



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

School of Social & Political Science

Graduate School

Social and Political Science Dissertation Cover Sheet

Please enter your Examination Number and Dissertation Title into the following grid and insert this form on to the front of your dissertation before uploading to ELMA.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Exam Number | B158826 |
| Dissertation Title | ON CHARITABLE VIOLENCE: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE TRUE COST OF RECEIVING CHARITY ASSISTANCE IN SOUTHWEST EDINBURGH. |
| Word Count | 11,979 (plus 2,998 words diary) |

Important information about how your dissertation may be retained and shared, please read.

The School may retain a copy of your dissertation and make it available to other students to assist them in completing their own dissertation. Where your work is made available, it will be anonymized and added to the subject area dissertation/ project library.

The freedom of information (Scotland) Act 2002 requires the University to make available to any enquirer any information held by the university, unless one of the legislation's narrowly defined exemptions apply.

If, with your consent, a copy of your dissertation is retained beyond the period of assessment, information contained within may be made available to any enquirer. If your dissertation or project contains confidential information, i.e. data that has been provided to you by external bodies under a Non-Disclosure Agreement or Data Processing Agreement, where confidentiality and integrity must be preserved; or personal or sensitive data belonging to research participants (information relating to natural persons who can be identified directly or indirectly from the information contained within your dissertation), you should not consent to your dissertation/project being retained.

If you do not consent to your work being retained we will destroy the work as per Taught Assessment Regulation 49.

If you consent for the School to retain a copy of your dissertation or project and make it available to other students to assist them in completing their own dissertation please check this box ☒.

If in future you wish to withdraw consent, please email pgtaught.sps@ed.ac.uk

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all participants of this project for their time to share their views and personal experiences with me. To CHAI, for the opportunity to join the team, the training and the resources provided. To my dissertation supervisor for her guidance and patience. And finally, to my parents and my best friend Giaksha for the emotional support in these uncertain times of the ongoing covid-19 pandemic.

ABSTRACT

Despite the experience of receiving charity assistance in the UK and around the world tends to be highly unpleasant and sometimes damaging for users, this study finds out that the experience at CHAI is highly pleasant and positively impactful for most recipients.

To know whether feelings of stigmatisation, as a form of charitable violence, are perceived by clients when they decide to contact and be contacted by CHAI. I carried out 10 in-depth interviews and 5 participant observations. To minimise risk around informed consent. respondents were randomly chosen from a pre-selected list of potentially non-vulnerable current and past CHAI clients of The Employability and Support Services. The results showed that only 10% of participants felt unfairly judged by CHAI during the assistance process. The analysis suggests that this is a result of the deeply embedded beliefs that someone must meet the common governmental and media characterisation of looking “hopeless” to be worthy of help. On the other hand, it suggests that the main reason for high reviews on the experience may lie in the fact that CHAI assistance does not often involve handouts but usually professional advice (as opposed to findings elsewhere). Nevertheless, it found out that for most participants the true costs of receiving charity assistance often involves proving deservedness and reciprocity, which, arguably, is also a way of exercising charitable violence because users’ mental and physical health can be jeopardised.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1. DISSERTATION AIM AND STRUCTURE..... | 2 |
| 2. THE EMPLOYABILITY AND SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS) AT CHAI..... | 3 |
| 3. POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN EDINBURGH CITY | 4 |
| 4. THE MORALISATION AND PUNISHMENT OF CHARITY ASSISTANCE..... | 6 |
| METHODOLOGY..... | 8 |
| 5. METHODS | 8 |
| 6. ETHICS AND POSITIONALITY | 10 |
| 7. LIMITATIONS..... | 11 |
| FIRST JOURNEY: | 12 |
| ON THE “PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCY”..... | 12 |
| 8. SELF-SUFFICIENT CULTURES AND IDEAS OF WORTH | 13 |
| 9. THE NORMALISATION OF CHARITABLE VIOLENCE..... | 16 |
| “BEGGARS CAN’T BE CHOOSERS” | 16 |
| 10. “THE CLIENTS”: BEYOND PITY STORIES..... | 20 |
| 11. BETWEEN STRUGGLE AND DESIRES FOR REASSURANCE..... | 22 |
| SECOND JOURNEY: | 25 |
| ON PLACES FOR SOCIAL SOLIDARITY..... | 25 |
| 12. THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND | 26 |
| 13. THE CHARITABLE SYSTEM IN EDINBURGH..... | 27 |
| 14. “[AT CHAI] WE FIX THINGS”..... | 28 |
| “A big relief” | 31 |
| THIRD JOURNEY:..... | 34 |
| THE EXPECTATIONS AND OTHER CHALLENGES..... | 34 |
| 15. THE CHALLENGES OF VISIBLE VULNERABILITIES..... | 35 |
| “Unseen” | 35 |
| 16. DESERVEDNESS: A TREND | 38 |
| 17. RECIPROCITY: A STORY OF SUCCESS..... | 39 |
| 18. OTHER CHALLENGES | 41 |
| 19. FINDINGS’ DISCUSSION | 42 |
| CONCLUSION..... | 43 |
| RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS | 44 |
| FIELDWORK DIARY | 45 |
| REFERENCES..... | 56 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| FIGURE 1: EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT HUB ADVERTISEMENT..... | 3 |
| FIGURE 2: CHAI ROOM 1 FOR PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH CLIENTS..... | 16 |
| FIGURE 3: CHAI ROOM 2 FOR PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH CLIENTS..... | 16 |
| FIGURE 4: ENTRANCE ROOM AT CHAI'S OLD PREMISES | 20 |
| FIGURE 5: EXAMPLES OF ISSUES THAT CITIZENS ADVICE HELPS TO SOLVE | 27 |
| FIGURE 6: CHAI CASEWORKERS AT THE NEW COMPANY PREMISES | 28 |
| FIGURE 7: CHAI ESS'S FLOW CHART | 30 |
| FIGURE 8 TOP 20 WORD FREQUENCY IN CLIENTS' INTERVIEWS. PRODUCED IN NVIVO..... | 31 |
| FIGURE 9: RECEPTION DESK AT CHAI NEW BUILDING | 35 |
| FIGURE 10: CHAI EMPLOYEES' WORK DESK | 41 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE SUMMARY (PART 1)..... | 24 |
| TABLE 2: PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE SUMMARY (PART 2)..... | 24 |
| TABLE 3: GOVERNMENT BENEFITS AND GRANTS IN SCOTLAND SUMMARY | 26 |

INTRODUCTION

“I stayed in an area where everybody knows about CHAI”, Debroah

“Good morning, you’ve contacted CHAI. How can I help you?” says the receptionist to every client contacting CHAI over the phone– a phone line that keeps ringing every few minutes while the rest of the team continues to stay focused on their job at the office. After listening to the callers' situation, she takes notes on it and transfers them to the correct department. CHAI is a charitable organisation registered in Scotland since 1997 (CHAI 1, 2013). CHAI receives people over the phone and by email whether self-referring or signposted from other national charities such as Citizens Advice or government organisations such as Job Centres. Others are contacted through or transferred by local schools, libraries, and GP’s contact points. When requested by clients, CHAI also meets them outside its office premises—usually at a client’s nearby cafe or library.

At CHAI, all departments are interconnected. Internally, they all work closely (e.g., Benefits with Employability). Externally, they maintain close relations with other charities such as Smart Works and Social Bite receiving clients from and referring them to. Certainly, anyone can contact CHAI. However, due to organisational policies, they can only directly help people living in certain Edinburgh postcodes (Southwest Edinburgh). Although one could claim that CHAI does not have a relatively strong social media presence so far, Debroah, a client in her mid-40s who received CV and job application guidance said – after asking her how she found out about CHAI – *“I stayed in an area where everybody knows about CHAI.... here, I would say, 3 out 5 people would know what CHAI is”* which beyond illustrating CHAI’s popularity also exemplifies how awareness on available help is transmitted from individuals to individuals around a community for which social capital and solidarity seems to play an important role.

DISSERTATION AIM AND STRUCTURE

This project is a School of Social and Political Science-approved placement with CHAI– an Edinburgh-based charitable organisation that focuses on poverty alleviation. The study aims to analyse whether stigmatisation, as a type of violence, is perceived by charity users during the process of receiving assistance and, if so, by who. Furthermore, it analyses the potential reasons and implications for such findings. It focuses on users from the CHAI Employability Service Support (ESS). This project is chronologically structured to enable readers to follow the stories as the experience occurs.

THE EMPLOYABILITY AND SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS) AT CHAI

It is one of the four main work operating departments at CHAI. The ESS focus on helping unemployed individuals wanting to go back to the labour market. Whether this is driven by economic pressures or desires, or the need for social recognition (Lopes, 2011), the ESS can help with job and volunteering searching, CV and interview preparation, finding training opportunities and funding, and confidence-building if needed – as seen in Figure 1 below “it can support you to flourish”. It operates with two employability workers (in addition to the support of the management team and other departments). It uses a Strategic Employability Pipeline approach to allocate clients’ status and then work with them from it towards being fit for work. This pipeline has 5 stages– from Stage 1 to Stage 5 going from “Not Job Ready” to “Job Ready” accordingly. For this, initial registration forms help caseworkers to decide their stages’ allocation. This department aims to particularly target those at stages 1 and 2 as seem like the ones needing the most support (CHAI 2, 2021).

Figure 1: Employability Support Hub advertisement



Source: CHAI (2021)

POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN EDINBURGH CITY

Until 2018, Edinburgh remained one of the most productive economies in the UK (Dixon, 2020). Although Edinburgh city is commonly regarded as a developed area, it is estimated that approximately 78,000 people (near 15% of the population) live in poverty (Edinburgh Poverty Commission, 2020) and that a person born in some rich parts of the city can live 21 years than one born in a poorer area (*ibid.*). So, despite apparent development, poverty and inequality in Edinburgh are persistent and the idea of people satisfying beyond their basic needs, as posited by my modernisation theorists (Rostow, 1960), seems like a privilege that not everyone can afford it.

As highlighted by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020), employment in Edinburgh is an issue. It is estimated that households, where at least one person is at work, represent more than 50% of all people in poverty in Scotland (*ibid.*). A report from Gowans (2015) points out workers' rights as one of the main employment challenges in Edinburgh. Some examples include being dismissed in unfair circumstances such as being off sick, becoming pregnant, attempting to take holidays, others involving not being paid by employers, being paid below the National Minimum Wage, being denied sick pay, etc. Many of which, according to the study, are related to clients on zero-hours contracts (ZHCs)– which is a type of employment contract that does not guarantee workers any hours but instead only pays for work carried out. Many researchers have shown the obscuring part of ZHCs jobs. This is, how “work flexibility” propaganda can mask income inflexibility and some precarious labour conditions together with minimal employment rights (Datta *et al.*, 2019). Still, approximately 62,000 people in Scotland are on a zero-hours contract (Clark, 2021). Similarly, it is the case of “gig workers” who under the status of self-employment requires them to “*willingly shoulder all the insecurities and risk of self-employment status*” (Harvey *et al.*, 2017, p.30). For instance, in the year 2013/2014 alone CAS advised 46,540 new clients on unfair employment issues in Scotland (Gowans, 2015). This research suggests that workers in low quality, stressful jobs can have poorer general health outcomes and daily quality of life including than those who are unemployed.

Despite Edinburgh's economic growth, in-work poverty and employment precarity in the city are evident. Deborah, one of my interviewees said, “*Well, as I said,..I spent a chunk of my life not working...when I got out of rehab, I got a cleaning job [in offices]. So, yeah, that job was a year and a half but then I ended up getting it terminated because of covid...*”

there was no work, everybody was working from home". This supports the view that not all unemployed people are in that situation because they "do not look hard" but, in some cases, it is because they have been unfairly dismissed. Arguably precarity, as an unexceptional attribute of the neoliberalism (Cross, 2010), is being backed up by governments through the permit and weak regulation of employment practices such as ZHCs and the gig economy. There is, indeed, a harsh context created by predominant ideas of capitalism where the realisation of top-down economics seems to be a cruel optimism for people at lower levels of the pyramid (Mole, 2010).

THE MORALISATION AND PUNISHMENT OF CHARITY ASSISTANCE

Sen (1983) claims that shame and stigma are deeply implicated in the experience, nature and persistence of poverty. In other words, shame comes as part of the experience of being poor. British ex-Prime Minister, David Cameron, described claimants as “sitting on their sofas waiting for their benefit cheques to arrive” (The Guardian, 2010). Which implies a characterisation of them as “lazy”. MP Iain Duncan Smith referred to them as people who “have seen their parents, their neighbours and their entire community sit on benefits for life” (Centre for Policy Studies, 2011) what insinuates into seeing recipients as being a part of a culture of dependency that reproduces. Julia Lepoidevin, a conservative councillor, claimed that they “make a conscious decision not to pay their rent, their utilities or to provide food for their children because they choose alcohol, drugs and their own selfish needs” (The Guardian, 2016). Declarations that label foodbank users as “selfish”, “bad citizens”. The list of examples of how political rhetoric is contributing to the stigmatisation of recipients is extensive. Nevertheless, these narratives around aid users seem to be not only deeply moralizing by shifting the entire responsibilities to the poor for their situation while refusing to acknowledge the wider spectrum (i.e., the contexts for poverty as seen earlier) but is also highly disciplining when using shame punishment to segregate the “worthy” from the “unworthy” aiming to create efficient machines as Foucault (1979) would argue. A perceived class division is noticeable among many ethnographic studies on aid and charity (Chase and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2014). Through the practice of “othering” – as (Lister, 2004) name the differentiation between “us” and “them” that establishes and maintains social distance – Garthwaite (2016), for example, reports how people internalised stigma and class separation when recipients recognise other foodbank users such “other people like us”. Tracey, a 66-year-old retiree, explained during a study of foodbank in Australia “*The first time . . . I was just very unsure . . . I’ve sort of thought about it and thought well, there are lots of people that have come to ask for help, well I’m just another one*” (McNaughton *et al.*, 2021). Similarly, Carlton, a CHAI client in his early 50s, said to me “*I feel confident about opening up to CHAI. They knew people like us, where we are from*”.

The “bad citizens”, those who are regarded as the ones not following civic rules of morality are also subject to scrutiny by the media. In the UK, TV programmes such as “Benefits and Proud”, “Benefits Street”, “Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole”, and “The Great British Benefits Handout” often characterise welfare recipients as somehow connected to

laxity, greed, and even criminality (Jensen, 2014). Which in turn contributes to all anti-welfare political narratives and class differentiation. More precisely, Tyler (2014) believes that these accumulative and repetitive television figures of the unworthy poor influence the public imagination to establish a consensus that we are “crawling with workshy, malingers”. Cambridge News newspaper, for example, posted on its website pictures labelling ‘shocking “spice zombie” footage’ where far from investigating before publishing, took the assumption of a cyclist’s report as true. *“I’ve seen documentaries about people taking spice, and that’s exactly what it looked like she’d been doing”* (Elliott, 2017). Arguably, this “poverty porn”, as referred by some authors such as Purdam *et al.*, (2016), far from reporting “the picture of life on benefits” creates an invitation for the “hard-working” to observe and judge (Patrick, 2017).

Similarly, another frequent stereotyping of claimants is the characterisation of them as “the hopeless”. This sensationalism is a phenomenon that Dogra (2014) would call “global representation of the poor”. Certainly, research shows that pity is a mobilizing emotion when referring to economically and politically disadvantaged groups as it was found to motivate collective action and donations (Lantos *et al.*, 2020). Nevertheless, apart from these apparent benefits of the instrumentalization of poverty pity, one can question how ethical is it to make people’s intimate struggles widely public to secure funds or other support? how ethical is it to blur the lines between private and public life? Moreover, how ethical is it reporting by using stereotyping statements (as a form of violence itself) that are not just often biased, highly edited, and sensationalised representations of the poor, as Hills (2017) claims, but also seem to ignore internal realities like job precarity and in-work poverty– as shown in the earlier section.? Although it is unknown how much, for certain, this type of media characterisation of the poor influences people’s attitude towards recipients, it is important to question the role of media when framing stories of people enduring hardship because dehumanising rhetoric of selfish recipients often ignores their lived experiences and suffering. *Ibid.* (p. 263) stated that “misconceptions about the welfare state and the way it is ‘abused’ are not just a matter of harmless misunderstanding”. Stigma indeed, as (Garthwaite, 2016) claims, seems to be linked to some of the most corrosive effects of poverty.

METHODOLOGY

The project was undertaken remotely with occasional visits to CHAI's office to engage in some observation. Based on "follow the thing" (Marcus, 1995), I aim to trace the journey of the assistance delivered by the CHAI ESS. It employed a mixed-methods approach—qualitative and quantitative—which included 10 in-depth telephone interviews to recipients, 5 participant observations, and 3 formal interviews with CHAI staff.

METHODS

Mixed methods

In-depth telephone interviews with recipients: this was chosen because of its relatively low technological skills' requirements aiming to be as inclusive as possible. On the one hand, qualitative questions included topics around clients' private live: "*Could you tell me a bit about yourself?*" and "*Do you remember your first approach with CHAI?*". Quantitative questions, on the other hand, involved Yes-No questions such as "Did you find CHAI's services to be useful?", *Would you come back to CHAI?*". Research participants were CHAI's current and former users.

An attempt was made to contact a total of 120 potential participants. However, only 11 interviews were carried out. From which only 10 interviews were taken into consideration for this study due to concerns around a participant's ability to provide consent ¹. The sampling was purposive to minimise the contact with potentially vulnerable people and hence avoid any ethical issues regarding informed consent. Other filters such as "clients that provided a phone number" and "clients that spoke basic level of English" were also added due to practicalities given the limitation of time and resources (e.g., to avoid hiring a translator). They all lasted from 35 min to up to 3 hours.

¹ The researcher had enough proof to believe that this person was under the influence of alcohol when the phone call was made.

Qualitative Methods

Fieldnotes: during my 5 visits to the CHAI's office, I observed and took notes on its operations and my daily activities together with my reflection on them. They were recorded in a fieldwork diary.

Participant observation: I participated in a 3-people conference call where I did not intervene but observed the flow of the phone call, the process of a returning client looking for a volunteering opportunity. I also observed the vocabulary employed, the questions and topics discussed by the caseworker. Likewise, the challenges faced during the process such as the mental burnout reported by clients when the referral forms were being filled out.

Case studies: through an exhaustive analysis of company reports and emails received, I familiarised myself with CHAI's previous internal research including what other clients already said about the services. I triangulated this existing data with my interviews' findings.

Formal interviews with CHAI staff: three formal interviews with a person from the CHAI Employability Hub helped me to clear my doubts around the accessibility of the services—i.e., pre-requirements—as well as with the assistance's end process.

Informal conversations: through communication with staff from different departments at CHAI (benefits and housing), I gained a bigger view of their operations and the internal connectivity of their different areas as well as on the company's external relations with other charities and government organisations.

Transcription notes: NVivo was used to transcribe participants' answers and to code all the relevant primary data collected.

Secondary data: I based my literature review on multi-sited ethnographies (Marcus, 1995) from countries in the global south and north.

ETHICS AND POSITIONALITY

This study identified the following potential ethical risks –which were also listed on the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) provided to all participants before their interviews.

Emotional effect: due to the nature of the study, sensitive information such as employment history and health status– was likely to be disclosed during the research. However, questionnaires were constructed in a way that open/narrative questions were encouraged instead of direct questions on life experiences. Additionally, a list of available support resources (e.g., free listening services) was compiled and attached to the PIS.

Breaching confidentiality: As per the CHAI volunteer confidentiality policy and agreement that I signed, I am required to disclose information to my work supervisor if there is a belief that an individual is or may be at risk of harm. Nevertheless, participants would have been informed of such a decision in the occurrence of this event.

Data management: All personal data including participants' names and CHAI staff's names were pseudonymised (i.e., fictitious names were given to all of them). Any other details that could have made them identifiable (such as exact age) were excluded. Pseudonymisation took place before writing up.

Positionality: even though I aim to report stories and observations as accurate as possible, I acknowledge that as an individual I am prone to biases. I recognise that my ideas and beliefs may have been shaped and formed by my own subjective “situated knowledge”. As some authors claim, a subjective researcher may be sensible to the political construction of the experience in the research field, on participants and on the route he or she has decided to follow (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). I tried to minimise this power dynamic by letting participants maintain full control over the interviews' arrangements such as dictating the time and date for the interview.

LIMITATIONS

As with most qualitative research studies, this project's main weakness is its reliance on participants' truthfulness which cannot be validated. Similarly, the sample size –i.e., 10 participants – prohibits theorizing generalisations (Morris, 2015). Furthermore, due to the nature of this research and the questions involved, many participants approached me with caution which could have limited the length and depth of their answers. Likewise, there are possibilities that participants may have lacked privacy during the interview as this was carried out remotely. If so, participants' answers may have been biased to fit their given situation. Finally, this research's findings are limited to the experience of a certain group of people: the ones regarded as “non-vulnerable” and those with English speaking skills and telephone devices.

FIRST JOURNEY:

ON THE “PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCY”

This chapter examines how charitable violence is masked under ideas of independence and self-sufficiency; and how these are frequently used to measure individuals' worth in society. Based on findings from international ethnographies and my interviewees' statements, I show how these ideas do not always come from within one's own culture but are also imposed. Later, it discusses how they lead to hidden damaging costs for the physical and mental health of some groups of recipients for which I argue a normalisation of charitable violence occurs. Finally, it evidences how people – beyond the characterisation of “lazy” and/or “hopeless” as a result of a dependency problem – are individuals with their own strengths and skills who come to CHAI for a variety of reasons that not only involves economic gains but also the finding of a sense of reassurance.

SELF-SUFFICIENT CULTURES AND IDEAS OF WORTH

In British politics, the idea that people must be stopped from “milking” the system is still a very popular narrative. For example, declarations from Labour party members such as Tony Blair enforcing a “welfare to work” and Gordon Brown’s speech on “cracking down benefits cheats” (Harris, 2021) are, arguably, expressions that enforce ideas of gift reciprocity where “the gift of benefits” given by the state seems to be subject to the expectation of given/doing something back. In this instance, it could be said that this requires behaving in certain ways that could be categorised such as the ones of a “good citizen”; which often involves being engaged in paid work that could maintain you as an economically independent being. But what is wrong with “dependency”? Their arguments lie in the idea that the delivery of benefits causes dependency on it, and this obstructs employment engagement. Nevertheless, the claim that “if you can only just make welfare that bit tougher, you will get better engagement with the labour market” seems unfounded. For instance, reports show that 40% of Universal Credit (UC) claimants are already engaged in work (*ibid.*). Yet somehow, for some politicians, benefits should only be given to “the worthy” “the productive”. But the question of what happens with the “unworthy” remains open. Consequently, it could be argued that the real reasons behind such narratives may lie within the fact that, as Mauss (2011) claims, there seems not to be such a thing as a free gift, lesser in a market economy where most things have a price and where even good things such as solidarity have been corrupted (Sandel, 2013). In other words, for some of the ruling political class welfare assistance is wrong because nothing should be given for free; this is, people must earn it, must work for it

On a bigger scale, it could be argued that ideas of independence and self-reliance are also institutionalised in and enforced by international organisations under words like “sustainable development” and “empowerment” which arguably far from promoting human development may be enforcing external ideas to be absorbed, universalised and taken as a panacea. For example, most assistance programmes’ funding in international development are subject to the delivery of sustainable programmes (Scherz, 2014). This is, there is a requirement to do something more than charity or giving handouts but to deliver programmes that could potentially lead recipients to be in a position of long-term self-sufficiency. However, in many cases, this often leads to neglecting people’s immediate needs—such as food and shelter—(*ibid.*). Arguably, then, if their first barriers are not being lifted how likely

is it that they could achieve long-term self-sufficiency? She argues that recipients “*were too busy trying to survive or lacked the wherewithal to participate in a way acceptable to Hope Child*” (*ibid.*, p.61).

Furthermore, all those efforts to avoid dependency (because independence is believed to last longer) may also conflict with some local and personal approaches to dependency. This is, for some cultures and people, dependency may not be a sign of destitution. Instead, for some, their ideas of personhood, fulfilment, or self-realisation are met through establishing relationships with others (Scherz, 2014). In other words, some individuals can find being a full person by attaching themselves to others. For example, in countries like Uganda where social security is almost inexistent having various “patrons” translates to having people who can assist them in a variety of ways. Here, patron-client relationships are very common and encouraged by the community. Arguably, then, the problem may lie within the definition that is given to “development” often generalised and single-approached to achieving economic independence.

This idea of independence is deeply internalised in society since long ago. For instance, Mauss (2011) claims that this self-sufficient culture and its ideas of freedom have historically been imposed and highly valued by society. As in contrast to some people in Uganda, for other people, economic independence/freedom is associated with honour and personal failure (Graeber, 2014). For which achieving independence can influence an individual's perceptions of self-worth and value in society, illustrating Max's posit that all economic struggles invite moral struggle (Marx, 1975). *"I wanted to do something with my time... I wanted to see what more I can do in my work life, maybe if I can work a little bit in more than just being a carer for my husband"*, Denise – a woman in her mid-50s who was looking for volunteer opportunities – said to me when described her reasons to come to CHAI. Through these ideas, people are encouraged and expected to achieve paid employment as a way to achieve economic independence, otherwise, they are categorised as "unworthy". Nevertheless, this neglect the fact that "the problem of dependency" may not be entirely related to lack of job engagement itself –as stereotyping statements often claim – but could also be related to job precarity and insecurity still prevalent in "developed" cities like Edinburgh (as per showed in previous sections). Consequently, based on Ferguson (2015), it could be argued for a need to look at other ways, potentially less harmful, to find and attribute social recognition away from the mere ability to supply the paid labour force. New ways where individuals can be seen less as economic actors and more like human beings because surely the value of a person itself goes beyond their abilities to contribute to the economy. Rawls (2020, p. 344) argued that *"self-respect and a sure confidence in the sense of one's own worth is perhaps the most important primary good"*. In other words, it could be stated that the problem of dependency (i.e., the rights to dignified access to welfare) should be approached as a problem of social justice and not just as a mere economical one.

THE NORMALISATION OF CHARITABLE VIOLENCE

“BEGGARS CAN’T BE CHOOSERS”

Figure 2: CHAI Room 1 for private meetings with clients.



Figure 3: CHAI Room 2 for private meetings with clients.



A gift itself is never free (Mauss, 2011), and it seems like the effects of accepting, promoting or somehow being part of such discourses are the “hidden costs” of aid assistance for recipients. A study on the experience of welfare assistance programme called Wubao in China found *“I don’t like getting Wubao, but I don’t have any other choice! ... A lot of people think that I am pathetic, while others think that I deserve it because I did too many wrong things when I was young. I agree that it is my destiny to be a Wubao household ... The only thing I wait for is death”* says Li Z.T., recipient of Wubao, Li and Walker (2018). In the UK, similar qualitative research found *“My disabilities are not self-inflicted, I didn’t choose to become disabled. I’m grateful for benefits but it makes me feel like someone else owns me, like I don’t have a future... I disagree that benefits are a “lifestyle choice”. Life on benefits breaks your spirit, destroys families, makes folk homeless – who’d want that? You’d have to be a masochist”*, declared Cath, in Patrick, (2017).

Likewise, an ethnography study in Australian food banks found out that many participants reported “anxiety and embarrassment” during their first visit to the centre (McNaughton *et al.*, 2021). Here, “First-timers” declared to have been hesitant to come to the charity premises due to feelings of personal failure and embarrassment for not being able to provide for themselves or their family (*ibid.*). Jane, a user, said *“That was really hard for me, I’m usually a very strong person, I don’t ask for help, I just deal with the situation”*. Bob, on his side, said *“You need help so you gotta grin and bear it...”* when describing the act of seeking support from the food bank. More precisely, in that study, when clients were asked about their opinion on food choice constraints, they justified their acceptance of it with words such as *“Well, ‘beggars can’t be choosers”*. Statements that exemplify how people’s identity is jeopardised by their belief that charity makes them immoral. For which, evidently social assistance, as supported by Calnitsky (2016), seems to possess the enduring feature of the moral regulation of the poor.

For Hatzenbuehler *et al.*, (2013), shame is the “*co-occurrence of labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination in a context in which power is exercised*”. These negative impacts on users’ identity, self-esteem and dignity seem to be worse for those who are frequent users, a study in Canada suggests (Hicks-Stratton’s, 2004). Nicholas, a middle-aged man who had sought food relief several times, expressed “*I walk out going ‘I don’t wanna come here again’*” (McNaughton *et al.*, 2021). According to Goffman (1968) when individuals are or believe that are being stigmatised, they can feel different or less desirable, can see themselves as tainted, as less than a whole person, like having some type of failure, shortcoming or handicap. He believes that there are three types of stigmas and that aid recipients often experienced the second type, the moral type, as they feel their personal character is the one under examination.

Furthermore, there seems to also be an impact on people’s social relations when, as some studies found, recipients indicate not disclosing themselves as charity users but keep it only to close family or friends (McNaughton *et al.*, 2021). A concept that Sen (1983), following Adam Smith’s work, would refer to as deprivation given that, to some extent, there is the inability to appear in public without shame. Therefore, it could be argued that receiving aid can decrease rather than improve social standing if stigma is perceived in the process. Moreover, another implication is the physical impact that the violations of dignity – through feelings such as anxiety – can have on some users by creating or worsening existing medical conditions, and hence creating contexts for further stigma. For instance, people have reported skipping meals, eating outdated food and foraging for food before visiting a charity’s location (Garthwaite, 2016). For instance, according to Hatzenbuehler *et al.*, (2013), stigma is a fundamental cause of health inequalities. Then access to aid as a last resource –when individuals are choosing to starve before seeking help– can reproduce and exacerbate people’s physical and/mental condition, and in turn their economic situation too.

The dominant political and social rhetoric towards aid claimants seems to be grounded on the idea that poverty is essentially a question of character, a choice. This is poor people are poor because they are too passive. The highly moralising and disciplining views for which poverty is somehow “deserved” create not only contexts for stigma which in turn could potentially be manifested by physical, mental and social wellbeing problems, as shown above, but arguably has a wider implication which is the normalisation, justification and legitimisation of this form of violence. Shame is indeed a powerful negative feeling but could also be considered as a trap to poverty and poor health, especially when governments, institutions, development practitioners, and members of society perceive aid assistance as a “socially unacceptable way to live” seeing the problem of social insecurity as a moral and economic problem rather than a matter of social justice.

“THE CLIENTS”: BEYOND PITY STORIES

Figure 4: Entrance room at CHAI's old premises



While carrying out my in-depth interviews, my first question was “Could you please tell me about you”. Here, apart from hearing participants’ struggles, limitations and barriers in life, I was also hearing and seeing people with hobbies, daily routines, strength, dreams, plans. I heard how, beyond being mere “users”, they were mothers caring for their children and disabled partners, young professionals, college students, yoga instructors, textile artists, dog owners, volunteers at community centres (some by own initiative despite being diagnosed as unfit for work). I saw real people with real problems, some showing their great strength and immense resilience when, for example, I heard the story of a mum fighting for winning back her children’s custody, refugees trying to start a new life in this country after escaping from war while losing parents on the way, ex-homeless individuals trying to seek help to furnish their new homes, and people becoming widows and shortly later disabled saying “*only got diagnosed with MS (Multiple sclerosis) last year and to be honest, I haven't seen any friends really since then ... my mobility has been seriously affected you know. So,*

it's going to take a little bit of courage to start seeing people again that haven't seen me since I got this". Orla, a woman in her late 30s who described herself as "a mother of two [children] and a wife", said "On a normal day I wake up and do my exercises. I run. I love running and walking in the morning...The plan I really want to do is to get my citizenship...after years of waiting..."

In this sense, I could argue that my findings support the view that narratives insinuating aid recipients as “the lazy” or “the hopeless” are mere generalisations, oversimplified and decontextualised statements, as Dogra (2014) would agree. The reality, instead, seems to be closer to reports such as the one from the Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020) which claims that most people experiencing poverty in Edinburgh are of working age, in employment, living in rental accommodation, and very frequently are families with children. Not always living in “deprived” areas but instead, they are in every area of this city. And as cause or consequence of poverty—I would argue that perhaps as both—unfortunately, they often are individuals affected by some type of disability and other mental and/or physical illness and limitations. CHAI seems to be aware of such stereotyping narratives when they particularly call all recipients by the word “client”. A word which I found repetitive through all the case studies on charity and benefits experience around the world that I read before writing up this study. McNaughton *et al.*, (2021) believe this is an attempt to normalise the charity experience

BETWEEN STRUGGLE AND DESIRES FOR REASSURANCE

Nine out of my ten participants declared that their first approach to CHAI was because of economic difficulties. Whether because their most urgent help was to apply for state benefits or independent grants; clearly, most of them were in difficult situations. William, a man in his late 50s, single, unemployed who came to CHAI for the first time almost 8 years ago, for example, told me *“They helped me to phone council for rent arrears because my benefit stopped when it should not have stopped, and other things like council tax, benefits...”*. Carlton who informed me to have come to CHAI because of *“a combination financial trouble, housing benefit, income”*. Similarly, Debroah reported, *“I was assigned a male called Leonel and basically it was about rent arrears, so I had to go to court regarding that. And he represented me in court”*. Likewise, Orla— who also described herself as an “immigrant without papers”— and Karen —a woman in her early 50’s who has experienced homelessness— said *“I could not go home, and we only survived on the money that was given to us because of the children. You’re not allowed to work. You cannot go to school. You can’t do anything. So, it was a very difficult time”* and *“I was referred to CHAI by the Social Bite Village, which is a place for people who are homeless, I lived there for about a year, and when I got my own flat, I moved out. They referred me to CHAI to get help with furniture”* respectively.

Although my research has found that an evident majority of clients reported struggles – such as the case of Carlton who said *“I feel living in a limbo...you know my physical health plus covid... I need to be careful with budget”*— not all of them were in a desperate position, not all were “hopeless”. In fact, some of them came to CHAI seeking reassurance. William said to me *...even though I am capable [to apply for benefits], I would like the help...I feel more confident when they do it for me”*, he continues *“...sometimes I even know what to do but instead I ended up getting just shuffled and getting nowhere...I don't know why it happens, but it happens...”*. Similarly, *“...I was working in the same job for 12 years, and then I changed jobs and I got made redundant. And so, I mean, I didn't really have much experience applying for work and I found that very difficult to get that organised, sorted out. Even my CV and things like that ... I was just going on websites and just uploading my cv and cover letter, just clicking on things, the same thing over and over again. And I wasn't getting anywhere. So, my friends suggested I should go to CHAI because they help people to go back into work”* explained Susan, who got one of her 2 current part-time jobs through CHAI.

Furthermore, Carlton said *“I’d have never thought on going to these places but some people just need motivation and CHAI does that”*. Although indeed money may be the most urgent need to be satisfied, people came to CHAI for different reasons which are not just entirely monetary ones. Arguably, then, development is not just a problem of money (Karim, 2011). There are some external factors such as the need for reassurance that can influence individuals’ life, for which a holistic view of development is important.

Table 1: Participants' profile summary (Part 1)

| | Participants' name (pseudonymised) | Gender | Age | Nationality | Marital Status | Have children? | Living | Immigrated to Edinburgh? |
|----|---------------------------------------|--------|-----------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Denise | Female | 40s-50 | Non-British European | Married | Yes | With partner and children | Yes |
| 2 | Beatrice | Female | Under 25s | British | Married | Yes | With partner and children | No |
| 3 | Orla | Female | 30s-40 | Rest of the world | Married | Yes | With partner and children | Yes |
| 4 | Sally | Female | 30s-40 | British | Divorce | Yes | Alone | Yes |
| 5 | Debroah | Female | 40s-50 | British | Divorce | Yes | Alone | No |
| 6 | susan | Female | Above 50 | Rest of the world | Single | No | With other relatives | Yes |
| 7 | Karen | Female | Above 50 | British | Widow | No disclosed | Alone | No |
| 8 | Gregor | Male | 40s-50 | British | Divorce | Yes | Alone | No |
| 9 | Carlton | Male | Above 50 | British | Single | No | Alone | No |
| 10 | William | Male | Above 50 | British | Divorce | No disclosed | Alone | Yes |

Table 2: Participants' profile summary (Part 2)

| | Participants' name (pseudonymised) | in paid employment at the present time? | Times at CHAI | Main vulnerability | Registered with CHAI in | Receiving or received support from other charities? |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | Denise | No | Multiple | "Visible" | More than 5 years ago | Yes |
| 2 | Beatrice | Yes, part time | Multiple | "Visible" | Within 1 and 5 years ago | Yes |
| 3 | Orla | No | Multiple | "Visible" | Within 1 and 5 years ago | Yes |
| 4 | Sally | Yes, full time or equivalent | Multiple | "Visible" | Less than 1 year ago | Yes |
| 5 | Debroah | Yes, full time or equivalent | Multiple | "Visible" | Within 1 and 5 years ago | Yes |
| 6 | susan | No | Multiple | "Visible" | Less than 1 year ago | Yes |
| 7 | Karen | No | Multiple | "Visible" | Within 1 and 5 years ago | Yes |
| 8 | Gregor | No | Multiple | "Visible" | More than 5 years ago | Yes |
| 9 | Carlton | No | Multiple | "Invisible" | More than 5 years ago | Yes |
| 10 | William | No | Multiple | "Invisible" | More than 5 years ago | Yes |

In summary, on my first journey, I have shown how charitable violence is justified under the idea that dependence is an immoral act for which a person's identity and worth is jeopardised. And how charitable violence, through the stigmatisation and characterisation of recipients, impacts physically and mentally some individuals in ways that can worsen their situations creating contexts for poverty and poor health traps. Finally, it has challenged government and media narratives that portray users as "lazy" and "hopeless" by showing how an in-depth profile of them as people with their own skills and strengths that are not always lacking in money but that some are in search of reassurance.

SECOND JOURNEY:

ON PLACES FOR SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

This chapter analyses the role that charities like CHAI are playing and the meaning they have on users' lives. It shows how charitable violence arose from the charity system's good intentions of improving people's lives, and how this social solidarity relies on the charitable system and the free labour of volunteers. In this way, firstly, it shows how social security in Edinburgh mainly involves a monetary provision in terms of benefits and grants, and how the system can be complex for some to navigate. Subsequently, it examines how charities are filling the demand for supporting individuals in the process for such applications and other types of help that goes beyond financial support. Finally, it shows how clients characterise their relationship with CHAI as opposed to government agencies. For which, I show, they are becoming "a big relief", "a safe place", and "home" for most of its clients.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

In Scotland, Social Security Scotland (SSS) is the main governmental agency responsible for administering benefits as per the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 (The Scottish Parliament, 2018). Nevertheless, the management of social security services in Scotland is still dispersed. For instance, some benefits – such as the newly introduced Universal Credit – are still being managed by governmental bodies like DWP through their delegated institutions such as Jobcentres and local authorities (Social Security Scotland, 2021). Which show that the application process may not have become entirely easy to navigate. As seen in Table 1 below Social Security in Scotland mainly involves state provision in form of benefits and grants. Most of them are means-tested and with an average processing time of 5-6 weeks to receive Universal Credit (Turn2us, 2021). In this way, one can wonder where do people in Scotland go when they have some immediate needs? When they do not understand the application process? Or when they need something beyond money (perhaps a piece of simple advice or reassurance as to how to write a CV because they want to go back to employment)? As Deborah –a CHAI client– says “*there are some people that may know the generics, but most don't know what they are entitled to because I always say the government doesn't say it out loud*”.

Table 3: Government Benefits and Grants in Scotland summary

| BENEFITS AND GRANTS IN SCOTLAND | | |
|---|---|--|
| SSS | DWP | Local council |
| Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment | Universal Credit | As part of the Scottish Welfare Fund |
| Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment | | |
| Best Start Grant School Age Payment | In replacement of... | Crisis Grants |
| Best Start Foods | Child Tax Credit | Community Care Grants |
| Carer's Allowance Supplement | Housing Benefit | Self-Isolation Support Grant |
| Funeral Support Payment | Income Support | |
| Job Start Payment | Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) | Others include: |
| Young Carer Grant | Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) | Low Income Pandemic Payment |
| Child Winter Heating Assistance | Working Tax Credit | Local housing allowance |
| Scottish Child Payment | | COVID spring hardship payment |
| Child Disability Payment | | COVID winter hardship payment |
| | Bereavement Support Payment | Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments |
| | | School clothing grant |
| | | School meals |
| ILF (Independent Living Fund Scotland) | HM Revenue & Customs | Warmworks Scotland |
| Transition Fund | Guardian's Allowance | Warmer Homes Scotland scheme |
| NHS Scotland | | |
| Young Patients Family Fund | | |

Own creation. Source: The Scottish Government (2021)

THE CHARITABLE SYSTEM IN EDINBURGH

In Edinburgh City, 555 registered charities are working on the prevention and/or relief of poverty (The Scottish Charity Regulator, 2021) –and CHAI is one of them. Based on the most recent estimation of Edinburgh's population of 527,620 (Statista, 2021), there is 1 charitable organisation of this kind per 952 individuals in this city. Research from the University of Strathclyde (2012) shows that, in recent years, approximately one in every five people in Scotland has contacted Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS)– which is the largest network provider of free advice in Scotland and the UK (CAS 1, 2021). Nevertheless, its existence relies on a considerable number of volunteers. Annabelle Ridley, former CAS Head of Training, says *“Many of the public don’t realise that we are a volunteer-led service, often confusing the Citizens Advice network for a public agency like the jobcentre or a local council office”* (CAS 2, 2021, p. 2). She highlights how over 2,3000 individuals volunteered more than 750,000 hours of their time to CAS in a year with an estimated value of time alone being over £11m. Similarly, a CAS worker points out how funds to meet people’s urgent needs had to be raised by staff members through sponsored walks and raffles (BBC, 2013). He highlights how, to some extent, the responsibility to look after people has been transferred to charities like them. He argues how social solidarity is expected from “big society” but not much from the state (*ibid.*). In this way, one could argue that what seems to happen on the ground is that through grant-giving and signposting, the UK government has outsourced social assistance to local charities and the free labour of volunteers. Figure 1 below shows some very common issues that public bodies will not help you to solve but that organisations such as CAS will try.

Figure 5: Examples of issues that Citizens Advice helps to solve

| Advice area | Benefits | Debt | Consumer | Housing | Employment |
|----------------|---|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Example | “I need help to claim Universal Credit” | “I need help with a bailiff issue” | “I need help – I have no gas and my smart meter isn’t working” | “I need help with a deposit as I have nowhere to live” | “I need help to get my redundancy pay” |

Source: Citizens Advice (2020)

“[AT CHAI] WE FIX THINGS”

Figure 6: CHAI caseworkers at the new company premises

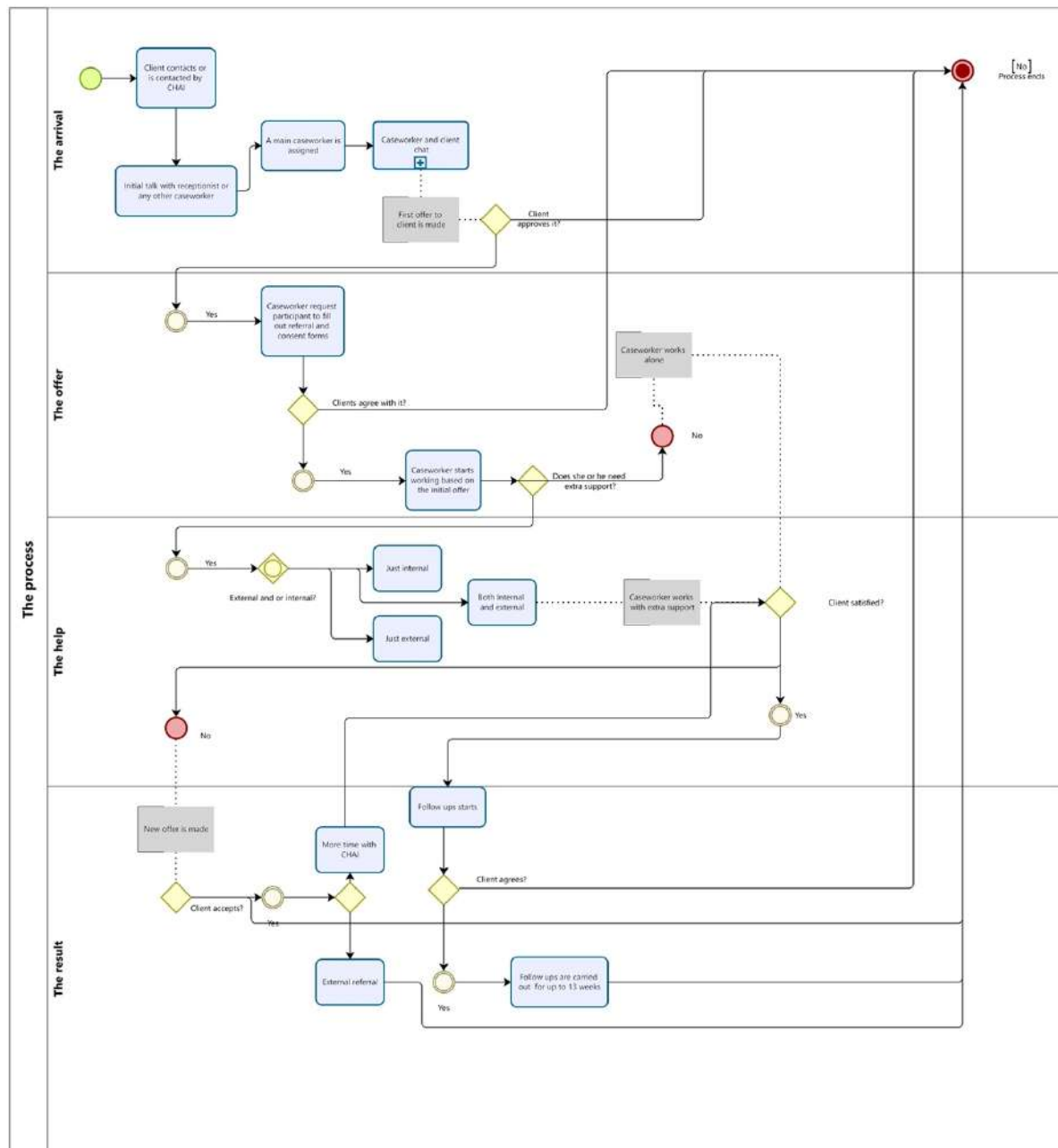


The process to obtain help from CHAI seems very simple: once a client is transferred to the Employability department, a staff member takes over the case. Often this caseworker will work with colleagues from other departments— such as Benefits and Housing— as most clients’ needs are diverse. This person explains the different ways how CHAI can help them and ask whether they are happy with the offer. If the client agrees, the caseworker explains how and why both a referral and an information form need to be filled in and signed (in hard copies over the phone, by email, or in person). Although the 12 pages information form is quite lengthy, caseworkers try to speed up the process by focussing on mandatory answers mainly. Despite that most clients seem tolerant with it; some express their discomfort and rather try to withdraw their application. For Simon, a 55-year-old man living alone in Edinburgh who wanted to go back to volunteering, for example, that was “*too much information over the phone. I’m sorry. I do not agree*”. For which, CHAI caseworkers offer alternatives such as, in this case, meeting him up in person at a cafe nearby his location. Some of them proceed. See figure 5 below for more details on the process. Then, CHAI

workers seem to be using all resources within their means and beyond to help despite some challenges such as those lengthy forms.

During a conference call with Marina, a CHAI ESS caseworker, we received a new client: a person who introduced himself as being referred by a Jobcentre. After the meeting, I asked her why the Jobcentre could not help this man? She said *“No government-run institutions will help you to find a job. DWP (Department for Work and Pension) and its delegated institutions such as Jobcentres manage benefits payments and supervision. But at CHAI, people see us as the ones who fix things”*. Indeed, at CHAI people can find personalised services where clients have a real person listening and providing feedback and guidance on their needs. As Marina told me, in another opportunity, *“sometimes we have people who have never written a CV in their life, so they are rather we write it for them”*. Indeed, I thought, “fixers” was a very precise way to summarise CHAI’s work. With a team of 40 staff members, it is estimated that CHAI helps clients to obtain a total financial gain of £5.3 million annually on average while spending an average of £1.1 million annually (CHAI 3, 2021) which seems very efficient. Nevertheless, as Orla describes, *“I needed help financially and... a listening service...something that nor your friends neither the government can understand but that CHAI can”*, for which places like CHAI seems to represent for some people a place beyond monetary gains. In this way, the help they provide could also be translated as 2,191 individuals receiving advice help, 6,438 advice issues resolved, 170 appeal tribunals represented annually, etc. (*ibid.*, p. 2).

Figure 7: CHAI ESS's flow chart

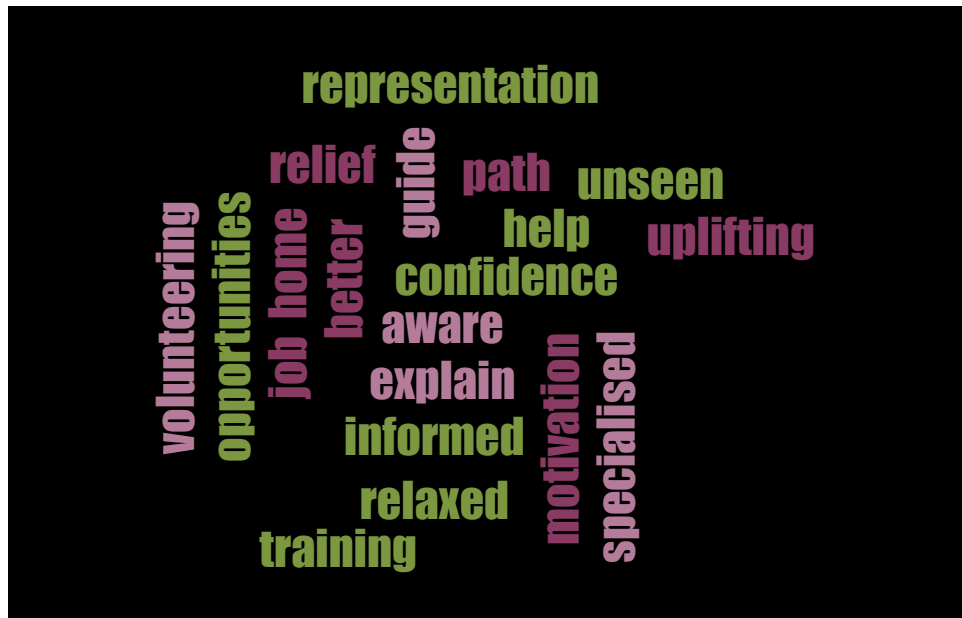


Powered by
BPM
Modeler

Source: Own creation

“A big relief”

Figure 8 Top 20 Word Frequency in clients' interviews. Produced in NVivo



Although, as discussed in Chapter 1, the experience of receiving welfare and charity assistance around the world tend to be unpleasant – and for some, harmful and traumatising – , the present research found out that the experience at CHAI was generally pleasant and helpful. For instance, 90% of my interviewees said that staff at CHAI were friendly, 70% found it useful and 80% said they would come back to CHAI if needed ². For them, CHAI meant something like “a big relief”, “home”. *“They help you with something that not your friends nor the government can understand but that CHAI does. I feel so much better ...a big relief...that if you need help, training...they will help you”*, says Orla. In perhaps an oblivious comparison, clients seem to trust CHAI services more than governmental agencies and friends in the understanding of their needs. She also said *“[CHAI is] a place where you find a counsellor, a lawyer that can help you with the paperwork...But those are the things that the government doesn't know...because what they see is just ‘oh there is a mother that is not capable to look after her kids, so they just come and take your children away’”*. Which show that the characterisation with CHAI, as opposed to relations with governmental agencies, may lie in the fact that some of them see the latter as regulators, enforcers and/or punishing entities.

² See Appendixes 1, 2, and 3 for more information.

Similarly, Beatrice – a woman under 25 years – said to me *"It makes me feel at home...like they make me feel like I'm not in a foreign country...They really try to help me. So, yeah, it's nice. And I'm glad that we have organisations like them"* which shows points out to how CHAI's impact spread to emotional support too. For instance, this is also illustrated when interviewees related CHAI services with "confidence-boosting" and "uplifting". For example, Susan said *"Knowing that I was doing something well /bad boosted my confidence...it's incredibly uplifting to have somebody on my side. I felt much better, much more prepared."* after receiving job application guidance. Likewise, when clients like Carlton claim that CHAI provided him with "motivation" to begin new challenges. He said *"I'd have never thought about going on courses in computer, typing or anything like that but eventually now I use a computer. I think CHAI opened a lot of doors for me...some people just need motivation and CHAI does that...they tackle every aspect of your life"*.

Moreover, the interactions clients established with caseworkers seem long-lasting. For example, Denise said *"They were really good. Leonel, I am totally sure, his name was Leonel, he was a massive help for my husband"* although many years have passed by since their last contact with CHAI. Likewise, Orla also expressed her relationship with CHAI *"Laura, she was just really wonderful ...She was like a mother. I love her. She was there to provide...You know there are people in life that just pass and go, oh and then there are these people that were extraordinary... I needed help with the Home Office, they sent letters [to them] and more extraordinary things"*.

In short, it can be stated that CHAI works, to some extent, as a place where people go when they do not know where else to go or what to do next. A legal place –like many (legal and illegal) operating in other parts of the world (Biehl, 2013) – that are not only helping to cope with the enduring effects of a harsh economic system for individuals at the bottom of the pyramid but also are there to supply the demand for the handling of the problems of the ones deemed as "unworthy" of governmental help because of being economically "unproductive". A place I would call "zones of state abandonment". The difference here is that with these charities, as opposed to places like VITA in Brazil, clients enjoy professional services and are supported and encouraged to become economically independent within 6 months. Then, clients have something beyond death or whatever luck can bring for them to look forwards to. A place legally separated from – but still very interconnected to – government through funding, referrals, and operational influence where the "too difficult", "the too costly", or perhaps the ones that the government forces to take "personal accountability" come and are sent to. A distance that, arguably, may mark the governmental

attempts to partially outsource the social support to third parties because it is “people’s moral liability to provide for themselves”. Or, as following Cross’s (2010) work, CHAI works as an “unexceptional result” from a place where Neoliberalism has exceptionally created conditions for economic growth but where, in practice, precarity and struggle is still unexceptionally persistent (as shown earlier).

Evidently, this highly-rated experience challenges the finding elsewhere like the ones in China, Australia and Canada, and those in sectors such as food banks. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that these high rated reviews on CHAI’s services, beyond reflecting a good organisational culture – e.g., friendly treatment from the staff and expertise in clients’ needs–, may also be grounded in the fact that CHAI assistance does not involve handouts like foodbanks in Australia, nor monetary support like in Wubao in China but mostly, intangible goods like professional advice. CHAI advertises itself as a provider of “practical help” – through professional advice, training, grant application, etc. – differentiating itself from other charities that offer “handouts”. Furthermore, although it is true that, in today’s current contexts where poverty relief greatly relies on social solidarity and the work of the charity sector together with the free labour of its volunteers, places like CHAI are highly successfully improving people’s lives and circumstances by producing all physical, mental and financial gains for clients – especially those with immediate needs and the ones seeking things beyond money– this should be taken with caution. Certainly, poverty relief should not be overgeneralised as an alternative to fight the root causes of inequality and struggle. In other words, services like CHAI helps to improve people’s situation indeed, but arguably the contexts of job precarity and in-work poverty (as shown earlier) remain the same for people which makes it a risky context for returning to and remaining in poverty. Similarly, it could also be argued that although some current alternatives such as cash transfer seem to be a good and probably more efficient way to help individuals at risk (Ferguson, 2015) – i.e., potentially lesser transactional costs, economic empowerment promotion, etc.– the consequences of a potential loss of social capital and community ownership like the ones found in CHAI should not be neglected when evaluating alternatives solutions to poverty.

This chapter has shown how the goal of improving people’s lives– despite being jeopardised by the government and media characterisation of recipients as some type of bad citizens for being dependent, as seen in chapter 1– is met for some groups of clients. Likewise, it has shown how the meaning of places like CHAI goes beyond monetary gains.

THIRD JOURNEY:

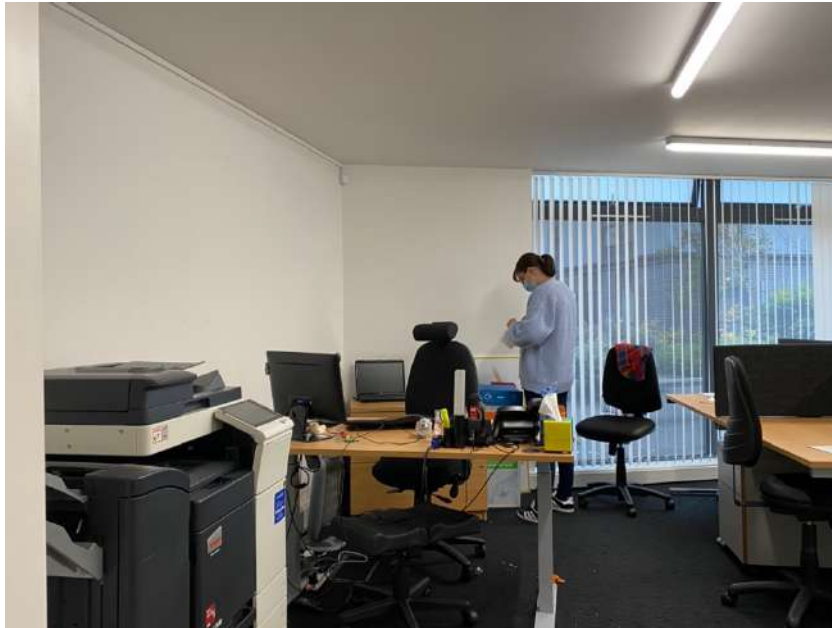
THE EXPECTATIONS AND OTHER CHALLENGES

This chapter analyses how different groups of people perceive different experiences at CHAI, as opposed to groups in Chapter 2. It finds and discusses two expectations indirectly imposed on CHAI clients. Firstly, the one of deservedness –in the sense of fitting media and government characterisation of what involves a person “in-need”– to access help. Secondly, the one of reciprocity with the economy – which involves becoming and remaining economically independent after the CHAI services conclude. Finally, it discusses some other constraints they face when navigating the process. Based on my findings and academic literature, it supports the view that charity violence is also exercised by and occurs within the charitable system.

THE CHALLENGES OF VISIBLE VULNERABILITIES

“Unseen”

Figure 9: Reception desk at CHAI new building



On the other side of the spectrum, there is a very different experience perceived. This is the case for people who introduced themselves to me as having “invisible needs” – which later I realised they were referring to mental health issues. William said *“They expect me to explain why I was needing an appointment, obviously, it is because I present quite...Well, actually, what I suffer from can be quite unseen if that makes any sense...”*. He also pointed out that different agencies, although he could not assure that they included CHAI, tell him *“your problem is that you present well’...the fact that I can communicate very clearly all these things ...that does not work in my favour [when seeking help]”*. Statements that reveal how the experience of receiving charity assistance is not the same for every client. Specifically, how this can act, following Berlant's work (2011), as a “cruel optimism” for some people who attend these places in the hope of benefiting from it but which in turn may end up harming them more than helping them.

Similarly, as William points out, *“the worst part with these agencies is that they try to encourage you to put as much information from you as possible under these forms because I present well so you get something between”*. Clearly, no person should go through extra surveillance just because their needs and problems are not as evident as the physical ones. They should not have to feel the need to give extra proof. For instance, See Me Scotland (2021) –a Scottish mental health charity–highlights the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect regardless of their type of illness or challenges. They claim *“A broken leg takes time and medical support to heal. A broke mind is no different”*. An important recommendation for charities who have a relatively high probability to receive clients with these needs as it is estimated that one in four people living in Scotland is facing mental health problems (Bebbington and McManus, 2020).

In fact, McNaughton *et al.*, (2021). Claim that governmental and media narratives on stigma have widespread to the charitable system. Studies have shown that shame and stigma are also exercised by charity’s staff during the delivery of assistance. Their study on foodbank in Australia showed how shoppers are identified with attributes such as “food insecure”, “poor”, “lazy”, “dirty”, “irresponsible”, “unemployable” by charity staff. And how some reported that *“Some of the volunteers made you feel like you were [a] second-class citizen . . . I’ve even had someone say . . . ‘well, what are you worried about, you’re getting it for nothing anyway’ . . . I’ll starve at home thank you very much . . . it was bad enough for me to come anyway”* (*ibid.*, p. 103). This is evidencing how charitable violence, in terms of the damaging effects of stigmatisation, is also exercised by the charity system. For instance, De Souza (2019) argues that stigma pervades assistance spaces with a culture of suspicion where volunteers are suspicious of clients and clients are suspicious of each other. Although, on the one hand, a recent study among Europeans reported that a big percentage (47%) of them believed that the reason for people living in poverty is because of injustice in society (Eurobarometer, 2010, cited in O’Toole, 2017); contradictorily, on the other hand, a later study showed that as much as 73% of people in the UK supported benefits caps (Curtice and Ormston, 2010, p.4) which illustrates a high level of suspiciousness from the general public towards recipients.

Furthermore, William continued arguing that *“It’s almost like they judge and look at you as if they are saying ‘Why are you even claiming that because you don’t have any reason for it?’”* which describes how even though when explicit discrimination has not occurred during the experience with CHAI, feelings of being stigmatised can be deeply internalised in some people– even though when company’s policies such as calling users by the word “clients” are in place. Despite it is true that, according to statistics, the stigma around mental health issues in Scotland is decreasing (Bradford, 2016), and that stigma and discrimination can indeed be subject to personal perceptions – like in the case of William – , the reality is that there is a group of people who are speaking about their feelings of anxiety and frighten caused by just the idea of seeking help. And this should be a clear call for action. For instance, Garthwaite, 2016 (pp. 280-281) claims that this perceived stigma is not mainly produced by how people were treated at the premises but instead by what users think *“what other people would think, or through how people using the services perceived themselves”*. Similar studies found that even though when stigma does not explicitly occur, Goffman (1968) claims that the stigmatised individual does not know what others “really” think of him or her; even when people are nice to them, they will feel that “in their heart” some are still stigmatising them. Carlton said to me *“The first meeting [with CHAI] was the most anxious.... For the first 10-20 minutes I felt I was being judged. I always remember my first appointment... I used to make an excuse... I can’t come... can you make it in two weeks or 1 month”*. Consequently, it could be argued that, following Simmel and Jacobson's (1965) work, poor people are not united by their own interactions but instead by the attitudes that society creates about them. Unfortunately, the collective attitude seems to be mostly negative especially if they are recipients of public or charitable assistance. For this, it can be claimed that shame is co-constructed in the sense that not just external actors such as government, media, international organisations and charities are the ones creating and enforcing them but also internal actors such as individuals’ deeply embedded beliefs too.

In sum, my finding supports the ones from The Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020, p.6) who highlights the importance of creating a dignified experience for those seeking help by suggesting that *“To end poverty in the city, the single biggest transformation Edinburgh could achieve would be to make the experience of seeking help less painful, less complex, more humane, and more compassionate*. In this way, it could be argued that the approach employed by help providers like CHAI towards people with these conditions seems to play a crucial role in the shaping of their perceived experiences.

Deservedness: a trend

Despite some mixed results, this research found a trend. This is, regardless of the type of experience clients perceived at CHAI, they all attempted to show their deservedness at some point during the interview. Some of them did it by showing me her busy schedule while saying phrases such as *“we are a family of hard work, you know, we just don't sit around”* or by telling me how busy they were with their kids for which they did not have much time for themselves. Others described to me how they used to be business owners and then said statements such as *“things became tough...we could not pay bills anymore, so we had to close it down”*. Likewise, others said *“my mental health does not allow me to work anymore but I still try volunteering”*, *“I worked until my health became worse...I could not control my bladder anymore...I had panic attacks”*. All this sensate to me as if they were trying to convince me that they tried to work and be “productive” as expected from society, but now they cannot do it anymore; so that they deserved the help because they truly need it and not just because they were “lazy”. This, arguably, may reflect the intensity of how deeply embedded and internalised is the stereotyping and the ideas of dependency that can lead people to think that others—like me—were judging and needed to hear the proof. In sum, although proof of deservedness is not asked by any staff at CHAI, people accessing the service seem to need to prove it.

Reciprocity: a story of success

I asked Marina to describe to me what CHAI would regard as “a story of success”, she said that this would involve when *“they [the clients] have achieved their goals in a realistic way but still challenging. No CHAI’s goals. CHAI does not impose. CHAI successes when clients succeed. We are here to help them to get there and help manage expectations”*. Although it is true that all CHAI services there is no expectation of reciprocity – i.e., that they do or accept different things from their own individual goals– in reality, however, the employability team has the main goal of helping people to go back to employment. William, for example, said *“Many charities have offered me many courses and kind of pointed me to things they think it could help [to get a paid job] ...but I have realised that it is obvious that I will never work apart from volunteering”*. Despite that employment has indeed been related to numerous benefits including economic, social and psychological ones (Lopes, 2011), nevertheless, one could question how fair is to indirectly impose such expectations to access assistance such as training opportunities. What if training is wanted to be pursued for personal development, or perhaps maybe for hobbies. Is it that, indirectly, we are supporting the notion that we must be productive to be rewarded (i.e., with training, workshops).?. What does it make our mere existence and/or desires for personal development not enough to be “worth” of help? For instance, Orla—one of my interviewees— asked me whether she could access training even though she is not looking for a job now because of housework and young children. She said *“I’m into creativity. I love the arts. I love interior design. I love the upholstery. Like making things from scratch ...I’d love to go for training for that. I don’t have money...Do you think CHAI would be able to help me with that?”*.

Consequently, the end process of receiving assistance from the CHAI employability team seems to beyond “when they have achieved their goals” but more like “when they are economically independent”. The fact is that CHAI’s work is heavily focussed on helping people at the bottom line of the employability pipeline. Which itself, one can argue, is not a bad practice especially given to the fact that they frequently operate with limited resources and somewhat uncertain funding. Nevertheless, one could also argue what happens to the ones that are not desperately in need such as Orla, or the ones whose “needs are invisible” such as William? who helps them to develop their creativity, their passion for arts when they lack funding? Finally, although CHAI always reassures clients that they can contact them back if needed help, CHAI help is usually set up to be for a maximum of 6 months per client.

Even though exceptions to extend this period can be granted, after this, all clients are more or less "standing on their own feet" as no further contact is made with them afterwards.

Although not directly required, reciprocity – as in remaining economically productive and independent– is expected as the end goal of the CHAI ESS services.

Other challenges

Similarly, during my interviews with participants, they highlighted their discomfort with the length of the protocols which, in their words, can be “quite repetitive” leading them to frustration and in some cases to miss the opportunity to access further help. For example, Karen – who was referred to CHAI to receive support in the furnishing of her new home as she was leaving her temporary charitable accommodation– said *“CHAI transferred me to this new agency. They said this new agency will take my case but then I never heard from them [CHAI] again...my grant was not processed because it missed the deadline for the application.”*. Likewise, William said that after being transferred to several charities *“It’s quite frustrating saying it over and over again”*. He continues, *“I’ve always found out that quite difficult. And there’s only been so many times when I’ve met some of the folks whom I have felt comfortable enough without needing to explain some more of the background if that makes any sense”*. Consequently, these findings align with the ones from the Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020, p.13); especially when it claims that *“it is exhausting for people in poverty to have to re-explain their experiences and traumas, particularly when results don’t always seem forthcoming”*. Moreover, some participants also highlighted how charities’ appearance of being busy can affect them. A participant said *“Sometimes, not always. I felt they were very busy...It would be nice if they allow you at least 20-30 minutes to properly explain your difficulties...because I found out that most of the time it is about ‘what is it that you need to be done?’ ”*.

Figure 10: CHAI employees’ work desk



Findings' discussion

In sum, this research's findings are mixed. Despite, as seen in chapter 2, most people reported a positive experience; on the other hand, however, people facing some type of mental health issues report desires for not coming back because of perceived pressures on validating the need for the service which leads them to feelings of frustrations and anxiety. Moreover, it found out that generally, people did not show discomfort with being "dependent" on places like CHAI but instead their discomfort came from some organisational operations and policies – such as an expectation of extra disclosure and scrutiny for those affected by unseen problems, some lengthy and repetitive procedures and CHAI's appearance of being busy. For instance, most people like Carlton often said *"Definitely, any help I can get I'm going to take it"* which illustrates Scherz's claim (2014) that some people may find dependency as a way to achieve self-fulfilment, as discussed in chapter 1. Furthermore, although the expectation of engaging in paid work can indeed be a way to achieve economic independence which certainly can bring numerous benefits. Nevertheless, it is also true that solving poverty and improving people's physical and emotional conditions requires more than alleviating the needs of individuals or helping them to become "independents" but requires structural changes like fairer employment conditions and a holistic approach to personal development that could involve emotional support.

This chapter has shown how people facing some type of mental conditions perceive an unpleasant experience which agrees with findings in experiences in food banks. Likewise, it shows how inexplicitly there is an expectation created in clients' being able to reciprocate the support provided by remaining economically independent through paid work.

CONCLUSION

Despite societal beliefs of independence and self-reliance historically embedded in people and the anti-welfare government together with media propaganda to stop “milking the system”, my findings have shown that charitable violence within the CHAI experience is very low (10%). On the contrary, overall, the charity experience received by most people in southwest Edinburgh was reported as highly positive. This differs from other experiences perceived around the world such as the ones reported in countries like China, Australia and Canada, and from experiences in other charity sectors such as food banks. Evidently, organisations such as CHAI work within their means and beyond to alleviate poverty in Edinburgh. They, in fact, seem to be aware of current narratives around charity stigmatisation for which they call all recipients by the word “client” in their attempts to normalise the experience. By providing both practical help such as job application guidance, CHAI became a safe place for most people in desperate positions who needed to “fix things” and for those who, as claimed by Orla, just needed it a “listening service”.

However, a smaller group – who labelled themselves as having “invisible needs” – feels stigmatised. For them, shame and suspiciousness around their worthiness of help are expected throughout the process. Even though their experiences were not directly accused as a result of CHAI’s treatment, there are feelings of being judged perceived that should be acknowledged and for which a form of action should be taken. Likewise, although proof of deservedness was not a pre-condition to access the services, all interviewees – by own initiative – tried to prove it to me by statements such as “*we are a family of hard work*”. This may reflect how deeply embedded the concepts of self-sufficiency are in some individuals in a market economy where gifts seem not to be entirely free. But that often imply “hidden costs” that involves effects on their wellbeing –which in turn seems to impact overall health conditions. Furthermore, despite all CHAI services being free of charge and no other expectation apart from “achieving clients’ goals” being sought, the employability hub has the explicit goal of “helping people to go back to the labour market”. Consequently, the true cost of charity assistance often involves meeting two perceived expectations: the one of deservedness – by looking worthy of help, following common governmental and media characterisation of “hopeless”), and the one of reciprocity – by remaining economically independent through paid work.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Shame is expected by some charity users but is also co-constructed by government, media, international institutions and even charity workers who by statements such as “*your problem is that you present well*” requires individuals to fit into the media and governmental characterisation of looking “hopeless” to deserve support. Hence, the very end goal of charity assistance – which is to help people – can be jeopardised by pre-conceptions on how the poor must look and must behave to deserve help. Without first challenging these ideas, this dissertation has shown how one could end up putting people into a vicious circle of poverty and poor health. The extend of this is still uncertain. Furthermore, although paid work is highly valued and expected, what happens to people who want to engage in training for personal development? They seemed to be left out in a sort of punishment for not wanting to be economically productive.

FIELDWORK DIARY

Week 1 and 2

It was my first day and first time at a remote placement. Although I had researched CHAI's work before and even though I already knew my work supervisor (as she was one of my interviewers for the role) I still had mixed feelings. I was nervous as usual when I start something new but also confident because I had volunteered several years for a similar NGO. I was assigned to the Employability department. My induction day turned out to be more informal than expected. My supervisor, Marina, approached me in a very warm way (asking me much lesser academic questions than during my interview). So, I felt more relaxed! Later, I found out that this warmth was a characteristic among many CHAI employees whose kindness was not just spread between colleagues but also transmitted to clients over the phone by using friendly and accessible vocabulary that included some laughs.

I was offered CHAI's resources – e.g., a professional email and a company phone device with a SIM card number – and training while on placement. Because the research involves sensitive topics with potentially vulnerable individuals, safety and confidentiality were crucial. Nevertheless, what excited me the most was to know that I was going to receive training in the use of CaseLink– an online software used by organisations that offer employability support in Edinburgh. I thought that familiarising myself with this software would help me to filter out my interview's participants.

Days later, while I was receiving several documentations from CHAI and applying for my Disclosure Scotland form, my training in CaseLink arrived. The session lasted 1 hour, and it helped me to get familiar with it and know, for example, that clients' reports could be exported to excel –which in turn would facilitate its analysis when I triangulate this data with my primary data. As days went by, my feelings towards my work started to change as several challenges were arising. Firstly, my disclosure application was marked as “need further attention”. That is, it would be taking longer than usual to be processed as my records were not easy to find due to my status as an international student (not a permanent UK resident).

Cheering myself, I thought “I guess I just need to remain patient and focus only on what was under my control!”. However, I received more and more paperwork. Some involved documents to be signed such as Confidential agreements and organisation policy statements. I imagine all these extra procedures were part of the fact that I am working with potentially vulnerable groups. Nevertheless, realising that all that I did during my two first weeks were extensive administrative work was exhausting. Fortunately, by the end of my second week, I was almost done with the paperwork which gave me some sense of achievement! Later, however, I received an email from Marina attaching 8 long pdf documents about the company for me to familiarise myself more with their work. She also informed me that she was requesting permission from her line manager to grant me access to the company’s quarterly reports (which usually are only provided to donors). From there, I knew this work would demand a lot of reading!

Week 3

While waiting for my Disclosure Scotland, I started my third week at CHAI with a long list of reading. As I went through the documents, I found out that although doing a placement remotely was making me feel somewhat alienated—far from the in-company experience—however, while I was reading case studies from the company reports I felt somehow connected with those people, to CHAI, and its donors. The case studies were described with so much detail that I felt I was there (as part of the CHAI team) when these people were being assisted. As days of more reading went by, I was getting to know more information on CHAI procedures when receiving new referrals for the employability service support (ESS). For example, I learnt that the service usually involves firstly filling out a referral form (which information will later be transferred to CaseLink) and providing clients with an information form—which had questionnaires that were quite extensive and involved private topics around personal life, employment status and barriers.

Reflecting on these forms, the first thing that came to my mind was “who fills these forms?” is it clients themselves or CHAI’s caseworkers? As most information was on sensitive matters, I thought that the report can vary according to who filled out the forms. I asked myself, “do people feel more confident when they have the privacy to write down their problems rather than saying them out loud to a stranger (i.e., a CHAI’s caseworker)?”. Remembering from a personal experience, I’ve felt more awkward talking to people directly but maybe that was just me? Later, I was informed that – prior covid-19 pandemic where services were also delivered in-person – users had the choice to fill them out by themselves or let CHAI’s workers assist them. Secondly, I continued to think about how much bureaucracy and strict guidelines are in place in organisations such as CHAI. Although I understand that the work and collected data is highly private for which it should be handled with care, the guidelines I am referring to are the ways of storing and collecting such data. For example, why are these filled out as hard copies in the first instance? Why are these hard copies mandatorily stored by the organisation even though clients’ information is always transferred to CaseLink? After chatting with Marina, I understood that these were “just practices requested by funders to later audit our work” and that “two ways of data storing was in place just in case one fails”. Then I noticed the heavy influence donors have on shaping a company’s procedures and policies.

I also noticed that among all the practical ways of support that CHAI's ESS currently offers none of them includes monetary support such as cash transfer for emergency support. So, I wonder, why is it? Is it merely due to lack of organisation funding or is it due to organisation philosophy –although at this point I have read a lot about the company's values, it was not very clear whether their statement of “empowering people” involved also avoiding offering them handouts? But specifically, I asked myself, where do people who urgently need money for survival go?. I noted all these down on a separate paper (inside the agenda I use daily and goes with me everywhere) to bring it to my next discussion with Marina. When I asked these questions to her, she set up a conversation with a staff member from the benefits department who explained to me that CHAI does not have its own company grants but instead if someone is facing an emergency, they would help them by first applying for a Crisis grant—which is a local governmental type of assistance– and if unsuccessful they would approach some local charity grants.

As I was added to the mailing list of CHAI's staff, I was receiving all kinds of general emails from all departments. This helped me to see the bigger picture of CHAI's work and how all the departments within it interconnect and work, most of the time, together. For example, we received cases where an individual needed help with finding employment, so my team took the case. Nevertheless, during a first meeting with the client, it became evident that he would also benefit from the advice team as he was facing some money debts issues. Similarly, I noticed how NGOs inter-refers users for further or more specialised services. That is, there are people that CHAI is helping with CV building and interview preparation but need some “professional” clothing, so they are referred to organisations such as “smart works”.

Week 4

My Basic Disclosure finally arrived so I was allowed to do some practical work now! Reading the information form for users named it “Using the employability and support services”, my attention went to two specific areas. Firstly, where it states that CHAI’s supports have a deadline of 6 months. So, I wonder, “what happens after this?”. “What if a person has some complex needs that inhibit them from securing a job during that timeframe?”. In my meeting with Marina, she explained that in those cases permission for extension is asked to the manager, or clients could also be referred to other organisations if some different or more specialistic support is needed (such as for mental health). Secondly, I noticed that some information— such as contact details and background information on health and personal circumstances— from this form was repetitive comparing it to the referral form — which at this point all clients are supposed to have filled in. Apart from making the process inefficient, I asked myself, is this not a way of producing revictimization on clients (which is likely to have an emotional impact on them)? I was imagining how, for example, an ex-convict would feel if they must declare private and sensitive information twice: first during the referral form and then on this later one?). I kept this as an open question to discuss with my participants during my data collection.

Focussing on internal literature, I found the “General mandate form” which is a consent form that needs to be signed by clients and by which they allow CHAI’s caseworkers to follow up for up to 13 weeks on users’ progression after they have obtained a job. With this authorisation, CHAI’s staff look for evidence of the client’s job and continuity. Some ways include contacting the client’s employer and requesting to see payslips. According to Marina and the reports I read, it was a way for them to keep track of the client’s progression and then be able to report “results” to funders. She pointed out that clients can decline this and still get the service, however, the extent to which this occurs was unclear. Regardless, I found this to be an act of surveillance, a strict condition to accessing help. So, I thought, how desperate a person must be to give up some of their privacy in exchange for some support? For my company report, I would analyse the client’s views on this policy and argue for more follow-up support in terms of mental health or financial planning than mere follow-ups of “progression checks” if needed.




Reflecting on how much funders influence the way organisation such as CHAI operates, I asked Marina to describe to me “Stories of success” according to her, to CHAI, and funders. She seemed a supporter of CHAI’s philosophy which claims that “CHAI

successes when clients succeed”. For her, as for CHAI too, a story of success involves seeing clients achieving their goals in a realistic but still challenging way. On the other side, although not very clear to me, funders’ stories of success seem to be based on quantifiable data: “How many people have now found a job?” However, I questioned myself, is this more important than getting to know “how many people are feeling better, more valued?

I started my sampling by creating two cases: current and past users. Then I proceeded to filter for suitable participants. Although CaseLink has extensive information on clients, it did not have the option to apply filters. I needed to ensure potentially vulnerable people were excluded from the study, so I used MS Excel to do it. Following the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act (2007) – Part1, Section 3 – which defines Adults at risk as to the ones who (1) are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests, (2) are at risk of harm, and (3) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected, I added 3 filtering criteria. Focussing on area 3, for example, I excluded participants with registered disabilities such as physical illness and additional learning needs. Furthermore, here I added filters for practicalities such as “has a mobile phone” and “speaks English”. All information was downloaded from CaseLink, so MS Excel formulas were used just to arrange such information to obtain a list of “potential participants”.

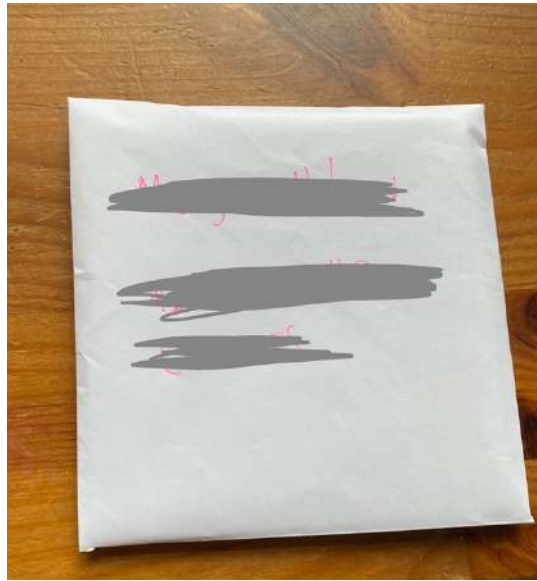
[illegible]

Once such a list was produced for both cases, I randomised them to minimise selection bias. Then I proceed to contact clients following the randomised order. See graphs below. An attempt to contact a total of 120 potential participants were made: a large proportion of phone numbers provided by CHAI were outdated, a great number of people did not pick up my calls or picked them up in a very rude manner. Later, however, discussing this with Marina she said “*some people are afraid to pick up calls as many are just calling them to chase payments, others maybe just going through something, maybe it just was not the right time for them*”. However, she recommended to me to make a maximum of 3 phone call attempts per client. So, I did it. Many declined the invitation, a few people requested a call back to another time, 19 people accepted to be part of the study. 7 people dropped out at the last-minute prior to the interview; 1 person dropped out during the interview. Finally, a total of 11 interviews were carried out until the end, however, only 10 interviews were taken into consideration as, after consulting with my dissertation supervisor, there were some uncertainties on whether my interviewee could provide consent.

| RANDOMISATION OF FILTERED PARTICIPANTS | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------------------|------|--|
| | Client ID | Random number assigned | Rank | Selected participants by randomisation |
|  Filtered "Current" users CASE 1 | | 0.142772639 | 1 | |
| | | 0.809761382 | 2 | |
| | | 0.401592744 | 3 | |
| | | 0.918125901 | 4 | |
| | | 0.129219512 | 5 | |
| | | 0.724062694 | 6 | |
| | | 0.196573573 | 7 | |
| | | 0.896035053 | 8 | |
| | | 0.637091548 | 9 | |
|  | | | | |
|  Filtered "Completed" users CASE 2 | | 0.369930031 | 49 | |
| | | 0.450031071 | 50 | |
| | | 0.793745131 | 51 | |
| | | 0.303684484 | 52 | |
| | | 0.556458131 | 53 | |
| | | 0.791956313 | 54 | |
| | | 0.845277737 | 55 | |
| | | 0.288887266 | 56 | |
| | | 0.863724303 | 57 | |
| | | 0.151927701 | 58 | |
| | | 0.403814252 | 59 | |

I first approach CHAI's potential participants by sending an advert post of the research by email and by text message (to those whose email addresses were not registered in any company records). Here, I briefly informed them of the project and that they will be contacted again in the upcoming days to discuss their interest. Once the potential participant agreed to participate, an Information Participant Sheet (PIS) was sent either by email, WhatsApp or by post according to their preference and accessibility. Although initially, all contact was aimed to be by phone call and email, I had to adjust it as, for example, Mr Gregor told me "I do not have access to the internet. I'm not great with computers but I can receive your documents by post"





I started all my interviews by obtaining verbal consent from all participants which included a confirmation that they have received and read the PIS. Most of my interviewees seemed to have remembered the appointment and politely greeted me over the phone. Although at the beginning of our conversation, it felt like they tried to maintain a certain distance from me by answering short and direct; later they started to open up telling me stories on what they used to do before the pandemic with great detail and going back to some of my initial questions to add up details such as *“I was once married but we used to fight a lot because of the business we managed together...we could not pay bills anymore”*.

Although interviews flowed well; nevertheless, days into the interview process I was starting to feel some emotional burnout from hearing many stories of struggle, injustice and marginalisation for weeks. I tried to remember my role as a researcher and not as a CHAI adviser or “fixer” although most people repeatedly asked me for it. For instance, Orla— one of my interviewees— said “do you know if CHAI could help me with training in arts? I said I’m afraid I am not sure and am not the right person for that, but I provided her with the details to contact CHAI caseworkers. Similarly, all the administrative work required to carry out these interviews—rescheduling appointments, making sure that I do not double book clients, worries that I may not be able to fit appointments cancelled at the last minute because of time constraints of the study—were physically and mentally challenging. So, I created a spreadsheet in MS Excel (something like a Gantt Chart) where I kept track of the progression of my interviews and the things to be done —e.g., resend an email attaching the PIS to the client’s

new email address. The fact that I could keep track of my interviewees' special requests was a time-saver.

Marina invited me to a 3 people conference call. She explained, before the phone call, that she received a referral from the Jobcentre for a man who was looking to find a volunteering opportunity. All this time I was following the process of current clients being helped by email. This was the first time I would, over the phone. So, I requested to be observant, rather than a participant. I did not want to interfere but observe the natural flow of this initial process. I kept notes on the way it flowed, the topics discussed, and the challenges faced; and later I compared it to the ones carried out by email. For example, it found a similarity: there was a constant reassurance given from CHAI caseworkers to clients on their ability to choose and consent by both phone calls as well as by email.

During my last days at CHAI, the line manager asked me for recommendations on the attributes they should seek in the person that they were recruiting at the end of the month. And after a careful reflection I said *“From all the data collected, I would say that the ideal candidate would have some experience working with potentially vulnerable people, apart from the generics of empathy and ability to see the strength (and not only the weakness of clients) just so to avoid sensationalism of “pity stories” and stigmatisation. It would also be important to make candidates aware of the potential risks of undertaking the job such as emotional burnout (when hearing people's struggles), the ability to handle rejection and certain types of impoliteness like people hanging up you the phone while you still talking. Hope that helps”*.

REFERENCES

- BBC (2013) 'On the front line with the Citizens Advice Bureau', *BBC News*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-21656355> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).
- Bebbington, P.E. and McManus, S. (2020) 'Revisiting the one in four: the prevalence of psychiatric disorder in the population of England 2000–2014', *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 216(1), pp. 55–57. doi:10.1192/bjp.2019.196.
- Berlant, L.G. (2011) *Cruel optimism* / Lauren Berlant. Durham [N.C.] ; Duke University Press.
- Biehl, J.G. (2013) *Vita: life in a zone of social abandonment* / João Biehl ; photographs by Torben Eslerod ; updated with a new foreword and photo essay. Berkeley: University of California Press. doi:10.1525/9780520951464.
- Bradford, E. (2016) 'In the Mind: Key facts about mental health in Scotland', *BBC News*, 15 February. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-35576995> (Accessed: 1 December 2021).
- Calnitsky, D. (2016) "'More Normal than Welfare": The Mincome Experiment, Stigma, and Community Experience', *The Canadian review of sociology*, 53(1), pp. 26–71. doi:10.1111/cars.12091.
- CAS 1 (2021) *Bureaux, Citizens Advice Scotland*. Available at: <https://www.cas.org.uk/bureaux> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).
- CAS 2 (2021) *Our volunteers are simply priceless, Citizens Advice Scotland*. Available at: <https://www.cas.org.uk/news/our-volunteers-are-simply-priceless> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).
- Centre for Policy Studies (2011) 'The 2011 Keith Joseph Memorial Lecture', p. 18.
- CHAI 1 (2021) 'About us', *CHAI*. Available at: <http://www.chaiedinburgh.org.uk/about-us/> (Accessed: 10 November 2021).
- CHAI 2 (2021) 'Employability Support', *CHAI*. Available at: <http://www.chaiedinburgh.org.uk/our-services/employability-support/> (Accessed: 12 November 2021).
- CHAI 3 (2021) *CHAI Business Plan 21-23*. Available at: http://www.chaiedinburgh.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CHAI-Business-Plan-21-23_170321.pdf (Accessed: 12 November 2021).
- Chase, E. and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, G. (2014) *Poverty and Shame: Global Experiences*. Oxford: University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199686728.001.0001.
- Citizens Advice (2020) *Impact report 2019-20*. Available at: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/Public/Impact%20report%202020%20Final.pdf> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).

Clark, D. (2021) *Number of people in employment on a zero-hours contract in the United Kingdom in 2nd quarter 2021, by region*, Statista. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/398583/number-of-employees-zero-hour-contracts-region/> (Accessed: 11 December 2021).

Clifford, J., Marcus, G.E., and School of American Research (1986) 'Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography ; a School of American Research advanced seminar / edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus.', in. Berkeley, Calif. ; University of California Press.

Cross, J. (2010) 'Neoliberalism as unexceptional: Economic zones and the everyday precariousness of working life in South India', *Critique of anthropology*, 30(4), pp. 355–373. doi:10.1177/0308275X10372467.

Curtice, J. and Ormston, R. (2010) *British Social Attitudes*, NatCen Social Research. Available at: <https://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-32/key-findings/introduction.aspx> (Accessed: 10 December 2021).

Datta, N., Giupponi, G. and Machin, S. (2019) 'Zero-hours contracts and labour market policy', *Economic policy*, 34(99), pp. 369–427. doi:10.1093/epolic/eiz008.

Dixon, G. (2020) 'Edinburgh by Numbers 2020', p. 34.

Dogra, N. (2014) *Representations of Global Poverty: Aid, Development and International NGOs*. London, UNITED KINGDOM: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited. Available at: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ed/detail.action?docID=1341849> (Accessed: 28 November 2021).

Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020) *A Just Capital. Acts to End Poverty in Edinburgh*. Available at: https://edinburghpovertycommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20200930_EPC_FinalReport_AJustCapital.pdf (Accessed: 11 December 2021).

Elliott, C. (2017) *Shocking 'spice zombie' footage captured by cyclist on Midsummer Common, Cambridgeshire Live*. Available at: <https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/shocking-spice-zombie-video-cambridge-13591724> (Accessed: 22 December 2021).

Ferguson, J. (2015) *Give a man a fish: reflections on the new politics of distribution / James Ferguson*. Durham: Duke University Press (The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures).

Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison / Michel Foucault ; translated from the French by Alan Sheridan*. Harmondsworth: Penguin (Penguin social sciences).

Garthwaite, K. (2016) 'Stigma, shame and "people like us": an ethnographic study of foodbank use in the UK', *The journal of poverty and social justice : research, policy, practice*, 24(3), pp. 277–289. doi:10.1332/175982716X14721954314922.

Goffman, E. (1968) *Stigma: notes on the management of spoiled identity / Erving Goffman*. London: Penguin Books.

Gowans, R. (2015) *Fair Enough?. Protecting Scotland's workers from unfair treatment*, Citizens Advice Scotland. Available at: <https://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/Fair%20Enough%20Protecting%20Scotland%27s%20workers%20from%20unfair%20treatment%20Feb%202015.pdf> (Accessed: 11 December 2021).

Graeber, D. (2014) *Debt: the first 5,000 years* / David Graeber. Updated and expanded edition. Brooklyn: Melville House.

Harris, J. (2021) 'The universal credit cut is the end point of years of "welfare" cruelty', *The Guardian*, 3 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/03/after-years-of-cruelty-to-people-on-welfare-is-the-uk-starting-to-think-differently> (Accessed: 12 December 2021).

Harvey, G. *et al.* (2017) 'Neo-villeiny and the service sector: the case of hyper flexible and precarious work in fitness centres', *Work, employment and society*, 31(1), pp. 19–35. doi:10.1177/0950017016638023.

Hatzenbuehler, M.L., Phelan, J.C. and Link, B.G. (2013) 'Stigma as a Fundamental Cause of Population Health Inequalities', *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(5), pp. 813–821. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2012.301069.

Hills, J. (2017) *Good times, bad times (revised edition): The welfare myth of them and us*. REV-Revised, 2. Bristol: Policy Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1t89f7m.

Jensen, T. (2014) 'Welfare Commonsense, Poverty Porn and Doxosophy', *Sociological Research Online*, 19(3), p. 3.

Karim, L. (2011) *Microfinance and its discontents: women in debt in Bangladesh* / Lamia Karim. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lantos, N.A. *et al.* (2020) 'Pity for economically disadvantaged groups motivates donation and ally collective action intentions', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 50(7), pp. 1478–1499. doi:10.1002/ejsp.2705.

Li, M. and Walker, R. (2018) 'On the origins of welfare stigma: Comparing two social assistance schemes in rural China', *Critical social policy*, 38(4), pp. 667–687. doi:10.1177/0261018317748315.

Lister, R. (2004) *Poverty and Social Justice: recognition and respect*. Tredegar: Bevan Foundation.

Lopes, H. (2011) 'Why Do People Work? Individual Wants Versus Common Goods', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 45(1), pp. 57–74. doi:10.2753/JEI0021-3624450104.

Marcus, G.E. (1995) 'Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, pp. 95–117.

Marx, K. (1975) *Early writings [of] Karl Marx* / introduced by Lucio Colletti; translated [from the German] by Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton. Harmondsworth: Penguin (Pelican Marx library).

Mauss, M. (2011) *The gift: forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies* / by Marcel Mauss ; translated by Ian Cunnison ; with an introduction by E.E. Evans-Pritchard. Mansfield Centre, Conn: Martino.

McNaughton, D. *et al.* (2021) 'Food Charity, Shame/ing and the Enactment of Worth', *Medical anthropology*, 40(1), pp. 98–109. doi:10.1080/01459740.2020.1776275.

Mole, N.J. (2010) 'Precarious Subjects: Anticipating Neoliberalism in Northern Italy's Workplace', *American anthropologist*, 112(1), pp. 38–53. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1433.2009.01195.x.

Morris, A. (2015) *A practical introduction to in-depth interviewing*. Sage Publications.

O'Toole, F. (2017) 'The lie that poverty is a moral failing was buried a century ago. Now it's back', *The Guardian*, 18 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/18/george-bernard-shaw-poverty-moral-myth> (Accessed: 27 November 2021).

Patrick, R. (2017) *For whose benefit?: The everyday realities of welfare reform*. 1st edn. Bristol: Policy Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1t896vj.

Purdam, K., Garratt, E.A. and Esmail, A. (2016) 'Hungry? Food Insecurity, Social Stigma and Embarrassment in the UK', *Sociology*, 50(6), pp. 1072–1088. doi:10.1177/0038038515594092.

Rawls, J. (2020) *A Theory of Justice: Original Edition* / John Rawls. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,. doi:10.4159/9780674042605.

Rostow, W.W. (1960) *The stages of economic growth: a non-communist manifesto* / W.W. Rostow. Cambridge: University Press.

Sandel, M.J. (2013) *What money can't buy: the moral limits of markets* / Michael J. Sandel. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Scherz, C. (2014) *Having people, having heart charity, sustainable development, and problems of dependence in Central Uganda* / China Scherz. Chicago ; The University of Chicago Press.

See Me Scotland (2021) *Stigma and discriminations*. Available at: <https://www.seemescotland.org/stigma-discrimination/> (Accessed: 1 December 2021).

Sen, A. (1983) *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford: University Press (OUP Catalogue). doi:10.1093/0198284632.001.0001.

Simmel, G. and Jacobson, C. (1965) 'The Poor', *Social problems (Berkeley, Calif.)*, 13(2), pp. 118–140. doi:10.1525/sp.1965.13.2.03a00030.

de Souza, R.T. (2019) *Feeding the Other: Whiteness, Privilege, and Neoliberal Stigma in Food Pantries*. Cambridge: The MIT Press (Food, health, and the environment). doi:10.7551/mitpress/11701.001.0001.

Statista (2021) *Population of Scotland 2020, by region, Statista*. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/865968/scottish-regional-population-estimates/> (Accessed: 11 December 2021).

The Guardian (2010) 'David Cameron's speech to the Tory conference: in full', *The Guardian*, 6 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/oct/06/david-cameron-speech-tory-conference> (Accessed: 13 December 2021).

The Guardian (2016) 'No more welfare cuts to come under Theresa May, says minister', *The Guardian*, 18 September. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/18/no-more-welfare-cuts-under-theresa-may-says-minister-damian-green-end-to-austerity> (Accessed: 13 December 2021).

The Scottish Charity Regulator (2021) *Register Search*. Available at: <https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/search-the-register/register-search/> (Accessed: 11 December 2021).

The Scottish Government (2021) *Benefits and grants*. Available at: <https://www.mygov.scot/browse/benefits> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).

The Scottish Parliament (2018) *Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018*. Statute Law Database. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/9> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).

Turn2us (2021) *How long does it take to process a claim?* Available at: <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Benefit-guides/Beginner-s-Guide-to-Benefits/How-long-does-it-take-to-process-a-claim> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).

Tyler, I. (2014) "'Being Poor is Not Entertainment": Class Struggles against Poverty Porn – By Imogen Tyler', *mediapovertywelfare*, 30 October. Available at: <https://mediapovertywelfare.wordpress.com/2014/10/30/being-poor-is-not-entertainment/> (Accessed: 22 December 2021).

University of Strathclyde (2012) *The financial benefits of advice provision the example of the Citizens Advice Service in Scotland*. Available at: <https://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/The%20financial%20benefits%20of%20advice%20provision%20the%20example%20of%20the%20Citizens%20Advice%20Service%20in%20Scotland.pdf> (Accessed: 4 November 2021).

Appendix 1: Q5 qualitative data summary

| Q.5. WERE CHAI STAFF FRIENDLY TO YOU? | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|---|
| PARTICIPANT | | ANSWER | EXPLANATION |
| 1 | Denise | Yes | <i>P</i> "Every time that we needed help, with anything, they were very professional and attentive with helping...on every occasion. They took their job very seriously and responsible." |
| 2 | Sally | Yes | <i>P</i> "They care about helping you. I got assigned a very nice lady. I think they were great, very friendly". |
| 3 | Carlton | Yes | <i>P</i> "I feel confident about opening up to CHAI. They knew people like us, where we are from. They know that a learning process is up to you. They are not telling you how you should live your life. They knew us better than we knew them...maybe they were super smart and scholar people but never materialised in front of us...I think the fact that they always knew somebody even in their own family that have the same type of issues...that was the main cause for trusting them. I felt that no matter what they put forward if it wasn't for me, I will have to see it rather than going there and obey the rules. I think that's one of the main attributes of my admiration for CHAI. "" |
| 4 | Orla | Yes | <i>P</i> "Laura, she was just really wonderful ...She was like a mother. I love her. She was there to provide...You know there are people in life that just pass and go, oh and then there are these people that were extraordinary." |
| 5 | Susan | Yes | <i>P</i> "Good level of help. Not overly helpful! A sounding board for my application." |
| 6 | Debroah | Yes | <i>P</i> "They were very helpful, very polite and they gave me good advice. Every time they had to call back, they always called back. I have nothing wrong to report about them." |
| 7 | Beatrice | Yes | <i>P</i> "They were very friendly, helpful and patient with me... my English was not great, but she helped me.... I'm so glad to have met her. I thought she was approachable like whenever I need her, I just text her or email her. She always replies. I'm so glad to know about CHAI and have met Marina. " |
| 8 | Gregor | Yes | <i>P</i> "All they were friendly, nice...it was very easy to contact them" |
| 9 | Karen | Yes | <i>P</i> "I was happy with the woman I spoke to. She seems perfectly nice, came to my house. She did call me, she did try. No problem talking to them... she was very nice." |
| 10 | William | Sometimes | <i>P</i> "Sometimes it has actually put me back and not wanting to go back to it just because of the experience...It's almost like they judge and look at you as if they are saying 'Why are you even claiming that because you don't have any reason for it?'" |

Appendix 2: Q2 qualitative data summary

| Q.2. DID YOU FIND CHAI'S ASSISTANCE USEFUL? | | | |
|---|----------|------------------------------------|---|
| PARTICIPANT | | ANSWER | EXPLANATION |
| 1 | Denise | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "They were really good. Leonel, I am totally sure his name was Leonel. He was a massive help for my husband. We're so relieved to have met CHAI". |
| 2 | Carlton | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "I found CHAI extremely helpful. When I've been there, I was relaxed, more informed, more aware of what was happening to me. I was living in limbo...my physical help plus covid. I'd have never thought on going to these places, but some people just need motivation and CHAI does that...they tackle every aspect of your life" |
| 3 | Orla | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "They help you with something that not your friends nor the government can understand but that CHAI does. I feel so much better ...a big relief...that if you need help, training...they will help you" |
| 4 | Susan | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "Knowing that I was doing something well /bad boosted my confidence...It's incredibly uplifting to have somebody on my side. I felt much better, much more prepared." |
| 5 | Debroah | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "Some may know the basics whereas with CHAI they can guide you to what you're entitled to and what help you can get. They set you on the right path...They have made a difference with the court representation. They were specialised in that, and I did not know enough about it." |
| 6 | Gregor | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "They just helped me to do things better than I would if I've done them myself." |
| 7 | Beatrice | Yes, definitely | <i>P</i> "It makes me feel at home...like they make me feel like I'm not in a foreign country...They really try to help me. So, yeah, it's nice. And I'm glad that we have organisations like them." |
| 8 | Karen | Yes, but it could have been better | <i>P</i> "They got me a DVD player and an iron. So, a couple of things. But then they transferred me to a new charity but due to timing they said they could not help me, and I didn't hear from CHAI either" |
| 9 | Sally | Yes, but it could have been better | <i>P</i> "I would like more opportunities to work in CHAI and get some money...So maybe more like paid volunteering." |
| 10 | William | No | <i>P</i> "They expect me to explain why I was needing an appointment, obviously, it is because I present quiet well...actually, what I suffer from can be quite unseen if that makes any sense. Although I explained very clearly why my appointment was far and that I struggle a lot of the time with doing that [paperwork], he walked out of the room to pick up a phone and left me doing all the paperwork on my own which I kind of thought it was very pointless...even though I am capable [to applying for benefits], I would like the help...I feel more confident when they do it for me...sometimes I even know what to do but instead, I ended up getting just shuffled and getting nowhere...I don't know why it happens, but it happens". |

Appendix 3: Q3 qualitative data summary

| Q.3. WOULD YOU COME BACK TO CHAI FOR HELP? | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| PARTICIPANT | ANSWER | EXPLANATION |
| 1 Denise | Yes, definitely ✓ | "Definitely, I would come back...They've done more than we expected". |
| 2 Sally | Yes, definitely ✓ | NI |
| 3 Carlton | Yes, definitely ✓ | "I thought I was going there for a slap on the arse and telling me that everything I was doing was stupid. But certainly, it was nothing like that. Definitely, any help I can get I'm going to take it." |
| 4 Orla | Yes, definitely ✓ | NI |
| 5 Susan | Yes, definitely ✓ | NI |
| 6 Debroah | Yes, definitely ✓ | NI |
| 7 Beatrice | Yes, definitely ✓ | NI |
| 9 Gregor | Yes, definitely ✓ | "Yes, they definitely helped me." |
| 8 Karen | Maybe ? | "Maybe it [not getting further help] was just bad timing." |
| 10 William | No ✗ | "Probably no, because I usually, if I feel desperate, go to Citizens Advice because I know them so well. They will refer me to other places, but I usually start from that. Because of my mental health, I much prefer going back to a place I've been a lot in the past...After all those times [when proof of deservedness is perceived as a requirement to access the service], it is not worth going through it again. Sometimes it has actually put me back and not want to go back to it just because of the experience." |