ISTR
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
THIRD-SECTOR RESEARCH

RESEARCH PAPER

Paradoxes Within the Management of Volunteers

Anders la Cour[1] · Lesley Hustinx[2] · Nina Eliasoph[3]

Abstract While scholars of management have extensively discussed paradoxes, scholars of volunteer management have given them little systematic attention. This special issue brings together the field of paradox studies with the research field of volunteer management. While many studies highlight paradoxes between different "missions" and mandates within volunteer-involving organizations, this introduction suggests using a "dramaturgical" approach that highlights the interplay between different actors, audiences, instruments for communication and action, and the broader moral, institutional frameworks in which the organizations operate. We review the field of paradox studies in management, then connect it to volunteer management, and then suggest ways that the dramaturgical approaches might help systematize some of the paradoxes that scholars have found in organizations that use volunteers. Next, the introduction summarizes this issue's articles. Finally, we suggest that paradoxes take a more prominent role in studies of volunteer management.

✉ Anders la Cour
al.mpp@cbs.dk

Lesley Hustinx
Lesley.Hustinx@UGent.be

Nina Eliasoph
eliasoph@email.usc.edu

[1] Copenhagen Business School, Frederiksberg, Denmark

[2] Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

[3] University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Paradoxes in Organizations: The Promise and Problem of Management

In recent decades, paradox has become a core theme in organizations and management studies. In fact, some scholars say that managers' success depends on their ability to acknowledge and address paradoxes (Schad et al., 2019). The notion of paradoxes in organizational studies has provided a steady stream of research since Weber, running through Simon and March (1958) and Thompson (1967). In an influential review paper, Smith and Lewis (2011) define the concept as "contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time" (Smith & Lewis, 2011:382; Lewis, 2000). The articles in this special issue extend the study of paradox from management studies to studies of volunteering. This introduction summarizes this approach, and also suggests a potentially useful complement to the study of paradox in volunteer-involving organizations: the "dramaturgical" methods of mid-century US scholars focus on interactions, paying attention not only to actors' explicit and unspoken messages and assumptions, but also to how these messages carry different meanings depending on which speakers who voice them, which audiences hear them, what are the tools of communication and implementation, and the broader social scene (Burke, 1969; Goffman, 1959, among others). This approach is especially useful for studying the management of volunteers, because there are so many confusing roles and audiences and moral frameworks in play all at once. Speech and action filter through them, giving suprising, paradoxical meanings to actions that managers might imagine as coherent and logical. Using the tools from the dramaturgical approach might help us see volunteer-involving organizations' paradoxes in a more systematic way than has previously been done.

Paradox Theory in Management Studies

Management of paradoxes in organizations can be defined as an exercise in constantly living up to contradictory yet equally legitimate claims. While "dilemmas" require managers to select one option at the expense of the other, and allow managers to use an either/or approach to handle the tensions, "paradoxes" move beyond such trade offs (Fairhurst el al., 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011). In a "paradox situation," opposing claims need to be addressed simultaneously (Stoltzfus et al., 2011). In March's work (1991), managers were advised that they could not choose between exploring or exploiting, but had to choose only one (Leonard-Barton, 1992; Levinthal & March, 1993; Tushman & Anderson, 1986). In contrast, the contemporary paradox literature advises managers to try to cope with both exploration and exploitation, reasserting the simultaneous importance of them both in ways that would benefit the organization (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Raisch et al., 2009; Smith, 2014; Smith & Tushman, 2005).

However, navigating the tensions of a paradox situation is not straightforward. Paradoxes feel uncomfortable. They can come across as a form of disorder, and therefore easily appear as threats to management and its central aspiration of order and consistency (Putnam et al., 2016 p. 75). Instead of being paralyzed by the seemingly impossible situation, managers should, according to leading scholars, embrace the paradox by seeking an both/and approach, treating the contradictions as complementary and mutual enabling, and in doing so, fuel virtuous instead of vicious cycles (e.g., Lewis, 2000; Smith & Lewis, 2011).

Vicious cycles emerge when managers fail to give equal attention to both poles, and instead favor one pole at expense of the other, thereby creating conflict and negative tensions between the two poles (Lewis & Smith 2022; Lewis & Smith, 2022).

Since then, several studies has investigated how vicious cycles can be changed to virtuous cycles and thereby promote learning and transformation (Chen, 2002; Edgeman et al., 2020; Farjoun, 2010; Huq et al., 2017; Miron-Spektor et al., 2011). To foster virtuous cycles, scholars call for strategies of differentiation and integration. "Differentiation" involves recognizing and conserving the distinction's importance; "integration" means "identifying linkages" between them (Smith & Tushman, 2005, p. 527; Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Lewis & Smith, 2022).

In the last decade, the research field has covered a wide spectrum of organizations and contrasting dichotomies, such as, just to name a few: rationality versus intuition in innovative companies (Calabretta et al., 2017); flexibility versus efficiency in one global corporation (Adler et al., 1999); individuality versus collectivity in small musical ensembles (Murnighan and Conlon 1991); inclusion versus exclusion in trade associations (Solebello et al., 2016) (for overviews, see various review articles; Hoffmann, 2018; Putnam et al., 2016; Schad et al., 2016; Fairhurst et al., 2016). The study of paradoxes in management has developed into a well established research field with its own overarching perspectives and underlying assumptions that traverse the many different empirical cases and theories.

Critiques of this perspective followed. Poole and Van de Ven (1989, p. 563) argued, three decades ago, that the field uses the term paradoxes "loosely, as an informal umbrella for interesting and thought-provoking contradictions of all sorts." Recent scholarship cautions that by addressing so many empirical phenomena and levels of analysis, the concept of paradox runs the danger of becoming too inclusive, either gathering almost all complex situations that have different expectations, or else becoming so general that it loses the sight of what makes paradoxical situations specific (see Schad et al., 2016; Li, 2016). The concept risks turning into a vague umbrella term, at the expense of conceptual precision and detail (also noted by Putnam et al., 2016; Smith, 2014), thus losing its power and potentially missing critical insights (e.g., Fairhurst et al., 2016; Putnam et al., 2016; Schad et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2017).

On the other hand, scholars have claimed the opposite, namely that the research field has developed into a closed research unit with a too narrow conception of how paradoxes should be defined and how it should be embraced. Cunha and Putnam have argued that this has led to a "premature convergence on theoretical concepts, overconfidence in dominant explanations and institutionalizing labels that protect dominant logics" (Cunha & Putnam, 2019, p. 96). They criticize the fields converging on both-and approaches as the most effective way to manage contradictions within organizations, instead of examining a repertoire of different types of responses to the challenge of paradoxes. They argue that to prevent this to happen, the research field has to avoid narrow theory building (see also Seidl et al., 2021).

Together, the different types of criticism represent a paradox of its own, claiming that the research field should live up to two contradictory claims, by being both more closed and more open, leaving the paradox scholars in the same impossible situation as the managers they study. However, as Schad et al. note (2019) both centripetal and centrifugal forces can help develop the field. This issue could be, itself, an example of this. On the one hand, it will take the established research field's definition of paradoxes as a stepping stone, for doing new investigations. At the same time, it will introduce new theories, empirical evidence, and methods to the field of paradox studies.

Taking the established field's definition of paradoxes as a stepping stone, this issue will show how the concept of "paradox" can be useful for studies of volunteer management. It will show that navigating through complex and ambiguous situations is not so much a matter of choosing an either/or approach, as recognizing the importance and legitimacy of both demands, and identifying situations where they can benefit from one another.

Paradoxes in Volunteer Management Research

Some researchers argue that the literature on volunteer management relies on rationalistic and instrumental forms of "management thinking (Sillah, 2022, Alfes et al., 2017, for comprehensive reviews see also Maier et al. 2016; Maier & Meyer, 2011; Studer & Schnurbein 2013, Brudney & Meijs 2009; Brudney et al. 2019)". Angela Marberg and her colleagues found that within the last decade there has been a remarkable increased use of vocabulary associated with managerial professionalism and measurable outcomes within the studies of management of volunteers. The central topics of this managerialist discourse are effectiveness, efficiency, resources, and strategy. It emphasizes that managers of volunteers should increase efficiency and effective accomplishment of the organization missions (Marberg et al., 2019). Some of this rationalistic research prescribes a "one size fits all" answer, while other research prescribes a more conditional approach (Meijs & Ten Hoorn 2008; Macduff et al., 2009; Brudney & Meijs, 2014). Both prescribe a formal and rational approach to ''managing'' volunteers (see).

In contrast to this trend, a growing body of research has focused on the uniqueness of volunteers' positions in voluntary organizations (Englert & Helmig, 2018; Studer, 2016). The volunteer is neither employee nor private person; neither professional nor amateur; neither inside the organization nor entirely out of it. This all challenges any fixed models for solving dilemmas, since dilemmas are built into the very position itself (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002; Ganesh & McAllum, 2012; Kramer, 2011; Kramer et al., 2013; McNamee & Peterson, 2014).

Indeed, already three decades ago, Ilsley saw the volunteers' nebulous position in organizations, saying that balancing between professional procedures and respect for volunteers' spontaneity is a central challenge (Ilsley 1990, p. 89, see also Pearce, 1993). Since then, a great deal of research has focused on tensions and contradictions that are specific for the organization of volunteers, as shown in Table 1.

This (inevitably incomplete) overview of a broad repertoire of different tensions, investigated through multiple theories and multiple methods, paints a rich picture of complexity. Even though the literature appears fragmented and without any central paradoxes to lead the research, it illustrates that a tension-centered perspective has been developed and applied to a broad range of volunteer studies. These various tensions show diverse ambiguities involved in attempts to organize and manage volunteers. Together and individually, these studies challenge the prevailing dogma of rational managerialism: not only does rational management neglect complexity, complexity is often a result of the very attempt to manage volunteers through formality and rationality. Thus, some studies argue that managers should "turn down the volume" on rational management discourse (Barnes & Sharpe, 2009). Or management should "filter" rational management practices so they respect the autonomy of the volunteers (Stirling et al., 2011) and contribute to volunteers' experience of self-determination (van Schie et al., 2014). Others try to address one of the observed poles (Macduff et al., 2009), or emphasize the need for the management to develop a "listen and learn" attitude, to navigate the poles on a daily basis (Eliasoph, 2011; la Cour, 2019; Satizábal et al., 2022). This issue's aim is to stimulate research in this direction partly by introducing to the general research field of paradox studies and presenting articles that explore how different paradoxes emerge *through the attempt to manage volunteers*. By showing various paradoxical situations' different, and often contradictory, expectations that exist simultaneously and consistently over time, this issue's articles thereby examine "paradoxical situations," according to the standard definition of the term.

Although existing research already provides some insight in how voluntary organizations often develop styles for "navigating" the described tensions *without* resolving them (Eliasoph, 2011; Glaser et al., 2020; la Cour, 2019), embedding these tension-focused studies in paradox theory will deepen our understanding of the intrinsically paradoxical nature of managing volunteers. While some of the above mentioned studies already go beyond an "either/or"-perspective, paradox theory pushes for a more rigorous analysis of contradictory and mutually exclusive aspects of organizational demands.

A Dramaturgical Approach to Paradox

Paradoxes do not just arise out of thin air. Several studies show that paradoxes owe their origin to an increasingly complex organizational environment (Schad et al., 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011). Some refer to the increasing global competition, which requires organizations to operate on both a global and local scene at the same time (Marquis & Battilana, 2009). Others point at the fact that paradoxes stem from the increasing variety of stakeholders, that raise

Table 1 Common tensions in volunteer management literature

Tensions	Samples of research
Control and autonomy	Barnes and Sharpe (2009), Hager and Brudney (2008)
Flexibility and formalization	McNamee and Peterson (2014)
Bureaucracy and interpersonality	Stirling et al. (2011)
Responsibilization and autonomy	Hustinx et. al. (2015), Bochove and Oldenhof (2020)
Predictability and spontaneity	Macduff et al. (2009)
Managerialism and volunteering	Salamon (2012), Kreutzer and Jäger (2011), Phillips and Levasseur (2004)
Professionalism and volunteerism	McAllum (2018), Weiss (2021)
Loyalty and disloyalty	la Cour (2019)
Intimacy and distance	McNamee and Peterson (2014), Grubb (2022)
Affection and formality	Ward and Greene (2018), O'Tool and Grey (2016)
Informality and formality	Meijs and Ten Hoorn (2008)
Pleasing financial sponsors and fulfilling the organization's stated missions	Sanders (2015), Ketkar and Puri (2022)
Providing a productive job and offering fun	Steimel (2018)
Participation and centralization	Alfes and Langner (2017), Satizábal et al. (2022)
Open-ended interaction and rule-bound organization	la Cour and Højlund (2008)
Open-ended and rule-bound; intimacy and ease of volunteering; pleasing sponsors and fulfilling stated missions; diversity and comfort; preset documentation and spontaneous growth	Eliasoph (2011)

competing yet equally important demands (Scherer et al., 2013). Others argue that paradoxes stem from the complexity and multiplicity of different working process and designs (Besharov & Smith, 2014), or from discordant roles that must be performed simultaneously (Michaud & Andebraud, 2022). These studies, and many others, show that numerous circumstances can trigger paradoxes. We miss, however, a more systematic approach for understand the relations between paradoxes and their circumstances.

Inspired by, but modifying, the American literary theorist Kenneth Burke's (1897–1993) "pentad" of five elements (agent, act, scene, purpose, and agency) we will tease out one possibly way of systematizing the seemingly infinite paradoxes that studies have shown:

To understand parodoxes, researchers need to ask not only "What are the organization's mandates, stated missions, and unspoken expectations—not only "*why*" they take form, but also, *how* they take form: "*Who*" is invoking the expectations in any specific moment? And for *what audience*? And with what *instruments*? With what historical and institutional background—what broader "scene"— in mind? By anchoring paradoxes in these different types of embodied expectations and ways of materializing, this special issue's six articles offer a systematic way of understanding of how a polyphony of different expectations can give rise to specific forms of paradoxes.

If you are familiar with Burke's work, you will notice that we added "audience" and subtracted "purpose" from his pentad. Why did we add "audience?" He formulated his influential "pentad" primarily to analyze public speeches. It is also often used to analyze films, novels, and other performances, so they do not include the audience in their analysis of the show. But to analyze *interaction*, we absolutely need to *include the listener in the interaction*. Why did we subtract "purpose?" We want to limit ourselves to observable phenomena, and we also want to recognize that people often have many layers of crisscrossed, contradictory purposes. Still, we start with Burke's idea of a pentad (it is still "five," since we subtracted "purpose" and added "audience"), because it offers a potential to systematize large numbers of organizations' paradoxes in ways that other dramaturgical approaches do not.

In his approach, as in ours, the interesting action is in the relationships between the five elements. When paradoxes arise, they often arise when, for example, the "speaker (the "who") does not match the expected message (the "what") from a person who is playing that role.

The "actor"—the "who"—refers to roles within the organization: volunteer, manager, or recipient of volunteers' aid, for example. It also can spotlight visible and/or audible demographic features of these actors, to which listeners might filter the roles: woman, teenager, African American, Chinese speaker, for example. Moving beyond manager-centered understandings, it can also include broader institutional actors, such as elite framers of missions. The reason it is important to separate our observations of the actor from the action and speech is that the same words and actions carry different meanings to listeners, depending on who is speaking or acting. The articles observe that listeners often further differentiate within categories that might all look like "manager," for example, such as: between unpaid volunteer managers, paid volunteer managers, elected leaders who manage volunteers, and, paid social workers, and paid or unpaid health care professionals, all of whom might be work with the same group of volunteers (Eliasoph, 2011).

The "audience"—the "where"—in our addition to Burke, can be inside the organization, or they can be external audiences, such as funding agencies, voters who

pay for the organization, schools and religious organizations that send volunteers, or other volunteer-involving and/or professional organizations. Even if an actor consistently says and does the same thing to different audiences, varied audiences may well hear different messages.

The "scene" refers to the broader institutions, both inside and outside the organization, that legitimate its work. Actors may or may not be fully conscious of any efforts at legitimation, but if a researcher observes that they (consciously or not) orient themselves toward some institution that affects their action, then the institution becomes relevant for the study.

The "instruments"—the "how"—refers to whatever material objects go with the human action. Some examples include quantitative assessments of the organization, furniture, telephones, and screens. The instruments that matter here are not just "used" by actors; they shape the action. One prominent tool in highly professionalized settings is spatiotemporal in nature, whereby potential conflicts between professionals and volunteers are prevented by a consecutive temporal work organization of paid professionals and volunteers.

The pentad is not something that gets in the way of volunteer organizations; the pentad *is* the way. Our point is that, when taken together, the pentad is part of what *defines* the normative and political dimensions of volunteer-involving organizations, in a way that is similar to the ways that "street-level bureaucrats" help define their organizations' mission, whatever the policies on paper may be (Garfinkel, 1967; Lipsky, 2010).

Introducing the Six Articles

Our collection spans different types of organizations and sectors (social work, health care, timebanks, and music festivals), as well as historical periods (different phases in welfare state development).

The first three articles take the broader "scene," the (Western European) welfare state, as the main entry point, centering on voluntarism in the provision of public services within highly professionalized organizational contexts.

In "Moral elites and the de-paradoxification of Danish social policy between civil society and state (1849–2022)", Anders Sevelsted remarkably shows how actors' ways of trying to settle the paradoxes of one era turn into the paradoxes of the next era. In his historical analysis across a 150-year period of the role of moral elites in settling paradoxes within Danish social policy, Sevelstad shows how the "scene" affects action and vice versa. He identifies, from the beginnings of Western welfare states onwards, a fundamental "social policy paradox" between philanthropic relief based on a logic of benevolence and state-administered relief based on a social rights logic. This paradox comes from vacillations, over time, of stigmatizing public or private relief. To legitimize particular social configurations, moral elites tried to create "paradox-free" social policies through acts of classification, categorizing some groups as deserving of benefits and assigning responsibility to the family, state, or market. Sevelsted meticulously unfolds the complex and shifting dynamics of managing paradoxes between 1) different moral elite groups ("actor"), 2) changing public perceptions of deservingness ("audience"), and 3) changing views of the sectors and their role in welfare provision ("scene"). The empirical analysis reveals three historical classification orders in the Danish context: Traditional Moral Elites and the Help to Self-help Classification (1849–1891); Specialists and Rights Classification (1891–1976); Economists and Workfare Classification (1976–present). He shows that the relationship between deservingness and sector provider is historically contingent. This goes against a common assumption that the more "deserving" a group is defined as being in any historical moment, the more the state gets involved. In Jeffrey Alexander's (2006) model of civil and noncivil spheres, a society's "binary code" treats some people and actions as "included or excluded, pure or impure, carrying stigma or not, being civil or noncivil, just or unjust pure or impure, deserving or not," as Sevelsted paraphrases (p. 4). Sevelstad adds an important layer to this model, saying that a society's binary code also stigmatizes or valorizes sectors' roles in providing aid, as well as classifying individuals and groups as pure and deserving or not, and the two classification systems work together differently in different epochs.

In "Towards a new typology of professional and voluntary care", Anders La Cour zeroes in on the increased reliance on voluntary care in relation to professional care in the contemporary welfare mix. La Cour says that recent scholarship tends to theorize each sector's care as distinct, each with its own essence, resulting in common understandings of professional care as "devoted to standards, accountability, equality, and bureaucracy" and voluntary care as "flexible, authentic, and individual", or more generally between "formal" and "relational" types of care. Managers see effective collaboration between professional and voluntary care providers as complementary, with volunteers in ancillary roles vis-à-vis professionals expert roles. This growing professionalization and responsibilization of volunteers is part of wider tendencies toward performance and accountability in public welfare provision, through which formal care criteria also increasingly applies to voluntary care. Managers' treatment of this boundary helps create conflict between professionals and volunteers. In dramaturgical terms, it is a mismatch between the actors and the action. Critical scholarship also

points to the effortful "boundary-work" that maintains the difference in values and identities between the groups. La Cour, however, discerns a common yet questionable underlying core assumption in these various approaches, namely that two essentially different and pure care logics build on distinct (and even incompatible) care principles, and that tension arises from the boundary crossing between professional and voluntary care in actual care practices. The problem is that this eternally reproduces the basic logic of complementarity. To move beyond this analytical deadlock, La Cour argues that both formal and relational forms of care are intrinsic to both professional and voluntary care. Based on this foundation, researchers can examine both types of care at a more fine-grained level, by examining differences in professional and voluntary forms of care's varied relations to the principles of both formal and relational care. La Cour shows how each form of care represents its own unique and paradoxical ways of combining formal and relational care principles. Instead of continuing to study paradoxes at the level of managing collaboration between volunteers and professionals, a more fruitful approach is to explore how they constitute their own paradoxical forms of care.

In a third paper titled "Together Yet Apart: Remedies for Tensions Between Volunteers and Health Care Professionals in Inter-professional Collaboration", Georg von Schnurbein, Eva Hollenstein, Nicholas Arnold, and Florian Liberatore investigate the collaboration between volunteers and health care professionals in the health care institutions in Switzerland. As in other settings of public welfare provision, health care volunteers have become vital, but their inclusion in formal, highly professionalized settings also leads to tensions. Introducing the concept of interprofessional collaboration (IPC), the authors construct a new framework for scrutinizing different types of tensions, and their antecedents between volunteers and health professionals. The authors argue that the role of volunteers in IPC research has, so far, been largely neglected, despite their essential, complementary role in providing high-quality health care services. To get a subtle understanding of possible tensions, Schnurbein and colleagues analytically distinguish between four types of tensions: status conflict, process conflict, task conflict, and relationship conflict, each with specific antecedents. For instance, an unclear or unfair task division can result in status conflicts at the individual or professional group level. In addition to unraveling the complexity behind the general notion of tension between volunteers and professionals, the study also approaches these tensions from a dyadic perspective, assessing the expectations and experiences of both volunteer managers and volunteers (the authors note that by not including health professionals in their study, the more informal experience of tension in actual IPC may not have

been fully captured). Overall, the volunteer managers who responded to the authors' survey reported more tensions compared to the volunteers. In health care settings, they reported more frequent conflicts related to processes, tasks, and relationships than those related to status. The fact that they less frequently reported status conflicts might be due to volunteers' mostly doing complementary tasks that do not interfere with the specialized professionals' work. To put it in dramaturgical terms, the actions fit the actors. Volunteers indeed preferred minimum role overlap and clear task division. One element of the pentad that made this possible was "the material instruments:" Volunteers and paid staff's tasks rarely took place simultaneously. Time and space became useful "instruments" for keeping action meaningful. The authors derive from these findings a paradox in IPC itself: while IPC is aimed at more effective and high-quality health care by stimulating more collaboration among various actors, the most preferred and conflict-reducing way of working is by clearly dividing and compartmentalizing professional and volunteer roles and tasks. Schnurbein et al. conclude that rather than pushing for more collaboration, managers should aim for a looser structure of "coaction".

With the final three research papers in our special issue, we travel to a different "scene," namely the borderland between voluntary association and market organization.

Two articles explore these borders in the "social economy" and "social enterprise". Policy makers and publics in general imagine that volunteering in these value-based, community-oriented alternative collectivities is in competition or tension with "traditional volunteering." This creates paradoxes for volunteer managers.

In "Paradoxes in the Management of Timebanks in the UK's Voluntary Sector: Discursive Bricolage and its Limits", Jason Glynos, Konstantinos Roussos, Savvas Voutyras, and Rebecca Warren coin the notion of a "timebank/traditional volunteering 'doublet'." While timebanking (defined as a community economy in which people exchange tasks or "services" using labor time as currency, Seyfang, 2002) is considered a form of volunteering, time bank advocates eagerly distinguish it from traditional volunteering. Time banking, they say, has an ethos of reciprocity, whereas traditional volunteering is unidirectional, other-oriented *helping*. This tension, the authors argue, creates a "performance paradox" for managers of timebank volunteers: a challenge in promoting timebanking and recruiting timebank volunteers is to explain its distinct and innovative nature, that is, "to bring something *new* into being, a practice and experience that many people are not (yet) familiar with" (p. 7, emphasis in original). This need for explanation poses a paradox for volunteer management "because the (rhetorical) performance of the manager brings into existence what s/he

purportedly is supposed to manage" (p. 2). Theoretically, the authors introduce two innovations into our thinking about paradox in (volunteer) management. First, while Smith and Lewis' seminal definition of paradox only addresses contradictory dualities that *already exist* in organizations, Glynos and colleagues show how paradox is also "constructed *in the interval between being and becoming*, the space between reality and possibility" (p. 2—emphasis added). Second, they formulate paradox in discursive terms, thus reconceiving the role of timebank volunteer managers as "discursive bricoleurs" who must use various rhetorical devices to legitimize the particular form of volunteering that is the object of their management practices in opposition/alignment with a set of wider discursive structures. Drawing on political discourse theory and method, Glynos and colleagues present a highly original empirical analysis of the volunteer managers "practices of articulation," by dissecting the performance paradox in two "offshoots". First, the "Everywhere (in name) but Nowhere (in substance)" paradox implies that by the need to align timebank volunteering not only with the dominant frame of traditional volunteering, but also with funding imperatives of increasing the number of volunteers and activities. Thus, managers downplay the intrinsic values of timebanking (reciprocity, community building), by portraying it to various audiences as a more convenient "plug-in" way (Eliasoph, 2011) of doing traditional volunteering. In a second paradox, the formal features of a future ideal case scenario of timebanking (such as registration of time credits) would no longer be needed because the underlying values have become natural parts of a healthy community life. This is already present in managers' experience of once active timebank members who stop registering what they do after they have befriended their comembers. Their continued reciprocal exchanges have become part of informal ties, which is perfectly compatible, as the authors note, with privatization tendencies in policy. Reinscribing it into (one-to-one) friendship furthermore tends to selectively promote some values of timebanking while marginalizing others, especially the creation of an alternative economy. In sum, volunteer managers have to position themselves constantly in relation to dominant structures and logics, ultimately navigating between "logics of cooptation" and "logics of progressive transformation", with the present case-study mainly a story of cooptation (p. 9).

In "Professional volunteerism: Interwoven paradoxes in the management of Roskilde Festival", Jonas Hedegaard delves into the context of a world-class music festival that primarily relies on volunteers, yet also needs to live up to highest professional and performance standards. It operates as a social enterprise, being value-based yet also requiring commercially viability. Here, volunteering takes the form

of "professional volunteerism", which Hedegaard approaches as a "locus of paradoxical tensions". While the general tension between two poles—"volunteerism" and "professionalism"—has been well-documented in existing literature, Hedegaard sees more-than one axis. Responding to more process-oriented and practice-theoretical approaches to paradoxes and their managerial responses, he explores "knotted and bundled tensions" (Putnam et al., 2016), "unfolding in relation to each other in a dynamic interplay between the actions of individuals and larger organizational and societal structures" (p. 4). This requires not only a "both-and" but also a "more-than" logic to fully grasp managerial responses to paradoxes. Based on a 9-months "insider action research project" covering different top and middle management teams of the festival, consisting of both volunteers and employees, hence having access to multiple actors and audiences across units and levels over a longer period, Hedegaard uncovers three pairs of paradoxical tensions: (1) Tensions between alignment and autonomy; (2) Tensions between commitment and empowerment; and (3) Tensions between performance and well-being. He describes managers' responses to these paradoxes, showing how these can influence and activate other interwoven tensions. Resolving a paradox in one situation, often merely meant moving tensions to another place or time. Hedegaard concludes that by accepting the paradox and utilizing a "more-than" response, volunteer managers find a constructive way forward in dealing with the tensions at play.

In "Volunteers' Discursive Strategies for Navigating the Market/Mission Tension", Consuelo Vásquez, Frédérique Routhier, and Emmanuelle Brindamour, focus on the major fundraising campaign of the Canadian Cancer Society, as a case of nonprofit marketization's intensification of the tension between market-based and volunteer logics. Examining communicative practices of volunteers in their everyday interactions, the authors' focus on interaction, in contrast with the dominant literature's focus on individual sensemaking. Discourse is here understood as "little'd' discourses" (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000), that is, "constellations of language, logic, and texts rooted in day-to-day actions and interactions (Putnam et al., 2016; cited in Vásquez et al., 2022, p. 4)." Using conversation analysis, the authors zoom in on a specific moment in one organizing committee's meeting, showing tension between market and volunteer orientations, the authors reveal six main approaches to navigating paradoxes, grouped under three broader categories: (1) Either-or approaches: selecting and segmenting; (2) Both-and approaches: integrating and balancing; (3) More-than approaches: reframing and transcending. They construct a processual model for navigating oppositions in interaction, which starts from varying ways of problematizing the oppositions, and moves

through different discursive navigation strategies. The authors conclude that even thought the market/mission paradox is central to many present-day NPOs, it is seldom expressed directly in everyday volunteer interactions. It rather manifests itself in more subtle and varied ways around practical concerns regarding volunteer work and a common search for compromise.

Conclusion

This special issue has only provided a glimpse of the many avenues that are left to explore with the help of a lens for paradoxes. We hope that this special issue will stimulate further challenges to the dominating linear and rational management literature with in the field, to make room for understanding that tensions and ambiguities are not problem to be solved, but are conditions to manage, in which the right approach can fuel excitement, creativity and development. We encourage the research field of management of volunteers to sharpen its focus on tensions and ambiguities, and to develop a paradox lens, to explain paradoxes and to develop insights into how people navigate them.

Many scholars predict that paradox theory will become a new paradigm, that replaces perceptions of organizations as linear and rational. Instead of presenting tensions and ambiguity as things that can and should be avoided, paradox studies explore how organizations can focus on competing and contradictory demands, to enable learning and creativity, foster resilience, and unleash human potential (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Tsoukas & Cunha 2017; Lewis & Smith, 2022). The indeterminacy can be fruitful, as Lewis says. We could call this a "win–win" situation: while we lose coherence and linearity in our theory (and they never were there, in organizations' practice) we "win" a new set of questions, with a new approach to organizations.

Our effort at bringing together the field of paradox studies in general management studies to the research field of volunteer management and the concept of "the pentad" from dramaturgical studies, arrive at two insights, each of which comes with suggestions:

First, we suggest that paradoxes do not only exist external to management, but are often a result of management. To say that is not to oppose managerialism, but the articles within this issue will describe how management is a participant in the paradoxical situation, creating and responding to indeterminancy. The seeming harmonization or resolution of paradoxes simply creates more paradoxes.

From this comes our second suggestion: to Smith and Lewis' focus on the fruitfulness of embracing paradox, we add that paradoxes are not *in the way*. They *are* the way. That is, they are not in the way of organizations' missions; rather, in practice, paradoxes are *the way that organizations have missions*. The pentad helps us understand organizations in the holistic, processual, and interdependence perspectives that paradox studies suggests.

Declarations

Conflict of interest There are no moral conflicts that have to be addressed in relation to this paper.

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-023-00578-8.

References

Adler, P. S., Goldoftas, B., & Levine, E. (1999). Flexibility vs. efficiency? A case study of model changeovers in the Toyota product system. *Organization Science, 10*(1), 43–68.

Alfes, K., Antunes, B., & Shantz, A. D. (2017). The management of volunteers—What can human resources do? A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*, 62–97.

Alfes, K. F., & Langner, N. (2017). Paradoxical leadership: Understanding and managing conflicting tensions to foster volunteer engagement. *Organizational Dynamics, 46*(2), 96–103. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2017.04.005

Alvesson, M., & Karreman, D. (2000). Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human Relations, 53*(9), 1125–1149.

Andriopoulos, C., & Lewis, M. W. (2009). Exploitation– exploration tensions and organizational ambidexterity: Managing paradoxes of innovation. *Organization Science, 20*, 696–717.

Ashcraft, K., & Kedrowicz, A. (2002). Self-direction or social support? Nonprofit empowerment and the tacit employment contract of organizational communication studies. *Communication Monographs, 69*, 88–110.

Barnes, M. L., & Sharpe, E. K. (2009). Looking beyond traditional volunteer management: A case study of an alternative approach to volunteer engagement in parks and recreation. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 20*(2), 169–187.

Besharov, M. L., & Smith, W. K. (2014). Multiple institutional logics in organizations: Explaining their varied nature and implications. *Academy of Management Review, 39*(3), 364–381.

Brudney, J. L., & Meijs, L. C. P. M. (2009). It ain't natural: Toward a new (natural) resource conceptualization for volunteer management. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 38*(4), 564–581.

Brudney, J. L., & Meijs, L. C. (2014). Models of volunteer management: Professional volunteer program management in social work. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance, 38*(3), 297–309.

Brudney, J. L., Meijs, L. C. P. M., & van Overbeeke, P. S. (2019). More is less? The volunteer stewardship framework and models. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership, 30*(1), 69–87.

Burke, K. (1969). *A grammar of motives*. University of California Press.

Calabretta, G., Gemser, G., & Wijnberg, N. M. (2017). The interplay between intuition and rationality in strategic decision making: A paradox perspective. *Organization Studies, 38*(3–4), 365–401.

Chen, M.-J. (2002). Transcending paradox: The Chinese "middle way" perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 19*(2), 179–199.

Cour, A. L. (2019). The management quest for authentic relationships in voluntary social care. *Journal of Civil Society, 15*(1), 1–17.

Cour, A., & Højlund, H. (2008). Voluntary social work as a paradox. *Acta Sociologica, 51*(1), 41–54.

Cunha, M. P. E., & Putnam, L. L. (2019). Paradox theory and the paradox of success. *Strategic Organization, 17*(1), 95–106.

Edgeman, R., Hammond, S., Keller, C., & McGraw, J. (2020). Virtuous cycles: Organizational dynamics of innovation and excellence. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence, 31*(11–12), 1290–1306.

Eliasoph, N. (2011). *Making volunteers: Civic life after welfare's end*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Englert, B., & Helmig, B. (2018). Volunteer performance in the light of organizational success: A systematic literature review. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 29*(1), 1–28.

Fairhurst, G. T., Smith, W. K., Banghart, S. G., Lewis, M. W., Putnam, L. L., Raisch, S., & Schad, J. (2016). Diverging and converging: Integrative insights on a paradox meta-perspective. *Academy of Management Annals, 10*(1), 173–182.

Farjoun, M. (2010). Beyond dualism: Stability and change as a duality. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(2), 202–225.

Ganesh, S., & McAllum, K. (2012). Volunteering and professionalization: Trends in tension? *Management Communication Quarterly, 26*, 152–158.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Glaser, V., Lo, J. Y., & Eliasoph, N. (2020). Navigation techniques: How ordinary participants orient themselves in scrambled institutions. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations, 65B*, 143–168.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City: Doubleday.

Grubb, A. (2022). Avoiding intimacy—An ethnographic study of beneficent boundaries in virtual voluntary social work. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 33*, 72–82.

Hager, M. A., & Brudney, J. L. (2008). Sustaining volunteer involvement. In M. Liao-Troth (Ed.), *Challenges in volunteer management* (pp. 9–27). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Hoffmann, J. (2018). Talking into (non) existence: Denying or constituting paradoxes of Corporate Social Responsibility. *Human Relations, 71*(5), 668–691.

Huq, J. L., Reay, T., & Chreim, S. (2017). Protecting the paradox of interprofessional collaboration. *Organization Studies, 38*(3–4), 513–538.

Hustinx, L., De Waele, E., & Delcour, C. (2015). Hybridisation in a corporatist third sector regime: Paradoxes of responsibilised autonomy'. *Voluntary Sector Review, 6*(2), 115–134.

Ilsley, P. J. (1990). *Enhancing the volunteer experience*. San Francisco, JosseyBass Publishers.

Ketkar, S., & Puri, R. (2022). Investigating the 'Mission and Profit' Paradox: Case study of an ecopreneurial organisation in India. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship.* https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2022.2132277

Kramer, M. W. (2011). Toward a communication model for the socialization of voluntary members. *Communication Monographs, 78*(2), 233–255.

Kramer, M. W., Meisenbach, R. J., & Hansen, G. J. (2013). Communication, uncertainty, and volunteer membership. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 41*(1), 18–39.

Kreutzer, K., & Jäger, U. (2011). Volunteering versus managerialism: Conflict over organizational identity in voluntary associations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 40*, 634–661.

Leonard-Barton, D. (1992). Core capabilities and core rigidities: A paradox in managing new product development. *Strategic Management Journal, 13*, 111–125.

Levinthal, D. A., & March, J. G. (1993). The myopia of learning. *Strategic Management Journal, 14*, 95–112.

Lewis, M. W. (2000). Exploring paradox: Toward a more comprehensive guide. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(4), 760–776.

Lewis, M. W., & Smith, W. K. (2022). Reflections on the 2021 AMR decade award: Navigating paradox is paradoxical. *Academy of Management Review, 47*(4), 528–548.

Li, P. P. (2016). Global implications of the indigenous epistemological system from the East: How to apply Yin-Yang balancing to paradox management. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management., 23*, 42–77.

Lipsky, M. (2010). *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York: Russell Sage.

Macduff, N. F., Netting, E., & O'Connor, M. K. (2009). Multiple ways of coordinating volunteers with differing styles of service. *Journal of Community Practice, 17*(4), 400–423.

Maier, F., & Meyer, M. (2011). Managerialism and beyond: Discourses of civil society organization and their governance implications. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 22*(4), 731–756.

Maier, F., Meyer, M., & Steinbereithner, M. (2016). Nonprofit organizations becoming business-like: A systematic review. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 45*(1), 64–86.

Marberg, A., Korzilius, H., & van Kranenburg, H. (2019). What is in a theme? Professionalization in nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations research. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 30*(1), 113–131.

March, J. G. (1991). Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. *Organization Science, 2*, 71–87.

Marquis, C., & Battilana, J. (2009). Acting globally but thinking locally? The enduring influence of local communities on organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 29*, 283–302.

McAllum, K. (2018). Volunteers as boundary workers: Negotiating tensions between volunteerism and professionalism in nonprofit organizations. *Management Communication Quarterly, 32*(4), 534–564.

McNamee, L. G., & Peterson, B. L. (2014). Reconciling "Third space/place" toward a complementary dialectical understanding of volunteer management. *Management Communication Quarterly, 28*(2), 214–243.

Meijs, L., & Ten Hoorn, E. (2008). No "one best" volunteer management and organizing: Two fundamentally different

approaches. In M. Liao-Troth (Ed.), *Challenges in volunteer management* (pp. 29–50). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Michaud, M., & Audebrand, L. K. (2022). One governance theory to rule them all? The case for a paradoxical approach to co-operative governance. *Journal of Co-Operative Organization and Management, 10*(1), 100151.

Miron-Spektor, E., Gino, F., & Argote, L. (2011). Paradoxical frames and creative sparks: Enhancing individual creativity through conflict and integration. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 116*(2), 229–240.

Murnighan, J. K., & Conlon, D. E. (1991). The dynamics of intense work groups: A study of British string quartets. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 36*, 165–186.

O'Toole, M., & Grey, C. (2016). 'We can tell them to get lost, but we won't do that': Cultural control and resistance in voluntary work. *Organization Studies, 37*(1), 55–75.

Pearce, J. (1993). *Volunteers: The organisational behaviour of unpaid workers*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Phillips, S., & Levasseur, K. (2004). The snakes and ladders of accountability: Contradictions between contracting and collaboration for Canada's voluntary sector. *Canadian Public Administration, 47*(4), 451–474.

Poole, S. M., & Van de Ven, A. H. (1989). Using Paradox to Build Management and Organization Theories. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 562–578.

Putnam, L. L., Fairhurst, G. T., & Banghart, S. (2016). Contradictions, dialectics, and paradoxes in organizations: A constitutive approach. *Academy of Management Annals, 10*, 65–171.

Raisch, S., Birkinshaw, J., Probst, G., & Tushman, M. L. (2009). Organizational ambidexterity: Balancing exploitation and exploration for sustained performance. *Organization Science, 20*(4), 685–695.

Salamon, L. M. (2012). *The State of Nonprofit America* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Sanders, M. L. (2015). Being nonprofit-like in a market economy: Understanding the mission-market tension in nonprofit organizing. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 44*(2), 205–222.

Satizábal, P., Cornes, I., Zurita, M. D. L. M., & Cook, B. R. (2022). The power of connection: Navigating the constraints of community engagement for disaster risk reduction. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 68*, 102699.

Schad, J., Lewis, M. W., Raisch, S., & Smith, W. K. (2016). Paradox research in management science: Looking back to move forward. *Academy of Management Annals, 10*(1), 5–64.

Schad, J., Lewis, M. W., & Smith, W. K. (2019). Quo vadis, paradox? Centripetal and centrifugal forces in theory development. *Strategic Organization, 17*(1), 107–119.

Scherer, A. G., Palazzo, G., & Seidl, D. (2013). Managing legitimacy in complex and heterogeneous environments: Sustainable development in a globalized world. *Journal of Management Studies, 50*(2), 259–284.

Seidl, D., Lê, J., & Jarzabkowski, P. (2021). The generative potential of Luhmann's theorizing for paradox research: Decision paradox and deparadoxization. In *Interdisciplinary dialogues on organizational paradox: Investigating Social Structures and Human Expression, Part B*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited

Seyfang, G. (2002). Tackling social exclusion with community currencies: Learning from LETS to Time Banks. *International Journal of Community Currency Research, 6*(1), 1–11.

Sillah, A. (2022). *Public sector volunteer management: Best practices and challenges*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Smith, W. (2014). Dynamic decision making: A model of senior leaders managing strategic paradoxes. *Academy of Management Journal, 57*, 1592–1623.

Smith, W. K., Erez, M., Jarvenpaa, S., Lewis, M. W., & Tracey, P. (2017). Adding complexity to theories of paradox, tensions, and dualities of innovation and change: Introduction to organization studies special issue on paradox, tensions, and dualities of innovation and change. *Organization Studies, 38*(3–4), 303–317.

Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2011). Toward a theory of paradox: A dynamic equilibrium model of organizing. *Academy of Management Review, 36*(2), 381–403.

Smith, W. K., & Tushman, M. L. (2005). Managing strategic contradictions: A top management model for managing innovation streams. *Organization Science, 16*, 522–536.

Solebello, N., Tschirhart, M., & Leiter, J. (2016). The paradox of inclusion and exclusion in membership associations. *Human Relations, 69*(2), 439–460.

Steimel, S. (2018). Skills-based volunteering as both work and not work: A tension-centered examination of constructions of '"volunteer".' *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 29*(1), 133–143. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-017-9859-8

Stirling, C., Kilpatrick, S., & Orpin, P. (2011). A psychological contract perspective to the link between non-profit organizations' management practices and volunteer sustainability. *Human Resource Development International, 14*(3), 321–336.

Stoltzfus, K., Stohl, C., & Seibold, D. R. (2011). Managing organizational change: Paradoxical problems, solutions, and consequences. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 24*(3), 349–367.

Studer, S. (2016). Volunteer management: Responding to the uniqueness of volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 45*(4), 688–714.

Studer, S., & von Schnurbein, G. (2013). Organizational factors affecting volunteers: A literature review on volunteer coordination. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 24*, 403–440.

Thompson, J. D. 1967. *Organizations in action: Social sci ence bases of administrative theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tsoukas, H., & Cunha, M. P. E. (2017). *On organizational circularity*. The Oxford handbook of organizational paradox: Approaches to plurality, tensions, and contradictions, 393–412.

Tushman, M. L., & Anderson, P. (1986). Technological discontinuities and organizational environments. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 31*, 439–465.

van Bochove, M., & Oldenhof, L. (2020). Institutional work in changing public service organizations: The interplay between professionalization strategies of non-elite actors. *Administration & Society, 52*(1), 111–137.

van Schie, S., Güntert, S. T., & Wehner, T. (2014). How dare to demand this from volunteers! The impact of illegitimate tasks. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 25*(4), 851–868.

Vásquez, C., Routhier, F., & Brindamour, E. (2022). Volunteers' Discursive Strategies for Navigating the Market/Mission Tension. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 1–21.

Ward, J., & Greene, A. M. (2018). Too much of a good thing? The emotional challenges of managing affectively committed volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 47*(6), 1155–1177.

Weiss, B. (2021). 'When you're here, you're not a militant feminist: Volunteer professionalization in a rape crisis center. *Theory and Society., 50*, 231–254.