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When deliberation is not possible: Moral dilemmas in fundraising

Abstract

Extant literature highlights the importance of ethical fundraising, exacerbated by recent increased public attention and media criticism (Hill, 2019). Arguably this increased attention calls for a deeper examination and understanding of the types of moral scenarios and dilemmas fundraisers encounter. Furthermore, fundraisers are often under intense time pressure to solve the dilemma and thus require quick, on-the-spot decisions formulated from intuition. Currently there are limited resources and training to help fundraisers implement ethical fundraising in their work; additionally, there is negligible education or skills training to help guide them in scenarios requiring intuition. Moreover, current literature fails to examine what these situations entail and how fundraisers might use intuition to help solve ethical fundraising dilemmas. Fundraising dilemmas requiring the use of moral intuition are currently unexplored in the academic literature. Therefore this research identifies the kinds of moral dilemmas that require intuitive responses from fundraisers and examines how are they solved. Furthermore, we identify how the dilemmas align with moral foundations theory (Haidt & Joseph, 2007), and determine if they require intuitive responses.

Semi-structured interviews of fundraising experts were used to obtain detailed descriptions of a variety of moral dilemma situations that required intuitive responses. Using thematic analysis the moral dilemma scenarios were categorised into theoretical and practical themes. Theoretical themed results revealed dilemmas most often were the result of having to choose

a response that aligned with two conflicting moral foundations: ingroup/loyalty and harm/care. The findings suggest that when fundraisers must make quick, intuitive decisions, they are often choosing between caring for an individual and demonstrating loyalty to their organisation. Furthermore, the results related to practical themes identified that dilemmas can also be categorised as involving certain types of fundraising activity and management decisions; such as major gifts, direct mail, and corporate fundraising, for example.

The findings were used to create the first academic and practitioner Moral Dilemma Measure that uses practical, applicable moral dilemmas to measure moral intuition amongst fundraisers. Our Moral Dilemma Measure aligns responses with relevant categories of the moral foundations theory and can be used in further research. This research is original in that it is the first study to explore moral dilemmas requiring moral intuition within the population of fundraisers. Through obtaining tangible, realistic moral dilemma scenarios fundraisers encounter in the workplace, research can begin to look more closely at how fundraisers can be helped to solve dilemmas as part of their professional duties.

Keywords: moral intuition, moral dilemmas, fundraising, moral foundations theory

Practitioner Points

1. Fundraisers encounter moral dilemma scenarios under time pressure that require intuition as part of their professional responsibilities at work.
2. Most dilemmas requiring intuition force practitioners to choose between caring for an individual and demonstrating loyalty to their organisation.
3. Most dilemmas requiring intuition can be practically categorised by type of fundraising activity and management situations.

When Deliberation is Not Possible: Moral Dilemmas in Fundraising

The subject of ethics in fundraising has become increasingly prevalent in the media in part due to some high-profile questionable practices (BBC News, 2016; Hill, 2019; MacQuillin, 2016). For example, UK media stories, including the Varsity Blues scandal, the Presidents Club annual charity event, and Olive Cooke death have been particularly noteworthy (Hill, 2019). In the case of Olive Cooke, the media wrongly attributed her suicide partly to being bombarded with requests to give money to charity (West, 2015). Olive Cooke was a 92-year-old woman and Britain's longest-serving Royal British Legion poppy seller. Her death sparked in-depth scrutiny of the ethics of fundraising practices within the UK (MacQuillin & Sargeant, 2019). This scrutiny has identified some wrongdoings and stimulated a focus on fundraising ethics in recent years; however little exists in the way of academic literature to guide this examination (MacQuillin, 2016; MacQuillin & Sargeant, 2019).

One of the challenges fundraisers face as part of their everyday work is experiencing moral dilemmas. Moral dilemmas are scenarios when an individual must choose between two 'right' actions or two 'wrong' actions (Kidder, 1995). These dilemmas consist of a "tension between two powerful values" and occur in many different walks of life such as professional, personal, educational and others (Kidder, 2004, p. 78). The most common categories of ethical dilemmas faced by fundraisers in the UK include remuneration, donor information and privacy, acceptance of gifts, efficiency, appropriate corporate support and distortion of mission (Sargeant & Jay, 2014; Sargeant et al., 2017).

To support ethical work, fundraisers are required to know and practice professional ethical codes of their own accord and interpretation (see for example, Association of Fundraising Professionals, 2014; Fundraising Regulator, 2018a, 2018b; The British Psychological Society, 2018). These ethical codes guide fundraisers by outlining moral

conduct within professional behaviour. They cover a wide breadth of areas and types of fundraising. In some cases, the ethical codes are very clear about what kind of behaviour is expected of fundraisers; however, there are two main issues within the codes that make them inapplicable to every dilemma scenario a fundraiser may encounter.

The first issue with the ethical codes are that they are grounded in ethical theories based on rules (deontology) or the outcome (utilitarianism) (MacQuillin & Sargeant, 2019). The second issue is that they do not provide guidance for every type of moral dilemma a fundraiser could encounter, particularly those that require an instantaneous response. These issues will be addressed later in this section.

In addition to the codes, several ethical decision-making processes have been published for the sector (Anderson, 1996; Fischer, 2000; Marion, 1994; Rosen, 2005). Each process includes questions and steps for fundraisers to evaluate moral dilemma situations and come to a decision about what they ought to do. The decision-making processes are other tools fundraisers can use when facing dilemmas that allow sufficient time to follow steps and reflect upon the situations, sometimes requiring discussions with colleagues. However, like the codes, ubiquitous use of the decision-making processes is not possible.

The first limitations of the ethical decision-making processes is that their efficacy and usefulness are not supported by academic evidence. Without such testing, it is difficult to understand why professionals should be encouraged to know and implement the processes. The second limitation is that all the processes require fundraisers to have discussions with others and to set aside dedicated time and cognitive space for contemplation and reflection. Thus in instances where a fundraiser must solve a moral dilemma quickly, working through any of the processes is not feasible.

In order to address these issues, we argue that two theories should be introduced and applied to this work, virtue ethics and the moral foundations theory.

Virtue Ethics:

Rather than base ethical codes on deontology or utilitarianism, consideration should be made to incorporate virtue ethics as the groundwork for ethical fundraising. Virtue ethics states that ethics are rooted in practicing virtues until they become habit and part of one's character (Aristotle, 350 BC). The moral virtues include temperance, justice, courage, prudence, generosity, magnanimity, wit, right ambition, good temper, magnificence, pride, truthfulness, friendliness (Aristotle, 350 BC). These virtues fall in the middle of a continuum where one end involves excess and the other deficiency, so that having too much or too little of the virtue results in non-virtuous living. For example, courage is in the middle of the continuum as a virtue, and at either end of the continuum are rashness and cowardice.

Virtue ethics states that all things (knowledge, inquiries, actions, pursuits, arts, etc.) aim to achieve good. The highest good, according to Aristotle, means happiness beyond having material goods. It includes health, pleasure and having friends.

In applying virtue ethics to fundraising, this is the only theory that reflects the character of the judging agent (fundraiser) while simultaneously promoting the interests of others (for example donors, beneficiaries and society). The judging agent is the person who encounters moral dilemmas and makes a judgment about what moral action to take in demonstrating virtue. Practicing virtue ethics would enable fundraisers to respond virtuously across multiple situations and provide an internal resource that can be used intuitively in scenarios where a quick reaction is required. As the theory states, if individuals practice virtues regularly, this practice should become habit.

In scenarios where fundraisers encounter moral dilemmas that require an intuitive response, another theory that should be considered is the moral foundations theory (MFT) (Haidt & Joseph, 2007).

Moral Foundations Theory (MFT):

The moral foundations were created through a wide review of moral values and social practices across diverse cultures (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). The values were clustered together, creating five moral foundations that make up the first draft of morality (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). The five foundations (see Table 1) comprise harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect and purity/sanctity. Arguably these moral foundations explain how intuitive moral judgments are made. Individuals first needed to develop these moral instincts as a way to survive, as shown in the ‘adaptive triggers’ row in Table 1. Over time, these adaptive challenges evolved to the practical domain, which is more relevant for current times. When individuals encounter a scenario in one of these domains, the theory posits they experience the aligned emotions and instinctually demonstrate the relevant virtues. MFT does not specifically define the foundations but rather describes how they function through examples (Haidt & Joseph, 2007).

TABLE 1 HERE

The harm/care moral foundation is described as an expansion of mammalian parents caring for their offspring. Initially, caring for offspring would increase their chances of survival and therefore benefit the survival of the species. In today’s world, the care moral foundation is triggered as a response to witnessing other people suffering or in distress, especially those that are vulnerable. In relation to fundraising, the harm/care foundation would apply to the relationships that fundraisers hold with other colleagues, Trustees, donors, or beneficiaries. These close relationships lead to fundraisers caring for the wellbeing of these particular individuals. When facing moral dilemmas, caring for the Trustee or donor would influence the fundraisers moral response.

The fairness/reciprocity foundation represents the reactions people have to acts of cheating or cooperation by others (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). Historically, individuals who were

highly sensitive to evidence of cheating and cooperation had an advantage over others who were not. This led to even exchanges between individuals. In fundraising, the fairness/reciprocity foundation would apply as fundraisers are expected to follow ethical codes, which are equitable. The rules in the codes fairly apply to all fundraisers across all scenarios.

The ingroup/loyalty moral foundation is an expansion of the long history of primate species (including humans) living in kin-based groups (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). Individuals that showed cohesion and allegiance to their group helped protect the group and were, therefore, more likely to survive. Today, the definition of an ingroup has expanded beyond kin to other groups with members demonstrating trust and cooperation (Haidt & Graham, 2007). In the fundraising context, fundraisers belong to the group or community within the organisations they work for. This belongingness may initiate the desire to act in a way that demonstrates a fundraiser's allegiance to the organisation. Therefore, when facing moral dilemmas involving the ingroup/loyalty moral foundation, the moral response of the fundraiser may be influenced by their commitment to the organisation.

The authority/respect foundation originates from primates' living in dominance hierarchies (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). Today, those who can navigate hierarchies to build beneficial upwards and downwards relationships have an advantage over those who do not. Within fundraising, the authority/respect foundation applies to the hierarchical construction of charities. Charities are governed by trustees, often run by executive directors and are constructed of various teams. Larger charities have fundraising teams, which are led by a fundraising director and then layered with managers, officers, and administrators. Therefore, fundraisers benefit from building relationships both with those higher and lower than them within organisational hierarchies.

The purity/sanctity foundation is derived from ancestors identifying risks from pathogens and parasites in the environment, and then making adaptations that increased their immunity (Haidt & Joseph, 2007). For example, humans shifted to an omnivorous diet, which was carefully scavenged. Within fundraising, the purity/sanctity foundation is mainly related to ethical gift acceptance. For example, healthcare charities typically have an ethical policy that refuses donations from tobacco or alcohol companies as their work would appear to conflict with the mission and purpose of charities focusing on health.

MFT also links the intrinsic innateness of morality directly to the virtue ethics theory. Each moral foundation is specifically linked to particular virtues, as can be seen in row 5 of Table 1. According to MFT, virtue is defined as “characteristics of a person that are morally praiseworthy” (Haidt & Joseph, 2008, p. 20). MFT states that individuals that possess virtues are the result of their ability to refine their perception and response to morally-relevant information within a social context (Haidt & Joseph, 2008).

As virtue ethics states, virtues should be practised by individuals so they become habit. Once this happens, the virtuous characteristic functions within an individual’s life as automatic behavioural response to adaptive challenges. Within fundraising, if a moral dilemma scenario aligned with a particular moral foundation, it would benefit the fundraiser to practice the relevant virtues. We argue that this practice would better equip fundraisers to cope with moral dilemma scenarios where the ethical codes and decision-making processes cannot be applied, such as those situations that require intuition.

In moral dilemma scenarios where fundraisers must respond quickly, intuition quickly and automatically occurs without effort, resulting in the outcome, not the process, as being accessible to consciousness (Haidt & Bjorklund, 2008). Fundraisers are not aware of the process used to solve a dilemma; they just know they have come to a conclusion. More specifically, moral intuition is defined as “the sudden appearance of an evaluative feeling

(like-dislike, good-bad) about a moral situation, without any conscious awareness of having gone through cognitive reasoning such as steps of search, weighing evidence, or inferring a conclusion” (Haidt & Bjorklund, 2008, p. 188). When encountering a moral dilemma requiring moral intuition, fundraisers will feel good or bad about a decision without any conscious processing or reflection.

Fundraising moral dilemma scenarios clearly warrant academic examination, but to date has not received attention. However, before applying these theories to practical settings, this research sought to explore and understand the moral dilemma situations fundraisers find themselves in as part of their work, and how they used intuition to respond. The research question that guided the research is:

What kinds of moral dilemmas do fundraisers encounter that require intuitive responses, and how do they solve them?

Methodology

This research consisted of ten qualitative, semi-structured interviews to understand commonly encountered moral dilemmas. This method was selected as it is well suited for discussing sensitive topics and enables probing for clarification and detail (Barriball & While, 1994; Fylan, 2005; Kallio et al., 2016). Purposeful sampling was used, due to the need to recruit fundraising experts. To be considered an expert, participants needed to have:

- 1) More than ten years’ full-time experience in fundraising in a leadership role as a director or consultant within the charity sector- thus meeting Gladwell (2008) requirement that experts should have 10000 hours of subject specific working time
- 2) Active leadership role within the fundraising community – thus have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the contemporary fundraising environment

Participants needed to meet this set criteria to ensure adequate fundraising experience and to have experienced multiple moral dilemmas in the workplace. Those in more senior positions and with significant time spent in fundraising are very likely to have experiences which could be shared as part of the research

Ten international expert professionals in fundraising were recruited (see Table 2 for further demographic analysis) to represent a variety of charity roles, charity categories, and geographic locations. These participants had diverse professional experience, working in over 31 organisations from 19 third sector categories (such as youth, animal and homeless) holding appointments such as Development Officer, Development Director, CEO, Head of Marketing, Assistant Director, Dean, and Consultant.

Ten semi-structured interviews were sufficient to provide data that displayed similar themes yet provided variability. A variety of moral dilemma scenarios were desired so as to provide adequate examples that could be used in developing a scale for future studies; however, themes linking dilemmas to the moral foundations theory were equally important.

The interview questions required participants to be vulnerable in their sharing of difficult moral dilemma scenarios and their decision-making choices. Questions were designed to elicit a variety of practical examples of moral dilemmas experienced by fundraisers and explore their decision-making process (see Table 3 for the full list).

TABLE 3 HERE

Interviews were conducted with participants via Skype. Participants were provided with the semi-structured interview guide and asked to prepare and consider their answers before the call. Interviews were recorded (with consent) and audio files were saved and transcribed for analysis.

Thematic Analysis was used because it is a flexible and foundational method for qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analysis identified themes that emerged from responses but weren't specifically asked of participants.

The theoretical thematic analysis was driven by the researcher's analytic and theoretical interests of moral intuition and the moral foundations theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Responses were reviewed and mapped to the moral foundations based on how strongly the words used and context matched the definition of foundations.

Results

Thematic data analysis resulted in participant descriptions of a total of 61 moral dilemma situations and 96 possible dilemma responses. Dilemmas and response options were analysed in order to discover themes.

Theoretical Analysis

Moral Foundations Theory within Moral Dilemmas. As the emphasis of the current research was on moral intuition, theoretical analysis was conducted initially. This analysis showed that in 56 moral dilemma situations, participants described responses that mapped to competing moral foundations (Graham et al., 2011). The remaining 5 dilemma scenarios did not have possible responses that mapped directly to any of the moral foundations. As shown in Table 4, moral dilemmas mapped most frequently to a conflict between the foundations ingroup/loyalty and harm/care (19 moral dilemmas). Participants most frequently experienced dilemmas where they described having to choose between demonstrating loyalty to their organisation or caring for an individual. Examples of moral dilemmas shared by participants along with conflicting moral foundation response options can be seen in Table 4.

Illustrations of Ingroup/Loyalty. Loyalty is defined in this research as a binding obligation to belong to a group. Participants described response options that demonstrated

their commitment and loyalty to an organisation or team as a result of job responsibilities. These responsibilities aligned with a commitment to meeting organisational objectives. The objectives would be met if interviewees demonstrated their support for the organisation through their behaviour. Further, meeting these objectives resulted in interviewees displaying their sense of affinity or belonging to the organisation.

Overall, interviewees described situations that related to a sense of responsibility and ownership of organisational goals. This sense of ownership developed as a result of personal investment in one's work and feeling as though being a part of this work is important to the organisation. In expressing this investment through accomplishing their responsibilities, interviewees described scenarios that illustrated feeling possession over broader organisational goals. Example responses demonstrating loyalty include:

I think because you're a fundraiser also, if you've been working in an institution quite a long time as a fundraiser you probably identify with the institution an awful lot. So, anything that somebody says that's against the institution, you take personally.

- Interviewee 10

Well, our organisation takes care of abused families, and we just had an offer of a gift from the local liquor distributor," kind of thing. "Should we take that money?" Then there you are risking the integrity of the institution against having resources to actually do some good. You have to try to weigh that dilemma.

- Interviewee 9

Illustrations of Harm/Care. The definition of care for this research is a response to a need when one feels a sense of concern for the wellbeing of a person. Participants were clearly concerned about the wellbeing of others including fellow team members, Board of Trustee members, beneficiaries and major donors for example. We suggest that expressing concern demonstrated the value participants place on their relationships in their organisation.

Furthermore, it also suggests the personal investment fundraisers make in contributing to the wellbeing of others. Examples responses of caring for others include:

“You have to respond in a way that validates them as a person because that is what is the root of their complaint...”

- Interviewee 10 (caring about donors)

“Does it help good staff? Does it demoralize other staff?”

- Interviewee 2 (caring about colleagues)

Illustrations of Intuition. To further explore how fundraisers used intuition to solve moral dilemmas, specific phrases and terms commonly associated with intuition were identified within participant responses. Interviewees explained how they made decisions using intuition with phrases like, “not a thought,” “instantaneously,” and “right then and there.” Based on the definition of intuition used for this research, these phrases demonstrated the use of intuition to solve moral dilemmas.

Example responses include:

For me, it’s not even a thought. It’s not even a dilemma for me. I just tell them it’s not what I do. I don’t have a list. I don’t keep a list. I’m not bringing you any donors. Whether or not they don’t hire me is irrelevant. Or whether or not they hire me, I should say...

- Interviewee 3

Oh yeah, you got to nip that in the bud right then and there. And let them know that in fact there should almost be shock and dismay on your face.

- Interviewee 1

Inductive Analysis

Inductive analysis was performed on all 61 dilemmas to identify practical themes. The initial practical themes that emerged were context-based and included categories of

fundraising type, employee management situations, association with a financial target, and relationships with individuals and/or the organisation. Table 5 shows categories of moral dilemmas based on practical contexts. When counted, 28 of the 56 moral dilemmas mapped to a specific fundraising type, 17 of the dilemmas were related to fundraisers meeting targets, 26 dilemmas involved individual relationships, 24 dilemmas involved organisational relationships, and 11 of the 56 dilemmas involved management-type situations.

Illustrations of Fundraising Activity. As participants were asked to describe moral dilemmas that occurred as a part of their occupation, it was expected that the situations described would relate to particular aspects of fundraising. Results revealed that dilemmas occurred when engaged with a particular type of fundraising, including direct mail, individual giving, corporate, and major gifts. The different fundraising activities require various processes and relationship building, resulting in diverse donation amounts and types. Further analysis of dilemma situations that occur under the most time-pressure resulted in participants most often describing instances involving a theme of major gift fundraising.

Successful major gift fundraising includes building relationships with major donor prospects over a long period of time, asking for donations in a face-to-face situation, and encouraging donors to become personally involved in the work and running of the organisation (Sargeant & Jay, 2014). Interviewees described dilemma situations that occurred in various stages of this complex process, for example:

Major gift fundraisers...go to another charity in the same city or same region and part of your interview process you make it known that you think you can bring some of the major donors from your last charity (they'll have never even heard of the new charity) with you.

- Interviewee 1

“I said that I didn’t want to accept the donation because we had an ethical code, and I thought that we didn’t have to accept all this money.”

- Interviewee 5

Illustrations of Management Contexts. Further analysis revealed that 11 of the 56 dilemma situations described by interviewees could be categorised within a broad theme of management decisions, specifically, decision-making and managing people. For example, participants described the dilemmas involved in making decisions about the fundraising activities they would pursue as part of their overall fundraising plan. Participants also described situations concerning compensation based on a percentage of funds raised, how to reward staff performance, and time off in lieu when working outside of normal business hours. These types of scenarios would typically be encountered by more senior-level fundraisers with the responsibility of delivering a fundraising plan and managing performance plans. Example dilemmas include:

I think in any size charity, its rewarding staff and performance-related pay. Do you do it? How does it work? Does it help good staff? Does it demoralize other staff?

- Interviewee 2

The other one I find it really prosaic... but I will tell you it’s the time off in lieu stuff. ... We do a lot of events in the evenings and some weekends and some stuff almost work to, ‘I’ve done three hours here so I’m going to take three hours off.’ And other stuff say ‘hey that’s part of the job, of course I’ll do that.’

- Interviewee 2

Discussion

The overall research question for the current study was “What kind of moral dilemmas do fundraisers encounter that require intuitive responses, and how are they solved?”

Examination of the tools available to help fundraisers solve moral dilemmas identified limitations that need addressing. These included the inability to apply codes of fundraising ethics to all scenarios and the foundation of ethics codes excluding virtue ethics. Additional limitations included decision-making processes lacking evidence of effectiveness and the inability to apply these processes in scenarios where reflection and discussions with colleagues are not possible. To better understand how intuition functions within fundraisers, exploratory research was conducted. The exploratory research presented here was designed to understand example situations when fundraisers used moral intuition in a professional context. It also obtained tangible, realistic example moral dilemma scenarios fundraisers encounter in the workplace.

Theoretical analysis of the semi-structured interview responses revealed that the majority of dilemmas fundraisers encountered involved a conflict between the harm/care and ingroup/loyalty moral foundations. Inductive analysis revealed that moral dilemma scenarios tended to align with particular types of fundraising situations, decision-making, and managing people.

Theoretical Themes

Use of Intuition

The first question of the interviews asked participants to describe situations that occurred under the most time pressure and required immediate responses. Participants used particular phrases that indicated they were using intuition such as “not a thought” and “right then and there;” however, they did not explicitly mention using intuition or their gut instinct when facing such scenarios. The difficulty in explaining how intuition was used to solve the moral dilemmas further supports the decisions were made without conscious awareness of the process (Haidt & Bjorklund, 2008).

One explanation for this difficulty in explicitly identifying intuition is that the situations may have also triggered emotions in participants that were related to moral intuitions, thereby influencing responses (Cummins & Cummins, 2012; Etxebarria et al., 2015; Haidt, 2003; Skoe et al., 2002; Teper et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2017). In such situations, the experience of particular emotions may relate to specific moral foundations that are then used to formulate a response.

In practical settings described by participants, intuition would be needed in scenarios involving major gift fundraising and management decisions. The use of intuition to solve moral dilemmas reflects the interpersonal relationships required for these role responsibilities. In both instances, dilemmas would occur during in-person meetings requiring an immediate response. In-person meetings force fundraisers to reply quickly, so they do not have the privilege to use rational cognition or engage in dialogue with colleagues about the situation. Instead, they are forced to address the individual who is waiting for an immediate response.

Illustrations of the Five Moral Foundations

Results of moral dilemma analysis revealed that the majority of scenarios described by participants were a conflict between demonstrating loyalty to one's organisation or caring for an individual.

The moral dilemma responses that aligned with the ingroup/loyalty moral foundation described situations that related to obligations and responsibilities in relation to organisations. As fundraisers faced moral dilemmas in the work setting, their suggested dilemma responses showed examples of support of and allegiance to the group of people comprising their organisations. We suggest two possible explanations for this finding. The first explanation is the amount of time fundraisers worked for a particular organisation. Employment over many years would demonstrate commitment to the organisation. This commitment would then

influence employee behaviour to align with organisational goals (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). The second explanation is alignment with the organisational mission. Even if fundraisers had not worked at an organisation for long, believing in the mission and purpose of the group would influence the fundraiser's desire to show their support.

For the response options that aligned with the harm/care foundation, participants described actions that met a need for someone they cared for. The participants felt concerned for the other person's wellbeing and reacted to that. The people described in the situations were donors, colleagues, beneficiaries, and Board of Trustee members. Given the variety of situations shared, caring for others appeared to permeate many areas of work for fundraisers. There are two possible explanations for so many response options aligning with this moral foundation. The first pertains to the relationships that fundraisers have. As feelings of care can occur for any individual (Haidt & Graham, 2007), it logically follows that fundraisers will care for the many people they have relationships with. The second possible explanation is that being caring is an inherent characteristic of fundraisers. Fundraisers have been described as compassionate people who treat others with decency and respect (Fischer, 2000). Furthermore, research has also demonstrated that fundraisers have empathy for others and are natural relationship builders (Breeze, 2017). As compassion is linked to the moral foundation of care, it is argued that these characteristics naturally align with caring for others (Haidt, 2003).

Practical Themes

Type of fundraising situation

The majority of moral dilemma scenarios were described in situations involving major gift fundraising, followed by direct mail, corporate fundraising, and individual fundraising (see Table 6). We suggest several interpretations could be used to explain these findings.

The first is the amount of experience interview participants had at a senior level. Often times, Chief Executives and Directors are involved in major gift fundraising as part of their role and responsibilities. Considering this, one would expect participants to have ample exposure to and involvement with major gift fundraising. Their breadth of experience in this type of fundraising activity might have led to their involvement in related dilemma situations, influencing their answers.

Another explanation of the number of dilemmas involving major gift fundraising could be the type of relationship that is involved in this fundraising. In order to run a successful major gift fundraising programme, one must follow a process involving researching, contacting, and spending time with major gift donors (Sargeant & Jay, 2014). In previous studies examining major gift fundraising, major donors describe their relationships with organisations as communal, such that both the donor and the organisation provide benefits to the other due to mutual concern for wellbeing (Waters, 2008). The mutual concern between major gift donors and organisations would be influenced by the work conducted by fundraisers. The amount of time that fundraisers spend building relationships and caring for major donors makes it more likely that they would experience a dilemma in this type of fundraising over other, more impersonal types of fundraising such as direct mail fundraising.

The final potential explanation involves occupational obligations. Major gift fundraisers are responsible for raising large amount of money to deliver the programmes and services of their organisations. They might also feel that because of this responsibility, they belong to the broader organisational team, which aligns with the definition of loyalty for this research. Fundraisers that feel a sense of loyalty to their organisations might experience a dilemma during situations that involve the potential to deliver their income targets.

Explanation two and three above show how fundraisers could find themselves in moral dilemma situations where one alternative is to meet their responsibilities to the

organisation, and another alternative is to express care for a major donor. This type of situation maps to the moral foundations of ingroup/loyalty and harm/care (Haidt & Joseph, 2008), which was the most frequently described alternative combination of dilemmas experienced in major gift fundraising. Given the overlap between scenarios involving major gift fundraising and the moral foundations theory (Haidt & Joseph, 2008), fundraisers working towards obtaining large donations for their organisations should expect to encounter such moral dilemmas in their work.

Management - Decision-making and Managing people

The second practical setting theme of the moral dilemma scenarios was described as management related, either in making high-level organisational decisions or in managing people. Many of the dilemma scenarios were described from the perspective of senior-level fundraisers. This maybe because participants either currently hold or previously held management-level fundraising positions as managers, directors or CEOs. As such, they would be providing example scenarios that took place reflecting these senior-level roles.

Conclusion

This research has made a number of contributions to both academic knowledge of this under-researched area and a number of important implications for ethical fundraising practice. The results of the interviews suggest that fundraisers do, in fact, encounter moral dilemma scenarios that require intuition. Interview responses additionally provided practical moral dilemma scenarios that reflect the lived-experience of fundraisers. Furthermore, moral dilemmas experienced by fundraisers that require moral intuition are mostly categorised as a conflict between the harm/care and ingroup/loyalty moral foundation. This is the first study to explore moral dilemmas requiring moral intuition within this population. As demonstrated in the extant literature, there are not any practical tools currently available to fundraisers to help them solve moral dilemmas that require an immediate reaction. As such, this research

provides the groundwork for understanding the types of scenarios fundraisers encounter. Moreover, the data collected from this research is being used to create a scale of moral dilemma scenarios and response options for use in future studies examining moral intuition and the moral foundations theory. To incorporate the moral foundations theory, response options reflect choices that align with either caring for an individual or demonstrating loyalty to an organisation.

Practically speaking these findings are important to charities with employed fundraisers as they clearly demonstrate the need to understand the scenarios employees might find themselves and provide them with practical guidance. The findings provide evidence that fundraisers encounter moral dilemmas that require an intuitive response. As such, it is beneficial to charities to support the moral development of their fundraising teams. To improve fundraisers' preparedness and confidence when encountering moral dilemma scenarios, it would also be beneficial to improve education and training in this area. Courses on ethics and morals would benefit fundraising professionals and should vary according to level of seniority. We argue it is also important for charities to understand the implications of intuitive moral decisions fundraisers make on behalf of the organisation.

Limitations and Future Research

The sample used consisted of individuals who had over 10 years of experience in fundraising and were considered experts in the field. Consequently these participants hold very senior level positions, which may have produced biased responses that reflect dilemmas experienced by managers and directors rather than more junior level fundraisers. However, in order to ensure dilemma scenarios included situations involved varying levels of seniority, interview questions included specific prompts to describe scenarios that junior fundraisers experience. Participants were also asked to consider what types of moral dilemmas their

junior staff members encounter in today's fundraising climate. However, it may add value conducting the research again using a sample comprised of junior level fundraisers.

The framework for the current study was created based on moral psychology history and literature. As such the moral foundations theory formulated a lens for analysis and discussion. Although the theory provides a robust defence of cross-cultural inclusion and application, given the quantity of interview responses aligning with the harm/care moral foundation, it may be prudent to also examine these experiences through the lens of care ethics.

The ethics of care posits that caring is the foundation of morality and that the impulse to care is universal (Dunn & Burton, 2013). Because it is the foundation of morality, caring for others will inform moral behaviour. In the case of the moral foundations theory, ethics of care would claim that regardless of the situation, individuals facing a moral dilemma would always choose the response that aligns with harm/care, so much so that the other moral foundations need not exist. Future research applying ethics of care to scenarios when fundraisers must choose between loyalty and caring could help understand whether or not the care moral foundation is a stronger influence on instinctual reactions when conflicting with other foundations.

Lastly, ongoing work includes the further development of a moral dilemma scale that was initially created based on the findings from this research. Further research should ensue to determine the reliability and validity of this scale, including factor analysis. This testing would provide a reliable and valid moral dilemma measure, which can be used in future studies to further understand the moral foundations theory and intuition amongst practical fundraising settings.

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Table 1*Moral Foundations Theory: the five moral foundations*

	Harm/Care	Fairness/ Reciprocity	Ingroup/ Loyalty	Authority/ Respect	Purity/ Sanctity
Adaptive Challenge	Protect and care for young, vulnerable or injured kin	Reap benefits of dyadic cooperation with non-kin	Reap benefits of group cooperation	Negotiate hierarchy, defer selectively	Avoid microbes and parasites
Proper domain (adaptive triggers)	Suffering, distress, or threat to one's kin	Cheating, cooperation, deception	Threat or challenge to group	Signs of dominance and submission	Waste products, diseased people
Actual domain (the set of all triggers)	Baby seals, cartoon characters	Marital fidelity, broken vending machines	Sports teams one roots for	Bosses, respected professionals	Taboo ideas, (communism, racism)
Characteristic emotions	Compassion	Anger, gratitude, guilt	Group pride, belongingness, rage at traitors	Respect, fear	Disgust
Relevant virtues	Caring, kindness, [cruelty]	Fairness, justice, honesty, trustworthiness [dishonesty]	Loyalty, patriotism, self-sacrifice [cowardice, treason]	Obedience, deference [disobedience, uppitiness]	Temperance, chastity, piety, cleanliness [lust, intemperance]
Example in Fundraising Domain*	Concern for a Major Donor who is upset	Charities claim their 'cost of fundraising' differently because there is no standard definition	Stay true to organisational mission and programmes when challenged	Reverence for a charity Trustee	Refusing donations from unethical people or businesses
Overall Application and Evaluation*	Applicable to multiple relationships that fundraisers hold as part of work Subjective	Embedded in Fundraising Code of Ethics in that all charities are expected to fairly follow the guidance Objective and Rule-Based	Applicable when fundraisers feel attached and belonging to their charity Subjective	Reflects the power dynamics of Trustees (mostly male) to fundraisers (mostly female) Objective, based on title	Very public-focused in that media publicise stories about charities accepting 'dirty money' Subjective

Source: (Haidt & Joseph, 2007, p. 31). *Row added by author.

Table 2*Participant demographics*

Interviewee	Gender	Position	Location
1	M	Charity Trustee	United States
2	F	Charity Executive Director	United Kingdom
3	F	Fundraising Consultant	United States
4	F	Fundraising Consultant	United States
5	F	Charity Fundraising Director	Italy
6	M	Charity Executive Director	Australia
7	M	Charity Executive Director	United Kingdom
8	F	Director of Development	United Kingdom
9	M	Professor of Philanthropic Studies and Dean	United States
10	M	Vice President	United Kingdom

Table 3*Semi-structured interview guide*

Question order	Question	Supplementary probes
	<p>Please describe difficult moral dilemma[s] <u>you have had to resolve almost instantly.</u> The situation could have occurred at any moment in your career. I am going to ask you to describe the dilemma and explain how you coped with it. I am interested both in the dilemma situation and in your reflections about the dilemma.</p>	<p>Were you under intense time pressure? How did you know what decision to make?</p>
2	<p>Secondly, what are the most common dilemmas you think fundraisers face in their first year in the profession, as an administrator let's say?</p>	<p>a. as a Fundraising Director? b. as the CEO of a Charity?</p>
3	<p>If different than the examples provided above, what are the three most frequent moral dilemmas you encounter?</p>	<p>Please give examples of each</p>
	<p>Do you have any other thoughts or suggestions that you feel will be helpful or relevant to this project?</p>	

Table 4

Moral dilemmas categorised by competing moral foundations

	Harm/Care	Fairness/ Reciprocity	Ingroup/ Loyalty	Authority/ Respect	Purity/Sanctity
Harm/Care	2	3	19	4	1
Fairness/Reciprocity		0	7	1	0
Ingroup/Loyalty			0	5	12
Authority/Respect				0	1
Purity/Sanctity					0

Table 5

Example dilemmas shared by participants and response Options aligned with conflicting harm/care and ingroup/loyalty moral foundations

Dilemma	Harm/Care	Ingroup/Loyalty	People Involved
A direct mail letter was written, approved and ready to be sent to printers, when the Programme Director told the Fundraising team they couldn't deliver the programme as it was presented in the mailing and wouldn't need funding. Fundraising team had to meet set targets but programme office removed justification for raising this money.	Change the message around the specific programme and arrive at a solution to ensure donors receiving the mailing were cared for in that we were truthful.	Carry on with the mailing as it was scheduled because it was part of our charity calendar and we had a target to meet	Direct marketing fundraiser, director, programme director, organisation
Charity Director introduced to HNW major gift prospect at annual gala. Individual was well-versed in charitable giving and during initial introduction, inquired with director how much money they would be asked for.	Address the awkwardness of the situation and ask the individual for a meeting during a more appropriate time	Share the amount needed to fund the programme and meet organisational targets	Director, Major donor prospect, organisation
Charity Director was invited to become Board of Trustees of an organisation run by a long-time friend. Other Trustees on the Board had expressed interest in supporting causes similar to the Charity Director's current organisation. Should they agree or refuse invitation?	Care for own time and personal commitments and refuse invitation	Give up personal time/commitments to build relationship with Trustee and meet organisational targets	Charity Director, friend, Trustee, organisation

Table 6

Moral dilemmas categorised based on practical contexts.

Categories			Dilemmas	
Fundraising Type	Count	Target	Individual Relationship	Organisational Relationship
Corporate	3	2	1	2
Direct Mail	5	2	3	2
Individual Giving	3	3	3	1
Major Gifts	17	8	8	6
Other	17	1	7	7
Management	11	1	4	6
Total	56	17	26	24