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## Nonprofit Administrator Strategies to Procure and Retain Long-Term Donors

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# Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Maxine Rolle

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Walden University  
2023

Abstract

Nonprofit Administrator Strategies to Procure and Retain Long-Term Donors

by

Maxine Rolle

MS, Strayer University

BS, Broward College

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

July 2023

## Abstract

Nonprofit sector administrators inability to procure and retain long-term donors can result in reduced revenue and possible organization failure. Nonprofit administrators who lack strategies to procure and retain long-term donors can negatively impact organizational performance and success. Grounded in network theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. The participants comprised four administrators of four separate nonprofit organizations in Fort Lauderdale, Florida who procured and retained long-term committed donors to remain operable for at least 5 years. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and a review of organization documents. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Three themes emerged: relationships with donors, sustainability and accountability, and revenue multiplicity. A key recommendation is for nonprofit administrators to engage and educate donors whose interests align with the nonprofit organization's mission. The implications for positive social change include the potential for nonprofit administrators to ensure their organizations remain operable, thereby continuing to provide services to assist members of the community with improving their quality of life.

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## Dedication

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who, without him, I am nothing! Anything is possible with God! I dedicate this to my mother, Daisy Thomas. Without you, I would not be here. Thank you, Dr. Kevin A. Rolle, my brother; you started the legacy of doctors in our family. Glory Be To God.

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## Section 1: Foundation of The Study

One role of a nonprofit organization is to empower the community. Walters (2020) stated that nonprofit organizations serve an essential role in rural communities by providing services and advocacy to the residents. Nonprofit organizations promote citizens' participation in community life through several different organizational structures: informal, such as associations and volunteer groups, and more formal, or public groups, such as charities and foundations (Buonomo et al., 2020). The objective of this study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. Section 1 of this study includes a discussion of the (a) background of the problem; (b) problem statement; (c) purpose statement; (d) nature of the study; (e) research question; (f) interview questions; (g) conceptual framework; (h) operational definitions; (i) assumptions, limitations, and delimitations; and, (j) comprehensive literature review.

### **Background of the Problem**

Nonprofits are called upon to fulfill basic community needs while receiving fewer public funds and competing with other organizations to secure more donors (Bahmani et al., 2012). Nonprofit administrators must acquire long-term committed donors to maintain operable financial stability through donors who may donate more frequently. Operationalization and performance measurement are challenges nonprofit leaders must overcome to maintain economic sustainability (Buonomo et al., 2020). The absence of a financial bottom line that could act as an evaluation criterion is also an issue (Kong, 2010). Furthermore, nonprofit stakeholders should assist nonprofit administrators in

developing relationships with government leaders to maintain funding for nonprofit organizations (Moxham, 2014).

Moxham (2009) reported four reasons for nonprofit leaders to measure organizational performance: financial reporting; demonstrating achievements to external market actors, users, and members; operational control; and, support for innovation. Nonprofit leaders may use multiple performance measurements based on the requirements of different stakeholders. Nonprofit organizations' administrators should generate a strategy plan and create adaptations to this plan depending on the frequency of donations from donors to donate more frequently and set aside time to practice the plans with members of the organizational hierarchy and community partners (Haupt & Azevedo, 2021). Administrators of nonprofit organizations also must manage staff and clients, primarily regarding the implementation and evaluation of programs and the assignment of related resources (Levesque, 2020). Haupt and Azevedo stated nonprofit administrators might not have previously learned how to retain long-term committed donors and maintain operable financial stability. This lack of knowledge and practice can negatively affect nonprofit resilience when faced with diverse crises resulting from a lack of donors (Haupt & Azevedo, 2021).

Nonprofit administrators face many challenges to achieve missions and goals. According to Levesque (2020), nonprofit leaders' challenges involve long-term strategic planning related to fundraising, growth, organizational structure, and board renewal. Managing contracts with government agencies, reporting on financial and program

outcomes, and continually cultivating relationships with existing and potential donors is time-consuming, yet important for maintaining donors (Levesque, 2020).

### **Problem Statement**

The sustainability of nonprofit agencies relies upon renewable government funding grants; however, government funding scarcities force nonprofit administrators to seek alternative funding to remain operable (Burde, 2018). De Wit and Bekkers (2017) indicated that accepting government funding may be counter-productive to nonprofit survival; specifically, for every \$1 of government funding generated to support a nonprofit, donors withhold \$0.67 of potential contributions. Ilyas et al. (2020) stated to make nonprofit's administrators successful to retain long-term donors, administrative leaders of nonprofit organizations should create a strategic plan that would achieve stakeholder engagement to retain long-term donors. The general business problem is that with decreased government funding, nonprofit administrators who do not secure committed long-term donors may experience business closure. The specific business problem is that some nonprofit administrators lack strategies to procure and retain long-term donors to remain operable.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. The population of the study consisted of leaders of four nonprofit organizations that have remained operable for at least 5 years in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The findings from this study may contribute to social change by ensuring valuable services remain

available to help citizens in need to establish means to become financially independent. In addition, increased financial independence may lead to meaningful employment contributing to nonprofit organizations' financial stability.

### **Nature of the Study**

A researcher selects among three research methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed (Reiter et al., 2015). A quantitative researcher tests a hypothesis to generate statistical data to explain a phenomenon (Christenson & Gutierrez, 2016). I did not select quantitative inquiry because I am not seeking numeric information to examine and explain the phenomenon. A qualitative researcher uses interviews to investigate a business problem and asks open-ended questions to collect narrative data related to a phenomenon (Yin, 2016). The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because I was seeking to understand the decision-making process used to remain operable, and numerical evidence did not support this endeavor. Finally, a mixed-methods researcher applies both qualitative and quantitative inquiry to explore a business problem (Povee & Robert, 2015). I did not select the mixed methods approach because it includes quantitative inquiry, and I was not seeking numeric explanations of the phenomenon.

Several designs are available for qualitative researchers. Three designs considered for this study were a phenomenological design, an ethnographic design, and a case study design. The phenomenological researcher seeks to explore the personal meaning of experiencing a phenomenon (Reiter et al., 2015). The phenomenological design was not appropriate as I intended to explore phenomena beyond the meanings of participants' lived experiences. The ethnographic researcher seeks to explore a phenomenon within a

specific cultural or group context presuming the uniqueness may provide new insights into behaviors that may be beyond norms (Aveling et al., 2016). Ethnography was not appropriate for this study as the participants are not differentiated by culture or unique group. The case study researcher uses a small sample, interviews, and other related evidence to explore the phenomenon (Yin, 2016). The case study design was appropriate for this study because I investigated a phenomenon within a specific time and space, using various types and data sources.

### **Research Question**

What strategies do nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain committed long-term donors to remain operable?

### **Interview Questions**

#### **Probing Questions:**

1. How long have you worked in the nonprofit industry?
2. How long have you been in your current position with this organization?

#### **Targeted Interview Questions:**

3. How do you develop initial contacts with potential donors?
4. What processes do you use to recognize or reward donors for their support?
5. How do you maintain contact with new and ongoing donors?

#### **Targeted Follow-Up Questions:**

6. How does your organization establish long-term relationships with donors?
7. How does your organization network with donors?



8. Based upon your organization's experiences, what strategies change a one-time donor to a repeat donor?
9. How, if at all, do you seek to involve donors with the direction or mission of the organization?
10. What, if any, unique or related interests do donors have in your organization, or services, that motivate their continued support?

**Targeted Wrap Up Questions:**

11. How do you follow up with potential donors after initial contact?
12. What additional information can you provide to help me understand donor commitment?

**Conceptual Framework**

One theory comprised the conceptual framework for this study: network theory. The tenets of network theory are (a) jointness of interests, (b) cooperative strategic posture, and (c) rejection of a narrowly economic view of a firm (Strand & Freeman, 2013). Network theorists (Faulk et al., 2016) explained that with reduced government funding, nonprofit agencies must network with related nonprofit agencies to collaborate on strategies that generate a collective interest in the need for services in a wide range of locations, supporting each other in the endeavors to gain funding. Network theory evolved from stakeholder theory and explicitly reflects the relationships on boards to build networks among agencies to generate funding to benefit multiple related agencies (Faulk et al., 2016). Network theory relates to this study because network theorists provide insights into the growing need for networking to establish and strengthen

relationships to ensure business sustainability. Network theory provided an appropriate lens to analyze data by exploring how nonprofit leaders apply networking and relationships in donor retention strategies.

### **Operational Definitions**

*Accelerator source:* Assist local businesses to develop investable projects or business models that deliver a good or service with significant public benefit (Eldridge et al., 2019).

*Authentic leadership:* Individuals who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective, knowledge, and strengths; who are aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and high on moral character (Avolio et al., 2004).

*Donor retention:* Keeping attracted donors interested and engaged in continuing to make donations year after year (Xiao & Yue, 2021).

*Financial sustainability:* Financial sustainability of a company derives from the principle of value maximization for shareholders at an acceptable level of risk, using the best combination of investments and available sources of financing (Zabolotnyy & Wasilewski, 2019).

*Nonprofit administrator:* The ability to make timely and informed decisions, define priorities and goals, and have the aptitude to see situations from a comprehensive organizational perspective (Kolzow, 2014).

*Nonprofit advocacy:* Creates strategic positioning that directly influences their long-term survival prospects and emerges as facilitators of social learning and agents of social change (Valentinov et al., 2013).

*Organizational effectiveness:* Motivates the employees to serve the client well and support each other in the organization (Chuang & Liao, 2010).

*Succession planning:* The process of developing an organization to meet future needs, including the support of employee development and talent management (Ballaro & Polk, 2017).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

The assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of research offer a structure for a researcher to understand. The coalition of assumptions, limitations, and delimitations improves the clarity of a researcher's intent in a study. I identified assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with this study in the following subcategories.

#### **Assumptions**

Assumptions are issues, ideas, or positions found in the initial stage of the researcher's final report (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The assumptions lead to the negligence of the cultural and social construction of information and the unquestioned use of the scientific research method (Ma, 2012). I identified two assumptions that would influence this study. First, I assumed the participants would honestly and thoroughly answer interview questions. The second research assumption was that the qualitative method was appropriate to explore how to understand the decision-making process used to recruit and retain donors.

**Limitations**

The limitations of a research study are used to evaluate challenges and reliance on quantitative measures ill-suited to complex social problems (Fox & Albertson, 2011).

This study had two limitations: the case study findings may not generalize to all organizations in all locations because the sample will be small and the time limit for data collection was limited. This research was intended to generate diverse candidates in nonprofit organizations. As a result, it could potentially limit the extent of data collected from interviewees. However, nonprofit organization leaders may have an extensive array of experiences.

**Delimitations**

Delimitations are underlying theories, study design, replication potential, shortcomings in data collection and questionnaire design, results interpretations, and corresponding conclusions (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). Researchers should clarify what will be investigated through delimitations in their case study, which determine the boundary or territory of the study (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016; & Ruling, 2015).

Delimitation is a term from qualitative research about setting boundaries to scope the research in a useful way rather than describing the narrow scope as a limitation (Alpi & Evans, 2019). The delimitations of the study included participants who were only selected from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and were limited only to leaders in the nonprofit industry.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study findings could be significant to both business practice and social change. Most importantly, nonprofit agencies offer services to those who seek sustenance, shelter, or economic independence. Nonprofit agencies are essential to individuals and families by providing services that would not otherwise be available, particularly for marginalized populations.

### **Contribution to Business Practice**

The findings from the study may help business leaders who struggle with sustainability reduce government funding to identify strategies to remain operable. Sustained nonprofit agency leaders have more significant opportunities to gain the attention of large, committed donors to sustained success in service delivery and a strengthened reputation within the business sector. The nonprofit success may lead to improved opportunities for business growth and longevity.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The results from the study have implications for social change by increasing servicing provisions for those in need within the community. A community rich in services may lead to superior economic independence and excellent health and wellness (Garland et al., 2018). Individuals and families may enjoy a better quality of life from the continued support of operable nonprofit agencies. A further benefit may be for donors who may gain significant satisfaction from supporting such worthwhile causes within communities.

## **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

Administrators in nonprofit organizations must seek alternative contributors to avoid closure because of the scarcity of government-supported donors. Nonprofit organizations require sufficient grants, donations, and other forms of sponsorships from outside sources to remain operable (Cerda-Suarez, 2021). Nonprofit administrators need to find long-term, committed donors to support them because a single donation will not sustain the organization. Donor retention is indispensable because the status and reliance on donations can either develop or damage a nonprofit organization's success; administrators should make donation management the prime concern. However, building and procuring donors is a challenge for nonprofit administrators (Drollinger, 2018). Although donor procurement and retention problems persist for nonprofit organizations, limited information exists about strategies to solve this problem. Succession planning becomes critical for nonprofit administrators to develop strategies to find and retain long-term committed donors (Khodakarami et al., 2015).

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore nonprofit administrator strategies to retain long-term donors. The literature review in this study includes a comprehensive summary of many scholarly works related to the research topic. Kumar et al. (2019) stated that knowledge on a subject advances when prior studies are synthesized logically and are based on the findings of prior studies that contribute significantly to the conceptual, methodological, and thematic development of a discipline (Hulland & Houston, 2020; Palmatier et al., 2018; Snyder, 2019). This literature review provides a

contextual understanding of the conceptual frameworks and phenomena related to nonprofit administrator strategies to retain long-term donors.

To develop this literature review, I used ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, Google Scholar, and the Walden University Library as a foundation for accessing journal articles. I also reviewed open journals and government websites to obtain literature related to nonprofit administrator strategies to procure long-term donors. The terms and phrases used in this search were: *administrator, government funds, nonprofits, nonprofit organizations, sustainability, for-profit and nonprofit, not-for-profit, social needs in South Florida, the growth of nonprofits in Florida, and network theory.*

In the literature review, I present the following topics: administrators in nonprofit organizations, government funds for nonprofits, and competition between service providers. My intent was to study conditions leading to the strategies to procure long-term donors for nonprofits.

### **Administrators in Nonprofit Organizations**

Administrators in nonprofit organizations should confront the uncertainties in the environment in which their organizations operate and identify new roles for nonprofit and public organizations to meet society's expectations (Bryson, 2018). Bryson identified a problem that nonprofit organizational leaders should adopt to help procure and retain long-term, committed donors. Nonprofit administrators typically prompt a need for new strategies to impact financial sustainability and maintain the nonprofit organization's mission. As a result, Bryson (2018) stated that strategies should be carefully tailored to

specific circumstances rather than “off-the-shelf” solutions imported from unclear organizational visions.

Nonprofit administrators should allocate an abundance of time to retain long-term committed donors. Berman (2015) stated that public and nonprofit organizational strategies could attain high-performance results by outlining the processes to improve sustainability. Berman suggested that managers and administrators need strategies to be familiar with plans to manage nonprofits effectively and public organizations, regardless of the economic situation. Among the strategies identified are those that nonprofit administrators can use to obtain and retain long-term, committed donors. A strategy for nonprofit administrators must be clear about which goals they are pursuing, the strategies for attaining these goals, and the conditions that may affect the implementation of strategies (Berman, 2015).

Berman mentioned that performance improvement strategies help public and nonprofit organizations face their changing environments, including increased demands for service. For example, an essential purpose of nonprofit strategic planning is to ensure that the organization's mission is clear (Berman, 2015). Nonprofit administrators may benefit from understanding the dynamics of different organizations on how the interactions could affect the organizational performance and sustainability of nonprofits. Finally, Berman proposed to implement a target date for each strategy to be completed.

McDonald et al. (2015) expressed that the environment in which nonprofit organizations operate is increasingly competitive because of growing intra-sector competition for donors, grants and government contracts, and commercial providers'



attraction to the sector. Although nonprofit organizations face challenges of organizational sustainability as leaders pursue missions to serve their communities (McDonald et al., 2015), nonprofit organizations continue to increase revenue. In the United States, nonprofit revenue has increased from 2.8% of GDP in 1974 (Hansmann, 1980), to 5.6% in 2016 (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2020).

McDonald et al. (2015) provided a typology based on sustainability to help nonprofit organizations achieve their goals. McDonald et al. also offered strategies to assist nonprofit administrators in sustaining the organization's financial objectives and mission. They further acknowledged significant challenges for administrators who run nonprofit organizations; the typology developed to identify several approaches is consistent with nonprofit organizations' fiscal and social viability. According to McDonald et al., nonprofit administrators should develop strategies to obtain revenues from grants and donations to effectively reduce the cost to the nonprofit organization's existing resources. One strategy for nonprofit administrators is to develop events and charge fees as an additional source of increasing revenues. Another strategy for nonprofit administrators is to retain corporate sponsorship of nonprofits as an avenue for raising funds and reaching sponsorship's goals.

The strategies provided by McDonald et al. (2015) can also assist nonprofit administrators to achieve sustainability, enabling them to remain operational while providing exceptional social value. Although nonprofit administrators often face ongoing challenges daily to retain long-term donors, McDonald et al. expressed that lead administrators of nonprofits must strive to achieve financial stability and monitor their

mission to ensure social relevance. Beyond the importance of these approaches in solving problems nonprofit administrators encounter, society is transforming, bringing the most complex challenges in a perpetual social being that are deeply affected, leading to a profound internal crisis within the nonprofit organizations (Niță, 2015). Nonprofit organizational leaders are an integral part of society that bolsters economic prosperity, environmental integrity, and social justice for-profit and nonprofit organizations (McDonald et al., 2015).

Althoff and Leskovec (2015) conducted a study about the crowdfunding website known as DonorsChoose.org. Althoff and Leskovec discussed the issues of retaining donors and recommending projects to them. Their research provided a detailed assessment of how potential donors control their giving. Althoff and Leskovec also explored different factors that affect donor retention and indicated that most contributors were likely to continue supporting a nonprofit organization if the administrator was friendly during the donation. Providing these donors with timely recognition of their support made contributors feel more appreciated, resulting in contributors becoming repeat donors to that organization.

Nonprofit administrators must develop good communication between committed and potential donors to retain donors' commitment. MacMillan et al. (2005) stated that listening is a necessary component of effective communication between nonprofit administrators and donors. MacMillan et al. found effective communication between nonprofit administrators and donors consists of good presentation and effective listening. Study findings indicated a positive relationship between communication presentation and

listening and the donors' level of trust in the organization and perceived levels of satisfaction in intrinsic benefits such as a belief that the nonprofit organization has a positive impact on society; these factors will in turn increase procurement of committed donors.

According to Drollinger (2018), building a sound relationship with a prime contributor is a strategy for a nonprofit administrator to obtain and retain a donor. Nonprofit administrators are the organization's relationship managers, and their primary role is to build trust to enhance the development of mutual goals between the donor and the organization through constructive communication. Drollinger emphasized the importance of effective communication by exploring a tool known as active emphatic listening (AEL) as a model to obtain and retain donors. Drollinger mentioned AEL is a method by which fundraisers may improve efforts to connect in a meaningful way with major donors by enabling fundraisers to operate with more accurate information regarding donor motivations, interests, and desires, and develop a sense of trust and genuineness between both parties. The conceptual frameworks promote understanding and enhance the knowledge of nonprofit administrators to obtain and retain donors through fundraisers tools such as contributing to sustaining social impact and maintaining alignment with organizational values.

### **Government Funds for Nonprofit**

State and federal governments fund nonprofit organizations using grants channeled directly to the governments' operations. Nonprofits that meet government agency requirements can apply for grants to obtain funds to support their causes (Cheng

2019). According to Cheng (2019), nonprofit relationships have assumed a unidirectional funding flow from governments to nonprofits, focusing on the impact of governments on nonprofits. Although grant application is complicated and lengthy, successful administrators can receive enough money to support their operations (Prentice & Brudney, 2018). Nonprofits that have historically been successful in applying for grants are usually more assured of subsequent funding than new applicants. In addition, state and federal government agencies usually examine nonprofits' capacity and credibility to implement their programs before approving funding (Fine et al., 2000). Apart from government funds, nonprofit organizations can obtain funding from fundraisers and individual and corporate donations (De Wit et al., 2017).

Government funds for nonprofits can depoliticize funds for activities because of the fear that donors might withdraw their funding (Lu, 2018). Some nonprofits are involved in political activities, including advocacy and lobbying. Advocacy is the process organizations use to cause political action (Gardner & Brindis, 2020). Nonprofit civic education and public campaigns sensitize citizens to pressure policymakers to take specific actions. Lobbying refers to the direct actions that organizations use to influence the government and its leaders (De Bruycker et al., 2019). Lobbyists can write to or publicly influence legislators to implement specific policies. These activities are usually imperative because nonprofits often advocate for the welfare of vulnerable people in society. However, according to Bloodgood et al. (2016), the share of government funds to nongovernmental organizations was negatively associated with lobbying expenditure. The researchers found that the impact is statistically significant and substantial, resulting

in reduced lobbying and political efforts by nonprofits. The findings support concern about the resource dependence of these organizations.

According to Zhao and Lu (2019), government funds for nonprofits can reduce the amount of money these organizations obtain from fundraising and other sources. Federal and state government funds can assist nonprofit organizations' credibility by attracting funds from other sources. Some nonprofit leaders believe that contact with the government can introduce nonprofits to a network of potential partners that can offer financial benefits. De Wit and Bekkers (2017) determined changes in donations for nonprofits that obtain higher government support. The outcome of the study showed that private donations for nonprofits declined by \$0.64 for every \$1 increase in government support. De Wit and Bekkers suggested that this what? raises questions about the dynamics associated with government funds for these organizations. Nonprofit administrators may reduce fundraising efforts after government funding is received.

Government funding for nonprofits will continue because many organizations depend on these funds for their operations (Amagtome & Alnajjar, 2020). However, the previously discussed study findings show that government funding can depoliticize nonprofit administrator actions and reduce donations from other sources. As a result, additional research is needed in this area to determine the reasons behind these behaviors, and how nonprofits can avoid them. Researchers can use a conceptual framework to focus on nonprofit organizations' challenges for applying for grants with state and federal governments for future research on obtaining grants from state and federal governments.

## **Cooperation and Competition Between Service Providers**

For-profit organizations create income for business owners and shareholders, whereas nonprofits are managed to provide an environmental or humanitarian service. Talavera and Sanchis (2020) stated that economic growth and money could not be considered an end or an objective; these must be instruments used to create social welfare and improve the quality of people's lives. From this perspective, Felber (2019) proposed the substitution of "for-profit" by "common good" and the replacement of competition by cooperation. The substitution of "for-profit" by "common good" does not imply that organizations are not going to obtain benefits; this means that entities must favor the general interest through the creation of social value (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020).

Pulgar and Pelekais (2014) identified the importance of strategic alliances between for-profit and nonprofit organizations as a tool to guarantee the effectiveness of social responsibility measures. By cooperating, partners in different or similar industries can unite their strengths to meet the needs and requirements of the society in which they operate (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020). Morales et al. (2011) affirmed that social responsibility policies could be more effective if performed through cooperation with entities that possess important competencies for their implementation, that is, through strategic alliances with nonprofit organizations. Talavera and Sanchis (2020) stated that alliances between for-profit and nonprofit entities had been strengthened as a method to facilitate actions focused on social responsibility and sustainability these authors and Porter and Kramer (2011) introduced the importance of alliances between for-profit and nonprofit organizations to create shared value.

Regarding cooperation between for-profit and nonprofit organizations, Porter and Kramer (2011) stated that for-profit corporations can embrace the social and environmental aspects predominating in the nonprofit entities. The authors affirm that nonprofit organizations can ensure their economic viability to continue operating. By cooperating, both entities complement their deficiencies, guaranteeing their survival (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020). Strategic alliances lead to the creation of shared value, which is based on the idea that organizations create economic and social value through their economic activity (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020).

Cooperation and competition are two factors that have been analyzed together in business literature (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020). First, they were considered two opposing terms: cooperation increases and competition decreases (Dixon, 1962; Fusfeld, 1958; Mead, 1967). Later, they were contemplated as two concepts directly related to cooperation favors competition (García-Canal, 1996). Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996) asserted that competition and cooperation are not incompatible concepts; they can be supplemented by what is known as co-petition.

The concept of co-petition arises from game theory application (Talavera & Sanchis 2020). According to game theory, companies must follow a win-win strategy in which success in the market does not require the failure of competing companies, because there may be multiple winners (Bengtsson et al., 2010; Bouncken & Fredrich, 2012; Cygler et al., 2014; Reaidy et al., 2015; Rusko, 2012). Nonprofit administrators use cooperation to be more competitive without reducing or eliminating competence (Talavera & Sanchis, 2020). A sudden reduction in reliable funding resulting from

competition between for-profit and nonprofit organizations threatens the organization's existence (Papa, 2021). As a result, nonprofit organization leaders must justify the need in the community to exist, while for-profits are beginning to offer the same services offered by nonprofit organizations at a cost to consumers (Papa, 2021).

### **Social Needs in Florida**

Several aspects of the social needs in Florida must be addressed adequately by either the government, social organizations, communities, and individuals to prevent such circumstances from causing adverse influences in society. Some of the common social needs in the state of Florida comprise mental illness, childcare and protection, domestic violence, and social amenities. Assessing the effect of strategies on health literacy outcomes and meeting social needs among vulnerable families is an important avenue for future research (Haidar et al., 2021).

In Florida, a social need is a lack of access to food, rather than the amount of food available, which causes hunger in food-rich environments (Barrett, 2010; Dreze & Sen, 1989). Bublitz et al. (2019) stated that even when abundant food is available in a locality, hunger persists if people do not have access to that available food. The challenge of access to affordable, healthy foods is particularly acute in underserved neighborhoods and communities that lack grocery retailers (Bublitz et al., 2019). People experiencing hunger may feel invisible as policies and programs designed to address hunger leave coverage gaps and fail to meet their needs (Corus et al., 2016). While some feel neglected by programs and organizations intended to provide food access, others may feel



stigmatized, which can also deter people experiencing hunger from accessing well-intended programs (Bublitz et al., 2019).

Many government programs (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP] and Women, Infants, and Children [WIC], both of which offer free and reduced school breakfast and lunch programs) are available to provide supplemental food assistance. Lack of awareness of available programs, and misunderstanding of eligibility requirements and bureaucratic processes are primary barriers for families accessing public benefits (Wu & Eamon, 2010). Bublitz et al. (2019) mentioned that navigating the complex and often rigid system to obtain these programs' benefits can be daunting without expert assistance. For instance, to receive SNAP in Florida, an individual must provide proof of US citizenship, a social security number, and information on income, assets, and expenses (Florida Department of Children & Families, 2018). The programs mentioned above are designed to assist people with basic food needs. Nonprofit administrations must employ effective strategies to assist in reaching the community with information on benefits for food security.

### **Leadership Styles**

Nonprofit organization leaders need to model the behavior they expect of others, which means they must demonstrate and communicate clear values for both themselves and their organization and be ethical in all their dealings (Kolzow, 2014). Researchers have shown that among the various leadership styles, the styles incorporate the ideals of team building, empowerment, participation, and total quality management in servant leadership (Srimathi & Narashiman, 2021). This leadership philosophy incorporates

ideals that emphasize the encouragement of a sense of community, consensus-based decision-making, servant leadership, and a holistic approach to work. Nonprofit leaders embody ideals that encourage their followers to be better than their best and exceed themselves (Gilstrap et al., 2015).

Heifetz and Laurie (2001) explored the new ideologies that leaders need to embrace to enable their followers to excel and improve. The authors observed that conventionally, followers expect stability, coziness, as well as answers from leaders, which authors consider to be more babysitting than authentic leadership. Heifetz and Laurie suggested that authentic leadership entails pushing followers out of their comfort zones, not being afraid of bringing challenges to the fore, asking tough questions, and managing the pain that results. The authors proposed various ideas that organizational leaders can adopt to address some of the most difficult challenges that their firms face, including changes in market dynamics and competition, as well as new technologies that become apparent. Although such challenges can be manageable, they are complex and take time to resolve. Solving most of these challenges requires the inclusion of all departments within an organization. Leaders need to offer solutions, ask difficult questions, and take advantage of the collective intuitiveness of the employees. The authors proposed ideas that included “moving onto the balcony” to identify emerging trends such as work avoidance and emerging power struggles. Identifying adaptive challenges, normalizing stress, sustaining controlled devotion, encouraging employees to take the front banner – an active role, and protecting the authority of leadership from below (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001).

Aurel (2015) aimed to define a new leadership philosophy that is useful in the private and public sectors. Aurel identified the relationship that exists between the types of leaders, intelligence, and organizational stress. Rational or logical intelligence, quantum, and emotional intelligence are discussed, with emphasis given to the spiritual type of intelligence. Aurel suggested that quantum or spiritual intelligence integrates and harmonizes logical and emotional intelligence attributes.

Aurel (2015) discussed various leadership styles in relation to the different intelligence types. Regarding spiritual intelligence, the author opined that spiritual leaders are inclined to give, authoritarian leaders are inclined to do, charismatic leaders are inclined to feel, and intellectual leaders are inclined to think. In both the private and the public sectors, the issue of organizational stress is pertinent. Aurel stated the need for a new style of leadership, which incorporates transdisciplinary principles. Such beliefs recognize the need for an authentic and holistic approach to preparing the future spiritual leader. Aurel concluded that the best type of leadership required both for the private and public sectors is spiritual leadership. Aurel determined the attribute of a spiritual leader effectively integrates and includes various situational reality features and harmonizes intra and extra-psychic plans. Similarly, spiritual leaders are able to guarantee self-coherence using a novel way of thinking. Through the various intelligence attributes, Aurel asserted that in both private and public administration, spiritual leaders are those who serve other people and are compassionate (Aurel, 2015).

One measure of effectively identifying effective and real leaders is through emotional intelligence. Similarly, Batool (2013) asserted that emotional intelligence is a

tool that can be used to develop effective management skills in future leaders. Batool conceded a lack of sufficient empirical to back this assertion. Batool attempted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective management. Batool evaluated the propensity of both working males and females' emotional control in the public and private sectors. Using a random sampling method, the author surveyed 50 people in the Pakistani banking sector and analyzed the collected data using SPSS software based on descriptive statistics. The study findings indicated a strong relationship between emotional astuteness and management style – meaning that effective leaders were also emotionally intelligent. This suggests emotional intelligence can be used to identify which leaders are effective and can develop practical management skills. The conceptual framework concentrates on the different types of nonprofit administrators' roles in management, making effective consensus-based decision-making to assist with retention for long-term donors.

### **Leadership and Succession Planning**

Leadership and succession planning targets the most critical positions in an organization; frequently, a candidate from within the organization is nurtured and developed (Oduwusi 2018). Oduwusi stated that the leader must have displayed the skills, knowledge, leadership qualities, experience, and desire required to groom a leader's position. The lead administrators role in a nonprofit organization is critical to sustainability and competitive advantage. According to Oduwusi (2018), there are four principal leadership succession planning components. The first component is identifying the potential successor. The process of selecting a suitable candidate to lead the business

upon the departure of the current CEO begins with the identification of at least one, and preferably more than one candidate, and should begin long before the CEO decides to step down (Oduwusi, 2018). The second component is changing management style, which can be both a hallmark and, at times, an identified weakness of many organizations is the CEO's management style (Oduwusi, 2018). The third component is successor training and development because the principal function of the CEO is to assure the success of his or her successor lies in the appropriate leadership development of the candidate (Oduwusi, 2018). The final component is selecting the successor because many factors qualify an individual to lead and manage a business (Oduwusi, 2018).

Oduwusi (2018) stated that those factors should include knowledge, skills, abilities, motivation, ambition, temperament, formal education, and experience. Also, nonprofit administrators facilitate succession plans to assist the organization with a strategic plan to maintain long-term donors. Oduwusi's four components to leadership succession planning conceptual framework are essential leadership competencies, succession plans, and barriers for leaders to make decisions successfully. Oduwusi (2018) asserted that succession planning facilitates the organization's strategic approach to its leadership development and employee skill assessment. Oduwusi identified several factors limiting succession planning and leadership among the leading administrators. The study findings indicated that communication was the top competency needed by the lead administrators in their duties. Oduwusi also emphasized that all successors should be trained and have proper skills implemented before proceeding over the predecessor to ensure business continuity. According to Oduwusi, communication is considered the

basic competency of leadership. An effective communication channel should implement aid the inflow of information to avoid conflicts (Oduwusi, 2018.)

Although Dadic (2016) mentioned the issue of management being pertinent to sustainability, the study did not mention succession planning. Santora and Bozer (2015) advanced the idea of succession planning, arguing that most nonprofit organizations collapse when their directors and CEOs retire because they were not prepared to appoint a director or CEO. Santora and Bozer stated that many nonprofits fail to forecast their leaders' future because the leaders themselves feel strong, authoritative, and even immortal. Some nonprofit leaders cannot comprehend their absence in the organization or even think about what would happen if they were absent. Most nonprofit leaders lack an internal leadership forum for mentoring a replacement because doing so may bring problems between the leaders in power and those being groomed. The study concludes that leadership development is important in nonprofit entities because effective leaders would develop their successors, making an organization operable. Many people think sustainability is about money, but leadership is also an important consideration. An effective leader could liaise with the government to reduce the high taxation rates to enhance sustainability.

### **The Growth of Nonprofits in Florida**

Nonprofit organizations are organizations that dedicate surplus revenue toward a specific social cause. Florida has many social needs, including mental illness, childcare, protection, domestic violence, and social amenities. Mrusek (2017) suggested that the number of nonprofit organizations have grown in Florida, and nonprofit leaders have

taken action to correct or contain the needs so that Florida citizens receive the chance of living a respectable and comfortable life. This situation has led to the growth of nonprofit organizations in Florida, including organizations in religious, research, scientific, and educational settings (Mrusek, 2017).

Researchers have examined the growth of various types of nonprofit organizations (Hertling et al., 2018). According to Hertling et al., religious organizations focus on the spiritual nourishment of their congregations. The objectives of Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, and other religious organizations are to attract members by preaching and teaching them their doctrines (Hertling et al., 2018). Leaders of these institutions realized that achieving their missions or increasing membership without addressing the social issues of followers did not make sense. Hertling et al. stated that some teachings, like the Christian teachings, suggest it would not be beneficial to tell a hungry person to be well without providing them food. Religious organization leaders assist their communities through charitable activities.

Herman and Renz (1999) measured the extent churches, schools, and hospitals used different elements of the nonprofit strategic planning process for growth, including goal setting, financial analysis and forecasting, stakeholder analysis, budget development, implementation management, and alternative analysis to assist with social issues. Herman and Renz used four performance measures: growth in contributions, top administrator satisfaction, membership growth; and, growth in services, activities, and product donations. These institutions usually serve citizens by either offering the service at no cost or costs significantly lower than those charged by for-profit organizations (Pal &

Altay, 2019). This growth in the nonprofit sector compared with the government and intentionally shrinking resources in many countries experimenting with devolution and for-profits are mirrored again in the United States (Abzug, 2017).

Smith (1997) and Oster (1995) identified the importance of understanding the growth and role of nonprofits as community actors. Abzug (2017) stated that the first two routes are at the population or community level, involving changes in the numbers of organizations. At the level of the individual organization, Abzug & Derryck (2002) posited three paths to effectiveness: (a) survival through crisis, (b) reinvention or renewal, and (c) shifting resources making tough choices about mergers and consolidations. All three involve an organization's adaptation to its changing environment and are taken together with the population level; these effectiveness paths mirror Denison's (1990) effectiveness outcomes of survival, growth, stability, or decline.

According to Bryan (2019), nonprofit organizations rely on resource development staff and board members to develop and maintain relationships with donors regardless of an organization's resource acquisition strategy. Lead administrators need to develop and maintain relationships with donors to maintain sustainability. Interest incapacity is also growing among funders such as the federal government and philanthropic foundations, which are increasingly funding efforts targeted explicitly at building nonprofits' capacity (Bryan, 2019). Nonprofit administrators should have a clear vision of how to strategize to procure and retain long-term donors.

Haidar et al. (2021) suggested that the cause for most of the social needs in Florida and globally is the lack of knowledge on the specific subjects that cause those



issues. Haidar et al. proposed that the curriculum was not providing adequate education on social issues and their causes. Haidar et al. (2021) found social and health needs among families, including unemployment, food insecurity, financial insecurity, and access to health care issues that create a struggle for society. In response to curriculum inadequacies, various Florida education stakeholders established new policies regarding the inclusion of those studies into the school curricula from the youngest age possible (Jackson et al., 2018). Some educational institutions have also formed as nonprofits to teach the communities how to mitigate social issues such as domestic violence and childcare and protection (Johnson et al., 2021). Other educational institutions manage mental health cases in Florida by offering primary and technical training to individuals based on their capabilities (García & Jackson, 2021.) Each of these groups' perceptions of the nonprofit's reputation can affect the organization's performance and growth (Padanyi & Gainer, 2003). Jackson et al. asserted that nonprofits must also ensure that their reputation matches reality. Herman (2021) reported that some organizations can become financially vulnerable if leaders are not actively soliciting feedback from their stakeholders.

### **Sustainability of Nonprofit Organization**

Organizational sustainability is a critical concern for both private and public organizations. Although government nonprofit organizations are advantaged because governments sponsor them, private nonprofits usually face financial challenges because of difficulties in obtaining sustainable sources of finance (Eldridge et al., 2019). Nonprofit organizations serve principal functions in societies and communities that

neither government agencies nor private corporations can effectively serve (Eldridge et al., 2019). Financial sustainability is more relevant to nonprofits because the organizations must have a stable and continuous source of income to pursue visions and missions (Eldridge et al., 2019). Eldridge et al. emphasized that incubator sources support early-stage nonprofits, social enterprises, and businesses to become financially viable. Accelerator sources perform many of the same services for more developed nonprofits or enterprises, focusing on helping them proliferate (Eldridge et al., 2019). The selected sources are elemental for nonprofit organizations to become self-sufficient in soliciting resources for sustainability.

Dadic (2016) explored the subject of sustainability of nonprofit organizations through strategies such as fundraising. The author emphasized in the study findings the importance of nonprofit organizations in society, particularly improving quality of life. Dadic stated that sustainability in nonprofits is a managerial question, and more often, private nonprofits lack financial resources because of poor management. According to Dadic (2016), poor management presupposes a lack of leadership, low-level cooperation, and a lack of transparency and accountability. However, researchers observe that nonprofit organizational leaders would carefully plan fundraising activities when there is good management. The fundraising events could involve sponsors, potential donors, and even the community in which the organization is making an impact. Because many people are interested in donating to charity and supporting projects that would better society and uplift the lives of vulnerable groups, fundraising is an effective strategy for soliciting funds to enable the nonprofit to be sustainable (Dadic, 2016).

Dadic (2016) assessed the advantage for nonprofit leaders to raise funds through funding or to solicit public money from government agencies. One challenge of fundraising is long-term sustainability, and a major limitation in Dadic's study because organizations may not be able to depend upon government grants for long-term operations. The source is valuable for the study. The focus on fundraising is helpful, although Dadic (2016) stated the need to explore the limitations of this strategy is necessary. The author makes a significant point in solving the question of sustainability. The conceptual frameworks encourage sustainability for nonprofit organizations through leadership, sponsors, and potential donors to develop retention for nonprofit organizations.

Perić et al. (2020) emphasized economic activity of nonprofit organizations is legally regulated; for example, nonprofit administrators offer products and services to the market. Many nonprofit organization leaders remain focused on donations, sponsorships, or different tenders because of lack of transparency and clear explanations of opportunities for economic activity (Perić et al., 2020). Perić et al. proposed that the issue of sustainability and dependence on different external sources of funding are obstacles for accomplishing the goals in most nonprofit organizations, and the most common reason for changing the business concept. Reluctance to adopt profit-oriented practices is evident in marketing operations (Perić et al., 2020). Perić et al. asserted that many nonprofit organizations tend to have an "organization-centered" mindset as opposed to "customer-centered" concerning marketing activities performed to support the funding segment.

Perić et al. (2020) explained that many nonprofit leaders do not understand the term "business model", although their organizations perform similar functions to for-profit organizations, such as managing and allocating resources to achieve organizational goals. Perić et al. asserted that the business models of nonprofit organizations have received limited academic exploration. Hedman and Kalling (2003) developed a business model that began at the product market level – customers, competitors, offerings, activities and organization, resources and factors, and production input suppliers. Hedman and Kalling concluded the model could be completed only by introducing managerial and organizational processes highlighting cognitive, cultural, learning, and political constraints. Afuah and Tucci (2003) used organizational performance to define a business model as "the methods by which a firm builds and uses its resources to offer its customers better value than its competitors and to make money doing so" (p. 4).

Organizational leaders use business models to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and can be 'conceptualized as a system that is made up of components, linkages between the components and dynamics' (Afuah & Tucci, 2003). A business model is a conceptual tool containing a set of objects, concepts, and their relationships with the objective to express the business logic of a specific firm (Osterwalder et al., 2005). The concept and the definition of a business model have evolved, and the results yielded a generic approach and synthesis of the existing literature (Wirtz, 2011). Afuah and Tucci concluded that business models include customer value, design scope, price setting, revenue sources, related activities, implementation, capabilities, and sustainability. Perić et al., (2020) asserted that the performance of the firm's business

model would be strongly influenced by the sustainability of the environment and organizations. Perić et al. also emphasized promoting sustainable social, economic, cultural, and environmental empowerment and community building, actively responding to citizens' needs, and providing support to socially vulnerable groups that include the social life of the local community.

Iwu et al. (2015) conducted a study to identify the determinants of sustainability and the organizational effectiveness of nonprofit organizations. Iwu et al. determined sustainability elements in nonprofit organizations are rooted in the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations. According to Iwu et al., the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations should be analyzed in two main dimensions. First, the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations should be analyzed based on their ability to accomplish their core mandates fully. Second, the effectiveness and sustainability of nonprofit organizations should be analyzed based on their capacity to cover the cost of operations. The ability to cover costs and achieve mandates are the primary factors influencing the sustainability of nonprofit organizations.

Iwu et al. (2015) suggested that the sustainability of nonprofit organizations should include both financial and non-financial criteria. Nonprofit organization leaders need to ensure the effective use of financial resources to achieve their mandates and be operable. Non-financial imperatives such as effectively meeting the needs of clients and society are valuable in ensuring the sustainability of nonprofit organizations. Iwu et al. explained nonprofit organization sustainability could be achieved by considering both financial and non-financial factors. The source is highly relevant to understand the

concept of sustainability in nonprofit organizations, making it useful for the research topic.

Valentinov and Vaceková (2015) conducted a comprehensive study to determine the sustainability of nonprofit organizations in rural areas, in the Czech Republic.

Valentinov and Vaceková focused on the demand-side and supply-side determinants of sustainability of nonprofit organizations. Valentinov and Vaceková stated the sustainability of nonprofit organizations is necessary because of the primary role performed in society of meeting the socio-economic needs of vulnerable populations in rural areas. According to the study's findings, the split between the demand and supply sides proves that the behavior of nonprofit organizations is highly complex. Valentinov and Vaceková asserted that while the demand side focuses on the problems in society, it does not capture the invisible challenges facing nonprofit organizations as they strive to achieve mandates. The challenges invisible to the societal perspective are the main factors that make the sustainability of nonprofit organizations insecure. The societal problems of nonprofits reduce the trust in nonprofit organizations for the leader's ability to address sustainability.

Valentinov and Vaceková (2015) mentioned that the nature of rural settings affects nonprofit organizations' sustainability. Valentinov and Vaceková maintained that the socio-economic characteristics of rural settings such as high levels of poverty, poor infrastructure, and geographical dispersion have adverse effects on the operations of nonprofit organizations. Although nonprofit organizations strive to solve problems in rural areas, such problems persist because of the nature of the rural setting. Nonprofit

leaders must understand the demand-side and supply-side factors affecting the sustainability of nonprofit organizations.

Najev (2016) focused on the relationship between the marketing process and the success of fundraising performance of humanitarian organizations. According to Najev, many nonprofit organizational leaders, including humanitarian organizations, misunderstand the concept of marketing, and only focus on sales and promotion activities. The lack of an adequate social image of marketing is a factor preventing the humanitarian organization from using practical marketing tools. Najev further suggested that nonprofit organizations are mainly concerned with meeting the needs of beneficiaries and donors, which prevents them from conducting effective and strategic marketing.

Challenges to the marketing process of nonprofit organizations include lack of funds and marketing personnel. The quick-fixing fundraising approaches and poor marketing make many nonprofit organizations unsustainable. Najev (2016) concluded that the marketing processes used by humanitarian organizations do not significantly influence fundraising processes. The researchers demonstrated the importance of understanding the marketing processes used by nonprofit organizations and how marketing processes influence fundraising performance.

### **Importance of Fundraising for Nonprofit**

Nonprofit organizations are funded through a combination of donations, grants, sponsorship, and public funding, including opportunity stores (France & Regmi, 2019). France and Regmi suggested observation of the organization finds some donors tend to donate in-kind through the provision of goods. France and Regmi stated that donors tend

to donate goods when they do not want to use the items anymore and desire to dispose of them. Fundraising is imperative to obtaining donations for nonprofit organizations.

Fundraising can be viewed as a systematic activity aimed primarily at raising financial resources for either an organization or an individual (Hommerová & Severová, 2019).

Hommerová and Severová stated that the purpose of fundraising is for nonprofit organizations to raise money and receive help in managing their relations with public donors with whom they share goals and intentions.

According to Hommerová and Severová (2019), fundraising is a set of methods aimed at raising funds necessary for executing a nonprofit organization's activities is only a means to an end. However, fundraising must not become the organization's nonprofit activities' objective because this would significantly jeopardize its sustainability (Hommerová & Severová, 2019). Fundraising activities are necessary to obtain financial assistance for nonprofit organizations. Administrators can use different fundraising activities: social media, website, sell goods and distribute educational materials. Fundraising can be successful only because the nonprofit organization's activities are beneficial for the community and contribute to society's sustainable development (Hommerová & Severová, 2019). Fundraising helps nonprofit organizations reach their goals and obtain donors' financial support for publicly beneficial or charity purposes.

Fundraising can aid nonprofit organizations with the financial gap in obtaining stability. Fundraising also contributes more than money to nonprofit organizations because fundraising messages create awareness of the organization and its program among those solicited (Thornton, 2006). Because both are symbolic and practical



importance of charitable and philanthropic giving, fundraising is essential for nonprofit management (Lee & Shon, 2018). The fundraising process includes various activities, from identifying individuals and groups, cultivating prospects, soliciting actual gifts, and recognizing donors afterward (Lee & Shon, 2018). Many people believe purchasing an item at a fundraising event is considered equal to donating to a nonprofit organization because the proceeds of the purchase fund the nonprofit organization. Regarding the conceptual framework, Lee and Shon's fundraising process is ideal for assessing the fundraising activities for raising funds for nonprofit organizations.

### **Retention of Donors**

Nonprofit administrators must commit to identifying strategies for the organization's level of independence on retaining grants, contracts, and donors. Waniak-Michalak and Zarzycka (2015) stated that financial and non-financial factors influence donors' decisions to fund a nonprofit organization. As a result, they discovered that donors often do not make financial statements when choosing a nonprofit organization to support financially. According to Waniak-Michalak and Zarzycka, financial statements are not very useful as they either lack essential information to assess an organization or contain an overwhelming amount of data. The researchers determined that non-financial information dramatically determines whether a donor provides charitable donations. Waniak-Michalak and Zarzycka asserted that corporate goals and descriptions of its projects are particularly significant to donors. Many of the participants in the study stated they had funded nonprofits because of the inspiration of individuals they knew.

The sustainability of nonprofit organizations does not depend entirely on financial security. Organizational sustainability is also influenced by non-financial factors such as organizational goals. Nonprofit administrators should consider creating goals and projects to ensure that they are strategic and congruent with their mission and vision. Waniak-Michalak and Zarzycka (2015) stated that donors prefer viable organizations, even if they may be experiencing temporary cash problems. This reference will be helpful to explain that nonprofit organizations can focus on non-financial factors to increase their attractiveness to potential donors.

McDonald et al. (2015) conducted research to understand the relationship between mission and money. The study allowed them to conclude that nonprofit organizations should endeavor to attain financial stability while simultaneously following their mission to assure social relevance. McDonald et al. proposed a "sustainability-based typology" that nonprofits can use to diagnose their particular difficulties, which would enable them to continue providing social value to their constituents (McDonald et al., 2015). Leaders of low financially performing nonprofit organizations should formulate strategic plans to enhance efficiency through minimized cost.

McDonald et al. (2015) addressed strategies that nonprofits can employ to achieve fiscal sustainability. They underscore that financial success primarily depends on reducing costs and increasing revenues. Nonprofit organizations can enhance revenues through donations and operational profits, including fees for service, sponsorship, commercial ventures, membership, grants, fundraising events, and contract fees, the

primary methods to reduce costs are increasing volunteerism, achieving cost efficiencies, and forming strategic alliances (McDonald et al., 2015).

Chikoto-Schultz and Neely (2016) demonstrated the association between financial stability and financial growth in nonprofit organizations. Chikoto-Schultz and Neely compared nonprofit organizations that exhibit low levels of financial stability and growth to those that demonstrate high levels. Study findings indicated high financial performers (HFPs) are often older and larger organizations regarding total revenue and unrestricted net assets. HFPs are characterized by high levels of compensation and capital assets, and effectively manage their spending by investing in professional officers by paying them more than other nonprofit organizations.

Chikoto-Schultz and Neely (2016) discussed various ways that nonprofit organizations source their funds. Foremost, they note that government funds and contracts positively contribute to financial stability and growth. Government funds are easier to access and more stable than private donations, making it a significant revenue strategy to achieve financial stability. Chikoto-Schultz and Neely emphasized that nonprofit organization leaders can use investment income to achieve fiscal stability.

Nonprofit administrators can maintain and procure long-term donors by developing different marketing platforms for donors. Xiao and Yue (2021) mentioned that one important challenge is donor retention, defined as keeping attracted donors interested and engaged so that they can continue to make donations year after year. Xiao and Yue stated that nonprofit administrators could simultaneously use cross-sectional survey data to measure donation intention-related variables. Xiao and Yue suggested that

online donor retention is another way to increase donor loyalty and trust toward the platform or retain long-term donors. Xiao and Yue's findings validated nonprofit administrators design a more efficient new donor acquisition strategy and conduct donor relationship management with more granular online donation behavior, which warrants more research. The conceptual framework of acquisition strategy is for the nonprofit administrators to create a relationship with long-term donors to retain stability with long-term donors.

Donor retention is essential for nonprofit organizations to maintain and secure long-term donors. Donor retention is developed by donor loyalty and trust toward the platform and can be affected by two broad factors: features of donation relationship and features of donation action and experience (Xiao & Yue, 2021). Features of the donation relationship are understood by looking at the channel of donor acquisition. Features of donation action and experience refer to donors who have been verified to have a stronger long-term relationship with the nonprofit organization (Schmitt et al., 2011). The strategy with the two broad sets of factors is aligned with the conceptual framework based on the results study by (Xiao & Yue, 2021).

### **Nonprofit Advocacy**

Nonprofit advocacy strategy creates long-term donors' survival by creating relationships with donors. (Valentinov et al. 2013), stated that nonprofit advocacy can provide service activities of nonprofit organizations that are seen as contributing to the compensatory pathway. Nonprofit advocacy concentrates their activities on retaining donors by devoting efforts to social needs despite dependence on government funding;

organizations can engage in advocacy for social benefits, provided that they develop nonprofit strategy plans that endorse a moral vision that situates the clients' problems and their solutions in the environment rather than in the individual.

In their advocacy roles for nonprofit organizations, administrators of nonprofit organizations advance and disseminate their visions of social progress benefits (Valentinov et al., 2013). The ideas of nonprofit administrators may be concerned with adjusting institutions, semantic categories, or both as nonprofit advocacy benefits (Valentinov et al., 2013). Nonprofit advocacy strategies may not necessarily bring the win-win solutions to particular social dilemmas, even though these solutions would most closely correspond to the nature of the direct pathway (Valentinov et al., 2013). For nonprofit advocacy to contribute to this pathway, it is sufficient that nonprofit goals for organizations merely raise public awareness of the respective social dilemmas and the associated discrepancies between social structure and retaining donors (Valentinov et al., 2013). The successful identification of win-win situations along the ergonomic lines requires essential preconditions, such as the stakeholders' practical deliberation and open negotiation, as well as the awareness of their interests (Valentinov et al., 2013).

### **Network Theory**

The tenets of network theory depict companies and their stakeholders as developing joint shared interests where the role of managers is to focus on creating more value for a more significant number of stakeholders by promoting and expanding upon the jointness of interests between the company and its stakeholders (Strand & Freeman, 2013). Freeman et al. (2008), contended that encouraging managers to consider the

jointness of interests between stakeholders is likely to produce better consequences for all stakeholders because it recognizes that stakeholder interests are joint. A stakeholder pursues its interests at the expense of others, and the others withdraw their support or look to create another network of stakeholder value creation (Strand & Freeman 2013). Network theory provides understandings of the growing need for networking to establish and strengthen relationships to ensure business sustainability for nonprofit organizations.

Network theory provides nonprofit organizations' administrators with knowledge about the different concerns stakeholders have as far as non-profitable organizations are concerned and the safeguarding strategies that different concerned partners may have to maintain network theory. Strand and Freeman (2013) stated that the long-run value creation for more stakeholders is likely when the company and its lead administrators focus on the jointness of interests between the organization and its stakeholders. Stakeholders' commitment is valuable for developing relationships to sustain networking theory.

According to Strand and Freeman (2013), the notion of a competitive-cooperative dimension is a valuable description of a fundamental tenet of stakeholder network theory to embrace cooperation between the company and its stakeholders. Adopting a "cooperative strategic posture" entails when a company demonstrates a tendency to first consider its stakeholders as potential partners in cooperation (Strand & Freeman, 2013.) Stakeholders can benefit from the value created through a cooperative strategic posture network in the nonprofit realm (Cabral et al., 2019). Cabral et al. emphasized stakeholder management capabilities among public, private, and nonprofit organizations to pursue

enhanced public value and continuous support from appreciative stakeholders. According to Cabral et al., reasonable financial returns can create value appropriated by other stakeholders in improved network theory beyond financial gains for nonprofit organizations.

Stakeholder theory rejects a narrowly economic view of the firm in favor of its purpose to create as much value as possible for its stakeholders (Strand & Freeman, 2013). Strand and Freeman stated that an administrator's most fundamental task is to formulate goals adapted to the opportunities offered by the company's situation, goals that will satisfy the demands of the stakeholders. Because stakeholders have additional communication channels to express their needs and call into question an organization's legitimacy, improved stakeholder management capabilities can be imperative for effective value creation (Cabral et al., 2019). Stakeholder management capabilities can enable organizations to deploy their operational capabilities in pursuit of enhanced public value and continuous support from appreciative stakeholders to help leaders create a sustainable business model (Cabral et al., 2019). The fundamental tenets of network theory provide insights to nonprofit administrators into the growing need for networking to establish and strengthen relationships to procure long-term sustainability donors.

Network theory emphasizes the social aspects of collaboration (Tang & Wang, 2020). Larson (1992) found that nonprofit alliances deepen the awareness, trust, and commitment of participants. Tang and Wang asserted that network theory suggests that the main motivation for nonprofit organizations is to establish linkages with other organizations and expand access to information and knowledge. Tang and Wang

emphasized that the embeddedness of organizations in a larger social structure among other organizations can result in significant trust and promotes collaboration among organizations. Networks create opportunities for collaboration by deepening the awareness, trust, and commitment of parties within a relationship (Guo & Acar, 2005; Moynihan, 2009).

Guo and Acar (2005) defined "network effect" as the effect of the board of directors' links with other nonprofit organizations on forming their collaboration. The deepened awareness, trust, and commitment developed in network relationships during standard times (i.e., non-disaster times) play imperative roles in promoting collaboration between nonprofit organizations in extreme circumstances (Tang & Wang, 2020).

Network theory indicates that social networks can promote the formation of collaborations (Guo & Acar, 2005). The intensity of the network can also affect the forms of collaboration (Larson, 1992). Tang and Wang stated that network theory emphasizes that the embeddedness of organizations in a social structure among other organizations is likely to result in trust and collaboration among businesses.

### **Transition**

Section 1 included the background of the problem, problem statement, purpose statement, and nature of the study. The research question and supporting interview questions were included. Operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations and the significance of the study were described. The remainder of Section 1 included a detailed literature review of the study topic and conceptual framework.



Section 2 components will include the role of the researcher, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and the reliability and validity measures for this study.

## Section 2: The Project

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. The population of the study consisted of leaders of four nonprofit organizations that have remained operable for at least 5 years in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The findings from this study may contribute to social change by ensuring valuable services remain available to help citizens in need to establish means to become financially independent. In addition, increased financial independence may lead to meaningful employment contributing to nonprofit organizations' financial stability.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher in qualitative studies requires the identification of personal values, assumptions, and biases prior to beginning the study (Tuohy et al., 2013). I am a business manager and owner in the health and fitness industry and have no direct relationship with any of the study participants. My work experience outside the nonprofit sector enabled me to collect and analyze data with limited personal bias. I made every effort to avoid reviewing participant responses through my personal opinions or perspectives regarding the study topic.

Using an interview protocol (see Appendix A), I explored participant themes or responses. A researcher's interview protocol is an instrument of inquiry establishing a consistent procedure for qualitative interview data collection of a specific topic (Patton, 2014). Researchers use interview protocols to ensure consistency and mitigate

unexpected problems during the interview process (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Qualitative interviews were useful for obtaining strategies, cultural views, practices, and experiences of interview subjects.

The intent of the Belmont Report (U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, 1978) is to protect research subjects and participants from harm. The central tenets of the Belmont Report are respecting persons, beneficence, and justice, and it requires the use of informed consent, assessment of participant risk, and equity in participant selection (U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, 1978). As a researcher, I applied the Belmont Report's ethical standards to protect each participant's rights and treat all participants respectfully. I also obtained Walden University Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval before commencing data collection or participant recruitment.

### **Participants**

I purposefully selected the participants (see Bernard, 2013) from four nonprofit organizations that remained operable for at least 5 years in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I used a sampling method, which Alvi (2016) described as a technique that researchers use to select a group of relatively smaller people selected for a population for investigation purposes. I recruited participants by contacting administrators of nonprofit organizations through LinkedIn to determine if they would be interested in participating in a research study about strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. Corwin and Clemens (2020) stated that the participant selection process is necessary in data collection.

After receiving IRB approval (number 06-17-22-0729773), I contacted participants of nonprofit organizations through LinkedIn and emails to introduce my study using invitational email allowed me to explore participants. Nonprofit leaders who agreed to participate were sent an informed consent form. Upon receipt of the informed consent form, each participant was contacted via email to determine a convenient location and time for the interview. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and virtually using the Zoom platform. Yin (2018) stated trust and rapport are mandatory for developing working relationships with participants in qualitative case studies. I established rapport with my participants by explaining the benefit of the participants their strategies to improve the success of organizations in the nonprofit sector. In addition, I was respectful and tried to make the participants comfortable with the interview process.

### **Research Method and Design**

According to Strijker et al. (2020), a researcher selects among three research methods: mixed-method, quantitative, and qualitative. Selecting an appropriate research methodology and research strategy is critical in a study. Quantitative techniques, such as surveys, frequently use standardized measures that fit diverse opinions and experiences into predetermined response categories (Connolly & York, 2002). I selected the qualitative methodology due to the explorative nature of the research questions. Researchers advise that when using the qualitative methodology, the number of participants should not be so small that it is difficult to obtain data saturation and yet not too large to make in-depth analysis difficult (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). The qualitative methodology was the appropriate method to use in this study. The quantitative

research method tends to be relatively inflexible and artificial (Amaratunga et al., 2002). I used the data gathering method because it is more natural than artificial. Also, quantitative research is not very useful in understanding the process or the significance that people attach to actions (Amaratunga et al., 2002). The qualitative research involved the ability to understand people's meaning. The quantitative method was not the appropriate research method for this study. The mixed method consists of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods and is more suitable with an extensive range of participants (Kaur et al., 2019). I did not select the mixed method design because I did not have a quantitative component in my methodology research.

### **Research Design**

Jorrín Abellán (2016) suggested that researchers might use five designs as examples of qualitative research design models: narrative research studies, phenomenological studies; ethnographical studies; case studies; and grounded theory studies. Narrative research or inquiry is one of the more recent qualitative methodologies on life stories as the essence of people-oriented sciences (Ntinda, 2019). The focus of this research was to investigate the personal life stories of interviewees; therefore, the narrative design is inappropriate. According to Mavhandu-Mudzusi (2018), the interpretative phenomenological analysis is a psychological qualitative research design used to understand participants' subjective realities through personal interpretations of their lived experiences and the meanings they attach to these experiences. I explored strategies administrators working for nonprofit organizations use to procure and retain

long-term donors; therefore, a phenomenology study was not a practical research design for this study.

Charani et al. (2019) noted ethnography is the study of people within the context in which they exist, live, and work. The purpose of my research was to gain an understanding of how nonprofit organizations maintain long-term donors. Ethnography also involves identifying concepts from the studies and abstracting them into a line of argument (Toye & Barker, 2020). Invariably, the utility of such qualitative research interviews depends on the participant or participants chosen in terms of their coverage and the quality of data within their responses (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). Traditionally ethnography is characterized by the in-depth observation of groups of individuals, being cognizant of the influences of historical and cultural contexts on social interactions (Jones & Smith 2017). In this study, there was no characterization to influence cultural contexts on social interactions; consequently, this design was not appropriate for my research.

Grounded theory is used for hypothesis and theory development is useful in mixed methods designs when the researcher or research team has adequate skills and training to implement it effectively (Guetterman et al., 2019). The research questions should drive design decisions, and researchers should ensure that questions are aligned for both mixed methods and grounded theory (Guetterman et al., 2019). Because I did not conduct a mixed-method study and did not develop hypotheses or theories, the grounded theory was not appropriate for this study.

Researchers use case studies to explore time and space-bound phenomenon (Alpi & Evans, 2019). Researchers use the case study design to understand a specific issue or

problem (Stake, 1995). Creswell (2013) stated that researchers use case studies to obtain an in-depth understanding of the case, where assertions are formed by the researcher about the overall meaning derived from the case and are reported at the end of a case study. The researcher uses a qualitative methodology study that encompasses greater complexity in a case report and often creatively combines multiple streams of data (Alpi & Evans, 2019). A case study is also traditionally considered a qualitative strategy to study a program, activity, or process in-depth, permitting a description of processes or groups' responses to interventions in real-life contexts (Grant et al., 2019). This qualitative case study was suitable for exploring administrators working for nonprofit organizations on strategies to procure and retain long-term donors.

### **Population and Sampling**

Researchers use purposive sampling in qualitative studies to obtain in-depth and rich data from participants (Tan et al., 2020). Tan et al. recommended that researchers identify and select participants who could provide rich data for qualitative studies. I used purposeful sampling to attract participants who possess experience using strategies to procure and retain long-term donors I purposefully selected participants from nonprofit organizations which have been in operation for at least 5 years before this research to ensure recruiting the most qualified candidates for this study. Each participant was above the age of 21 and implemented successful strategies that resulted in procuring and retaining long-term committed donors to remain operable.

The population for this qualitative case study was nonprofit administrators in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who have knowledge of strategies to procure and retain long-term

donors. Eng (2003) noted it is important to calculate the correct sample size because it affects the accuracy of the measurement and the conclusions about the population. Yin (2018) suggested a small sample size is adequate for case study design because the focus of a case study is with data richness and not data quantity. Hanson et al. (2011) suggested that a minimum of three participants are necessary to explore a case extensively. I interviewed four nonprofit administrator leaders who have cultivated successful strategies to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. The skilled researcher must remember the original purpose of the case study but be willing to adapt procedures or plans if unanticipated events occur (Yin, 2018). The criteria for selecting the participants: (a) 21 years old or older, (b) any gender, (c) leaders, administrators, or managers working for nonprofit organizations who developed nonprofit strategies plans for nonprofit organizations, and (d) nonprofit organizations that have been operable for at least 5 years. The research goal was to assess nonprofit administrators' strategies on how to procure and retain long-term donors.

Qualitative researchers usually work with few feasible cases to study a topic in-depth (Farrugia, 2019). According to Serra et al. (2018), purposive sampling strategies, even though generally overlooked, can be extremely useful for exploring the inherently complex context and other variables of interest. I recruited participants by contacting nonprofit administrators of nonprofit organizations through LinkedIn and via email to determine if they would be interested in participating in a research study about strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable.



Researchers use purposive sampling to select the sample deliberately and purposefully, which they believe can be the most useful in answering the research question (Farrugia, 2019). Curtis et al. (2000) noted that qualitative research is difficult to perform without discussing what aspects of sampling may be widely accepted as necessary. Qualitative researchers use multiple sources of data and perspectives to ensure that study results demonstrate validity through data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I studied supporting documents that provided an overview of the business model of the nonprofit donors and stakeholders and interviewed the four nonprofit administrators directed by the criteria of the 2021-2022 Baldrige performance excellence framework and the network theory as the conceptual framework. I ensured the reliability and validity of the data collected with member checking. The supporting documents comprised the organization's previous nonprofit strategic plan, financial records, various social media platforms, nonprofit goals, mission and vision statements, and data captured during nonprofit administrators' interviews examining the nonprofit organization through the criteria of Baldrige performance excellence framework (2021-2022). Saturation is used in qualitative research as a criterion for analyzing data (Saunders et al., 2018). Data saturation is achieved by interviewing participants until no new themes emerge (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2018). I continued interviewing participants until no new themes emerged. A total of four participants were interviewed.

### **Ethical Research**

Ethical research requires maximizing the protection of human participants, ensuring the quality, trustworthiness, and rigor of research, and following the rules and

regulations established by professional fields, institutions, and funding agencies (DuBois & Antes, 2018). The interviewees disclosed personal and confidential data; ethical procedures were in place to ensure the interviewees' privacy during the interview process. To ensure discretion and anonymity, the interviewees have not been identified by their real names. Instead, I assigned fictitious names to all participants. Finally, each participant received a consent form to explain their potential role in this study.

Data storage decisions affect the performance of both the ingestion and retrieval of information (O'Mara et al., 2016). Wei et al. (2020) stated that the cloud service management node stores the basic information of each node storing data, and its primary function is to manage the corresponding storage node; the storage node stores the corresponding data and the connection between the storage servers, mainly for data storage. I will store the data in the cloud for 5 years from the date I completed my data collection.

The interviewees in this study were informed that participation was voluntary, and they could decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time. Researchers should make it easy for interviewees to leave the study at any given time. Widmer et al. (2020) stated that researchers must provide a process by which a subject voluntarily confirms their willingness to participate in research after being informed of all aspects of the research relevant to the subject's decision to participate. I explained to the interviewees that they could withdraw from this study at any time, which is a moral right given to them. Also, I advised the interviewees that there are no incentives for participating in this research and no penalties for withdrawing from this study. The

interviewee's decision to participate in the research must be voluntary, free of coercion, undue influence, or intimidation (Widmer et al., 2020). I spoke with each interviewee to ensure they understood that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me via email or phone.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The researcher is the primary data collection instrument in a qualitative research study. Data collection instruments in qualitative description designs can include interviews, focus groups, observation, or document reviews (Colorafi & Evans, 2016). Also, the researcher is an instrument in generating the data. The interviewer will administer questions and comprise a relatively free-flowing interchange of views between the researcher and interviewee (Saunders et al., 2016). For this qualitative single case study, I served as the primary data collection instrument for this case study. I prepared for the interviews by reviewing the financial data of the nonprofits, with specific reference to their financial statements, annual reports, social media platforms, and media cover. I obtained data via semistructured, face-to-face on-site at their respective nonprofit organizations, at third-party locations, or virtual interviews with four nonprofit administrators who successfully resulted in developing strategies to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable for at least 5 years.

Qualitative interviews afford researchers opportunities to explore, in an in-depth manner, matters that are unique to the experiences of the interviewees, allowing insights into how different phenomena of interest are experienced and perceived (McGrath et al., 2019). I used the interviews to collect data to study nonprofit administrator strategies to

procure and retain long-term donors. By contrast, a structured interview guide usually includes predetermined questions stated in the same way to all interviewees with the purpose of eliciting responses to the exact phrasing (McGrath et al., 2019). In semistructured interviews, the interviewer guide or protocol includes several predetermined questions (typically five to 15 questions), but the interviewer can ask probing follow-up questions based upon the interviewees' responses (Lingard & Kennedy, 2010). I used an informed consent form to initiate communication with participants to obtain interviewees. I scheduled appointments with nonprofit administrators based on acceptance of interview participation and interviewee availability. I recorded interview sessions with a cellular telephone and used the recorded interviews to compare the data with other documentary evidence. I used an interview form that outlines 12 open-ended interview questions (see Appendix B).

Additional data sources strengthen the reliability and validity of a case study evaluation (Yin, 2013). Recording and transcribing interview data ensures the reliability of interviewees' responses (Gani et al., 2020). I transcribed the data collected from the interviewed participants and provided summaries to the interviewees to review for validation. Roberts and Priest (2006) described the qualitative content analysis as a particularly reliable approach to handling data collection; increasing reliability includes ensuring technical accuracy in recording and transcribing; recorded interviews and interview transcripts can help improve reliability transcripts. Rose and Johnson (2020) stated that member checking involves sharing collected data, often in a draft report, with research participants and receiving feedback about the summary. I used member checking

by providing each interviewee with interview summaries to confirm analysis and understanding to verify and validate data correction.

### **Data Collection Technique**

In qualitative research, the researcher is the data collection instrument and cannot separate themselves from the research (Jackson, 2019). Rose et al. (2019) identified the following common data collection techniques: interviews, focus groups, field notes, observations, questionnaires, and tests or measures. Data collection is used to explore core issues such as the need for replication research and research transparency, which involves making data collection instruments available for researchers to use in their projects (Rose et al., 2019). Semistructured interviews are the most accessible qualitative data collection instrument consisting of questions that are loosely structured to provide participants with more opportunities to express themselves fully (Mensah, 2020). I used semistructured interviews to interview participants with open-ended questions. I prepared for the interviews by reviewing the financial data of the four nonprofit organizations, with specific reference to their financial statements, annual reports, and media coverage. I used methodological triangulation to analyze the data gathered to prepare for the interviews. I obtained data via semistructured, face-to-face, online, and via email with four nonprofit administrators from four separate organizations who successfully understood strategy planning, assisting in the nonprofit organizations remaining operable for at least 5 years.

Ahmed and Mohamed (2023) posited the consent form as an agreement between the researcher and participants to help ensure they have an informed decision about

participating in the study, and the participants have the right to withdraw from participating without fear of penalty. Consent forms were emailed to four participants. I reviewed each executed consent form in its entirety. There were no incentives provided to the four participants of this study. The participants volunteered their time and commitment without any incentives. Irvine et al. (2013) suggested semistructured interviews are interviews in which the interviewer has prepared a list of topics to be explored and questions to be asked while following an established interview protocol (see Appendix A). Researchers use an interview protocol to ensure that the questions elicit open responses from the participants, which enables the conversation to be developed in ways that could not have been anticipated when the interview schedule was planned. According to Busetto et al. (2020), semistructured interviews are characterized by open-ended questions and the use of an interview guide or protocol. Using open-ended questions allowed me to conduct semistructured interviews in this study.

Case study researchers use semistructured interviews as the primary means of gathering research data to answer research questions (Brown & Danaher, 2019). I used 12 open-ended questions during the interviewing process for this study (see Appendix B). I interviewed four participants face-to-face on-site at their respective nonprofit organizations, at third-party locations, or via virtual platform as selected by the participants. I wrote and recorded responses during the interview. Researchers use smartphones to record interviews because smartphones are versatile and prevalent and offer several beneficial applications (Donker et al., 2013). I used the voice recorder on my Apple iPhone 14 Pro Max to record the interviews and store the recordings in an

iCloud drive for backup. The use of digital technology for promoting research methods is becoming a prominent tool for researchers (Bell et al., 2018).

Researchers use semistructured interviews in various formats and deploy a range of technologies (Brown & Danaher, 2019). Audio recording of interviews is recommended to enable the researcher to concentrate on the interview and build rapport without being distracted by extensive notetaking (Edwards & Hoiland, 2013). I took extensive notes and recorded the interviewee with a voice recorder on my Apple iPhone 14 Pro Max to ensure that all interview questions would be answered and transcribed accurately. I stored all my notes electronically and used Microsoft Excel to assist with creating code themes recognized during this process of my research and the interviews. Interviewees were informed that audio recording is used for data collection and that they can refuse to be audio recorded if preferred (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). None of the four participants refused to be recorded.

The general process for analyzing and interpreting most interviews involves reviewing the data (in the form of transcripts, audio recordings, or detailed notes), applying descriptive codes to the data, condensing, and categorizing codes to look for patterns (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). By coding data in their original multimedia forms, researchers can improve the accuracy of their interpretations because they can review the original data and the imbued and nonverbal meanings (Markle et al., 2011). Researchers used a member-checking strategy to achieve credibility by providing participants with interview summaries to review for accuracy (Waturuocha, 2021). I asked the interview questions one-on-one and then validated the data through member

checking. The semistructured interviews of this qualitative study provided an in-depth analysis of how the member-checking strategy of the data interpretation or transcript review can enhance data. Dorhout (2023) suggested member checking should occur after transcription to show how participants' opinions and assertions are interpreted and portrayed. I analyzed data gathered in the interview process from the four participants of the four nonprofit organizations, various social media platforms, and scholarly research as a segment of member checking and data triangulation. Finally, I used member checking to confirm the information gathered during the interview to ensure consistency with the interviewee's intent to convey.

### **Data Organization Technique**

Koltay (2019) stated researchers need support in planning, organizing, security, documenting, and sharing datasets for a deposit, preserving them on a short and a long-term basis. I used a journal for this research to document notes from the interviewees. Prepare to gather data ahead of time prior to the occurrence of an incident; indeed, this kind of preparation would save effort and time (Alenezi et al., 2019). I transferred all notes to the electronic file iCloud. The iCloud service management node stores the necessary information of each node storing data, and its primary function is to manage the corresponding storage node; the storage node stores the corresponding data and the connection between the storage servers, mainly for data storage (Wei et al., 2020). I wrote down phrases and facial cues, such as smiling or frowning. I took extensive notes during these semistructured interviews, reviewed client-specific supporting documents,



and reviewed peer-reviewed journals and books to examine collected data and enhance the credibility of the study's findings for methodological triangulation.

I protected each interviewee's file through redaction, coding, password protection, and the hard copies of the master notes in a locked file cabinet. I assigned each interviewee a number instead of using their names, and the journal will remain kept in a secured location without any accessibility by third parties. For example, I assigned a code to each interviewee, (e.g., P1, P2, P3), and file encoded data correlated to each interviewee, such as recordings, company data, and electronic data in folders with assigned codes.

Coding data was necessary to organize the research. Find a label that allows the grouping of several elements (statements or observations) under one concept so that we have a more or less limited number of codes (or categories) rather than a large variety of diverse phenomena (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014). La Pelle (2004) stated it is often desirable to use conceptual theme codes rather than question number codes as the highest level (whole number) coding category. Since survey respondents may well write in data that is relevant to other open-ended questions or that refer back to these and coding by question number will not allow sorting this type of data into the appropriate thematic category (La Pelle, 2004). I created a table with columns for the interviewee ID, the question number, the question, and the theme coding.

### **Data Analysis**

Williams and Moser (2019) stated that coding is an essential structural operation in qualitative research, enabling data analysis and successive steps to serve the purpose of

the study. Although qualitative researchers continue to refine their triangulation processes to ensure the data's trustworthiness, more nuanced approaches may be developed and applied to the research procedures (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Four types of triangulations are data triangulation, which includes matters such as periods of time, space, and people, investigator triangulation, which includes the use of several researchers in a study; theory triangulation, which encourages several theoretical schemes to enable interpretation of a phenomenon; and, methodological triangulation, which promotes the use of several data collection methods such as interviews and observations citation. I used methodological triangulation for this study because of the various data collection methods. Data collection comprised of semistructured interviews and a review of organization documents from government databases, operations, financial reports, and annual reports. Network theory provides an appropriate lens to analyze data by exploring how nonprofit leaders apply networking and relationships in donor retention strategies.

Daniel (2019) stated that key elements of data analysis included the topic, formulation of research questions and hypotheses, literature review, the research design, sample size, sampling technique, statistical tool for data analysis, and referencing style. Although researchers can use qualitative software to use complex data analysis tools (Williams & Moser, 2019). Researchers need to be familiar with the data to maintain a good connection between open codes and the raw data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). A helpful data analysis technique is adding specific notes to identify codes that will assist researchers in understanding the raw data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Kyngäs et al. also suggested assigning pseudonyms to participants to identify data sources while ensuring

confidentiality. I also documented all research activities, such as consent forms, data collection, and data analysis (Kyngäs et al., 2020). I used iCloud to store each interviewee's file and used a password for each interviewee.

The quality of a study can be increased by developing a detailed description of the research process, context, aims, questions and design, theoretical underpinnings, and the methods of data collection and analysis, results, discussion, and their alignment (Stenfors, 2020). Researchers must be familiar with the data to maintain a good connection between open codes and the raw data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). A helpful technique is adding certain notes to identify codes that will help the researchers when they return to the raw data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). I familiarized myself with the data and generated codes for each interviewee. I used Excel for the coding process. I categorized each interviewee's files by manual coding, grouped the codes into themes and sub-themes folders, and stored information in computer files. Olapane (2021) stated that for audio recording after interview completion, NVivo 12 software transcription transcribe automatically and offers multiple coding methods. After the interviews, audio recordings were anonymized and transcribed verbatim using the automatic NVivo 12 as a second coding (Olapane, 2021). I used the transcription of the audio files completed using NVivo 12 transcription services for secondary coding and transcriptions corrected accuracy (Gupta et al., 2020). Once the transcriptions were completed, NVivo Pro version 12.0 was used to analyze the data by adapting principles of inductive content analysis (Gupta et al., 2020).

I immersed myself in the raw data by listening to tapes, reading transcriptions, studying notes, and listing ideas and recurrent themes (Pope et al., 2000). Creswell

(2009) suggested that the final report or the description of themes should be shared with participants for verification purposes, a process referred to as member checking (Loh, 2013). The draft themes arising from the analysis should be forwarded to participants for feedback and then confirmed through a literature review (Noble & Heale, 2019). I also assess public and organizational documentation, press release, and minutes from the organization's internal meetings. I shared a summary of each interview with each participant to ensure the accuracy of my data analyzed.

### **Reliability and Validity**

#### **Reliability**

##### ***Dependability***

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified the four components for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Reliability refers to dependability that establishes the consistency of the outcomes after performing a test repeatedly. Dependability enhances reliability and asserts that findings are distinctive to a specific time and place, and explanations are consistent across the data (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Triangulation serves as an opportunity to reinforce the dependability of a study, which is one of the strengths of qualitative research because "fewer layers" exist between the researcher and the participants in the study (Merriam, 1995). I used an audio recorder to record each interviewee and take notes while interviewing each interviewee. To improve dependability, each interviewee received a summary of their interview for review and authenticity.

**Validity**

Researchers use validity criterion to assess the dependability of the instrument used in measuring. The validity of a study ensures transparency of the research study and reduces researcher bias (Singh, 2014). Validity establishes the extent to which an assessment agrees with estimated correlations and suppositions, which are reached theoretically (Wakefield et al., 2017). It is an essential element that dictated the level with which an instrument evaluates the things it is intended to establish.

***Credibility***

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility in qualitative studies is similar to internal validity in quantitative studies. Credibility is achieved when the researcher has achieved a certain level of confidence in the findings based on the phenomenon under investigation. Credibility can be achieved through member checking, which is the process in which preliminary findings are presented to participants for input and elaboration (Stenfors, 2020). I provided each interviewee with a summary of collected data and requested each interviewee to verify my interpretation of my findings. Triangulation is a method used to increase the credibility and validity of research findings (Cohen, 2017), and is achieved by comparing interview responses with another data source (Daniel, 2019). I used methodological triangulation to compare interview themes with organization document content.

***Transferability***

To ensure transferability, researchers use verbatim transcripts and thick descriptions in data analysis (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Transferability provides evidence

to the reader with evidence to assess research outcomes' integrity (Daniel, 2019).

According to Koch (1994), detailed descriptions of the original context of the research must be adequately described so that judgments can be made. I ensured the transferability of findings by obtaining detailed descriptions of the original context of the research. The researcher is responsible for providing detailed descriptions so the reader can make informed decisions about the transferability of findings to their specific contexts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Firestone, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; McKee, 2004; Stake, 1995).

The emphasis should be on creating 'thick' descriptions, including accounts of the context, the research methods, and examples of raw data so that readers can consider their interpretations (Dawson 2009; Popay et al., 1998; Stake 1995). I produced detailed descriptions of the study's findings, not limited to research methods and examples of raw data for readers to review.

### ***Confirmability***

A researcher can enhance confirmability by using 'audit trails,' which means that the researcher will include written field notes, memos, or excerpts from a field diary to support the connection between the data and findings (Kynge et al., 2020). The facilitators and researcher will obtain confirmability by checking and rechecking the data (Daniel, 2019). Confirmability was ensured by checking the handwritten taken during the interview process for this study. Guba (1981) stated confirmability provides three assessment criteria: (a) triangulation, (b) practicing reflexivity, and (c) arrange for a confirmability audit. I used methodological triangulation, reflexive journals, transcriptions, data saturation, and interviewees reviewing transcribed documentation for

direct quotes and clarity. I established a rapport with the interviewees before and after the interviews to maintain confirmability during this entire process.

### ***Data Saturation***

The sample size is not specified before the researcher starts the data collection process, and data collection stops once saturation occurs (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Data saturation is pursuing multiple perspectives from participants to achieve a diverse data set (Creswell, 2002). To ensure data saturation's trustworthiness by evidencing data saturation, no new ideas emerging during interviews and negative cases of data that did not support emergent patterns or trends (Patton, 2014). The term data saturation refers to a point when information from participants becomes repetitive, and the researcher will not gain any new information from further data collection (Kyngäs et al., 2020). I based data saturation on the responses of the interviewees. I contacted each interviewee and provided a copy of their interview for review and correction to return within a specified time frame.

### **Transition and Summary**

This qualitative multiple study intended to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. In this section, I explained my role as a researcher, information on the interviewees, and how they were recruited. I explained the research method, research design, population and sampling of the study, data collection techniques, data organizations techniques, data analysis, reliability, and validity. After applying for and receiving IRB approval, I conducted interviews, which allowed me to complete Section 3. Section 3 consists of this

study's purpose and how the findings apply to professional practice, themes are identified, and the relationship of the findings with the conceptual framework is explored.



### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The objective of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. Data were obtained from interviews with four nonprofit leaders and the review of organizational documentation, including economic records and yearly reports. All of the participants met the following qualifications: they had been in the nonprofit industry for over 5 years, were successful in implementing strategies to sustain their organization, and were over the age of 21. Each nonprofit organization had remained operable for at least 5 years.

I identified three themes of strategies that interviewees implemented in their organization to remain operable: relationship with donors (connecting), sustainability and accountability (visibility), and revenue multiplicity (achieved by educating donors). In the presentation of my findings, I will describe the themes based on the data analysis. I will also demonstrate a connection between the results and network theory, the conceptual framework I applied for this research.

#### **Thematic Findings**

The research question for this study was: What strategies do nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain committed long-term donors to remain operable? Executives of four nonprofits participated in this study. I conducted semistructured face-to-face and online interviews with four nonprofit executives from four organizations; all participants were in Florida. I reviewed the organization's mission and vision statements. In addition, I reviewed income statements and annual reports, and all the organization's

social media platforms. To maintain confidentiality, I assigned each participant pseudonyms, P1, P2, P3, and P4, and used a pseudonym for each nonprofit organization. Three major themes emerged after data analysis, coding, and triangulation, as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Major Themes Identified*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Relationship with Donors	98
Sustainability and Accountability	86
Revenue Multiplicity	81

**Theme 1: Relationship with Donors**

The first primary theme identified was the relationship with donors (connecting). Leaders must develop a foundation built on integrity and trustworthiness to maintain donor relationships. P1 stated, “developing a relationship with donors means you have to be transparent, and having integrity is the foundation.” P2 said, “transparency builds an ongoing relationship with donors.” According to Alhidari et al. (2018), individual donations should be managed with the objective of building a trusting relationship. Leaders in charitable organizations should promote transparency and accountability in reporting their activities and provide evidence that brings out its trustworthiness, such as current data on its impact on the community (Alhidari et al., 2018). P3 also stated that developing a relationship with donors is linked with trust and transparency, both between the donor as well as the organization. The strategies align with the conceptual framework

as demonstrated by Faulk et al. (2016), who applied network theory and found that a systems approach assisted in analyzing data by exploring how nonprofit administrators develop relationships in donor retention strategies. I reviewed organizational documents provided by the four nonprofit administrators that develop nonprofit strategic plans to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. Themes were created from the conceptual framework of network theory and Baldrige Performance Excellence Frames (2021) to identify.

The strategy implemented by the nonprofit executives that I interviewed aligned with Katz (2018) who stated that trust is important for the existence and success of charity organizations. The nonprofit literature indicates that the organization's image matters, particularly the perceived influence and trustworthiness (Katz, 2018). P4 stated that all relationships develop out of trust, and nonprofit organizations must display trust and integrity to maintain long-term donors. Donating money to a charity organization requires trust because information asymmetries make it impossible for donors to estimate the quality of the service provided (Greiling, 2007). P3 further elaborated that trust is the main foundation of development and maintaining relationships with potential donors. Katz (2018) stated that the perceived influence and trustworthiness of that organization affect the probability of an individual donating to the organization. Trust in nonprofit organizations in developed nations appears to be considerably low and even decreasing in some places (Light, 2005, 2008; Saxton, 2004).

The responses by the interviewees are in alignment with peer-reviewed studies from the literature review and recent studies. Transparency is a strong signal for

trustworthiness and effectiveness (Katz, 2018). Similarly, the leaders established trust with donors through demonstrations of professional competence, including effective communication (Shaker & Nelson, 2022.) Shaker and Nelson posited that the relationship felt more stable, less uncertain, and not episodic. The leaders and donors became socially bonded. P1 specified that meaningful relationships are associated with increased satisfaction and communication with the donor to maintain trust. Burroughs and Eby (1998) stressed that individuals who develop a psychological and relational contract with a community are supported by a state of being involved rather than external factors such as earning something or climbing a career ladder and tend to develop a deeper, reciprocal relationship built with trust. Table 2 includes a summary of different responses from each participant about their relationship with donors.

**Table 2***Theme 1: Relationship with Donors*

A Priori Code	Participants' Identifier	Excerpts
Relationship with donors	P1	We work on a strategy to further involve donors to maintain relationships. The goal is to constantly communicate with potential donors via telephone, emails, or meetings in person or zoom to develop a prospective long-term relationship that we bring them into regular, and then long-term donors. It is investing your time to develop a relationship. Our strategy is that every donor starts off as a potential donor to develop as a long-term donor.
	P2	The term we use is called a prospect and just a variety of ways. I feel like I am pretty good at reading people, but you know, if someone gives me their business card, most likely my first initial contact will be to reach out via email or telephone to see if they want to meet for coffee? Do you want to jump on the, the zoom? Let's get lunch. Are you a happy hour person? What can we do to get together? And then usually we just keep following up from there via telephone or email. I do have to reserve my time to build and maintain relationships with potential donors.
	P3	Potential donors, we certainly do a warm check-in. For example, emails, face-face, and telephone. I am the kind of person personally that takes pictures of everything. Whether it is the donors who are supporting a particular program area or if it is a special event or an initiative that we are doing, I really love capturing the candid moments and the highlights, you know, of that impact and being able to share that with people and hopefully make them smile. I think capturing memorable moments of impact demonstrates to the donor that they helped to put a smile on a family's face or a young person's face. Being able to share with them through our social media, email marketing or just sending a personal touch email or a personal thank you note are just the little ways that you can do that really cost nothing to really show your appreciation for that support.
	P4	Maintaining long-term donors, for example, we met them at a social event, then we followed up within 24 hours with a phone call or an email to say how nice it was to meet them. And that we love to continue the conversation. If there was a time we might meet for coffee or chat on the phone, so very light we do not, we do not go heavy because nobody would talk to us. We are in constant communication to build a substance relationship with donors.

## **Theme 2: Sustainability and Accountability**

The second theme from the interviews and data collection was that nonprofits need sustainability and accountability with donors (visibility). The responses by the interviewees are in alignment with peer-reviewed studies from the literature review and recent studies.

To enhance the credibility of the study's findings for methodological triangulation, I reviewed organizational documentation, financial statements, annual reports, and organizations' websites to answer the open-ended research questions. I checked the vision statements and mission statements of each organization. I compared the information I reviewed with the participants' interviewed responses. To promote sustainability and accountability, the executives I interviewed outlined the significance of involving donors with the importance of the organization's mission. P2 explained, "involving the donors in the organization's mission builds a relationship because the donor is providing their expertise." Cheuk (2021) concluded that financial management capacity had been proven to have an impact on charity financial sustainability, the clear implication from this what? is that charities should endeavor to recruit directors with accounting professional qualifications as the latter is a reliable indication of financial skills and competence, as well as ethical behavior (Cheuk, 2021). Regarding financial management practices in nonprofits, Waiganjo et al. (2012), Ibrahim (2012), Njoroge (2013), and Saungweme (2014) noted a strong positive relationship between sound financial practices and processes with financial sustainability.

The interviewees insisted that the need for sustainability and accountability is correlated with donors partaking in the nonprofit organization's mission. P1 mentioned that it is vital to engage the donor in the mission of the organization process. This is another way of retaining the donor for long-term stewardship. With regard to alignment with the conceptual framework, the strategy applied by the nonprofit administrators that I interviewed also aligned with researchers such as Lewis (2011), Ibrahim (2012), and Ebrahim (2005), in particular, noted that such sound practices were instrumental in helping nonprofits carry out their mandate to stakeholders and attain their objectives and help to convince donors that donated monies would be used for planned (and not other) purposes (Lewis, 2011; Okorley et al., 2012). Donors involved with the organization's mission are critical for executives of nonprofits to maintain sustainability and accountability within the organization. P4 stated that: our organization's mission puts the needs of donors at the forefront; whatever they require, whether financial reports or information on the organization's endeavors, we would ensure that we provide the information promptly. P3 posited that adequate reserves help provide a nonprofit with sustainability and accountability, ensuring their ability to meet their goals in the long term.

Executives of struggling organizations should implement strategies to aid with all facets of operational procedures to strengthen the confidence in donors to maintain long-term donors. Ortega et al (2020), suggested a lack of strategic expertise on the board will limit the board's capacity to manage a new context. There is a lack of commitment to substantive accountability for several reasons: High donor confidence; weak demand for

information from the stakeholders; internal organizational problems related to organizational structure and culture; and lack of internal professionals (Ortega et al (2020). Gilchrist and Simnett (2019) stated financial resources (private or public) in the third sector are critical to its sustainability and affect its long-term success (Keating & Frumkin 2003). Table 3 summarizes each participant's responses regarding sustainability and accountability in procuring and retaining long-term donors.

**Table 3**

*Theme 2: Sustainability and Accountability*

A Priori Code	Participants' Identifier	Excerpts
Implementation Practices	P1	The company's mission has to be compatible with the donor's interest. Also, by building a relationship with the donor you will find out what the donor's expertise is too main the donor's interest. Provide the donor with any documentation or financial records they request. Stay in communication with the donor. It is essential to get to know your donor to maintain a relationship with the donor. Make the donor feel invaluable.
	P2	The donor showed know your mission plan. Always ask for feedback from donors. When building a relationship with a donor study what motivates the donor. Let the donor know you are available to communicate at any time. Invite donors to meetings. Show the donor you appreciate their relationship. Have networking meetings.
	P3	The organization's mission is important for the donor to know. Donor stewardship perspective to engage your donors in the process is vital. And I can give you a direct example. If we have a partner from a financial institution who is really dedicated and interested in supporting small businesses, then we want to engage them in the process. We want to get them in front of real small business owners so they can hear directly from them about some of the challenges that they're having, being able to grow and scale their business. This is information that the financial institution can take back and use to really model programs and model products that so that audience. So being able to connect them directly with our clients and offer free educational workshops for free for our clients is really invaluable. And that really deepens the relationship between us as the organization and the donor while helping to meet the needs of our clients. So again, it goes back to that relationship and making sure that we're clear about what our mission is and our role in where the needs exist in the market.
	P4	We definitely involve them with the mission because on most of the material that we mail out or on our website, we also have our mission statement there. We get to know what their interests are to make sure it is a donor match to maintain long-term donors. We have meetings ie meet in greet on occasion



with them to talk about our direction for the future. We get are donors involved by seeing what their expertise are and see if they want to serve on our board.

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### **Theme 3: Revenue Multiplicity**

The third theme that emerged from the data analysis is revenue multiplicity for donor retention (achieved by educating donors). The executives who were interviewed understand that communicating and developing a relationship with stakeholders develops growth for success. This aligned with the conceptual framework established relationship with stakeholders improves sustainability. P1 stated that revenue multiplicity is based on the ability of a nonprofit organization to maintain long-term donors. Also, P1 informed that nonprofits need to find innovative ways to engage donors to participate in donating. Cheuk (2021) stated revenue multiplicity has also been noted to be a precursor to greater accountability. Revenue multiplicity would then lead to financial sustainability (Cheuk, 2021).

The interviewees stated that donors' and stakeholders' relationships are essential to maintain revenue multiplicity. P2 stated revenue stream is required for nonprofits to achieve their goals and stakeholder relationships assist with this process too. P3 declared building a relationship with stakeholders is a consistent endeavor and allows the stakeholder to provide their expertise to obtain revenue cascade. Cheuk (2021) proclaimed revenue multiplicity implies raising funds from a variety of sources: government agencies, corporations, foundation donors, and commercial undertakings.

This theme is aligned with the conceptual framework that builds networks among different agencies. Froelich (1999) stated specific revenue strategies entail different levels of accountability. I reviewed professional and academic literature relevant to the

context of the research study and the conceptual framework. I used network theory to analyze nonprofit agencies to collaborate on strategies to generate a collective interest in the need for services in various locations, supporting each other to gain funding and establish a conceptual foundation for this study.

For example, procurement of government funding would subject the nonprofit to complicated government rules and regulations, standardized documentation, evaluation, and accountability (DiMaggio, 1986; Gronbjerg, 1991 & 1992; Nielsen, 1979; Taylor, 1995), whereby non-profits lacking in such procedures would find difficulty in accessing government funds. Cho and Park (2020) theorized financial sustainability of nonprofit organizations with revenue multiplicity and financial stability helps improve the independence of organizations in case of financial instability resulting from resource dependency (Froelich, 1999; Tinkelman, 1999), even though the nature of nonprofits can be shown as relying on donor voluntary contributions (Carroll & Stater, 2008). P4 indicated developing strategies to involve donors and agencies will lead to a constant stream of revenue. According to Cheuk (2020), financial management has been noted to drive revenue multiplicity and own income generation in the non-profit context. Table 4 will provide additional responses from each participant regarding sustainability and accountability in procuring and retaining long-term donors.

**Table 4***Theme 3: Revenue Multiplicity*

A Priori Code	Participants' Identifier	Excerpts
Revenue Multiplicity	P1	P1 The mission of the nonprofit organization should align with the donors to maintain revenue. Constant engagement with the donors is imperative. Donors have to feel that they are a part of the mission/organization they are donating to.
	P2	Executives have to create strategies that attract donors' interest. Nonprofit executives can acquire donors' revenue streams to ensure financial self-sufficiency. Revenue stream encourages financial position strength; implementing practices that aligned with donors' and stakeholders' expertise increases revenue.
	P3	Whatever the charitable practice is for the nonprofit donors must have an interest in the cause to start developing a relationship to obtain donations from the funder. Revenue sources are achieved for the drive of the executive for the nonprofit cause. The executives have to develop strategies for revenue and approach it aggressively.
	P4	Nonprofits' administrators have to vigorously seek opportunities to generate revenue substance. This means actively having direct communication with donors, stakeholders, and staff of the organization. Having monthly or quarterly meetings to maintain the interest of donors. Engagement is a necessity for all staff, donors, and stakeholders.

**Application to Professional Practice**

The focus of existing literature on donor relationships is to enable administrators of nonprofit organizations to obtain necessary funds and in-kind donations and facilitate informing donors about the impact of their contributions (Nageswarakurukkal et al.,

2020). Nageswarakurukkal et al. noted the necessity to understand donors' motivations within the fundraising process and the mechanisms that influence their relationships and behaviors are vital components. Researchers also focused on the importance of administrators of nonprofit organizations maintaining a good relationship with past donors to enhance their loyalty to nonprofit organizations to maintain their longevity (Nageswarakurukkal et al., 2020). Nudd (1993) affirmed that administrative leaders of nonprofit organizations spend considerable time and resources collecting information about donors and maintaining and cultivating those relationships (Rosso, 1993; Worth, 2002). The professional practice for developing relationships with donors is vital because nonprofit administrators are essential to a foundation to facilitate donors to continue contributing to the nonprofit organization. The findings of this study could provide nonprofit administrators with a framework for maintaining relationships to ensure long-term donors combined with sustainability and accountability for nonprofit organizations.

Based on the findings of this study, administrators of nonprofit organizations may maintain long-term donors by implementing three successful theme strategies as follows: (a) relationships with donors, (b) sustainability and accountability, (c) and, developing revenue multiplicity to improve the likelihood of nonprofit organizations maintaining donors. The Baldrige performance excellence program framework (2021) provides administrators with seven benchmarks for the continuous assimilation of creating measurable outcomes created by the guidance of the profile for a charitable organization. For example, integrating the Baldrige performance excellence program framework (2021)

may assist nonprofit administrators in engaging in meaningful relationships with donors to aid in creating an operable nonprofit organization boosting revenue multiplicity.

The first element is a relationship with donors. Nageswarakurukkal et al. (2020) explained that different types of donors, or potential donors, can contribute to a nonprofit organization's mission or program. Administrators of nonprofit organizations must understand different types of donors to facilitate their engagement and build a positive rapport with all types of donors (Nageswarakurukkal et al., 2020). Nageswarakurukkal et al. stated that private donors know why they want to sponsor a nonprofit organization. Nageswarakurukkal et al. also posited that private donors read nonprofit organizations' mission statements and want to understand how their donations benefit those in need. nonprofit organization administrators must consistently engage in their mission to ensure the retention of donors. Donors are more willing to contribute to efficient organizations and service partnerships to build an image that attracts more resources (Carvalho et al., 2019). Once the donor has developed a relationship with the nonprofit organization's mission, the donor will enlist new donors for the mission.

The second element is sustainability and accountability. Administrators for nonprofit organizations must aggressively explore strategies to maintain sustainability and accountability for nonprofit organizations. (Carpenter, 2023) explained that nonprofit administrators can create progress reports to demonstrate the nonprofit organization's progress in completing projects for the mission. These reports transparently identify instances and areas where the nonprofit organization is successful and where they are not meeting objectives, and are one of the few formal accountability mechanisms in a

complex partnership (Carpenter, 2023). The Baldrige performance excellence framework (2021) can assist nonprofit administrators in creating strategies to improve overall sustainability and accountability. Administrators of nonprofit organizations must use accountability to demonstrate that their activities are consistent with the values of their mission, thereby responding to any concerns (Carvalho et al., 2019).

The third element is revenue multiplicity. Traditional nonprofit organizations must deliberately reconfigure their operating models to effectively implement practices to attract revenue streams and introduce new business functions (Fitzgerald & Shepherd, 2018; Hwang & Powell, 2009). Revenue streams allow traditional nonprofit organizations to increase financial certainty in response to reduced traditional funding sources and increased long-term donors. Although most nonprofit administrators' strategies contribute to a more significant cause in addition to earning revenue, collecting revenue multiplicity to gain recognition within the community is still an important factor for nonprofit organizations. Ko and Liu (2021) noted that nonprofit organizations use productive activities to generate revenue multiplicity to support their social missions.

### **Implications for Social Change**

Administrators of nonprofit organizations can increase servicing provisions for those in need within the community. According to (Mion et al., 2023), organizations and individuals can compensate for the inefficiency of public services, especially in times of crisis, benefiting society by providing for the community's well-being. If nonprofit organizations cannot remain operable, the result may be a significant loss for the impoverished. Mion et al. (2023) asserted that an ethical organization contributes to

creating social relational capital and facilitates its members to cultivate their social relational capital. An ethical organization creates a virtuous environment by focusing on values and trusts rather than contracts and interests, creating a context within which donors can continuously focus on their purpose and maintain their core values (Mion et al., 2023). Trust is considered a valuable element that explains the participation of donors and stakeholders (Behl et al., 2020).

Individuals who are transparent with information and activities will be trusted more than individuals are not transparent (Holzer, 2022). When administrators of nonprofits improve trust in their donors, supporters, and stakeholders, they receive a longer commitment to support their efforts (Holzer, 2022). Although Holzer expressed that trust also encourages new donors to contribute without much effort. Developing trust with donors is created through transparency and is a central component in developing a relationship wherein the donor will enlist new donors for the organization's mission. The social implications of this study are developing practices to inspire other administrators of nonprofit organizations to establish meaningful relationships to obtain long-term donors and develop trust with donors, supports, and stakeholders. These actions will enable nonprofit organizations to remain to continue to assist with the community's needs for the impoverished.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The objective of this multiple-case study was to explore strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. A nonprofit administrator can improve transparency and strengthen connections with

donors, stakeholders, and those who require services. I recommend that nonprofit administrators consider implementing the strategies highlighted in this study. Long-term donor retention is essential to improve the development and economic growth of the impoverished. An informed donor can impact operable and sustainability resources to demonstrate their commitment to improve accountability and responsibility toward their stakeholders.

To maintain sustainability and accountability, nonprofit administrators should engage the donors' interest in the nonprofit organization's mission. Nageswarakurukkal et al. (2020) stated that providing information on nonprofit organizations' mission and programs, beneficiary needs, or the impact of projects can increase the strength of donor retention. By regular meetings, nonprofit administrators should maintain and provide current information about the mission, vision, project, and activities to donors and stakeholders. Another form of contact to maintain long-term donors is email and telephone communication. The nonprofit organization's mission should be aligned with the donors and stakeholders to keep the stakeholders and donors engaged in maintaining sustainability and accountability for the nonprofit organizations. As a result, the findings of this study may enable nonprofit leaders to increase awareness and build trust with donors to maintain long-term goals to remain operable, enhance sustainability and accountability in organizations, and increase revenue multiplicity in nonprofit organizations.

Revenue multiplicity aids nonprofit organizations in maintaining sustainability and accountability. Artamonova (2022) suggested that the financial aspects of the



nonprofit sector get the most attention. The financial basis for the functioning of the nonprofit sector comprises grants, subsidies from public authorities, and donations from individuals and legal entities (Artamonova, 2022). Revenue multiplicity assists nonprofit organizations in maintaining sustainability and accountability for increasing donor funding and aid focused on enhancing the development and economic growth of the lesser developed. Services provided by nonprofit organizations are essential to strengthen the community for the impoverished. Carvalho et al. (2019) suggested that the community's possible donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, governments, and society are interested in accountability because it is a public service.

Nonprofit stakeholders want to understand how resources are applied and managed, in order to provide legitimacy to the organization, making it known and increasing the degree of trustworthiness (Brown & Moore, 2001). Revenue multiplicity is essential to demonstrate that a nonprofit organization remains operable, for example, by being financially responsible, and that social value is created (Felićio et al., 2013), associating it with the organization's mission and objectives (Moore, 2000).

Administrators of nonprofit organizations should use accountability to demonstrate that their activities are consistent with the values of their mission for the organization, thereby responding to the stakeholder and donor concerns (Carvalho et al., 2019).

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The focus of this study was gaining an in-depth perspective and insight into the knowledge of administrators of nonprofit organizations for strategies used to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. Future studies should not be

limited to one specific type of nonprofit organization or leader. The participants comprised four leaders of separate nonprofit organizations who successfully procured and retained long-term committed donors to remain operable for at least 5 years. Future researchers could increase the sample size and concentrate on nonprofit organizations that have been operable for more than 5 years.

Global trends which arose at the end of the twentieth century as consequences of rapid waste of natural resources, increasing human population, unsatisfied basic needs of people, and global destabilization of natural and socioeconomic systems (Płachciak, 2009) led to the creation of many nonprofit organizations (Carvalho et al., 2019). As a result, the growth of nonprofit organizations is increasing rapidly. Future researchers could use a survey-based mixed-method research methodology by utilizing quantitative techniques, including data collection from funding received from government grants and fundraisers. I focused on three successful strategies: (a) relationship with donors, (b) maintaining sustainability and accountability, and (c) revenue multiplicity for administrators in nonprofit organizations. Researchers in the future could explore additional strategies for nonprofit administrators to maintain, procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. As a result, I recommend that future researchers focus on unsuccessful strategies that occurred while attempting to obtain long-term donors to be aware of the challenges that occurred.

### **Reflections**

My DBA journey has been extremely long, challenging, and exhilarating at the same time. However, I started this journey with severe challenges occurring in my life

throughout the entire journey. I felt drained mentally, emotionally, and physically.

Reflecting on this journey is making me emotional. Loved ones prayed for me, and I stayed steadfast in my faith and prayed. This DBA doctoral study has taught me about different types of nonprofit organizations and how to be an asset to the impoverished in the community and make a difference in society. I learned about the core of research data, including data analysis, data collection, and data saturation. Also, I advocate for the underprivileged, there could have been potential personal biases, but detailed interview questions and member checking limited my biases. I have always been passionate about social responsibility for the underprivileged well-being in the community. By completing this academic study, I will be able to share my findings and contribute to research on nonprofit organizations to obtain strategies to assist in the community the underprivileged with basic daily needs.

### **Conclusion**

Improving donor retention performance has become crucial for each nonprofit organization, and tremendous fundraising effort has already been made to turn one-time donors into repeat donors (Kessler & Milkman, 2018). For example, prior donors or fundraisers are encouraged to solicit new donors, and individuals or organizations who benefit from donations are suggested to provide positive feedback, such as sending a “thank you” letter or packet to the donors (Althoff & Leskovec, 2015). Administrators of nonprofit organizations should regularly communicate with donors through emails and face-to-face meetings. Because donors who participate in charitable never receive any repayment, some innovative and prosocial marketing programs such as “charity gift

cards” and “donation matching” offers are provided to acquire more new donors and attract more donations from prior donors (Xiao & Yue, 2021). As mentioned above, the administration of nonprofit organizations could send timely messages to donors. This demonstrates recognition to the donors.

This qualitative multiple-case study explored strategies nonprofit administrators use to procure and retain long-term committed donors to remain operable. The findings of this study may aid nonprofit organization administrators in understanding how to develop strategies to maintain long-term donors, remain operable to offer valuable services, and remain available to help citizens establish means to become financially independent. Three themes emerged in this study: relationships with donors, sustainability and accountability, and revenue multiplicity. The results of this study may provide strategies for nonprofit administrators to maintain long-term committed donors by implementing strategies to build meaningful relationships by aligning with donors interested in the nonprofit organization’s mission, ensuring valuable services remain available to benefit the community. Nonprofit organizations may benefit by relationship building, communicating impact, trust, and donor involvement to remain operable with revenue multiplicity for the nonprofit organization to assist the impoverished with daily needs in the community.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

## Strategies to Procure and Retain Long-Term Donors

Date:

Time:

Location:

Interviewee number:

Step 1|Introduction:

Greetings, my name is Maxine Rolle. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me.

Step 2|Purpose:

I want to ask a few questions about effective strategies to procure and retain long-term donors you have implemented to reach the company's mission and organizational goals.

Step 3|Describe the rationale for participation:

Your participation in this research project on strategies to procure and retain long-term donors is significant as a study. It will help us understand the funding strategies to procure and retain long-term donors and help nonprofit leaders acquire sufficient funding. Interviews will be conducted with yourself and two other nonprofit leaders providing information to this research project.

Step 4|Describe the benefit of participating in the interview:

The study's advantage pivots on understanding strategies to procure and retain long-term donors for nonprofit organizations.

Step 5| Discuss ethics

Protection of the interviewee's privacy is essential in this interview. I seek permission to record the interview. If there is a question that you do not feel comfortable answering or if you would like to stop the interview at any time, please let me know, as your participation in this interview is voluntary.

Step 6| Discuss confidentiality:

The interview content will be confidential. Data will be subject to password protection. After five years, the interview data will be subject to destruction. The interview data will solely be for the study.

Step 7| Process:

During the interview, I will take notes and audio record the interview. I want to make sure that your voice is captured entirely. I will send you a copy of my notes and the recording. Feel free to add or make any changes as appropriate. No names of the interviewees in this project will be used. Do you need clarification of any points discussed?

Step 8| Transition to interview questions:

We will now start the semi-structured interview.

Thank you for your cooperation in this process.

## Appendix B: Interview Questions

### **Probing Questions:**

1. How long have you worked in the nonprofit industry?
2. How long have you been in your current position with this organization?

### **Targeted Interview Questions:**

3. How do you develop initial contacts with potential donors?
4. What processes do you use to recognize or reward donors for their support?
5. How do you maintain contact with new and ongoing donors?

### **Targeted Follow-Up Questions:**

6. How does your organization establish long-term relationships with donors?
7. How does your organization network with donors?
8. Based upon your organization's experiences, what strategies change a one-time donor to a repeat donor?
9. How, if at all, do you seek to involve donors with the direction or mission of the organization?
10. What, if any, unique or related interests do donors have in your organization, or services, that motivate their continued support?

### **Targeted Wrap Up Questions:**

11. How do you follow up with potential donors after initial contact?
12. What additional information can you provide to help me understand donor commitment?