. Some studies seek to apply psychological contract theory to volunteers, but do not directly address how (or even whether) it can be used to exercise authority over volunteers in a way that is consistent with their motivations and that enhances engagement and increases retention rates.

It is my goal to begin to fill in this dual gap in the research by creating a conceptual framework as a starting point for future research in this area. This framework includes categorizing the tools and practices used by organizations employing volunteers in both service and back-office capacities.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Choice of Methods

As discussed in chapters two and three, the volunteer management literature contains gaps regarding authority's place in the volunteer-organization relationship. Furthermore, scholars looking at theory seem to ignore this relationship. Therefore, this study is a qualitative inquiry into the nature and exercise of authority within the volunteer-organization relationship.

Qualitative research is routinely applied when studying the relationship between organizations and volunteers for several reasons. First, it examines subjects in their natural setting (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Secondly, this type of exploration seeks depth of knowledge over breadth of knowledge (Whittemore, Chase & Mandle, 2001) and specific rather than general information (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Qualitative research requires researchers to engage in periods of fieldwork, examining many variables utilizing few cases (Luton, 2010). It can involve site-specific activities that place the observer in the world under study (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Qualitative research possesses certain key characteristics in its design and purpose.

- It looks for an understanding of the participants' social world through their experiences and perspectives;

- It utilizes small samples purposefully selected using specific criteria;

- Data collection involves close contact with participants and allows the emergence of all salient issues;

- The data are often detail-rich, allowing analysis which is open to emergent ideas; and leads to outputs which focus on the interpretation of social meaning through mapping and "re-presenting" the social world of the participants (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

Qualitative researchers look for an analytical, fact-specific knowledge of a situation, based on the insider's perspective, which may or may not transfer to other situations (Luton, 2010). This approach works well with the Weberian theoretical basis for my research, as Weber believed that the researcher must understand the meaning of social actions within the context of the material conditions in which people live (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

This study involves interviewing volunteers and paid staff of nonprofit organizations to describe their experiences within the organization during various types of activities the organization engages in. The organizations were purposefully chosen using specific criteria. The interviews were intended to elicit not just specific information but also individual stories. Stories are a useful way to gather social science data, because they contain knowledge that is different than methods such as surveys (Ospina & Dodge, 2005). Stories put faces on concepts and provide deeper insight into a question than quantitative data (Patton, 2002). Stories also provide context and support understanding

better than other types of narratives (Patton, 2002). The research also incorporated

documentation from each organization containing rules or procedures that volunteers are

required to follow. Although this information is be unique to each organization and

perhaps to each participant, the goal is to find commonalities among the information that

may prove applicable to other situations.

Frame of Inquiry

There is no single approach to qualitative research. Instead, specific methodology

depends upon an individual's view regarding the social world (ontology), knowledge and

how to acquire it (epistemology), the purpose of the research and the intended audience,

among others (Snape & Spencer, 2003). My ontology, or view of reality, rests on the

belief that there is no one true view of the world. Each individual looks at the world in a

subjective manner, through his or her experiences. That world view is a cumulative

totality of the individual's experiences, changing with each new occurrence (see Luton,

2010; Lundberg & Young, Table 4-3, 2005). My approach to knowledge, what it is, and

how it is acquired (epistemology), is based on the belief that knowledge also depends

upon a person's experiences; there can be no objective view. Knowledge is acquired in

part through experiences, and if experiences are subjective, then so is the knowledge

acquired therefrom. This viewpoint is hermeneutical, in that it is experienced-based

(Lawn, 2006).

Rigor and Reliability

There is a vast array of literature defining and explaining rigor or trustworthiness

in qualitative research and comparing it to that of quantitative research. Rigor is as

crucial a part of qualitative research as for quantitative research. Rigorous research

establishes confidence in the findings of a study (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Lincoln and Guba were the first to address the issue in the context of qualitative research and create some standards for determining the validity of qualitative research (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In their review of strategies used in qualitative studies, Barusch, Gringeri, and George (2011) point out that rigorous qualitative research in the social work field is not only "good" research (p. 18) but must be relevant and have an impact on social justice.

Numerous scholars have examined the different terms and concepts that make up scholarly rigor in qualitative research (Barusch, et al., 2011; Golafshani, 2003; Angen, 2000; Morrow, 2005). Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001) emphasize the difference between criteria and techniques in the pursuit for threats to validity. They define criteria as standards or ideals to be pursued, and list integrity, authenticity, credibility, and criticality as primary criteria (Whittemore, et al., 2001). Techniques are methods used to reduce threats to validity and sort them into four types: design consideration, data generating, analytic, and presentation (Whittemore, et al., 2001).

Scholars who tackle the subject of validity have come up with varying terms to describe the qualitative equivalent of the elements of validity in quantitative research (Patton, 2005). An examination of the literature reveals use of the following terms: credibility: confidence in the 'truth' of the findings; transferability: the findings can be applied in other contexts; dependability: the findings are consistent and could be repeated; and confirmability: a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002; Morrow, 2005). Another list includes credibility (results convincingly reflect the experience of the participants); authenticity (results

include an awareness of differences in voices of the participants); criticality (the process demonstrates critical appraisal); and integrity (there is evidence of repetitive checks of validity and humble presentation of findings) (Whittemore, et al., 2001). While these terms may be couched in different ways, they all seek the same outcomes. Table 5 below summarizes the qualitative elements of validity and how to minimize threats to validity (Patton, 2002).

Table 3: Validity Components for Qualitative Research (Source: Patton, 2002).

Qualitative component	Description	Minimizing threats
Transferability	Applicable in other contexts	Use of diverse range of organizations
Credibility	Confidence in truth of findings	Use of interview guide to make sure each interview is conducted consistently Triangulation through use of both narrative and content analysis
Dependability	Findings are consistent and repeatable	Existence of commonalities within responses
Confirmability	Extent of neutrality and not researcher bias	Awareness and identification of instances of researcher bias

I checked for face validity by submitting the interview guide to an expert in the field for his input before the pilot study and then again after the pilot, once changes were made to the instrument. Content validity was checked by conducting a pilot study with individuals from three different organizations.

Qualitative research is an appropriate method for studying the relationship between organizations and their volunteers based on the understandings of the participants, while looking for emergent concepts in the way of authority. The goal of this study is to uncover deeper meanings and underlying information on my specific questions

through in-depth interviews of both volunteers and paid staff my goal, rather than attempting to cover a wide range of topics. The use of interviews often allows the researcher to create a close association with the participants and better understand their personal experiences (Snape & Spencer, 2003). By examining the perceptions of the interviewees, I hope to build a conceptual framework of the authority relationship that volunteers have with their organizations.

Choice of Organizations

Qualitative sampling requires two key components: appropriateness and adequacy (Fossey, et al., 2002). Appropriate participants are those who can best inform the study. Adequate sampling includes sufficient information sources (such as people, places, events, types of data) so as to address the research question and to develop a full description of the phenomenon being studied (Fossey, et al., 2002). Typical qualitive research focuses on small samples which have been intentionally selected according to the needs of the study (Coyne, 1997). Researchers seek out participants they believe will maximize the potential for obtaining data (Coyne, 1997).

One type of widely-used qualitative sampling is purposeful or purposive sampling (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green Wisom, Duan, Hoagwood, 2015). There is no consistent definition of this type of sampling; it has been described as seeking out information-rich cases for in-depth study (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbon, 2015) and nonprobability sampling (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). It aims to select appropriate information sources to explore the meaning of that which is being studied (Fossey, et al, 2002). Gentles, et al. (2015) caution against attempting to create a standard definition and instead suggest describing the selection process in the context of the particular study.

Teddlie & Yu (2007) identify four broad categories of purposeful sampling based on the objectives of the researcher:

- Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability

- Sampling special or unique cases (useful for examining an individual case)

- Sequential sampling (to generate theory or where the sample evolves on its own during data collection)

- Sampling using multi-purpose techniques (where multiple qualitative techniques are used in the same study

I utilized purposeful sampling in choosing my subject organizations, seeking to match up the characteristics of the organizations with my research questions (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). I started out with a pre-selected pool of potential organizations. Criteria included service-oriented organizations; the utilization of volunteers in both "back-office" support and service-related activities; and the presence of paid staff who worked alongside the volunteers, doing the same or similar jobs. My goal was to find organizations that needed to manage their volunteers both within the physical walls of the organization, where managers might have more control over individuals, and in public activities, where control might be more of an issue. Time and scheduling considerations meant that the location of the organizations be limited to the northeast Ohio area. A dozen organizations were contacted. Four agreed to participate.

All four participating organizations are similar in that they offer services to populations in need and provide some or all of their services outside of the physical confines of the organization, thus providing the necessary homogeneity identified by DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree (2006) and allowing a basis for comparison (Teddlie & Yu,

2007). Organization A is a local chapter of an international organization whose mission is to provide care for those in need. Their mission areas include disaster response, health and safety services, and blood donations. This chapter serves a five county area in Ohio, employs four paid staff members and counts approximately 50 volunteers. Organization B is a local chapter of an international organization that works to provide housing for those in need. It is located in a large rust-belt urban area and serves the surrounding metropolitan area. This organization employs 52 paid staff and 100-150 repeat volunteers. Organization C is another local chapter of the same housing organization located at the edge of a metropolitan area. It serves a county that has suburban, ex-urban, and rural areas. This chapter employs 36 paid staff and 2,000 volunteers. Organization D is a small service-oriented organization. Its mission is bicycle education and access. It is located in the heart of a city located in the rust belt. It employs five paid staff and approximately 20-25 volunteers who come in regularly. All of the organizations had situations in which the volunteers and paid staff members worked alongside each other, doing similar tasks.

Choice of Individual Participants

In each participating organization, the executive director or volunteer manager asked among the volunteers and staff members for potential participants and forwarded a list of those who agreed to take part in the study. This method of sampling can be described as opportunistic, a subtype of purposeful sampling, which allows the researcher to take advantage of sampling opportunities as they appear (Suri, 2011). In this case, the actions of the executive directors in asking individuals to participate.

All totaled, I conducted interviews with 26 participants: 12 paid staff and 14 volunteers. Four of the paid staff members were managers or volunteer coordinators, one was an Executive Director, and the remaining staff members worked closely with volunteers, doing the same or similar tasks.

Interviews

My study was conducted using semi-structured, open-ended interviews with paid staff and volunteers in four organizations. Interviews allow the researcher to obtain a first-person understanding of the object of the study (Patton, 2002), as well as shared understandings across a group of subjects (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Semi-structured interviews facilitate the pursuit of understanding of both information and meaning through the use of predetermined questions, improvisational probes, and responsive follow-up questions (Luton, 2010). Interviews create personal encounters between the researcher and the interviewee, in which open and direct questions are used to produce detailed narratives and stories (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Narratives and narrative analysis are an integral part of my research. Narratives help explore specific phenomena, such as leadership and organizational changes, and how individuals react to them (Ospina & Dodge, 2005).

Authority within the context of an organization is the right to act or perform a role that affects all or part of the organization (Aghion & Tirole, 1997) and often results from the patterns of interactions between superiors and subordinates (Kahn & Kram, 1994). The use of semi-structured interviews allows the interviewees to expand on their responses and elicits details of those interactions. The stories from my interviews will be

used to explore the concept of authority and how it affects volunteers' relationships with their organizations.

The interviews included questions aimed at obtaining specific information plus open-ended questions intended to encourage conversations and elicit stories. Open-ended, informal questions were designed to encourage stories describing the interviewees' experiences. Each interview consisted of a series of standardized questions to insure coverage of the same areas of inquiry across all organizations. Follow-up questions were asked where necessary. In addition, specific questions were designed to elicit information about the organization (mission, short history, number of volunteers, number of paid staff) and descriptions of the organizational structure (including the decision-making process).

Before each interview, I explained the purpose of the study, assured them of the confidentiality of their responses, and obtained signed informed consent forms. Two of the interviews took place over the phone due to distance and scheduling issues. The rest of the interviews were conducted in person. Each interview followed an interview guide (attached as an Appendix to this document), to ensure some consistency in subject matter coverage. I took notes during the course of each interview and transcribed those notes prior to beginning coding and data analysis.

Coding

Coding was a two-step process. Each research question was assigned a highlight color. I read through each transcript and highlighted the responses according to which question the response applied to. Specific questions were designed to apply to specific research questions. For example, questions covering the structure of the organization, the

decision-making process, and interactions between staff and volunteers were intended to elicit responses that would help in creating a picture of what the authority relationship looks like (question 1). Questions about job assignments, first-day experiences, formal rules, training requirements, and incentive programs were designed to look for what techniques or tool volunteer managers used as a means to exercise authority (research question 2). A few questions went to volunteer management issues, such as how a staff handles a situation where a volunteer refuses to do an assigned task or engages in questionable conduct that might tarnish the organization's reputation. Research question 3, which deals with the volunteer management aspect of the authority relationship, did not have specific questions assigned. Rather, I was looking for how the responses overall portrayed the management and authority interaction. Generally, answers and responses to specific interview questions did not fall neatly into a specific category and responses often led to comments or stories that applied to more than one research question. I then sorted the responses by question and created a separate list for each question. This was done to facilitate looking for patterns or commonalities.

The second step involved additional coding for mention of tools used by organizations as a means of exercising authority (research question 2). Using clean copies, I read through the transcripts for mention of specific tools or techniques that could be or was used in exercising authority. Each tool was assigned its own color. These responses and the list of tools they generated are discussed in chapter 4.

Documentation

In addition to interviews, my data include copies of employee-volunteer handbooks from each participating organization. Documents provide supplementary

research data and can verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources (Bowen, 2009). They have several advantages as sources of data: efficient to obtain, availability, cost-effective, unaffected by the research process itself, stable, exact, and they can provide a broad range of coverage over time, topic, and setting (Bowen, 2009). Documentation such as volunteer handbooks or guidelines takes on a legal role in cases where the relationship breaks down. The use of these documents was to provide insight into how organizations prepare to exercise authority. Differences between that preparation and reality as exemplified by the responses of interviewees may provide insight into the volunteer-organization authority relationship.

Analysis Methodology

My goal in the analysis stage was to capture and interpret the common sense, substantive meanings in the participant's conversation (Ritchie, 2003), using grounded analysis, defining analytical categories and identifying whatever relationships might exist between them (Ritchie, 2003). Both my sampling method and the use of an interview guide were chosen to allow comparison of responses across individual interviews. To confirm my conclusions, I compared the responses of all interviewees regarding a single issue, such as the way disputes were handled. I used document analysis as a means of triangulating my data, comparing the contents of the handbooks with the responses in my interviews, in order to determine the extent to which the documents used in regards to exercising authority. Document analysis is often used with other research methods to provide different ways to study the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009).

The coded responses in step one formed the basis of my concept model, which is explained in chapter five. The responses from step two were used to identify six tools.

Findings in regard to research question 3 were gleaned from a combination of all responses and the findings of both research questions 1 and 2.

The coding and analysis procedures were slightly different with the documentation than with the transcripts. I listed the topics covered in each organization's documents and compared them to the interview transcripts in order to ascertain the extent to which written document was a part of the relationship.

Hermeneutics

This research approach was fundamentally guided by an appreciation that individuals seek to continuously expand their understanding of their own situations and are therefore hermeneutically inclined. Hermeneutics is a way of interpreting information and events. The core is the hermeneutical circle: the world as a whole is understood through examination of its parts, and the value of those parts is understood by looking at the whole world (Gadamer, 1975). Hermeneutics tradition is found in the interpretation of religious symbols, but its application has evolved into interpreting human experiences (Shklar, 2004). Heidegger theorized that we are constantly interpreting the world even before we try to understand it, thus expanding the circle to include interpreting the human existence through individual projects and activities (Lawn, 2006). Up to this point, hermeneutics was based mostly on reading and interpreting texts. Gadamer took this philosophy farther and stated that hermeneutics is not just interpreting texts but a way of describing the nature of human understanding (Gadamer, 1975).

According to Gadamer (1975), all understanding ultimately flows from experience. For Gadamer, truth is both experiential and historical. Just as the part modifies the whole, the experience of truth found in new or unexpected experiences

creates tension with what is already understood (Lawn, 2006). Gadamer noted that history includes inherited prejudices and that the individual's prejudices have a greater influence on his reality than his judgments (Lawn, 2006).

Gadamer's writings also include the concept of authority. Genuine authority, according to Gadamer, existed not through social power but "the ability to open up questions and make certain matters seem crucial, important, and worthy of consideration (since they take us to the heart of what we are, within our cultural horizons)" (Lawn, 2006, p. 38).

Weber's models of authority rely on both historical and experiential truth (Weber, 1947). Traditional authority is legitimized by its continued existence. Charismatic authority relies on the followers' interpretations of and experiences with their leader. Legal-rational authority is based on pre-existing rule, but ultimately the person carrying out those rules is interpreting them to some extent (Weber, 1947).

Hermeneutics is appropriate because my study is based on the belief that the organization-volunteer relationship is socially constructed and that the reality of this relationship lies within the context of each party's beliefs (Snape & Spencer, 2003). That reality is constructed through our experiences, where interpretation is continually negotiated through conversation and dialogue (Angen, 2000). In this research, dialogue and conversation take place through semi-structured interviews. I rely upon the recollections of the individual participants to describe the reality of the relationship. This means that each person is putting his/her own interpretation into the narration. These versions combine to create an understanding of the way authority plays out in the various activities they describe.

Hermeneutical researchers use qualitative methods to establish context and meaning in peoples' actions (Patton, 2002, p. 115). The reality of the relationship exists within the context of the individual's beliefs and experiences. By asking individuals to describe their experiences in their own words, I hope to discover the type and meaning of authority present during the course of an organization's activities. Since I am an outsider looking in, getting insider knowledge is imperative in order to arrive at an understanding of authoritative aspect of the volunteer-organization relationship for each organization (Luton, 2010).

Hermeneutics is particularly appropriate for this study because Gadamer examines how authority impacts understanding. He points out that personal authority is based on recognition and knowledge that the person giving the order is superior in judgment to the subordinate and therefore that judgment should take priority (Gadamer, 1975). Recognition of authority implies that statements by a person in authority can be seen as true (Gadamer, 1975); thus, authority is one way of discovering truth. As part of my analysis, I examined the ways in which the participants' viewpoints and understandings reflected a recognition of authority.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

The goal of my study was to determine whether traditional authority relationship models can be applied to volunteers. I began with the assumption that the relationship would be different from that of paid employees and that existing authority models would not adequately describe the process of exercising authority. Interviews with staff members and volunteers, as well as an examination of the documentation provided by the organizations, produced a number of interesting findings. This chapter describes those findings. It includes general descriptions of the respondents, their role in their organization, and summations of relevant responses. It is organized by research question.

At its core, authority is the legitimate relation of domination and subjection, and can be described as legitimate power (Smith, 2002). Weber's legal-rational model implies that the authority relationship exists within the structure of the organization and not with the individual occupying that role (Weber, 1947). Power is primarily tied to the personality of the individual (Smith, 2002). So it is both reasonable and necessary to extend the research on volunteers to the authority relationship between them and their organizations in order to identify ways to customize volunteer management efforts.

To explore that relationship, my interviews included questions designed to draw out statements that would describe the authority relationship (Research Question 1), suggest processes or tools used in the exercise of authority (Research Question 2), and speak to how the relationship impacts volunteer management (Research Question 3). Table 4 below illustrates the relationship between the interview questions and my three research questions.

Table 4. Relationship between interview questions and research questions

Research Question 1: Authority relationship	Research Question 2: Tools	Research Question 3: Impact on volunteer management	General information
7. Mission or purpose of organization	12. Volunteers' jobs	21. Refusal of volunteer to perform assigned task	1. Position in organization
8. Describe the structure of the organization.	13. Describe your first day	22. Instances of volunteer misconduct that conflicted with rules or made the organization look bad?	2. Length of time in organization
9.Describe the decision making process	14. Necessary training or skills for volunteers	28. Best experience or what you like most	3. Other positions in organization
10. How to become a volunteer	20. Formal rules applicable only to volunteers? How do volunteers react to these rules?	29. Worst experience (or biggest challenge)	4. Number of staff members?
15. Urgent situations: yes or no; how often 16. Decision-making chain in those situations	25. How new volunteers get assignments or go for questions		5. Number of volunteers: registered/active
17. Spontaneous volunteers 18. Procedures to accommodate these volunteers	26. How volunteer gets subsequent assignments		6. Reason for choosing this organization?

Research Question 1: Authority relationship	Research Question 2: Tools	Research Question 3: Impact on volunteer management	General information
19. Disputes between staff and volunteers regarding work product; method of resolution, formal procedures?	27. Reward or incentive system for volunteers		
23. Describe relationship/interaction between paid staff members and volunteers			
24. Conflicts between paid staff and volunteers; resolution procedure			

Respondents

As noted in Chapter IV, I interviewed 26 individuals, 14 volunteers and 12 staff members, from four organizations. The staff members included one executive director, three volunteer coordinators, and eight staff members assigned to specific program areas. The fourth volunteer coordinator position was held by a volunteer. The length of service for volunteers stretched from brand new to over 50 years, and fell roughly into the following categories: 1 year or less, 2 – 15 years, and over 15 years. Table 5 below contains an overview of the respondents in this study

Table 5. Respondents

Staff members: position held		Volunteers: Length of service	
Executive director	1	One year or less	5
Volunteer manager	3	2 – 15 years	7
Specific service area	8	Over 15 years	2

The two volunteers with the most seniority in their current organization have volunteered with their organizations for 24 and 50 years respectively.

Research Question 1

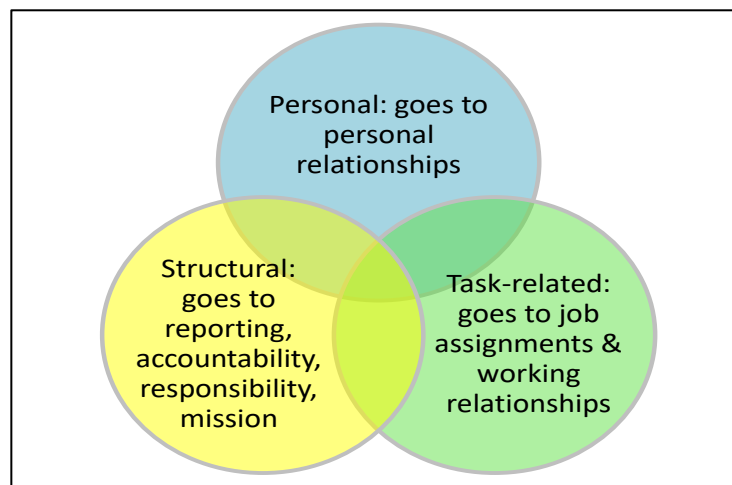*What are the characteristics of the organization-volunteer authority relationship?*

The first step was to understand the nature of the authority relationship between volunteers and organizations. Therefore, my first research question was directed at the substance of that relationship. My aim was to understand the nature of the authority relationship between an organization and its volunteers and how it can be described. To that end, I looked for markers or characteristics that would indicate the boundaries of the relationship.

Within the context of an organization, authority is the right to act or perform a role that affects all or part of the organization (Aghion & Tirole, 1997). Authority often results from the patterns of interactions between superiors and subordinates (Kahn & Kram, 1994). The features that most indicate the recognition of authority include specific job responsibilities, the reliance on the organization for compensation, and the subjugation to discipline and reward as part of the job's responsibilities (Weber, 1947).

Questions that elicited responses describing the authority relationship included the following: describe the structure of the organization; describe the decision-making process; jobs staff members perform; what jobs do volunteers perform; what jobs do staff members perform; dispute resolution procedures; existence of a reward or incentive system. These questions relate to the features described by Weber. The responses to these questions resulted in a description of an authority relationship containing three dimensions: hierarchical, personal, and job-related.

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What emerged from an examination of the interview transcripts was a three-part relationship between an organization and its volunteers. These three components encompass features similar to those identified by Weber (1947), such as job descriptions, obedience to rules, and the opportunity for reward. I labeled them structural, personal, and task-related. Figure 1 illustrates these components and how they relate to each other.

Figure 1. Volunteer authority model

The first component, structural, describes the structure of the organization and individual's place within the organization. Mission is a key part of this component, as it is the defining characteristic of a nonprofit organization and relates to the "specific purpose" characteristic in Weber's legal-rational model (1947). The structural component also includes formal job responsibilities as well reporting relationships or hierarchical structure. Hierarchical structure is characterized by the presence of different degrees of authority at various levels and in different positions of the organization (Tosi, 2009).The structure of an organization is part of all three of Weber's models (1947).

Respondents' descriptions of their organization's structure as a whole varied from organization to organization and ranged from generalizations to specific representations.

The local chapters of national organizations were often described as being "very organized" by both volunteers and staff. Members of those organizations seemed to understand not only the structure of their chapter but how they as individuals and as a group fit into the larger organization. This was evidenced by a detailed description of the positions in the various levels (local, regional, national) of the organization. Two volunteer managers, one paid staff and one a volunteer, provided a verbal level by level description, starting at the national level. A few volunteers at the service level focused on their immediate chain of command when describing the organization's structure. Other volunteers were less detailed: one respondent described the reporting hierarchy as very structured. Another referred to job assignments when describing the organization, saying that there was no formal structure because jobs are assigned based on skills. Staff members generally used hierarchical language to describe the organization. Critical comments came from volunteers. One organization was described as disorganized. One staff member of a local chapter pointed out that the purpose of the organizational hierarchy was not about power. There was some reference to parity on the part of staff and volunteers in the responses. A staff member in the independent nonprofit called the hierarchy "as egalitarian as possible." Another staff member in a different organization stated that staff and volunteers are equal. A volunteer coordinator for yet another organization considers the volunteers to be part of the staff.

Structure was often described by both paid staff and volunteers simply as the staff reporting to the Executive Director. Other responses helped fill out the picture of the authority relationship and included descriptions of who is accountable to whom, lists and descriptions of the tasks performed by volunteers versus paid staff, the interchangeability

of jobs between volunteers and staff, and the presence (or absence) of formal rules and policies.

Volunteers also had their own organizational framework, with varying degrees of formality. In one organization, this framework was set up according to type of service, with volunteers working with the staff assigned to that area. In another organization, volunteers were differentiated by length of service. Loyal volunteers, as they were called, are those who have been with the organization for several years and have specific, relevant skills. In contrast to new volunteers, whose schedule and tasks were controlled by the volunteer coordinator, these loyal volunteers could simply come in on their preferred days and times. Another organization had a level called "key volunteers," individuals who had to meet certain requirements. In return, these key volunteers were allowed to take ownership of a service or project of their choice and could supervise newer volunteers within that project. This supervisory feature existed in the other organizations, but on a less formal level, in the form of experienced volunteers being paired with new volunteers.

Evidence of mission's importance came from responses to the question, "why did you choose this organization?" While respondents often listed more than one reason, a majority of the volunteers and many of the paid staff listed the organization's mission as one factor that attracted them. In many instances, the organization's mission reflected the individual's personal interests, for example, bicycling. In other cases, the response was simply "I liked the mission."

The fact that the organizations' framework ranged from loosely organized to a formally structured arrangement and that interviewees often described the dispute

resolution by noting who reports to whom, suggest that the structural component of the authority relationship manifests itself as both formal and informal hierarchical patterns of reporting, accountability, and responsibility. This component reflects some of the components of Weber's legal-rational authority model: a clearly defined hierarchy, a consistent set of rules, and individuals whose obedience is to the rules and not to any individual person (Weber, 1947). This model of authority requires a belief by the individual members in the legitimacy of the rules and the power of the leaders to act under those rules (Weber, 1947).

The second component, personal, relates to personal connections. It reflects the manner in which individuals, both volunteers and staff members, relate to each other within the context of authority. While an individual's relationships within the organization are described in all Weber's models, this component most closely reflects his charismatic model, in which authority is based on the follower's personal relationship to the leader (1947).

One way to identify authority is through the patterns of interactions between superiors and subordinates (Benoit-Barnes & Cooren, 2009). Interviewees were asked to describe the relationship between the staff and volunteers. Almost all interviewees (19 of 26) described staff and volunteer relations in a positive manner. All but two volunteers were positive in their assessments of the relationship. One less-than-positive volunteer noted that some managers worked better with the volunteers than others, but would not elaborate. The remaining volunteer stated that she was too new to make a judgment. Positive observations included good, great, friendly, and pretty close. Some respondents noted that the relationship was like that of a family. There was also mention of humor

and respect. One volunteer acknowledged the complexity of the relationship by describing it as a "sit-com, but it works." Of the remaining two, one felt that she was too new to make a judgment and the other couched her response in terms of how some managers worked better than others with the volunteers.

Among the staff members, seven responded in positive terms, one even calling the relationship "awesome." The others used less effusive language, describing it as cohesive or equal, or noting that the two groups interact on a regular basis. One slightly negative comment from a staff member mentioned some grumbling among volunteers, but that where volunteers are assigned to areas they choose, there is more cooperation from them. Other comments that address this component include how well the two groups work together, how they consider each other friends, and that it is a relaxed environment in which to work. Conflicts between the two groups were described as rare or unusual across all the organizations.

These observations indicate that the personal aspect of authority revolves around relationships at the individual level between staff and volunteers. These relationships comprise the social relationships that Weber describes: the behavior of groups of individuals within an organization that requires a mutual understanding regarding the purpose or meaning of the actions (Weber, 1947). The volunteers in this study showed an understanding of that purpose.

The third component is task-related. Job responsibilities are part of the structural component. In this component I am treating tasks separately. For the purpose of this research, the term job refers to an individual's overall position within the organization.

Tasks are the individual assignments or parts of assignments that make up duties attached to the position.

In this study, the task-related component of the authority relationship includes job assignments, agreeing or refusing to do an assigned job, discussions about what jobs volunteers are allowed to do, and the jobs staff members and volunteers work on together. This reflects characteristics of Weber's models in two ways. In Weber's legal-rational model, job descriptions and assignments are intertwined within the structural makeup of the organization and require specific expertise (Weber, 1947). But in his traditional model, job assignments are made based on expediency, or as they are needed, with little regard to expertise. Nonprofit organizations often need their volunteers to do whatever needs to be done on a given day. Another connection is the concept of free will. Weber's model relates to paid employees and describes a contractual component which allows for some free will. Free will (to choose what you do and when you do it) is the hallmark of volunteering.

When asked about a volunteer's refusal to do an assigned task, there was almost universal agreement among staff members that volunteers should be allowed to do the jobs that they want to do. If a volunteer said no to a job, interviewees from all the organizations stated that staff members would accommodate the volunteer's preferences and try to find something that the volunteer would like to do. If there was nothing available, all organizations would send the volunteer home, asking them to come back on another day. When asked the same question, volunteers had a variety of responses. Several noted that it was okay to refuse and that an organization cannot make a volunteer do something he or she does not want to do. In one organization, the volunteer

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coordinator was not a paid staff member; she stated that she would take such an issue to the Executive Director. One volunteer stated that he would not turn down any assignment. Several volunteers, representing more than one organization, noted that their organization tried to accommodate a volunteer's preferences and limitations.

The manner in which work assignments are handed out depended on the organization, except for new volunteers. In all four organizations, staff members assigned new volunteers their tasks. Once a volunteer became a little more experienced, he was expected to go to a staff member (either the person in charge of that service department or the volunteer coordinator) for his next assignment. In all the organizations, the more experienced volunteers were allowed at least some discretion in choosing their assignments. The exception was in service areas where specific training was required. A volunteer was assigned only to that area for which he/she was trained. Skills were often taken into account in job assignments. Where skill level was not an issue, some level of self-assignment occurred. One organization used a large white board in a centrally-located area that listed all the jobs for that day. In another organization, volunteers' assignments often changed in the field as needs changed. Volunteers were told to check that board for their next assignment. Volunteers, especially experienced volunteers, were also given discretion in how they did their jobs. The volunteer coordinator of one organization said that she trusted her volunteers to make decisions out in the field because they were on site and understood the context.

When asked about differences in the jobs or tasks performed by volunteers and staff, interviewees (both volunteers and staff members) stated that volunteers did every kind of job available. One volunteer commented that once the work got started, you

couldn't tell the difference between the volunteers and the staff. In three out of the four

organizations, volunteers performed both service-delivery and administrative ("back

office") duties. In the remaining organization, staff members were responsible for all

administrative work. As the interviews progressed, some differences between staff and

volunteers came to light. For example, none of the organizations allowed volunteers to

work on Human Resources-related tasks or to work the cash register (in those

organizations with a retail component). In all the organizations, staff members worked

side by side with the volunteers on service-delivery projects.

　　　Closer examination of the interview transcripts revealed that the components

described above share some attributes with each other. Figure 2 describes the three

components and identifies the areas of overlap.

Figure 2. Volunteer authority model -- areas of overlap
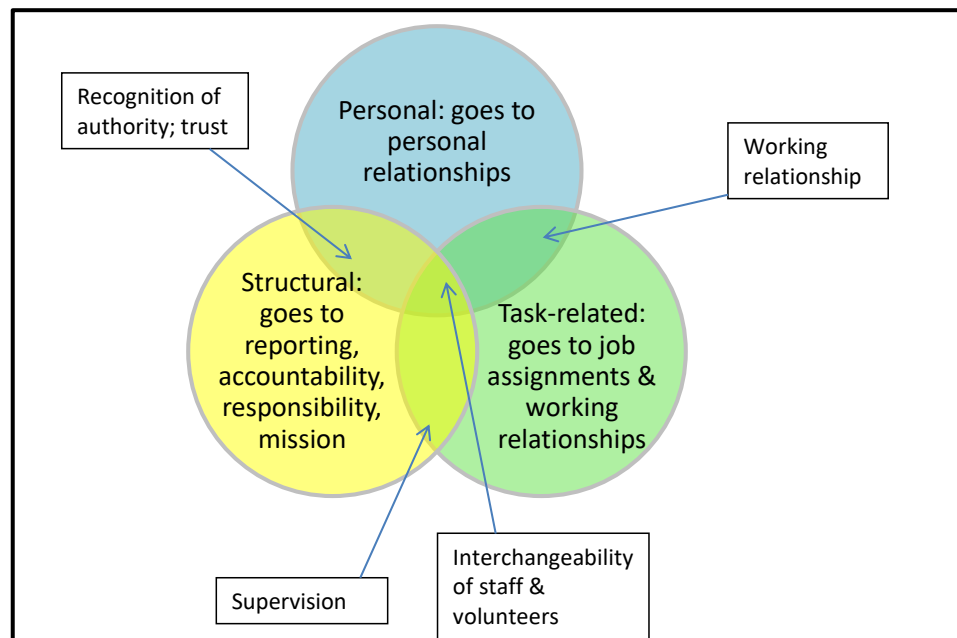
Statements characterizing how the structural and personal components overlap include the following: volunteers know the staff and know who is in charge; the staff trusts volunteers to make the right decisions because they are out there (i.e., in the field).

Statements illustrating the personal and task-related components overlap focus on the working relationship. These include: there is a good working atmosphere here; staff and volunteers interact on a regular basis; everyone wants to help and to be here; and experienced volunteers help the new people.

Supervision was a common element in the overlap of the structural and task-related components. Statements covering this topic include: staff members check the volunteers' work; new volunteers are supervised by the volunteer coordinator; and the tendency of leadership and staff to micromanage.

There was one feature common to all three dimensions: that of the interchangeability of volunteers and staff. Interchangeability is present when the responsibility for performing specific tasks are transferred between staff and volunteers (Handy, et al., 2008). Interchangeability tends to occur in organizations that have a small paid staff and rely heavily on volunteers for its operations (Handy, et al., 2008). The organizations participating in my study followed that pattern. Two organizations employed very small paid professionals (four and five, respectively) and tended to see the volunteers and staff as one working unit. One volunteer coordinator used the term "one workforce" and the volunteer coordinator for the other organization said that he considered volunteers as "staff." A volunteer from one of those organizations stated that once the work begins, you cannot tell the volunteers from the staff. The two organizations that employed larger paid staffs tended to assign volunteers to a general area (retail or

service or office). The volunteers would continue working in those areas unless they requested a change. This did not appear to occur very often.

One surprising and unanticipated finding came out of the interviews. One question asked the participants if their organization encountered spontaneous volunteers during their mission-related activities. Respondents from the small service-oriented non-profit said that they did not encounter this type of volunteer, but the three others, which were larger and had a bigger public presence, mentioned some encounters. They all had procedures in place. The volunteer manager of one organization specifically stated that all volunteers, no matter how they approached the organization, must go through specific training before they are allowed to work alongside individuals who are officially registered with the organization.

Research Question 2:

What tools or practices do organizations utilize to exercise authority over its volunteers?

While volunteer management literature does not cover the exercise of authority specifically, much is written about best practices (Hager & Brudney, 2004). In a study for the Urban Institute, Hager & Brudney (2004) identified the following best practices: supervision and communication; liability insurance; collection of information on volunteer numbers and hours; screening procedures; written policies and procedures; recognition activities; annual measurement of impact (or productivity); training opportunities for volunteers; and training for paid staff who work with volunteers. Weber (1947) lists, among others, a consistent system of rules, a defined hierarchy of positions, and specific areas of expertise.

Part two of the data analysis involved examining the interview transcripts for references of tools or practices used in exercising authority. Specific items fell into six general categories. I labeled the categories as: application/tracking systems, decision-making, rewards/incentives, rules, training, and task/jobs. These mimic some of the best practices found in the volunteer management literature.

Application/tracking systems. The application /tracking systems category covers the methods by which the volunteer becomes an official member of the organization plus the system used by the organization to keep track of volunteers, including hours worked, schedules, and jobs. Although it might seem counterintuitive to include the application process as part of a study on authority, I included it because the application process is often a potential volunteer's first glimpse into the organization.

All four organizations required a formal application and all were available online. In three organizations, the process was simple and completed in a short period of time. The other organization's application process was more complicated. In that organization, all applications are submitted and processed online at the national level. It is a seven-step process that one staff member called lengthy and indicated that it was the biggest reason people start but do not finish the process. But staff is available in the office to assist an applicant in navigating the process and there is also assistance over the phone. The volunteer is then assigned to a chapter by the national volunteer services office. The application process was less complicated in the other organizations and could often be completed offline.

Three of the four organizations maintained a system for keeping track of volunteer information such as hours served and schedules. One organization utilized its

tracking system to implement its rewards/incentive program.

Decision-making. This category focuses on the way in which decisions that impact the individual's volunteer experience were made. It includes dispute resolution and how volunteer misconduct is addressed. Interview questions were designed to gauge how well volunteers understood how decisions were made, even if they did not take part in the process. In separate questions, interviewees were asked about decision-making generally (with regard to the operations of the organization) as well as specific questions dealing with disputes between staff and volunteers and handling instances of misconduct of volunteers. In their responses, volunteers and staff members seemed to treat all decisions as part of one process. The most common observation was that the resolution of a problem or dispute depended on the situation. Volunteers often had no knowledge of any specific process. One volunteer thought that staff would follow the handbook. Others simply said any dispute would be referred to the Executive Director. One volunteer simply responded: "confusing."

Volunteer misconduct, and how it was managed, did not seem to play a big role in any of the organizations. Misconduct was defined as any behavior that put the organization in a bad light. This question was often answered with an example of a volunteer doing poor quality work. The response in those situations typically involved a staff member or experienced volunteer instructing the volunteer. Many volunteers were unaware of any serious misconduct issues but thought that there were rules or processes in place to handle misconduct situations. Most volunteers assumed the staff was responsible for managing such issues. One instance cited was handled by the volunteer

coordinator. Cases of volunteer misconduct rarely resulted in volunteers being let go, although the possibility was mentioned.

Rewards/incentives. Rewards/incentives are any program that recognizes the efforts put forth by the volunteers. Two of the four organizations had a reward system in place that included appreciation dinners, service pins, and recognition of anniversaries. One organization rewarded its volunteers with credits that could be used in the retail store. The remaining organization's reward program consisted of thank you notes and recognition of all volunteers at the end of each completed project. The volunteers all spoke in positive terms regarding these programs. One volunteer also noted that he volunteered for what he gets out of the experience not for stuff.

Rules. Rules include any kind of formal guidelines or policies that set forth expectations with regards to behavior and job responsibilities. These guidelines can be written or informal; they can be set forth in some way that is accessible to the volunteer, such as hard copy, online, or a posted notice on the premises. All four organizations had some kind of rules in place. In one organization, they were included in the online application process, requiring the applicant to "accept" the policies acknowledging that he/she had read them. Three of the four organizations provided hard-copy versions. The rules for the remaining organization were covered in the new volunteer orientation and summarized on notices posted on the door leading to the main work area. The volunteer coordinator of this organization, which was the smallest, was in the process of documenting these rules at the time of the interview. Volunteers in all organizations were aware of the rules and understood the core tenets, e.g., safety, respect.

Tasks/jobs. This category focuses on what tasks volunteers are assigned, how

tasks are assigned, and who assigns them. This area is one in which staff members' responses revealed some resistance to their authority. Every organization reported experience with pushback from volunteers when assigning a task. In one organization, a volunteer noted that the staff member in charge of the service area in which the volunteer works is considered "the boss" and has the responsibility of resolving the issue. When asked how these situations were handled, staff members all said they would try to accommodate the volunteers' preferences. Two volunteer coordinators noted that they had more control over their paid employees than volunteers.

Volunteers understood and articulated the different jobs that staff and volunteers performed. They also acknowledged that staff made an effort to place volunteers in the jobs volunteers wanted. But they too noted that you cannot make a volunteer do something they do not want to do.

When asked what jobs volunteers performed in the organization, volunteers in all four organizations said some version of "everything." Despite this general answer, there were some restrictions in what volunteers were allowed to do. In the organizations that operated a retail shop to help support their operations, volunteers were not allowed to collect payments. Volunteers were not allowed to help in Human Resources areas.

In terms of specifics, volunteers with the least skills are more likely to be assigned to specific tasks, whereas those with skills or who are more experienced have some choice in their assignments. In the more highly structured organizations, with separate and distinct work areas such as the office or service delivery, volunteers are assigned to one specific service area.

Training. Training includes all types of instruction available to the volunteer. It can be informal, one-on-one instruction or in a more formal class-like setting. This category includes not only training that might be required by the organization, but also optional training opportunities. The formality of training ranged from highly structured with required components to informal learn-by-doing to one-time instruction and/or written manuals. Everyone seemed to accept the method in place in their organization. The volunteers in the organization with the less structured training often commented on how staff members and more experienced volunteers were always available to answer questions or offer assistance.

Generally speaking, all four organizations utilized some version of the six categories. As should be expected, staff members knew of their organization's use of these tools and could explain them. Not all volunteers were aware of them, however. Volunteers often were unaware of the decision-making process, one volunteer was unaware of the reward program for her organization, and some volunteers had no knowledge of how volunteer misconduct or disputes involving staff and volunteers were resolved. Much of these inconsistencies in knowledge can be attributed to the intermittent nature of volunteering. Even the most ardent volunteers are not on site as consistently as paid staff. Events may occur in their absences that, once resolved, are not discussed any further.

How do these tools or practices fit into the authority relationship? Figure 3 below illustrates the areas of the relationship that these tools may be relevant to.

Two categories apply to all three components. Rules set forth the structure of the organization, define job responsibilities, and often set parameters on interactions between

individual members of the organization. Tasks/jobs influence the entire volunteer-organization relationship, perhaps causing resentments if the jobs of volunteers and staff are interchangeable. Decision-making impacts the personal and structural dimensions. Decisions are a core part of authority (Aghion & Tirole, 1997). It is the process of making a choice the results of which have consequences within the organization (Nutt, 2005, in Denhardt, Denhardy, & Arstigueta, 2009). Thus, decision-making impacts individuals in both their official and personal capacities. The application/tracking systems bring individuals into the organization and define their place within it. Training programs impact volunteers' job performances.

Figure 3. Use of tools within the volunteer authority model
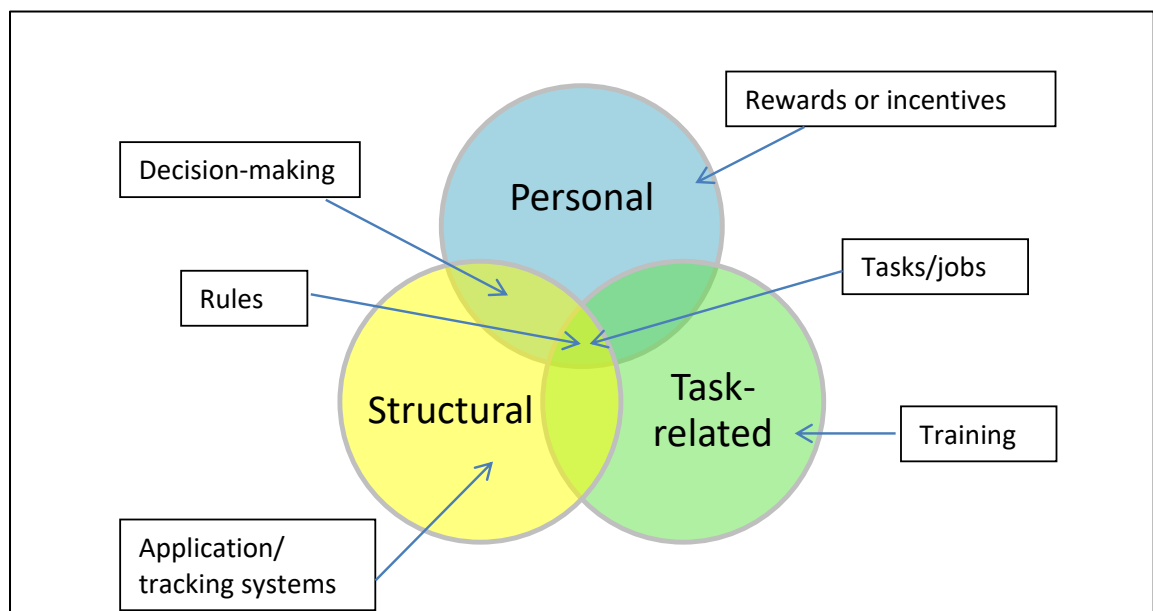
Research Question 3:

What do differences in the authority relationship between paid staff and volunteers mean for volunteer management?

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My third research question assumes some degree of difference between volunteers and paid staff and focuses on the way those differences impact volunteer management. There is general agreement that the major difference between volunteers and staff is that staff members are rewarded for their work through monetary compensation and volunteers are rewarded in other ways (Pearce, 1993, Liao-Troth, 2001). This difference has the greatest impact on their motivations. Paid staff members are generally motivated by their pay; volunteers' motivations are more likely to be based on personal factors (Pearce, 1993). They also differ in their understanding of the organization's identity, which are the characteristics that members feel are central to and define the organization (Kreutzer & Jäger, 2011). These differences can contribute to the inherent tension between volunteers and staff members, even when everyone claims that the organization is like a family.

To see if volunteers and staff members differed in their views of their organizations, I asked each person to summarize the organization's mission and what attracted them to the organization enough to volunteer or work there. All but one staff member knew the mission and described it in similar terms. All of the volunteers had some idea of the mission, with a majority answering without hesitation. Mission was also a frequent reason for why the individual originally joined the organization. This was true among both the volunteers and the staff, with more than half of each group cited the mission as at least one part of why the joined. Other reasons varied but were not unexpected. Volunteers cited being retired, wanting to give back, likes helping people as the main reason for volunteering. Staff members' reasons included employment needs and wanting to teach or do something they had an interest in. The differences in these

responses do not rise up to the level of disagreement that Kreutzer & Jäger (2011) were concerned with. In fact, they all appear to be one happy family at first glance. So how does this inherent tension manifest itself in these organizations and within the context of the authority relationship?

There are two areas in which the need for authority may arise: a volunteer's refusal to do a task assigned to him and volunteer misconduct that threatens the reputation of the organization.

Both staff members and volunteers pointed out that the organization cannot make a volunteer do a job that he/she does not want to do. One staff member said that paid staff will do what they are assigned, but volunteers will often push back or leave. Several volunteers also commented that an organization cannot force volunteers to do a job if they refuse.

It should be noted that refusal by a volunteer to do an assigned task seems to be the exception rather than the norm. This conduct occurred infrequently in all four organizations. When it occurred, staff members seemed to take it in stride. There was no indication from any of them that it was a major problem in how the organization operated. Some staff members noted that in extreme cases they would send a volunteer home for the day if nothing desirable was available, but they indicated that taking such drastic action was a last resort. These extreme cases represent a failure to understand that volunteers can be a sustainable resource requiring planning and consideration of the job preferences of volunteers (Brudney & Meijs, 2009).

In addition, written rules and policies, already considered a best practice in volunteer management, are key to being able to exercise authority, especially in cases of

volunteer misconduct. However, having that documentation in place and making sure the volunteers read it can be a challenge. One organization included its rules and policy statements as part of the application process and included a statement at the end of the application that by signing the application the applicant has read and accepted those policies. This puts the applicant on notice regarding the content of those policies and expedites enforcement. This can be an effective practice, as one volunteer coordinator noted that when nothing is in writing, it is hard to enforce the rules.

With volunteers having the ability to refuse an assigned task volunteer managers have some difficulty exercising authority when the need arises. As noted earlier, authority must be acknowledged by both parties for it to be effective. What I found through my conversations with both staff members and volunteers is that there is an authority relationship and that relationship has several components. While organizations may have many tools in place to exercise authority, each tool may only address one (or even part of one) component. And the differences in exercising authority over paid staff and volunteers appear primarily in the area of task assignment, an area in which the main difference between volunteers and staff stands out: the right of the volunteer to say no.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Summary of findings

This study described the authority relationship between an organization and its volunteers and created a conceptual model of volunteer authority that identifies three components: structural, personal, and task-related. These components did not stand alone, but overlapped in many areas. My research found that the participating organizations utilized a variety of specific tools within that authority relationship, but not every tool addressed issues raised within every component. This research also found that while the core difference between paid staff and volunteers, that is, the freedom to refuse a task assignment, may impede the exercise of authority, in practice that refusal rarely arises and when it does, volunteer managers by their own admission recognize that volunteers cannot be forced into doing something they do not want to do and find alternative work for the volunteer.

There are other important takeaways from this study, from both a theoretical and practical viewpoint. From a theoretical perspective, each component of the volunteer authority model connects with Weber's models of bureaucratic authority and also with

psychological contract theory. From a practical standpoint, this research can provide another way of looking at volunteer behavior and managing it accordingly. This chapter discusses both these points of view.

Intersection of model and theory

This research was based on the assumption that the authority relationship fit within Weber's legal-rational model and that psychological contract theory influenced how the parties acted within the relationship. However, the research shows that there is no one all-encompassing model that describes the volunteer-organization authority relationship. Instead, I found that the components in my volunteer authority model is composed of individual characteristics of each of Weber's models and that each of the three dimensions of psychological contract theory corresponds to a component of the model.

Weber's three models each define an individual's authority in terms of the position in the organization that person holds. According to Weber, authority is the probability that an order will be obeyed by an individual or individuals (Weber, 1947). It exists when the individual accepts the judgment or command as the standard for their behavior (Anderson, 1966). Charismatic authority exists when the group recognizes the authority of an individual based on specific characteristics which set him apart from the rest (Weber, 1947). There is an emotional basis to the relationship between the leader and his followers. Traditional authority is based on the sanctity of the order as it has existed. Commands are given out and accepted as they always have been (Weber, 1947). In the legal-rational model, the organization is created for a specific purpose and one's authority depends entirely on one's position in the organization, subject to specific rules applicable

across the organization. Often, specific knowledge or expertise is required (Weber, 1947).

Psychological contract theory refers to the perceptions of mutual obligations to each other of both parties to an employment relationship (Herriot, et al., 1997). It has been applied to volunteers by a number of researchers (Liao-Troth, 2001, 2005; Nichols, 2013). The psychological contract manifests itself in the volunteer authority relationship in the way the volunteer sees his/her role in the organization and the behaviors he/she expects based on that role (Vantilborgh, et al., 2012) Early researchers of the theory identified two dimensions of psychological contract: transactional and relational (Rousseau, 1989 in Vantilborgh, et al, 2012). The transactional psychological contract focuses on a monetary exchange: wages for work for paid employees and reimbursement of expenses for volunteers. In a general sense, it describes what the individual expects to get out of the relationship. Since volunteers are not paid for their work and may not always incur reimbursable expenses, perhaps this aspect of the psychological contract should be considered in terms of the non-monetary results from volunteering, described by respondents as a sense of satisfaction or good feelings. Relational psychological contract focuses on a social or emotional exchange, a sense of being or wanting to be connected to others. Later research added a third, value-based dimension. It is defined as including credible commitments to pursue a valued cause or principle implicitly exchanged at the intersection of the organization-individual relationship (Vantilborgh, et al, 2012). It also includes a personal element: a desire on the part of the individual to be a part of the group. Vantilborgh and his colleagues (2012) see this third layer as particularly applicable to both employees and volunteers working in nonprofit

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organizations, with their emphasis on mission and values. Table 6 below summarizes the

connections between the authority relationship model and Weber and the psychological

contract theory. .

Table 6. Volunteer authority relationship connection to theories

Theory	Structural component	Task-related component	Personal component
Weber's model	Legal-rational	Traditional	Charismatic
Shared characteristic	Mission as purpose; hierarchy; expertise	Need-based assignments; no training needed	Relationship to clients; personal connection
Psychological Contract	Value-based	Transactional	Relational
Shared characteristic	Mission as value	Satisfaction/ fulfillment from helping others; reward system	Relationship to clients; personal connection

The structural component of the volunteer authority relationship model shares

several characteristics with Weber's legal-rational model. The first is the organization's

purpose, characterized here as its mission. The mission is often the reason volunteers, as

well as some staff members, join the organization. The other shared characteristics are

hierarchy, whether formal or informal, and knowledge or expertise that the organization

may deem necessary in order to fulfill its mission. The shared psychological contract

dimension is the value-based dimension, with its emphasis on agreement with or belief in

the organization's mission.

The task-related component is tied to Weber's traditional model through his

statement that, in the traditional organization, tasks are often first assigned on an as-

needed basis, and that assignment becomes tradition through repetition (Weber, 1947). In

Weber's traditional model, task assignment is not made on the basis of training or

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expertise. This is often the case with nonprofit organizations that have few paid staff members and rely heavily on volunteers for the organization's operations. Volunteer managers commonly assign tasks to volunteers as they are needed. The shared characteristic of this component with psychological contract theory is the transactional dimension of the psychological contract, which focuses on an "exchange" within the relationship. In the case of nonprofits, the exchange may occur in the form of what the volunteer expects to get by working at the organization, perhaps feelings of satisfaction or fulfillment from helping someone in need, or through a reward or incentive program.

Personal relationship is the psychological contract characteristic that the personal component shares with Weber's charismatic model. Weber's model focuses on the attraction by followers to the personal qualities of the leader. In the nonprofit arena, this focus could be expanded to include other volunteers or to a volunteer's attachment or commitment to the organization's clients, one of four dimensions of volunteering (See Cnaan, et al., 1996). This attachment ties the personal component of my model with the relational psychological contract, based on a commitment to the clients and a desire to belong.

Tools and Practices

This is where the model begins to have practical implications. My interviews with volunteers and staff members revealed the presence of various tools or practices that organizations utilize in their dealings with volunteers. They all reflect volunteer management practices in some way, but also serve to enable the exercise of authority over the volunteers, although perhaps unconsciously. The specific items described by participants fell into six categories, as described in Chapter 4: application/tracking

systems, tasks/jobs, rewards/incentives, rules, training, and decision-making. The use of each category coincided with one or more components of the volunteer authority model. Most of the specific items within each category could be found in documentation such as the volunteer handbook. The presence of such written rules or procedures gives the impression of formality and hierarchy to daily operations, appearing to bring the organization's structure within the legal-rational model. Examination of the interview transcripts tells a different story. Participants referenced handbooks and other policy or procedure documents when asked about decision-making processes, refusal of volunteers to do an assigned task, or job assignments in general. Often the response was accompanied by a "disclaimer," to the effect that the speaker had not witnessed such behavior but if it happened, the speaker was sure the staff member would follow the process set out in the handbook. This use of documentation within the context of everyday management appears to be by reputation rather than actual application.

Hermeneutics

As stated in Chapter IV, this research was conducted with the belief that individuals continually seek to understand their current experiences within the context of their previous experiences. This hermeneutical viewpoint plays a significant role in my study of the authority relationship.

There is a hermeneutical aspect to authority, control, and the relationship between volunteer and organization. Gadamer described authority not as an investment of social power but the ability to take a question and get at what is really important about it (Lawn, 2006). Like Weber, Gadamer believed authority is vested in the individual, whose source is acknowledgement and knowledge (Lawn, 2006). The volunteer relationship is a social

construct that operates within that structure, which consists of a chain of formal authority relationships starting at the top of the organization and reaching down to the bottom, tying together the different levels of the organization (Tosi, 2009). Each individual brings into the relationship his or her own values, motivations, and expectations. Although the volunteers' responses to the question "why this organization" could be described in general terms, all of them were personal to the speaker: emotional recovery after being a caregiver for a loved one ("I found a new life after being a caregiver"), the faith-based mission and activities of the organization, adjusting to retirement ("after I retired, I wanted to give back"). The other half of the relationship, the organization as personified by paid staff members, also had personal reasons for being part of the organization. One staff member stated that her organization "was the purest form of helping.". Unlike volunteers, who may suffer from role and task uncertainty, paid staff members generally have an official understanding regarding their status in the organizational structure and the jobs they are required to do.

Staff members and volunteers bring these attitudes to their interactions and a "conversation" takes place as each party interprets the other's actions through his or her own experiences. Each side is separately interpreting the nature of the staff member's authority, which cannot translate into control unless the subordinate acknowledges the validity of that authority (Kahn & Kram, 1994). Without that acknowledgement, instructions do not get followed and services do not get delivered.

For the hermeneutical circle to continue, reinterpretation based on present actions must continue. This can be done by changing management approaches; for example, by revising job assignments when volunteers express displeasure at their assigned tasks or

by revising and printing out formal policies and procedures to replace verbal communications or notices posted on the wall. Once these changes have been in effect, more interpretation will take place, as staff members observe the impact that the new policies have on volunteer actions. The challenge for the staff, and the nature of hermeneutics generally, is that one never arrives that the "perfect" scenario. There will always be change, observation, interpretation, and more change, resulting in an ever-evolving relationship.

Psychological contract theory and hermeneutics overlap when the volunteers' expectations bump up against the actual experience. The psychological contract is created in the mind of the volunteer, based on interactions with representatives of the organization (Herriott, et al., 1997) and the volunteer's interpretation of those interactions. Discrepancies in what each representative tells the volunteer regarding expectations (or obligations) that fall within the psychological contract create ambiguities. Volunteers may resolve those ambiguities by interpretation based on previous volunteer experiences. They may even see these ambiguities as an absence of authority, especially where they perceive a breach in the psychological contract, and may change their behavior as a result (Starnes, 2007).

The tools and practices utilized within the authority relationship are also subject to understanding through previous experience.

Impact on Volunteer Management

The third research question focuses on the practical aspect of authority. It acknowledges the differences and tensions between paid staff and volunteers and seeks to discover how those differences impact volunteer management. We have already seen how

my volunteer authority model connects with Weber's three types of bureaucratic authority and the three dimensions of psychological contract theory, as well as how the various tools and practices fit into the model.
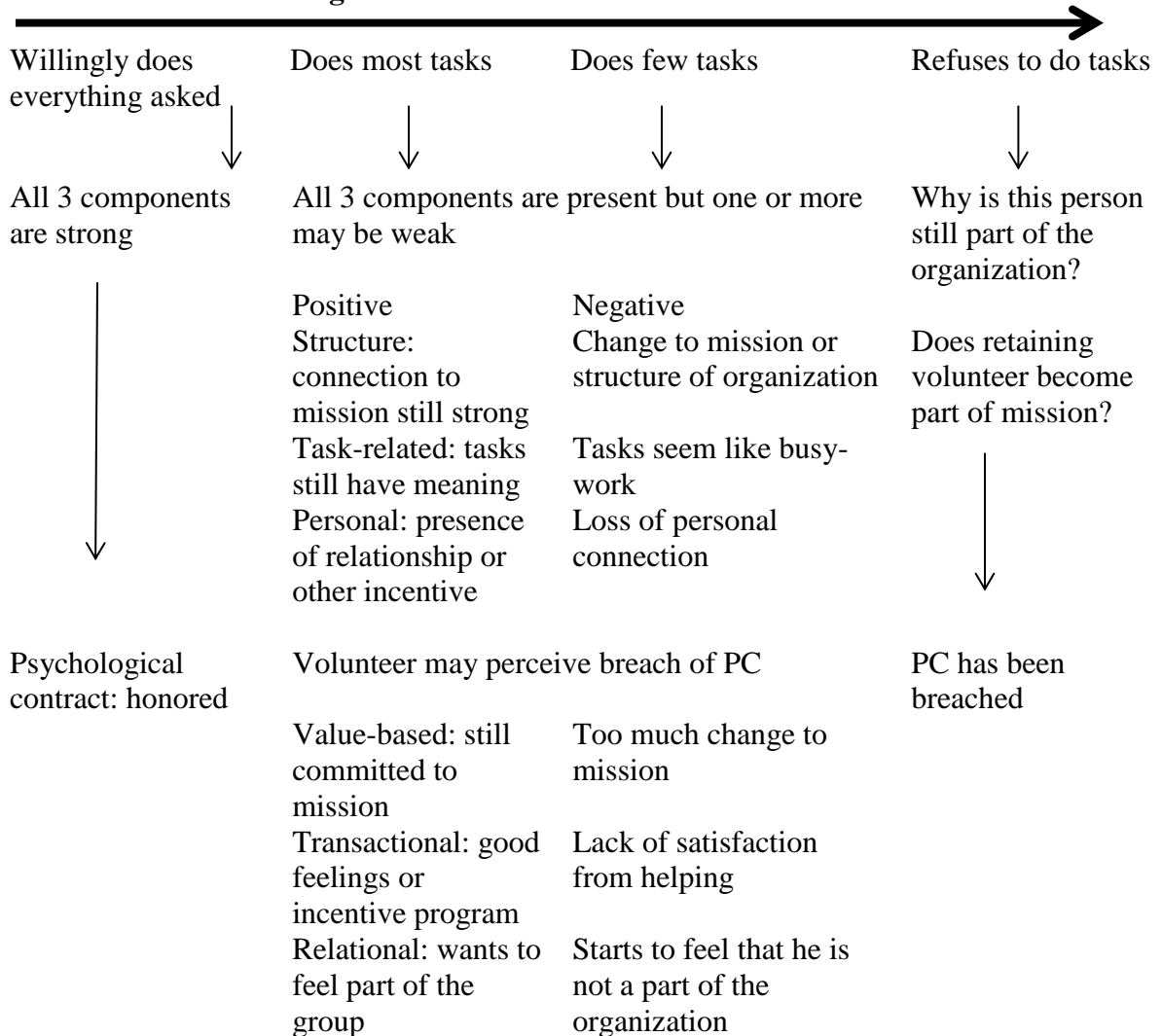
The next step is to understand how these principles and concepts come together in the context of volunteering. To do that, it is helpful to view volunteer behavior as a continuum that ranges from someone willingly doing anything that is asked to someone who refuses to do anything. Figure 4 below illustrates that continuum, including possible scenarios a volunteer manager might face. The diagram shows both positive and negative aspects (weaknesses and strengths) of each component of the volunteer authority model and the way psychological contract theory interacts within the behavior continuum.

In the scenario in which a volunteer does "whatever it takes" (in the words of one volunteer respondent) all three components are strong: there is an understanding of the mission and operational set-up of the organization, an understanding of the purpose/reason for various tasks, and a commitment to the individuals in the organization and the clientele. The volunteer may sense that the psychological contract is being honored. The middle section of the continuum represents various levels of obedience and refusal when assigned a task. In those situations, willingness to follow through may depend on the strength of each component, measured by the presence or absence of some particular element. For example, there might be a change in the mission that the volunteer does not agree with, the volunteer is assigned too many "busy-work" type tasks, or there could be a loss of personal connections, to coworkers or those served by the organization.

In another scenario, the volunteer may perceive a breach of one or more aspects of the psychological contract. Perhaps the focus of the mission is changing in a way that

the volunteer disagrees with or the volunteer does not understand how the task relates to his view of the mission. Volunteering at that organization may no longer result in positive feelings or simply may not be fun anymore. Obedience to job assignments may result from a desire to remain part of the group. In the extreme case of a volunteer refusing most or all tasks, a nonprofit manager may well ask, why this person is still part of the organization. In this scenario the volunteer may view the psychological contract as being breached. The risk in this case may be that retaining the volunteer may itself turn into a mission and deflect resources from the main cause.

Figure 4. Volunteer behavior continuum

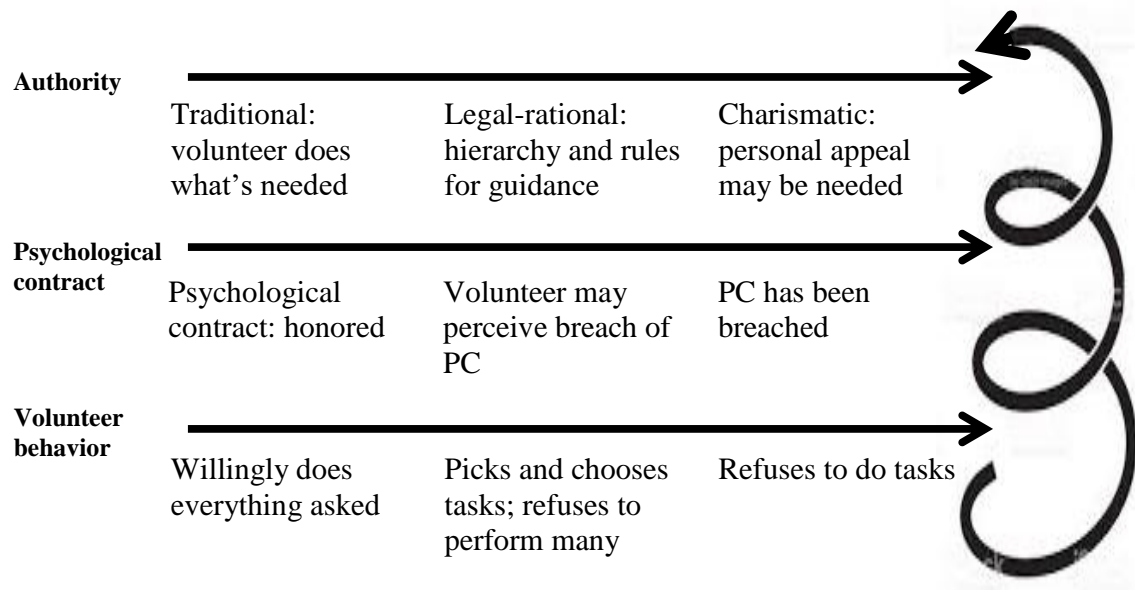| Willingly does everything asked	Does most tasks	Does few tasks	Refuses to do tasks
All 3 components are strong	All 3 components are present but one or more may be weak		Why is this person still part of the organization?
	Positive	Negative	Does retaining volunteer become part of mission?
	Structure: connection to mission still strong	Change to mission or structure of organization	
	Task-related: tasks still have meaning	Tasks seem like busy-work	
	Personal: presence of relationship or other incentive	Loss of personal connection	
Psychological contract: honored	Volunteer may perceive breach of PC		PC has been breached
	Value-based: still committed to mission	Too much change to mission	
	Transactional: good feelings or incentive program	Lack of satisfaction from helping	
	Relational: wants to feel part of the group	Starts to feel that he is not a part of the organization	

The scenarios in which a volunteer agrees to do some of the assigned tasks but refuses to do others can be said to create a "pinch" point (Sherwood & Glidewell, 1972, cited in Osland, Kolb, Rubin & Turner, 2007). In this context, the pinch takes place at the point at which the recognitions of authority begins to wane and the individual feels the psychological contract has been breached, evidenced by a change in behavior, such as refusal to perform assigned tasks, reduction in the amount of volunteer time, or a reduction in work quality.

Figure 5 illustrates another view of the volunteer-organization relationship by looking at it from the hermeneutical perspective. It is based on volunteer behavior ranging from doing whatever is asked to refusing to do anything. The psychological contract comes into play as a result of volunteers entering the volunteer relationship with certain expectations. These expectations may be influenced by past volunteer or other lived experiences and may influence their understanding of the current circumstance. This understanding in turn influences their behavior or willingness to perform tasks, represented by the volunteer behavior continuum, as in Figure 4. If the volunteer perceives a breach in the psychological contract (see Starnes, 2007) and changes his/her behavior, a "pinch point" may occur. This is the point where the exercise of authority impacts how the organization manages the situation at the authority level. How authority is exercised depends on both parties' interpretation of the situation. Where a volunteer willingly does whatever is needed, as one participant stated, the authority stems from traditional authority. Where there is some pushback, the volunteer may respond better to formal rules and hierarchy, as in legal-rational authority. Where there is a total breakdown, a personal appeal may be necessary, as in charismatic authority.

Figure 5. Hermeneutical perspective of authority and volunteer behavior

Authority	Traditional: volunteer does what's needed	Legal-rational: hierarchy and rules for guidance	Charismatic: personal appeal may be needed
Psychological contract	Psychological contract: honored	Volunteer may perceive breach of PC	PC has been breached
Volunteer behavior	Willingly does everything asked	Picks and chooses tasks; refuses to perform many	Refuses to do tasks

If the organization manages the situation to the satisfaction of the volunteer, the problem is solved (the pinch point is removed). This process takes place multiple times, often without those involved realizing it. A hermeneutical approach suggests that an individual relies on the accumulated past experiences, which may change his/her perspective with each new interaction. This ever-changing interpretation creates a spiral, with one set of experiences continually influencing the next.

Unanticipated Findings and Future research

Two unexpected findings appeared in the course of this research. The first was the presence of "self-assignment," that is, allowing a volunteer to choose his/her next task after completing the current one without formal direction from a staff member, thus granting the volunteer some level of discretion in his/her job performance. Self-assignment appeared in all four organizations, and was generally informal in nature. In some cases, volunteers finished their tasks and asked other volunteers if they needed

help. In one case, a list of tasks for the day was posted and volunteers could check that list and decide which task to do. The relationship between the granting of discretion in this manner and authority is unclear from this research.

Other topics for additional research include how volunteers recognize authority in the first place, the impact of mission or size of organization on how organizations manage volunteer behavior through the exercise of authority, and how demographics such as age, gender, or education level impact the authority relationship.

Limitations

As with most research there are limitations to what this study intended and accomplished. This specific research was limited to volunteers; authority of an organization over its paid staff is documented in countless organizational behavior books and scholarly articles. Because of the lack of research on authority and volunteers, this inquiry's purpose was to discover the characteristics of the authority relationship of volunteers and organizations and its implications for volunteer management. While there is no intent to generalize these findings, they do provide some insight into how authority impacts volunteers and organizations and can serve as the basis for more in-depth study.

Conclusion

This research was based on the premise that authority is a force in the volunteer-organization relationship and sought to discover what it looks like and how it impacts organizations and their volunteers. The authority relationship, like any other, relies on both parties' participation. Authority cannot exist without its assertion by the individual in charge being accepted by the subordinate party (Kahn & Kram, 1994). Generally, volunteers seemed to accept the organization's authority, illustrated by statements about

doing whatever it takes when asked to a take on an assignment or task. But volunteer managers acknowledged that they had little back-up upon which to rely in those instances where an assignment was refused. Volunteers by the very nature of their role are free to come and go and to also to say no. Except in extreme cases (safety or liability issues), volunteer managers work around those refusals.

Interviews with volunteers and staff members resulted in a concept model for volunteer authority that reflects the role of both the organization and the individual. The model connects to principles of bureaucratic authority and elements of psychological contract theory through the organization's purpose or mission and hierarchical framework; what the volunteer gets out of the volunteer experience; and the personal relationships that develop within the organization. These connections are not immobile, but can be adjusted by volunteer managers depending on the individual situation. Looking at the interview responses using a hermeneutical approach shows that both staff members and volunteers bring their previous lived experiences to the current one, which impacts their understanding of the relationship and their subsequent actions. In the case of a staff member handling a problem with a volunteer, the following process takes place. The volunteer interprets his/her experiences and interactions with the organization based on his or her prior experiences and acts accordingly. The staff member responds based on his or her interpretation of the situation, prior experiences, and other interactions with the volunteer, both past and present. However the situation is resolved, it becomes integrated into both parties' lived experiences, which then become a new layer or level of experiences. This new level then becomes the basis for interpreting future situations.

It is hoped that this model may provide some context for the tenuous nature of the authority relationship, some understanding of the preconceived ideas and expectations that volunteers bring to volunteer experience, and integrate those expectations into their own responses.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Brief introduction/explanation of research, such as:

This study is about how an organization maintains its authority over its volunteers. I am looking for specific information about your organization but I am also interested in your personal experiences.

Make sure consent form is signed

Questions:

1. What position do you hold in the organization? How long?
2. How long have you been with the organization?
3. Have you held any other positions?
4. How many staff members?
5. How many volunteers: registered/active
6. How/why did you choose to volunteer/work for this organization?
7. Can you summarize in your own words your organization's mission or purpose?
8. Describe the structure of the organization.
9. Can you describe the decision making process generally?
10. How does someone become a volunteer or staff member in this organization?
11. What jobs do paid staff members perform?
12. What jobs do volunteers perform?
13. Describe your first day as a volunteer/staff member.
14. What kind of training is required or what skills are needed for volunteers?
15. Are you as a staff member/volunteer confronted with situations that have a sense of urgency (decisions must be made quickly, stakes may be high)? How often?
16. What is the decision-making chain in those situations?
17. Has your organization ever been confronted with "spontaneous" volunteers, that is, people who are not formally associated with your group but show up at an event and want to help?
18. If so, what procedures are in place to accommodate these volunteers?
19. Do disputes arise between staff and the volunteers regarding the work product of the volunteers? If so, how are they resolved? Is there a formal procedure in place?
20. Are there formal rules that apply only to volunteers?   How do volunteers react to these rules?
21. What happens when a paid staff member tells a volunteer to do something he/she doesn't like or is outside his/her regular duties?
22. Can you remember an instance in which a volunteer's actions conflicted with the rules or norms of the organization or made the organization look bad?
23. Can you describe the relationship between paid staff members and volunteers? How do the two groups interact with each other?
24. Can you describe a time when there was a conflict between paid staff and volunteers? How was it resolved?
25. How do new volunteers know where to go for their tasks/assignments or if they have questions?
26. When a volunteer completes a task, how does he/she know what to do next?
27. Is there a reward or incentive system in place for the volunteers? [If yes: Please describe it.]
28. Can you relate your best experience (or what you like most)?
29. Your worst (or your biggest challenge)?