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**Elevating the Human Experience through Service Standards:  
Insights from the Global Refugee Crisis**

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3 **Elevating the Human Experience through Service Standards:**  
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5 **Insights from the Global Refugee Crisis**  
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10 **Abstract**  
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13 **Purpose:** This article proposes a set of three service standards for serving humanity; develops  
14 the ADD (Agency, Dignity, and Diversity) Service Standards Framework; integrates these  
15 standards with human experience; and then applies this framework to refugee service  
16 experiences.  
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23 **Design/methodology/approach:** Building on Transformative Service Research (TSR), we  
24 propose service standards for humanity and connect these standards to elevating the human  
25 experience. Subsequently, the ADD Service Standards Framework for serving humanity was  
26 presented and applied to the human experiences of refugees.  
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33 **Findings:** Three service standards for serving humanity are proposed: empowering human  
34 agency, respecting human dignity, and honoring human diversity. Further, we apply these  
35 three standards to offer a set of standard-specific practical actions adapted to the plight of  
36 refugees.  
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43 **Originality:** This paper contributes service standards for guiding service systems of any kind  
44 in serving humanity and provides a comprehensive framework for designing and  
45 implementing service standards that can elevate the human experience.  
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50 **Practical implications:** The practical implications affect all aspects of humanity's service  
51 systems. Service standards should be universal, responsive to various needs of individuals and  
52 groups, and adaptable to changing needs.  
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Keywords: Service standards, Human experience, Serving humanity, Refugee service experience, Transformative service research, Service inclusion, Service wisdom

Paper type: Research Paper

Journal of Service Management

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## Introduction

Service research has coalesced around the study of service systems as a fundamental abstraction of service science (Maglio *et al.*, 2009). Service systems were defined as “a value-coproduction configuration of people, technology, other internal and external service systems, and shared information (such as language, processes, metrics, prices, policies, and laws).” (Spohrer *et al.*, 2007, p. 72). According to Maglio and Spohrer (2008, p. 18) “Cities, city departments, businesses, business departments, nations, and government agencies are all service systems.” The Transformative Service Research (TSR) movement (Anderson *et al.*, 2013) focuses on improving human well-being in service systems. Based on TSR, Fisk *et al.* (2020, p. 616) called for service researchers to “develop service standards for properly serving humanity.” Moulton-Tetlock *et al.* (2024) recently proposed, that “service researchers should adopt wisdom as a primary topic and accept the challenge of propagating wiser research, wiser practice, and wiser societies.” In response, this article proposes three service standards to elevate human experience across the full spectrum and complexity of humanity.

The concept of service standards fits within the growing literature on the role of institutions in service systems (Koskela-Huotari *et al.*, 2020). Institutions have been defined as “humanly devised rules, norms, and beliefs that enable and constrain action and make social life predictable and meaningful.” (Vargo and Lusch, 2016, p. 11). Human societies have evolved into complex, rule-based institutional systems. Creating new service standards as rules to serve humanity must be carefully crafted to meet human needs. Fortunately, Lorraine Daston (2022) published a detailed history of rules titled “Rules: A Short History of What We Live By.” According to Daston (2022, p. 2): “Since Greco-Roman antiquity, three principal semantic clusters have mapped out the meanings of rules: tools of measurement and calculation; models or paradigms; and laws.” These three types of rules offer three possibilities for creating service standards that serve humanity.

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5 We propose three service standards for elevating the human experience: human  
6 agency, human dignity, and human diversity. These standards are interconnected and form an  
7 additive framework that we call the ADD (Agency, Dignity, and Diversity) Service Standards  
8 Framework. We adopted the metaphor of a wisdom crane to visually represent these  
9 standards. Each service standard builds on the wisdom of the previous service standard.  
10 Service systems that adopt these service standards can elevate the human experience.  
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19 In the 2020s, the world reached an unusual level of crises, which led to the term  
20 polycrisis being applied to the modern era (Henig and Knight, 2023). The term polycrisis  
21 captures the growing complexity of the problems experienced by human service systems. The  
22 modern refugee crisis is one of the many complex human service system problems. Refugees  
23 represent a wide range of humanity, come from diverse backgrounds worldwide, and face  
24 unique challenges because they have fled their original country and desperately seek inclusion  
25 in a different country. To demonstrate the applicability of the service standards to real world  
26 problems, we apply these standards to the plight of refugees. Service standards for humanity  
27 should be sufficiently robust to encompass refugee needs. Such standards should also nurture  
28 universal human potential across service systems worldwide.  
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42 This paper makes several contributions. First, we propose three service standards for  
43 serving humanity based on a generalized understanding of the interdependent complexity of  
44 human experience. Second, we developed the ADD (Agency, Dignity, and Diversity) Service  
45 Standards Framework to demonstrate how constructing service standards for human  
46 experience can be performed recursively for humanity. Third, we demonstrate the supple  
47 adaptability of the ADD Service Standards Framework to the unique needs of any group of  
48 humans, by applying the standards to the plight of refugees. Fourth, we identify important  
49 implications based on these service standards. Research implications include service design,  
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3 service delivery, and human experience. Practice implications include all service systems:  
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5 corporations, governments, and nonprofits. Society implications include nation-states, climate  
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7 change, technological innovation, and social movements.  
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10 This article is structured as follows. First, we connect human experience to the concept  
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12 of service standards. Second, we examine possible ways to develop service standards that  
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14 serve humanity. Third, we propose three fundamental service standards for serving humanity.  
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16 Fourth, we develop the ADD Service Standards Framework that integrates service standards  
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18 for humanity. Fifth, we examine the human experience of refugees. Sixth, we apply the ADD  
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20 Framework to the human experience of refugees. Finally, we explore the implications of the  
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22 ADD Service Standards Framework for research, practice, and society.  
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## 28 **Human experience**

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30 Proposing service standards for serving humanity requires numerous concepts that  
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32 acknowledge and appreciate the human experience of all people, which are defined and  
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34 referenced in Table 1.  
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37 Insert Table 1 in here

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40 The concept of human experience was first introduced to service research by Fisk *et*  
41  
42 *al.* (2020). The authors explained that the business terminology for people's roles in service  
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44 systems as customer (Customer experience ) and employee (Employee experience) are just  
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46 parts of each person's overall human experience, and are insufficient concepts for the full  
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48 richness of human life. Gustafsson *et al.* (2024) have further explored the relationships  
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50 between customer experience, employee experience, and human experience.  
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54 Fisk *et al.* (2020, p. 616) defined human experience as "... the totality of each person's  
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56 experience with service systems as they seek to meet their basic human needs across their life  
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58 journey." Thus, human experience influences human actions, decisions, and interactions with  
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3 others and with the environment. Therefore, human experience is the expression of what it  
4 means to be human in all its diversity and complexity. Human experience is shaped by both  
5 individual and collective factors and can vary widely across different contexts and situations.  
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7 However, human experience also expresses commonalities and connections among all people,  
8 such as the need for security, freedom, justice, and meaning. According to Maxwell, a  
9 philosopher of science, (2007, p. 112): “In order to enhance our understanding of persons as  
10 beings of value, potentially and actually, we need to understand them empathetically, by  
11 putting ourselves imaginatively into their shoes, and experiencing, in imagination, what they  
12 feel, think, desire, fear, plan, see, love and hate.” In harmony with Maxwell, Frank *et al.*  
13 (2024) critiqued all of modern science for having a blind spot caused by ignoring or  
14 misunderstanding human experience.  
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28 Respecting and valuing each person’s human experience provides the necessary  
29 foundation for developing service standards for serving humanity and elevating the human  
30 experience. By seeking to understand how service systems affect each person’s human  
31 experience, we sought to identify the root causes of injustice and to propose service standards  
32 that can enable fair and effective solutions.  
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### 42 **Developing service standards**

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44 Our logic for service standards was inspired by the work of Lorraine Daston (2022), a  
45 science historian. Daston wrote a history of the rules in human societies that order every  
46 aspect of our lives. She identified and explained three historical types of rules: laws,  
47 measurement and calculation tools, and models or paradigms. Daston (2022, p. 3) provides  
48 valuable context for any rule: “Rules can be either thick or thin in their formulation, flexible  
49 or rigid in their application, and general or specific in their domains.”  
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3 The purpose of this article is to create rules consistent with TSR's pursuit of  
4 improving human well-being and service systems. Therefore, we reviewed each of the three  
5 types of rules identified by Daston, starting with laws. Laws are a constrained category  
6 because only cities, regions, and nations have the power to create them. In Daston's terms,  
7 laws can be thick or thin in formulation, but they tend to be rigid in application and specific in  
8 their domains. Legal systems enable nations to control the behavior of their citizens. In  
9 modern times, there are many critics of how difficult it is to change a law viewed as unjust by  
10 groups of humanity. For example, in 1865 slavery was abolished in the United States, but new  
11 racial segregation laws disenfranchised African Americans. Remnants of these laws still cause  
12 harm and controversy (Rothstein, 2017; Stevenson, 2014). Many other nations have been  
13 widely criticized for how their laws treat their citizens.  
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28 Next, we consider rules as measurement and calculation tools. As noted by Daston  
29 (2022), computer algorithms are modern and pervasive examples of such rules. Algorithms  
30 tend to be thin in formulation, rigid in application, and specific in their domains. Controversy  
31 about algorithms has become common (Eubanks, 2018; O'Neil, 2017), with the common  
32 theme being the risks of automated exploitation.  
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40 Daston (2022) explains that rules as models are less commonly used than laws and  
41 algorithms. She elaborates that "In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,  
42 however, rules-as-algorithms increasingly edged out rules-as-paradigms." (p. 6). Daston  
43 favors models (rules-as-paradigms): "Rules-as-models are the most supple, nimble rules of  
44 all, as supple and nimble as human learning." Daston (2022, p. 272). We agree with Daston's  
45 description of models as supple, nimble, and capable of learning.  
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54 While we adopted Daston's rules as models of logic, we chose to label our rules as  
55 "standards" because the word "standards" has more specific connotations than the general  
56 word "rules." This choice was also influenced by the two articles published in the 1980s. In  
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3 1985, a legal article (Schlag, 1985) contrasted “bright line rules” with “flexible standards.” By  
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5 “bright line” he meant a rigid rule in its application, and by “flexible standard” he meant a  
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7 standard that was flexible in its application. This conveys the point that the word “standards”  
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9 is already associated with flexibility. An earlier article by Shostack (1982) introduced service  
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11 design to the nascent service research field and mentioned the need for service standards to  
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13 improve services.  
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17 In current business practice, service standards typically focus on customers and  
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19 organizations. Such standards define what a customer can expect from a service and how the  
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21 service provider should deliver it. In this sense, standards specify the service's requirements to  
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23 fulfill its purpose. Hence, the purpose of such a standard is to identify the quality of the  
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25 services provided and improve communication between a service provider and its customer.  
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27 As a result, these standards must be met by each service provider, and they set minimum  
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29 levels of service that are reasonable for customers to expect from service providers.  
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31 As we pondered creating service standards, an additional quote from Daston became  
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33 especially relevant. Daston (2022, pp. 5-6) noted the central philosophical problem of all  
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35 rules: “The most ancient and enduring problem inspired by rules is how universals can be  
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37 made to fit a potential infinity of particulars that cannot be foreseen by the rule-maker.” Our  
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39 belief is that service standards for humanity should be co-created by humanity. Services  
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41 should serve the full spectrum of human needs by practicing service inclusion (Fisk *et al.*,  
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43 2018).  
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49 We define service standards for humanity as principles for elevating the human  
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51 experience. These standards ensure that inclusive services meet every person's unique needs  
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53 and support the free interaction of individuals within service systems. They should empower  
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55 individuals and communities and foster an environment where human potential is recognized  
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3 and actively encouraged to thrive. Adhering to these standards can result in service systems  
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5 that genuinely serve humanity.  
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### 10 **Three service standards for serving humanity**

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12 We propose three service standards for serving humanity by co-creating wiser service  
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14 systems. Our three standards are thick in their formulation, flexible in their application, and  
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16 general in their domains. Our primary selection criterion was to identify standards that  
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18 encapsulate what it means to be a thriving human. We believe that each human deserves a  
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20 decent life, no matter who they are or where they come from. To create service standards for  
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22 all service systems, we began with the premise that they should be as parsimonious as  
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24 possible. Hence, we sought to propose universal standards for human experiences across  
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26 individual human differences and service systems.  
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31 This article proposes three fundamental service standards: 1. *Human agency*, 2.  
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33 *Human dignity*, and 3. *Human diversity*. All three concepts are interdependently necessary to  
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35 empower individuals, enable co-creation, drive change, and uphold the inherent worth of  
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37 every human being. Support for these three standards also stems from the fields of social  
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39 work and hospitality, which recognize that human beings possess agency to determine their  
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41 roles in their life circumstances (Parsell *et al.*, 2017); human dignity plays a transformative  
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43 role (Becker, 2021); and that human diversity is quite multidimensional (Kapoor, 2011).  
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45 Finally, these three standards fit within Maxwell's (2007, p. 98), concept of wisdom, which is  
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47 "...understood to be the capacity to realize what is of value in life for oneself and others."  
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51 Below, we provide a comprehensive overview of the three standards.  
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### *Empowering human agency*

Instincts and desires do not drive humans entirely (Bagnoli, 2007). Humans make autonomous and reasoned choices regardless of their circumstances (Griffin, 2008).

Consequently, empowering human *agency* recognizes that all humans have the right to an autonomous sphere of personal life and should be treated as autonomous agents. Hence, everyone can make choices and act according to their goals, values, and beliefs.

We define human agency as the capability of individuals to think independently and make choices that shape their experiences and personal destiny. This service standard enables people to shape and control their own lives but requires that their actions do not interfere with the rights and freedoms of others. Human agency is essential for personal growth and well-being.

### *Respecting the dignity of all people*

Human dignity is a fundamental concept that affirms the value of each person. In the context of this paper, the most relevant meaning of respecting dignity is the recognition that we have a moral obligation to consider other persons in our decisions about how to act (Darwall, 2009). Consequently, we demonstrate respect for other humans, not because we appraise them as meriting our respect but because we feel morally obliged (Allan and Davidson, 2013). The moral basis of respect is human *dignity*, a word derived from the Latin term *dignitas*, which means “worth, worthiness” (Collins, 2016, p. 66). Human dignity is acquired by the mere fact of being human and must be respected under all conditions (Kain, 2009). According to Immanuel Kant (1997) human dignity, is unconditional and is expressed through the human ability to be rational and capable of self-reflection and self-representation. Almost all cultures share the idea that we should respect the dignity of others and expect them

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3 to respect our dignity. Dignity can be found in African, Australian Aboriginal, ancient  
4 Chinese, ancient Greek, and Indian cultures (Allan and Davidson, 2013).  
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8 Based on Mattson and Clark (2011, p. 303), we define human dignity “a  
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10 commonwealth of individually assessed well-being, shaped by relationships with others,  
11 affected by the physical world, and framed in terms of values.” By respecting human dignity,  
12 we recognize that all human beings are equal participants in the world by virtue of their  
13 human status, and that they have the right to be valued and treated ethically. Human dignity is  
14 also the foundation of human rights, which belong to every person simply because they are  
15 human. Therefore, respect for the dignity of each person is an important service standard.  
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### 26 *Honoring human diversity*

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28 The evolution of modern humans is a complex process that involves major changes in  
29 *diversity* over time (Mirazon Lahr, 2016). With more than 8 billion humans living today,  
30 diversity has reached a fascinating level of complexity. We define *diversity* as the full  
31 spectrum of individual human differences, including culture, nationality, ethnicity, race,  
32 religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities/disabilities,  
33 age, socio-economic status, and any other personal characteristics. Honoring human diversity  
34 requires an active appreciation of each human's uniqueness, reflecting the full expression of  
35 human possibilities. Therefore, honoring human *diversity* requires sensitivity to essential  
36 human differences and respect for the full range of social and cultural variety. This service  
37 standard requires service systems to work hard to include and serve the full spectrum of  
38 human diversity.  
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## Service Standards Framework

In this section, we develop the ADD Service Standards Framework. Our ADD framework encompasses an additive perspective on the roles of agency, dignity, and diversity in human experience. We will build the framework from the top to the bottom. Following Daston (2022), our three service standards are models that can learn and evolve as the context of the human experience evolves. This is pivotal to understanding and addressing the multifaceted complexity of serving humanity.

To construct our framework of three standards for humanity, we use the metaphor of a wisdom crane (see Figure 1). The root metaphor of "cranes" can be linked to Daniel Dennett's (1995) work, where he proposed that Darwin's concept of natural selection could be seen as a crane. In this context, "service standards" can be viewed as a foundational framework for elevating the human experience, much like how cranes lift objects. Dennett describes natural selection as a process that incrementally builds complexity and adapts over time to become crane-making cranes. These service standards for humanity can evolve and adapt, become more refined and effective, and wisely elevate the human experience.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 contains our "Wisdom crane metaphor for the ADD service systems framework" because we think it embodies the "seeking wisdom" logic of Maxwell (2007). Our wisdom crane begins at the top level with human agency. Agency liberates human potential. Therefore, agency should be empowered for each human. The second level of the crane is dignity. Dignity is a sociocultural bridge between agency and diversity. Each human needs their own sense of dignity. Therefore, dignity should be respected. Human diversity is the third level of the wisdom crane. Diversity is the standard that focuses on the uniqueness of each human experience. Therefore, diversity should be honored.

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3 Human agency, dignity, and diversity are interconnected concepts that, when wisely  
4 harmonized, can elevate the human experience. Human agency thrives when dignity is  
5 upheld. Recognizing the dignity of each person supports a diverse society, in which all  
6 members can contribute uniquely and fully. Diversity is, therefore, the palette from which  
7 agency and dignity draw color. Essentially, the relationship between these three elements is  
8 synergistic, with each amplifying the others and responding to the various needs of  
9 individuals and groups in service systems. This interplay strengthens our framework by  
10 respecting human complexity.  
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21 Integrating diversity, dignity, and agency into our crane-making crane framework  
22 ensures that a wide spectrum of human experiences are considered in the development of wise  
23 policies, programs, and practices. The framework provides a pathway for action and change.  
24 The ADD framework enables and liberates human potential, allowing individuals to interact  
25 freely and effectively within the service systems. It should flexibly accommodate the diverse  
26 needs and circumstances of individuals across various cultural backgrounds and promote an  
27 environment in which everyone can contribute and benefit from the service system.  
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37 In the following section, we describe refugees' plight in the context of their human  
38 experiences. We then expand on the logic of the "Wisdom crane metaphor for the ADD  
39 service systems framework" by applying each of the three standards to the refugee experience  
40 and offering a set of standard-specific practical actions. Finally, we explore the  
41 interconnections between service standards and refugee experiences.  
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### 51 **The human experience of refugees**

52 The human experience of refugees is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon.  
53 Refugees often face immense challenges stemming from dire circumstances such as severe  
54 hunger, critical health issues, and life-threatening situations. Refugees encounter an extensive  
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3 spectrum of needs stemming from necessities, such as shelter and sustenance, to more  
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5 complex requirements, such as legal assistance, psychological support, and educational  
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7 opportunities. A scarcity of available resources exacerbates these challenges. As a result,  
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9 refugees undergo a myriad of human experiences in their journey to seek safety and  
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11 protection, including physical and psychological trauma, exploitation, discrimination, and  
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13 legal barriers. Refugees must also cope with the loss of their identity, culture, community, and  
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15 livelihood as well as the uncertainty of their future and the possibility of never returning to  
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17 their homeland. Collectively, these factors shape the human experience of refugees into  
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19 survival against all odds, where resilience is forged in the crucible of hardship. Unfortunately,  
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21 the dehumanization of refugees is a common aspect of their experiences (Jović, 2021).  
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23 Recognizing the humanity of refugees is crucial to countering dehumanization. When met  
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25 with supportive structures, refugees can find a semblance of peace and begin to rebuild their  
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27 lives. From a service perspective, however, the most important aspect of this approach is that  
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29 it places refugees at the center with co-created design of service standards. This also means  
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31 that refugees deserve the opportunity to co-create the services they receive.  
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38 Humanity's nation-state service systems are being challenged by massive numbers of  
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40 refugees to continue serving the human experience needs of their citizens and to cope with the  
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42 human experience needs of refugees arriving in their country. In 2022, the number of people  
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44 forced to flee due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, and events  
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46 seriously disturbing public order exceeded 100 million for the first time. This means that one  
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48 in every 78 people on Earth has been forced to flee, a dramatic milestone that few would have  
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50 expected a decade ago (UNHCR, 2023). Most alarming, however, is that the current plight of  
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52 refugees is only the "Early Warning" of humanity's global problems, and this issue becomes  
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54 even more important in view of future projections. Vince (2022) argues that climate change  
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56 alone will be the primary cause of massive human migration. Some forecasts estimate 2  
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3 billion migrants by 2100, mainly due to the damage caused by rising sea levels (Geisler and  
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5 Currens, 2017) and other factors such as heat, famine, diseases, and lack of resources (Vince,  
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7 2022). An increasing number of humans will be forced to flee failing service systems,  
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10 whether human-caused or natural disasters. Facing such severe disruptions, humanity must  
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12 develop service standards for serving the massive human flow of this crisis without  
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14 undermining people who are not refugees.  
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### 19 **Applying service standards to refugee experience**

21 The right side of the ADD Service Standards Framework in Figure 1 illustrates the  
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23 process of elevating the refugee experience. By discussing the example of refugees, we  
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25 provide a critical context for research on improving human experiences due to the unique  
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27 challenges and resilience of refugees. As refugees embody a huge diversity of human  
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29 experiences and backgrounds, their case represents a good application of service standards as  
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31 a general model. Applying service standards for humanity to refugees provides a test of our  
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33 thick formulation, flexible application, and generality of their domain. Service standards,  
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35 while universal in their core principles, must be adapted to fit the unique contexts and  
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37 experiences of different human conditions such as those of refugees. Below we address the  
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39 refugee human experience through the lenses of agency, dignity, and diversity. We also  
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41 provide actionable service system suggestions to support refugees in the context of each  
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43 service standard.  
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#### 51 *Applying agency to refugee experience*

53 One of the most challenging experiences for refugees is their loss of agency. From the  
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55 perspective of applying the human agency service standard, refugees are not merely passive  
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57 recipients of aid or sympathy but should be active agents in shaping their own destinies. Their  
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3 agency plays a crucial role in navigating their circumstances. Despite the often restrictive and  
4  
5 challenging environments, many refugees engage in a range of coping strategies and exhibit  
6  
7 remarkable resourcefulness in helping refugee service systems. For instance, during the  
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9 coronavirus pandemic, refugees in German asylum homes, Greek island hotspots, and Kenyan  
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11 refugee camps have been documented to have developed their own protection measures, such  
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13 as the production of hygienic products and the publication of their situation, calling for action  
14  
15 and assistance (Böhme and Schmitz, 2022). They also create informal networks, organize  
16  
17 community activities, and establish additional service support systems. In Za'atari (Jordan),  
18  
19 Syrian refugees have established businesses, schools, and community centers (Betts *et al.*,  
20  
21 2015). This demonstrates that, even under structurally and institutionally framed conditions,  
22  
23 refugees establish forms of agency, adapt to restrictions, and invent strategies to cope with  
24  
25 their circumstances.  
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31 To effectively support refugees, it is imperative to acknowledge and reinforce their  
32  
33 agency. This can be achieved by promoting respect for refugees' choices, priorities, beliefs,  
34  
35 and values. One example could be providing platforms for refugees to share their stories and  
36  
37 perspectives, thus humanizing their experiences and countering the often dehumanizing  
38  
39 narratives found in media and policy discussions. Another is recognizing the rights of  
40  
41 refugees to informed consent either directly or if the person is unable to give explicit consent  
42  
43 from an appropriate person/agency (i.e., a person's guardian). Moreover, actionable  
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45 suggestions for supporting refugees focus on empowerment. These can include supporting  
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47 refugees' rights to participate in all decisions concerning them and involving them in the  
48  
49 decision-making process regarding camp management, services, and policies. It also involves  
50  
51 legal empowerment, ensuring access to legal aid and legal knowledge. This empowers  
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53 refugees to advocate for themselves. Furthermore, individuals and communities can focus on  
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55 refugee education by providing them with knowledge and skills. As such, they can engage in  
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3 simple yet impactful actions, such as organizing awareness and fundraising events, offering  
4 employment opportunities to refugees, and participating in mentorship programs that help  
5 refugees integrate into new cultures and societies. These actions aid refugees in meeting their  
6 immediate needs and contribute to their long-term well-being and integration.  
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### 10 11 12 13 14 *Applying dignity to refugee experience*

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16 From the perspective of applying the human dignity service standard, it is essential to  
17 recognize the intrinsic and equal value of each person, regardless of their status as refugees.  
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19 The human experience of refugees is a profound testament to the resilience and dignity of the  
20 human spirit. To address the refugee crisis, it is crucial to implement policies that uphold  
21 these values, ensuring that refugees are treated with the dignity they inherently deserve. Real-  
22 world examples of refugee service system initiatives that have successfully upheld refugee  
23 dignity include community-based programs that integrate refugees into local societies and  
24 offer language classes, cultural orientation, and job training. For instance, in Turkey,  
25 strengthening refugee dignity organizations has provided Syrian refugees with vocational  
26 training, enabling them to find employment and regain a sense of purpose (Özer *et al.*, 2021).  
27  
28 Other actionable suggestions for supporting refugees' dignity include advocating policies that  
29 protect their rights and dignity, preventing any form of harassment and exploitation, and  
30 demonstrating respect for the dignity of others in all written and verbal communication. This  
31 aligns with recent service research (Kabadayi and Tsiotsou, 2022), which recommends  
32 avoiding language that stigmatizes other persons (i.e., refugees) and encourages racism, and  
33 xenophobia. Another suggestion relates to recognizing and ensuring refugees' rights to  
34 privacy and confidentiality. The right to privacy encompasses the right to protect a person's  
35 intimacy, identity, name, gender, honor, appearance, feelings, and sexual orientation.  
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Beyond intrinsic value, human dignity encompasses the right to live a dignified life. This includes recognizing and ensuring the provision for refugees of the basic rights of humans to food and nutrition, clothing, shelter, and necessary conditions of care when required. In other words, it ensures that all refugees enjoy an adequate standard of living and are able to fully participate in ordinary, everyday interactions with other people.

### *Applying diversity to refugee experience*

Refugee experience is a multifaceted human journey that intersects with the broader narrative of human diversity. Refugees represent a diverse group unified by their shared experience of forced migration. Compelled to flee, refugees carry with them the burden of their immediate survival and the rich tapestry of their cultural identities and personal histories. By embracing the human diversity service standard that service systems should serve all of humanity, we can create a more inclusive society that assists refugees in their time of need and values the strengths they bring to the global community. For example, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in a collaborative effort developed a Blueprint for Joint Action to promote equal rights and opportunities for refugee children. Their goal was to improve access to education, clean water, sanitation, and child protection services for 10 million refugees and host community children by the end of 2022 (Global Compact on Refugees, 2023).

To support refugees effectively, it is crucial to adopt specific actionable strategies that acknowledge their diverse backgrounds and promote inclusivity. For instance, it involves acknowledging the intersectionality of identities and how factors such as ethnicity, religion, gender, and socioeconomic status combine to shape individual experiences. Positive outcomes emerge when these dimensions are celebrated, rather than merely tolerated. Furthermore, to truly respect and recognize refugees within their social and cultural contexts, it is essential to

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2  
3 provide culturally competent services. This includes training service providers on the nuances  
4 of different cultures and the provision of interpreters to overcome language barriers. Such  
5 measures ensure that refugees receive support in a manner that is both respectful and  
6 effective. Discrimination, an all-too-common plight for refugees, can be mitigated by  
7 enforcing policies that promote equality and educate the public on the harmful effects of  
8 prejudicial treatment. Creating safe and inclusive environments is not just about physical  
9 safety; it is also about fostering a sense of belonging and community where human diversity is  
10 not just accepted but celebrated. Finally, equitable opportunities and access to services are  
11 fundamental to the refugee experience. This means providing resources and support that cater  
12 to the unique needs of refugees, thus allowing them to thrive and contribute to their new  
13 communities. By ensuring that refugees have equal opportunities for success, we can help  
14 their integration and enrich the social fabric of the host society.

### 33 *Exploring the interconnections of service standards and refugee experiences*

35 Exploring the interconnection between human agency, dignity, and diversity within  
36 the context of refugee experiences involves understanding how these standards are upheld and  
37 integrated into practical service delivery. Practical examples of these service standards can be  
38 seen in initiatives that empower refugees to participate in decision-making processes that  
39 affect their lives, thereby respecting their agency. Programs that provide language training  
40 and employment opportunities enable refugees to regain control over their life circumstances  
41 and contribute to their new communities. Upholding dignity can be observed in policies that  
42 ensure equitable access to healthcare and legal services for refugees, recognizing their rights  
43 and worth as individuals. Celebrating diversity is evident in community events that encourage  
44 cultural exchange and understanding, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect  
45 between refugees and host populations (UNHCR, 2020).

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3 These standards are interconnected in the realm of policy and implementation. For  
4 instance, when refugees are involved in the planning of housing projects, they not only  
5 exercise their agency, but also affirm their dignity by valuing their input and ensuring that  
6 diverse needs are met. Similarly, educational programs designed with input from refugees can  
7 better address the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of participants, thereby  
8 enhancing their effectiveness and relevance.  
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10  
11 Agencies and organizations working with refugees can further these standards by  
12 creating platforms for refugee voices to be heard, advocating policies that protect refugee  
13 rights, and facilitating programs that acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of refugee  
14 experiences. By doing so, they contribute to a more inclusive society that recognizes the  
15 strength and potential of its newest members. In essence, the interconnection of human  
16 agency, dignity, and diversity in refugee experiences is about creating environments in which  
17 refugees can thrive and not just survive.  
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### 35 **Implications**

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37 Significant implications for enhancing the wisdom of human service systems emerge  
38 from our service standards for serving humanity. The ADD Service Standards Framework  
39 portrays the additive and connected logic of the three service standards for constructing  
40 wisdom cranes. According to Fazey *et al.* (2020, p. 16), “The critical challenge now facing  
41 humanity is how to turn the enormous capacity of knowledge systems towards supporting  
42 development of wisdom about how to act in the world.” This section explores the implications  
43 of these service standards for research, practice, and society.  
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#### 56 *Service Standards Implications for Research*

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58 Because service standards to serve humanity are a new concept with general  
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3 application to all service systems, there is a great opportunity for service design research to  
4 create and evaluate implementations of these service standards. Service research can co-  
5 design and test universal service designs to maximize usability for all (Watchorn *et al.*, 2023).  
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10 Similar service design research can be conducted with any other group that experiences  
11 vulnerability. The interdependence of the framework's components can be further examined to  
12 understand how they influence each other and the overall service design process.  
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17 The ADD Service Standards Framework offers a path to advancing theoretical  
18 knowledge and creating tangible improvements in service delivery and human experiences.  
19 Future research should continue to build on these findings and explore the dynamic relationship  
20 between service standards and human experiences across various contexts. By conducting  
21 empirical studies, researchers can validate the practical applicability of the ADD framework  
22 and its components, ensuring that the theoretical constructs hold true in real-world scenarios.  
23 This will contribute to the development of more effective human-centered service designs that  
24 can adapt to the evolving needs of society.  
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35 Furthermore, research should consider how service standards affect human experience  
36 across diverse contexts such as cultural, economic, and technological environments.  
37 Fundamentally, such research in different human contexts would enable constructing wisdom  
38 cranes for the specific needs of a group of humans. Each human context presents unique  
39 challenges and opportunities for service design and the framework must be adaptable to  
40 accommodate these variations. By exploring these different contexts, researchers can gain  
41 insights into how service standards can be optimized to enhance human experience. In addition,  
42 there are significant opportunities to study the co-creation of policies and practices that seek to  
43 enact these service standards.  
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56 Research implications for improving refugee experiences with our ADD Framework  
57 include measuring refugee agency, dignity, and diversity within the context of the Refugee  
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3 Service Experience Framework developed by Boenigk *et al.* (2021). Such research can  
4  
5 identify weak spots in refugee services throughout the refugee service journey. As the ADD  
6  
7 framework illustrates, service design research that is co-created with refugees is needed to  
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9 empower their agency, respect their dignity, honor their diversity, and thereby elevate their  
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11 human experience. Cross-cultural studies are also desirable for identifying ways to improve  
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13 refugee journeys in various countries, regions, and cities.  
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### 19 *Service Standards Implications for Practice*

21  
22 Based on the Wisdom crane metaphor for the ADD Services Standards Framework,  
23  
24 service systems can design their service standards to be functional and effective, but also  
25  
26 meaningful and respectful of all human experiences. Service standards should be responsive  
27  
28 to the needs and aspirations of diverse groups and individuals such as women, children,  
29  
30 minorities, refugees, and people experiencing vulnerabilities. These service standards are  
31  
32 general models that apply to all service systems including corporations, governments, and  
33  
34 nonprofits. Indeed, these standards are related to recent organizational efforts to increase the  
35  
36 diversity, equity, and inclusion of employees and customers (Arsel *et al.*, 2022). Specific  
37  
38 policies and procedures for enacting these service standards should be co-created with  
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40 employees and customers. At present, B (for benefit) Corporations (B Corporations, 2024) are  
41  
42 the closest examples of organizations whose practices resemble the standards we proposed.  
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48 Incorporating the ADD Framework into the internal marketing and training practices  
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50 of service organizations is a strategic move that can yield significant benefits. Rewarding staff  
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52 members who consistently exhibit behaviors that meet or exceed these standards can motivate  
53  
54 individuals to maintain high service levels. Such practices can also lead to a stronger brand  
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56 reputation. Therefore, service organizations should consider these elements as integral  
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58 components of their operational strategies.  
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3 Across the world, many organizations provide services to refugees. The ADD  
4 Framework can facilitate internal monitoring of the effectiveness of refugee services at  
5 meeting agency, dignity, and diversity needs. Such monitoring can facilitate the design of  
6 improved refugee services. Local and regional authorities can empower refugees by providing  
7 opportunities to co-create service solutions based on their human experiences.  
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### 17 *Service Standards Implications for Society*

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19 At the macro societal level, the modern world is a system of nation-states. Most of  
20 humanity lives within the boundaries and laws of the nation where they were born. Every  
21 nation has a history and current legal practices for the treatment of citizens within their nation.  
22  
23 Nation-state services based on service standards for humanity can have a positive impact on  
24 society and the environment because they can promote social inclusion, diversity,  
25 responsibility, and sustainability. Focusing on the service standards of agency, dignity, and  
26 diversity can make it possible to serve humanity with the compassion and resources they  
27 deserve. Finally, because these service standards are general models, they can be adapted to  
28 changing circumstances and challenges such as climate change, technological innovation, and  
29 social movements.  
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42 Unfortunately, various forms of subjugation and dehumanization are chronic problems  
43 in many nations and are one of the many factors that amplify the modern refugee crisis. Given  
44 humanity's polycrisis, it is time to rethink how human society organizes itself on Earth.  
45 According to Vince (2022, Introduction), "... we will, as refugees of nations, need collectively  
46 to transition to a sense of ourselves as citizens of Earth. We must shed some of our tribal  
47 identities to embrace a pan-species identity." If the people of Earth were all served by these  
48 service standards, each person would be able to develop their own agency and sense of  
49 dignity, and enjoy their unique diversity. This would follow Singer's (2016) idealistic logic  
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3 for “One World Now.” It also follows Alexander and Conrad’s (2022) logic for citizenship as  
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5 a global practice.  
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### 10 **Conclusion**

11  
12 Three service standards for serving humanity were proposed in this article. Following Daston  
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14 (2022), our proposed service standards are thick in their formulation, flexible in their  
15  
16 application, and general in their domains. Empowering human agency, respecting human  
17  
18 dignity, and honoring human diversity can elevate the human experience. The ADD Service  
19  
20 Standards Framework presents the additive and connected logic of these three standards. This  
21  
22 framework was applied to the human experience needs of refugees. Serving humanity requires  
23  
24 a deep understanding of each other’s human experience. You cannot serve humanity unless  
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26 you empower human agency. You cannot serve humanity if you do not serve each person’s  
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28 dignity. And you cannot serve humanity unless you serve their diversity. These three  
29  
30 standards are deeply interconnected with the needs and experiences of every human. Service  
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32 systems can and should adopt these three service standards to build their own wisdom crane  
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34 for elevating the human experience of those they serve within their system.  
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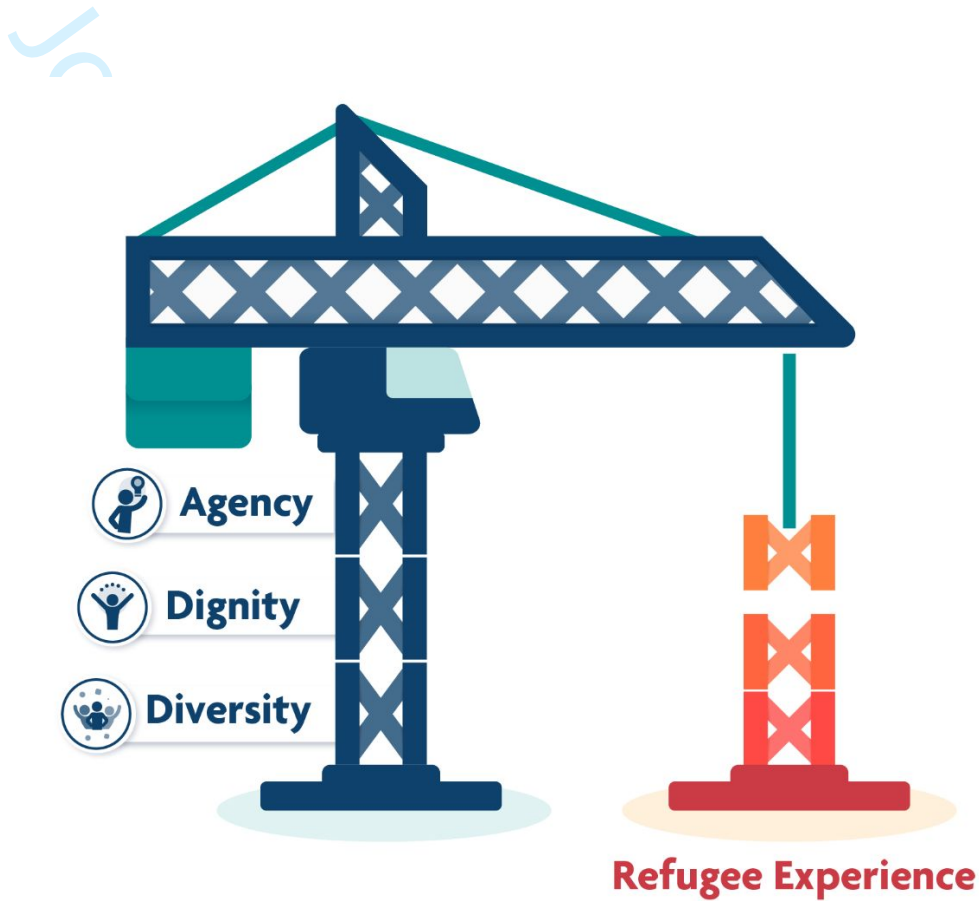
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Figure 1. Wisdom crane metaphor for the ADD service systems framework



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**Table 1. Operational Definitions of Key Constructs**

Construct	Definition	Reference
Service System	"A value-coproduction configuration of people, technology, other internal and external service systems, and shared information (such as language, processes, metrics, prices, policies, and laws)."	Spohrer <i>et al.</i> (2007, p. 72)
Institutions	"Humanly devised rules, norms, and beliefs that enable and constrain action and make social life predictable and meaningful."	Vargo and Lusch (2016, p. 11)
Service standards for humanity	Principles for elevating the human experience that ensure inclusive services to meet every person's unique needs and support the free interaction of individuals within service systems.	Developed for this paper
Human agency	The capability of individuals to think independently think and make choices that shape their experiences and personal destiny.	Developed for this paper
Human dignity	"... a commonwealth of individually assessed well-being, shaped by relationships with others, affected by the physical world, and framed in terms of values."	Mattson and Clark (2011, p. 303)
Human diversity	The full spectrum of individual human differences, including culture, nationality, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities/disabilities, age, socio-economic status, any other personal characteristics.	Developed for this paper
Human experience	"... the totality of each person's experience with service systems as they seek to meet their basic human needs across their life journey."	Fisk <i>et al.</i> (2020, p. 616)
Refugees	"Persons that have well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it..."	UNHCR (2016, p. 14)

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