Walden University

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Amy J. Clement

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Abstract

Volunteer Coordinators' Practices to Motivate and Retain Volunteers in Animal Welfare

Organizations

by

Amy J. Clement

MS, Capella University, 2007

BS, Eastern Michigan University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Human Services

Walden University

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Abstract

Animal welfare organizations depend on volunteers to continue to take care of animals and rehome them. Animal overpopulation is estimated at 70 million animals and without enough volunteers to help socialize them, they can be unadoptable and subject to euthanasia. The problem addressed through this study was volunteer turnover in animal welfare organizations and resulting negative impacts on animal welfare. Researchers have examined person-organization fit related to employee retention in for-profit environments but not the experience of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. The purpose of this general qualitative study was to examine practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Eight participants were interviewed via semi-structured interviews and data were interpreted through the lens of person-organization fit theory. Each question was analyzed with holistic coding as well as in vivo coding. Results of the analysis indicated that when volunteer coordinators aligned volunteer interests with tasks they performed, personalized experiences through task alignment, communication, and recognized volunteers' efforts, volunteers were more motivated and more likely to remain in their role long-term. If values were not aligned and training was not adequately provided, volunteers were less motivated to remain with the organization. Findings may provide information to volunteer coordinators regarding the importance of designing and employing a structured training program that determines the values fit and outlines expectations of the volunteer, to avoid dissatisfaction and burnout among volunteers and increase retention.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my parents, friends, and family who

have supported me along the way. It was because of their encouragement and support that

I was able to forge ahead through many obstacles to complete my doctorate.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my dissertation committee, Dr. Shari Jorissen and Dr. Kelly Chermack, for their assistance, support, and encouragement during this process. I have learned a great deal during this process and through the support of my committee members, feel confident in my research, results, and submission.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Researchers have examined person-organization (PO) fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017), but few researchers have used PO fit when studying volunteer retention in nonprofit organizations (NPOs; Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). This information could be used to better inform training for volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations, as well as other organizations that use volunteers, to understand how to motivate and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations.

In this chapter, I will provide information about the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, research question, theoretical framework used, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study.

Background

NPOs operating in the United States are responsible for delivering essential public services, promoting community development, advocating for human rights, and influencing public policy development (Bright, 2016; Cheng, 2019; Corbett et al., 2017). These types of organizations rely on government grants and contracts at the federal, state, and local level as well as volunteer assistance. Nonprofits encounter unique challenges

since their financial structure makes them susceptible to environmental and operational issues and threats that are not faced by for-profit organizations (Kirchner et al., 2018).

Volunteer Turnover

Volunteer turnover is a problem for nonprofits as more than a third of those who volunteer 1 year fail to volunteer the following year (Hamerman & Schneider, 2018). Recruiting and training new volunteers continue to be a challenge for organizations as these efforts are time consuming and cost more than retaining volunteers (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Sefora & Mihaela, 2016). Volunteer shortages can hinder the continuity and success of organizations, contribute to decreased organizational morale, and reduce public service offerings (Erasmus and Morey, 2016; Harp et al., 2017; McBey et al., 2017).

Some of the issues affecting volunteer length of service include recruitment, motivation, management, training, retention, skills/motivation, burnout, and turnover. Recruitment and retention are closely linked as inadequate recruitment methods can lead to a poor volunteer fit and performance and effective recruitment practices improve retention and can decrease costly continuous recruitment (Sefora & Mihaela, 2016; Stefanick et al., 2020). Nonprofits often rely on both internal and traditional marketing strategies to recruit volunteers to help achieve their missions (Stankiewicz et al., 2017). To help ensure a match between volunteers and nonprofits, coordinators and managers should screen volunteer applications similarly to those of paid employees and should consider whether the volunteer applicant has the matching qualifications, enthusiasm, and commitment level (Kolar et al., 2016).

Volunteer Recruitment & Motivation

The recruitment of volunteers continues to be challenging due to personal factors that affect volunteers that can result in episodic volunteerism and decreased long-term commitments (McNamee & Peterson, 2016; Stukas et al., 2016). These changes can influence motivation, retention, and turnover in volunteers.

There are many traits and characteristics that determine an individual's motivation to volunteer. Motivational traits include values, contributions to the community, need for personal growth (Kolar et al., 2016), agreeableness, empathy and warmth and prosocial behaviors (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Evers, 2016), all which are linked to altruistic intentions that are intentional and voluntary acts that benefit someone else and do not include an expectation of a reward (Bendaravičienė et al., 2019; Feigin et al., 2018). In order to keep volunteers working at optimal levels, their motivations and personal values (Oo et al., 2018) need to be considered within the organizational environment (Vareilles et al., 2017; Willems & Dury, 2017). Training can also be important in maintaining motivation because the volunteers feel valued. If the volunteer receives extensive training, they may be more motivated to stay in the organization since there has been investment made by the organization to prepare the volunteer to be successful (Zievinger & Swint, 2018).

People are intrinsically motivated when engaged in activities they find interesting and challenging (McFarland, n.d.). While they have similar motivational traits to other organization volunteers, a unique difference of animal shelter volunteers includes having a passion, love, and concern for animals, and a desire help make a difference in their lives

(Guenther, 2017; Herzog, 2017; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). When animal shelter volunteers are engaged in their work, they stay more motivated to fulfill the needs and mission of the organization (McFarland, n.d.).

Volunteer Management

Even though volunteers have unique positions, their needs are similar enough to those that work in paid positions to warrant many of the typical human resource management (HRM) practices including legal compliance, job analysis and design, recruitment, selection, onboarding, training, and performance management (Akinlade & Shalack, 2017; Kolar et al., 2016; Studer, 2016). HRM practices such as developing clear guidelines and standard operating procedures can clarify the expectations for appropriate behaviors among volunteers (Kolar et al., 2016). A for-profit context cannot always be applied to volunteers working in a nonprofit context as specific nuances exist between the two (Bartram et al., 2017; Kappelides et al., 2020; Vantilborgh & Van Puyvelde, 2018). For example, the nonprofit volunteer environment is often more unstructured than organizations that function for profit, making it difficult to control and/or discipline volunteers since they are there by choice and not because they are earning a paycheck and benefits (Cady et al., 2018; Ward & Greene, 2018).

Retention

Retention is often neglected by volunteer managers as they may be focused on getting the required work done and not on the factors that may cause a volunteer to continue to volunteer or leave the organization (Merrilees et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2016). Because these coordinators may not know about or understand the reasons volunteers

enlist, remain, or leave NPOs (Merrilees et al., 2020), they may not know how to support their volunteers.

Alignment of Tasks with Motivation

The matching or alignment of tasks to skills has been found to be related to job satisfaction, performance, and intent to remain in an organization (Cady et al., 2018; Hamerman & Schneider, 2018; Stukas et al., 2016). One of the main reasons one third of volunteers leave organizations each year is due to a failure to match their skills with the tasks that they are asked to perform (Hamerman & Schneider, 2018). In some cases, a volunteer is committed to the organization's purpose or cause but may not be motivated to contribute to a specific task (Cady et al., 2018).

Turnover

According to Piercy & Kramer, 2017, the volunteer turnover rate is over 35% annually in the United States versus less than 4% for paid employees. This discrepancy in higher volunteer turnover rates versus employee turnover rates can be explained through the fact that it is much easier to leave a volunteer position than a regular position since the volunteer position is unpaid (Aboramadan et al., 2019). Lack of volunteer commitment, engagement, and satisfaction increases costs and difficulty attracting new volunteers (Harmon & Xu, 2018; Aboramadan et al., 2019). Perceived expectations of volunteers were also a factor in turnover, especially if they differed from their actual experience. For example, volunteers seek rewarding work in a friendly environment that fits their availability while administrators expect volunteers to comply with professional, legal, and regulatory requirements (Sheptak & Menaker, 2016).

Even though volunteers are unpaid, they are still affected by the fit with their values/ethics (Benevene et al., 2018; Scherer et al., 2016), communication styles of management (Bauer & Lim, 2019), environmental support (McBey et al., 2017), mismatch of the position (Jacobs, 2017), role ambiguity (Harp et al., 2017), and emotional demands (Ertas, 2019) of an organization. Similar to a paid employee position, if a volunteer believed that their values aligned with the values of the organization, there was a greater chance that they remained long-term (Leuty, et al., 2019; Nesbit, et al., 2016; Su et al., 2015; Swider, et al., 2015). According to Scherer et al. (2016), volunteer roles can be stressful and demanding, just as they are for paid positions. Volunteers who lacked support from their organization's leadership experienced burnout through mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion, depersonalization, role ambiguity, and lack of personal accomplishment. However, unlike for-profit counterparts, many nonprofits did not have a designated volunteer manager, lacked formal volunteer management policies, or overburdened their staff with volunteer management responsibilities (Ertas, 2019; Scherer et al., 2016). This lack of structure led to frustration and resulted in volunteers quitting or seeking other volunteer opportunities (Scherer et al., 2016).

Problem Statement

Not-for-profit, community, and human services organizations depend on volunteers to provide services (Bauer & Lim, 2019; Benevene et al., 2018; Curran et al., 2016; Hyde et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2016). Hamerman and Schneider (2018) indicated that approximately 40% of one million nonprofits in the United States rely on volunteers to fulfill their missions. Volunteers are a valuable resource, but they can be difficult to

retain (Malinen & Harju, 2017; Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016). Volunteer turnover is a problem for nonprofits as more than a third of those who volunteer 1 year fail to volunteer the following year (Hamerman & Schneider, 2018). Recruiting and training new volunteers continue to be a challenge for organizations as these efforts are time consuming and cost more than retaining volunteers (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Sefora & Mihaela, 2016). Volunteer shortages can hinder the continuity and success of organizations, contribute to decreased organizational morale, and reduce public service offerings (Erasmus et al. 2016; Harp et al., 2017; McBey et al., 2017). A few of the main issues surrounding volunteer retention are the failure to align volunteers' skills with tasks (McBey et al., 2017), failure to provide role clarity (Jacobs, 2017), and poor organizational person fit (Bauer & Lim, 2019; Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016).

Animal welfare organizations depend on their volunteers in order to continue their mission of taking care of animals and rehoming them. "Shelter Animals Count" (n.d.) indicated that animal overpopulation is leading animal shelters to bear the burden of an estimated 70 million animals. Approximately nine million dogs enter animal shelters annually in the U. S. (Protopopova et al., 2018) and, without enough volunteers to help socialize and calm dogs, they can be unadoptable and subject to euthanasia due to lack of space or interested adopters (Mahoney & Meyer, 2018; Protopopova et al., 2018; Reese & Ye, 2017). Therefore, the problem that will be addressed through this study is volunteer turnover in animal welfare organizations (Harp et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016) and the negative impacts on animal welfare, including animals being turned away

or selected for euthanasia (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Spehar & Wolf, 2018).

Researchers have examined PO fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017), but few researchers have used PO fit when studying volunteer retention in NPOs (Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). Although the aforementioned research regarding volunteer retention demonstrates important findings, I have found no researchers who have specifically focused on the experience of the volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations in relation to how they address volunteer motivation and retention. I have also not found scholars who have assessed how organizational PO fit may be used by animal rescue organization volunteer coordinators using a qualitative research approach. Given such, further research is warranted that could address the social problem of volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations and the resulting negative impacts on animal welfare. This study is needed because its results have the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations. Since volunteering is essentially an unpaid position, PO fit concepts can offer volunteer coordinators insight into understanding how to attract, motivate, and retain volunteers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this general, qualitative study is to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators

in animal welfare organizations. Researchers have examined PO fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017), but few researchers have used PO fit when studying volunteer retention in NPOs (Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). This information could be used to better inform training of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations, as well as other organizations that use volunteers, to understand how to motivate and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations.

Research Question

RQ 1: What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations?

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theory that was used for the theoretical framework of the study was PO fit. PO fit theory originated over a century ago as a psychological theory, called person organization interaction, and has been found primarily in management contexts within for-profit organizations (Beck, 2018; Ekehammar, 1974). The theory is the overall fit between values and characteristics of an individual and an organization (Beck, 2018; Costello et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016).

PO fit theory is multifaceted and consists of complementary and supplementary fit and needs-supply and demands-ability perspectives (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). Supplementary fit includes the perceived similarity between individual

characteristics and organizational characteristics while complementary PO fit incorporates needs-supplies and demands-abilities perspectives. Perceived PO fit is the comparison of an individual's assessment of their own personal values to that of the organizational values.

Supplementary Fit

Supplementary fit indicates equivalence between a person and the organization through similarities in values, goals, personality, and characteristics and has been considered the most used fit indicator in PO fit research (Ballout, 2007; Bednarska, 2016; Cable & Edwards, 2004; Frost & Edwards, 2018; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Perceived fit is the idea that the individual interprets as a match between their goals, values, attitudes, and personality with the organization's culture/climate, values, norms, and goals. An overall fit can take two forms, a match between individual and organizational attributes, or a compliment between individual skills and the organization. Perceived PO fit focuses on the match between personal and organizational values from the employee perspective (Bocchino et al., 2003). Both must align for PO fit to occur.

People perceive themselves as able to fit into an organization if they have similar characteristics to those within that organizational environment (Herkes et al., 2019; Mostafa, 2016). A PO fit occurs when an individual's perceived characteristics align with the perceived organization characteristics. Cable & Judge, 1996 identified individual characteristics as values, goals, personality, and attitudes. Individual characteristics that complement the needs of an organization in both needs-supplies and demands-abilities will lead to a higher PO fit. Organizational characteristics such as culture, climate,

values, goals, and norms should be considered when a person is deciding if they would fit into an organization. A PO fit occurs when an individual's perceived characteristics align with the organizational characteristics (Cable et al. 1996; Chatman, 1989).

Complementary Fit

Complementary fit is the extent to which a person and their environment possess characteristics that complement or complete each other (Ballout, 2007; Cable & Judge, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; Mostafa, 2016), so that an individual's personal qualities add something to the organization (Ballout, 2007; Cable & Edwards, 2004; Shen et al., 2018; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Together the supplementary and complementary components of PO fit shape the notion of how well individuals fit within the organization, which can influence how individuals perform (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; van Vianen, 2018).

The needs-supply of the organization (the degree in which the needs of the individual are met by the organization) as well as the demand-ability fit (the extent to which the needs of the organization are fulfilled by the abilities of the individual) are both included in PO fit. Needs supply consists of the individual's needs, desires, preferences, and preferred system or structure (Bednarska, 2016). A match occurs when a person's needs are fulfilled by the organization (Bretz & Judge, 1994). If an individual possesses the needed skills that the employer seeks, a PO fit will occur. An actual fit is the objective fit that occurs when an individual's knowledge, skills, and ability to perform tasks aligns with the organization's needs, desires, preferences, and system/structure. This is not determined by the individual, so it is not a perceived fit.

Objective fit involves the participant assessing and reporting on their characteristics in addition to asking coworkers to report on the same characteristics (Youngs et al., 2015). A match between the participant and the coworkers leads to a higher PO fit.

Appropriateness to Study

This theory is appropriate for this study because if a volunteer believes that their values align with the values of the organization, there is a greater chance that they will remain as a volunteer long-term (Leuty, et al., 2019; Nesbit, et al., 2016; Su et al., 2015; Swider, et al., 2015). Since volunteer shortages and high turnover can have a negative impact on a nonprofit's ability to provide needed services to the community, volunteer coordinators and management in NPOs should consider PO fit in accepting volunteers as well as their on-going interactions with that volunteer (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; McBey et al., 2017). PO fit has the potential to help retain individuals in volunteer roles for a longer period of time (Leuty, et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015). Understanding this volunteer cycle can assist with aligning volunteer and PO fit to reduce turnover and contribute to greater retention of volunteers within NPOs (Leuty et al., 2019; Nesbit et al., 2016; Su et al., 2015). If volunteer coordinators do not understand how PO fit influences the retention of volunteers, they may not be able to retain volunteers as effectively as they could if the understood the dynamics of PO fit (Hartenian & Lilly, 2009; Scherer et al., 2016). Therefore, the elements of PO fit were used to inform specific questions that related to recruitment, motivation, training, and retention of volunteers within an animal welfare NPO. The questions enabled me to discover how PO fit plays a role (if at all) in each stage of the volunteer lifecycle.

Nature of the Study

This was a qualitative study using a general qualitative approach. A general qualitative research design is used to investigate participants' opinions, attitudes, beliefs, or experiences of events (Percy et al., 2015). Using a qualitative approach aligns with the purpose and research question since I was attempting to gain knowledge about the experiences of the participants and not relationships between variables. General qualitative inquiry was used in this study to discover information without relying on any single or combined research approach or a particular tradition or philosophical underpinning. I focused on collecting data through interviewing or observation, analyzing data by identifying themes, and presenting information to the reader (Given, 2008; Liu, 2016; Lichtman, 2014; Thomas, 2006).

While other approaches were considered, they did not fit the study. For example, in grounded theory, a development of theory from the research is anticipated (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). However, I used a theoretical framework that is already established and was not seeking to develop theory, so this did not align with the study (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Ethnography relies on developing an in-depth view of the culture through immersion over an extended time period including fieldwork and several data collection techniques, which was not feasible for a doctoral study (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Case studies are useful for generating hypotheses, testing hypotheses, and building theories (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). I was not attempting to generate hypotheses or build theories through this research (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Therefore, a general qualitative research design was a better fit for

my study because I was not limited by the requirements of other studies mentioned above.

Assumptions

Since this study was a qualitative study, I assumed that several realties existed within the study which included mine as the researcher, those of the participants being studied, and that of the reader who is reading the study (The California State University, n.d.). Potential researcher biases included assumptions that the volunteer coordinators/managers were not adequately retaining volunteers and did not have the literature knowledge background of strategies that work (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). This needed to be addressed by journaling and internal recognition of those biases (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013).

I assumed that selected participants were honest and forthright with their responses and willing to divulge information regarding internal volunteer management practices (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon, 2013). To help ensure this assumption, steps were taken to ensure their identities were kept confidential (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). I assumed that volunteer lifecycle practices were similar among all participants, meaning that they recruited, trained, motivated, and retained their volunteers in similar ways. I also assumed that patterns or categories could be extrapolated from participant responses that could be used to understand the research question (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). To determine accuracy of these patterns, I needed to verify the responses with the participants by sending them a

copy of the transcript after the interview was conducted (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013).

Another assumption was that the participant sample was appropriate to ensure that they had a similar experience (Wargo, 2015). This was addressed through inclusion selection of participants. I also assumed that participants had an interest in participating in the study without promise of any monetary benefits. This was addressed by informing study participants that there was no monetary reward for their participation in the study.

Since I was the person interpreting the results and delivering them to the reader, I assume that the reader had enough knowledge and information to understand the results based on the background information provided in the study. The literature review served to provide the background information needed for the reader to understand why specific questions were asked and the meaning of responses from participants (Simon & Goes, 2013).

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study is related to the problem statement and are the factors included within the range of the study (Simon & Goes, 2013). The scope explains the specific parameters and extent of the research area that will be explored (Editage Insights, n.d.). I explored the experiences of volunteer coordinators/managers with regard to practices to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Other NPOs that are not animal welfare focused were excluded.

Delimitations are the attributes that limit or narrow the scope and define study boundaries such as specific participants and research design (Editage Insights, n.d.;

Research Paper Advisor, n.d.). Delimitations also include the methodology and tools used to collect data. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used Skype for practical, safety, and cost reasons. The specific aspects of the research problem evaluated experiences of volunteer coordinators/managers with regard to practices to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Populations included volunteer coordinators/managers who oversaw recruitment, training, motivation, and retention of volunteers.

<div align="center">**Limitations**</div>

The limitations of the study consist of design or methodology characteristics or potential weaknesses of the study that can have an effect on the findings or interpretations (Creswell, 2012; Price and Murnan, 2004). Limitations and potential challenges included locating local willing participants and not recruiting an appropriate sample size or obtaining an adequate response rate within the sample size (Simon & Goes, 2013; Wargo, 2015). I used social media (LinkedIn, and Facebook groups) to try and reach as many people as possible to expand the number of participants.

Prior to conducting the study, I assumed that volunteer coordinators did not want to speak about negative situations or experiences regarding poor fit or criticisms about the operations of organizations. A limitation meant that they were tempted to say what they thought I wanted to hear to provide answers they thought were desirable (Stein et al., 2016). To minimize these limitations, participants were reassured that their responses were confidential to encourage honest and full disclosure.

Significance

By understanding the experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations in relation to volunteer motivation and retention, there is the potential to reduce the turnover of volunteers from these organizations and the resulting negative impact on animal welfare (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Harp et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016; Spehar & Wolf, 2018). According to Nesbit et al. (2016), volunteer coordinators are not always trained, or trained well, in the management of volunteers and how to retain them. This information could be used to inform training for volunteer coordinators in these organizations so they can better understand how to motivate and retain volunteers based on individuals' motivation and PO fit.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the study parameters, including the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, research question, theoretical framework used, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study. In Chapter 2, I will provide a detailed explanation of the theoretical framework used as well as review the relevant literature related to the study topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this general, qualitative study is to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. Researchers have examined PO fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017), but few researchers have used PO fit when studying volunteer retention in NPOs (Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). Since volunteering is essentially an unpaid position, PO fit concepts can offer volunteer coordinators insight into understanding how to attract, motivate, and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations.

In Chapter 2, I start by describing the search strategy used to locate articles for the literature review. I provide a detailed explanation of how PO fit served as the theatrical framework for this study. PO fit is detailed as it relates to fit within an individual and an organization.

Literature Search Strategy

Primary databases used to search for articles related to this study included ERIC, ABI/Inform, Business Source Complete, Science Direct, Academic Search Premier, Dissertations and Theses at Walden University, ProQuest Central, PsycARTICLES, PsycEXTRA, Psychology: A SAGE full text collection, PubMed Central Open Access,

EBSCO Open Access Journals, PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, SocINDEX with full text, Thoreau, and Google Scholar. I also used citation chaining through foundational articles and Google Scholar to identify related research from other studies to ensure saturation with articles, dissertations, and textbooks on this topic.

Keyword searches related to PO fit were not limited to a specific year for the components of the theory, since there are references to the theory dating back to the 1970s when PO fit began appearing in the literature. The literature for PO fit and retention, gender, and ethnicity were limited to the past 5 years, to remain current. Other keyword searches that are not specific to PO fit were limited to articles published between 2000 and 2020. The key search terms used in the literature search included *person-organization fit, person-organization fit theory, person-environment fit, PO fit, PO fit theory, nonprofit, volunteer retention, volunteer fit, person-organization (PO) fit and Person-organization (PO) fit and recruitment, PO fit and retention, PO fit and job satisfaction, PO fit and burnout, PO fit and gender, PO fit and ethnicity, PO fit and age, PO fit and employees,* and *PO fit and volunteers.*

Articles were limited to the past 5 years for the literature review. Databases used for the literature review section included ERIC, ABI/Inform, Business Source Complete, Science Direct, Academic Search Premier, Dissertations and Theses at Walden University, MedLine, ProQuest Central, PsycARTICLES, PsycEXTRA, Psychology: A SAGE full text collection, PubMed Central Open Access, EBSCO Open Access Journals, Emerald Management, PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, SocINDEX with full text, Thoreau, and Google Scholar and GuideStar. Citation chaining was used in relevant articles.

Keywords used for the literature review section included *nonprofits in the United States, volunteers in the United States, nonprofits in Tampa Bay, FL and number of volunteers in Tampa Bay, FL, duties of volunteers in animal shelters, volunteer recruitment in animal shelters, volunteer motivation in animal shelters, volunteer training in animal shelters, volunteer retention in animal shelters, volunteer turnover in animal shelter, volunteer management, task and volunteering and motivation, intent to stay and volunteers, volunteer management, HRM or human resource management and volunteers, training and development, training and education, volunteer, volunteering or volunteerism and learning or program.*

Theoretical Framework

PO fit is the degree of alignment between an individual's values, goals, and/or cognitive skills and abilities and the characteristics or requirements of the organization (Saether, 2019; Youngs et al., 2015). In this section, I will describe the development of PO fit, the theory, and components of the theory, and how these components work together to create a PO fit. Recruitment, retention, burnout, and employee and volunteer aspects as well as diversity (gender, age, ethnicity) and job satisfaction will be discussed as they relate to PO fit. Finally, PO fit and employees versus PO fit and volunteers will also be discussed.

Development of Person-Organization (PO) Fit Theory

The PO fit theory is a concept that describes compatibility between individuals and organizations, including values, interests, and behavior. Employment seekers will be attracted to and selected by those organizations whose values are similar to their own and

will guide their attitudes and behaviors as a reflection of the perceived workplace fit (Mehlika et al., 2017). Discovering a good match between needs and supplies can generate high levels of fit, which may result in strong organizational commitment, high job satisfaction, and decreased turnover intentions (Cable & Judge, 1996). Alignment between an individual's personality and values and the environment will increase the likelihood of staying in the role (O'Reilly et al., 1991).

People are likely to choose environments that reflect or fit their values (Cable & Judge, 1996; Little & Miller, 2007; Yu, 2014; van Vianen, 2018; Westerman & Cyr, 2004). Derived from Lewin's (1951) person-environment (PE) fit model and Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework, PO fit was altered when Chatman (1989) refined the focus from the ASA model to PO fit, to account for individuals' attitudes and behaviors and to consider individual/organizational value congruence. The ASA model indicated that individuals will be attracted to organizations that have goals in alignment with their own and consequently will leave if there is no similarity between goals (Cable & Judge, 1996; Edwards & Cable, 2009; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). If the values between the individual and the organization align, there is a greater chance of a fit.

Components of PO Fit

PO fit is multifaceted and consists of complementary and supplementary fit and needs-supply and demands-ability perspectives (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). Supplementary fit includes the perceived similarity between individual characteristics and organizational characteristics while complementary PO fit incorporates needs-supplies and demands-abilities perspectives. Perceived PO fit is the

comparison of an individual's assessment of their own personal values to that of the

organizational values. Figure 1 below shows the PO fit model and each component in

detail.

Figure 1

Person-Organizational Fit Model (adapted from Influence of Person-Organizational Fit

model in Liao et al., 2015)
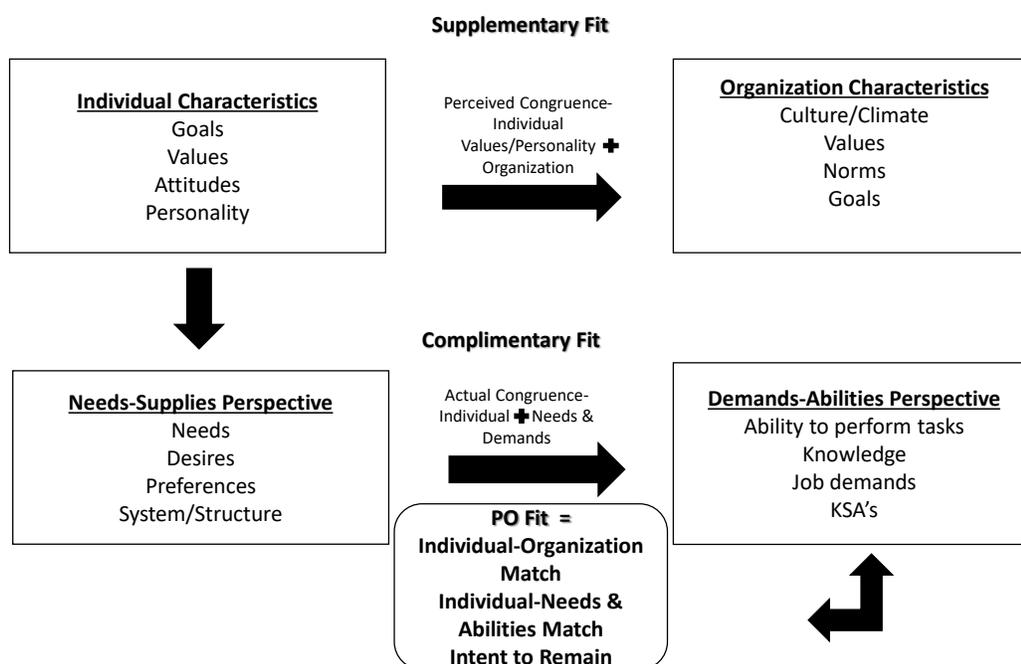
Supplementary Fit

Individual Characteristics
Goals
Values
Attitudes
Personality

Perceived Congruence-
Individual
Values/Personality ✚
Organization

Organization Characteristics
Culture/Climate
Values
Norms
Goals

Complimentary Fit

Needs-Supplies Perspective
Needs
Desires
Preferences
System/Structure

Actual Congruence-
Individual ✚ Needs &
Demands

Demands-Abilities Perspective
Ability to perform tasks
Knowledge
Job demands
KSA's

PO Fit =
Individual-Organization
Match
Individual-Needs &
Abilities Match
Intent to Remain

Supplementary Fit

Supplementary fit indicates equivalence between a person and the organization

through similarities in values, goals, personality, and characteristics and has been

considered the most used fit indicator in PO fit research (Ballout, 2007; Bednarska, 2016;

Cable & Edwards, 2004; Frost & Edwards, 2018; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987).

Perceived fit is the idea that the individual interprets a match between their goals, values,

attitudes, and personality and the organization's culture/climate, values, norms, and goals. An overall fit can take two forms, a match between individual and organizational attributes, or a compliment between individual skills and the organization. Perceived PO fit focuses on the match between personal and organizational values from the employee perspective (Bocchino et al., 2003). Both must align for PO fit to occur.

People perceive themselves as able to fit into an organization if they have similar characteristics to those within that organizational environment (Herkes et al., 2019; Mostafa, 2016). A PO fit occurs when an individual's perceived characteristics align with the perceived organization characteristics. Cable & Judge, 1996 identified individual characteristics as values, goals, personality, and attitudes. Individual characteristics that complement the needs of an organization in both needs-supplies and demands-abilities will lead to a higher PO fit. Organizational characteristics such as culture, climate, values, goals, and norms should be considered when a person is deciding if they would fit into an organization. A PO fit occurs when an individual's perceived characteristics align with the organizational characteristics (Cable et al. 1996; Chatman, 1989).

Complementary Fit

Complementary fit is the extent to which a person and their environment possess characteristics that complement or complete each other (Ballout, 2007; Cable & Judge, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; Mostafa, 2016), so that an individual's personal qualities add something to the organization (Ballout, 2007; Cable & Edwards, 2004; Shen et al., 2018; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Together, the supplementary and complementary components of PO fit shape the notion of how well individuals fit within

the organization, which can influence how individuals perform (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; van Vianen, 2018).

The needs-supply of the organization (the degree in which the needs of the individual are met by the organization) as well as the demand-ability fit (the extent to which the needs of the organization are fulfilled by the abilities of the individual) are both included in PO fit. Needs supply consists of the individual's needs, desires, preferences, and preferred system or structure (Bednarska, 2016). A match occurs when a person's needs are fulfilled by the organization (Bretz & Judge, 1994). If an individual possesses the needed skills that the employer seeks, a PO fit will occur. An actual fit is the objective fit that occurs when an individual's knowledge, skills, and ability to perform tasks aligns with the organization's needs, desires, preferences, and system/structure. This is not determined by the individual, so it is not a perceived fit. Objective fit involves the participant assessing and reporting on their characteristics in addition to asking coworkers to report on the same characteristics (Youngs et al., 2015). A match between the participant and the coworkers leads to a higher PO fit.

PO Fit & Recruitment

Recruitment is the process by which organizations add to their staff through the acquisition of new people (McGinley et al., 2018; Yen, 2017). Fit can be established by the company's values and level of professionalism (McGinley et al., 2018; Yen, 2017). Alignment between the job seeker's values and those of the organization determines how fit increases attraction to an organization (McGinley et al., 2018; Yen, 2017). The perception of value match during the recruitment process facilitates certain expectations

about future work and employer relationships, which has a positive or negative impact on organizational attraction (McGinley et al., 2018; Yen, 2017).

Job seekers' perceptions of PO fit are a good predictor of their attraction to organizations (Firfiray & Mayo, 2017). Candidates evaluate an organization's image to identify with the values and ideals. Well-regarded companies are perceived as credible, and a good corporate image influences job seekers to align their values with those of the company to create a good PO fit (Brunner & Baum, 2020; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017; Wei et al., 2016). However, companies with a poor image or perceived ethical violations turn off candidates and make them hesitant to connect with a recruiter or pursue a potential job opportunity (Firfiray & Mayo, 2017).

Throughout the recruitment process, job seekers and recruiters acquire a lot of first-hand information and begin to verify accuracy of a perceived fit. If there is a lack of fit, job seekers withdraw from the recruitment process and seek other job opportunities. However, if job seekers see themselves as fitting with the job and/or the company, they maintain their applicant status for the next recruitment stage (Yen, 2017). If fit is established through recruitment, candidates are more likely to participate in the entire recruitment process and express greater interest in the company.

PO Fit & Employment Outcomes

PO fit theory focuses on the relevance of PO fit as a predictor of employee's job outcomes. An employee's relationship with their supervisor has either a positive or negative impact on how the employee perceives the organization since perceived values, and behaviors exhibited by the supervisor reflect organizational values (Grobler &

Holtzhausen, 2018; Jin et al., 2016; Jutras & Mathieu, 2015). These perceptions translate into shifting attitudes and behaviors, which alter job satisfaction, turnover intention, and actual turnover (Jin et al., 2016; Jutras & Mathieu, 2015).

Job Performance

An employee's job performance impacts the organization positively or negatively by the amount and quality of work performed (Afsar & Badir, 2016; Ardıç et al., 2016). If an employee's alignment between knowledge, skills, and abilities with the position is high, job performance is also high (Afsar & Badir, 2016; Ardıç et al., 2016; Bhat & Rainayee, 2019). Conversely, an employee who does not perform at the required KSAs or meet deadlines negatively impacts the success of the organization (Ardıç et al., 2016). Satisfied workers display higher job performance over time than unsatisfied workers, which in turn contributes to job satisfaction. Workers who enjoy their work tend to work harder to achieve maximum results (Faraz & Indartono, 2018).

Having a mutual understanding of clearly defined roles and expectations between the employee and employer contributes to higher work performance (Ardıç et al., 2016; Gul et al., 2018). A high demands-abilities and needs-supplies fit leads to a higher PO fit for the employee and organization (Boon & Biron, 2016). The employee's needs are fulfilled if the job meets the employee's expectations regarding pay, benefits, training, interesting and challenging work, promotion opportunities, recognition, and decision-making latitude (Boon & Biron, 2016; Moghaddam et al., 2018). However, as organizations change, so does job performance (Boon & Biron, 2016). If there are

massive layoffs and one person absorbs the job duties of several other people due to lack of resources, it negatively affects job performance (Boon & Biron, 2016).

Retention

PO fit is connected to retention (Saks & Ashforth, 1997) as well as organizational commitment and intention to quit (Kristof-Brown., 2007). Employees who are engaged demonstrate a greater sense of physical, emotional, and cognitive attachment to their jobs and organization as well as high energy, dedication, and are less likely to quit their jobs (Memon et al., 2018). However, employees who are not engaged display apathy, disenchantment, and social aloofness (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013). A collaborative and friendly workplace environment (positive relationships with management, peers, subordinates, and customers) decreases the likelihood of leaving. Additionally, value alignment reduces the incidents of employee turnover by enhancing worker retention and aided in the creation of identification with an organization (Chattalas et al., 2016; Olubiyi et al., 2019). Employees whose values do not fit with the organization's values either leave voluntarily or are separated from the organization involuntarily (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Another contributing factor to retention is the interaction between an employee and management. Like job satisfaction and burnout, a negative or positive interaction will determine the employee's intent to stay or leave the organization (Cai et al., 2018; Wijesinghe, 2017).

Job Satisfaction

When a work environment fit employee values, they use their abilities to the fullest, which aids in career success and satisfies their achievement motivation (Wei,

2015). Therefore, they do not need to consider other employment opportunities (Wei, 2015). Job satisfaction within PO fit increases loyalty, organizational commitment, and enhances productivity (Alfes et al., 2016; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018; Lv & Xu, 2018). PO fit also improves employee morale and job satisfaction and motivates them to achieve success (Hayes & Stazyk, 2019; Seong & Choi, 2019). These factors are similar to what is used to determine intention to leave or retention by employees.

Other factors can contribute to job satisfaction, including an employee's interaction with management. Supervisors influence employees' perceptions and behaviors through communication, job assignments and task management (Wijesinghe, 2017). Therefore, if employees with high PO fit receive guidance from a supervisor who supports the values of the organization, employee supervisor communication and trust was fostered (Wijesinghe, 2017). Conversely, supervisors with perceived low PO fit reduces clarity and increases misunderstandings and uncertainty among employees which inhibits employees' performance and job satisfaction (Hamstra et al., 2019; Sungdae et al., 2019).

Burnout

Burnout is a negative psychological condition that is illustrated by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment (van den Bosch et al., 2019). It can be caused by a mismatch between people and their work situation in terms of lack of value alignment, which can lead to job stressors in terms of role conflict and role ambiguity. This imbalance between job demands and job resources contributes to emotional exhaustion and in burnout and negative PO fit (Kilroy et al., 2017; Mostafa,

2016). People typically need affiliation and belonging within organizations and social groups (Kilroy et al., 2017). If an employee does not feel a connection to the environment or their job, they experience internal conflict which causes depersonalization of the work environment (Kilroy et al., 2017). Disengagement manifests through alienation and cynicism or withdrawal, which declines self-definition and results in burnout (Diefendorff et al., 2016; Huang & Simha, 2018; Kilroy et al., 2017). Burnout is associated with negative work outcomes, such as low commitment to the organization, lower job satisfaction, a higher tendency to leave the organization, and low performance (van den et al., 2019). Job performance, retention, job satisfaction and burnout affects PO fit either positively or negatively.

PO Fit and Demographics

Differences in person organization fit have been found in demographic groups including gender, ethnicity, and age (Autry & Daugherty, 2003).

Gender

Gender influences an employee's perceptions of the workplace and attitudinal reactions to others within an organization. Women obtain social support and friendship from others, and those who build and maintain value-based relationships are more likely to stay in an organization (Kim et al., 2019). Regarding men, building networks is more important. However, person-organization fit is equally important across genders for maintaining social network ties (Lin, 2008).

Perceptions of PO fit are driven by social and intrinsic outcomes. For example, relationships are stronger for intrinsic outcomes for men compared to women (Lin, 2008).

Men working shifts other than normal working hours experience a lower PO fit since they do not feel a sense of community with other workers and the organization (Lin, 2008). The frequent shift changes are also considered demanding and lead to negative outcomes. Although, if men are in relationships and have monetary and familial responsibilities, they are more likely to gain a high level of supplementary PO fit (Merecz-Kot & Andysz, 2017). However, working different shifts does not affect the level of PO fit with women.

Negative PO fit adversely affects behavioral outcomes for both men and women (Venkatesh et al., 2017). Women who do not feel a PO fit in their work environments engage in passive aggressiveness while men exhibit direct or overt aggression (Venkatesh et al., 2017). Men sacrifice family-related aspects of their lives to achieve greater job-related success whereas women value family life as more important than work which affect their intention to quit. Women who no longer identify with their organization as strongly experienced lower levels of PO fit then men (Scott et al., 2015).

Ethnicity

Value matching affects turnover intentions among people of color (Gonzalez, 2016). When women of color perceive discrimination coupled with lower PO fit, organizational support, and self-esteem it equates to poor work outcomes and psychological distress which causes those employees to leave (Velez et al., 2018). Minorites and those with less formal education report lower levels of job satisfaction than those with more formal education and culturally disadvantaged groups are more vulnerable to shorter periods of organizational tenure than culturally advantaged groups (Velez et al., 2018). Perceived negative fit is associated with economically distressed

African American employees' job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Lyons et al., 2014).

Since employees usually seek out organizations that align with their values and characteristics, over time, the organization can consequently become homogenous. That means that those who do not perceive a fit within an organization may not seek out employment within that organization because they are too different from current employees (Bjorklund et al., 2012). Also, if organizations do not display diverse hiring practices, policies and equal opportunities, minority employees look elsewhere since that affects their perceived fit with the organization (Madera et al., 2018). Ethnic minorities are also negatively affected by lack of connections within an organization (Prasad et al., 2017). Many do not have connections to leverage in the job search process, which affects their perceived fit to a company's values and culture (Prasad et al., 2017). Beyond struggling to find a job, minorities also lack ways to obtain information to form positive perceptions of the organization, such as access to social media (Prasad et al., 2017).

Age

Generational age differences impact work values and influence organizational fit (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Since many organizations are run by older generations, a potential mismatch between the work values of Generation X, Y and Baby Boomers occurs, which leads to high turnover intention (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Since each generation develops a distinct value system based on socioeconomic conditions during their formative years, their feelings toward work and what they desire from work were

influenced by that value system (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Consequently, individual's belonging to different generations hold different work values.

Baby Boomers and Generation X employees are the most influential in shaping the values and culture of the organization (Rani & Samuel, 2016). When it comes to generational preferences, Generation X and Generation Y (Millennials) place more importance on learning and pride in their work knowledge and skills and social work values (such as establishing meaningful relationships), then Baby Boomers (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Baby Boomers are more concerned about learning opportunities than Generation X. Generations X and Y valued extrinsic items, such as status, prestige, and advancement opportunities, more than Baby Boomers do (Cemalcilar et al., 2018; Ertas, 2019; Firfiray & Mayo, 2017; Rani & Samuel, 2016). Since Generation Y craves prestige and status, they are described as ambitious and impatient and expect immediate rewards, including praise, promotion and pay (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Most Generation Y's are considered job hoppers with values driven by a sense of entitlement of rewards regardless of actual performance levels (Rani & Samuel, 2016: Winter & Jackson, 2016). This can lead to a fit mismatch between their values and expectations and what the organization can provide. On one hand, Baby Boomers are loyal, idealistic, and value job security and a stable working environment as well as respecting authority (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Conversely, Generation X'ers are skeptical of and unimpressed with authority. They value a strong work–life balance where personal values and goals are regarded as more important than work-related goals (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Generation Y employees have higher expectations than the older generations and left jobs when those expectations were

not met (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Generation Y employees also have lower commitment

and higher turnover intention compared to older generations and if they do not receive

rewards at one organization, Millennials move to an employer with more perceived

opportunities (Rani & Samuel, 2016). Demographics, including gender, ethnicity, and

age have unique impacts on the PO fit of an employee and an organization.

PO Fit & Employees Versus Volunteers

Even though volunteers are unpaid, they are still affected by the fit with their

values/ethics (Benevene et al., 2018; Scherer et al., 2016), communication styles of

management (Bauer & Lim, 2019), environmental support (McBey et al., 2017), the

mismatch of the position (Jacobs, 2017), role ambiguity (Harp et al., 2017), and

emotional demands (Ertas, 2019) of an organization. Like a paid employee position, if a

volunteer believes that their values align with the values of the organization, there is a

greater chance that they remained long-term (Leuty, et al., 2019; Nesbit, et al., 2016; Su

et al., 2015; Swider, et al., 2015). According to Scherer et al. (2016) volunteer roles can

be stressful and demanding, just as they are for paid positions. Volunteers who lack

support from their organization's leadership experienced burnout through

mental/emotional exhaustion, physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, role

ambiguity and lack of personal accomplishment. However, unlike for-profit counterparts,

many nonprofits do not have a designated volunteer manager, formal volunteer

management policies, or overburden their staff with volunteer management

responsibilities (Ertas, 2019; Scherer et al., 2016). This lack of structure leads to

frustration and results in volunteers quitting or seeking other volunteer opportunities (Scherer et al., 2016).

Nonprofit employees tend to value intrinsic rewards over extrinsic rewards and have distinctive motivations for choosing a volunteer or non-paid position (Suh, 2018). The perceived ethics cultivated within an organization influence the fit of the volunteer since their own personal values are a reason they choose to volunteer with a specific organization (Benevene, et al., 2018; Schwepker, 2019). Though employees need a paycheck to pay bills, they also seek a higher compensation and benefits which are associated with lower turnover and intent to leave (Ertas, 2019). Paid employees value a more extrinsic environments and rewards than intrinsic.

The information outlined above could be used to better inform training for volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations, as well as other organizations that utilize volunteers, to understand how to motivate and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations. If volunteer coordinators understand how PO fit influences volunteers, they may be able to retain volunteers more effectively (Hartenian, et al., 2009; Scherer, et al., 2016). Even though volunteers are unpaid, PO fit still affects retention; if volunteers believe there is an alignment of values between them and the organization, there is a greater chance of long-term tenure.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts

I will begin the literature review with the definition, purpose, and statistics of how many nonprofits and volunteers exist within the U.S. including how many organizations

and volunteers work in animal shelters. The discussion about volunteers includes recruitment, motivation, management, training, retention, skills/motivation, burnout, and turnover.

Nonprofit Organizations

According to Guidestar (2015), a NPO is an organization without shareholders or a profit-making purpose. The nonprofit business model requires that an organization put any income earned back into its operating budget. Nonprofits can pay their employees, but they cannot pay board members, officers, shareholders, or volunteers (Guidestar, 2015). NPOs are values-driven organizations versus performance-driven and the mission is altruistic oriented (Park et al., 2018). Nonprofit organization employees and volunteers provide critical services to local and national communities through a variety of platforms, including providing food, shelter, and access to medicine (Carroll & Kachersky, 2018) as well as arts, culture and humanities, education, environment, animal advocacy, public health, mental health, research, legal, employment, housing, recreation, youth services, and religion (Guidestar, n.d.).

NPOs impact individuals and communities by engaging volunteers and donors, partnering with other organizations to provide services, promoting education and awareness, and unifying community members (Cadet & Carroll, 2019). Nonprofits are important social and policy platforms and foster social innovation and entrepreneurship as well as service delivery, civic and political engagement, and sustainability, which has the potential to advance communities (Lu et al., 2020; Moldavanova & Wright, 2020). A main difference between for-profit organizations and NPOs is that NPOs receive funding

primarily from grants and donations, which makes them heavily dependent on this revenue to run their operations (Shon et al., 2019).

NPOs operating in the United States are responsible for delivering essential public services, promoting community development, advocating for human rights, and influencing public policy development (Bright, 2016; Cheng, 2019; Corbett et al., 2017). These types of organizations rely on government grants and contracts at the federal, state, and local level as well as volunteer assistance. Nonprofits encounter unique challenges since their financial structure makes them susceptible to environmental and operational issues and threats that are not faced by for-profit organizations (Kirchner et al., 2018). Since nonprofits operate in complex and volatile environments, they are increasingly adopting business-like procedures to manage pressure from government funding oversight and satisfy more transparent financial practices (Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018). Nonprofits' income may include revenues from sales of goods, services rendered, or work performed to support mission-related activities (Lee, 2019). NPOs provide essential services and support to communities even though they rely heavily on government funding and volunteer workers.

Volunteering

Volunteers in the United States

McKeever (2018) estimated that 25.1%, or 77.3 million people, volunteered in 2018, contributing 8.8 billion hours with a value of $195 billion. There are approximately 12,206 operating NPOs in the U.S. (Guidestar, n.d.). Within the total number of

nonprofits, 10,222 are animal-related, meaning they function as animal shelters, rescues, or as animal advocacy (Guidestar (n.d.).

Volunteer Recruitment

Recruitment and retention are closely linked as inadequate recruitment methods can lead to a poor volunteer fit and performance and effective recruitment practices improve retention and can decrease costly continuous recruitment (Sefora & Mihaela, 2016); Stefanick et al. 2020). Nonprofits often rely on both internal and traditional marketing strategies to recruit volunteers to help achieve their missions (Stankiewicz et al., 2017). To help ensure an ideal match between volunteers and nonprofits, coordinators and managers should screen volunteer applications similarly to paid employees and should consider whether the volunteer applicant has the matching qualifications, enthusiasm, and commitment level (Kolar et al., 2016). NPOs can also raise awareness of their missions through marketing techniques to help ensure that those who volunteer understand the organization and its values before volunteering (Cadet & Carroll, 2019). While several methods are utilized to engage and recruit potential volunteers, the use of emotional persuasiveness within recruitment messages seems to elicit the most responses (Cao, 2018). Marketing has a positive influence on employee behavior and those with a positive experience within the nonprofit organization are more inclined to help recruit others to volunteer (Gross & Rottler, 2019). Other tools that have been used to recruit volunteers includes different social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter as well as volunteer specific websites like Volunteer Match (Lee, 2020).

Many volunteer organizations rely on low-cost or free strategies including referrals as they do not have a recruitment marketing budget (Best Friends, n.d.). Low-cost recruitment marketing tools includes flyers, posters, and their website or social media (Bright & Hadden, 2017). Animal shelter recruitment campaigns may also include recruiting volunteers through TV commercials, newspaper advertising, local high schools and colleges, and other community organizations and clubs (ASPCA, n.d.; Best Friends, n.d.; Pet Finder, n.d.).

Although animal shelters need volunteers, researchers have warned that organizations must be careful about who they accept as volunteers as just accepting anyone who applies can cause issues for the organization (Babcock, 2020). Certain volunteers who want to help may not be right for the position and a good fit should be established between the potential volunteer and the needs of the organization. Saying no to someone is okay in certain situations, if either or both parties will not benefit from the volunteer organization partnership (Babcock, 2020; Stefanick et al., 2020). The reasons for this include the cost that is associated in training a volunteer who may leave shortly after training and also the attitudes and behaviors of volunteers can affect others at the organization if they are negative. The recruitment of volunteers continues to be challenging due to personal factors that affect volunteers that can result in episodic volunteerism and decreased long-term commitments (McNamee & Peterson, 2016; Stukas et al., 2016). Recruitment efforts can influence the effectiveness of motivation, retention, and turnover in volunteers.

Motivation for Volunteering

Motivation for Volunteering for Non-Profits

There are many traits and characteristics that determine an individual's motivation to volunteer. Motivational traits include their values, contributions to the community, and a need for personal growth (Kolar et al., 2016), agreeableness, empathy and warmth and prosocial behaviors (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Evers, 2016), all which are linked to altruistic intentions that are intentional and voluntary acts that benefit someone else and do not include an expectation of a reward (Bendaravičienė et al., 2019; Feigin et al., 2018). Forming relationships with likeminded people (Merrilees et al., 2020) and aligning their values with the mission of an organization are also reasons given for volunteering (Dorner & Rózsa, 2018; Hamerman & Schneider, 2018; Stefanick et al., 2020). When volunteer coordinators understand these motivations, they can more successfully recruit volunteers as well as market opportunities to attract well-suited volunteers (Costello et al., 2017; Kolar et al., 2016; Tiraieyari et al., 2019). However, since volunteers work of their own free will and have intrinsic motivations for their work instead of receiving a paycheck, they require a unique management system (Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019; Piercy & Kramer, 2017).

In order to keep volunteers working at optimal levels, their motivations, and personal values (Oo et al., 2018) must be a consideration within the organizational environment (Vareilles et al., 2017; Willems & Dury, 2017). Training and recognition can also be important in maintaining motivation because the volunteers feel valued. If the volunteer receives extensive training, they may be more motivated to stay in the

organization since there has been investment made by the organization to prepare the volunteer to be successful (Zievinger & Swint, 2018).

Motivation for Volunteering in Animal Shelters

In addition to having similar motivational traits of all volunteers, a unique difference of animal shelter volunteers includes also having a passion, love and concern for animals, and a desire help make a difference in their lives (Guenther, 2017; Herzog, 2017; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). McFarland (n.d.) emphasized that a strong volunteer animal rescue program utilized volunteers to partner with administration to provide clarity on roles and expectations. Involving volunteers creates standardized guidelines and motivates them while encouraging retention. People are intrinsically motivated when engaged in activities they find interesting and challenging (McFarland, n.d.). When animal shelter volunteers are engaged in their work, they stay more motivated to fulfill the needs and mission of the organization (McFarland, n.d.). Motivation is a critical factor to whether volunteers remain in their volunteer positions long-term.

Volunteer Management

Researchers who study human research management noted that existing Human Resource Management (HRM) research has been focused on for-profit organizations with limited research about nonprofit volunteer management. A few researchers indicated that human resources management concepts have been utilized for both paid and volunteers positions in the phases of recruitment, orientation, training, supervision, recognition, and separation (Akinlade & Shalack, 2017; Bendaravičienė et al., 2019; Kolar et al., 2016; Studer, 2016). Even though volunteers have unique positions, their needs are similar

enough to those that work in paid positions to warrant many of the typical HR management practices including legal compliance, job analysis and design, recruitment, selection, onboarding, training, and performance management (Akinlade & Shalack, 2017; Kolar et al., 2016; Studer, 2016). HRM practices such as developing clear guidelines, standard operating procedures and expectations can clarify the expectations for appropriate behaviors among volunteers (Kolar et al., 2016).

However, several other authors illustrated that some aspects of formal HRM may be useful but given the fact that volunteers may need more caring and supportive approaches than those who receive payment for their work, the for-profit model of managing individuals may not be appropriate for the management of volunteers in all aspects (Alfes et al., 2017; Bartram et al., 2017; Einolf, 2018; Einolf & Yung, 2018; Kappelides et al., 2020; Smithson et al., 2018; Vantilborgh & Van Puyvelde, 2018; Ward & Greene, 2018). A for-profit context cannot always be applied to volunteers working in a nonprofit context as specific nuances exist between the two (Bartram et al., 2017; Kappelides et al., 2020; Vantilborgh & Van Puyvelde, 2018). For example, the nonprofit volunteer environment is often more unstructured than organizations that function for profit, making it difficult to control and/or discipline volunteers since they are there by choice and not because they are earning a paycheck and benefits (Cady et al., 2018; Ward & Greene, 2018). Traditional HRM management strategies may also not work since this approach is often bureaucratic in nature and does not allow enough flexibility for the needs of volunteers (Einolf & Yung, 2018). When nonprofit volunteer coordinators/managers provide individual attention, flexibility and customized work

schedules/positions to volunteers, there can be increased satisfaction and interest in remaining with the organization long term, which is more cost effective for the organization (York, 2017).

Volunteer Training

Lack of training can contribute to decreased employee motivation and performance (Nesbit et al., 2016) while effective training and development of volunteers may positively impact their satisfaction and organizational commitment (Zollo et al., 2019). If those who manage volunteers do not have the knowledge and skills to manage volunteers it can lead to frustration, anxiety, turnover, burnout, and negative attitudes in the volunteers and those they work with (Dean & Willis, 2017; Nesbit et al., 2016).

When coordinators of volunteer training program provide role clarity, in addition to supervision and support, they may be able to reduce retention and turnover issues (Claxton-Oldfield, 2016; Moghaddam et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2016). Training programs should include information about volunteer roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, expectations, coordinator/manager support, communication strategies (through meetings, newsletters and contact with the volunteer coordinator), team building opportunities, educational advancement (workshops, updated skills), and support from the organization through reimbursement of any out-of-pocket expenses to foster engagement and retention (Claxton-Oldfield, 2016).

Training within animal shelters should also encompass volunteer roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, expectations, coordinator/manager support, communication strategies, team building opportunities, educational advancement, and

support from the organization through reimbursement to foster engagement and retention (Claxton-Oldfield, 2016; Protopopova et al., 2020; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). Proper training, attention to detail and standard operating procedures are critical to provide quality care in animal shelters (Griffin, 2012). For instance, implementation of a volunteer training curriculum can increase adoptability of dogs and training knowledge of animal shelter volunteers (Bright & Hadden, 2017). When volunteers receive specialized training, it can boost their confidence and self-esteem which can lead to a positive effect on their behavior and adoption rates (Bright & Hadden, 2017).

However, part of the issue of establishing an effective training program is the lack of knowledge on the part of leadership as to what volunteers should be trained in (Federico et al., 2020). Many volunteer coordinators do not have the skill set to identify training that their volunteers need on an individual basis (Federico et al., 2020) since in some cases, the volunteer coordinator role is vague (Nesbit et al., 2016). A careful selection and training of a volunteer coordinator/manager role is vital to ensure volunteers are managed and their needs are met (Nesbit et al., 2016). National organizations such as the ASPCA and HSUS provide training which can also be of value in some cases since this is free or low-cost training for shelter volunteers (Federico et al., 2020). In addition, local experts can be a beneficial resource to provide hands-on training to supplement basic standardized volunteer training and these experts may be willing to volunteer their time to assist the organization in training their volunteers. Other volunteer training opportunities can include conferences, meetings and webinars and reading and

viewing of publications, instructional videos, online training, and textbooks however many of these require funds that the organization may not have (Griffin, 2012).

Volunteer Retention

Retention is often neglected by volunteer managers as they may be focused on getting the required work done and not on the factors that may cause a volunteer to continue to volunteer or leave the organization (Merrilees et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2016). Because these coordinators may not know about or understand the reasons volunteers enlist, remain, or leave NPOs (Merrilees et al., 2020) they may not know how to support their volunteers. Yet, researchers who have studied retention suggested that volunteer motivation played a key role in developing effective approaches to retain volunteers (Chacón et al., 2017; Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019; Stefanick et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2016; Zollo et al., 2017).

Support from management and engagement is also important. If volunteer management practices are created that support and engage volunteers, they may be better equipped to perform their roles (Aboramadan et al., 2019; Kappelides et al., 2020; Lv & Xu, 2018). Programs that integrated volunteers into the operation, valued their feedback, opinions, and work, and provided clear and aligned roles are more likely to motivate and retain volunteers (McFarland, 2018; Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016). Additionally, recognition of volunteers, access to training and professional development opportunities, and satisfaction of their work may improve retention (Einolf, 2018; Hurst et al., 2017; Milbourn et al., 2019; Reznickova & Zepeda, 2016; Trent et al., 2017; Vareilles et al., 2017).

Even though volunteers may have the option to choose their involvement levels, role clarity can result in positive outcomes and reduced intent to leave, whereas role ambiguity may result in negative job satisfaction and lessened retention (Kramer & Danielson, 2017). Role clarity can aid volunteers in developing relationships and understanding the culture of an organization as well as how they fit into that culture (Kramer & Danielson, 2017). Position alignment, task achievement, and satisfaction may also strengthen a volunteer's intent to continue in their role (Merrilees et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020). In animal shelters, interactions with volunteer leaders and their perceived support were found to be related to volunteer retention (Cady et al., 2018; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017). When leaders of volunteers communicate clear direction, vision, and encouraged feedback, it positively influences volunteers to stay and discourages disengagement (Cady et al., 2018; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Piercy & Kramer, 2017).

Aligning Volunteer Skills/Motivation With Assignment(s)

The matching or alignment of tasks to skills has been found to be related to job satisfaction, performance, and intent to remain in an organization (Cady et al., 2018; Hamerman & Schneider, 2018; Stukas et al., 2016). One of the main reasons one third of volunteers leave organizations each year is due to a failure to match their skills with the tasks that they are asked to perform (Hamerman & Schneider, 2018). In some cases, a volunteer is committed to the organization's purpose or cause but may not be motivated to contribute to a specific task (Cady et al., 2018). Task demands outside of the job

description or expectations may be due to lack of communication, preparation, and organizational support (Wicker, 2017).

Volunteer coordinators should ensure skill to task matching and attempt to satisfy volunteer preferences in relation to the type of work, times they prefer to work, and how many hours they wish to work (Güntert et al., 2016; Salmani et al., 2019). Providing tasks aligned to their interests can result in more positive satisfaction with the volunteer role and motivation to complete the assigned tasks (Nencini et al., 2016; Reznickova & Zepeda, 2016; Rogalsky et al., 2016). When volunteers are happy with their assigned tasks, they are more inclined to continue in that role (Stukas et al., 2016). Like motivation and retention, a volunteer's satisfaction and engagement with tasks determines their intent to stay or leave (Milbourn et al., 2019). The effectiveness of volunteer training, skills alignment, and motivation impact retention.

Volunteer Attrition

Volunteer Burnout

People may assume an emotional burden when working in organizations that help others (Gonzalez-Mendez et al., 2020; Houston-Kolnik et al., 2017). This is often referred to as compassion fatigue or burnout. Burnout is a reaction to emotionally demanding work and is defined as a stress syndrome characterized by exhaustion and a cynical attitude towards work (Seemann et al., 2019; Setti et al., 2018; Viljoen & Claassen, 2017). Burnout manifests in increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization of those they are helping, and a decreased sense of personal accomplishment (Harmon & Xu, 2018) and has been linked to impaired attention and memory, sleep disturbances,

depression, anxiety, decreased work capacity, and sickness or absence from work (Gonzalez-Mendez et al., 2020; Viljoen & Claassen, 2017). These experiences may result in the individual deciding to leave a position or the organization (Harmon et al, 2018).

Other factors that contribute to burnout include job–person mismatch, lack of reward or recognition, job satisfaction decreases, and value conflict between the individual and the organization (Harmon et al, 2018; Scherer et al., 2016) as well as role ambiguity and conflict (Setti et al., 2018) and disengagement with the assigned role (Saint Martin et al., 2019). Burnout occurs less if work is perceived as purposeful and helps others leading to higher self-esteem, motivation, greater sense of purpose, and satisfaction (Molina et al., 2017; Saint Martin et al., 2019; Setti et al., 2018). The greater the misalignment between the volunteer's goals and values, and those of the organization, the more burnout is experienced. Further, burnout is positively related to intentions to quit; as burnout increases, volunteer intentions to quit also increases (Scherer, 2016).

In addition to misalignment between volunteer goals, personality and values, volunteers in the nonprofit animal shelter environment may also be faced with lack of resources and the reality that the animal's life consists of suffering and sometimes death (Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). They may feel a profound responsibility and empathy for suffering animals and could be negatively affected by witnessing acts of violence and oppression against animals (Gorski et al., 2019). These intense emotions could be perceived by others as irrational and emotional and may result in dismissive attitudes from management. This can contribute to frustration and burnout in volunteers (Gorski et al., 2019).

Many volunteers working in animal shelters can be exposed to physical labor, physical stimuli (noxious odor, loud noise, dirty), strained work relationships, lack of social support, and high animal death rates (Guenther, 2017; Monaghan et al., 2020; Protopopova et al., 2020). Volunteers also may face strain associated with having to care for animals they later euthanize which places them at a high risk for compassion fatigue, burnout, and a higher suicide rate of more than three times that of the average American worker (Federico, 2020; Kinchen, 2019; Marton et al., 2020; Protopopova et al., 2020).

Researchers have found a positive correlation between the number of dogs euthanized and employee turnover in animal shelters, suggesting that greater euthanasia rates may be related to a decline in job satisfaction (Protopopova et al., 2020). Since volunteers interact and grow close to the animals, they face a contradiction in their roles as they may act as both caregivers and killers of shelter animals (Guenther, 2017). This paradox may have damaging effects on their mental and physical health and have been found to be related to exiting the animal rescue environment (Guenther, 2017). Volunteers who experience emotionally upsetting situations (such as the euthanasia of dogs and cats) may become angry with the organization and staff and may distance themselves from others and have conflicts with shelter management (Herzog, 2017).

Volunteer Turnover

According to Piercy and Kramer (2017), the volunteer turnover rate was over 35% annually in the United States versus less than 4% for paid employees. This discrepancy in higher volunteer turnover rates versus employee turnover rates can be

explained through the fact that it is much easier to leave a volunteer position than a regular position since the volunteer position is unpaid (Aboramadan et al., 2019).

Another reason volunteers leave is due to personal, employment and educational commitments. The amount of time required to volunteer weekly or long-term may interfere with other obligations such as family, work, and school (Stefanick et al., 2020; Willems & Dury, 2017). Lack of volunteer commitment, engagement, and satisfaction increases costs and difficulty attracting new volunteers (Aboramadan et al., 2019; Harmon & Xu, 2018). Perceived expectations of volunteers are also a factor in turnover, especially if they differ from their actual experience. For example, volunteers seek rewarding work in a friendly environment that fits their availability while administrators expect volunteers to comply with professional, legal, and regulatory requirements (Sheptak & Menaker, 2016).

In some cases, when long-term volunteering is a barrier, volunteer coordinators can benefit from offering flexibility to volunteers in the form of episodic volunteering (donating small amounts of time at unscheduled or single occasions). Remaining flexible to the needs of volunteers can mitigate turnover (Hyde et al., 2016). Although in some volunteer situations, it may be financially unfeasible to provide extensive training to episodic volunteers, including those in hospice, and first responders since these organizations depend on long-term, intensive commitments (McNamee & Peterson, 2016). Burnout and compassion fatigue are directly connected to volunteer attrition; the greater the likelihood of burnout, the greater the chances of volunteers leaving.

Summary & Conclusions

In the above section, PO fit theory and its components were described that relate to identifying a values fit between employees, volunteers and organizations. Aspects of the volunteer lifecycle, such as recruitment, retention, burnout, and job satisfaction as well as characteristics of diversity (gender, age, ethnicity) were discussed with relevancy to PO fit. Finally, PO fit and employees versus PO fit and volunteers were discussed. While research exists on volunteer recruitment, motivation, management, training, retention, skills/motivation, burnout, and turnover, limited research exists on these aspects within the animal shelter environment. Volunteer coordinators of animal shelters need to understand the volunteer cycle to reduce the turnover and contribute to greater retention of volunteers (Leuty, et al., 2019; Nesbit, et al., 2016; Su et al., 2015).

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this general, qualitative study is to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. Researchers have examined PO fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017), but few researchers have used PO fit when studying volunteer retention in NPOs (Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). This information could be used to better inform training for volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations, as well as other organizations that use volunteers, to understand how to motivate and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer retention in animal welfare organizations. In this chapter, I will cover research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, methodology, and issues of trustworthiness.

Research Design and Rationale

The main research question for this study is: What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations? This was a qualitative study using a general qualitative approach. A general qualitative research design is used to investigate participants' opinions, attitudes, beliefs, or experiences of events (Percy et al., 2015). Using a qualitative approach aligned with the purpose and research question since I

attempted to gain knowledge about the experiences of the participants and not relationships between variables. General qualitative inquiry was used in this study to discover information without relying on any single or combined research approach or a particular tradition or philosophical underpinning. The focus was on collecting data through interviewing or observation, analyzing data by identifying themes, and presenting information to the reader (Given, 2008; Lichtman, 2014; Liu, 2016; Thomas, 2006.

While other approaches were considered, they did not fit the study. For example, in grounded theory, a development of theory from the research is anticipated (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). However, I used a theoretical framework that is already established and did not seek to develop theory, so this did not align with the study (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Ethnography relies on developing an in-depth view of a culture through immersion over an extended time period including fieldwork and several data collection techniques, which was not feasible for a doctoral study (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Case studies are useful for generating hypotheses, testing hypotheses, and building theories (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). However, I was not attempting to generate hypotheses or build theories through this research (Astalin, 2013; Teherani et al., 2015). Therefore, a general qualitative research design was a better fit for the study because I was not limited by the requirements of other studies mentioned above.

Role of the Researcher

My role as researcher was to gain information and knowledge from participants about their experiences (Karagiozis, 2018). I only recruited individuals that I did not know and therefore did not have any professional or personal relationships with. To manage potential study biases, reflexivity was used (Galdas, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Reflexivity is the process by which researchers reflect critically upon themselves (Phillips & Carr, 2007). I used an analytical memo throughout the research process to document data analysis, create connections to the literature, and note emerging themes (Phillips & Carr, 2007).

Bracketing is a researcher's awareness of vested interests, personal experience, and assumptions that can potentially influence the data of a study (Fischer, 2009; Gearing, 2004; Tufford & Newman, 2012). Bracketing keeps interviews on a personal level despite the researcher knowing about the topic prior to the study (Sorsa et al., 2015). For example, I realized and acknowledged my personal values and feelings that influenced the study. Both personal and research-based bracketing were considered since theoretical framework and literature review knowledge was also acknowledged (Sorsa et al., 2015). The method of bracketing that I used was reflexive journaling, which was started prior to beginning the study. A reflexive journal allowed me to identify and explore my interest in this study and assumptions or preconceived notions about the study population and environment, as well as my personal value system (Tufford & Newman, 2012).

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

Population

The population consisted of volunteer coordinators (or managers, depending on the title) who worked in animal shelters and were familiar with managing volunteers in the stages of recruitment, training, and retention. Some organizations may call the position either coordinator or manager, but so long as the position duties were the same, speaking with both types helped with obtaining information. There are approximately 318 animal welfare and advocacy NPOs within the state of Florida (Guidestar, n.d.) and approximately 35 animal shelters who employ volunteer coordinator/managers in the Tampa Bay region (Petfinder, n.d.).

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy consisted of a combination of purposive convenience sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is the intentional (nonrandom) selection of a participant determined by the qualities they have (Etikan et al., 2016) and is appropriate to identify and recruit those who share the same experience (Etikan et al., 2016; Schatz, 2012). Convenience sampling was also used, as a nonrandom sampling where target population members meet outlined criteria, such as accessibility, geographical proximity, availability, and willingness to participate (Etikan et al., 2016). Snowball sampling is the process in which researchers ask targeted participants to indirectly recruit other participants (Marcus et al., 2017; TenHouten, 2017). Snowball

sampling was used in the case of volunteer coordinators who know others in the same position and referred to me.

Criteria for participant selection was based on those who hold the position of a volunteer coordinator or volunteer manager in an animal shelter. Participants met the criteria if they were in a volunteer coordinator or manager position and directly oversaw the volunteer process (including recruitment, training, and retention), were 18 years of age or older, understood English, and were employed in the volunteer coordinator/manager role for at least 6 months. These parameters ensured I spoke to the correct type of person to provide information that was used in the study (Reybold et al., 2013; Sargeant, 2012). Participants who did not meet these criteria were not considered for the study since they did not have any information to provide on the subject (Reybold et al., 2013).

Sample Size

In a qualitative study, adequate sample size depends upon who and what is being studied and the meaning that is drawn from the data collected (Boddy, 2016; Galvin, 2015; Mason, 2010). When collecting data in a qualitative study, it is important that data are collected until saturation is reached (Galvin, 2015; Mason, 2010). This means that the answers given to the questions asked are being repeated by multiple participants so that no new information is being gathered. Some researchers suggest a sample of 6 to 10 may be adequate for sampling among a homogenous population while still reaching saturation (Boddy, 2016; Galvin, 2015). Therefore, the number of participants that were sought was 10 to 15 with a final number of 10 if saturation was met by that point (Boddy,

2016; Galvin, 2015). I submitted to IRB a range to ensure that I had enough participants to reach data saturation.

Potential participants were identified through their position via organizational websites and Facebook and Instagram pages (Table 1). Most animal shelters had the name of the volunteer coordinator/manager displayed on their website, and I directly emailed that individual to recruit them for the study from the information found on the website. I also searched Facebook and posted a request on identified pages to ask for contact information of the appropriate individuals to speak with. The Walden Participant Pool was not used since there were unlikely to be any participants that fit the criteria.

Table 1

Recruitment Websites

Social Media	Groups
Facebook	Volunteer Coordinator Resource Community
	Animal Shelter/Rescue Workers Network
	Volunteer With Animals
	Volunteer Coordinator Resource Community
	Animal Shelter/Rescue Workers Network
	Volunteer With Animals
	Animal Shelter Volunteers
	Florida Animal Shelter Reform Movement
	Pasco County Animal Services
	Hillsborough County Animal Services
	Animal Shelters Near Me
	Humane Society of Tampa Bay
	Friends of Strays
	Humane Society of Pinellas

	SPCA Tampa Bay
	Pinellas County Animal Services
	Humane Society of Pasco County
	Humane Society of Manatee County
	Humane Society of Sarasota County
	Hernando County Animal Shelter
	Humane Society at Lakewood Ranch
	Polk County Animal Control
	Humane Society of Polk County
	Sarasota County Animal Services
	Hardee County Animal Control
	Pet Resource Center, Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL
Instagram	Pet Pal Animal Shelter
LinkedIn	Volunteer Coordinators
	Humane Society of Tampa Bay
	Hillsborough County Animal Services
	Pasco County Animal Services
	Humane Society of Pinellas
	SPCA Tampa Bay
	Pinellas County Animal Services
	Humane Society of Pasco County
	Humane Society of Manatee County
	Humane Society of Sarasota County
	Hernando County Animal Shelter
	Polk County Animal Control
	Humane Society at Lakewood Ranch
	Humane Society of Polk County
	Sarasota County Animal Services
	Hardee County Animal Control
	Pet Resource Center, Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL

Instrumentation

Demographic Form

Demographic information was collected to describe the sample in relation to the

population to which the results of this study were being generalized (McCormick et al..

2017; Salkind, 2010). Demographics such as years of experience and age were

considered. Participants who were at least 18 years old and had at least 6 months of

experience in a volunteer coordinator/manager role were sought. The intended

demographic information collected is outlined below in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographic Form Variables

Variable	Values/Coding
Age	Actual age in years
Gender	0=male 1=female 99=prefer not to answer
Ethnicity	0=White 1= American Indian or Alaska Native 2= Asian 3= Black or African American 4= Hispanic or Latino 5= Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 6=two or more 99=prefer not to answer
Time working in role	Actual number of months (can be recoded to years if determined necessary when reporting demographics)
Time volunteering/working with animal organizations	Actual number of months (can be recoded to years if determined necessary when reporting demographics)
Education level	0=no high school diploma 1=HS or GED 2=some college

	3=associates degree
	4=bachelor's degree
	5=master's degree
	6=doctoral/PhD degree
	99=prefer not to answer
Number of volunteers supervised	Actual number of volunteers supervised
	99=don't know
Size of organization	Actual number of employees
	99=don't know
Type of nonprofit funding (government, private donations, combination)	0=government funded
	1=private donations
	2=combination
	99=prefer not to answer/don't know

Semi-Structured Interview

Interviewing is a primary source of qualitative research due the rich, individualized context that it provides (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). There are many reasons to conduct qualitative interviews, including developing an understanding and integration of multiple perspectives, describing processes and experiences in depth, obtaining holistic information on realities, experiences, and phenomena, and learning how participants interpret experiences and events (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Data collection instrumentation consisted of researcher-developed interview questions that were open-ended, allowing the participant to provide detailed answers.

The basis for instrument development was founded in the theoretical framework and literature on PO fit and the components of volunteer management identified within the literature (recruitment, training, motivation, and retention). PO fit is the compatibility between individuals and organizations, including values, interests, and behavior (Cable & Judge, 1996; Mehlika et al., 2017; Olubiyi et al., 2019). Alignment between an individual's personality and values and the environment will increase the likelihood of

staying in the role (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Therefore, it was essential to identify whether volunteer coordinators/managers considered this aspect when recruiting, training, motivating, and retaining volunteers to determine if PO fit played a role in recruiting, training, motivating, and retaining volunteers within the organization.

The data collection source consisted of recorded audio files of the interview. I listened carefully to responses and prompted interviewees to provide more information on vague or unanswered questions. I asked for more clarification as needed to ensure I understood what the participants were attempting to convey. This aided in garnering rich and in-depth information from the participants. Content validity is supported through the research questions to collect and capture participant perspectives (Brod et al., 2009). Content validity was established through construction of the interview questions (see Table 3) and ensuring that the information collected was consistent with the questions asked and the responses of the participants (Brod et al., 2009). The questions were asked to specifically answer the main research question and included other questions to learn about strategies/methods for volunteer recruitment, training, motivation, and retention issues.

Table 3

Interview Questions by Related Research Question

Interview question	Prompts
1. What strategies are used to recruit volunteers?	Tell me more about specific methods used to attract or recruit volunteers.
2. What type of screening process is used during recruitment to determine if the volunteer is a good it within the organization?	Are there specific questions asked when a volunteer expresses an interest in volunteering?
3. How do you determine if a volunteer's values are aligned with those of the organization?	What happens if a volunteer's values do not align with the organization?

4.	What training did you receive to work in a volunteer coordinator/manager role and supervise volunteers?	
5.	How are volunteers trained or introduced to their tasks?	Tell me about specific training or orientation for the volunteer role.
6.	What types of activities/strategies are used to determine what motivates volunteers?	Tell me about specific questions that are asked to determine motivation.
7.	How do you determine which activities to assign volunteers?	
8.	How do volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations personalize volunteer experiences/duties based on what motivates the volunteer?	Tell me how you match a volunteer with a task/duty that interests him/her.
9.	How do you communicate with volunteers during their tenure regarding questions or problems?	Tell me more about how problems/issues are handled.
10.	In what ways do you handle volunteers who are thinking of no longer volunteering to persuade them to continue?	Tell me about specific guidelines to retain volunteers.
11.	Why do you think that volunteers choose to leave their position?	What have you observed as reasons that volunteers quit?
12.	Do you have any other information that you want to share?	

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment

After Walden IRB approval to conduct the study was granted, participants were recruited using social media (Facebook, LinkedIn) websites for animal shelters in the greater Tampa Bay, FL area (Tampa, Clearwater, St. Petersburg, Bradenton, Brandon, and Riverview) via a flyer (Appendix A) and by researching specific websites for names of employees who served as volunteer coordinators/managers in animal shelters. My recruitment flyer was posted on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn) websites for animal shelters in the greater Tampa Bay, FL area (Tampa, Clearwater, St. Petersburg, Bradenton, Brandon, Riverview, Sarasota) with study details, inclusion criteria and my contact information.

For the inclusion questions I asked if they were employed in a volunteer coordinator or manager position and directly oversaw the volunteer process (including recruitment, training, and retention), were 18 years of age or older, and had been employed in the volunteer coordinator/manager role for at least 6 months. If the inclusion criteria for the study was met, I emailed the potential participants providing them a copy of the informed consent form and asking them to read and reply via email with the words "I consent." Once I received their consent, I scheduled the interview.

Participation

When I met with the participants, I began by letting them know that the interview was going to be recorded and asked for their agreement to record the interview. If they agreed I started the recording. If they did not consent to being recorded, I thanked them for their time and let them know that we could not continue. After they gave their verbal consent to recording, I asked demographic information and proceeded with the interview questions via Skype.

Data Collection

The audio portion of the interview was recorded using Skype. Demographic questions were asked first in the interview. I filled out the demographic form and had their answers recorded verbally. During the recorded interview, I utilized journaling to capture any pauses or initial impressions that warranted a closer look at the transcript. Journaling is used in research studies to examine reflections of the researcher and potential biases within a research project (Treharne & Riggs, 2014). This includes thoughts and impressions of the research project both before and after interviews are

conducted (Chenail, 2011). Methods of journaling can include emails or diary entries in the form of a notebook or recorder (Chenail, 2011).

After I asked the interview questions and any follow up questions, I wrapped up the interview by thanking participants for their time. I assigned numerical codes to identify participants to maintain confidentiality and privacy. If a participant later informed me that they no longer wanted to participate in the study, I paired the code to the name to withdraw their information from the study.

Data Analysis Plan

The audio transcripts of completed interviews were sent to a transcription professional at Rev.com (https://www.rev.com/) to put into a Word document. Information from the Word document was sorted in Excel to track the codes, themes, and categories. A first cycle coding consisted of holistic coding. Holistic coding captured overall contents and potential categories as a preparatory evaluation to second cycle in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2015). Second cycle coding consisted of in vivo coding (also referred to as verbatim, literal, and natural) which highlighted ways participants used words or phrases to express stories or ideas through their spoken words (Manning, 2017). In vivo coding was appropriate since it captured the participant's voice in short phrases and included terminology of a particular group of people (volunteer coordinators) or culture (NPOs; Saldaña, 2015). Categories were listed as a heading on an Excel spreadsheet and then each short phrase underneath the relevant heading (as a subheading), to keep the information organized.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Creating a process for establishing trustworthiness within qualitative research is essential to rigor (Amankwaa, 2016). To ensure trustworthiness, steps are outlined below to confirm credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. Participant informed consent, transparency, confidentiality, and reciprocity are also essential elements of rigor and trustworthiness (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Credibility

Credibility (internal validity) provides confidence in the truth of the findings (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). I addressed credibility through data transcription, analysis, and interpretation. I emailed a copy of the transcript to participants for member checking, and asked them to review, comment, revise, or provide additional insight within a 7-day timeframe. If they did not respond in that timeframe, I accepted that as the participant confirming their transcript. A reflexive journal was used to record my thoughts, feelings and any biases that influenced findings.

Transferability

Transferability (external validity) shows that findings have applicability within other contexts (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). I established the potential for transferability through rich, descriptive information detailing the research method, my role as a researcher, data collection and data analysis. To achieve the potential for transferability, I established the need for the study through research of existing literature on the topic. Transferability will be determined by other researchers based on the methods above. I purposefully sampled participants who provided in depth knowledge of

the topic (Anney, 2014). I also observed my reactions through memos and noted any feelings I experienced during the interview and data analysis process.

Dependability

Dependability (reliability) indicates that the findings are consistent and repeatable (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). A journal was used to identify any feelings and reactions that emerged during the interviews with potential to bias the interview process, including collecting and analyzing data obtained from the participants (Chenail, 2011). I kept a detailed journal that consisted of interview and observation notes, and any emails collected during the research process (Treharne & Riggs, 2014).

Confirmability

Confirmability (objectivity) is the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not by researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). An important part of the process is to use reflexivity to understand my own biases and stereotypes and recognize those as part of the process (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). To this end, I utilized a reflexive journal to consider my own values, thoughts, and feelings during the research process (Amankwaa, 2016; Pandey & Patnaik, 2014; Shenton, 2004).

<div align="center">

Ethical Procedures

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Prior to recruiting participants and collecting data, I obtained approval from Walden University's IRB. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and participants had the option to exit the study at any point in time. Study participants were informed that their participation, name, and responses would be kept confidential. A

transcriber was used and as part of the transcription process, confidentiality was guaranteed. Participants were emailed the consent form and asked to review and reply to my email with the words "I consent." Participants were not provided with any monetary or other incentives. The target population was not considered to be protected or vulnerable as the participants were required to be 18 years old or older so that parental consent was not required. I did not recruit any specific groups considered vulnerable (pregnant women, prisoners, those with diminished mental capacity, etc.). Demographic information was reported in aggregate in the final dissertation and any quotes from the interviews were masked to reduce the risk of someone reading and identifying the participant. In addition, specific social media sites used to recruit participants were masked in the final dissertation to reduce risk of participant identification. Recordings, transcripts, and other data will be kept on my password protected computer for the IRB's required 5 years.

Summary

The purpose of this general, qualitative study was to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. Throughout this chapter, I provided a detailed description of the research method, sampling strategy, criteria, and recruitment of participants. Data collection methods, interview questions and data analysis were also discussed. Strategies to address trustworthiness and ethics were highlighted as well.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this general, qualitative study was to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. The main research question for this study was: What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations? In this chapter, I discuss the study setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and the results.

Setting

IRB approval (01-08-21-0678318) was granted on January 8, 2021. The study was posted on January 9, 2021 on sites discussed in Chapter 3. The Walden participant pool was not an appropriate avenue of recruitment since I was unlikely to find any participants that fit my study parameters, so this site was not used. There were a couple of unique situations I experienced as data were collected. Two participants had been the volunteer manager but had recently transitioned to a new position within the same organization. Both participants agreed to speak with me and provide information since their successors did not have the minimum 6 months' experience and therefore did not meet the inclusion criteria for the study. Another participant was a co-coordinator and oversaw volunteers who worked with the dogs in the shelter. His counterpart oversaw the volunteers who worked with the cats.

Demographics

Demographic information was collected from each participant (eight participants total) and is represented below in Table 4. The largest percentages were aged between 30 and 50 (37.5%) and female (75%), and all participants identified as White/Caucasian (100%). The longest time working (in months) was between 24 and 35 months (25%), while the largest percentage of participants' time working/volunteering in animal organizations (25%) was 12 to 23 months, 24 to 35 months, and over 80 months. The majority of participants (62.5%) had completed a bachelor's degree. Seventy-five percent of participants supervised more than 111 volunteers. Size of the organization ranged from 1 to 10 (37.5%) and 51 to 100 (37.5%) as the largest representation. Type of funding was split equally (50%) between private donations and a combination (private donations and government funding).

Table 4

Demographic Information (N = 8)

Variable	Category	% of sample
Age	18-29	--
	30-39	37.5
	40-49	37.5
	50-59	--
	60+	25.0
Gender	Male	25.0
	Female	75.0
Ethnicity	White	100
Time working in role	<1 year	12.5
	12-23 months	12.5
	24-35 months	25.0
	36-47 months	12.5
	48-59 months	12.5
	60-79 months	12.5
	80+	12.5
Time volunteering/working with animal organizations	<1 year	--
	12-23 months	25.0
	24-35 months	25.0
	36-47 months	12.5
	48-59 months	12.5
	60-79 months	--
	80+	25.0
Education level	High school (HS)	12.5

	Bachelor's degree	62.5
	Master's degree	25.0
Number of volunteers supervised	0-10	--
	11-29	12.5
	30-59	--
	60-89	--
	90-110	12.5
	111+	75.0
Size of organization	0-10 employees	37.5
	20-50 employees	--
	51-100 employees	37.5
	101+	12.5
	Don't know	12.5
Type of nonprofit funding	Government funded	--
	Private donations	50.0
	Combination (government and private donations)	50.0

Data Collection

I posted my flyer on Facebook groups and LinkedIn and directly contacted volunteer coordinators whose names were listed on animal welfare organization websites. A few Facebook members and two participants referred me to other individuals they knew who worked in similar roles via snowball sampling. I was able to reach and speak with two of these referrals for the study and unable to reach a few others. For the individuals I was able to reach on the phone or via email, I described my study and asked them if they wanted to participate. If they said yes, I sent them an email with the details of the study (the flyer, Appendix A) and the consent form (Appendix B) and asked them to reply to the email with the words "I consent" if they wanted to participate. Once they responded via email with the words "I consent," I set up an interview date and time.

Data were collected from a total of eight participants using semi-structured interviews. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in person interviews were not deemed safe, therefore virtual interviews were conducted using the Skype platform. Over the course of 5 weeks, interviews were held and varied in length from 18 minutes to 30 minutes. Calls were recorded after the participant gave verbal consent to be recorded. The Skype software presented some challenges with a couple of participants being able to access the meeting link, and on one occasion I had to reschedule the interview since the recording feature did not work. There were also a few issues downloading the recording to send to the transcription company. Also, because video was not used, I was not able to witness the participants' nonverbal body language to assess how they felt about the study

questions. In lieu of video, I paid attention to the tone of the voice and any hesitation in their answers to questions asked.

Initially, 10 to 15 participants were sought, with a final number of 10 if data saturation was met by that point. However, I reached data saturation (no new information received after asking multiple participants) after speaking with 5 participants. Even though I reached data saturation after 5 participants, I conducted interviews with 3 more participants, to verify saturation, for a total number of 8 participants. I discussed believing that I reached saturation with my committee members, and they indicated that I could stop data collection with 8 interviews.

Data Analysis

Transcription & Data Verification

Once each interviewed was completed, an audio recording was submitted to the transcription service Rev.com (https://www.rev.com/) to be converted into a transcript in the form of a MS Word document. Once the transcript was sent, I downloaded the document and saved it to a data collection folder on my personal computer. I also emailed a copy of the transcript to participants for member checking and asked them to review, comment, revise, or provide additional insight within a 7-day timeframe. All participants confirmed that the information was accurate, except for two participants who pointed out a minor spelling error in the transcript. To verify that the information in the transcript matched the recorded interview, I read through the transcript while listening to the interview recording.

I then created a MS Excel document and organized the responses to each question by participant. I began a new line for each question and underneath that line listed each participant (1-8) on a separate line. I copied the responses from the Word document for each question and pasted them into the Excel spreadsheet for each corresponding question. There were 2 columns at the top of the page for first cycle (holistic) and second cycle (in vivo) coding. This allowed me to read through each response passage to look for themes and categories within the responses.

Initial Coding

Each question was analyzed with holistic first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2015) to capture an overall code word for that segment of data. For each question, I looked through participant responses to see if there were similar items that could be coded to a theme. Once a code was identified, it was grouped into categories, and those categories were identified as themes (see Saldaña, 2015). For example, in the first question (What strategies are used to attract/recruit volunteers?), all participants cited Facebook, the organization's website, Instagram, and Volunteermatch.org as ways to attract volunteers, so one of the holistic codes used was online/social media because those are all various forms of social media and online recruitment. The same tactic was employed for each question, whereby I looked for similar responses that led me to overall words that captured the responses of the participants. Second cycle (in vivo) coding was used to capture direct verbatim quotes from participants to support the first cycle coding. For example, in Question 1 the phrase "utilize a couple of online sources" was stated by Participant 3 so it was captured verbatim in second cycle coding.

Holistic coding was used to capture words that summarized content as a preparatory evaluation to in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2015). Second cycle coding consisted of in vivo coding (also referred to as verbatim, literal, and natural) and highlighted ways participants used words or phrases to express stories or ideas through their spoken words (Manning, 2017). Coding categories were listed as a heading on an Excel document, and then each short phrase was added underneath the relevant heading (as a subheading) to keep the information organized.

Second cycle in vivo coding was used to represent specific groups of quotes used by participants as they related to each question. In vivo coding expressed the participant's voice in short phrases and included terminology of a particular group of people (volunteer coordinators) and culture (NPOs; Saldaña, 2015). Table 5 details each question, the first cycle holistic coding used, and the second cycle in vivo coding used.

Table 5

First and Second Cycle Coding

First cycle coding (holistic)	Second cycle (in vivo)	Theme	Participant quotes
Recruiting/attracting	-Online/social media -word of mouth -promoting through events	**THEME 1:** The first part of retaining is attracting and screening to filter out those with dissimilar expectations (fit). Description of how theme operates: Recruiting happens through online (SM), word of mouth and events. Recruiting and screening happens through interviews, shadowing, and background checks.	"word of mouth" "utilize a couple of different online resources" "promote through events" "volunteer services has separate dept that recruits" "presentations at senior groups" "Facebook"
Recruiting/screening	Application process • Shadowing/shadow with mentors • Interview—phone or not • Self-select • Background		"volunteers self select" "shadowing" "interview potential volunteers" "phone screen to determine interest" "background checks" "interviews" "orientation" "shadow with volunteer mentors" "expectations met and realistic" "series of questions" "working to revamp the program"
Alignment (retention)	• Transparency • Ethics • Aligned with policies	**THEME 2:** Alignment w values, training, personalization, and communication are important aspects of retention. Description of how theme operates: Transparency,	"up front about org values" "screening through orientation" "transparency with processes and practices" "compassion for animals and people" "code of ethics" "tricky" "emotional environment" "not as concerned about values" "make sure they have the competence & ability to say no" "asked why they were there"

		Ethics, training for managers and training for volunteers, communication—open door policy, suggestions, feedback, contact info, recognition, and incentives.	
Manager training (retention)	• Hands-on/trial by fire • No formal training		"experience in nonprofit sector" "training in volunteer and community outreach aligned" "certified and trained through NCL" "fine-tuned experience through webinars" "worked as cat liaison" "trial by fire" "learned through hands on" "background as volunteer"
Volunteer training (retention)	• In-person training • Online courses/online training • Shadowing		"use of online courses and in person training" "pathways" "safety protocols" "shadowing" "introduce values, mission and processes" "specialized training" "taught animal behavior and handling first" "hands on" "virtual orientation" "digital handbook with volunteer etiquette" "fosters aren't provided a lot of training" "adoption people provided 3-5 training sessions" "Zoom training" "would be hands on with them"
Communication question (retention)	• Open door policy • First point of contact • Suggestions/anonymous • Email/contact/phone/cell number		"open door policy" "name of department heads with pictures" "go to contact person" "first point of contact" "contact info listed in volunteer room" "anonymous suggestions" "quick and efficient responses via email" "make rounds on volunteer shifts" "give out cell number" "respond to and fix problems" "greet them when they come in" "checking in" "helping them" "variety of team members who stay in contact to provide help" "express concerns via email"
Retention	• Depends on situation • Recognize milestones/appreciation		"recognize volunteers and milestones" "incentivize continuing to volunteer" "understanding different motivations"

	• Incentivize—giving swag, more responsibilities • Conversations—what's going on		"hear them out" "new job" "frustrations" "one on one conversations" "creative solutions" "personally thank them" "appreciate them" "conversation including email or text to find out interest" "no room due to moving for fosters" "sometimes people drop off" "ask if there was a specific reason"
Leave (Retention)	• Not aligned expectations • Concern for animal • Mandated for comm service • Snowbirds • Health: COVID/age/physical ability • Stress/burnout/life • Schedule changes • Issues with others or cliques		"not what they expected" "difficult to see animals euthanized or suffering" "snowbirds" "community service mandate" "schedule changes" "inflexibility of long time volunteers" "shift culture" "burnout" "not something they want to do" "issue with another volunteer" "cliques" "pair up early to welcome new people" "lost people due to COVID" "bored" "stressful to foster" "lack of communication" "life gets in the way" "couldn't physically meet the requirements"
CommunicationQuestion (Retention)	• Open door policy • First point of contact • Suggestions/anonymous • Email/contact/phone/cell number		"open door policy" "name of department heads with pictures" "go to contact person" "first point of contact" "contact info listed in volunteer room" *(table continues)* "anonymous suggestions" "quick and efficient responses via email" "make rounds on volunteer shifts" "give out cell number" "respond to and fix problems" "greet them when they come in" "checking in" "helping them" "variety of team members who stay in contact to provide help" "express concerns via email"
MotivationStrategies	• Communication/open communication/newsletter • Ability to provide feedback (survey monkey) • Appreciation events/holiday parties • Adoption stories	**THEME 3:** Aligning tasks with interests of the volunteers keeps them motivated. Description of how theme operates: Motivation is achieved through regular communication, feedback processes, and fit.	"ability to provide feedback to management" "open communication" "weekly newsletter" use "us and we language" for inclusivity "communication" "adoption suceess stories" "updated and informed" "appreciation events" "holiday party" "do something special for exemplary volunteers" "close knit type of family" "socialization for seniors" "keep them involved via lots of communication" "involve volunteers in new programs" "survey monkey" "Christmas party"

			"verbally check in with them"
Assignments (motivation and retention)	• Based on interest— matched/ emotional fulfillment • Self-select	**THEME 4:** Motivation and retention go hand in hand. Description of how theme operates: Several aspects of what participants described was activities and processes that addressed both motivation and retention at the same time, mostly having a personalized approach. Self-selection, interest, emotional fulfillment.	"volunteers self select on application "volunteers express areas of interest & are matched" "application & orientation process" "emotional fulfillment" "nitty gritty work" "they choose" "create positions to empower and keep them motivated" "they select activity they want to participate in" "tried to accommodate their interest"
Personalizeexperiences (Motivation and Retention)	• Based on interest— matched/emotional fulfillment • Self-select		"try to match duty with area of interest" "shadowing" "emotional fulfillment" "nitty gritty work" "choice they make" "create positions to empower and keep them motivated" *(table continues)* "ask self-directed volunteers to do other activities" "touched base with them during shifts" "didn't want recognition; wanted what would help the animals"
Challenges	• Culture • Overseeing large number • Resources • Lack of feedback/ communication	**THEME 5:** Retention practices come with challenges. Description of how theme operates: The culture of the org/group, the number of people, having the right resources, and maintaining communication and feedback.	"overseeing a large number of volunteers is challenging" "leadership position" "using networks for culture shifts" "having resources" "problem when they stop talking" "empower volunteers" call out accomplishments" "call people and leave voicemail vs email" "may not see many volunteers as a foster" "they felt appreciated but didn't want things" "they wanted to just help the animals"

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I ensured trustworthiness through the steps outlined below to confirm credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. I utilized participant informed consent, transparency, confidentiality, and reciprocity to ensure rigor and trustworthiness (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Credibility

A qualitative study is considered credible if the researcher demonstrates engagement by building trust and rapport with interviewees to gain rich, detailed responses (Cope, 2014). Prior to the interviews, I spoke briefly with the participants to describe my study and at this point was able to quickly build rapport before conducting the interview. During the interviews, I practiced active listening and repeated information back to the participant to verify accuracy. I addressed credibility through data transcription, analysis, and interpretation. Once the interview was transcribed, I emailed a Word copy of the transcript to participants for member checking and asked them to review, comment, revise, or provide additional insight within a 7-day timeframe. All participants confirmed that the information was accurate, except for two participants who pointed out a minor spelling error in the transcript. A reflexive journal was used to record my thoughts, feelings and any biases that influenced findings. The reflexive journal helped me to clarify my experiences, values, and assumptions before conducting the research (Ortlipp, 2008). Since I had volunteered previously at one of the organizations, I anticipated that the participant response would match my personal experience. I recognized my preconceived expectations and worked to remain impartial to their

responses so that my own experience did not interfere with the interpretation of the results. To help accomplish this, I adhered to the questions on my interview guide to keep me on track and that decreased the likelihood of asking irrelevant questions.

Transferability

Transferability (external validity) was established via the rich, descriptive information detailing the research method, my role as a researcher, data collection and data analysis throughout chapter 3 and by following these guidelines as I collected and analyzed my data. To achieve transferability, I established the need for the study through research of existing literature on the topic. I purposefully sampled participants who provided in depth knowledge of the topic (Anney, 2014). I also observed my reactions through memos and noting any feelings I experienced during the interview and data analysis process.

Dependability

Dependability (reliability) indicates that the findings are consistent and repeatable (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). I followed the methodology that I described in chapter 3 closely so that another researcher could follow those same steps and replicate my study and results. Since I was the main instrument of data collection via interview-based questions, I needed to strive to be as impartial as possible to increase the reliability of the participants' responses (Ortlipp, 2008). Therefore, a journal was used to identify any feelings and reactions that emerged during the interviews with potential to bias the interview process, including collecting and analyzing data obtained from the participants (Chenail, 2011). I kept a detailed journal that consisted of interview and observation

notes, and any emails collected during the research process (Treharne & Riggs, 2014). To ensure dependability, I read the transcript verbatim of the participant and only used those responses spoken by them for my analysis; thereby reducing the risk of interjecting my own thoughts and beliefs about what was said.

Confirmability

Confirmability (objectivity) is the extent in which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not by researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Amankwaa, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Confirmability was achieved by using a reflexive journal to consider my own values, thoughts, and feelings during the research process (Amankwaa, 2016; Pandey & Patnaik, 2014; Shenton, 2004). For example, I assumed that my questions would be direct and easy to understand. However, a couple of participants struggled with answering questions 7 and 8 because they were very similar, and participants gave the same responses for both questions. I assumed participants were irritated that I asked very similar questions back-to-back when they had previously provided the answer. Instead of asking question 8 verbatim, I restated their answer to question 7 and asked if they wanted to provide any additional information. This was mainly to display active listening to the participant so they would not think I was not paying attention to the answers. I was also surprised that a couple of participants had a graduate degree. I assumed that most would have at least a high school diploma and some college but not have higher than a bachelor's degree.

In addition, I provided my methodologist with a recording of my first interview in order to get feedback on my interviewing skills and to ensure that I was not "leading" the

respondents to reply in certain ways. I also demonstrated confirmability through analysis of findings derived directly from the data by providing rich quotes from the participants (Cope, 2014).

Results

The main research question was "What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations?" Themes derived from the data analysis are listed below, including a description of the theme in relation to the research question and a description of how the theme operates within the context of the theme. There were 5 main themes discovered. Theme 1 was described as the first part of retention is attracting (recruiting) and screening to filter out those with dissimilar expectations (fit) and was focused on the process of attracting and screening qualified individuals to try to ensure fit from the start. The second theme that emerged was that alignment with values, training, personalization, and communication are important aspects of retention. This became evident through many discussions of how personalization is a necessary aspect of fit and retention. Theme 3, aligning tasks with interests of the volunteers kept them motivated, was centered around discussions of interest, fit, and motivation—again addressing retention through personalization. Theme 4, motivation, and retention are interwoven, touches on how motivating volunteers and retaining them are intrinsically tied together. Finally, Theme 5, retention practices present challenges, emerged regarding the challenges to retention. Though participants were able to articulate many ways that they worked to

motivate, personalize, and retain volunteers, this process did not come without challenges.

Theme 1: The First Part of Retaining is Attracting Recruiting) and Screening to Filter Out Those With Dissimilar Expectations (Fit)

Recruiting took place through online (social media), word of mouth and events. Additionally, recruiting and screening occured through interviews, shadowing, and background checks. Participant 4 emphasized Facebook as a means of recruitment by stating "we do Facebook live and we'll talk about having volunteers come out and help support our cause." Other methods of recruitment included using efforts to retain current volunteers so that they would refer others to the organization. One organization had a separate volunteer services department that handled active recruitment so the volunteer coordinator could focus on the management of volunteers.

All but one participant indicated that they established a screening process to determine volunteer and organizational fit. Much of this was determined through a combination of the online application/questionnaire prospective volunteers filled out on the website and either a phone or in person screen conducted by the volunteer coordinator to discuss the role of interest. Of the 8 participants, only 2 indicated that they conducted background checks and one participant indicated their organization required fingerprinting of volunteers before they could begin. Other methods to determine fit included shadowing with another volunteer mentor, signing a waiver and an orientation. Participant 4 also stated that "anyone can volunteer as long as they sign a waiver and pass a background check."

Theme 2: Alignment With Values, Training, Personalization, and Communication are

Important Aspects of Retention

Transparency from the volunteer coordinator, ethics alignment of the volunteer

and the organization, training for managers and training for volunteers, and

communication via an open-door policy, suggestions, feedback, leadership contact info,

recognition and incentives were essential to retaining volunteers. Reasons cited as to why

volunteers left depended on their situation and varied from perceived expectations such

as boredom with the role, to stress, compassion fatigue and burnout. To help avoid

volunteers leaving, personalization of the tasks was applied such as hands on training,

shadowing, and ensuring volunteer fit with interests.

To determine if person-organization fit was assessed, the volunteer coordinator

ensured transparency of policies, which included understanding the mission statement,

objectives, goals, and impact of the organization as well as providing a code of ethics for

volunteers to sign before they could begin with any tasks. Most of this was achieved via

orientation, the online application, initial phone screen with the volunteer or through

shadowing with a volunteer mentor. Participant 5 commented that:

"It's tricky because this is a really emotional type of environment, and we want to

make sure that they can handle that. They sign a document that states expectations

including respect others even though I may not agree with them, display

sensitivity, consideration, and compassion for animals and people."

There was a high degree of consistency among the volunteer coordinators as to

how they trained the volunteers. All volunteer coordinators used a combination of online

(virtual) courses/in person training, welcome packet, orientation, working with another volunteer mentor, or on the job shadowing with either the volunteer coordinator or an experienced volunteer. Training times varied from a couple of hours to 3 to 5 sessions with a mentor, depending on the role. Some volunteer positions had specific training that was catered to their interest and included pathways for advancement, as stated by Participant 1, "There's also an online training course for each one of those paths to let them know what they would need to know for those paths." Other comments included information on the type of training in which volunteers expressed interest. Participant 4 said "We have a specialized training for whatever area they're looking to get into, we make them do a specialized training for that before they're able to start that task." Participant 5 stated, "We have them work their first time in the shelter. They shadow with a mentor and when they come in for training." And Participant 7 stated "My coworker and I would be hands-on with them, teaching them the different aspects that they had signed up for."

All volunteer coordinators mentioned that it was important to inform volunteers of the appropriate contact person during initial training. The coordinator was typically the first point of contact for volunteers. All coordinators also maintained an open-door policy, in some cases providing volunteers with personal contact information. In the case of one very small organization with just a few employees, the executive director and board members were very involved, and the volunteers were encouraged to contact them directly if they felt that they needed an escalation for an issue or problem. Similar messages were expressed by coordinators, such as "In initial trainings, we always let

volunteers know that if they have a problem with something that we're doing or a staff member or another volunteer or whatever the case might be, that they can always go straight to the volunteer manager." (P1) and "I always tell them no matter what the issue is, call me and contact me to let me know and I'll try and resolve whatever the issue is." (P2) and "My office is like their office. We have a couch in here and they just know my door's always open." (P6)

Additionally, constant contact with the volunteer coordinator or volunteer mentors, either in person, via email or through surveys, newsletters or private Facebook groups were also used to inform volunteers how they can address problems or issues. As Participant 6 stated "We have quite a few mentors and we stay in constant contact with them throughout the whole process." "Sometimes they would email us expressing concerns for something that might have taken place on their last shift. We have a private Facebook page for volunteers so sometimes they would post on there." (P7)

Theme 3: Aligning Tasks With Interests of the Volunteers Keeps Them Motivated

Assigned activities were largely determined by the applicant and their interests, prior experiences, background, and passion. In many cases, volunteers indicated their choices and interests on the initial application. During the initial phone screen or orientation, more detail was provided by the volunteer coordinators to explain the activity and ensure there was still an interest from the volunteer. As Participant 5 indicated, "It's always based on interest first, because I want to make sure that they're really comfortable doing what they're doing, and that they definitely have an interest and a passion for it."

Volunteer coordinators used the information obtained from the online application based on self-selected areas of interest from the volunteer to assign them to the appropriate tasks to keep them motivated. One coordinator did however express that they believed in promoting volunteers to other tasks based on their performance, "Once we realize we have a volunteer who's very self-directed then we'll contact them and ask them if they would like to participate in other activities." (P6)

Theme 4: Motivation and Retention are Interwoven

Motivation was achieved through regular communication, feedback processes, and fit. According to all volunteer coordinators, frequent and open communication was key to keeping the volunteers motivated. Many avenues of communication were utilized to keep in touch with volunteers on a regular basis (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) including surveys, volunteer forums, newsletters, Facebook group pages, and emails, as well as verbally checking in with them when they reported to their shifts. Additionally, appreciation lunches, potlucks and holiday parties were held to recognize volunteers and aid in motivation and retention. Many coordinators relied heavily on the use of feedback through surveys to assess what methods of motivation were working and not working. As Participant 5 stated "We do a lot of communication, a lot of keeping them involved." Posting adoption stories to motivate the volunteers was also used. "We can post videos of the dogs during playgroups and stories about the dogs and cats that are coming in here and success adoption stories, and they really enjoy that." (P5) Several aspects of what participants described was activities and processes that addressed both motivation and retention simultaneously, utilizing a personalized approach based on volunteer self-

selection of activities in which they wanted to participate, interest in selected activities, and emotional fulfillment of what they were doing.

Theme 5: Retention Practices Present Challenges

The culture of the organization/group, the number of people, having the right resources, and maintaining communication and feedback were all factors that were cited by participants. It was important to check in with volunteers and frequently to make them feel valued and as part of the team. Participant 2 stated that the volunteer coordinator role was "a leadership role and therefore responsible for setting the standards and culture of that organization while also functioning as a liaison to other leaders." As a slight variant to devoting efforts to communication was Participant 6 who was a coordinator and also a volunteer and did not have the ability to dedicate as much time to recruitment, training, motivation, or retention as they were strictly a volunteer. Therefore, there was essentially no motivation or retention efforts made for volunteers and very little training for certain positions, stated as "fosters aren't provided a lot of training but do work with mentors." (P6)

Overall Research Question Results: What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations?

The volunteer lifecycle consisted of a few key phases, including attraction/recruitment, training, motivation, task alignment and retention. Initially, volunteer coordinators utilized social media and word of mouth to recruit volunteers and had them fill out an application indicating their interest areas. Once volunteers were

interviewed and trained to their tasks (based on their interests), volunteer coordinators employed various communication strategies such as newsletters, Facebook group postings, interactions with volunteer mentors, luncheons, awards and recognition and pathways to gain more responsibilities as ways to motivate, personalize experiences and retain volunteers. Expectations and fit were also assessed and established via orientation to increase the likelihood of the volunteer remaining in their role long term.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the overall results of the research question including demographics of the eight participants interviewed. I also presented steps to data collection and analysis, coding, and evidence of trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability, and results of the study including main themes discovered from participant responses to each question to support the main research question. In chapter 5, I will share my interpretation of the key study findings, reveal limitations of the study affecting trustworthiness, provide recommendations for future study and practices as well as implications that can affect positive social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this general, qualitative study was to explore the motivation, personalization, and overall retention practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. A general qualitative research design was used to investigate participants' opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of events (Percy et al., 2015). Using a qualitative approach aligned with the purpose and research question since I attempted to gain knowledge about the experiences of the participants and not relationships between variables. General qualitative inquiry was used in this study to discover information without relying on any single or combined research approach or a particular tradition or philosophical underpinning. The focus was collecting data through interviewing or observation, analyzing data by identifying themes, and presenting information to the reader (Given, 2008; Lichtman, 2014; Liu, 2016; Thomas, 2006.

According to Nesbit et al., (2016), volunteer coordinators are not always trained, or trained well, in the management of volunteers and how to retain them. Information from this study was conducted to inform training for volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations, and other organizations that use volunteers, to understand how to motivate and retain those volunteers. The information obtained from the study also has the potential to improve volunteer retention and reduce turnover in animal welfare organizations by understanding the experiences of volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations. The main research question was "What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain

volunteers in animal welfare organizations?" There were five main themes derived from the data analysis:

1. The first part of retaining is attracting (recruiting) and screening to filter out those with dissimilar expectations (fit);

2. Alignment with values, training, personalization, and communication are important aspects of retention;

3. Aligning tasks with interests of the volunteers keeps them motivated;

4. Motivation and retention are interwoven; and

5. Retention practices present challenges.

In the chapter, I will share my interpretation of the key study findings in relation to the literature, reveal limitations of the study affecting trustworthiness, and provide recommendations for future study and practices as well as implications that can affect positive social change.

<div align="center">**Interpretation of the Findings**</div>

Interpretation of Findings in Relation to the Literature

The section below compares what has been found in the peer-reviewed literature with findings in this study, including ways in which the findings of this study confirm, disconfirm, or extend knowledge within the discipline. Themes that were identified as part of the data analysis and results in Chapter 4 are related to different aspects of the research question related to being able to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations.

Themes

Theme 1. The First Part of Retaining is Attracting (Recruiting) and Screening to Filter Out Those With Dissimilar Expectations (Fit)

Tools that were used to recruit volunteers included various social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Volunteer Match, organizational websites, and volunteer referrals (Bright & Hadden, 2017; Gross & Rottler, 2019; Lee, 2020). These tools were used to not only recruit volunteers, but to also assess the potential fit between the individual and the organization through a phone screen, application, and specific questions to determine expectations. Since fit has a direct impact on volunteer motivation and retention (Saks & Ashforth, 1997), most volunteer coordinators indicated that they spent a considerable amount of time attempting to establish fit through a phone screen, orientation, training, and shadowing with another volunteer.

While there were no specific methods identified in the literature by which to assess fit, there was consistency across the coordinators in how they handled this aspect of the recruitment process, which included use of social media and word of mouth via other volunteers. Most coordinators welcomed the steady influx of volunteer interest; however, Participant 1 indicated that they "did not need to actively recruit because there were more than enough volunteers readily available."

Theme 2: Alignment With Values, Training, Personalization, and Communication are Important Aspects of Retention

An important aspect of retention is the match between a volunteer's personal values and those of the organization (Oo et al., 2018; Vareilles et al., 2017; Willems &

Dury, 2017). This values match is established and assessed through an initial phone screen between the potential volunteer and the volunteer coordinator, as well as through the application process, orientation, and peer to peer volunteer shadowing. As Participant 3 stated, "We try to set expectations on the front end, just so that people know what they're getting into."

Expectations and values fit increased the likelihood of the volunteer remaining in their role long term (Sheptak & Menaker, 2016). Again, no specific methods of assessing fit were discussed in the literature review, but there was consistency among the methods used to determine fit by the volunteer coordinators in the study (phone screen, orientation, and shadowing). Personal values were taken into consideration for all but one participant, who worked for a volunteer-run organization. He said that he was not as concerned about values as he was that "they have the competence and ability to say no" (P6).

If volunteer management practices are created that support and engage volunteers, they may be better equipped to perform their roles (Aboramadan et al., 2019; Kappelides et al., 2020; Lv & Xu, 2018). In animal shelters, interactions with volunteer leaders and their perceived support were found to be related to volunteer retention (Cady et al., 2018; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017). When leaders of volunteers communicated clear direction and vision and encouraged feedback, it positively influenced volunteers to stay and discouraged disengagement (Cady et al., 2018; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Piercy & Kramer, 2017). My findings correlated with the literature in a few ways. First, frequent, and regular interaction between the coordinator and the volunteers

was established via open door policies and various ways that the coordinator could be reached (to address any issues/problems). Communication methods consisted of weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly emails, surveys, volunteer forums, newsletters, Facebook group pages, phone calls, and verbally checking in with them when they reported to their shifts. Many coordinators relied heavily on the use of feedback through surveys to assess what methods of motivation were working and not working. These methods aligned with the information found in the literature review, with the exception of Facebook groups, which were not mentioned in the literature review. Participants 6 and 7 both cited SurveyMonkey as the tool of choice to reach their volunteers for feedback.

Researchers agree that training within animal shelters should encompass volunteer roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, expectations, coordinator/manager support, communication strategies, and educational advancement (Claxton-Oldfield, 2016; Protopopova et al., 2020; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). Volunteer managers provided roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, expectations, and communication contacts via the orientation process. Statements included "They go through an online course" (P1), "The welcome packet highlights job position description and safety protocols" (P2), "The orientation video introduces volunteer to organization, values and mission" (P3). Once volunteers were interviewed and attended orientation, they were typically assigned to a volunteer mentor who provided training to their task based on their interests identified on the initial volunteer application. Participant 5 stated that "Volunteers first shadow with a mentor for training."

Information gathered from the literature review process did not reveal any specific amount of training needed to ensure volunteer retention. However, when speaking to volunteer coordinators, I learned that training times varied from a couple of hours to 3 to 5 sessions with a mentor, depending on the role. Participant 5 stated, "We have them work their first time in the shelter. They shadow with a mentor and when they come in for training." Further, Participant 7 stated, "My coworker and I would be hands-on with them, teaching them the different aspects that they had signed up for."

Motivation is also fostered through training. If the volunteer receives extensive training, they may be more motivated to stay in the organization since there has been investment made by the organization to prepare the volunteer to be successful (Zievinger & Swint, 2018). As I learned during my interviews, some volunteer positions had specific training that was catered to their interest and included pathways for advancement, as stated by Participant 1, "There's also an online training course for each one of those paths to let them know what they would need to know for those paths." Participant 4 said, "We have a specialized training for whatever area they're looking to get into, we make them do a specialized training for that before they're able to start that task." Some volunteers were hand-picked for specialized training based on their performance. This aspect was not addressed in the literature, but volunteer coordinators stated that they enjoyed training exemplary volunteers and the specialized training made the volunteers feel valued.

Many volunteer coordinators do not have the skill set to identify training that their volunteers need on an individual basis (Federico et al., 2020) as the volunteer coordinator role is vague in some cases (Nesbit et al., 2016). Careful selection and training of a

volunteer coordinator/manager role is vital to ensure volunteers are managed and their needs are met (Nesbit et al., 2016). If those who manage volunteers do not have the knowledge and skills to manage volunteers, it can lead to frustration, anxiety, turnover, burnout, and negative attitudes in the volunteers and those they work with (Dean & Willis, 2017; Nesbit et al., 2016).

While I did discover that none of the volunteer coordinators received any formal training for their role, 2 had previous volunteer experience within the organization which helped them more smoothly transition to the coordinator role. One coordinator took the initiative to become certified through a nonprofit organization to oversee and manage volunteers. All coordinators expressed that they learned through on-the-job training and trial by fire. Despite the fact that all volunteer coordinators I spoke with lacked formal training, they were still able to effectively manage and assist the volunteers by staying engaged and in constant contact with the volunteers. The lack of training did not appear to negatively affect volunteer retention, nor did it lead to frustration, burnout, or negative attitudes from the volunteers.

Hamerman et al. (2018) stated that one of the main reasons one third of volunteers leave organizations each year is due to a failure to match their skills with the tasks that they are asked to perform. The volunteer coordinators I interviewed heavily relied upon the initial application from volunteers indicating their areas of interest. The coordinators then personalized training for the volunteers based on those interest areas. To help avoid volunteers leaving, personalization of the tasks was applied such as hands on training, shadowing, and ensuring volunteer fit with interests. Participant 1 mentioned that they

tried to use volunteer advancement programs to avoid stagnation kept volunteers interested and more likely to stay: "They can always be learning more and taking on more roles as they move forward. And we found that volunteers really respond to that."

Claxton-Oldfield (2016) suggested that communication between management and volunteers can be conducted through meetings, newsletters and contact with the volunteer coordinator. The volunteer coordinators interviewed used various communication strategies such as newsletters, Facebook group postings, interactions with volunteer mentors, luncheons, awards, and recognition and pathways to gain more responsibilities as ways to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers. Although it was not mentioned in the literature, Facebook groups were cited by a few volunteer coordinators as ways to communication with volunteers as well as share adoption success stories, to keep them motivated. As Participant 3 stated, "I send out a weekly email that includes an adoption report. I find that that's really motivating for the volunteers."

Theme 3: Aligning Tasks With Interests of the Volunteers Keeps Them Motivated

The matching or alignment of tasks to skills has been found to be related to job satisfaction, performance, and intent to remain in an organization (Cady et al., 2018; Hamerman & Schneider, 2018; Stukas et al., 2016). McFarland (n.d.) suggested that when animal shelter volunteers are engaged in their work, they stay more motivated to fulfill the needs and mission of the organization. The volunteer coordinators I spoke with indicated that when tasks aligned with volunteer interest, it motivated the volunteer to keep showing up for their shifts and remain excited about their work.

Most volunteer coordinators based the task alignment on volunteer interest, but Participant 7 handled the situation differently and stated, "We wanted to try to accommodate what they were really interested in doing, because that would help keep them engaged and wanting to come back. But if they're lacking and training wasn't working, we would direct them to a different area." This approach was not aligned with information found in the literature review. For example, researchers specified that volunteer coordinators should ensure skill to task matching and attempt to satisfy volunteer preferences (Güntert et al., 2016; Salmani et al., 2019). Providing tasks aligned to their interests can result in more positive satisfaction with the volunteer role and motivation to complete the assigned tasks (Nencini et al., 2016; Reznickova & Zepeda, 2016; Rogalsky et al., 2016). When volunteers are happy with their assigned tasks, they are more inclined to continue in that role (Stukas et al., 2016). Failure to match skills and interests with volunteer tasks has been found as one of the main reasons one third of volunteers leave organizations each year (Hamerman & Schneider, 2018).

Theme 4: Motivation and Retention are Interwoven

Researchers who have studied retention suggested that volunteer motivation played a key role in developing effective approaches to retain volunteers (Chacón et al., 2017; Lorente-Ayala et al., 2019; Stefanick et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2016; Zollo et al., 2017). Retention efforts related to motivation can be neglected by volunteer managers as they may be focused on getting the required work done and not on the motivational factors that may cause a volunteer to continue to volunteer or leave the organization (Merrilees et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2016). I discovered that the volunteer coordinators I

interviewed were very focused on ensuring that volunteers were as motivated as possible to aid in retention efforts.

It is important for volunteers to hear how their work makes a difference. Participant 3 said that "I send out a weekly email that includes an adoption report. I find that that's really motivating for the volunteers that wasn't something that volunteer managers have done in the past, but that's the thing a lot of the volunteers are very invested in." McFarland (n.d.) found that people are intrinsically motivated when engaged in activities they find interesting and challenging. Additionally, when animal shelter volunteers were engaged in their work, they stayed more motivated to fulfill the needs and mission of the organization, which in turn made them feel part of a worthy cause to help the animals (McFarland, n.d.).

Recognition of volunteers, access to training and professional development opportunities, and satisfaction of their work may improve retention (Einolf, 2018; Hurst et al., 2017; Milbourn et al., 2019; Reznickova & Zepeda, 2016; Trent et al., 2017; Vareilles et al., 2017). Many volunteer coordinators held appreciation lunches, potlucks, and holiday parties to recognize volunteers and aid in motivation and retention. While most volunteer coordinators indicated many volunteers appreciate being recognized, which aligns with what researchers have indicated, there was one who found that volunteers did not want personal acknowledgement. Participant 5 shared her experience with rewarding volunteers. She surveyed the volunteers and asked them what kind of tangible items would help them to feel appreciated. She was surprised to read that the volunteers were not interested in being appreciated with awards/food, etc., as they were

with making sure they could effectively care for the animals so they could be adopted. They felt good knowing they were helping the animals and that was enough of a reward. She stated that "They didn't want things, they only wanted to help the animals."

Theme 5: Retention Practices Present Challenges

Reasons that volunteers leave can be due to personal, employment and educational commitments. The amount of time required to volunteer weekly or long-term may interfere with other obligations such as family, work, and school (Stefanick et al., 2020; Willems & Dury, 2017). In some cases, participants stated that "Volunteers are mandated to perform community service and when they had completed their time, they left and did not return." (P2). Participant 7 said that "Some volunteers had work and family conflicts, couldn't meet the requirements, or they moved out of the area." Participant 2 indicated that "In Florida, there are many seasonal volunteers (snowbirds) who leave during part of the year and then they will resume volunteering when they return to Florida."

There are other reasons that affect retention. Participants 1 and 4 cited "Misaligned expectations, frustration with the task or the organizational management or between other volunteers." In the cases where the volunteer experienced frustration or the expectations did not align, a phone call or email was used to ask how the situation could be resolved, if at all. Some tactics for frustration and misaligned expectations were expressed by coordinators, such as, "If it's something where they're experiencing any kind of frustration, I try to have at least a one-on-one conversation with them to work out the issue." (P1)

Sometimes volunteer coordinators find that volunteers felt that they cared more than the staff and/or they were overwhelmed with moral and social responsibility which led to burnout (Seemann et al., 2019; Setti et al., 2018; Viljoen & Claassen, 2017). Burnout is a reaction to emotionally demanding work and is defined as a stress syndrome characterized by exhaustion and a cynical attitude towards work (Seemann et al., 2019; Setti et al., 2018; Viljoen & Claassen, 2017). Participant 3 confirmed that "I've seen volunteers leaving because I see a lot of kind of compassion, fatigue, and burnout, where they may have given way too much time and energy to the point where it was stressful for them. And maybe they had those views of, I care more than the staff care. So I have to do all of this work because the staff won't do it."

Other prominent issues occurred between volunteers or between volunteers and management. Volunteer coordinators indicated that if the volunteers did not agree with a procedure or the way a situation was handled it led to frustration. And in other cases, long term volunteers were not open to change or there were volunteer cliques that new volunteers struggled with, making them feel isolated and not involved. According to Participant 5, "They all knew each other, and they would stay in their own clique and when new people came in, they just felt like they weren't welcome, or they weren't part of the team."

The COVID-19 health pandemic posed a unique and unprecedented retention situation for many volunteer coordinators. Many shelters were forced to shutter their doors and halt volunteer efforts due to safety precautions which in turn led to deficits in volunteer assistance (Goolsbee et al., 2020). Some elderly volunteers who were

vulnerable to getting sick chose to step away from their volunteer roles due to safety. For the shelters that remained open to volunteers, interaction between volunteers and coordinators shifted to rely more heavily on virtual orientations and trainings, to avoid risk of exposure to the virus. However, shadowing and mentoring and hands-on experiences continued for those organizations who remained open to accept volunteers. Participant 6 spoke to the COVID situation and explained that "We lost a lot of adoption counselors due to COVID."

While the reasons for volunteers leaving were consistent with the literature (Stefanick et al., 2020; Willems & Dury, 2017), most of the volunteer coordinators I spoke with did not cite retention as an issue that prevented operations to continue or animals to be properly cared for, as the organizations were sustained by long term volunteers. Despite the best efforts of the volunteer coordinator to try to persuade volunteers to stay, sometimes it was in the best interest of the volunteer and the organization for the volunteer to move on. As Participant 5 stated "We have that sit down conversation and say that maybe this isn't the best fit." In one case where the coordinator was a volunteer and not a paid employee, these practices and experiences were not as consistent and in some cases were nonexistent as there was a lack of resources available to achieve effective training, motivation, or retention. This volunteer coordinator instead relied heavily on other volunteers and word of mouth for recruitment, training, and retention. Consequently, volunteer turnover was much higher in this organization than in the other organizations that had an established and structured volunteer management program.

Interpretation of Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

The following section provides interpretation of the study findings in relation to

the theoretical framework. The person-organization (PO) fit theory and components will

be discussed as they relate to supporting or contradicting study findings. PO fit is

multifaceted and consists of complementary and supplementary fit and needs-supply and

demands-ability perspectives (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). Similar to

the interpretation of findings in relation to the literature review, the themes that were

identified as part of the data analysis and results in Chapter 3 are related to different

aspects of the research question related to being able to motivate, personalize

experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations.

Theme 1: The First Part of Retaining is Attracting (Recruiting) and Screening to Filter

Out Those With Dissimilar Expectations (Fit)

Volunteers' perceptions of PO fit were a good predictor of their attraction to

organizations (Firfiray & Mayo, 2017). Volunteers were directed to the website to fill out

an application to volunteer. This provided the opportunity to ensure their own perceptions

of the organization were either validated or misaligned. If volunteer perceptions were

validated, they were more likely to fill out the application information. Volunteer

coordinators mentioned that it was a rare occurrence for a volunteer to get through the

application, phone screen and shadowing if their values were not aligned with those of

the organization. Participant 2 stated that "In our welcome packet, we have specifically

the mission statement, objectives and goals and the impact of our organization is. It's a

little bit of introspection on themselves. They read it and they say, Yeah, I kind of see myself sharing the same ideas and goals and objectives."

The perception of value match (PO fit) during the recruitment process facilitated certain expectations about future work and organizational relationships which had a positive or negative impact on organizational attraction (McGinley et al., 2018; Yen, 2017). The volunteer coordinators expressed that they were focused on incorporating a values match between the volunteer and the organization through reiteration of mission statements, policies, and procedures and in orientation and training. To determine if person-organization fit was assessed, the volunteer coordinator ensured transparency of policies, which included understanding the mission statement, objectives, goals, and impact of the organization as well as providing a code of ethics for volunteers to sign before they could begin with any tasks. Most of this was achieved via orientation, the online application, initial phone screen with the volunteer or through shadowing with a volunteer mentor. Fit was directly correlated to volunteer retention and turnover.

Theme 2: Alignment With Values, Training, Personalization, and Communication are Important Aspects of Retention

Person-organization fit (PO) fit theory focuses on the relevance of PO fit as a predictor of outcomes (Grobler & Holtzhausen, 2018; Jin et al., 2016; Jutras & Mathieu, 2015). The volunteer/manager relationship has either a positive or negative impact on how the employee perceives the organization since perceived values and behaviors exhibited by the manager reflect organizational values (Grobler & Holtzhausen, 2018; Jin et al., 2016; Jutras & Mathieu, 2015). These perceptions translated into shift of attitudes

and behaviors, which altered job satisfaction, turnover intention, and actual turnover (Jin et al., 2016; Jutras & Mathieu, 2015). The study participants expressed the importance of their behavior, values, and leadership and how it can impact whether a volunteer stays or leaves. According to Participant 2, "volunteers want to be part of an organization that aligns with what they believe in."

If employees with high PO fit received guidance from a supervisor who supported the values of the organization, employee supervisor communication and trust was fostered (Wijesinghe, 2017). Communication efforts were cited by all volunteer coordinators as a critical element to retaining volunteers. Feedback was elicited from volunteers through surveys, to keep the coordinator informed and proactive about potential issues or problems. Participant 2 commented that "Communication is a big thing that keeps a lot of people motivated to continue coming in."

Theme 3: Aligning Tasks With Interests of the Volunteers Keeps Them Motivated

PO fit is multifaceted and consists of complementary and supplementary fit and needs-supply and demands-ability perspectives (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). Supplementary fit includes the perceived similarity between individual characteristics and organizational characteristics while complementary PO fit incorporates needs-supplies and demands-abilities perspectives. Perceived PO fit is the comparison of an individual's assessment of their own personal values to that of the organizational values. If the values between the individual and the organization align, there is a greater chance of a fit.

When a work environment fits with employee values, they used their abilities to the fullest, which aided in task completion and satisfied their achievement motivation (Wei, 2015). The volunteer coordinators that I spoke with all agreed that if the volunteer was able to use their abilities and enjoyed the task, they were more motivated to continue to volunteer. Participant 1 emphasized the importance of fulfillment by stating "I personally think that it's important to just, even if it's a 2 or 3 question deal, just get some sort of feedback to make sure that people are enjoying the process or feeling fulfilled by the process."

Theme 4: Motivation and Retention are Interwoven

PO fit is connected to retention (Saks & Ashforth, 1997) as well as organizational commitment, motivation, and intention to quit (Kristof-Brown., 2007). Employees who are engaged demonstrate a greater sense of attachment to their jobs and organization as well as high energy, dedication, and were less likely to quit their jobs (Memon et al., 2018). Employees who were not engaged display apathy, disenchantment, and social aloofness (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013). If an employee does not feel a connection to the environment or their role, internal conflict can be experienced which causes depersonalization of the work environment (Kilroy et al., 2017). This point is evidenced by the experiences of some volunteers who did not feel welcome within the organization by other volunteers. If there were conflicts among volunteers and management this led to decreased retention and higher volunteer turnover.

Satisfied workers displayed higher job performance over time than unsatisfied workers, which in turn contribute to job satisfaction and motivation. Workers who enjoy

their work tended to work harder to achieve maximum results (Faraz & Indartono, 2018).

A collaborative and friendly workplace environment (positive relationships with

management, peers, subordinates, and customers) decreases the likelihood of leaving.

Value alignment reduces employee turnover by enhancing worker retention and aiding in

the creation of identification with an organization (Chattalas et al., 2016; Olubiyi et al.,

2019). Employees whose values do not fit with the organization's values either leave

voluntarily or separate from the organization involuntarily (Olubiyi et al., 2019). People

typically need affiliation and belonging within organizations and social groups (Kilroy et

al., 2017). For the volunteer coordinators that integrated values expectations matching

between the volunteer and the organization, they believed there was an increase in

motivation and retention among the volunteers since the expectations were established in

the beginning of the recruitment and training process. Participant 4 stated

> "We actually have them sign a document that says what we expect and what we
>
> would like for them to do and what they feel comfortable with, like respect others,
>
> display sensitivity, consideration, and compassion for animals and people, ask for
>
> help when needed. So, we make some go through a volunteer code of ethics and
>
> what we're looking for and make sure that that matches with what they're here
>
> for."

Theme 5: Retention Practices Present Challenges

There can be many challenges to retention efforts among volunteer coordinators,

including burnout. Burnout can be caused by a mismatch between people and their work

situation in terms of lack of value alignment, which can lead to job stressors in terms of

role conflict and role ambiguity (Harp et al., 2017; Jacobs, 2017; Kilroy et al., 2017;

Mostafa, 2016). This imbalance between job demands and job resources contributes to

emotional exhaustion and in burnout and negative PO fit (Kilroy et al., 2017; Mostafa,

2016).

Scherer et al. (2016) and Ertas (2019) suggested that unlike for-profit

counterparts, many nonprofits do not have a designated volunteer manager, formal

volunteer management policies, or overburden their staff with volunteer management

responsibilities. This can lead to frustration and volunteers quitting or seeking other

volunteer opportunities. During my study, I did not find this to be the case. All but one

organization had either a paid volunteer coordinator and one organization had an unpaid

volunteer coordinator. In the organizations that had paid staff, there were clearly

established policies and procedures and clear communication between the volunteers and

coordinators for any issues or problems that arose.

Limitations of the Study

Since this study was a qualitative study, I assumed that several realties existed

within the study which included mine as the researcher, the participants being studied,

and also for the reader of the study (The California State University, n.d.). Potential

researcher biases included assumptions that the volunteer coordinators/managers were

not adequately retaining volunteers and did not have the literature knowledge background

of strategies that work (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). I addressed

these potential assumptions by journaling and internal recognition of those biases

(Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). However, once I began speaking

with the volunteer coordinators, I realized that they were very knowledge about the use of strategies (communication, task alignment, recognition) to understand how to retain volunteers. Therefore, my initial internal bias was counteracted.

I assumed that volunteer lifecycle practices would be similar among all participants, meaning that they recruited, trained, motivated, and retained their volunteers in similar ways. I discovered that the lifecycle practices were similar among all participants, except for the one volunteer who was a volunteer himself and not paid by the organization. He was unable to devote the time and energy necessary to recruit, train, motivate and retain volunteers as effectively as the other paid coordinators due to lack of communication with the volunteers. I believe not having a physical location for volunteers to report was also a barrier for this coordinator since he was unable to personally connect with volunteers in person, as opposed to the other coordinators who had physical locations and offices on the premises. I extrapolated patterns and themes from participant responses that were used to understand the research question (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013). To determine accuracy of those patterns, I verified the responses with the participants by sending them a copy of the transcript after the interview was conducted for member checking (Research Paper Advisor, n.d.; Simon & Goes, 2013).

Another assumption was that the participant sample was appropriate to ensure that they were able to provide the information that would answer the research questions of the study (Wargo, 2015). This was addressed through inclusion selection of participants. I also assumed that participants had an interest in participating in the study without

promise of any monetary benefits. I addressed this by informing study participants that there was no monetary reward for their participation in the study and they still volunteered to participate.

I assumed that the reader had enough knowledge and information to understand the results based on the background information provided in the study. I also assumed that the reader will read the materials found in the different chapters of the dissertation in order to ensure that results will be read in the appropriate context. The literature review served to provide the background information needed for the reader to understand why specific questions were asked and the meaning of responses from participants (Simon & Goes, 2013).

The scope of the study is related to the problem statement and are the factors included within the range of the study (Simon & Goes, 2013). The scope explained the specific parameters and extent of the research area that was explored (Editage Insights, n.d.). I studied the experiences of volunteer coordinators/managers with regard to practices to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Other NPOs that were not animal welfare focused were excluded.

Delimitations are the attributes that limited or narrowed the scope and defined study boundaries such as specific participants and research design (Editage Insights, n.d.; Research Paper Advisor, n.d.). Delimitations also included the methodology and tools used to collect data. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted using Skype as a virtual platform, for practical, safety and cost-effective reasons. The specific aspects of the research problem evaluated experiences of volunteer coordinators/managers with

regard to practices to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Populations included volunteer coordinators/managers who oversaw recruitment, training, motivation, and retention of volunteers.

The limitations of the study consisted of design or methodology characteristics or potential weaknesses of the study that affected the findings or interpretations (Creswell, 2012; Price & Murnan, 2004). Limitations and potential challenges included locating local willing participants, and potentially not recruiting an appropriate sample size or obtaining an adequate response rate within the sample size (Simon & Goes, 2013; Wargo, 2015). I utilized a few different avenues such as social media (including Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook groups) as well as organization websites to reach as many people as possible to expand the number of participants. Even though I reached data saturation at 8 participants, I was unable to find the minimum 10-15 participants for the study, as originally set forth by my committee. By using Skype, those without the link or access to my email were excluded from the study. Not having access to my email, phone number or Skype potentially limited the number of participants who were able to participate in the study. The study was conducted in the Tampa Bay, FL vicinity and included a small sample size. Even though data saturation was received within this group of participants, those who lived outside of the designated area were excluded, which was also a study limitation.

Recommendations

Suggestions for future researchers include utilizing various ways to access participants (either via multiple online platforms or via phones) to be able to reach more

potential participants who would meet the desired inclusion criteria. Future researchers could also recruit potential participants from a larger geographic area than I did. This could provide information about if the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators from different areas are similar or different. For example, Florida has a large population of part-time residents who volunteer when they are residing in Florida during the winter months (Wykes, n.d.). This is unique to Florida and may result in different issues related to retention. Other states may have different retention numbers if their volunteers reside within the state full-time and year-round.

While the research question was designed to identify how volunteer coordinators recruited, trained, motivated, aligned tasks, and retained volunteers in animal welfare organizations, a question that was not addressed is how those organizations were impacted by turnover of volunteers. None of the volunteer coordinators mentioned if the animals suffered due to not having an adequate number of volunteers to attend to tasks. This could be valuable information that either supports or rejects the notion that volunteer turnover costs NPOs money and hinders their ability to provide services to the community (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Spehar & Wolf, 2018).

Implications

Volunteers are a valuable resource but can be difficult to retain and it is costly when the organization has to recruit and train new volunteers (Malinen & Harju, 2017; Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016). Volunteer turnover is a problem for nonprofits as more than a third of those who volunteer one year fail to volunteer the following year

(Hamerman & Schneider, 2018). Recruiting and training new volunteers continues to be a challenge for organizations as these efforts are time consuming and cost more than retaining volunteers (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Sefora & Mihaela, 2016). A few of the main issues surrounding volunteer retention are the failure to align volunteers' skills with tasks (McBey et al., 2017), provide role clarity (Jacobs, 2017), and poor organizational person fit (Bauer & Lim, 2019; Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016).

Researchers have examined person-organization fit as it relates to employee retention within human resources and management in for-profit environments (Chen et al., 2016; Leuty et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2019; Su et al., 2015; Swider et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2017) but few researchers have used person-organization fit when studying volunteer retention in NPOs (Jacobs, 2017; Malinen & Harju, 2017; McBey et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016). This study reinforced the importance of incorporating PO fit into the key areas of the volunteer lifecycle (recruitment, training, motivation, task alignment and retention). When volunteer coordinators take fit into account and align the values of the volunteer with the values of the organization, a better fit occurs, which in turn positively impacts retention (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Hartenian, et al., 2009; Leuty et al., 2019; McBey et al., 2017; Nesbit, et al., 2016; Scherer, et al., 2016; Su et al., 2015; Swider, et al., 2015).

Effectively incorporating the elements of PO fit into orientation and training programs may assist volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations to understand how to motivate and retain volunteers. This has the potential to improve volunteer

retention in animal welfare organizations. Improving retention allows more animal shelters to care for and adopt out a greater number of animals since resources will not be negatively affected by volunteers leaving (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Spehar & Wolf, 2018).

I attempted to fill the literature gap I identified through the review of the literature by examining volunteer retention efforts through the lens of person-organization (PO) fit. The problem addressed was the high rate of volunteer turnover in animal welfare organizations and the resulting negative impacts on the animal's welfare (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Harp, et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016; Spehar & Wolf, 2018). The understanding of volunteer coordinator experiences in animal welfare organizations may help reduce the turnover of volunteers from these organizations and the resulting negative impact on animal welfare (Arbe Montoya et al., 2017; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Guenther, 2017; Harp, et al., 2017; Scherer et al., 2016; Spehar & Wolf, 2018). The interpretation of the data in relation to previous literature and the theoretical framework could be useful in training for volunteer coordinators in these organizations so they can better understand how to motivate and retain volunteers based on that individuals' motivation and person organization fit.

Conclusion

A general qualitative approach was used for this study to explore the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Results of the study indicated that motivation and retention were intertwined. The information discovered in this study highlighted the

importance of careful selection of volunteers that share the same values and expectations of the organization as well as structured training programs that introduced volunteers to their tasks to keep them motivated to remain with the organization. When volunteer coordinators aligned volunteer interests with tasks they performed, personalized experiences through task alignment, communication, and recognition of volunteers' efforts, they were more motivated and more likely to remain in their role long-term. If values were not aligned and training was not adequately provided, volunteers were less motivated to remain with the organization. Findings from this study contributes to literature through the inclusion of values fit between the volunteer and the organization, which had not been considered with regard to volunteers in animal welfare organizations. Study findings impact social change by offering insight into the volunteer lifecycle. Volunteer turnover is a social problem that negatively impacts animal welfare organizations' ability to ensure optimal care for animals as well as contributing to costly recruitment efforts. Recommendations for practice include ensuring that volunteer coordinators design and employ a structured training program that includes questions to determine the values fit between the potential volunteer and the organization and effectively outlines expectations of the volunteer, to avoid dissatisfaction and burnout among volunteers and increase retention.

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Interview study seeks volunteer coordinators/managers who oversee volunteers in animal shelters

There is a new study asking *What are the practices and experiences of volunteer coordinators to motivate, personalize experiences, and retain volunteers in animal welfare organizations?"* that could help identify ways to improve retention among volunteers in animal shelters. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences overseeing volunteers within animal shelters.

This interview is data collection for the doctoral study of a Ph.D. student. To protect your privacy, I will not use your name in the published study.

Participation:
- One 30-45-minute virtual interview that will be recorded.
- An emailed copy of the interview transcript to verify accuracy and check information. This process is estimated to take 10-15 minutes.
  - Participants will be sent the following email post interview:

    Please find attached a copy of the interview transcript. If you would like to review for accuracy and provide any comments or corrections, please send those to me within seven (7) days of the date of receipt. If you do not reply within the seven (7) day timeframe, I will assume that you

accept the transcript as is and I will move forward with data analyses. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Volunteers must meet these requirements:
- 18 years old or older
- Understand and speak English
- Work in volunteer coordinator or manager role in animal shelters for at least 6 months
- Potential participants will be sent an email to arrange a time for an interview.

To confidentially volunteer, contact the researcher:

Appendix C: NIH Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Amy Clement** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 07/02/2017.

Certification Number: 2428473.

Appendix D: Participant Inclusion Questions

Inclusion Questions:

1. Are you employed in a volunteer coordinator or manager position and directly oversee the volunteer process (including recruitment, training, and retention)?
2. Are you 18 years of age or older?
3. Do you understand English?
4. Have you been employed in the volunteer coordinator/manager role for at least 6 months?

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Interview Questions by Related Research Question

Interview question	Prompts
1. What strategies are used to recruit volunteers?	Tell me more about specific methods used to attract or recruit volunteers.
2. What type of screening process is used during recruitment to determine if the volunteer is a good fit within the organization?	Are there specific questions asked when a volunteer expresses an interest in volunteering?
3. How do you determine if a volunteer's values are aligned with those of the organization?	What happens if a volunteer's values do not align with the organization?
4. What training did you receive to work in a volunteer coordinator/manager role and supervise volunteers?	
5. How are volunteers trained or introduced to their tasks?	Tell me about specific training or orientation for the volunteer role.
6. What types of activities/strategies are used to determine what motivates volunteers?	Tell me about specific questions that are asked to determine motivation.
7. How do you determine which activities to assign volunteers?	
8. How do volunteer coordinators in animal welfare organizations personalize volunteer experiences/duties based on what motivates the volunteer?	Tell me how you match a volunteer with a task/duty that interests him/her.
9. How do you communicate with volunteers during their tenure regarding questions or problems?	Tell me more about how problems/issues are handled.
10. In what ways do you handle volunteers who are thinking of no longer volunteering to persuade them to continue?	Tell me about specific guidelines to retain volunteers.
11. Why do you think that volunteers choose to leave their position?	What have you observed as reasons that volunteers quit?
12. Do you have any other information that you want to share?	

Appendix F: Demographic Information

Demographic Form Variables

Variable	Values/coding
Age	Actual age in years
Gender	0=male
	1=female
	99=prefer not to answer
Ethnicity	0=White
	1= American Indian or Alaska Native
	2= Asian
	3= Black or African American
	4= Hispanic or Latino
	5= Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
	6=two or more
	99=prefer not to answer
Time working in role	Actual number of months (can be recoding to years if determined necessary when reporting demographics)
Time volunteering/working with animal organizations	Actual number of months (can be recoding to years if determined necessary when reporting demographics)
Education level	0=no high school diploma
	1=HS or GED
	2=some college
	3=associates degree
	4=bachelor's degree
	5=master's degree
	6=doctoral/PhD degree
	99=prefer not to answer
Number of volunteers supervised	Actual number of volunteers supervised
	99=don't know
Size of organization	Actual number of employees
	99=don't know
Type of nonprofit funding (government, private donations, combination)	0=government funded
	1=private donations
	2=combination
	99=prefer not to answer/don't know