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Perceptions of the Grant Decision-Making Process: A Study of Foundation Grantmakers and Grant Seekers Who Focus on Youth Violence in Chicago, Illinois

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

PERCEPTIONS OF THE GRANT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:
A STUDY OF FOUNDATION GRANTMAKERS AND GRANT SEEKERS
WHO FOCUS ON YOUTH VIOLENCE
IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK

BY

PATIYA FREELY

CHICAGO, IL

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Finally, to my future husband. It would have been great to share this experience with you, but you may have distracted me too. Thanks for waiting, but it's okay to find me now!

.

Dedicated to every child lost to violence, we failed you.
To every child constantly facing violence, we vow to better protect you.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ...

—2 Corinthians 2:14 (KJV)

A child who is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth.

—African Proverb

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ABSTRACT

Local partners (churches, schools, and community organizations) are often at the front lines of addressing the problem of recurring deadly violence against Black urban youth. Foundation grants are frequently used to fund their work. While foundations annually award millions of dollars in grants to community-based organizations addressing youth violence, there is little detailed information available about their decision-making process. Notably, there is a lack of research on the determinants of the grant decision-making process that may inadvertently affect grantee outcomes and ultimately beneficiary organizations and communities.

A sample of ten decision-makers who had funded or sought funding for projects addressing youth violence in Chicago, Illinois, over the previous five years made up this descriptive phenomenological study. The study's primary focus was the nuanced perspectives of the grant decision-making process. Data was collected via one-on-one Zoom interviews.

Findings conveyed that proximity and "trusted others" commonly have an impact on the decision-making process for grantmakers and grant seekers in both personal and professional decisions. Remarkably, 90% of study participants had a personal experience with youth violence and one study participant emphasized the necessity of centering the input of youth in violence prevention work. Grant seekers and grantmakers alike stand to gain from a more comprehensive understanding of the grant decision-making process, which may yield more productive partnerships. Ideally, this study will provide data and context for conversations that could lead to better outcomes in foundation-funded efforts to address Black urban youth violence.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background/Significance

The Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention reports there are 12 youth homicide victims each day in the U.S. and 86% are killed by gun violence. (Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention, 2022). In Chicago, there were 150 youths aged 0-24 years old killed from January to July 2021. All but one victim was killed by gun violence. Of these victims, 78% were identified as Black and 90% were male. In 2020 and 2019, youth of the same age and similar backgrounds represented 35% and 40% of homicides in Chicago in those years, respectively (Howe & Boyle, 2021). Youth violence in Chicago is an ongoing occurrence largely impacting Black male youth.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that homicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for persons aged 10-24 years old in the U.S. (CDC, 2019). Nationally, there are 14 youth homicides and 1,300 youth hospitalizations daily due to violence. In other words, one of the wealthiest and most progressive countries in the world has over 5,000 youth homicides and 700,000 youth violence-related hospitalizations each year (CDC, 2019). For every young person killed by violence, more sustain injuries that require hospital treatment. Firearm attacks more often end in fatal injuries than assaults that involve fists, feet, knives, and blunt objects. This not only harms families and communities but impacts overall potential as these youth will be unable to complete their education and contribute their knowledge and skills to the local workforce, pay taxes, or engage the local economy and raise their own families. The World Health Organization

(WHO) adds that harm is beyond the immediate communities where violence most often occurs.

It reports that there are nearly 200,000 homicides among youth aged 10–29 years of age worldwide, making it the fourth leading cause of death for people in this age group. Youth represent 42% of all homicide victims, globally (WHO, 2021).

Figure 1. Causes of Youth Violence

Causes of Youth Violence



Dimensions of causes of youth violence: Community Specific Framework (Ross et al., 2020)

Community-based organizations or CBOs are uniquely positioned to assess and implement programs that focus on Black urban youth violence. These organizations, often smaller non-profit groups staffed by local residents, work to tackle issues specific to their local community. Youth violence is one such issue. An example is The Chicago Area Project, founded in the 1930s by a University of Chicago sociologist who created a youth-focused organization that targeted local challenges noted to contribute to juvenile delinquency such as unemployment, substance use, and gang violence (Chicago Area Project, 2021). The prevalence of youth

violence in urban areas like Chicago has garnered financial support from federal, state, county, and city resources. Local and national grantmakers have also become fiscal partners to CBOs who do youth violence work. One such grantmaking partner is the Chicago-based MacArthur Foundation, which awarded just over \$3.5 million to local violence prevention initiatives in a recent 14-year period (John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2022).

Foundation grantmakers award millions of dollars to CBOs annually, but it is possible the decision-making process can unknowingly impact grantee outcomes. This can occur when the values of the grantmaker conflict with those of the grant seeker. One illustration is when a Ford Foundation Board member noticed an objectionable political stance on a grantee's website, leading to a \$100,000 award being rescinded. Activities for a two-year program were in jeopardy as the grantee had to use unconventional means to replace the promised funds (Smith, 2007, p. 1) This proposed study aims to explore if funding (and the decisions inherently part of the funding process) may have assumptions, conditions, and agendas that are a departure from the original goals of the grantees and beneficiary communities. This research intends to explore if grant decision-making processes are a factor in grantee outcomes.

Significance to Social Work

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) embodies care for youth and the factors related to youth violence in its Core Values. It aligns with the social work values of 'social justice, service, dignity, and worth of the person', that all speak to the call to action for social work as it relates to racial minority youth violence prevention (NASW, 2020). In 2021, there was an average of over 1,600 violent assaults on youth every day in the U.S. Of these attacks, 86% are lethal with urban Black youth aged 15-17 being at the greatest risk of homicide

than any other group (Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention, 2022). Social workers are involved in addressing youth violence at various levels. Many are on the staff of or partner with grassroots organizations that receive grant funding, or they can be part of the grant-seeking team. In the academy, social workers can be instructors of future practitioners and policy advocates of youth violence work who will encounter grantmaking foundations in their professional journey. A partnership between academic social workers and grant-supported work is exemplified in the work of The Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention. Finally, social workers such as this researcher may seek foundation grants to further the research of innovative approaches to address youth violence. Grant-making foundations and their decision-making processes are thus connected to social work.

Statement of the Problem

Regardless of political affiliation or socioeconomic status, it is widely agreed that the frequent occurrence of Black urban youth violence and deaths are preventable and innovative approaches must be explored. Several professionals have attempted to address this issue, but data shows the problem is getting worse in cities such as Chicago (Youth.gov, 2021). Philanthropists (local and national) have attempted to address this by funding CBOs that do grassroots youth violence work. Chicago and other major cities that experience high levels of violence have considerable organizations and resources focused on this work. The examination of grantmaking elements that may be impacting the granting and use of such resources by grantees could improve their effectiveness (Jung, 2020, p. 415).

Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations

This study is informed by the constructivist paradigm. The constructivist

paradigm asserts that meaning is context-driven and is based on the perception of the observer (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 2). *Social Constructivism* was introduced by German sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Lukemann in their 1967 publication, *The Social Construction of Reality*. They posed that people made ‘meaning’ of lived experiences, places, objects, or things (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). These meanings can vary from person to person and can be layered, complex, and subjective. They believed that people interpret and assign meaning to the world as they experience it. Meaning is assigned by individuals as a phenomenon is experienced within a social context.

Social constructivism is now established as one of the major paradigms of research. It is especially noted for qualitative research to be effective with broad, open-ended general questions. This is intentional so that ‘meaning’ can be interpreted by the participant, not prescribed by the researcher. This paradigm acknowledges that researchers recognize that their own culture, background, and experiences impact interpretation. Therefore, research findings are tied to participant views and often focus on where people live and work and their processes of interaction. Things are what they are because of their meaning in context and experience.

Social constructivism couples well with phenomenological studies. Creswell & Poth (2018) add social constructivism is often referred to as interpretivism, as the researcher makes sense of, or interprets what meanings others have assigned to things (p. 34). A phenomenology (discussed in more detail later) is rooted in the lived experience of a phenomenon from the perspective of the one who experienced it. It is an inductive method where themes emerge as themes and patterns present themselves in analysis. The focus on meaning-making and the perspective of the participant make social constructivism ideal for this study.

Organizational Decision-Making Model

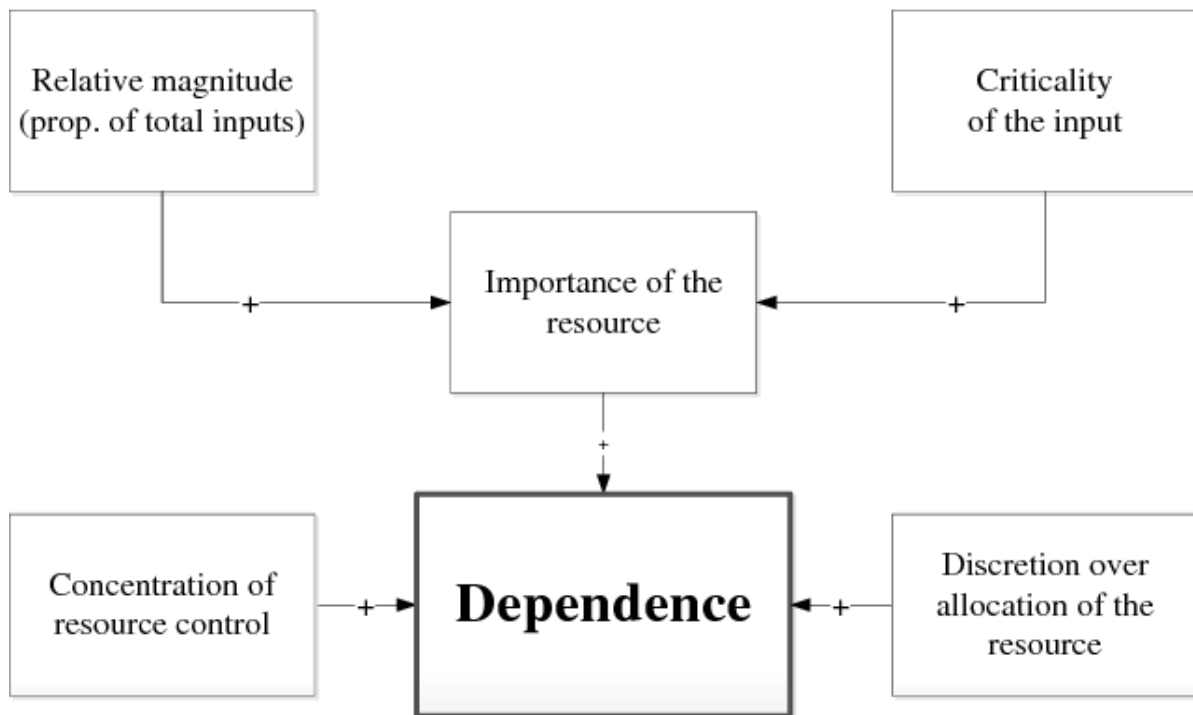
The Stinson Wellness Organizational Decision-Making Model (The Stinson Model) offers an alternative to organizational decision-making, ODM (Grandori, 2001), and is rooted in organizational theory. It was developed by David Stinson in 2013 as an individual approach to decision-making. Stinson partnered with Mark Lee and adapted the model to an organizational context, with the understanding that organizations are comprised of people and are created to ultimately serve people. The quality and components of decisions are addressed with two core principles: wise decision-making and alignment (Lee & Stinson, 2014). They define organizational decision-making as “the process of responding to a problem by searching for and selecting a solution or course of actions that will create the most value for organizational stakeholders”(Lee & Stinson, 2014, p. 14). This study explores the phenomenon of grant decision-making with the depth that this model offers. The qualitative interview questions are informed by the ‘layers’ of Stinson’s model which are detailed in the literature review.

Resource Dependence Theory

While this study is partly focused on foundation grant decision-makers, the position of grantees is as relevant to the topic. Resource Dependence (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) regards the external control of non-profit organizations as being significantly connected to their funders. It explains that in an effort to survive [fiscally], organizations may make decisions or alter their behaviors to appease those who externally control them via program funding. It also explores the threat and consequences of upsetting the funder when CBOs engage in political or controversial activities their funders regard as undesirable (Smith, 2007, p. 13). This is regarded as the ‘politics of funding’ and how it can cause internal discord with beneficiary organizations. This

study seeks to connect grant decision-making with this dynamic as it relates to those impacted by these decisions and will be discussed in more detail in the literature review section.

Figure 2. Resource Dependence Model (Mensing, 2013)



Terms and Definitions to Contextualize the Study

There are relevant terms that will be used in this study and discussion that the reader should be familiar with. *Philanthropy* is defined as the altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement, usually manifested by donations of money, property, or work to needy persons, by an endowment of institutions, and by the generosity to other socially useful purposes (Grant, 2011). A *philanthropic foundation* is an institution that pursues social innovation and problem-solving by leveraging private money for public purposes (Chatterjee, 2018). A *grant* is a non-contractual one-way transfer of assets for a social purpose. *Grantmaking* is the awarding gifts of cash, grants in support of projects; a highly diversified set of activities that incorporates

numerous influences, traditions, styles, techniques, and expressions across a range of stages such as establishing a grantmaking strategy, developing appropriate decision-making procedures protocols and practices, creating and promoting priorities and application guidelines, assessing and selecting ideas worthy of support, communicating decisions and conditions, managing active grants, evaluating results, and making improvements as well as addressing human temptations in the process (Jung, 2020). A *grantee* is the recipient or awardee of a grant. *Decision-making* in the context of organizations as defined by Stinson is the process of responding to a problem by searching for and selecting a solution or course of actions that will create the most value for organizational stakeholders (Lee & Stinson, 2014). *Impact* is the fundamental intended change in organizations communities or systems (Grant, 2011, p. 153). If the outcomes are achieved then certain changes in organizations, communities, or society as a whole might be expected to occur. Grant additionally distinguishes *outcomes* as specific changes in individual or group behavior, knowledge, skills, and level of functioning are accomplished when planned activities lead to people who are participating to benefit in certain ways, achieve certain goals, become able to apply new skills, or have access to new opportunities. Outcomes are set by funders, agreed to internally and externally, are measurable, are not overly complex, and have a timetable of one to three years (Grant, 2011, p. 153).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review is divided into four sections: (1) Black Youth Violence, CBOs, and Grantmakers; (2) Power, Control, and Foundation Grantmakers; (3) Grant Foundation Decision-Making; and (4) Conceptual Framing of Grant Decision-Making in the Literature. This review highlights the knowledge published on the research topic and exposes areas where more studies are needed and thus the knowledge gap.

Black Youth Violence, CBOs, and Grantmakers

Community-based organizations are well-positioned to address issues as they originate from and focus on local community issues. CBOs located in Black urban communities are often most acquainted with and best positioned to address recurring issues such as youth violence. CBO goals and activities often emerge from the lived experiences and expertise of their communities, needs, and youth. Due to the inequities and systemic racism in this country, many Black urban communities do not have the disposable income to address challenges youth face with the best resources. According to Conley (2000), 30% of Black Americans have no liquid assets while the average White American family has nearly \$80,000 in liquid assets (p. 531).

Durán (2005) expounds on this disposition with the following:

...disparities are due to racial structures composed of a network of relations at the social, political, economic, and ideological levels that shape the life chances of the various races. A legacy of accumulated preferential treatment continues to confer racial privilege and economic supremacy for whites at the expense of people of color, creating a race gap. These outcomes are less the result of individual actions and intentional attitudes than the

character of formal political and economic structures that generate racialized, but nevertheless widely legitimized public policy outcomes (p. 197).

These factors also correlate with the ability to transfer wealth in an inheritance or to engage in significant philanthropic [financial] activity. The disparate access to disposable income for Black Americans can translate into fewer available resources to fund interests most meaningful to the Black community, such as the community level root causes of Black youth violence.

CBOs often seek grant funding (via a grantee organization) to operate and maintain their programs. What is not clear is if the funding received from foundations has an agenda attached to it. There can be certain considerations and influences from the funder that do not align with the grantees' intentions. An instance of this is illustrated in not-so-distant history. According to Francis (2019), the NAACP needed funding for its anti-lynching campaign in 1916. Instead, the committed funder forced the issue of equal education, with lynching and racial violence being excluded from funding consideration. The goals and intentions of the NAACP were co-opted, and the anti-lynching campaign was never funded. The preferences and agenda of the funder superseded those of the grantee. This was a definitive illustration of *movement capture* (Francis, 2019). The local community is an expert in itself, but this perspective is not always shared by those outside the community, who may offer financial resources. The notion of the Non-profit Industrial Complex or NPIC could be likened to the positionality of some foundation grantmakers and grantees. The NPIC is essentially a connection of financial institutions funding the work of social service organizations (government-designated non-profit organizations) that at its core are harmful to poor and disenfranchised people, according to ethnic studies scholar and activist Dylan Rodriguez (Smith, 2007, p. 8). An example is a corporation exploiting its workforce's labor to make a profit and then some of those profits being used for foundation grant

funding. It is regarded as ‘bad money’ by the activists who shame non-profit organizations for accepting funds of such ‘soiled’ origins even if the funds are channeled toward ‘good works’. The non-profits may be aware of the ‘soiled’ origins but accept the funds out of necessity. The study of a collaborative effort between grantmakers and youth violence in Chicago was explored by Ira Silver in the context of “comprehensive community initiatives” (Silver, 2005, p. 212). The study evaluated community-based agencies that were receiving grant dollars for youth employment and recreation options in an effort to prevent violence. The findings yielded that despite the funders stating that community agencies were collaborators, their suggestions and input were essentially disregarded. The partnerships ultimately were ‘sponsor-led’, meaning funders largely determined the awards despite inviting collaboration from the community agencies tasked with completing the work.

Power, Control, and Foundation Grantmakers

In some instances, the provider of resources can perceive themselves as the solution to the problem. Many CBO leaders would acknowledge that the lack of resources is major but not the only major obstacle they face. There should be a shared vision of allocation of resources and respect and consideration of the vision that existed before resources are offered. Lukes (2007) defines *power* as “the capacity to bring about outcomes” and further states power is also “the capacity to advance one’s interests and affect the interests of others, whether negatively or positively” (p. 60). One example is one anti-violence organization being focused on grassroots organizing. Their funder insisted that the professionalization of the organizers would be more beneficial and essentially diffused the momentum of the organization as its most promising leaders were recruited to other work. (Smith, 2007, p. 11). This was an exercise of power and

control by their prominent foundation funder. There was no conversation or questions asked, but a simple decision derailed their ability to realize their original goals.

When a CBO is discouraged or penalized for its advocacy and other efforts to mobilize toward social change (such as openly supporting Black Lives Matter), it can leave a deficit in its ability to be true to organizational values. The issues often coincide with the programs that are funded but if some attached issue is considered undesirable or offensive, resource control can be exerted by funders. According to Anheier (2011), this illustrates *paternalism*, where funders exercise inappropriate practices in favor of some grant seekers over others due to values (p. 13). It is also a form of discrimination. This detachment can cause funder tensions and the perception that the work and priorities of the community organization are overshadowed by the preferences of the funder, who most often is not a member of the community (similar to *movement capture* previously referenced). The facets of *Resource Dependence Theory*, (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) or how the external resources of organizations affect the behavior of the organization are also evident in this instance. The unpredictability of a funder's response to advocacy and other social change activity (and consequences thereof) may cause CBOs to be less vocal and active in arenas and ways most meaningful to them and representative of their community. There can be an impression that the priorities set by the CBOs are most important, but oftentimes organizational pursuits may seem co-opted by funders. The political dimensions of power (Krings et al., 2019) can be applied to local community organizations whereby decision-making power (who decides), agenda-setting power (what is a priority), and ideological power (influence of what is necessary and possible) are controlled by those who are considered to be powerful. Su (2010) echoes this as she states, "the choices made by individuals and organizations are largely circumscribed by

the actions of those around them, especially if these individuals are powerful or have more resources.”

The impact of funder preference and perceived interference of other interests have prompted some community-based and grassroots organizations to seek other funding which does not inhibit their activist or advocacy activities. While practiced more widely outside of the United States, some organizations have declined to partner with grantmaking foundation funders and align themselves with other means of funding. This exemplifies *Resource Mobilization Theory* (Pichardo, 1988), or how individuals and groups amass resources needed to translate grievances to action. From the community-based organization’s perspective, the act of rejecting much-needed funding is worth the freedom from the bonds of not being able to be politically engaged as an organization is compelled to be.

There are also government funds that CBOs receive outside of grantmaking foundations. For instance, violence prevention efforts in Chicago are supported by the federal government, State, County, and City entities. In 2021, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority earmarked \$94 million in grants for violence prevention (Smith, 2021). The same author further notes that funds are mostly focused on street outreach. Additionally, other programs such as youth jobs, after-school programs, and citizen re-entry receive hundreds of millions of dollars annually. In Cook county, where Chicago is located, violence prevention grants amounted to \$16.5 million in 2020 with 1.75 million allocated to combat violence in the south suburbs. Funds to address violence are plentiful, so other strategies must be explored.

Grant Foundation Decision-Making

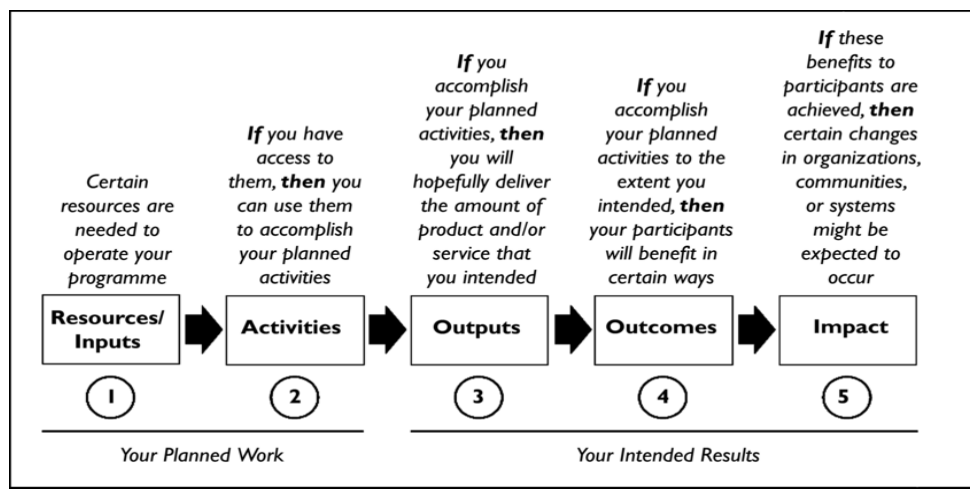
A major area where grantmaking foundations are criticized is the grant decision-making

process. There are no published standards or guidelines available to the public and grant decision-making processes may vary from one grantmaker to another. Foundations are notorious for their lack of transparency in their processes and very little is published about this aspect of grantmaking. Diaz (1999) states that there is a “major theoretical lacuna for understanding and predicting the behavior of these important social institutions” (p. 141). This leaves scholars, practitioners, and all other interested persons at a disadvantage in understanding foundations also referred to as “black boxes where little is known and even less is understood...” (p. 141). This is highly problematic as there are currently 25 foundations with assets that exceed \$1 billion that give \$45 million to programs annually (Diaz, 1999). The inability to comprehensively understand and study organizations with this much giving potential, power, and influence is concerning for grantees and beneficiary organizations.

Conceptual Framing of Grant Decision-Making in the Literature

Some have attempted to “unravel the mystery” of the grant decision-making process. The Kellogg Logic Model to grantmaking has inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.

Figure 3. The Kellogg Logic Model



Note. W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004) as noted by Grant, 2011, p. 34.

Grant (2011, p. 34) further shares the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) to grantmaking in seven steps:

- (1) Goal—What results do we expect?
- (2) Purpose—Why are we doing this?
- (3) Outputs—What are the deliverables?
- (4) Activities—What will we do to deliver the outputs?
- (5) Indicators of achievement—How will we know we've been successful?
- (6) Means of verification—How will we check our reported results?
- (7) Assumptions and Risks—What assumptions underlie the structure of our project? What is the risk that they will not prevail?

This framework is useful in the general understanding of how a foundation may approach the overall grantmaking process. It is however relatively generic. The same author adds (Grant, 2011, p. 15) how a field for investment may be identified by a funder:

- (1) Provisionally select a field of investment.
- (2) Calculate the likely impact.
- (3) Is the impact significant enough to be measurable?
- (4) Do I care about measuring it?
- (5) Can it be measured?
- (6) How can it be measured and at what cost?
- (7) Revisit selected field and revise.

Studies and literature on grant decision-making are few. Mentions of the value of funder decisions include maximizing impact at the most minimal cost and recognizing that one decision

could impact others or limit options in other areas (Grant, 2011, p. 16). Decision-making was noted in the discussion of the grant application evaluation. The peer review was mentioned as a measure that can be viewed as quality control and an added layer of objectivity. The same paragraph mentions the peer review, composed of a Board of Trustees, a delegated committee which may involve a senior person's assessment (upwards review) or someone on the same executive level, a peer. The notion of anyone else being involved in the decision process is not mentioned. Questions that related to the application evaluation process were noted that included the make-up of the decision-making committee, the training of the committee, and how staff recommendations were handled (Grant, 2011, p. 44). This was the closest to being critical of the process but there were no alternative actions offered if any of the responses were negative. It was however noted that all applicants should know from the beginning of the application process: who will be making the decisions, what the decision options are (yes, no, or yes with revisions) when the decision will be made and awardees notified, as well as the process if the outcome is unsatisfactory. While these questions are practical, how grantmakers are accountable to them was unclear.

Participatory practices engage those who are impacted by a decision in every aspect of the process from start to finish (Evans, 2015). Participatory Grant Making (PGM) involves the beneficiary community and often grantees in the entire grantmaking process, including the award process. This practice can enlighten foundation grantmakers in ways that perhaps program officer reports and other strategies cannot. Participatory practices are also acts of social justice. This action could address some of the criticisms of philanthropy to do more than wield power over grantees. Foundation grantmakers working with this social justice lens can be viewed as

taking a step towards the *decolonizing of wealth* (Thige, 2020). One study highlights that relationships and mutual trust and respect were essential to the process involving community-based organizations in Palestine and Northern Ireland (Kilmurray, 2015). The funder was available to meet with the local community at their convenience and was sure to exercise flexibility and compassion in addition to the traditional support funders usually offered. The CBOs facilitated meetings and were involved in the decision-making. The results were that funders were exposed to the lived experience of the grant seekers and their voices were incorporated in guidelines and decisions.

Grant concedes that the grant decision-making process was not perfect. The time it takes to commit to awarding a grant should be built into the evaluation process. Board of Trustee members and trustees were notably referred to as the grant decision-makers. A concerning statement followed that these were extremely busy people, with heavy responsibility, so decisions are preferred to be made at the single rare point when they are all available (Grant, 2011, p. 193). The presence of a sub-committee or specialist committee was noted in larger foundations—but: “the responsibility for the decision still rests with the full board.” To be clear, the award of funding is defined as an offer being made to a successful applicant but there is no contract until a signed acceptance is received from the applicant. Post decision management and control were noted as difficult for some funders.

Jung (2020) offers some perspective on grantmaking approaches that encompass decisions. He too echoes that grantmaking foundations are historically reluctant to share data, calling the grantmaking environment a “terra incognita”, or uncharted territory. He delves into the questions and issues that grantmakers face (see Appendix A) but little to nothing about the

grant decision-making process. He challenged that the roles of foundations should be examined. Currently, US-based foundations serve six roles which include: judge (who and what is funded), editor, citizen, entrepreneur, activist, and partner. Although these roles are easily identified, the lack of insight about foundations is a “lacuna of knowledge” (p. 415).

Bloomfield (2002) compiled a matrix, “The Five Core Decision Elements used by Foundations” (see Appendix B). The components are philanthropic fit between foundation and grant seeker, organizational patterns and tendency, grantmaking strategy and style, philanthropic landscape, and charitable impulses in habits of the mind. This evolved into the *Multiple Preference Model* where the aforementioned elements are evaluated to determine the best fit for a grant award. The *charitable impulses factor* includes beliefs, motives, and values that are subject to bias. The author admits this is controversial and may need to be removed from the model due to the difficulty of proving its existence. This is plausible despite it being widely known that personal preferences can influence grant decision-making due to the nature of the process.

Organizational behavior models have been explored to illuminate foundation behavior, including decision-making. Chatterjee (2018) explains the *Processual Analysis Theory* (which she cites from Pettigrew, 1997) as decisions not being a standalone process, but considers context, history, and current political factors. The *Collective Empathy Theory* (Muller et al., 2014) relates decisions are impacted by organization decision-makers feeling empathy about the human needs that could be addressed by their organization. It is feasible to see how both theories could apply to foundations that fund community-based organizations that do Black urban youth

violence work. A future study of the theoretical underpinnings of foundations that fund Black urban youth violence would be useful for grantees, scholars, and general stakeholders.

The importance of relationships in grant decision-making was a recurring theme in the literature. It is noted that some funders tend to award grants to applicants they know and like. This is inherently problematic as most funding decision-makers are likely white, well educated, and from wealthy backgrounds (Durán, 2005, p. 198). Many grantees from community-based organizations are working-class and often do not share social circles with grantmakers. This leaves little to no opportunity to cultivate valuable relationships with grantmakers. Regrettably, relationships and trust may take more time to build than a grant award period. The movement toward business-like models in grantmaking appears to discourage activities that are time-consuming and could result in outcomes that are not likely to be measured (Duran, 2005, p. 198). Ideally, measurable results and the realization of the “return on investment” happen in the grant award period. This is the ‘bang for your buck’ scenario grantmakers may subscribe to (Silver, 2005, p. 213). Silver adds that structural racism could hinder grantmaker and grant seeker relationships. If the funder perceives that race is no longer an obstacle to ideal outcomes, Black community-based organization leaders who perceive race as a present issue may see this as a conflict. If funders believed some individuals did racist things instead of society being racist, a common view of issues may be difficult to achieve. Also, what is considered ‘worthy’ of funding becomes unclear when individual success is emphasized over movements to effect broad social change where entire communities are the focus.

Finally, the Stinson Wellness Organizational Decision-Making Model (Stinson Model) offers a comprehensive guide that addresses the wellness of the individual which translates to the

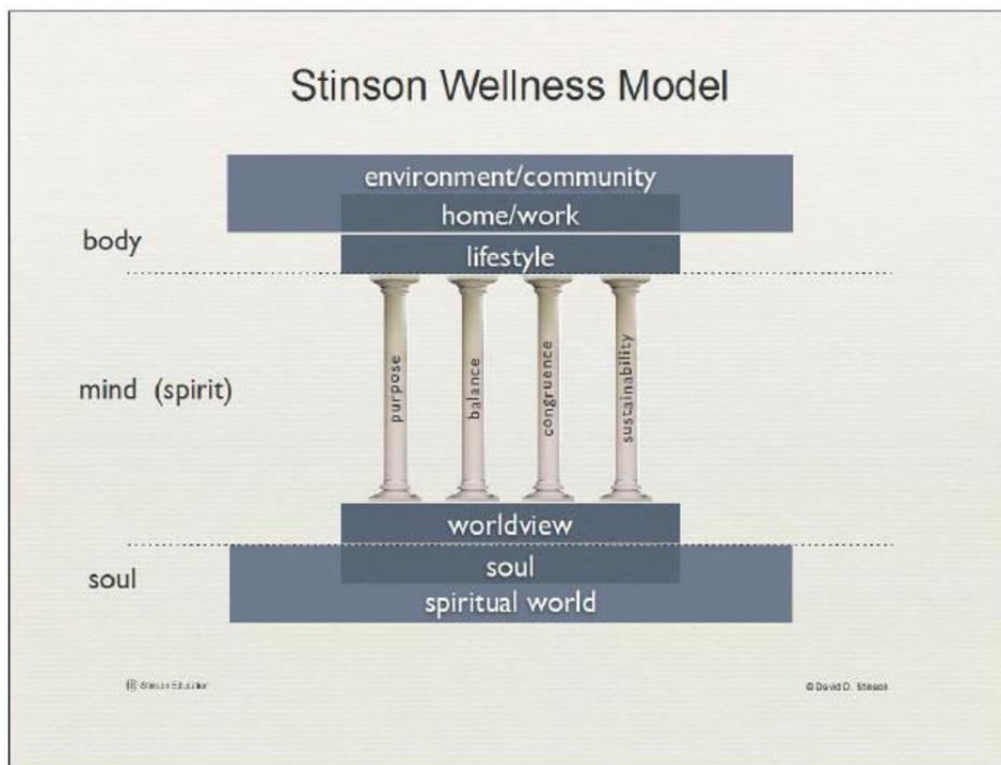
wellness of the organization and its stakeholders (Lee & Stinson, 2014). Stinson presents the “layers of life” that holistically apply to individuals and highlights how they apply to decision-making (p. 13). These layers are:

- (1) *worldview*—subconscious and conscious views of life, the reasoning behind actions, behaviors, and nuances;
- (2) *lifestyle*—internal world and values expressed in outward behaviors and actions;
- (3) *home and work*—immediate environment of the people lived with and most closely connected to, how environment of closeness and feedback can encourage, discourage, or influence behavior;
- (4) *environment and community*—where people live affects them politically, socially, and culturally; participation in groups and the norms of these groups can define day-to-day life;
- (5) *spiritual world and soul*—identity in the spiritual world and how this informs beliefs and actions in the natural world; only applies to those who believe in a spiritual self.

Stinson resolves that all these layers form ‘the core identity’ that translates to the passions, skills, and strengths from where decisions are made. He adds purpose, balanced approaches, and congruence as facets of the decision-making process (p. 17). These are quite personal yet significant to many people. The unique personal experiences and depth involved in this model are complementary to the exploration involved in a phenomenological study. It is this level of depth that this researcher seeks in understanding the perceptions of grant decision-makers. Stinson posits that people are who they are no matter what environment they are in. While context impacts some things, characteristics of what shapes a person, including their

decision-making remain the same regardless of if they are in a personal or professional setting. Using this model, the grant decision-making process is an extension of a person's decision-making process.

Figure 4. Stinson Wellness Model



Note. Taken from Kunte (2016).

The literature on this topic is cursory. Studies that focus on organizations with a phenomenological lens are few. Studies focused solely on the grantmaker decision-making process are lacking and I found no studies focused on the grant seeker or community-based agency's perspective of the grant decision-making process. A study that included both perspectives would illuminate this potentially significant but neglected topic. This leads to the research question: *How do foundation grantmakers and grant seekers of Black youth violence who work in Chicago, IL, perceive the grant decision-making process?*

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Design and Rationale

Phenomenology is ideal for studying a single phenomenon and is often conducted as an interview with a small sample, as the focus is deep understanding. This study applies a *descriptive phenomenology* and a qualitative interview design. The descriptive is for the exploratory nature of the study. A descriptive phenomenology was fitting for this study since it is focused on how organizations experience their decision-making process. Patricia Sanders highlighted the significance of using phenomenology to study organizations in her seminal article, *Phenomenology: A New Way of Viewing Organizational Research*, published in 1983. She noted the missed opportunities to gain more nuanced information and deeper understanding as few organizations are viewed from a phenomenological lens. The intended outcome of this research is to focus solely on the lived experience of the grant-decision making process.

Phenomenology is a qualitative research design that requires the researcher to describe the lived experience of a phenomenon as shared by an individual who experienced the phenomenon. Creswell (2009) states a phenomenological study incorporates several accounts of individuals who experienced the same phenomenon (p. 13). Clark Moustakas, a leading scholar of phenomenological research methods, offers that this design of inquiry is classified as a hermeneutic science that involves reading a text so the intention and meaning behind appearances are fully understood. He adds that the text describes the conscious experience and interpretation unmask what is hidden behind the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, p. 10). Semi-

structured interviews were used for this study. Phenomenology is the best method for this study as opposed to other qualitative methods such as a case study or focus groups. While these methods explore an experience with one or many cases, phenomenology exclusively focuses on lived experiences. Specifically, this study used *transcendental or descriptive* phenomenology. Edmond Husserl, a German philosopher, known as the ‘Father of Phenomenology’ initiated this form of phenomenology in 1931 (Moustakas, 1994, p. 25). He determined that bracketing was the only way to truly study a phenomenon. Bracketing is the suspension of the researchers’ preconceptions, beliefs, or prejudices so that they do not influence the interpretation of the participant’s experience. (Peoples, 2021, p. 30). The process was likened to the researcher approaching the data as ‘a stranger in a strange land’ with no assumptions or foreknowledge about what they are exposed to. Using this lens allows for a pure description of a phenomenon with minimal to no intrusion of researcher bias. Wojnar and Swanson (2007) state that “descriptive phenomenology is a complex philosophical tradition and a method of inquiry. The lived experience itself as described by the participants is used to provide universal description of the phenomenon” (p. 174). This article provides guidance for understanding phenomenology and the difference between transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenological methods. Husserl’s student, Martin Heidegger, believed bracketing was not truly possible for humans and later developed *hermeneutic or interpretive phenomenology*. His stance was that no researcher could ‘un-know’ what she already knows, and this should be embraced and not suppressed (Peoples, 2021, p. 32). A later study may find hermeneutics practical, but not for this current study.

Lee et al. (2014) used a descriptive phenomenological method in a study that explored the access of maternity health services to Chinese immigrants in Canada. There were 15 one-on-

one semi-structured interviews (a common method in phenomenology) conducted. The author developed the interview guide based on her knowledge of the population and spoke in their native language. Themes emerged which included the importance of culturally competent maternity care. Martins (2008) studied 15 homeless adults using descriptive phenomenology. Qualitative interviews that lasted 30-60 minutes yielded a greater understanding of navigating the healthcare system while experiencing homelessness. The population of the Martins study is a marginalized group who are often misunderstood and excluded in conversation about their situation. While the population of my study is not marginalized, they represent youth who are often marginalized and whose voice is excluded in conversations about their situation. The lens of a marginalized population was beneficial in development of this study. Oshodi et al. (2019) completed a descriptive phenomenological study of the perceived autonomy of nurses in England compared to nurses in America. This study used a purposive sample of 48 nurses who completed semi-structured interviews comprised of four questions. The results revealed the greater the perceived autonomy a nurse reports, the greater the satisfaction with their work. Themes were compared to an American study where there were fewer cases of patient complications and deaths where nurses reported increased perceived autonomy. Reviewing the results of two groups in the same descriptive phenomenological study was useful as the outcomes could impact life or death situations for patients. The outcomes of the study possibly impacting life or death is similar to the position of youth that grantmakers and grant seekers are working on behalf of in my study. Knight et al. (2012) completed a phenomenological study to explore why 31 New Zealand students completed a registered nursing program. Close family and friends were reported to provide the support needed for students to persevere. This researcher anticipates that

close personal networks are a major factor of this research study. In a like manner, closeness of family and proximity to home were the focus of a health study of 27 children and their parents conducted in the United Kingdom. Heath et al. (2015) examined the impact of familiarity of community and family as it relates to illness recovery in children. Proximity can foster a positive response in human-based situations as this is also relevant to the context of this research. A limit of descriptive phenomenology is that results are expressed in language which is subjective (Eberle, 2014, p. 199). A researcher must be thoroughly trained to accurately use this method and put their interpretations aside to depict participant responses without bias.

This researcher discovered notable empirical studies focusing on grantmaking or grant seeking that also used semi-structured interviews. Quinn et al. (2014) investigated the impact of 41 California-based grantmakers on social change as it pertains to public education in the U.S. and charter schools. Their research, similar to this dissertation, found that directed dollars can move the narrative in the manner they choose. This echoes the literature of this study that recognized the power of foundations to impact institutions. Ji & Pang (2021) examined grantmakers' increased funding in response to the crisis of a major earthquake in China. While funding increased immediately, it waned over a 10-year period. The need was still great due to the disaster's devastation, but many foundations had shifted their funding priorities. This researcher is concerned that funding for youth violence work may have similar outcomes. Lastly, MacLeod & Emejulu (2014) explored asset-based community development (ABCD) in the U.S. and Scotland. They interviewed 10 grassroots community organization leaders about their experience of the impact of private funding on public issues. Funding sources for community development projects raised questions about neoliberalism, privatization, and inequality. Their

research and this dissertation study are similarly focused on the welfare state and care for people living in marginalized communities.

Sampling Method—Snowball Sampling

The sampling method was snowball sampling. Sociologists Parker et al. (2019) define snowball sampling as using the networks of identified study participants to refer other participants. It is a convenient, purposeful approach often used in qualitative studies, especially if the population is difficult to reach. The snowball sampling process has its limitations. First, there are no prescribed guidelines for snowball sampling. An example is the lack of shared meanings and terminology. This flexibility can leave newer researchers open to misunderstandings and mistakes (Coyne, 1997). Methodology and rigor can also be weakened as the sample directly impacts research outcomes. The selection of an ‘information rich’ participant or one that can provide the most in-depth information related to the purpose of the study is not always identified from convenience sampling (Coyne, 1997). While generalization is not the goal of a phenomenological study, a representative sample of the study population may not emerge from this sampling method. Limits of the snowball sampling method also include recruiting participants who are similar and may have similar viewpoints. Additionally, referrals may be few, can be geographically spread out, and often desire to remain anonymous (Parker et al., 2019). Woodley and Lockard (2016) explored the challenges of limited referrals while using snowball sampling. Their study was about the experiences of Black woman educators working at a predominantly white institution. The use of referrals in snowball sampling moved the study from two referrals to 15 referrals and ultimately 10 participants. The authors' use of rapport and relationships to recruit participants was beneficial to this study. Similar to this current study, it

aimed to include a population of an understudied group that was difficult to access. Using semi-structured interviews, a study was conducted on the strategies foundations employ to achieve their missions (Stewart, 2017). In the sample, which was concentrated in a single geographic region, there were 29 grant-making foundations. The use of strategic approaches to identify grantees who aligned with their goals contributed to a greater perception of intentionality and transparency. This research was especially pertinent given that the population of this study consisted of grantmakers focusing on a specific geographical area. It is regrettable that the grant seekers of this study were not included as their inclusion could have provided richer results. Conversely, McGinnis Johnson (2016) used a snowball sample to study 622 participants that included funders and grantees. The impact of community engagement in grant decisions was the focus of this study and is relevant to this current research. Similarly, Farwell & Handy (2020) explored decision and community engagement as it relates to funding organizations that support physical and mental health in the state of Washington. The snowball sample yielded 25 participants where findings supported the benefits of participatory processes. The participatory action of engaging community in all phases of the grant process from beginning to end is aligned with the goals of this dissertation study.

Sample Size

The sample of this study was comprised of 10 individuals holding decision-making positions as a grantmaker or grant seeker. Five grantmakers and five grant seekers, comprising two study groups, were identified having reached saturation for this research study. According to phenomenological methods scholar Katarzyna Peoples, a phenomenological study should have 8-15 participants (Peoples, 2021, p. 49). Another similar study emphasized that smaller sample

sizes are preferred in this approach so the researcher can focus on the depth of individual experiences and not be overwhelmed by too many participants. Roberts (2013) completed a study on first-time mothers who reported a negative birth experience that had five participants. The use of semi-structured interviews led to exploring ways midwifery can better support mothers in a holistic way. While the study is about birth experiences in the healthcare field, it relates to my study as it involves a holistic lens also. Relatedly, Pathak & Intrat (2012) used semi-structured interviews in their study that included teachers and students from Singapore and Thailand. The 10 teachers in their sample were interviewed to learn about student collaboration at their school. Their study resulted in potential collaborative learning ideas. This study's objective was intriguing because it seeks to investigate more effective collaboration between two groups in which a power dynamic exists. My study does the same as grant seekers experience a power dynamic with grantmakers.

Measures

The researcher discussed the study objectives with her dissertation chair to ensure that the appropriate interview questions were asked. It was suggested that the researcher find measures that focused on the study population. In addition, it was proposed that articles and studies pertaining to decision-making be reviewed. Both activities yielded few studies relevant to the research topic or population. The researcher also reviewed studies that utilized the descriptive phenomenology methodology. Lastly the core elements of The Stinson Model were used to formulate the content of the questions. These activities yielded questions that focused on approaches to grantmaking and organizational and personal decision-making. Examples of these topics include collaboration, the grant giving and grant seeking process, and interaction with

leadership. The researcher reviewed these questions and determined that the interview would last between 45-60 minutes. After developing the initial questions, the researcher conducted practice interviews with a population representative who was not included in the sample. As an added measure of rigor, the literature suggests doing the interviews with members of the population who are not part of the study sample. A grantmaker and grant seeker with experience levels similar to the sample completed the interview and shared feedback on the interview protocol. The comments regarding the questions ranged from use of jargon to the sequence of questions. The suggestions were noted, and the interview questions were edited accordingly. The final protocols for the grantmaker and grant seeker group can be found in Appendix C. Another study that utilized the same development process interviewed children with a severe health condition. These children were purposefully recruited from a hospital database and in an at-home care program (van Scheppingen et al., 2008). Both the participants and their guardian(s) had to agree to be in the study via assent and consent. Confidentiality of participant identity as well as how their data would be collected and stored was also discussed before beginning the interviews. The researchers then reviewed the program details, completed a literature review, and studied the participants' medical history to create the interview protocol. The first iteration was pilot-tested with two children and revised before being finalized. The final questions were open-ended about the daily activities of the children. Interviews were conducted at the home of the participants. The results yielded a deeper understanding of the experiences of children with a certain health issue. Other health professionals serving these children could benefit from this rich information. The objectives of this study were meaningful to this current research because it involves children

in a particularly vulnerable situation and the adults that make choices that impact their lives. This is also true of the participants and ultimate focus of this current research.

Here are a few of the questions that were asked during the research interview of my study:

- How would you describe the organizational culture at your current organization?
- How does the organization's leadership interact with staff, the local community, and other stakeholders?
- How would you describe the grant decision-making/-seeking process your organization uses?
- Who do you consult with about major professional or personal decisions before making them?
- What role if any do you think philanthropy plays in social justice?
- What exposure do you have to youth violence outside of the media, articles, or research/data?

All documents used to recruit and complete this study in addition to all other study related documents are located in Appendix C. These documents are:

- IRB Approval
- Recruitment email/phone script
- Recruitment Flyer
- Study Introduction
- Pre-Screen Questions/Demographics Questionnaire
- Invitation to Participate
- Verbal Consent Form
- Grantmaker Protocol
- Grant seeker Protocol
- Thank you/Debrief Note

Recruitment

I used existing professional networks to obtain referral names of grant decision-makers and grant seekers per the population definition. I shared the study criteria with my professional networks via phone conversation or an email. Dr. Felicia DeHaney, a member of my dissertation committee and a current executive at the Kellogg Foundation, Consuella Brown, a former foundation president, and Ivan Medina, an expert in philanthropy and community engagement, all generously shared contacts that could potentially participate in the study. I compiled a list and then sent an email introducing the study and invited potential participants identified through the aforementioned methods to complete the pre-screen survey (see Appendix C). Once identified, participants were emailed a pre-screen survey to confirm their eligibility for the study. Potential participants were asked to complete the survey and return it via email within 24 hours. A second email was sent after the respondent returned the pre-screen survey. Respondents were formally invited to participate in the study and sent the consent form if they were eligible (see Appendix C). Interviews were scheduled at the participant's convenience. Prior to the initiation of this study, IRB approval was obtained (see Appendix C).

Sample

The sample of this study represented a population of foundation grant decision-makers and grant seekers who focus on youth violence work in Chicago, IL. The inclusion criteria for the study were that participants had to be a foundation grant decision-maker whose foundation funded youth violence work in Chicago, regardless of giving level amount. The foundation could be national or local but must have funded youth violence work in Chicago within the past five years. Funders who do not give to youth violence work in Chicago or who have not funded this

work within the past five years were excluded from participation in the study. Grant seekers included in this study were those who applied for funding from foundation grantmakers for youth violence work in Chicago in the past five years.

Table 1. Research Sample

Participant Seeker(S)/Maker(M)	Gender	Highest Education Level	Years of Experience
S1	Male	Ph.D.	20+
S2	Male	Masters	15+
S3	Male	Ph.D.	20+
S4	Female	Masters	10+
S5	Male	Masters	20+
M1	Female	Masters	20+
M2	Female	B.A.	20+
M3	Female	Ph.D.	15+
M4	Female	Masters	20+
M5	Male	Masters	15+

Demographics

The grantmaker participants were decision-makers from national and local foundations that fund youth violence work in Chicago. The grantmaker group consisted of four females and one male. The grant seeker group consisted of four males and one female. The total years of related work experience ranged from 10 years to 20 years. Women and men in both groups had about the same amount experience with slightly more experience being in the grantmaker group. All participants except one had a masters level education or higher. All participants reported either no political affiliation or identified with the Democrat party. Religious beliefs were reported as Christian, Muslim, and none. These were results from the demographic questionnaire completed by participants before the research interview (see Appendix C). The participant groups represented a variety of professional backgrounds. Work experience included executive

leadership, fundraising, financial management, counseling, and community organizing. Most participants spent time in environments comprised of non-profit and community-based organizations, as well as volunteer activity. The researcher was pleased that seven of the ten participants came from academic or social work backgrounds. Another point of interest is that 80% of grantmakers and 60% of grant seekers were parents of children in the age group most impacted by youth violence.

This study's sample ended up being a subset of the population that was underrepresented. According to literature, the majority of foundation grant decision-makers are older white cis men. This was not the case with the sample produced by this study. The sample of this study shared numerous characteristics with the demographic most affected by youth violence.

Figure 5. Demographics of Study Participants

Grantmakers were from local and national foundations
Grant seekers were from community-based organizations in Chicago
Grantmakers= four female, one male; Grant seekers= four male, one female
Related work experience range was 10 years to 20 years
Reported religious beliefs were Christian, Muslim, and none
Reported political affiliation was Democrat or none
Professional background included social work, academia, fundraising, financial management executive leadership, and community organizing
There were grantmakers who were once grant seekers in this study
Participants included parents of youth in the age range most impacted by violence in Chicago
Sample for this study was an under-represented group within an under-represented group

Data Collection Procedures

Using Zoom for interviews. Interviews were collected on Zoom at a time convenient for the participants. The interview time ranged from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. One participant requested their interview to be scheduled at 7am and another at 9 pm. The Zoom meeting platform enabled participants to maintain their schedules and participate without delay. Despite that the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic may have passed, many people continue to worry about contracting the virus. If a participant was hesitant to attend a face-to-face meeting to protect their health or the health of their family, Zoom eliminated this concern. There were a few concerns about Zoom related to the missed nuances of an in-person meeting. If a participant was uncomfortable or had restricted body language, the platform made it difficult to notice. In addition, Zoom did not permit accommodating distractions such as on-screen notifications and other people in the area. Confidentiality and the consent form were reviewed orally before starting the interview. The researcher then asked if there were any questions and also obtained oral permission to record and transcribe the interview. Identifiers such as Seeker 1, Maker 3, etc., were assigned to protect the identity of the participant and her/his organization. The record feature in Zoom was used for audio and interview transcription. The researcher took handwritten notes during the interview and wrote reflective memos immediately after each interview (see Interview Protocols in Appendix C). Some participants shared personal stories at length but follow-up interviews were not needed for this study. A thank you note/debrief (see Appendix C) was sent via email after each interview was completed and no further contact was made with the participant.

Observations on Data Collection—Researcher Reflections

There were various orientations among the professionals regarding the approach to the study. During sample recruitment, it was compelling to notice that the study prompted both interest and concern from certain participants. The following are exceptions as the email was sufficient for most participants. During an initial informational meeting, the researcher was questioned about the nature of the research questions and the intended use of the results. This conversation yielded ideas for potential future research topics that were beyond the scope of this study. Another possible study participant was highly referred by another participant. When contacted, they expressed concern about the confidentiality of their response. The researcher reassured their confidential and anonymous participation. This appeared to put them at ease, and they agreed to participate, but they were subsequently unreachable and did not respond to the researcher's attempts to schedule an interview.

Another participant was irritated the study interview was not completed at the introduction meeting, expressing their limited availability. The researcher explained that she did not want to assume interest in the study, but the participant stated their consent was implied due to the referral source. The Stinson Model was at work, as their relationship with the trusted individual who referred me was, from their perspective, implied their consent to participate in the study. The consultation or connection with their trusted other led to their decision to participate in the study. This was the case with most participants and shows the effectiveness of snowball sampling. Other interesting occurrences in this process include:

- A potential participant was extremely busy but fascinated with the study. They recently completed their own PhD and strongly desired to adjust my research focus based on their rationale.
- One grantmaker remarked candidly and laughed, expressing relief that their participation was anonymous.

Institutional Review Board Process

The IRB process was not without challenge. As anticipated, there were questions for clarification and four revisions were submitted. There was a strong concern that the study's subject matter could cause distress or harm to the participants. The researcher and chair provided additional information on the purpose of the study, the scope of the questions, and reaffirmed that all participants were already familiar with the topic, which was one of the inclusion criteria. After numerous communications with representatives of the IRB, this dissertation research was approved. The approved IRB can be found in Appendix C of this study.

Researcher Role

In accordance with the requirements of a doctoral dissertation, the researcher also fulfilled the roles of recruiter, developer of instruments, and independent analyst of the collected data. My life experience and perceptions are explicitly stated as they could affect the interpretation of the data. I am a former staff of a CBO who relied on grant funding for youth violence work. This could also be an ethical consideration with bias as there was an impression made when grant applications were denied. Also, preconceived ideas about some foundation grantmakers as being judgmental, classist, and out of touch with grantees and beneficiary communities could color interpretation of the data. The practice of bracketing proficiently was

critical in addressing this. I addressed these issues by consistently writing memos and employing member checks. Impressions, reactions, and feelings were recorded after each interview and during the coding process. Additionally, regular check-in appointments with respected, experienced researchers and mentors were completed throughout the study.

Data Analysis

Analysis of this research study consisted of components of Auerbach and Silverstein's *Qualitative Data, An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* (2003) and Braun and Clarke's *Thematic Analysis Steps* (2006). Both resources are noted with over 100,000 citations for the analysis of qualitative data. Auerbach and Silverstein are American professors of psychology at Yeshiva University in New York. Carl Auerbach specializes in trauma, collective and cultural trauma, and mass violence, all phenomena that are relevant to youth violence work. Lousie B. Silverstein is a qualitative expert, with previous leadership roles in the American Psychological Association (APA), whose work is focused on family and multiculturalism. Both authors currently co-direct the Fatherhood Project. This researcher appreciated that the development of their analysis process presented in their book was informed by persons with these lenses and specific experiences. Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, psychology professors located in New Zealand and England, are known for their contributions on teaching about thematic analysis. Their seminal article, *Using Thematic Analysis* (2006) has over 200,000 online views and their work is featured in research methods textbooks. In fact, this widely cited article has evolved into a textbook, *Thematic Analysis, A Practical Guide* (2022).

This researcher began with the first steps from Auerbach and Silverstein as it was approachable for a new solo researcher. It acknowledges that a dissertation study is conducted

independently, despite the fact that the best research is conducted in collaboration. The Braun and Clarke method is based on the assumption that a research team will conduct the study. Auerbach's and Silverstein's specific instructions on how to proceed were provided rather than having to rely on philosophical underpinnings that always pointed back to the researcher's discretion. There is a chapter entitled "Coding: The Mechanics" that guides one from raw data to identifying what data is relevant to the study. This made sense as it is stated not everything will be included in the analysis. The process of identifying relevant text assisted in avoiding being overwhelmed by the volume of every piece of text within the collected data.

Qualitative Data [the book] is meant for the novice researcher who needs guidance on what specifically to do when faced with a sea of information. It takes readers through the qualitative research process, beginning with an examination of the basic philosophy of qualitative research, and ending with planning and carrying out a qualitative research study. It provides an explicit, step-by-step procedure that will take the researcher from the raw text of interview data through data analysis and theory construction to the creation of a publishable work. (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Auerbach and Silverstein's and Braun and Clarke's procedures for completing qualitative data analysis are extremely similar, with considerable overlap. Before beginning the analysis, both require a comprehensive comprehension of the data and repeated readings to ensure a thorough familiarity with them. Both encourage the physical printing of interview transcripts and handwritten notes taken in the margins. Repeating ideas are essentially the same as codes. The term 'thematic analysis' is only used with Braun and Clarke, but theme development is noted with Auerbach and Silverstein. Steps for Auerbach and Silverstein are: relevant text, repeating ideas, and themes (concept of the orphan theme introduced in this analysis process). Braun and Clarke's analysis process include: familiarization, coding, search for themes, defining and naming themes, reviewing themes, and lastly, writing up the report.

The researcher began her data analysis with the first three steps of Auerbach and Silverstein, then integrated the last two steps of Braun and Clarke's process. This flowed seamlessly for the type of data being analyzed and was conducive for this particular research study. Auerbach and Silverstein provided easy-to-follow, tangible, specific steps for novice researchers to follow. The researcher's confidence in performing the analysis correctly was bolstered by the clarity of the instructions. Here are the analysis steps used to analyze the data for this research study.

Clean the Data

The interview transcripts were 'cleaned'. Each interview transcript was transferred from the Zoom recording file into a separate MS Word document. All respondent names were removed from the transcripts, de-identifying the respondent. A watermark was added to identify each transcript (i.e., Seeker 2, Maker 5, etc.). All 'raw data' transcripts were then printed. The researcher read (skimmed) transcripts while listening to interviews. Corrections were made so that printed transcripts matched the interviews verbatim, thereby cleaning the data. The researcher noted impressions and thoughts in margins of transcripts and kept a reflexive journal (see Appendix D). Transcript reading alternated between grantmakers and seekers. The 'clean' transcripts were then printed and used exclusively from that point forward. This is also the "raw text."

Prepare for Analysis

A review theoretical framework was recommended to determine what to include and exclude, and to determine biases. "A theoretical framework is the set of beliefs about psychological and social processes with which you approach your research study" (Auerbach &

Silverstein, 2003, p. 46). Next, the research question was reviewed. An exploration of what the question is asking and why it was being asked was completed. Reflective questions such as, why these questions are being asked, what do I want to know, what difference does it make, why is it important had to be pondered. Responses to these reflexive questions were written down as a point of reference to begin the process. The authors admonished the researcher to “be mindful of who I am asking the question of and why this person is a fitting respondent” (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). It is recommended that the first time completing a data analysis be done ‘by hand’, using MS Word (processing program), so the PI (researcher) can get a feel of the operations involved (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

The central idea of coding is to move from raw text to research concerns in small steps, each step building on the previous one period that way you do not have to immediately see the connection between the raw text and your research concerns; You only have to see as far as your next step. Having taken that step you will be able to see further and take the next step after that one. In this case coding can be seen as a staircase moving from one level to the next of understanding (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 35).

Select relevant text for analysis. *Relevant text* refers to passages of a transcript that express a distinct idea related to research concerns (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 46). All relevant text was highlighted in the hard copy of transcripts.

Raw text → relevant text → repeating ideas → themes

When deciding what text is important, the following questions were considered:

- Does it relate to my research concern?
- Does it help me understand my participant better? Does it clarify my thinking?
- Does it simply seem important, even if I can't say why?

Highlighted passages were copied into separate files—one for each interview transcript. The relevant text transcripts were used hereafter to complete the analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 48).

Familiarization. Braun and Clarke recommended starting with the familiarization of the data as mentioned earlier in this section. This involved reading each [clean] transcript multiple times. The authors stated *immersion*, or actively reading searching for meanings and patterns happens with repeated reading. They stated to read each transcript completely and thoroughly for meaning (Braun & Clark, 2006). They stressed the importance of familiarization with all aspects of the data. This connects to why qualitative research most often has smaller sample sizes, due to the thorough nature of data review. It is further suggested that notes and reflexive memos be written for reference in future analysis phases. While no specific number of reads was suggested, this researcher read the transcripts three times. The first read is a skim while the data was being cleaned, followed by two comprehensive reads of the cleaned transcripts.

Discover repeating ideas. The researcher searched for repeating ideas while completing the two thorough reads of the data. A *repeating idea* is an idea expressed in relevant text by two or more interview participants (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). It is when different participants express the same idea (with the same or similar words) in their response. The researcher must be mindful to include enough text within the repeating idea so that the context is not lost. A list of repeating ideas was created for each interview transcript. All transcripts from the first sample group were read, then the second group was read. ‘Orphan ideas’ are okay in this phase but the researcher was advised to evaluate if any orphan ideas are too broad, too narrow, or simply belong elsewhere (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). All orphan themes were noted in a reflexive

journal. Auerbach and Silverstein note that there will likely be 40-80 repeating ideas, but 60 is good. Repeating ideas should be named to capture the “essence of idea in a dramatic and emotionally vivid way” (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 49). This is the equivalent of a code in the Braun and Clarke process.

Compare repeating ideas/emergence of themes. Next, the repeating ideas were grouped in categories that express a common theme. A *theme* is an implicit idea or topic that a group of repeating ideas have in common (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 62). The authors recommended the researcher note choices of why what text was selected for repeating ideas. A theme may be initially generated inductively from raw data or generated deductively from theory and prior research. This researcher used a deductive approach. Deductive analysis is driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest and may provide a more detailed analysis of some aspect of the data (Braun & Clark 2006). The researcher noted themes that emerged from the first and second interviews from grant seekers. The themes were used for the remaining grant seeker interviews. Similarly, the researcher used the same themes with the grantmaker interviews. The conceptual framework may be utilized to develop broad higher order codes to help organize the data. These deductive codes often form main themes that may match an interview question. (Nowell et al., 2017). Orphan themes were identified and incorporated into the discussion at the preference of the researcher. The other themes were named with an easy-to-understand phrase that is simple and avoids jargon (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Review themes. The researcher examined themes to assess if there was any overlap. She confirmed only one idea was represented in each theme and that the repeating ideas for each theme were coherent. The same repeating idea can be part of more than one theme. A thematic

map, or visual representation of the themes, can be created in this phase. This map displays what aspect of the data a theme represents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It also illustrates the connection between repeating ideas, themes, and possible sub-themes. *Sub-themes* are essentially themes within a theme. They can be useful for giving structure to a particularly large and complex theme, and for demonstrating the hierarchy of meaning within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92).

Compare themes to research question. A detailed analysis was then written for each theme by writing about the theme's content and scope in a couple of sentences. This is the story that each theme tells. It is important to consider how each theme fits into the broader story being told about the data in relation to the research question. This ensures there is not too much overlap between the themes. Each theme was considered by itself, and then in relation to the others (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Generate report. The report tells the story of the data that speaks to the validity of the analysis. The researcher provided concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting accounts of the story the data tells within and across themes. Evidence of the themes within the data were presented, in the form of vivid examples which captured the essence of the point being demonstrated. Ultimately the analysis report not only provided a description but also highlighted the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Validity and Reliability

This researcher used validity measures to ensure this study is trustworthy and credible. For example, the researcher noted personal bias that may have impacted interpretation (explanation of researcher bias). Reflexive notations were made in a separate journal. The

researcher also employed an external audit which involves an expert researcher who is not involved in the study reviewing the analysis and findings to check for accuracy (see Appendix E). All procedures from the beginning until the end are ideally replicable. Additionally, the dissertation chair worked with the researcher to develop a plan to control for bias. This plan included the review and discussion of reflexive notes and bracketing, guidance where the researcher lacked clarity, suggestions to review quality dissertations with a similar research design, identification of assumptions that emerged from the researcher's prior career experiences, and encouragement during routine meetings.

Rigor—Addressing Bias/Reflections on Analysis and Researcher Orientations

As an insider who shares multiple identities with the participants, the researcher may benefit from advantages such as expediency of access and rapport building, insight into personal history, and a more remarkable ability to understand the participants cognitive processes. Conversely, the researcher's status as an insider may have presented complications such as over-identification, difficulty recognizing patterns, and less exploration (Chavez, 2008, p. 479).

There were limited power dynamics involved in this study. This researcher was not in a place of power other than not meticulously protecting the confidentiality of the study participants. As she is interested in philanthropy as a career, the researcher remained cognizant of the fact that some of the participants may be future colleagues. The researcher acknowledges that she had a natural affinity for the participants who were grant seekers. She was eager to hear and explore their perspectives first. As a former social worker with a community-based organization dependent on grant funding, it is possible that she over-identified with the grant seekers. Admittedly, the researcher could have been seeking her own voice during this analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter described the Methods employed to complete this research study. The researcher highlighted the steps from participant recruitment to interview completion. The iterative procedure for formulating the final questions was described. Some reflections on interactions with potential participants from the researcher's perspective were also shared. The nuanced strategy for combining two noteworthy analysis plans was described in detail. In addition, evidence of the steps taken to ensure validity and credibility were provided. The following chapter focuses on the Findings of this research study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

In the following chapter, the findings of this research are presented using the analytical framework of descriptive phenomenology. Six major themes and their respective subthemes are introduced. An orphan theme, or response noted by relatively few or one participant, is also mentioned because it was important to the study despite being uncommon.

The six major themes are: (1) Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice, (2) Examining the Decision-Maker in Grant Decisions, (3) Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking, 4) Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant-Seekers (Resource Dependence), (5) Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence, and (6) Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence. This chapter includes two orphan themes (explained in greater detail later in the chapter). These are: *Youth Voice in Youth Violence Work* and *Challenges of Trust-Based Philanthropy*.

Themes

I. Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice

Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice emerged as the frontal theme of this investigation. Some participants implied that social justice entails correction of societal and systemic harms inflicted on marginalized groups. Specifically, grantmaker one stated that social justice is "having the conditions met that allow people who have been marginalized to be their full authentic selves." Grantmaker three added that they view the term social justice in a literal

sense in that norms, public systems, structure, and institutions operate so that people are able to participate in society in a way that is truly fair. Grantmaker one further highlighted their social work experience in their definition of social justice including social aspects of existence such as recognition, affirmation, and validation. Grant seeker three, who also has a background in social work, said that social justice is subjective and embodies a moral code with equal access and accountability at its core.

I think about social justice in a very literal sense. It is about what is fair and what is right ...if we were to achieve a form of social justice in society, the public systems and structures and institutions would operate in a way that makes sure that the ways that people can participate in society are truly fair. It is righting in public institutions, systems, and norms (GM4).

It's more about holding philanthropy accountable to hear our voices and make us included in their decisions their funding decision making. It's more about the battle of listening to our voices and where we need the resources and resource allocation---it's like this, they can't be philanthropy without us you know, like giving away money for tax incentives you gotta have somebody to give it to, and even if you give it to white led organizations that are doing this work. They still need us because we're the people that's using the resources right so it's like we can hold those organizations accountable that's getting that money to and say look, we can provide these services ourselves, so this is what we need you to do (GM3).

In the above quotes, Philanthropy's role in social justice was perceived as powerful and unique from other funding organizations by grantmakers and grant seekers. Money was inextricably linked to social justice, according to grant seeker four. "You can't separate the dollars from the movement, you need both to kind of move the needle", they remarked. Grantmaker four emphasized that philanthropic organizations' tax status makes them unique and uniquely positioned to impact social justice. They likened foundations to "quasi-public institutions because of their IRS status." Grantmakers also acknowledged that foundations have

access to significant amounts of money and the autonomy of choice in how it is spent.

Grantmaker five who is familiar with community organizing observed that

...philanthropy has access to wealth that most people, most communities, otherwise wouldn't have access to and can deploy those resources in a fairly nimble way on that there is a ton of innovation and experimentation and responsiveness that can happen that you just frankly don't see and probably won't see in government (GM5).

Grant seeker one echoed this sentiment by mentioning that grantmaking foundations have the power to decide what issues and messages are funded and which ones are not. The depth of the benefit was encompassed in the intent of the award according to grant seeker five. They explained there is a distinction between merely giving money and giving money with the intention of empowering the beneficiary community and better equipping individuals in their specific situations. Lastly, the role of philanthropy in social justice was mentioned to be on a continuum from funding direct services to funding policy change. For instance, Grantmaker one reported, "80% of our money goes towards direct services, about 20% towards policy advocacy."

If you think about it [philanthropy] as a *quasi- public institution* because of the IRS status, it could play a huge role. It is a little bit of a strange fruit. But in the best sense, my most hopeful sense is that because as an institution there's a lot of flexibility. That creates a lot of opportunity to work toward more about an arc of social justice in the world, so I think philanthropy can play a big role (GM4).

You can't separate the dollars from the movement, you need both to kind of move the needle (GS5).

We're trying to organize philanthropy towards more social justice by funding community organizing because there are only a few foundations in Chicago that do (GM1).

According to grantmakers, there is room to utilize foundation wealth for social justice.

The flexibility with which funds are allocated permits more resources to be allocated to community organizing, in addition to direct services. Both immediate and future needs can be addressed in philanthropy's role in social justice.

The sub-themes that emerged from the Philanthropy and Social Justice theme are: Allies, Access & Freedom from Barriers, Equity & Inclusion of the Excluded, Community Engagement, and Racial Justice and Economic Justice.

Allies, access and freedom from barriers. Allies, Access & Freedom from Barriers is the first of four sub-themes of the Social Justice theme in this study. Grantmaker four readily defined social justice as “The ability to have the freedom... social justice is making sure everyone has belonging, power, freedom, and fun.” Grantmaker one’s definition stated that social justice for philanthropy is, “an acknowledgement of the power philanthropy holds in its choices that can further the ideal of every human having the ability to see their full potential in every space of society.” These responses show agreement in how the respondents perceive this phenomenon. Grantmaker three added that social justice is, “the journey and making sure that the well-being of every human on this earth has access and fair treatment to all systems.” This fluidity of social justice and philanthropy was further described as, “an ongoing movement that has lasted for decades” by the fourth grant seeker. In action, the work of philanthropy and social justice involves collaboration, organizing, and advocacy. The third grantmaker added that, “social justice is about organizing and advocating. It’s being a voice for the unseen in our world.” They elaborated by adding that, “a component of social justice is looking at the intersectionality of the injustice and access.”

Social justice is unfortunately an ongoing movement...the fights we fought decades ago, we're still fighting today. But it's a necessary movement, and we can't do it without allies. we need we need all the allies, and it is more than just putting the Black Lives Matter sign up in your front yard. It's the action of holding your peers accountable, it's making a seat at the table for folks who look like us (GS5).

Social justice is the journey and making sure that the well-being of every human on this earth has access and fair treatment to all systems...social justice is about organizing and

advocating and being a voice for the unseen in our world... A component of social justice is looking at the intersectionality of the injustice and access (GM3).

The ability to have the freedom... social justice is making sure everyone has belonging, power, freedom, and fun (GM3).

Philanthropy can help facilitate allies and access in its role in social justice according to respondents. This role in social justice can involve advocacy and uplift voices that have been silenced or ignored in acts of injustice.

Equity and inclusion of the excluded. Equity and the inclusion of those who have been traditionally excluded is the second sub-theme of the *Philanthropy and Social Justice* theme. Equity was mentioned in relation to systems in communities, especially where people of color live. Equity was additionally noted in the disproportionate impact of injustices and distribution of resources and services. Inclusion was referenced toward those who have been historically excluded to be fully included and access made available to them. The second grant seeker explained, “it's not about treating everybody the same, to me, social justice is about equal opportunity to succeed.”

Social justice is similar to equity, it is ensuring that people have the opportunities that they need to be successful, it's not about equality... it's not about treating everybody the same, to me, social justice is about equal opportunity to succeed, and it is about looking at the system (GS4).

I do think that we have to look at where does part of the budget go, and so I think it's looking at those systems all of those systems that impact our community in a disproportionate way so to me social justice is looking at education, it is looking at policing, it is looking at our mental health and health systems that disproportionately negatively affect African Americans, you know so to me it is honestly working to remove all those barriers that keep us out of opportunities to succeed (GS4).

The second grant seeker emphasized that social justice should not be solely focused on the equal

treatment of individuals. Social justice is instead a holistic approach to the systems that impact individuals. In the systems of society, there should be equal chances for success.

Community engagement. Community Engagement is the third sub-theme that participants emerging for the *Philanthropy and Social Justice* theme. This entails communities being viewed as partners and defining what that partnership looks like. The content of grant applications and Board composition was mentioned. Community conversations and quality of time spent in and with communities were frequently referenced. Grantmaker two shared that “Our president had listening sessions with every grantee in every community we award funds to.” Grant seeker five who is from an agency with a long history in the community stated convening to discuss hard things was necessary. They said, “[meetings are needed] to talk about the hard stuff and not be afraid of stepping on any toes because you got to get uncomfortable to make progress.” The second grant seeker, a professional in the youth development space, expressed the desire for donors to be more physically present to enhance funder/grantee relations. They stated, “we invite donors to come and witness the work that's being done... in order for us to have more productive outcomes, you should walk with us on the ground and see firsthand what we're doing.” A final thought regarding community engagement is the composition of the Board. Grantmaker four, a youth justice advocate, noted their organization’s board was blended with members of the community. The majority voice on this Board was that of the community, which resulted in community-oriented decisions.

Our community involvement conversation is ongoing. We've done very little participatory grant making but we've supported a huge project that was a participatory collaborative where end users helped determine where funds should be focused. We do not have a community advisory committee yet (GM1).

Bringing together folks from the corporate space, folks from the community, folks from foundations, folks on the government, to have this discussion around like what do we do, how do we do it, who else needs to be at the table...so really come up with some solutions to the issues that we hear talked about over and over again (GS5).

We invite donors to come and witness the work that's being done. What we're trying to say is it's not enough for you just to throw money at it because sometimes a philanthropic organization might have no idea. Being a social justice organization or using that moniker and saying we're going to give you money to do XY and Z—and the people who are on the ground are saying, well, it could be better spent this way. Sometimes they have those difficult conversations where they the organization just wants to be there. So, in order for us to have more productive outcomes, you should walk with us on the ground and see firsthand what we're doing (GS2).

We had a blended board, a 15-member board with 8 from the community and 7 from the corporate world so it gives the community to dominant voice. The local community was engaged not so much in the grant making decision, but they evaluated proposals. The Board was very active, and I appreciated that as you don't find that a lot in philanthropy (GM3).

We are being more transparent. Our president had listening sessions with every grantee in every community we award funds to (GM2).

Funders' physical presence seemed just as significant to grant seekers as the monetary award itself. Grant seekers saw the benefit of grantmakers seeing how their awards are spent for themselves. Funders have responded with more participatory practices.

Racial Justice and Economic Justice is the fourth sub-theme of the *Philanthropy and Social Justice* theme. Participants closely connected injustices being addressed economically.

Grant seeker three explained that:

...social justice has to be economic. I think that it has to involve recognizing the harms acknowledging the harms and coming up with an economic plan to repair it. The specific and deliberate harms done to people of color require specific and deliberate funding. Social justice is addressing the harms that have impacted people of the African diaspora (GM3).

The second grant maker responded that this effort should be continuous and prioritize the input of people of color. They said, “the economics of social justice is trying to help specific

communities, specific races or ethnicities.” This same grantmaker acknowledged that racial justice was a new but possibly temporary priority in their foundation’s giving. “Philanthropy is fickle that way... The new thing that's happening, they'll fund it...right now, its racial equity and trust-based philanthropy.”

Social justice is addressing the harms that have impacted people of the African diaspora (GS3).

Social justice has to be economic. I think that it has to involve recognizing the harms acknowledging the harms and coming up with an economic plan to repair it (GS3).

The economic harms experienced by people of color was acknowledged by both grantmakers and grant seekers. Grantmaking foundations are positioned to address economic harms by advancing racial equity via trust-based philanthropy.

II. Examining the Decision-Maker in Grant Decisions

Examining the decision-maker in grant decisions is the second major theme that emerged from the data. *The Stinson Model* will be utilized to frame the components of decision-making referred to by interview participants. The four core components of this model that inform decision-making are: worldview, home and work, environment and community, and spiritual world/soul. Some areas are more applicable to personal decisions or professional decisions. Overall, participants reported that their decision-making process was often informed by a mentor, relative, or personal acquaintance [trusted other] with whom there is a lengthy history and strong rapport. Before arriving at a decision, decision-makers indicated that they consult, question, and consider the perspectives of “trusted others” as valuable input. Participants respected those they consult, and there is evidence that the “trusted other” reflects their values and ideal position regarding the decision under consideration.

I have a group of friends I have known for 40 years that I call on and bounce ideas off. Two of my friends are in youth development, so they kind of understand the field, and another friend is in the private industry, so sometimes we're able to talk a lot about the similarities and the differences between not for profit and for-profit work (GM5).

In general, grantmakers and grant seekers utilized the same methods when making personal and professional decisions. This is exemplified in the fourth grant seeker's response:

My mom...I also have my tribe of good sister friends so whatever I have stuff going on personally or professionally I'm going to turn to them as well. I have some pretty bad ass professional coaches so, especially for stuff on the career front, I would look to them (GM4).

Three participants between both groups noted their spiritual lives influencing their decision-making. Grantmaker two stated they prayed before every decision in addition to seeking counsel from other trusted people. "I'm a very spiritual person, so I always go to God in prayer. There are people I consult but it all depends on what it is. I try to talk to people who I know have experienced whatever it is to give me really good advice like my coworkers." Grantmaker four noted a combination of trusted persons and their beliefs as influencing their decisions. They shared, "decision-making is like processing, most of the time with my mentors or just me leaning on my own wisdom for mistakes I've made in the past...truly trusting in my gut, my instincts, that's your gut or your connection to the higher being, which I define as Jesus and God."

The *human factor*, or proclivities of being a human being, is inherently connected to the grantmaking process, according to grantmaker one who has over 20 years of grantmaking experience.

The human factor in grant making is something I think that is sometimes overlooked or not understood. People say funders are objective in their grant making and I don't know about that...how can you not bring your full self to the work that you're doing? Grant decision-making is done by real people (GM1).

This quote from grantmaker one emphasizes grantmaking is a human-influenced process because it is carried out by humans. The Stinson Model is based in the principle of people's decisions are impacted by other people.

The human factor in grant making is something I think that is sometimes overlooked or not understood. People say funders are objective in their grant making and I don't know about that...how can you not bring your full self to the work that you're doing? Grant decision-making is done by real people (GM1).

I have a group of friends I have known for 40 years that I call on and bounce ideas off. Two of my friends are in youth development, so they kind of understand the field another friend is in the private industry so sometimes we're able to talk a lot about the similarities and the differences between not for profit and for-profit work (GS4).

Decision-making is like processing, most of the time with my mentors or just me leaning on my own wisdom for mistakes I've made in the past...truly trusting in my gut, my instincts, that's your gut or your connection to the higher being, which I define as Jesus and God (GM3).

Possibly some close work colleagues and a few close friends that I might sort of brainstorm with or strategize on options or what ifs or what are the unintended consequences of things. My identity guides my decision making, not religion or politics (GM1).

I definitely pray about things before I do them and I use discernment (GS3).

I'm a very spiritual person, so I always go to God in prayer. There are people I consult but it all depends on what it is. I try to talk to people who I know have experienced whatever it is to give me really good advice like my coworkers (GM2).

Both grantmakers and grant seekers cited similar decision-making values in their responses. The 'trusted other,' a person with whom the decision-maker has a strong rapport, influences the decision-maker's choice frequently. The responses of both groups illustrate the core values of The Stinson Model of Decision-making.

III. Nuances of the Grantmaking and Grant-Seeking Process

Nuances of the grantmaking and grant-seeking process is the third theme that emerged

from the data. Grantmaker four described the process of grantmaking as “more of an art than a science.” The same grantmaker explained further:

The process must consider context and individual organizational factors... You cannot have a homogenous nonprofit society to respond to a heterogeneous society. You can't have that so you have to be able to have judgment in a way that you can mix the technical things [with an application] of hard skills and soft skills (GM4).

Participants noted those who are involved in the process is nuanced. Grant seeker two stated, “In theory, I should be involved in every type of project managing aspect or any grant that we pursue.”

There were responses specific only to grantmakers. An example is the recommendation of grantee awards. Grantmaker two shared, “we all make recommendations. The Board, a committee, and staff meet to discuss the applications and decide.” Grantmaker four stated their process, “was traditional philanthropy” and detailed what often happens in grantmaking.

...you do a call for open LOIs, and it was such a time-consuming process, so they went through LOIs and you cast out the net then you go through the LOIs and then you select organizations that still may not be selected for the grant. They went through site visits. I mean it was time consuming the grant making process, it was traditional they did grants once a year, the process took about six months. The grant making process was very tedious. Lots of follow up questions back and forth (GM4).

I think, is much more of an art than a science. Like if you get into the science of like doing grant making that's when you can be on autopilot. And you're looking for everything to be the same because you're going to check this list, and everybody has to check those boxes. You cannot have a homogenous nonprofit society to respond to it heterogeneous society. You can't have that so you have to be able to you judgment in a way that you can mix the technical things that you know what the what others right, so I was like where's the organization in their life cycle, then like what does that mean for that development and the kinds of resources that they need if they're five year old organization versus a 50 year old organization right---teaching them to kind of look at those things, how do you look at a budget and, like what the inputs are that are in the budget versus what their narrative is and if those things don't match, how do you get to talk to them about it, to make sure they wanted to match differently or that you can draw things that they may not be likely to say to a founder because they're afraid to do it right

so, then you can develop the relationship differently so that you can structure resources in a way that makes sense to them (GM3).

I would make recommendations, they had to be approved by the Board. Before they held a vote we did our presentations and the Board voted very, very cumbersome to questions asked, and sometimes it would be follow up questions that Board members have that we had to follow---- It was very traditional like it went through the Board process. We had to vet the organization's their 990s, we have to make sure that their financials were intact (GM3).

It was remarkable how grantmakers acknowledged differences in their grantmaking considerations in a positive light. Diversity abounds in society, and there is room in grantmaking to account for this diversity. This activity is not one-size-fits-all.

Factors that impact the process of grantmaking. Grantmakers mentioned factors that could impact the grantmaking process. Traditional factors were mentioned as well as recent factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Grantmaker two acknowledged COVID-19 on their funding practices.

It wasn't until the pandemic when we found out the health disparities and the quality of the health of black and brown people versus white people...tons of money went out to small grassroots organizations, like it hit them emotionally in the heart and now they're like, we gave them a bunch of money, they should be good now, what's the next thing? (GM2).

The recent increase in racial unrest in the U.S. was also mentioned in factors recently considered for grant awards. Grantmaker one echoed this sentiment and said that “increasingly the racial equity lens is also being considered in our grant making.”

It wasn't until the pandemic when we found out the health disparities and the quality of the health of black and brown people versus white people...tons of money went out to small grassroots organizations, like it hit them emotionally in the heart and now they're like, we gave them a bunch of money, they should be good now, what's the next thing? That's the problem with philanthropy it's always funding that big thing that big issue that everybody's working on (GM2).

You know people use this term *trust-based philanthropy* and it's all these euphemisms that developed... I'm not sure how I feel about them. I mean part of why we are selective

in terms of who we give money to is because once we give you the money is up to you to do whatever it is, you want to do with it. It's your money at that point. I'm not going to come in and say I need you to do it this way, but that's not that's not how we operate. That being said, because there is criteria we use to judge, we judge the work that people are doing (GM5).

I think philanthropy is very, very subjective and I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing, like people might use that word say really. I think it's very subjective and like if you asked one foundation one thing, the ask another the same thing, they might hear different things. Such is the same with the grant decision making process. I think it's a very subjective process and many ways. There are standard things, and we take those things into consideration. We're trying to figure out a way to not be judgmental so what I mean by that is like if the budget is small, does that mean you're low-capacity organization or unworthy? That's not necessary and we don't want to make those kinds of judgments. We want to make an assessment about how those funds are used, whether it's like \$250,000 or \$25 million. So they submit pieces of information that allow us to like make an "assessment of organizational conditions." In order for us to see and have deeper understanding, our team is asked to meet people in person as much as possible, go to the physical site, so you can see more the context in which they work. And sometimes when you see things you can ask different questions (GM3).

The merit of a grant recipient was determined not by their budget but by their impact. The quality of their work was the most important factor for grantmakers. Relationships and clear communication appeared essential in this respect.

Seeker perceptions of the process. There are experiences specific to grant seekers highlighted in this study. Grant seeker three was directly engaged in the opportunity identification and grant writing process while grant seeker five had an organizational department designated for these activities. In the instance of grant seeker two, collaboration with the grants department and their role was interconnected.

I have the autonomy, I get feedback, but ultimately what I shaped together that's gonna be the final thing, which is something I appreciate because I'm also more collaborative. I'm gonna take sections and take feedback wholeheartedly and edit stuff out but actually figure out how I can incorporate it (GS3).

It's craftsmanship how you craft a certain section thinking about you can modify it to address the other parts. That is a team process, so we do have a strong evaluation team.

We're able to put something together get and give feedback to evaluation team feedback from leadership (GS3).

Grant seekers sometimes have extensive grant writing experience and can identify funding opportunities instead of waiting for them. There was variation from a development department, single individual, or team effort toward securing grant awards.

Sub-themes that underscored the *Nuances of the Grantmaking and Grant-Seeking Process* theme are: *The Role of Funders in Grant Award Goals, Politics, and Relationships in Grantmaking, and Resource Dependence*. Participants discussed how funders influenced grant objectives and/or outcomes. Politics was frequently mentioned and characterized as an accepted nuance in grantmaking. The influence of decision-makers and their preferences were acknowledged by grantmakers and grant seekers. Resource Dependence, or the propensity of grant applicants to modify their proposals in order to secure funding, even if it does not align with their mission, was also frequently observed among both groups of participants.

Funder role in awards and outcomes. Funder Role in Awards & Outcomes is the first of three sub-themes of the *Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking* theme in this study. Funders frequently specify where and how they anticipate their grants to be utilized. Grantmaker two stated that their foundation offered general operating grants, while grantmaker four was opposed to such grants. Several participants highlighted the subjectivity of funding. Grant seeker one welcomed the influence on award outcomes, while grant seeker two viewed it as a burden. Grant seeker four mentioned the capacity of foundation grantmakers to share best practices of other grant-seeking organizations in the community.

We've done the research and so we're looking for funders to trust us to do what we do best. We're also looking for funders to introduce us to other organizations maybe doing

similar work or maybe an opportunity to partner, because they sit at a higher level... (GM4).

Grantmaker five expressed awareness of the power dynamic. Some balance to this power dynamic could be achieved by soliciting input from awardees and occasionally offering additional funding if grantmakers identified areas in which they could provide additional assistance. Grantmaker four commented, "We're on this call, and I am wondering why are you only asking us for this amount of money? Don't you need more help to do this?" Positive and negative viewpoints were expressed regarding the Board's influence and input.

There is this power dynamic that people in philanthropy either lean into or run away from. I got something I know other people want. And those other people know I got something that they want and so we can play this game, like we are the same, but we aren't. And so we do try to have a light touch (GM5).

Yes, we do but it is individual and subjective. We fund locally so can visit sites and offer the perspective and insight from having so many community organizations that submit proposals. There is expertise in communities and program officers can share best practices learned among grantees, because they have great relationships. We also encourage grantees (from the same program area) to talk to each other (GM1).

The foundation is really pro-collaboration...they want to make sure there is opportunity to give feedback and build relationships by spending time with them talking about the work (GS3).

Grant seekers and grantmakers had differing views on funder influence in grantmaking.

Grantmaker influence was viewed from being collaborative to being a burden. This was an illustration of the power dynamic of grantmakers with grant seekers.

Politics and relationships in grantmaking. Politics and Relationships in Grantmaking is the second of three sub-themes in the Process of Grantmaking theme. The reality of politics and relationships were commonly mentioned with both participant groups. Without being asked, funder five stated that the question of who and what receives funding is a political one. They

said, "... as you dig into the power dynamic more, and I mean just candidly why certain things get support and why certain things don't--is a political question." The involvement of politics was likened to a dance that all parties participated in. The relationships an organization has was noted to mean the difference between being funded or not. Grantmaker one stated that the presence of one person at a foundation opened a new group to be funded. Grant seeker two also experienced the same dynamic stating that the departure of a single individual from their organization drastically altered the reception of their efforts and grant-seeking endeavors. Once the favored individual was no longer present, their coworkers became much less responsive and treated them with disdain. The notion of building relationships and moving from transactional experiences with funders was highlighted by three of the five grant seeker participants. Grant seeker four evoked a popular book series to explain their views on the process be like dating for a partner.

I think sometimes people forget is you want to have relationships with friends. You don't want to just be a transactional applicant for the grant to say we got the money. And that's the end you want to be sure you're reporting, you want to be sure you're invited in the certainly bit or program opportunities, you know you really wanted to be like your you would, if you were dating for a partner. So, they're not always receptive. We're open in the same way as you as a date different people and have different experiences...it's kind of like *the philanthropy love languages*. It's like figuring out which funder needs what. Which ones like numbers and which one wants stories. One needs more touches than others...that's philanthropy (GM4).

Grantmaker three echoed this sentiment by simply stating, "A lot of the organizations that were funded did have more connections, so that speaks to relationships and the importance of relationships. I don't know if it's fair or not, but they did."

I think, as you dig into the power dynamic more, and I mean just candidly why certain things get support and why certain things don't--is a political question (GM5).

In some respects the I am a gatekeeper, and so it's is me that's taking the recommendations to the Board, and of course know they have full license of what make

whatever decision, they want to make but, this is a dance we do, but the goal is always to have enough trust and respect in gendered in the relationship where they hear whatever recommendation I'm making and hear it with the ear, as if it was coming from one of them (GM5).

Sometimes it's a subset of the community who is representing. When we talk about representation and we talk about inclusion that has to be intentional. Because you can live in Austin but if I'm good friends with the alderperson and because we're friends that you select me to be that representative, am I still really representing Austin or am I, representing my friend's views? But then they're able to say, but we had an Austin resident (GS3).

So, that's important to be in a relationship and to not perpetuate kind of a transactional situation unless that's what they want. Sometimes giving the money away that's all people do sometimes that's a nice thing to do, too, but. You know, people are often wanting to help have other things unlocked like within a network or ecosystem and for us to do that, it's important for us to experience a person or organization in their space (GM3).

I would you say we want to build relationships. Because I've been in rooms at the table when folks on making funding decisions and I've seen folks pull out. Grant applications and forget the beautiful writing that has gone into it. The question is always asked, "who knows ABC"? And folks say I've never heard of them are who's the executive director. ..oh I don't know either. Those applications always go to the side, absolutely no. Regardless of what they wrote are folks that get considered. I think our approach to that is to build relationships, as much as we can with the foundations (GS1).

Repeatedly, relationships were cited as the most important factor in grantmaking. A well-known grant seeker would benefit, whereas a new grant seeker would be likely be at a disadvantage.

This causes one to ponder the particulars of establishing relationships with grantmakers.

Resource dependence/mission drift. Resource Dependence and Mission Drift is the third sub-theme of the Process of Grantmaking theme in this study. A continuation of the conversation on relationships and politics ingrained in grantmaking and grant seeking is the related the notion of Resource Dependence. This is the tendency for grant seeking organizations, often community-based organizations becoming 'chameleons' to fit a proposal and secure funds. It is the reliance on a single funder, without which operations and programming are essentially

impossible. It is frequently rooted in the fear of insufficient funding, but can result in *Mission Drift*, which is when an organization abandons its original mission and goals in favor of those of a potential funder. This is part of the power dynamic and was acknowledged by both groups. Funder five explicitly expressed this viewpoint by stating, “If people want the resources, they're going to adjust to what they know we're supporting, so we don't have to say anything---they do it to themselves.” The grantmakers were aware that community-based organizations often depend on them for survival, and it may appear as if they are playing a game to determine who will receive the funds.

The *chameleon effect* renders the organization altering itself to whatever the environment (funder preferences) it is in. Grant seeker five described it as being a disservice to the community the funds are awarded to serve.

It really is more on the receiving organization to make sure that all the funding received is mission aligned. Are your funding opportunities mission focused, mission aligned, vision aligned, and if they're not you really shouldn't be going after that funding. And you do the community and the people you serve a service a disservice. You shouldn't chase the funding (GM5).

The power dynamic is the fear that I won't get my funding. That power dynamic exists (GM3).

Their [philanthropy's] role is to make things happen, where they want things to happen. They do that by giving money to who they want and then locking out who they want (GS1).

Respondents in this study made repeated references to power. Grant seekers becoming chameleons to obtain funding seems to be an accepted practice by both grantmakers and grant seekers. Chasing money could ultimately harm resource-deficient communities, said one seeker.

IV. Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant-Seekers (Resource Dependence)

Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant seekers is theme four of this research

study. The norms and accepted practices embraced, perpetuated, and expected in a particular organization are aspects of organizational culture. This includes leadership interaction, the role of funders in grant award use and outcomes, orientation towards resource availability and power dynamics perpetuated by grantmakers or perceived by grant seekers. Two community-based grant seekers had negative perceptions of their organization's culture. Grant seeker two stated, "We are a youth organization and I work with some people who don't like kids." They added that some of their colleagues viewed the work as merely a job, but warned that without a commitment to youth, they would not be able to maintain their positions. Grant seeker three stated that procedures make the organizational culture difficult. They described the organizational culture by saying, "It's horrible...there's so many different layers of administrative red tape." The lack of reception to new ideas and innovation was also connected to the negative view of organizational culture in both participant groups. Grant seeker two elaborated on their negative view of their organization's culture by stating, "the changes my colleague and I was trying to make institutionally were not well received by everyone. We met lots of roadblocks and being told our concerns are tabled for now." This perception was shared by a grantmaker who, after questioning a few organizational norms, was subjected to hostile treatment. They provided a detailed account:

I started asking questions which didn't go well... it was interactive with the Board, it was truly a place of levels, and I wasn't allowed to speak to the foundation president without approval. I wasn't allowed to contact any of the Board members without permission... I was always perceived as the problem... (GM3).

More grantmakers reported a positive perception of their organizational culture than grant seekers. Grantmaker five stated their organizational culture is reflective of their philosophy which is "the belief that communities have a right to determine their future for themselves."

Grantmaker four uplifted their organization's culture by noting its commitment to diversity and their constant open dialogue. They shared, "these are people who have all different backgrounds and come from different parts of the city and they're all different generations." They elaborated:

...we can openly talk about and reflect on and try to act on how to make the world a better place. All the things that come with that, like we could say words like racism and sexism and talk about, the role of enslavement, and indigenous cleansing and we talk about all of that stuff (GM4).

Overall, the perception of organizational culture was mixed between the participant groups.

The culture...is it amenable to change, does it need a fresh voice, I think it does, and I feel like I'm going to be able to assess whether or not they will be open to it. I'm not sure if I could make the change but I should be able to make some small changes, but when it comes to compensation, this is going to be a big one (GS3).

Collegial collaborative... racially diverse, we're all more liberal democrat leaning. We are a very steady and reliable funder; we fund organizations for many years. And, when there's something big happening, we're at the table. If we are not at the table people kind of ask why we aren't. They don't say that about some other foundations (GM1).

The fund itself started out as very grassroots like it transitioned from funding like mostly church programs and small community organizations which probably was time consuming from what I gather, because these are people that don't have data they don't know how to run a program out of a location or space. And as they transitioned as the fund evolved over 10 years it really went to started going to the bigger organizations. The other thing that I realized, is that the bigger organizations have less metrics to report on while the smaller organization and got bigger grant dollars, while the smaller organizations was given more metrics and got smaller grants. So I started asking questions which didn't go well... it was interactive with the Board, it was truly a place of levels like I wasn't allowed to speak to the Foundation President without approval I wasn't allowed to contact any of the Board members without permission... I was always perceived as the problem... other team members of grant writers and fund raisers were uncomfortable (GM3).

Those who challenge the status quo may encounter a hostile culture in grantmaking and grant seeking. Opportunities for training, leadership interaction, and input may be thwarted. How can

new, progressive, community-focused ideas be embraced without being perceived as a threat in the organizational culture?

Training. Training is the first of three sub-themes of the Organizational Culture theme. It refers to how the staff of grantmakers and grant seekers are trained in philanthropy, grantmaking, and grant getting. There were few to no formal trainings offered by either group of participants. Grantmaker two offered, “we had so many new hires and had to come up with training quickly. One staff shared information from a previous role. They [program officers] are learning by getting out there and doing it.” Grantmaker one echoed the sentiment of value in the expertise that program officers bring can be regarded as training. They reported, “... the saying is you're not really trained in grant making...the folks that we have looked for and hired have always been sort of subject matter experts...” Four of the five participants in grant seeker group equated training with relationship building, as relationships were frequently viewed as the deciding factor in whether a grant was awarded. Grant seeker three cited a similar viewpoint and said, “Our approach to that is to build relationships, as much as we can with the foundations.” The subjectivity and organic nature of grantmaking was noted with two grantmakers. Surprisingly, one grantmaker stated they do not formally train their staff in grantmaking on purpose. They stated, “... formal training hasn't happened largely on purpose as a way to inoculate ourselves from just becoming another grantmaker.” Grantmaker four eloquently stated the subjectivity of grantmaking and its nuances in the following statement:

The things that people get taught are more or less kind of a technical... and then the other things are softer that people learn... how we think about it, in our organization. I think this is how I train people to think about it... grantmaking is much more of an art than a science (GM4).

This was amplified by other subjects:

So technically right now it's just me and two other my coworkers and maybe a sprinkle of other officers that are very versed in the context of what it [grant seeking] looks like but. Not too many people in our department are like in tune with how funding works (GS3).

My predecessor was allowed to go to training conferences network with other groups so she helped launch a major initiative. I was told that I was too connected to community and, I will be too focused on the external versus the internal and so because of that, when I asked to go to a training, I was told I had to prove my worthiness basically. It was very challenging (GM3).

We go to a formal regional training through our regional grants association, which is corporate. Everybody has to participate in that within their first year when that training is available. The things that people get taught are more or less kind of a technical, but they get training to learn how to read financial audits, how to read the tax forms—how to make sure that they meet the legal requirements (GM3).

Evaluation. Evaluation is the second of three sub-themes of the Organizational Culture theme in this study. It refers to the evaluation of the grant decision-making process by both groups of participants. Similar to training, this was often not a formal process. The grant making process was sometimes evaluated but rarely was the decision-making aspect of the process a specific focus. “We've never really had a solid evaluation process, and that's what we're working on now” was the response of one grantmaker. Grant administration was more commonly discussed. The burden of grant administration and reporting was mentioned by both participant groups. There was mention of the lack of interest in written grant report. Grantmaker four exclaimed, “Nobody wants to write all that and nobody wants to read all that! One question that we did add to our form a couple of years ago is “how would you like us to evaluate you.” Lack of emphasis on the decision-making process in evaluation highlights the importance of this study.

There are a lot of grants that are \$50,000 grants that administratively take up more your time, and then have mandatory meetings and trainings for you to attend. So we have to evaluate you know is that a good use of our time...we don't have a huge staff. We have

24 sub grantees that we have to allow us to help build their capacity and manage and evaluate their work so (GS1).

We've never really had a solid evaluation process, and that's what we're working on now (GM2).

Yes, so we use a grant making software. Three board members had to review and evaluate each proposal, so it was weighted. It was averaged and it was based on a scoring system, so it was one board member if all three board members, you know, like whoever we got the highest scores, I mean that's who was presented to the Board for approval and as a program manager I summarized all of those comments and put them into a report. So yeah, was it evaluated, where we evaluated on our impact in our effectiveness, where we held accountable to changes that we were seeking, even though we have four priority areas, no, it was all about grading the organizations and not ourselves (GM3).

Training and evaluation seemed subjective and in process for grantmakers. Evaluation appeared to be more focused on grantees instead of grantmakers. Few to no formal processes were devoted specifically to evaluating the grant decision-making process.

Leadership interaction. Leadership Interaction is the third sub-theme of the Organizational Culture theme in this study. It refers to the nature and frequency of organization leadership engagement. This engagement can be internal or external. It can be with multiple levels of staff or leader to leader. The responses highlight the positionality toward leadership and staff interaction and its effect on organizational culture. Grantmaker four had a particularly negative experience in which they felt they were ostracized and retaliated against for their community-centered orientation and question-asking. A detailed account was shared that, “there was a lot of distrust. And I wasn't allowed to go to trainings, even though this was my first true grant making role in philanthropy, coming from someone with lived experience, I thought my voice would be welcomed.” Grant seeker four proudly enthusiastically shared their leadership’s interaction style. They boasted,” [our leader is] someone who's very connected, very passionate

about social justice and equity for the black community... ready to go to any board meeting or community meeting or talk to staff on every level.”

I would say, everybody on the team is a leader in some form, so we could use that word broadly... when I think one of the things that we try to do is meet people where they are figuratively and literally (GM3).

We exhibit equity not only outside of the organization, but internally...our President reduced their travel budget and equally spread it among the entire staff... so all of us were able to attend a conference...our grantees love our President because they streamlined the grant application process. We ask for much less and grantees asked if we could encourage other foundations to do the same (GM2).

We are replacing reports with check-in visits, sort of like a site visit. Outcomes come from the check in conversations. No one was really reading the reports anyway! We also use the check-ins to see if discretionary funds are needed and if so, to help grantees apply. We also stopped asking grantees to meet us in our downtown offices, but we go meet them in the community (GM2).

Who is considered a leader and what leaders do varies among grantmaking foundations. At one organization, everyone was considered a leader in some capacity, whereas there was a distinction and noticeable hierarchy at other organizations.

**The following statements are graphic and can be triggering for some people.*

V. Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence

Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence is the fifth theme of this study. It is the first-hand experience with violence inflicted on/perpetrated by persons aged 0-24. This includes being the victim of or initiator of violence, witnessing violence, or a personal connection to violence involving youth. This definition is focused on physical violence most often associated with gun violence, assault, community violence, chronic and vicarious trauma. Individuals themselves, their children, family members, friends, and community members both past and present represent ways one can be exposed to youth violence. Nine of the ten participants in this study had a personal experience with youth violence. Grantmaker two described an instance that involved

their son. “I have been exposed to youth violence with my son. Someone actually tried to rob him and kill him. He was getting ready to shoot him then the gun jammed.” Regrettably, the son of grantmaker five was also nearly killed by gun violence. They shared, “...[not long ago] someone was shooting at somebody literally ten feet from where my son was standing.” Grant seekers were also commonly impacted by youth violence in their community or family. Grant seeker one bravely shared the horrible instance their family experienced: “We have a niece who was murdered and left naked in an alley.” Tragically, grant seeker three mentioned, “I have family and friends that have been murdered violently, including being killed by police officers.” Although not the focus of this study, there was vicarious trauma or chronic trauma based on the frequency with which both participant groups reported experiencing the occurrence. With remorse, grant seeker two shared the impact of repeated exposure to youth deaths by stating, “Youth violence happens often working in my area all the years I have. It's very impactful with the first few kids but by the 11th kid you're worried about where you're going for lunch and your upcoming appointments.” The personal familiarity with youth violence is noteworthy in this study. Three of the ten participants alluded to participation in activity and associations that could lead to violence, when they were younger. “I’ve been part of a group of young people that's been out there” said grantmaker three. Grantmaker five disclosed they had been involved, “as a young person with violence and guns and street organizations.”

I have been exposed to youth violence with my son. Someone actually tried to rob him and kill him. He was getting ready to shoot him then the gun jammed (GM1).

I grew up in Chicago seeing young people being shot (GM3).

I’ve worked with young people who have been murdered, who've been shot and who have shot people (GM5).

Some of it is just like an everyday thing where you know people who were shot and killed. I can remember in my second year of high school, there was a kid that I rode the bus with all the time... one Friday we were on the bus together going home, and on Monday we all learned that he was shot dead in the alley. And I remember how traumatic that felt that this person was there one day and literally like the next, he wasn't... I've been very proximate to this issue in a very direct way (GM4).

I've known people who've been shot and killed. I know people who have had relatives impacted (GS5).

Youth violence happens often working in my area all the years I have. It's very impactful with the first few kids and then by the 11th kid you're worried about where you're going for lunch and your upcoming appointments (GS2).

I would say that that's the direct impact, and you the secondary impact is connected to trauma that happens to people that you have either worked with or people that you have lived around who have been killed. The kind of trauma of being in a war zone, you know [vicarious trauma] (GS3).

The number of respondents in this study who were exposed to youth violence was startling. The personal accounts shared, though unsolicited were indicators of their humanity and the “full self” introduced in the earlier quote. Vicarious trauma and concern for loved ones was repeatedly noted.

VI. Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence

Proximity to Issues and/or Communities Impacted by Youth Violence is the sixth theme of this research study. This theme embodies the immersion or extended exposure to a community cause issue. Living space location choices, voluntary, non-mandatory, and uncompensated work presence participation contribution, most often associated with personal investment, can be viewed as an expression of personal choice regarding what is worthy of free time and where to raise a family and invest in personal home space. The physical, emotional, psychological, historic and cultural distance or closeness to an issue or community is included in this theme. It is essentially the distinction between an “outsider” observer and a participant with lived experience. Residential preference is the voluntary decision of location of homelife community

and environment. Grant seeker five noted, “A lot of us live in the communities, we where we serve, or we live in similar communities.” *Volunteerism* or acts of providing non-compensated work, expertise, or time [personal resources] to a community or cause is in this category. Choice of people space and location to spend free time and invest in permanent (long-term) living situation. There were eight of the ten grantmakers and grant seekers who spent time volunteering. Grantmaker three explained, “I think volunteerism is part of my DNA. Primarily, a lot of my volunteerism is around sitting on boards.” Grant seeker two proudly shared, “I volunteer continuously... probably for about maybe 12 years [in my home community youth sports league].”

I volunteer in my community with CAPS, which is the police department. I have also volunteered on presidential and other local political campaigns (GM2).

I live in a primarily black working-class neighborhood. Lived here 35 years. [I am in a sorority and] we are about community service, and I also volunteer my time with my college alumni chapter so it's a big part of my life...and I stay pretty close to my high school and so when I get a chance to speak or mentor young girls that help them get to college (GS5).

Where respondents reside and how they spent their free time highlighted physical presence in community was significant. It is comparable to the sentiment expressed on the *Community Engagement* sub-theme. Respondents in both the grantmaker and grant seeker groups reported long-term commitment to volunteering and living in their community.

Orphan themes. During data analysis, a few references were made that were uncommon but especially noteworthy. They are relevant to the topic of the research and presented with nuance. Due to their rarity in the interview responses, they are referred to as *orphan themes* (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003, p. 58). These themes were presented by grantmakers three and five who have had grant seeking experience with community-based organizations. These

grantmakers have community-organizing background and are parents to children at the age of those most impacted by youth violence. This researcher believes that there is a correlation between these distinctions and why their responses contained the orphan themes. Their experiences as a grantmaker and a former grantee seemed interconnected and flowed naturally.

The first orphan theme is about the *inclusion of youth voice*. Grantmaker three elaborated on the fact that the voices of youth themselves is largely absent from the grantmaking and grant seeking conversation about youth violence. Despite the prevalence of violent youth deaths, their opinions are rarely sought to address this issue that directly impacts their lives. Relatedly, the practice of Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) was mentioned by three grantmakers. Involving communities in funding has seen an increase since the pandemic exposed many race-based inequities. Funders may have been inclined to do things differently, but perhaps only temporarily as a response to the racial unrest. Time will reveal if grantmakers have embraced a permanent change in their funding practices. Grant seekers are often fearful or uncertain due to Resource Dependence mentioned earlier in the Process of Grantmaking theme.

Youth voice inclusion in youth violence program development. According to one participant, the inclusion of youth voice in the development of youth violence programs should be standard. It appeared fundamentally obvious but was explicitly disregarded. This may be an important aspect of more effective and well-informed programs to prevent youth violence. Grantmakers and grant applicants who address youth violence should embrace a partnership with youth in this public health crisis.

.... if you're making decisions about a youth program and not getting youth input shame on you! (GM4).

Youth voice inclusion in youth programming was emphasized. It was noted that the input of those most affected by a particular issue was essential. This premise is related to the following orphan theme of trust-based philanthropy.

Participatory grantmaking and trust-based philanthropy challenges. Participatory grantmaking is an aspect of trust-based philanthropy that involves the inclusion of those who are ultimate benefactors of awarded funds in every aspect of the funding process from beginning to end. It was not among topics included in the interview questions. Some participants noted that the practice is relevant at this time. Grantmaker five highlighted that what is labeled as trust is not trust at all. They admitted that it is difficult to have multiple voices involved and considered in a single conversation, especially about money. Trust-based philanthropy was mentioned but who defines what trust is and how it is truly integrated into practice was one unprompted comment. Community engagement would be a start, but Boards are often still hesitant to embrace this long-term and to come to communities and see firsthand how grant seekers are using awarded funds. This may contribute to the sentiment that the COVID-19 pandemic presented unusual circumstances that relaxed funding requirements, but funding is ‘getting back to normal’. Other issues (unrelated to youth violence) are now getting grant makers’ attention.

...the more voices you bring into the conversation, the more complicated it can get really fast. The reason we're in these jobs is we're supposed to be able to hear all those voices and see a pathway forward, not to eliminate the voices or only pull in voices, we want to hear. So there's a responsibility (GM5).

There often isn't trust. If we were legit about using this term trust-based philanthropy and really leaned into it, that means that we wouldn't have any say in what's going once funds are awarded... we would organize a broad community meeting where any and everybody's invited in... We ask who needs to get money in the city and whatever the people say is where we're giving money to. I don't think there's anybody on the planet that does grant making that way (GM5).

The inclusion of multiple voices is recognized as both necessary but difficult as it relates to trust-based philanthropy. The concept of trust can be viewed through various lenses. Grantmakers and Boards appear to be considering how and for how long to engage in trust-based philanthropy.

Conclusion

The six themes illuminate the similarities and differences of the perspectives of grant seekers and grant makers. Grant seekers and grantmakers agree that philanthropy has a distinct role in social justice. Several sections of the Findings highlighted responses that were shared by both groups. There was mutual acknowledgement of the power dynamic, significance of relationships, and the occurrence of Resource Dependence in the grantmaking environment. Both groups in this study recognized training and evaluation could use more development. The exposure to youth violence was prevalent among nearly all the respondents in this study. Despite the proximity to youth violence, grant seekers noted a desire to see a greater presence of funders in the communities their grants benefitted. Community engagement was a noted theme, and trust-based philanthropy was mentioned by four participants. The orphan themes spoke to novel and poignant perspectives of two grantmakers who were former grant seekers themselves.

Numerous themes were interconnected with other themes and subthemes. There were connections in responses where Organizational Culture connected with Community Engagement and Resource Dependence. Community Engagement intersected with Leadership Interaction and the Process of Grantmaking. The Funder Role sub-theme intersected with Evaluation and Role of Relationships and the major theme of Organizational Culture. Lastly Decision-Making responses were also aligned with the Proximity to Youth Violence sub-themes of Volunteerism and

Residential Location. These intersections are one continuous narrative with multiple layers, comparable to the view of a landscape from various vantage points (Figure 3).

The Stinson Model was an appropriate illustration for the context of the study Findings. Participants' responses are seamlessly traceable to the components of The Stinson Model. While there are five core components, the worldview, home and work, and environment and community components were most relevant in the responses of this study. The application of The Stinson Model to this study is further explored in the following chapter.

Figure 6. Themes and Sub-Themes of the Study

Theme	Sub-Themes
1. Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allies and Access • Equity and Inclusion • Community Engagement • Racial and Economic Justice
2. Examining the decision-maker in grant decisions	
3. Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking and Grant Seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funder Role • Politics and Relationships • Resource Dependence
4. Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Evaluation • Leadership Interaction
5. Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence	
6. Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteerism • Residential Location
7. Orphan Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Voice Inclusion • Trust-based Philanthropy Challenges

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Grantmaker one inadvertently described the Stinson Model in the context of grant decision-making:

The **human factor** in grantmaking is something I think that is sometimes **overlooked or not understood**. People say funders are objective in their grantmaking and I don't know about that...how can you not bring your **full self** to the work that you're doing? **Grant decision-making is done by real people.**

Grantmaker one brings self into decision making when they mentioned “the human factor, full-self, and real people” when referring to what influences a decision. “How can you not bring your full self to the work you are doing?” The human factor being “overlooked or not understood” was fascinating as this grantmaker saw it as significant enough to have an impact within the context of grant decision-making. This quotation highlights the impossibility of separating the individual (full self) from any environment, including professional settings.

The Stinson Model (see Chapter Two, Literature Review) is a personal decision model developed by David Stinson and adapted by organizational scholar Mark Lee. It examines how the same factors that influence individual decisions also impact the organizational decision-making process (Lee, 2014). Organizations are comprised of people, and people are people regardless in any environment—irrespective of whether they are in a professional or personal setting. Consequently, similar decision-making tools are used in both type of settings.

This Discussion chapter is organized around the themes and orphan themes from Chapter Four. These themes are: (1) Examining the Decision-Maker in Grant Decisions,

(2) Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking, (3) Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant-Seekers (Resource Dependence), (4) Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice, (5) Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence, (6) Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence, (7) Youth Voice in Youth Violence Work, and (8) Challenges of Trust-Based Philanthropy.

I. Examining the Decision-Maker in Grant Decisions

In this study, professional and personal decisions were substantially influenced by the same values or factors. Mentors, colleagues, long-term friends, and relatives were identified as the trusted others who influenced decision-makers. The rapport with the trusted others was substantial as respondents mention knowing their trusted others for 35 and 40 years. This is a lengthy time period to gain influence in organic long-term association with the same person(s). This might be about the *worldview, environment and community, and home and work* core values (Lee, 2014). If the people in these spaces do not change or if there is a lack of diversity or there are no challenges to the norm, then stagnant perspectives may develop. This may inadvertently create a situation in which different is encountered so infrequently and is so distinct from what people are accustomed to, that different is consciously or subconsciously perceived as wrong. Only that which is part of the homogeneous environment is right or acceptable.

Grantmakers essentially described the Stinson Model to the grant decision-making process without being asked or informed about the model (Lee, 2014). I was surprised that a funder would be so in tune with this dynamic within organizations. There were six out of ten responses that shared details relevant to The Stinson model. What influences decisions—the internal and external decision-making factors—were readily identifiable in the majority of the

responses. Grantmakers seemed inclined to emphasize the inextricable link between the human condition and the tasks that people perform at work, including decision-making.

II. Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking

Linsey McGoey, a scholar who studied The Gates Foundation, wrote about how donors resist advice:

Philanthropic donors don't like being told how to spend their money and to some extent, they have robust grounds for defensiveness [which is the] freedom from political intervention. If donors don't like it, they can be told what they tell their own grantees... a close watch on how dollars are spent is essential to ensuring the creation of social value. If you don't like the rule, then don't give the money. Pay the taxes instead (McGoey, 2015, pp. 233-234).

The grantmaking process was compared to more of an art than a science in response to this sentiment. Context and individual organizational factors were mentioned in discussing subjectivity in grantmaking. The justification offered for this position was that the diversity of human conditions can be influenced by a multitude of variables, and therefore the response to serving/funding human conditions should be subjective as well. Participants rated this subjectivity in grantmaking on a continuum from positive to negative. The positionality and past experiences of the participants likely determined where participants were on the continuum (see Chapter Four, Findings).

Regarding grantmakers and the requirements they place on grantees, the concept of transparency is viewed differently. As previously mentioned, and documented in the literature, funders are notorious for their lack of transparency, yet they insist on knowing how grantees spend their awards. Philanthropic leaders do not want to be scrutinized but insist on the scrutiny of their grantees. The power in deciding to whom philanthropic funds belongs, who has the

power to monitor it, and to what extent that power exists could be the motivation for this position.

Participants acknowledged the origin of philanthropic organizations' wealth in different ways. There was direct mention of the reduced tax obligation or money that would have gone to the public if taxes had been paid in full. Specifically, a grantmaker referred to foundations as “quasi-public institutions” because of their IRS status. If funders were as transparent as they require their grantees to be, there would likely be a significant shift in the philanthropic landscape.

III. Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant-Seekers (Resource Dependence)

According to the *Resource Dependence Model*, organizational structure and development can be understood by looking at the environment within which the organization operates. The complex patterns of resource flows and the relative degree of control exerted over these flows are central to understanding which organizations are in positions of power and which are weaker. (Frumkin, 2010, p. 134). *Resource Dependence* refers to the tendency of grant-seeking organizations to apply for funds according to the preferences of the funder, despite the grant seeker's organizational mission, goals, or strengths. Related to this is *Mission Drift*—when a grant seeker vacates their organizational mission and assumes that of the funder, like a chameleon. Both Resource Dependence and Mission Drift are rooted in the fear of not receiving funding, and the reality that resources from a single funder can mean the difference between being operational or not. Both grantmakers and grant seekers groups were aware of and appeared to accept this as part of the culture in grantmaking. This phenomenon of Resource Dependence and Mission Drift may be implicitly perpetuated because it is so ingrained in grantmaking and

grant-seeking culture. Grantmaker five admitted this and stated that grant seekers essentially adjust themselves to the issue being funded or to the RFP (requests for proposals) without the funder's request.

There is a movement of non-profit organizations seeking to free themselves from reliance on foundation grants and seek other means of funding. An example is when one organization did *grassroots fundraising* (that involves stakeholders) such as individual calls, house parties, and tee shirt sales, to reduce reliance on grants (Smith, 2007, p. 2). It would be interesting to see how foundation grantmakers responded if a significant number of grantees ceased to apply for funding. Grantmakers are aware that grant seekers are reliant on them and rarely become independent of their funding. This awareness of grantee reliance appears to provide less incentive for change, as grant seekers remain largely compliant with the status quo. Also, since many funders would prefer that their grantees not rely on them for long-term funding, they can commit to identifying alternative sources of long-term funding for their grantees. One future endeavor to consider is forming an organization solely focused on assisting non-profit organizations to establish for-profit arms to supplement their funding and reduce dependence on grants.

IV. Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice

In recent years, there have been increased efforts to engage philanthropy in social justice. According to the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (now Change Philanthropy), foundations have persistently underfunded marginalized communities. They reported that foundation grants to underserved communities increased by only 5% between 2003 and 2013 and accounted for a small portion of all foundation grants. Despite an increase in foundation assets,

social justice strategies received no additional funding during this time. Change Philanthropy has developed a guide to assess and better improve their social justice efforts (Lief, 2020). Grantmakers acknowledged that foundations have access to significant amounts of money and the autonomy of choice in how it is spent. It is possible that grantmakers are extremely cautious of appearing political or partisan as activities associated with social justice are frequently perceived as such.

The concept of philanthropy's unique role in social justice led to a discussion of the intersection of racial justice and economic justice. It was found that philanthropy's wealth is largely the result of money retained from reduced taxes or money that would otherwise go to the public. Grant seeker four stated, "it is our money, but foundations choose where it goes." Philanthropy can exert its influence through the correction of systems and the modification of policies.

Participants surprisingly, as reported in the social justice theme in the Findings, indicated that they may not readily associate their work with social justice. Responses ranged from cursory to profound and specific. For example, social justice was noted to embody accountability, allies, access, and community engagement (see p. 48). Some respondents have long held a social justice perspective, as evidenced by their stated priorities of community organizing and volunteerism. This appears to be a part of their professional background. As the social justice theme reported, for some grantmakers, the concept could be more recent and is being gradually adopted by their foundations. The difference between these responses was prior community organizing experience versus exposure to the concept of social justice and the newer practice of hiring community organizers. These differences in background and professional orientation are likely

related to proximity, a theme discussed later in this chapter.

V. Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence

The Findings reported in this theme highlight how all but one participant in this research study had been personally exposed to at least one act of youth violence. Many had several experiences with youth violence in their personal and professional lives. An example is a grant seeker sharing the horrific tragedy their family experienced when their niece was killed and left naked in an alley. As was reported in grantmaker five's quote in this theme, a recent incident was shared in the data, covered in where shots were fired at someone less than ten feet from where their son was standing. It is worth examining that 60% of grantmakers in this study were proximate to youth violence or whatever issue(s) they fund. There is evidence that proximity impacts the dynamic of grantmaking. As it relates to philanthropy, the issue here is that the general practice is for funders to get proximate to community organizations and/or their leadership, without the requisite requirement of getting proximate and/or knowledgeable about the actual social issue. This second-degree relationship prioritizes the relationship between funders and grantees while placing grantees in the role of educating funders on issues, which is concurrently important and taxing. (Brown, 2021, p. 24).

While proximity is further explored in the next section of this chapter, it is worth noting the impact of youth violence exposure on non-profit leaders. It may be due to the snowball sample, but 100% of grant seekers and 90% of grantmakers were exposed to youth violence. There is less distance between the funder, the issue being funded, and those impacted by grant funding. Nearly all of the participants in this study were proximate to youth violence and had

personally experienced youth violence. This dynamic is uncommon, but it must result in familiarity and empathy in the process of grantmaking and grant seeking.

Proximity could be correlated with the "human factor" mentioned in the chapter's introduction. If participants had not been personally exposed to youth violence, then their perspective of the issue would likely be different. Perspective differences may include who is affected by youth violence, where they live, and what factors in their lives may increase the likelihood of youth violence occurring. If a person lacks real-world experience, their perspective is susceptible to being influenced by biased sources such as the media. Personal actions are more easily identifiable than systemic problems. Structural violence always precedes physical violence in a community. It is difficult to determine whether grantmakers keep these realities in mind when making grant decisions.

VI. Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence

In the Findings (Chapter Four), a grant seeker stated that they had no reason to believe that anyone on the Board did not like kids or were not sincerely concerned about what was happening in their community. He added however not one member of the Board has stepped foot into the community. This can be viewed as the concept of "white savior" which according to Windholz "refers to an idea in which a white person, or white culture, rescues people of color from their situation" (Windholz, 2017). It can also occur when white people donate money or resources to a charitable cause without recognizing that money is not the sole solution to a problem, thereby ignoring its root causes.

It is the equivalent of a white-led organization providing housing in a low income community without addressing why affordability is an issue or racism being historically

ingrained in housing policies. There can be a grand opening ceremony and no conversation with the residents to understand their reality or positionality. Distance of the grantmaker from the issue being highlighted by the grant seeker can change the perspective of how it's funded. Additional findings reported that many grantmakers have recognized their organizational distance from funded issues. They are seeking to support organizations led by personnel with lived experience and exposure to the individuals they serve. This is *proximity* and it is integral in “distributing power, building relational respect, and addressing society’s most entrenched problems alongside individuals with lived experience” (Brown, 2021, p. 10). Grant seekers recognized the value of proximity. Funders seem reluctant to get close to their grantees and the benefactor communities of grant awards. Grant seekers may become frustrated as funders resist proximity, thereby weakening the relationship between the grantor and grantee, and perhaps the award outcomes. There are instances of how some grantmakers are attempting to be more proximate. Grantmaker three shared their foundation had a “blended board” with the majority voice being people from the community. Grantmaker two stated their foundation has invited grant seekers to review grant applications and select awardees. Another example is a few foundation presidents physically visiting every community that their funds serve to for the sole purpose of hearing from those who live there. The literature additionally recommends that grantmakers show up to grantee community-based events that have nothing to do with funding. This portrays genuine interest and value instead of having a transactional relationship. The more proximate a grantmaker is, the better their understanding of the context of their grantmaking and this possibly enhances award effectiveness and outcomes.

VII. Youth Voice in Youth Violence Work

“Anyone doing youth work without the inclusion of youth voices should be ashamed of themselves”, according to grantmaker three. They seemed to rebuke grantmakers and others who claim to work on behalf of youth but fail to involve them in the work's process. According to them, the dismissive omission of the youth's perspective in addressing a problem that repeatedly affects them, such as violence, is inexcusable. It was reported in the findings that youth who face violence are more aware and willing to help find the solution than it may seem they are. A group of Chicago youth were asked about the exclusion of their voices and co-authored an article with a university-based violence prevention lab. They articulated the following:

Generally, youths like us understand that violence does not solve conflict; it only makes it worse. Yet, we may feel the need to resort to violence to prove— and protect— ourselves. If you are truly interested in violence prevention, you must listen to us and consider this reality. Are you challenging policies and practices that create toxic environments in which we feel we have no choice but to engage in violence to survive? Youth voices are direct and illuminate the incongruity of many well-intended violence-prevention approaches that we find inadequate (Jones et al., 2021).

This literature could be exploring that youth are not only concerned but are also aware that the interpersonal violence they face is a result of failed policies and systems that perpetuate violence in their communities and is not solely the result of individual actions.

Within the theme of *Youth Voice in Youth Violence Work* it appears that youth violence practices that center youth voice and are participatory should be evaluated for effectiveness and outcomes compared to those that do not. People, including youth and community residents, are experts in their own lives and situations. For example, in the Findings, a participant had deep community ties and a long history of volunteering. They were involved with “the wrong crowd” as a youth but a concerned adult took an interest and changed their life. Now they are the

concerned adult who can relate to good kids in bad situations. Youth must be asked and genuinely engaged in the youth program development process, which includes grantmaking focused on youth violence. Their input and thoughts should not be disregarded due to their age or positionality. Grantmakers and other stakeholders must not simply force their decisions about youth on to youth. While financial resources are what grantees request from grantmakers, money is not always the sole solution to the multifaceted issues faced by grantees. Furthermore, if the grantmaker is not proximate, they may lack the depth of understanding the challenges of beneficiary communities. There are valuable layers, nuances, and expertise in those who are directly impacted by and who have lived experiences with social issues. The notion that wealth of funders is the entirety of solutions to social issues is oversimplification, dismissive, and must be refuted.

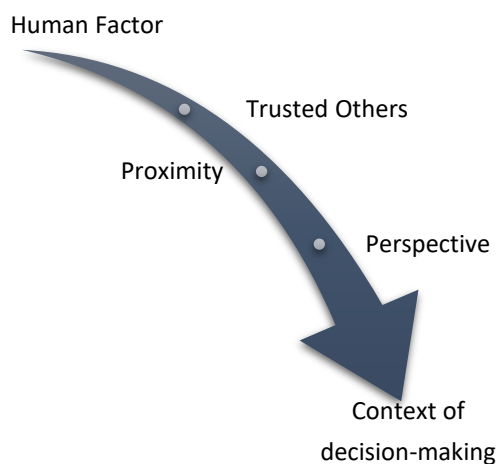
VIII. Challenges of Trust-Based Philanthropy

The implication here is that trust-based philanthropy can be challenging for both the funder and grant seekers. Funders usually have timelines connected to their funding cycles with expected deliverables and outcomes at the end. Trust-based philanthropy requires community-engaged work which may not advance within these timeframes, necessitating uncommon flexibility with uncertain outcomes (Hauger, 2021). Tyler Hauger is a Norwegian proponent of participatory grantmaking and author of the seminal article *Nothing About Us, Without Us*. The article's title is an homage to the slogan's creators, Michael Masutha and William Rowland, two prominent disability rights advocates from South Africa who championed participatory practices. In this highly cited work, Hauger examines the challenges of trust-based philanthropy, including the difficult-to-understand organizational-wide shift required for this work. (p. 17). There is a

notion that many funders are not interested in sharing power with grantees. The effort of establishing trust and incorporating feedback into long-standing grantmaking processes may not appear to be worthwhile. For the participant group of grantmakers who have long held the position that they are the authority on a given issue because they provide funding, deferring to the community's expertise and sharing power may be challenging. Grant seekers and community members are frequently forced to contend with power, politics, and the intimidation resulting from socioeconomic differences, such as varying levels of education. Efforts seem to be abandoned prematurely due to the numerous complexities of engaging in the trust-based philanthropy process.

Grantmaker five admitted that there often is no trust of grantees. This needs further examination because how can there be trust-based philanthropy without actual trust? Also, who defines trust and from what perspective is trust measured? The aforementioned grantmaker conceded that community conversations become more complex with each additional voice added. They continued that funders must show intent to include all relevant community voices for solutions, not just the voices they prefer. This is hard, time-consuming work, and few funders are willing to engage in this authentic form of trust-based philanthropy. There appeared to be tension between understanding the value of trust-based philanthropy and working with a foundation that does not practice it. Perhaps the concession was attempting to convince the Board and other decision-makers by working from within. The deeply rooted attitudes of many funders' lack of trust in and collaboration with grantees should be further explored. Paternalism as an expression of power in grantmaking foundations should be further studied.

Figure 7. Influences of the Decision-Making Context



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Summary

It seems that the subject of social justice was not anticipated by most participants. Despite not expecting to discuss social justice there was a clear connection of philanthropy's role in it. Resource Dependence was thoroughly noted by both groups as it relates to relationships in grantmaking. This seems to point to the organizational culture that exists within the environment of both grantmakers and grant seekers. Within the culture of grantmaking and grant seeking organizations, respondents' experiences ranged from positive and engaging to negative and alienating. The positionality toward engaging the community and trust-based philanthropy was additionally explored. The final observation of this chapter is that despite 90% of the study participants being exposed to youth violence, only one respondent mentioned youth voice inclusion. Influences of the decision-making context emerged in this study (Figure 7).

Limitations

The researcher included Limitations in each section of this study.

Recruitment, Sample, and Data Collection

There was reluctance and evasion of qualified grantmakers and seekers due to confidentiality concerns. There was also understandable concern that critical responses could offend funders or employers and how this connected to their confidentiality. Some vetted people who met the inclusion criteria were concerned their participation would remain anonymous and were concerned their funders would be aware of the comments. The concern of their identity being revealed may have discouraged would-be participants.

There is no comprehensive published list of who funds youth violence work (private funds) in Chicago. A list of this sort could have been useful in sample selection and population identification. It is possible that organizations that do youth violence work do not consider themselves as such as there is no universally accepted definition of youth violence work. This research can expand the conversation beyond activity directly linked to gun violence reduction. Youth violence is most often associated with gun violence as nearly 100% of youth deaths are from gun wounds. This unfortunately excludes sexual violence and cyber violence which are also prevalent with youth in the age range of high impact of gun violence. Also, if the inclusion criteria was expanded from five to ten years, other experienced professionals would not have been excluded who may have provided substantial contributions to this study.

Literature and data from this study yielded that most foundation Boards are composed of older cis white men. Since older cis white men were not a significant demographic of this study, it is uncertain how their input would have impacted results. This study does not explore majority white-led grantmaking foundations that fund youth violence work. This study yielded a sample of an understudied group/sample within an understudied population. The process of grantmaking

and organizational culture likely vary by funder type and location and size. Funding decision-making likely varies by type of organization. A private, public, or corporate, foundation versus a community foundation likely do things different due to their orientation. COVID-19 made Zoom preferable for participants, but in-person meetings may have provided different context not readily captured online. The researcher was unable to gauge nuances that would only be witnessed in an in-person interview.

Data Omission from Analysis

Interpretation would be a rich layer, but description was needed first for context. Perhaps a future study of this nuanced topic and population could be conducted after this study is implemented. An interpretive phenomenology can be used to explore the topics noted in the Implications chapter. The familiarity of the topic and proximity to youth violence led to many participants sharing information that was outside of the scope of this study. While this information would be useful for a future study, it did not align with the objectives of this study and was subsequently omitted. As previously stated, an interpretive study would be an excellent follow-up to this study.

Implications

Implications to Research

This study was the first of few to include the joint perspective of grant seekers and grantmakers. No studies on youth violence have been conducted and perhaps it can be replicated in other cities that tragically experience the same issue. This issue is incredibly layered and can also be examined with the perspective of various funding sources from corporate foundations to federal, state, and county sources. The differences in grant seeking, grant administration, and grant outcomes can be compared. A companion to this study could be the way grantmakers view

providing resources for immediate needs versus future resources in their decision making. The concept of *long-termism*, or a greater focus on the future, is relevant here. In a like manner, proximity to funded issues and grantmaking could be investigated. Topics such as vicarious trauma and impressions about a funded issue without lived experience can be highlighted. Spaces that could be examined are where funders live and how they spend their free time, the economic, racial, cultural diversity exposure outside of work, and the overall non-work world of foundation funders.

There are numerous areas of grant seeking to be explored as this group is often not the focus of investigation. One study could explore grant seeker perspectives on moving from Resource Dependence/Paternalism to Trust-Based Grantmaking. Such a study could focus on what grant seekers could offer and the benefits to the grantmaker to embracing this practice. A grant seeker in this study suggested there be research conducted on the mindset of grant seeking as it relates to funding. He said the ‘scarcity mindset’ that keeps organizations dependent on foundations needs to be better understood so it can be addressed. This was interesting as results from this current study implied that change may not be embraced or well received in either grantmaking or grant seeking organizations. If changes are made, would they be permanent or temporary? In a related study on changes in grantmaking, a study could be conducted on the impact of COVID-19. Funders in this study shared that their grant decision-making was altered drastically during the height of the pandemic but also acknowledged that foundations can be fickle, and things may go back to the way they were pre-pandemic. A study of grantmakers and grant seekers on what changes made during COVID-19 that should be permanent and why would be illuminating for both groups in such a study.

Implications to Teaching

There were solid areas in this study that could enhance teaching for social work students. The first is the scope of philanthropy as it relates to social work. They are natural partners as their goals for society and serving marginalized groups are often aligned. Regrettably this is often not presented as such in social work education and the stark differences in the environments and orientations may overshadow commonalities. Social work education could further explore why people are inclined to work in philanthropy and compare it to why people are inclined to become social workers. These comparisons may lead to the questioning why more social workers are not working in philanthropy.

The NASW, the national professional organization for social workers, can engage this conversation. The core areas of focus include social work education, policy making, and many of its membership work in non-profit organizations. Protection and enhancing the outcomes of youth is at the foundation of social work. The social work discipline can use the Findings of this study as a basis for an expanded discussion. Here are ways that social workers can use this study:

- *Social Work Practice (Micro)*—social work education and better working knowledge of funders they will likely encounter professionally or on behalf of those they are serving.
- *Social Work Programs (Mezzo)*—better informed and increased capacity with funders of non-profits where social workers are often employed.
- *Social Work Policy (Macro)*—policy informed by social workers who work with those with lived experiences that require services that require funding; can be liaisons to assist grantmakers to adopt trust-based and participatory grantmaking policies for their foundation.

Implications to Practice

This research offers several considerations for practice and philanthropy. The Findings

add empirical data and can advance the conversation on why participatory grantmaking is beneficial for both foundations and the organizations they fund. It provides context for both the grantmaker and the grant seeker in a way not considered previously. It can be a launch toward embracing participatory practices such as decision-making if participatory grantmaking cannot be fully instituted. It can open the lens for both groups and highlight areas of commonality instead of imbalanced power dynamics and Resource Dependence. One idea is to convene grantmakers and grant seekers to discuss funding efforts to develop a for-profit arm for their grantees. This could reduce dependence on grantmakers which seems ideal for both groups. Another consideration is to give newer, lesser-known grant seekers an opportunity to receive funding. The significance of relationships in grantmaking is well noted, but perhaps an unconventional approach could be considered. There can be awards of “learning grants” or funding that allows exploration of the grantee’s alignment with the funder.

Lastly, this study could provide a framework for how other public health issues (housing, education, climate change) that are funded by foundations can be more effectively researched. By including grantmakers and those who work in the focused area of funding, a more comprehensive understanding is available. Multiple perspectives on the same issue could yield unimaginable benefits and reduce bias on both sides. This directly embraces participatory grantmaking and trust-based philanthropy. What would youth violence programs look like if youth themselves were involved in program development from start to finish? If youth voice was centered, could it be that outcomes in youth violence prevention efforts would look different? Due to the dire occurrence of daily youth killings, every option should be considered.

Final Thoughts on Implications

Philanthropist Mackenzie Scott has given away over \$12 billion in the past three years. One has to consider if her current marriage to a former public school teacher and previous experiences as a financially struggling student, both placing her proximate to the issues faced by benefactors, has influenced her giving. It would be interesting to note how many current philanthropists have lived experiences or volunteered with the issues they currently fund.

Many people with extreme views such as that of politics, race relations, inequities, and violence have no interaction with those who have been directly impacted by or have lived experience with the issue. Despite this they may have strong opinions that have to be informed from somewhere. What informs these impressions and perspectives is certainly important as oftentimes these individuals will have decision-making power on behalf of those they have never met. These persons may also have decision-making power as foundation leaders and members on foundation Boards. Classism in philanthropy among the Board and staff was mentioned by grantmaker three. The conversation about the moral responsibility of grantmakers to social issues and worthiness of grantees is connected to this classism. Relatedly this classism may impact how foundations address philanthropy's responsibilities to fund immediate versus long term needs. Should their organizations exist in perpetuity or will they sunset? What is the context of this conversation?

Perhaps the pressure to pivot from a culture of Resource Dependence and Mission Drift will come from foundation colleagues or the general public. A campaign similar to the Giving Pledge that focuses on foundations rather than billionaires, to commit to Trust-Based Philanthropy beyond the organization's Values Statement, is one way foundation colleagues can

encourage their peers. Similar to the Giving Pledge, all support accrued through this campaign would be made public.

Conclusion

Tragically, there are 12 youth homicide victims each day in the U.S. and 86% are killed by gun violence. In Chicago, there were 150 youth aged 0-24 years old killed from January to July 2021. Social workers are involved in addressing youth violence at various levels. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) embodies care for youth and the factors related to youth violence in its Core Values. It aligns with the social work values of 'social justice, service, dignity, and worth of the person' which all speak to the call to action for social work as it relates to racial minority youth violence prevention. Community-based organizations are well positioned to address local issues like youth violence. These organizations are however often reliant on foundation grants among other means of funding for survival. Despite this, there has been an increase in funding toward youth violence in cities like Chicago, IL, where the rate of fatal incidents involving youth continue to increase.

Little data exists on the grant decision-making process that is publicly available. Despite the fact that foundations have been the subject of a few studies, there is still considerably more to learn about these influential and wealthy organizations. This researcher found no studies that discuss the grant decision-making process specifically. In addition, no studies have incorporated both the grant seeker's and the grant funder's perspectives on the same issue. Descriptive phenomenology methods with semi-structured interviews were used to conduct this study. There were ten total participants with five grantmakers and five grant seekers who completed the study. All interviews were completed using Zoom.

This research study was guided by one central question: How do grantmakers and grant seekers of youth violence work in Chicago perceive the grant decision-making process? The goals of this study were to (1) explore the factors influence personal and professional decision-making, (2) understand the funder and grant seeker's perspective of the grantmaking/grant getting process, and (3) identify the similarities and differences between both groups regarding the grantmaking process. The literature further supported the connection of themes in the discussion. The research question was answered in the sense that perceptions of the grant decision-making process were dissected into descriptive layers, discussed individually, and woven into the overall narrative of this one-of-a-kind study. Ultimately, this is a matter of social justice and an opportunity to examine foundation grantmakers' commitment to a declared public health issue.

The grant decision-making process was explored using the lens of the Stinson Model. The themes presented themselves as what participants perceived as the grant decision-making process and what influences it. Core components of the Stinson Model illustrated the findings. There were six major themes that emerged from this study: (1) Philanthropy's Unique Role in Social Justice, (2) Examining the Decision-Maker in Grant Decisions, (3) Nuances of the Process of Grantmaking, 4) Organizational Culture of Grantmakers and Grant-Seekers (Resource Dependence), (5) Participants' Exposure to Youth Violence, and (6) Proximity to Issues/Communities Impacted by Youth Violence. The two orphan themes were: *Youth Voice in Youth Violence Work* and *Challenges of Trust-based Philanthropy*.

I was shocked that only one respondent of the ten mentioned youth voice. It is uncertain if they would have been considered part of community organizing or community engagement but

the youth themselves were not explicitly mentioned. Repeatedly both groups mentioned the importance of relationships and how personal dynamics can impact funding. As the analysis progressed, this rendered The Stinson Model even more relevant. While almost every participant in both groups was exposed to youth violence, only one participant mentioned youth voice in efforts to address youth violence. This research confirms the need for a broader conversation about youth violence, as well as who should not only be involved but also be at the center of the conversation. Philanthropy can engage this with its influence and unique role in social justice.

APPENDIX A
GRANTMAKER APPROACH LIST

Foundations and grantmaking activities

Table 28.1 Key questions and issues that a grantmaking approach presents

What are the underlying drivers for grantmaking?	<p>What type and degree of risk is the foundation willing to take? Is the focus on alleviating symptoms or supporting the delivery of services?</p> <p>Is the aim to build or broker knowledge and understanding?</p> <p>Is the aim to address root causes and work towards structural and/or policy change?</p>
What does the foundation offer?	<p>What kind of support is being offered (financial or also non-financial; direct or indirect)?</p> <p>What type of costs will be supported (capital, revenue, project, overheads, full, core)?</p> <p>How much is being offered and when (small or large grants, at which and for which part of the grantees' lifecycle)?</p> <p>What shape does the funding take (restricted, unrestricted; gift, grant, investment, prize, award; full, partial or matched)?</p>
What is the funding timeframe and cycle?	<p>Is the focus on short- or long-term grants?</p> <p>Is the emphasis on pro-cyclical (in line with the growth phase of an economic cycle) or countercyclical (in line with economic decline, challenges, and recessions) grantmaking?</p>
What is the theory of change?	<p>To whom are resources offered (established or emergent ideas/ organizations)?</p> <p>Is the focus on taking a top-down or a bottom-up approach?</p>
What are the characteristics of the grant programme?	<p>Is it responsive and open so that anybody who meets the foundation's criteria can apply? Is funding strategic and targeted to a specific outcome? Is it by invitation only?</p>
Who benefits?	<p>Explicitly? Implicitly?</p>
What is the nature of the foundation's external relationships?	<p>Is the relationship to grantees engaged or hands off? Direct or through intermediaries? Is it a gift, contractual, auditing, delegating, or collaborative relationship?</p> <p>Does the foundation encourage and seek collaborations with others or does it try to avoid them?</p> <p>Is the foundation pursuing a high or a low external profile?</p>

Source: Based on Dietz, McKeever, Steele, & Steuerle, 2015; DP Evaluation, 2012; Frumkin, 2006; Leat, 2006; Ridley, 2017; Unwin, 2004.

As referenced in Jung (2020).

APPENDIX B
BLOOMFIELD FIVE CORE DECISION MAKING ELEMENTS

Bloomfield's Five Core Decision Elements (2002)

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Table 1. The Five Core Decision Elements Used By Foundations In Grantmaking Decisions, with Associated Key Decision Factors

1 Philanthropic Fit between Foundation and Grant-seeker	2 Organizational Patterns and Tendencies: Formal and Informal	3 Grantmaking Strategy and Style	4 Philanthropic Landscape	5 Charitable Impulses and Habits of the Mind*
<p>Key Decision Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Donor intent* ▪ Direction & field(s) of interest ▪ Specific grantmaking agenda & guidelines ▪ Priorities & goals <p>*Includes the donor's family, if appropriate</p>	<p>Key Decision Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History, culture, traditions, & norms ▪ Leadership structure & operating procedures ▪ Internal advocate-champion ▪ Credible internal stakeholders or influential peers ▪ Uncertainty, risk, & constraints 	<p>Key Decision Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positioning & defining focus on current problems & future opportunities ▪ Giving ideology & theory of change ▪ Preferred logic model, solutions, & expectations about results ▪ Effect of proactive or reactive, tight, or loose style ▪ Flexibility & choice during grant cycle; availability of funds ▪ Continuity & persistence ▪ Funding use: venture capital, "safe harbor" funding, leveraged resources 	<p>Key Decision Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public policy trends, initiatives, & implications ▪ Opinions of media & public ▪ Opinions of influential stakeholders and decision-makers' peers* ▪ Market forces affecting foundation's visibility and competitiveness <p>*Includes other public or private institutions, other funders, wealthy individuals, policy influencers, public figures, & "connected" grant-seekers</p>	<p>Key Decision Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beliefs & values ▪ Motives & aspirations ▪ Bias, heuristics, & cognitive illusions <p>*Underlying psychosocial factors that trigger philanthropic decisions</p>

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL LETTER & RESEARCH RELATED DOCUMENTS

Printed on: Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Dear Patiya Freely,

On Wednesday, April 27, 2022 the Loyola University Chicago Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and approved your Initial application for the project titled "**Foundation Grantmaker and grant seeker perceptions of the grant decision-making process, a phenomenological study.**" Based on the information you provided, the IRB determined that: the risks to subjects are minimized through (i) the utilization of procedures consistent with sound research design and do not unnecessarily expose participants to risk, and (ii) whenever appropriate, the research utilizes procedures already being performed on the subjects for diagnostic or treatment purposes the risks to participants are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to participants, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result the selection of subjects is equitable informed consent be sought from each prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in accordance with, and to the extent required by §46.116 informed consent be appropriately documented, in accordance with, and to the extent required by §46.117 when appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of subjects when appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data when some or all of the subjects are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, pregnant women, mentally disabled persons, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, additional safeguards have been included in the study to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects

In addition, the IRB determined that documented consent is not required for all participants. The IRB approved a waiver of documentation of informed consent.

This review procedure, administered by the IRB, in no way absolves you, the researcher, from the obligation to adhere to all Federal, State, and local laws and the Loyola University Chicago policies. Immediately inform the IRB if you would like to change aspects of your approved project (please consult our website for specific instructions). You, the researcher, are respectfully reminded that the University's ability to support its researchers in litigation is dependent upon conformity with continuing approval for their work.

Please notify the IRB of completion of this research and/or departure from the Loyola University Chicago by submitting a Project Closure Report using the CAP system. In all correspondence with the IRB regarding this project, please refer to IRB project number #3404 or Reapplication number #7964. The IRB approval granted for this project expires on **4/27/2024 12:00:00 AM**

If you have any questions about this IRB approval, please feel free to contact the IRB chairperson, Loretta Stallons, at lstanlan@luc.edu or the co-vice chair who signed this letter. For any other questions about the Loyola University Human Protections Program or CAP, please contact the Associate Director of Research, Andrew Ellis at (773) 508-2629 or email the irb@luc.edu.

Best wishes for your research, Thea R. Strand, Ph.D. Vice-Chair, Institutional Review Board

tstrand@luc.edu

Hello,

My name is Patiya Freely, and I am a social work PhD student at Loyola University Chicago. With a career committed to enhancing Black youth outcomes, I am especially concerned that **Black youth are 20 times more likely to be killed by violence than their peers.** This situation is beyond dire and requires innovative approaches now. My dissertation is focused foundation grant makers and grant seekers who do youth violence work in Chicago. The study will explore perceptions of the decision-making process and how it can be an area of focus for greater outcomes of grant funded youth violence work. It is a first step to explore a possibly overlooked factor that could perhaps unveil more effective approaches of grant funding for Black urban youth violence work, its beneficiary communities, and ultimately Black urban youth.

I am recruiting foundation grant makers and those seeking grants for youth violence work in Chicago. Your input would be used to increase the knowledge about this understudied area that can be quite significant. I hope to understand the essence of the grant decision-making process and grant seeking as revealed in personal experiences. I am seeking vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of these experiences. The study will be conducted in a one-on one interview.

I hope to illuminate or answer the question: *How do foundation grant makers and grant seekers of Black youth violence work perceive the grant decision-making process?*

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a grant maker or grant seeker of youth violence work in Chicago. Participation in this study will be a one-time interview that will last no longer than one hour. If needed, a 30-minute follow-up may be requested. Your identity and responses will remain confidential. Interviews will be conducted in May 2022, and I can come to your place of business for your convenience. Additionally, I am happy to offer a secure Zoom link as an alternative to an in-person interview.

I have attached a brief questionnaire to ensure your eligibility for this study. Upon receipt of the questionnaire, I will follow up on next steps. There is no compensation, but your valuable insight will provide increased knowledge and public understanding of this area. I value your potential participation and thank you in advance for your time.

Thank you,

Patiya Freely



Pre-Screen Questions

Has your organization funded or focused on youth violence work in Chicago, IL within the past five years?

What are your responsibilities in your current organization? How long have you had these responsibilities?

Are you currently directly involved in the grant-decision making or grant seeking process?

Demographic Questions (to ensure diverse representation in the study)

1. What is your highest level of education?
2. What, if any are your political beliefs/affiliations?
3. What, if any are your religious beliefs/affiliations?
4. How do you identify in the following: ethnicity, gender, sexual identity?

Please email completed form to pfreely@luc.edu within 48 hours of receipt.

Invitation to Participate

Thank you for your interest and willingness to participate in my dissertation research on the experience of the grant decision making and grant seeking process. I am pleased to share that you have qualified to participate in the research study! I am excited about the unique contribution of your insight.

Would you be available for one hour on _____ (DATE) at _____ (TIME) at your office? If not, when is your preferred date and time?

As mentioned, your identity and responses will be confidential. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Interviews will be audio taped and I will be taking notes during our discussion. Both will be secured then destroyed per Loyola University policy.

If there are any questions or if anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via email at pfreely@luc.edu.

Thank you,

Patiya Freely

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(General)

Project Title: *Perceptions of the Grant Decision-Making Process by Grant Funders and Grant Seekers*

Researcher(s): *Patiya Freely*

Faculty Sponsor: *Dr. Shweta Singh*

Introduction:

You are being asked to take part in a research study being conducted by Patiya Freely for a dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Shweta Singh in the Department of Social Work at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because you are a grant maker or a grant seeker who makes or seeks funds for youth violence work in Chicago, Illinois. Only funders and grant seekers affiliated with youth violence work will be participants in the research. The goal is to learn about experiences that may be unique to Chicago youth violence funders and grant seekers that could ultimately translate into grant outcomes.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in the study.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to explore the process of grant-making from the grant funder's perspective and grant seeking from the seeker's perspective. The experience of the decision-making process is the specific focus of this research. Previously understudied information can be reveal nuances, themes, and other less noticed details that could impact outcomes.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to:

- *Respond to open-ended questions about the experience of making or receiving grant funding for youth violence work in Chicago, IL. The details of how you experience the grant-decision process will be the focus of the questions. Please know your participation is voluntary.*
- *This interview will be one hour and will be audiotaped and transcribed.*
- *This research will involve a one-time, one-on-one, in-person interview.*
- *Research participants will be asked questions that could be considered personal.*
- *Research participants will be either in the grant-maker or grant seeker group.*

Grant Maker Questionnaire

This will be audio taped and I will be taking notes during our discussion. Both will be secured then destroyed per Loyola University Chicago policy. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Opening Questions

Interviews will start with a few questions that are informed by the personal ‘layers’ noted in Stinson’s model as indicated in parenthesis. A few of these questions are:

How would you describe the racial, cultural, economic characteristics of where you currently live? How long have you lived there? (*home/environment and community*)

Do you volunteer or do any charitable work outside of this organization? (*lifestyle*)

Who do you consult with about major professional or personal decisions before making them? What, if any other personal factors impact your decision-making (i.e., faith, politics, personal convictions)? (*environment and community/worldview*)

How do you define social justice? What role if any do you think philanthropy plays in social justice? (*worldview*)

Why do you think foundation grants are needed? What are the characteristics of a worthy cause/issue for a grant award in your opinion? (*worldview*)

What exposure do you have to youth violence outside of the media, articles, or research/data? Have you ever done youth violence work or know anyone personally impacted by youth violence? (*environment and community/worldview*)

Interview Questions

How would you describe the organizational culture at your current organization? Has it been this way for some time or changed recently?

How does the organization's leadership interact with staff, the local community, and other stakeholders?

How are people at your organization trained in philanthropy?

Would you describe the grant decision-making process your organization uses? What is your specific role in this process?

Who else is involved in the grant decision-making process at your organization? What is your organization's stance on community involvement?

Does your organization have a mechanism in place to evaluate aspects of the grantmaking process? If yes, please describe it.

What if anything would you change about the grant decision-making process of your organization?

How would you describe your organization's engagement with the communities that benefit from your funding of youth violence work?

How does your organization perceive their role in the outcomes of the grants as a funder?

Does your organization offer input on the use/goals of awarded funds to the organizations who do youth violence work? If so, how?

Grant Seeker Questionnaire

This will be audio taped and I will be taking notes during our discussion. Both will be secured then destroyed per Loyola University Chicago policy. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Opening Questions

How would you describe the racial, cultural, economic characteristics of where you currently live? How long have you lived there? (*home/environment and community*)

Do you volunteer or do any charitable work outside of this organization? (*lifestyle*)

Who do you consult with about major professional or personal decisions before making them? What, if any other personal factors impact your decision-making (i.e., faith, politics, personal convictions)? (*environment and community/worldview*)

How do you define social justice? What role if any do you think philanthropy plays in social justice? (*worldview*)

Why do you think foundation grants are needed? What are the characteristics of a worthy cause/issue for a grant award in your opinion? (*worldview*)

What exposure do you have to youth violence outside of the media, articles, or research/data? Have you ever done youth violence work or know anyone personally impacted by youth violence? (*environment and community/worldview*)

Interview Protocol

How would you describe the organizational culture at your current organization? Has it been this way for some time or changed recently?

How does the organization's leadership interact with staff, the local community, and other stakeholders?

How are people at your organization trained in philanthropy?

Would you describe the grant seeking process your organization uses? What is your specific role in this process?

Who else is involved in the grant seeking process at your organization? What is your organization's stance on community involvement?

Does your organization have a mechanism in place to evaluate aspects of the grant seeking process? If yes, please describe it.

What if anything would you change about the grant seeking process you experience with your funders?

How does your organization perceive the funder's role in grant award outcomes?

Do your foundation grant funders offer input on the use/goals of the awarded funds? If so, how?

Thank you for meeting with me and completing the interview for my dissertation study. I appreciate your willingness to share your unique and personal experiences. The work is just beginning as I must complete the analysis, but I am happy to provide you with the results of the study. The findings will be used for increasing the knowledge about this important yet understudied area. Your time and responses are greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Patiya Freely

YOUR INSIGHT IS NEEDED!

Does your organization receive grant funding?

Does your organization award grant funding?

Does your work address Chicago youth violence?

Would you consider sharing your experience in grantmaking or grant seeking?

Contact me to learn more about my dissertation study!

Seeking volunteers for a one-hour interview

Participation is confidential and anonymous

Email: Patiya Freely, pfreely@luc.edu

This study has been approved by the IRB of Loyola University Chicago

APPENDIX D
REFLEXIVE JOURNAL ENTRIES

Reflexive Journal Entries

I have not begun my research interviews yet. My IRB should be granted next week. I am eager to begin my research, but tonight I was made aware of something else to consider. After an interesting conversation, a colleague told me to be careful to protect the identities of the participants and to take extra care they will remain anonymous. It can sometimes be deduced who organizations are as my sample is so specific period I in no way want to harm anyone and I'm glad to have this in the foreground of my thinking before I start collecting data. How do I avoid harm as a new researcher as the PI and sole researcher? **(8 April 2022)**

I just completed my very first interview for this study! The respondent seemed comfortable as we were familiar and had met in person previously. I think it went okay. I tried not to elaborate on the questions and was deliberate to pause to let them think. I wanted to wait for them to complete their thoughts and not rush to the next question. One of my in questions may not be quite clear. It seems as though the respondents struggled with relating and it being organic versus it being a leading question. And simply getting the info. This is not a conversation. I was stunned by the personal story that they shared in this interview. And had to focus to stay present and not get sad about hearing about the murder of a family member that they shared while discussing their familiarity with youth violence. **(18 May 2022)**

A pre-meeting was requested from a potential research participant despite them getting the information and the pre-screening questions about the study before agreeing to participate. I am finding this to be frustrating. They are quite concerned about remaining anonymous. They were referred by another person that I knew personally. I am getting more traction with grant seekers than I am with grantmakers. I was told that funders would likely be less accessible than grant seekers and that is shaping up to be true. I am really hoping to get real willing referrals but was hoping to be familiar with most of my participants so they can share more in-depth insight in their responses and are already comfortable with me. **(20 May 2022)**

I had my first grant seeker interview today. My questions were sort of scrutinized in a way that I did not expect. The power differential is noted in the responses of the grant seekers and this grant maker. The responses seemed calculated and reminded me of the pre- interview conversation that was requested that helped the participant decide if they wanted to proceed with the study. A lot about the grantmaking culture was shared and I appreciated their viewpoint. **(20 May 2022)**

The interview I just completed was stunning as I did not expect the participant to share a personal story of an experience with youth violence. It reminded me of working in foster care as they recounted the horrific details of the loss of a child life. Of course, I gave space for them to fully share but had to bring them back to the interview with compassion and sensitivity. I was sure to express my gratitude for them sharing such a traumatic occurrence. I had to check my feelings as I felt things like this keep happening and it seems that we live in a nation that does not prioritize saving the lives of the certain youth. There are some but from politicians to average citizens, it appears the loss of child lives is accepted and expected. **(31May2022)**

APPENDIX E
INTER- RATER RELIABILITY REPORT

Inter-Rater Report for Patiya Freely

External Audit Researcher:

- Ph.D. level social worker
- Fits inclusion criteria for a grant seeker participant
- Has requested and secured millions in funding during their career
- Works in leadership with a large community, family and youth-focused organization
- Organization leader in a decision-making role at a well-known multi-location non-profit organization
- Has over 20 years of experience in direct practice, clinical, and leadership roles in Chicago, IL
- Reviewed the two transcripts from grant seeker 1 and grant seeker 3 used to create the codes for this study

Transcript/ Line #	Text	Code name	Code Definition	Agreement
Seeker 1 101-122	The economics of social justice Helping specific communities, races ethnicities	Social Justice	<i>The correction of societal/ system level harms inflicted on marginalized groups</i>	Yes
Seeker 3 60-79	Recognizing and acknowledging [race-based] harms and coming up with an economic plan to repair them; resources lead to liberation			
Seeker 1 83-92	Professional colleagues, mentors, and people from the community.	Decision-making	<i>The process and actions used to arrive at choice between one or more options or courses of action by an individual or organization</i>	Yes
Seeker 3 38-51	Consult colleagues, mentors, and people who volunteer in the same spaces who share similar values			
Seeker 1 334-376	Relationships are a major part of grant seeking. A great proposal can be written but if the applicant is unknown, it is unlikely they will be funded. Chicago is a unique place and should be seen in context. What works in other large cities may not work in Chicago so suggestions from other areas are not very useful.	Process of Grantmaking/ Grant seeking	<i>Any procedure/ practice/ experience involved in grant giving by grantmakers and grant getting by grant seekers. Involves training in philanthropy and all persons involved in the process.</i>	Yes

Seeker 3 270-298	There is the autonomy of identifying of potential funders based department needs and priorities. This process is extended to the full team to increase their familiarity with a major part of how they are able to get things done.			
Seeker 1 232-267	The organization is four years old but has demonstrated value for the input of everyone. Decisions are not only made from the top down, but the contributions of the newest and youngest staff are requested also.	Organizational Culture	<i>The norms and accepted practices embraced, perpetuated, and expected in a particular organization</i>	Yes
Seeker 3 167-191	It's horrible due to the excessive layers and administrative red tape for anything to get done			
Seeker 1 184-219	Participant's niece killed and left naked in an alley. Several family members and friends have lost children to violence or have children who are perpetrators of violence. Concern for young adult sons.	Exposure to Youth Violence	<i>The first-hand experience with violence inflicted on/perpetrated by persons aged 0-24.</i>	Yes
Seeker 3 123-130	Family and friends who were violently murdered and some killed by police. Secondary trauma is commonly connected to these experiences			

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VITA

Dr. Patiya Freely was born in Columbia, South Carolina to JoAnn Freely and Willie Freely. She is the younger (yet bigger) sister to Audrey and auntie to two incredible nephews, Kevin and Tyree. During her formative years, she lived with her maternal grandparents, which shaped her life outlook. Her grandfather, William Walker, Jr., was a Baptist pastor, and her grandmother, Betty Walker, exuded kindness, compassion, and concern for others, as well as an interest in new places and people. Her paternal grandparents, World War II veteran John Freely and grandmother Ruth Freely, exemplified love for family, tradition, and values such as stability, the value of hard work, and a love of laughter.

Dr. Freely moved to New Jersey during middle school and graduated from Orange High School. Orange, New Jersey, was later discovered to be similar to the communities from which many of the youth she would later serve lived. It was similar to some Chicago neighborhoods, which have high rates of violence and poor outcomes for many residents, particularly youth. The difficult environment did not deter but motivated Dr. Freely to persevere. With the encouragement of family and a few invested teachers, she graduated high school and moved to Washington, D.C., to attend Howard University, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in International Business.

Dr. Freely enjoyed her experience at the notable HBCU and looked forward to a career in Corporate America. Then a life-changing event caused Dr. Freely to revisit her plans and seek God for direction on the next steps in her professional life. She ultimately decided to pivot

careers and accept a role newly formed by a social services agency in New Jersey. Child welfare became Dr. Freely's passion.

Transformative experiences led Dr. Freely to Chicago, Illinois. She earned a Master's in Social Work degree with a concentration in Community and Administrative Practice from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). Dr. Freely's approach to social work is collaborative, team-oriented, and encourages multi-disciplinary input. She firmly believes everyone can play a part and contribute their expertise to solve a part of the problem being addressed. She has served as a project manager, liaison, advocate to youth in employment, academic achievement, mentoring, and other life skills.

Due to family and other personal reasons, Dr. Freely returned to the East Coast but relocated back to Chicago eight years later in 2016. The constant news of youth homicides was especially troubling, and she felt God called her back to Chicago to be instrumental in the conversation and to impact how youth violence was approached. Ultimately Dr. Freely became the project manager for a youth violence program based in the Loyola School of Social Work. This experience sparked an interest in the connection between research, the academy, and community. She soon realized a Ph.D. would be necessary to make the significant macro-level impact she believes she was created to make. This was achieved when she defended her dissertation in November 2022. Dr. Freely is determined to fulfill her life's purpose to increase outcomes for vulnerable youth. She also is committed to being the person she needed early in her social work career.