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African American Charitable Giving in Charlotte, North Carolina: Engagement Strategies

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Abstract

Nonprofit agencies are instrumental in U.S. society and local communities. While there is significant outreach targeted for wealthy and middle-class Caucasian families, there is a lack of targeted effort for African Americans. The purpose of this case study was to explore the strategies development directors use to engage and retain African American donors. The focus of the research questions was what factors lead to successful engagement campaigns for African Americans. The qualitative case study was suitable for gathering data from multiple sources of information, including an interview questionnaire and existing literature. A purposeful sampling strategy was appropriate for choosing 5 development directors from 5 nonprofit organizations for the open-ended interviews. Transcribed data were analyzed by comparing responses that led to theme creation. Source triangulation utilized for trustworthiness and response interpretation revealed community development, fostering relationships and intentional engagement are themes that attract African Americans. Results of the study showed development directors who utilize community based and family oriented themes and targeted social media campaigns reach more African American patrons. The social implications outlined in this study are intended to assist nonprofit leaders create a stable donor base so they can positively impact the local community. By addressing engagement strategies with a significant portion of the community, nonprofit leaders can attract and retain this largely untapped market for continued sustainability.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this to my Mother, Ama, Derek, Dad, and the Village that raised me. If not for your prayers and consistent encouragement, I would not be here. I love you all so much and could not want for more. And, by God's grace, I am now completing one of the most important educational accomplishments of my life.

Acknowledgments

I want to first acknowledge my entire family and all the friends that have helped push me to this point. Secondly, I want to spotlight the city of White Plains for raising me and Johnson C. Smith University for molding me into the man I am today. To my chair Dr. Stephen Tippins and Dr. Doreen McGunagle, thank you for your valuable insight, patience and expertise. Finally, to all the people that took part in this study, thank you for your assistance, answers and being receptive to my call. May this research help guide and fortify the missions of nonprofits everywhere. Cheers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Problem

Charitable giving is a choice and the amount given changes over time (Mataira, Morelli, Matsuoka & Uehara-McDonald, 2014). This fundamental concept also underscores the amount that people give and where they give (Gasman, 2010). The extensive choices associated with donor involvement and development can create challenges for staff members who are responsible for procuring long-term donations (Mataira et al., 2014).

The U.S. economy has been in flux since 2008, with some considerable rebound in recent years. Fundraisers and nonprofit organization leaders have recognized that individual donors are giving less or only giving to select organizations. Ford and Merchant (2010) discussed the decreasing amounts by donors and the decreasing number of donors. Individual donors continue to represent the largest source of revenue for nonprofits (Ko, Gibson, & Kim, 2011).

Considering these factors, long-term and sustainable involvement for donors with one nonprofit is becoming harder (Cacija, 2014). There has been little, if any, formal evaluation on engagement strategies targeted toward African Americans for nonprofit organizations. To flesh out the factors that contribute to a sustainable and successful nonprofit in Charlotte, North Carolina, it was important to determine the elements that address healthy engagement and impact successful donor relationships and fundraising with select donor bases.

Donor cultivation and donor engagement are vital functions of a nonprofit organization's long-term sustainability. Nonprofit organizational leaders across a broad spectrum are consistently looking for ways to expand donor bases and build capacity (Millar & Doherty, 2016). Technology has also affected the way donors engage as well as how they use their resources (Kirk, Abrahams, & Ractham, 2016).

The purpose of this study was to understand and examine factors contributing to successful engagement with African American donors. The hope was to engage African Americans in ways that increase their charitable giving. In this study, I looked at literature showing how nonprofit leaders have improved fundraising efforts toward sustainability. Fundraising has basic tenets that all start with a developmental plan (Aaker & Mogilner, 2010). Development personnel of small and medium-sized nonprofits must fundraise vigorously with fewer resources, which leads to creative and nontraditional fundraising mediums (Schneider, 2003).

I used peer-reviewed journal articles and academic publications to provide context and to substantiate what is known regarding nonprofit fundraising. Recent searches of the literature revealed the following themes: (a) nonprofit organizations, (b) fundraising strategies, (c) development strategies, (d) social responsibility, (e) history of African American philanthropy, and (f) young African Americans. The themes served to create a solid foundation for the study and to mine any practical or effective methods for donor engagement and fund solicitation within the African American community. The list of search terms included *fundraising, nonprofit, minority, African American philanthropy,*

development, engagement, donations, sustainability, donor relations, charity, and

charitable giving.

Problem Statement

Nonprofit development directors engage in fundraising and donor cultivation

throughout the year, and with minority communities increasing in wealth and population,

there needs to be targeted engagement efforts toward these communities (Jackson,

Washington, & Jackson, 2012). African Americans and other minorities have the same

choices to give to organizations as other races but only invest deeply if they feel

welcomed and tied to the organization soliciting the funds (Mataira et al., 2014).

Nonprofit leaders have a duty to raise funds and generate revenue growth.

Development directors primarily fundraise in their local communities (McGee &

Donoghue, 2009). By building relationships with African Americans and other minority

groups, a focused and targeted fundraising effort could yield significant financial impact.

This relationship building can not only develop a new funding stream but also create

short- and long-term donor retention (Gallicano, 2009).

The general problem is that, although there is significant outreach for wealthy and

middle-class Caucasian families, there is a lack of targeted efforts to engage African

Americans, which has led to lower levels of giving (Perry, 2015). The specific problem is

the lack of effective engagement strategies used in charitable giving that negatively

affects local communities by exploring common factors that contribute to lower levels of

giving from the African American community. Nonprofit leaders are not intentionally

closing the gaps for engaging African Americans in the charitable giving process

(Jackson et al., 2012). A gap exists in the current research that demonstrates whether specific and targeted campaigns with African Americans can readily affect their giving capacity and subsequent engagement.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand and explore factors that contribute to effective donor engagement in African American charitable giving circles. The intention of this study was to highlight charitable giving gaps with African Americans by focusing on engagement strategies or the lack thereof. This research may help to increase nonprofit engagement, improve marketing techniques, and target specific donor groups more effectively.

To enhance and maintain organizational operations, development directors need to raise sufficient funds from a myriad of sources. Along with raising those funds, long-term relationships with donors are necessary to increase sustainability. Not much research addresses fundraising techniques that significantly increase African American participation or subsequent engagement. While there is literature and knowledge for courting older adults (Gregory, 2014), Hispanics (Marx & Carter, 2008), and millennials (Drezner, 2009), there is little research regarding African Americans. The motivation for this study was to help establish engagement strategies for African American donor cultivation and retention.

Closing the gaps and engaging groups that nonprofit development directors have minimally targeted or not targeted at all may help with capacity building and long-term sustainability (Williams-Gray, 2016). Nonprofit organization leaders should be looking to

develop and build relationships with all stakeholders in the communities in which the organization does business. Leipnitz (2014) studied the long-term effects of donor satisfaction and engagement, which showed positive results when all community stakeholders are vested. This vestment should purposefully include African Americans and other minorities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were suitable for gathering insight into the perceptions and beliefs of nonprofit organizations with the goal of answering the main research question:

RQ1: What are the central factors for donor engagement in the African American philanthropic community?

Subquestion 1: How do development directors explain the reasons for lower levels of charitable giving by African Americans in comparison to other ethnic groups?

Subquestion 2: How do development directors work to increase levels of charitable giving among African Americans?

Conceptual Framework

This research study involved incorporating a hierarchy-of-effects conceptual theory along with Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising. These theories contributed to the foundation of the study because they highlight the effects of development strategies, marketing, engagement, public relations, and targeted messaging (Barry, 2012). The decision to use a hierarchy of effects and theory of fundraising parallels the decision-making processes development directors use to attract and engage donors.

Organizational leaders have influence over press material, donor packets, and intended targets. Marx and Carter (2008) indicated that strategic and purposeful messaging leads to sustained giving and involvement. Hierarchy of effects promotes the development of long-term relationships, which leads to sustainability. Organizations use consistent messaging and active communication strategies for donor development (Ki & Hon, 2012). The decision for African Americans to invest their time, talent, or treasure is a choice they do not make quickly. Therefore, development directors must create awareness and provide information that leads to an informed decision (Aaker & Mogilner, 2010).

The theory of fundraising proposed by Kelly (1995) includes four fundraising principles: two-way symmetrical, two-way asymmetrical, press agentry, and public information. Two-way symmetrical fundraising allows for relationship building between the donor and the agency. After donors have developed a relationship they are comfortable with, the donors will ultimately give a gift. Two-way asymmetrical fundraising is very similar in premise and focuses on continued conversations between the public and the agency. Development directors consider this level of fundraising ideal and the most desirable. The least desirable of Kelly's mediums is press agentry. The focus of this principle is on emotional reactions or responses from potential donors. Although this method draws out heartfelt sentiment, it does not always create long-term engagement or large donations.

The conceptual frameworks chosen served as a foundation to examine whether an organization's engagement practices align with existing theories that pertain to building

long-term engagement strategies with a targeted population. Both conceptual frameworks were instrumental in developing the research questions for this study. Boards of directors and development directors who have a hand in creating the engagement material responded to questions about the organizations' development and engagement plans and whether they felt they do enough to attract and retain African American donors. Finally, the conceptual frameworks were suitable for analyzing organizations' engagement efforts during the research period.

The premise of this research study was that nonprofit leaders can do more to garner and solicit funds from African Americans. Intentional engagement of African American donors starts when organizational staff knows how to solicit support and approach donors proactively, which can create a sustainable donor base. There was a focus on transparent and effective communication as well as on knowledgeable development staff. Engagement with donors is important, and that strategy, along with mission relation and program creation, can increase donor development and retention.

Nature of the Study

This study involved qualitative methods. Qualitative research was an effective method of inquiry to determine which factors may lead to lower levels of African American philanthropy. The specific design for this study was case study. The focus of the case study is on managerial and organizational processes through the lens of real-world processes (Yin, 2003). The focus of this study was on engagement strategies used by nonprofit organizations to attract African American donors.

A case study was the right fit for this research project given the goal of contributing to the existing body of knowledge. It was also an appropriate design given this was a contemporary concept and a phenomenon in organizational culture. Yin (2009) noted case study research is suitable for studying phenomena in organizational culture. Members of boards of directors were a suitable population for this case study given they understand the importance of fundraising and organizational financial sustainability. Development directors were also suitable because they are the main solicitors of funds and create development strategies.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of terms related to nonprofit organizations, donor engagement, and target marketing. The study included words and phrases specific to the study and the environment in which they are used. A short description follows each term to ensure readers could understand and follow the study with clarity.

Donor engagement: Donor engagement refers to establishing a relationship with potential customers and cultivating this relationship through involvement, value, and consistent marketing to keep the donor vested in the organization (Drezner, 2009).

Nonprofit organizations: Nonprofit organizations can be a national or global entity but can also serve small communities, towns, cities, or a state (Kirk et al., 2016). Designated with a tax-exempt status, nonprofits can serve any capacity or social needs designation, such as at-risk youth, arts engagement, homeless populations, animal rights, educational programs, and domestic violence prevention.

Press agentry: Fundraising strategy that uses emotional or sensational parameters to attract or capitalize on donor emotion (Kelly, 1998).

Two-way asymmetrical: A type of fundraising strategy that involves using communication between the agency and its potential donors or stakeholders (Kelly, 1998).

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Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

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Assumptions

The primary assumption of this study was that African Americans want to engage and donate to nonprofits, given that they believe in community support and giving back (Thompson, 2012). A secondary assumption was that development directors in Charlotte, North Carolina, are not directly targeting African American donors, which leads to significant disengagement. The third assumption for this study was that participants would answer all research questions truthfully and with transparency during the interview process. The fourth assumption was that participants in the study would fully understand engagement strategies and the ways nonprofit leaders use them.

Limitations

The limitations for this study hinged on participant responses in the interview process. Each person participating in the study gave answers or responses that were personal to them and their experiences. Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that time and the ability to respond are factors to consider when selecting respondents. Given this information, the goal was to find respondents with time and adequate ability to respond.

Subsequently, each participant had a different level of expertise, income, and economic flexibility that also created limitations in the responses.

Delimitations

This study was limited to nonprofit organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina. This group was not a true representation of the entire nonprofit community in Mecklenburg County or the United States. Each nonprofit agency selected had a different mission and scope for its service delivery in the community. Given this, the agencies and their engagement strategies were limited to their desired outcomes. The selected nonprofits did not represent every nonprofit of similar size or with similar staffing. Although some organizations may have a dedicated person that handles development and engagement, others may not. Further research with a similar focus should take place to find results for other geographical areas. Further studies with nonprofits of similar sizes that serve a specific clientele may provide different results as well.

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Significance of the Study

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In the United States, nonprofit organizations serve many capacities and roles. Nonprofit organizations provide services for communities and individuals, and they can identify and address gaps through advocacy (Salamon, 2002). An organizational focus on fund development and donor base creation can assist with fiscal growth. This study contributes to the field of management, as many nonprofit organization employees do not know how to engage minority donors effectively.

Nonprofit organization leaders should be able to recognize, identify, and engage all potential donors in their area of influence. Traditional donor campaigns may not reach

all communities or ethnic groups, which creates a gap with information exchange. A common assumption is that everyone receives information from direct agency contact, websites, or social media (Waters & Tindall, 2011). Many minority communities have technological gaps and a digital divide. Dolan (2015) indicated that schools, nonprofit organizations, and other service-oriented agencies often miss their targets because of antiquated models or development directors overlook the lack of resources within a group.

The effective engagement of African Americans as a target group for nonprofit organizations has yet to be maximized. Van Slyke, Ashley, and Johnson (2007) pointed out that in 2000, African Americans had an earning power of $543 billion and made philanthropic contributions of $7.1 billion. The considerable spending power by African Americans continues to grow; however, engagement and potential donor campaigns for this group have not increased. Winters (1999) indicated a desire exists to reach out to African Americans but that there is reluctance due to the lack of knowledge about this prospective donor base.

The motivation to give and the techniques to influence African Americans to give may be different from those of other ethnic or racial backgrounds. Carter and Marx (2007) discussed how generational wealth is new to many African Americans, as are stable incomes that allow for philanthropy. This information points to African Americans possibly being cautious with new opportunities within charitable circles.

This caution extends to organizational choices about engagement or "skipping around" (Burnette, 2005, p. 119) the minority neighborhoods. This phenomenon includes

lack of interest in donor engagement, lack of strategy, and not knowing African American interests or motivations. The goal of this research study was to highlight a better understanding of African American donors and their motivations and to underscore why nonprofit organization leaders should hone in on this largely unsolicited donor base.

Reduction of Gaps

Researchers have addressed general fundraising (Kim & Kou, 2014) and overall nonprofit capacity building (Williams-Gray, 2016). Researchers have also highlighted engagement strategies for older adults (Gregory, 2014), Hispanics (Marx & Carter, 2008), and Koreans (Moon & Choi, 2012), as well as gender-specific fundraising (Dvorak & Toubman, 2013; Kemp, Kennett-Hensel, & Kees, 2013; Lwin, Phau, & Lim, 2013). However, little or no research has highlighted the need for nonprofit development directors to engage the underserved population of African Americans.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study may warrant discussion among nonprofit leaders in Charlotte, North Carolina, on how they can address engagement issues and attract more funding from the African American community. Information generated from the research may create positive social change in the local communities that these nonprofits serve. Nonprofits that are viable and have sustainability deliver high-impact services and resources (Calabrese & Grizzle, 2012).

Social environments and demographics of major cities are changing. As cities trend to attract and develop cultural melting pots, nonprofit organization leaders must look at the coinciding patterns. The donor makeup of these cities reflects the makeup of

the community (Mottino & Miller, 2005). For African Americans, the data point to growth in educational attainment increases in financial capital and home ownership. This positive pattern can lead to assistance in communities via increased philanthropy and volunteerism. Targeting African Americans for donor engagement is a strategy that nonprofit development directors should undertake if they are looking toward the future of fundraising (Mottino & Miller, 2005).

The traditional model of attempting to attract and retain donors is slowly changing, and nonprofit leaders must create newer pathways to draw funding (Carruthers & Wanamaker, 2013). This research study may help nonprofit development directors attract and cultivate minority donor bases. It also delivers practical information on how to solicit funds with this targeted population. Nonprofit leaders understand the importance of fundraising but do not always know the best tactics for select groups and addressing disengagement (Schneider, 2003).

Transition and Summary

The ability to grow and retain a donor base is paramount for nonprofit leaders. Targeting African Americans and other minorities can assist with fund development (Chaidez-Gutierrez & Fischer, 2013). Chapter 2 includes an outline of the literature review, and I discuss background and historical context for this study. Chapter 2 includes (a) the literature review and (b) a discussion on themes in the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The exploration of fundraising is not new; however, the attraction and denotation of African Americans or minorities is a relatively new issue in the field. A review of the literature revealed a lack of resource material on African American engagement strategies. Therefore, researchers have not adequately studied the topic of donor engagement and retention efforts targeting African Americans and minorities, which are groups researchers have historically overlooked. Furthermore, this group has recently been in the spotlight for philanthropy and giving efforts, which places parameters around research or longitudinal studies. Thus, there have not been many opportunities to develop studies surrounding this topic. African Americans have a long history of philanthropy that is not documented as traditional philanthropy or donor engagement. The fact that African Americans are vested and engaged but not receiving credit is an important consideration when applied to this study, which involved examining targeted fundraising techniques, donor engagement strategies, and donor retention for African American patrons. Fundraising efforts by nonprofit organizations constantly evolve and change as staff learns more about racial, cultural, and gender differences with respect to donor behavior (Marx & Carter, 2008).

The theoretical foundation for the study was the hierarchy-of-effects conceptual framework and Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising. Researchers have not used the hierarchy-of-effects theory or Kelly's theory of fundraising extensively regarding African American donor engagement strategies or fundraising. However, relevant literature on the

theory showed that multiple or designated steps among a peer group produce significant results in low- or high-involvement scenarios. Subsequently, African American or minority donors with high involvement in a nonprofit entity or social cause may donate at varying levels (Ki & Hon, 2012).

The decision to use the hierarchy of effects and Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising parallels the decision-making processes development directors use to attract, engage, and address donor participation. Organizational leaders have influence over press material, donor packets, and intended targets. The theories help the foundation of the study by highlighting the effects of development strategies that are warm, engaging, and targeted to specific donor bases (Flick, 2014). Marx and Carter (2008) gave credence to this by stating that strategic and purposeful messaging leads to sustained giving and involvement.

The purpose of this study was to highlight methods nonprofit leaders can use to solicit African American donors, create donor retention, and address participation. Related topics in the literature studied looked at nonprofits, minority fundraising, and pathways toward sustainability. Fundraising has basic tenets, and all fundraising starts with a developmental plan (Aaker & Mogilner, 2010). The staff of small and medium-sized nonprofits must fundraise vigorously with fewer resources. This lower amount of staffing leads to creative and nontraditional fundraising mediums (Schneider, 2003).

This literature review included peer-reviewed journal articles and other academic publications to provide context, and the findings of other publications helped to substantiate what is known regarding nonprofit fundraising. From the literature found and

examined, the following themes emerged: (a) nonprofit organizations, (b) fundraising (c) development strategies, (d) social responsibility, (e) history of African American philanthropy, and (f) young African Americans. The purpose of the themes was to create a solid foundation for the study and to mine any effective methods for African American donor engagement and fund solicitation. The list of search terms included *fundraising, nonprofit, African American philanthropy, minority philanthropy, development, sustainability, donor relations, donor engagement, social responsibility, charity,* and *charitable giving*. The literature review includes an evaluation of 113 articles. Of the 113 articles, 96 (or 86%) had publication dates of 2013 to 2017. The 17 remaining sources were seminal works that provided valuable insight and historical context and that helped form the foundation of the research.

Nonprofit Organizations

The intended mission and vision of nonprofit organizations is to serve the best interests of the community. Nonprofits can act as a national or global entity but can also serve small communities, towns, cities, or an entire state (Norris-Tirrell, 2014). There was a 45% increase in the number of nonprofit registrations between 2003 and 2013 (Kim, 2015). Designated with a tax-exempt status, nonprofits can serve any capacity or social needs designation such as at-risk youth, arts engagement, homeless populations, animal rights, educational programs, domestic violence prevention, and many more.

Nonprofit leaders derive large portions of their budget from fundraising and donations. The generation of funding allows for staff development, program enhancement, advancement of the mission, and organizational growth (Durango-Cohen,

2012). The economy in the United States is consistently shifting, which means continuous adjustments are necessary for changes and challenges related to fundraising in nonprofit organizations (Calabrese & Grizzle, 2012). Nonprofit agency leaders and boards have been considering investing funds to maximize profits (Maltby & Rutterford, 2016).

Nonprofit organizations and for-profit organizations have two distinct differences. The goal of for-profit companies is usually to generate a product or service for a designated price. The product or service generation creates income for the company. The goal of a nonprofit organization is not normally to create a product but to provide a service with dollars generated to create a social good (Kim, 2015). The second difference is the mission of nonprofits is not solely profit driven. For-profit companies have an obligation to shareholders to maximize profits. Development directors are seeking donations and contributions to place back into the hands of their service users.

The use of effectiveness measures is currently trending among nonprofit agencies. Effectiveness scales measure how well an organization is doing and the impact of an organization in the community (Willems, Jegers, & Faulk, 2015). This ability to measure creates buy-in for long-term and potential donors. The measures used are tools created not just in the nonprofit sector but in the for-profit sector as well. The use of for-profit tools allows nonprofits to generate donor profiles and market segmentation (Fader, Hardie, & Shang, 2010). This level of segmentation allows development directors to create strategies for donor engagement. Willems, Boenigk, and Jegers (2014) outlined several compromises that nonprofit leaders make when adding performance measures.

One of those compromises is that not all segments of the population may be represented, which could lead to minorities left out of engagement strategy planning. The measures are worth it, given the increase in donations, but development directors should be careful not to leave out certain groups (Willems et al., 2014).

As nonprofit agencies grew and expanded, the scope and role of many changed as well. Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations developed social responsibility ideals and looked to influence governance (Almog-Bar & Zychlinski, 2014). This conceived ideology led nonprofit leaders to solicit funds for designated causes and to employ business strategies.

Another increasing trend is the convergence of nonprofit management and social entrepreneurship. This blending of business mediums may allow for sustainable bottom lines and increased service provision (Millar & Doherty, 2016). Nonprofit leaders who mix new business school models with traditional nonprofit management techniques may find themselves more successful in the future of fundraising.

Philanthropy and entrepreneurism will continue to merge as leadership changes hands and social dynamics change (Mickiewicz, Sauka, & Stephan, 2014). Communities face a myriad of challenges that nonprofit staff are not able to handle on small budgets. Tilcsik and Marquis (2013) discussed how natural disasters and local catastrophic events require huge donations and budgets. Nonprofit leaders looking to create sustainable agencies and budgets need to consider altruism and commerce exchange to raise larger sums of money (Licuanan, Mahmoud, & Steinmayr, 2015).

Volunteers comprise a huge piece of the social capital that nonprofit organizations use (Nesbit & Brudney, 2013). Kang (2016) noted that a connection exists between volunteer engagement and donor engagement. The focus of charity is a designation of prosocial behavior; however, it must tie to something (Winterich & Zhang, 2014). Populations not engaged on any level will not identify with financial donations (Kang, 2014).

Fundraising

At the core of nonprofit development are fundraising and donor relationships. This process engages people's philanthropic side, urging them to give generously to causes to which they relate to or in which they believe (Gasman, 2010). An organization's development department or development director usually undertakes the activities of fundraising. This key staff member or group of staff members are responsible for soliciting donations and for creating events that solicit donor engagement. Development directors target new and existing donors through software programs, mailers, or subscription lists started through agency visits or referrals.

In the United States, consistent support for philanthropic efforts has created a rich history (Gasman, 2010). Malhotra and Smith (2011) pointed out that motivations for giving are different, but usually encompass (a) tax reductions, (b) charity and social justice, (c) altruistic ambitions, (d) duty or sense of obligation, and (e) possible good investments. Therefore, nonprofit organization leaders have better odds at raising funds and should seek to create donor engagement strategies that speak to these motivations.

Subsequently, seeking donations from African Americans should encapsulate these same ideals.

However, many nonprofit organizational leaders subscribe to using tools created for the for-profit sector when it comes to communication, public relations, and marketing strategies (Van Slyke et al., 2007). It would make sense to co-opt practices from for-profit companies that have been widely successful. Additionally, these methods are easily accessible and at times offered at a low cost, which allows nonprofit organizational leaders to capitalize on continued use. Despite the factors that would push a nonprofit leader or development director to use these fundraising tactics, many for-profit methodologies do not incorporate nonprofit ideals. As noted earlier, the typical nonprofit donor has a certain motivation for giving and does not look for direct or instant impact upon donating (Malhotra & Smith, 2011). For-profit business strategies do not focus on the ethereal qualities of the nonprofit donor.

The fundraising approach can take on for-profit approaches but should include operational needs and analytical approaches to maximize success. With the wide range of choices patrons have, it can become increasing difficult for donors to select a nonprofit to which they would like to donate. Development directors must make their organizations stand out or provide information to donors that builds identification (Smith, Windmeijer, & Wright, 2013). Bentley (2014) studied and highlighted donor motivation. Bentley's findings pinpointed self-interest, altruism, and mixed motives as the top three types of donor motivation. Development directors who have not had training in donor motivation will miss these prompts and find fundraising laborious and difficult (Bentley, 2014).

Identification for a nonprofit can make the difference in how much people donate or if they donate at all. The nonprofit market continues to grow and become crowded with causes people care about (Stebbins & Hartman, 2013). Development directors must learn to leverage their brand as it relates to both fundraising and development strategies. Donors engaged and cultivated through similar experiences that the nonprofit supports usually remain for longer periods. Donors who make consistent contributions to an organization are valuable to the nonprofit and receive the organization's attention throughout the year (Bell, 2003). As nonprofits are not alike, they set their terms for levels of giving and annual goals. The mission and vision of nonprofits help determine the amount of fundraising needed each year.

To increase fundraising and create brand recognition, nonprofit leaders are turning to professional fundraising services or social enterprise. These services provide consultants to develop impact strategies that can increase donations or donor involvement (Wang, Duan, & Yu, 2016). However, small and medium-sized nonprofits that are community driven and understand local issues can create that same awareness by using grassroots platforms.

Grassroots platforms or celebrity involvement are traditional inroads to minority awareness for fundraising. Charities in which development directors create enthusiasm with individuals closely related to a cause create more engagement (Kelly, Morgan, & Coule, 2014). However, there are advantages and disadvantages with these strategies. If the celebrity leaves, withdraws support or motivation to participate wanes, the drop-off for minority donors, in this case African Americans, can be a cause for concern.

Strategic fundraising has taken on a myriad of forms that address specific sectors of society. For example, targeted fundraising has yielded considerable results with older adults (Gregory, 2014) and Hispanic populations (Marx & Carter, 2008). As recently as 2012, there was research committed to understanding the giving patterns of Koreans (Moon & Choi, 2012). The creation of targeted models for African Americans provides organizations with data and empirical evidence to explain how and why minorities give and support certain causes (McKeever, Pressgrove, & McKeever, 2015).

Organizational leaders are looking to highlight their organization to decrease the chances donors choose another organization. Given the perception that there is a glut of nonprofits, creating a niche and optimizing positive public relations becomes a means of attempting to increase fundraising (Barbieri & Malueg, 2014). As nonprofits continue to form and grow, the decision-making process for individuals grows. Development directors ask donors to make choices about who to support with fewer resources (Drezner, 2009). The implementation of performance measures that showcase positive outcomes drives minority giving (Medina-Borja & Triantis, 2014).

Donors also care about results. As organizational leaders seek differentiated ways to attract funding, donors are asking for measures and performance outcomes (Charles & Kim, 2016). Data provided donors with empirical evidence of where the money is going and images of success. Fundraising metrics are becoming vital institutional tools for evaluation and organizational effectiveness (Chen, 2015). Cordery and Sinclair (2013) noted that donors find it important to know how involved the board, staff, and volunteers are in the fundraising process.

Fundraising for nonprofits can include various means, ranging from single-donor campaigns to large-scale government funding. Government funding has a large effect on the bottom line for many nonprofits, particularly those in the arts and cultural sectors (Kim & Van Ryzin, 2014). Government grants have been in the spotlight for creating a crowd-out issue where individuals feel less likely to support nonprofits that are receiving money from the government (Hughes, Luksetich, & Rooney, 2014). For nonprofits not rooted in those areas, the campaign to attract funding will often come in the form of personal asks with area residents (Charles & Kim, 2016).

The number of nonprofit organizations in the United States continues to grow. This increase in numbers affects the decisions individual donors must make before deciding where to commit resources, particularly when the causes are issue based (Bennett, 2015). Development directors are blending traditional fundraising tactics with nontraditional communication efforts to offset donor drop-off (Thompson, 2012). The ability to blend traditional and nontraditional techniques leads to innovation and creates a passage for fresh perspectives development directors can use to target and engage donors (Bereskin, Campbell, & Hsu, 2016).

Given the documented rise in the number of nonprofit organizations, it would not come as a surprise that donations tend to decrease during difficult economic times. Various development directors rely heavily on donations to provide services to vulnerable populations, and attracting new patronage helps with donor fatigue (Marx & Carter, 2014). Even during economically stressed times, Marx and Carter (2014) found

that African Americans still gave in consistent amounts to youth organizations and federated campaigns.

Fundraising professionals should begin to use techniques that relate directly to African Americans and their giving potential. Clerkin, Paarlberg, Christensen, Nesbit, and Tschirhart (2012) pointed out that vested and fixed communities are more connected to local nonprofits, which affects giving and prevents drop-off. The ability to self-identify with a nonprofits mission consistently influences giving behavior (Smith, 2013). Influencing giving behavior is justified in cost and administrative expenses when the influx of donations exceeds the capital output (Marudas, Petherbridge, & Ciokiewicz, 2016).

The motivations for giving change throughout the life of a donor, so fundraising platforms should factor in those changes. Empathy is the main reason many donors feel motivated to give (Kim & Kou, 2014). Kim and Kou (2014) suggested looking at empirical data around race and ethnicity to discover what causes are dominant among peer groups. Addressing challenges with fundraising can start with general motivation research and then narrow to motivation research targeted toward specific groups (Brands & Elam, 2013). The competitive nature of fundraising requires forward thinking and sustained efficiency (Kilbey & Smit, 2014).

Part of forward thinking involves not viewing or approaching all African Americans as one monolithic group (Van Slyke et al., 2007). Fundraising effectiveness starts and ends with campaigns that match sociodemographic traits. The ability to target specifically creates an efficiency in the donor engagement process.

Development Strategies

Development directors have used many types of development strategies over the course of time. Fundraising is unique to every organization, but development professionals typically use many of the same platforms and frameworks regarding engagement and securing patrons (Brown & Guo, 2010). These strategies include but are not limited to direct mailers, target donor lists, marketing materials, and social media. Social media is the newest platform that many development directors are using to attract and engage younger donors. By posting images and phrases that identify the good works of the organization, potential donors can see where their resources go. Per Kirk et al. (2016), social media is the least expensive of current development strategies and can have a wider reach given its global platform.

Nonprofit development strategies also push into nontraditional areas, such as allowing donors to dictate where and how they want their gifts used. Giving donors control over the use of the funds or in-kind donation increases the motivation to donate (Khodakarami, Petersen, & Venkatesan, 2015). Patrons who have an increased involvement and interest participate more.

This increased involvement can also spill over into how development directors or those responsible for generating funds target their base. Organizations that have the resources are using software and studies to determine what areas or concerns are important to donors. This process allows development directors to spotlight areas donors are offering the most money (Waniak-Michalak & Zarzycka, 2015). By mining financial

information, development directors can construct a more detailed approach for selecting

donors in their community.

Along with selecting donors in their community, celebrity endorsements or

capitalizing on celebrity branding can increase donations to a nonprofit organization.

Celebrities have a certain sway on the public, and the perception that they are giving to a

specific cause will move others to do the same. High visibility for a nonprofit and a cause

is a development strategy that can boost awareness and donations (Ilicic & Baxter, 2014).

However, the use of celebrities is not a proven tactic to increase long-term engagement

for African Americans (Van Slyke et al., 2007).

Fundraising efforts are also starting to become convoluted due to priority

strategies placed on donors. Boenigk and Scherhag (2014) studied the effects of nonprofit

organizations prioritizing donors based on giving levels and donor loyalty. Some of the

data showed that groups not placed in high regard left for other institutions. This lack of

regard leads to disengagement due to dissatisfaction or bad community relationships

(Boenigk & Scherhag, 2014). Additionally, there can be disengagement from donor

strategy if it does not mete out parity (Scherhag & Boenigk, 2013). Because of the lack of

intentional engagement, development directors usually leave African Americans out of

the tiered-priority strategy.

Competition has increased between nonprofits for donations and other resources.

This competition stems from an increase in the number of available nonprofit

organizations people can choose from (Grizzle, 2015). Nonprofit leaders that demonstrate

a credible and viable development strategy likely attract a higher number of donations

(Grizzle, 2015). Calabrese and Grizzle (2012) outlined the continued importance of development directors engaging nontraditional groups and appealing to local interests when creating a development strategy.

Nonprofit leaders similarly deal with the expectation of creating trust and commitment in donors. Building a sustainable base of donors involves long-term effectiveness (Powers & Yaros, 2012). Powers and Yaros (2012) highlighted the efforts made to make inroads into neighborhoods using open forums meant to cultivate support through honest dialogue.

The continued challenges for nonprofit leaders to attract donors extend from strategic planning to volunteer relationships. Volunteer partnerships are often neglected, but have the potential to provide huge value to a nonprofit's development strategy (Samuel, Wolf, & Schilling, 2013). Building a competitive advantage in the nonprofit sector can begin with word of mouth and positive verbal contributions from volunteers (Schloderer, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2014). Addressing engagement can begin with the daily interactions of staff, volunteers, and the targeted community.

Fundraising and engagement strategies are shifting to technological mediums. Social networking sites are valuable tools for stakeholder and donor engagement (Ihm, 2015). Courting new African American donors will increasingly take place through the technological and social platforms that are of interest to them (Ihm, 2015). Swanson (2013) noted that organizational leaders who blend technology with an organization's social capital fare better in long-term development.

Examples of social media use exist on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram. Nonprofit institutions are typically early adopters of current technology (Smitko, 2012). Lovejoy, Waters, and Saxton (2012) noted that having multiple ways to learn about the organization can develop or strengthen donor relationships. Engaged institutions have short- and long-term development strategies that might help to address communication issues with donors (Swanson, 2013).

The level of public engagement on social media differs between organizations. However, institutional leaders must be cognizant of the value that social media platforms bring (Cho, Schweickart, & Haase, 2014). Mano (2014) contended that social media, and the networking attached to it, gathers together people of like-minded interests. This similar thinking affects their giving behavior. As societal demographics change, giving strategies must also change to attract diverse donor bases (Mano, 2014).

Social networking sites are also a platform for gaining traction with younger donors. The next generation of donors, and particularly African Americans, are looking to platforms that make giving easier (Mottino & Miller, 2005). However, many nonprofit organizations do not court African Americans specifically but instead choose to create generic engagement strategies that encompass just volunteering (Kim & Lee, 2014). This level of engagement attracts some donors, but not many, as the strategy is not holistic and does not intersect with social and technological trends (Mottino & Miller, 2005).

Consistent innovation in the workplace and with organizational leaders creates an environment for success and is vital to a nonprofit organization's survival and long-term sustainability (McMurray, Islam, Sarros, & Pirola-Merlo, 2013). Nonprofit executives

cultivate and nurture innovation at the leadership level, and it becomes part of the organizational culture (Chapleo, 2015). However, nonprofit leaders must communicate these ideals effectively.

Central to any development strategy is the communication of the strategy. The person in charge of communication at a nonprofit organization should have solid relationships with the surrounding community and should diversify those efforts (Zhu & Cheung, 2014). Nonprofit health organizations have been on the frontline of communication development strategies that tie into donor engagement for years. McKeever (2013) discussed the various ways leaders of successful health organizations attracted donor funding by channeling and creating broad social messages. Diverse efforts are emerging with staffing as well as with targeted engagement and development efforts (Bortree & Waters, 2014). Leaders of organizations built on service to the community must design diverse strategies to engage African Americans to address disengagement.

Development directors must design these messages with both race and age in mind. African Americans do not have one collective motivation to give based on race. Efforts to engage younger African Americans must take on the social concerns of the times (Jackson, 2001). Jackson (2001) highlights conscious frameworks in which younger African Americans like to be engaged. Examples of those engagement efforts include relevance to the African American community and connectivity to their career aspirations.

Nonprofit organizational leaders should seek to understand why African Americans give and what their key motivators are. This level of understanding can help create successful development strategies and giving campaigns (Carter & Marx, 2007). Historically, African Americans did not have a lot of wealth, but they understood community development and educational needs (Mottino & Miller, 2005). Using segmented information to create a donor campaign for a selected audience is not new. However, African Americans are still an "untapped philanthropic resource" given agencies are not engaging them effectively enough (Van Slyke et al., 2007).

Social Responsibility

Philanthropy refers to the voluntary giving of resources that strategically affect nonprofit organizations. Current business literature indicates that individuals and companies are highly likely to give to communities in need or people at risk (Hatcher & Studer, 2015). The idea behind this premise is people in need are victims and need considerable help from those able to provide it.

Business leaders have begun the process of marrying traditional organizational ideals with philanthropy. Social responsibility or community philanthropy is the title bestowed on corporate charitable giving (Paarlberg & Yoshioka, 2015). Companies vary in size and scope, and size and scope typically determine the amount of giving done by a company. Racial makeup also plays a role in the amount and areas the funds affect.

Affected areas or persons are grouped into the stakeholder sphere of influence. Social responsibility is rooted in stakeholder theory, which is the reason the effect of philanthropy extends into different communities and causes (Deigh, Farquhar, Palazzo &

Siano, 2015). Individual donors have the influence of choice and make decisions based on their interests. Organizational leaders who look at fresh perspectives and partnerships can help remedy engagement issues (Eid & Sabella, 2014).

Corporate philanthropy has grown over the years and helps mediate giving between personal interests and business (Liket & Maas, 2016). Company leaders use strategic philanthropy to locate specific areas of need and apply their collective resources toward those areas. By doing this consistently in a familiar environment, the premise is that the philanthropic effort will create a long-term effect (Salazar, Husted, & Biehl, 2012). The creation of this complementary relationship provides extended benefits but can also cause a decrease in African American engagement due to unidentifiable causes (Hadani & Coombes, 2015).

Companies continue to grow, and along with that growth comes demographic shifts. Minorities and women are entering top positions that can ultimately influence the donation of organizations' dollars (Kabongo, Chang, & Li, 2013). This diversity adds depth and layers to social responsibility.

Social responsibility also ties into understanding public awareness. Organizational leaders that express or exude confidence in the mission, vision, and values of the organization find greater sustainability (McDougle, 2014). The perceived confidence relationship creates legitimacy and public awareness for donor campaigns (McDougle, 2014). Volunteering is a segment of donor engagement. The call to service starts with motivation to help a nonprofit agency. The awareness of the donor creates positive

experiences and promotes sustained engagement to the nonprofit organization (Piatak, 2016).

Deeper connections can be made regarding social responsibility and corporate giving. Xie and Bagozzi (2014) investigated the role of emotion-based giving and corporate linkages to ethical business decisions. Donors become involved with companies they believe have the community's best interest at heart (Rim, Yang, & Lee, 2016). Organizations affiliated with faith or spirituality tend to have an advantage with followers because their mission speaks to their personal beliefs. Historically, African Americans were linked intrinsically to causes that stemmed from or were supported by the Black church (Gasman, 2010). This connection is a motivation for giving, and nonprofit leaders that are not making the connection are not going to see African American donor engagement increase.

Ford (2015) considered fundraising advantages afforded to schools attached to a specific sectarian network. At risk for disengagement are African American donors who see the schools or agencies as being outside their personal or religious scope or do not have a personal stake (Andreini, Pedeliento, & Signori, 2014). Organizational leaders seeking to ward off donor fatigue must not only increase the quality of service provision but must also create real relationships with the African American community.

The challenge of engaging and creating social connections is perplexing (Cunningham, Avner, & Justilien, 2014). History has shown exclusion and disproportionality within African American communities regarding social responsibility and nonprofit organizations. Deeper levels of engagement from nonprofit organizations

and philanthropic funds must include African Americans (Cunningham et al., 2014). However, there have been very few engagement strategies that included African Americans or other minorities (Cunningham et al., 2014).

History of African American Philanthropy

Leaders of nonprofit organizations and community-based groups that rely on philanthropic donations should understand the historical giving aspects of African Americans (Carter & Marx, 2007). Several reasons exist for exploring minorities as a target group for donor engagement. In the United States, African Americans are one of the largest groups of minorities. The United States will continue to grow more ethnically diverse in the years to come, which will signal a change in the source of continued donor dollars. Nonprofit organizational leaders should use strategic plans and development plans to target these diverse groups intentionally and effectively to garner support and create long-term sustainability (Carter & Marx, 2007).

The ongoing history of African American philanthropy is consistent with social trends that show positive upticks with income and social status. Although African Americans have engaged in giving and help-oriented practices since slavery, it was the recognition of church-based giving that drew the most attention (Gasman, 2010). Churches formed the cornerstone of charitable giving among the Black community and still serve as a leader in the field.

African Americans as a donor group continue to be underserved and less targeted than other racial groups. Van Slyke et al. (2007) pointed out that consistent outreach or intentional efforts to reach philanthropic dollars from African Americans have remained

underemphasized historically. This disconnect has created a gap in engagement for minorities and has made creating inroad slow. However, the efforts of organizational leaders who have attempted to create donor engagement campaigns targeting African Americans have been general, bland, and uniform (Van Slyke et al., 2007).

Conversely, once solicited, African Americans should attempt to respond in-kind and create results that warrant nonprofit organizations targeting them (Carter & Marx, 2007). Key to creating action plans and steps that African Americans can get behind is researching and understanding the philanthropic history of African Americans (Jackson, 2001). The limited research and documented historical context for African American philanthropy also places limitations on how to solicit and explore future trends properly.

Understanding the storied history of African American philanthropy will allow nonprofit organizational leaders to focus on why African Americans give and how they choose to give. Philanthropy for African Americans starts with a sense of family created out of necessity and during the times when African Americans were marginalized and isolated from the larger Caucasian constructs of early society (Bell, 1969). Philanthropy and charitable giving within the African American community are not new. They have a long-standing history with families and friends that extends through traditional and nontraditional means. As the United States goes through societal shifts and minority communities grow larger, it is important that nonprofit organizations recognize this donor base (Carson, 2000).

The act of philanthropy for African Americans has been set in a consistent continuum of community and family, with neither existing without the other nor always

connected to family values (Bell, 1969). Individual giving typically referred to giving to family and was not designated as philanthropy, even though the family member was perhaps in need. This same premise existed with time, talent, or other resources and extended into the greater community goals (Carter & Marx, 2007). African American charitable giving is rooted in connectedness and identification (Carson, 2000). The tradition of giving for African Americans starts with community-based efforts and then extends itself to general self-interests. These self-interests can be driven by business opportunities or those directly affected by the cause (Edmondson & Carroll, 1999).

This interest, whether self or communal, leads back to community uplift. The uplift extends to racial parameters (Bell, 1969). Although most African Americans were shut out of predominantly Caucasian organizations and institutions, racial exclusion forced the development of channels and systems to push the race forward (Carter & Marx, 2007). The result was the creation of a philanthropic system that excelled at volunteering, fundraising, and donations geared toward to racial parity and community development.

This system includes large and small organizations within the community that work with primarily African American issues. A few examples of these organizations are fraternities and sororities, churches, and historically Black colleges and universities (Van Slyke et al., 2007). The institution within African American communities where philanthropy is most prevalent is the church. Charitable giving for minorities is higher inside church-based organizations or agencies tied to similar faith-based ideals (Andreoni, Payne, Smith, & Karp, 2016).

The African American church, since its inception, has been a cornerstone and a bellwether to African American philanthropy. The church provides stability and comfort during times of oppression (Van Slyke et al., 2007). However, it also can raise unprecedented amounts of funds for social programs and community development. These social norms are typical in all cultures and have credence over where and who handle charitable giving (Krupka & Croson, 2016). The connection to the church or deity provides a boost for giving and is less likely to encounter donor disengagement.

The level of church engagement has not stopped or tapered off, but the philanthropic measures have shifted over time. The church has been instrumental for African American giving since the 1700s, and during the 1800s, it began to take on more meaning (Jackson, 2001). African Americans started to understand the power of collective unity and the ways it could influence social agendas. This agenda creation included volunteerism as the main hub for African American philanthropy (Carter & Marx, 2007).

Volunteering became the onus for how African Americans gave because they did not have the breadth of resources that Caucasians had. Subsequently, the historical exclusion from Caucasian institutions increased the motivation to volunteer and help with strictly African American causes (Jackson, 2001). The philanthropic causes needed volunteers to help with transition services for runaway slaves, obtaining freedom papers, and providing shelter (Carter & Marx, 2007). The unknown causality of this undertaking was that Caucasians who believed in abolition began to volunteer with African American causes and donate to the same causes (Jackson, 2001).

In the 1900s, African American philanthropy and nonprofit engagement continued the path toward economic, educational, and political freedoms. Jackson (2001) cited the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the United Negro College Fund as examples. These organizations could galvanize African American dollars and volunteers to promote political and civil engagement as well as educational achievement. More groups have developed over the years, but at the core is African American participation in philanthropic efforts that support community development (Carter & Marx, 2007).

Efforts to create long-term sustainability require nonprofits to diversify their streams of income and donations. This diversification includes donor segmentation and engagement tactics that work for specific groups (Carter & Marx, 2007). Rogers (2002) discussed how philanthropy was different for the African American community and should be approached in an intentional manner with specific plans. Nonprofit leaders are making a mistake when not engaging this historically underemphasized group (Carson, 2000).

African Americans have a significant stake in the health and development of their communities. Past and current economic realities show that philanthropy is important to infrastructure and ongoing development (Jackson et al., 2012). This causation helps in the decision-making process regarding where and how African Americans donate.

Parallel to the development of the community is the personal relationship with the organization and the identification of the staff. African Americans who see those like themselves inside the offices or board rooms of nonprofits find it gratifying to donate to

these very same institutions (Bernstein & Bilimoria, 2013). Organizations with a diverse workforce or diverse board of directors usually have inroads to donor engagement for minorities.

African American donors benefit from seeing identical images in the nonprofit arena and donating to similar organizations (Adesaogun, Flottemesch, & Ibrahim-DeVries, 2015). The impact of having people of color in prominent positions creates an unspoken culture of giving and receiving that members of minority communities support. However, African Americans in nonprofit organizations do not have the same career mobility as their Caucasian colleagues in nonprofit organizations, so they do not see identical faces when approached by nonprofit agencies to donate (Wilson, 2012).

Damman, Heyse, and Mills (2014) discussed gender, race, and promotion in nonprofit organizations, which can have a direct correlation to donor engagement. Racial and gender diversity can address lack of donor engagement in some cultures. Sociological understanding and job authority play into how African Americans and members of other races decide to distribute their income (Wilson & Maume, 2016).

Organizational challenges such as diversity and mobility have an adverse effect on minority philanthropy in both nonprofit and for-profit sectors (Kabongo et al., 2013). Carruthers and Wanamaker (2013) indicated that they saw African Americans give more to educational foundations and nonprofits that specialize in school disparities with racially diverse administrations. Conversely, institutions that featured less diverse administrations saw less funding from minority led households.

Leslie, Snyder, and Glomb (2012) indicated that African Americans and other minority groups have had less favorable experiences historically in U.S. society and give less or drop-off more over time. African Americans express higher levels of discernment with organizations and look to fund organizations that match their identity or ideals (Shteynberg, Leslie, Knight, & Mayer, 2011). Garrow (2012) noted that race and poverty affect personal and governmental decisions for funding nonprofit agencies. The choices made have parity regarding relationships, poverty, and funding choices (Garrow, 2012). Organizational leaders seeking to close gaps should be mindful of preoccupations and historical challenges.

The connection to targeted campaigns extends to newer generations of givers within the African American community. Drezner (2013) noted that millennials in the African American community are the next wave of targets organizational leaders need to engage for sustained giving. Many of the youth in this demographic are college educated and attended colleges affiliated with a church (Drezner, 2013).

Additionally, there are predictors in all communities that highlight how giving takes place within certain social demographics. Wiepking and Bekkers (2012) discussed similarities and differences in cultures that determine how, why, and where they give. By targeting these specific parameters, leaders of nonprofit organizations can attempt to increase giving from the African American community. Trust in the nonprofit agency is an important factor for African American donors, so agencies that rate high on a trust scale can heighten engagement (Taniguchi, 2013).

As African Americans continue to adopt and evolve giving strategies, the recent manifestation has been on family enterprises. Feliu and Botero (2016) explored the idea of families creating a mechanism to generate and then transfer their donations to singular causes. This ability to affect a common cause familiar to the family can potentially hurt nonprofit organizations that do not engage the community (Feliu & Botero, 2016).

Young African American Engagement

The motivation for African American giving and the ways it relates to younger African Americans are vital for nonprofit organization leaders to understand. Jackson (2001) noted that motives for younger African Americans who fit in the millennial category could vary from older African Americans. Whereas older African Americans seem to receive the glut of any engagement strategy, the next generation of African American donors needs to be involved as well.

Younger African Americans in the millennial category will be the foundation for the next generation of philanthropists (Jackson, 2001). The birthdates for millennials range from 1980 to 2000 (Paulin, Ferguson, Schattke, & Jost, 2014). Millennials represent about 30% of the current population in America, and others should not overlook their presence (Paulin, Ferguson, Jost, & Fallu, 2014).

The process or processes for sustained engagement for millennials do not yet have full definitions. Along those lines are the perceived differences between Caucasian millennials and African American millennials. Given the historic context of African American charitable giving, Jackson (2001) highlighted that traditional giving and the shifting of those giving practices are vastly different from other racial and ethnic groups.

Nonprofit leaders should be considering the factors that drive African American giving and then dig deeper to engage the next group of age-appropriate donors (Jackson, 2001).

Engagement for millennials has been generally directed at social media marketing campaigns (Kim & Lee, 2014). Social media has the power and influence to build a larger donor base given its technological reach. However, many organizations employ older adults that have no real expertise or prowess when it comes to creating engagement strategies for millennials (Paulin, Ferguson, Schattke, et al., 2014). This same deficiency extends to the lack of creation for targeted efforts to attract African American millennials (Bucic, Harris, & Arli, 2012).

Nonprofit leaders should begin to invest heavily in social media marketing toward millennials given the wealth transfer that will occur over the next two decades. Paulin, Ferguson, Schattke, et al. (2014) discussed the transfer of wealth that many baby boomers will undergo as they get their end-of-life affairs in order. Adult children or grandchildren will receive this wealth or resource allotment. The grandchildren or millennial generation will have decision-making power on where to donate funds. This is also true for African Americans.

Jackson (2001) studied younger generations of African Americans, their potential wealth transfer, and their giving patterns. Social media and nontraditional giving campaigns reach millennials. Organizational leaders who make inroads or connections to African American millennials will be at the forefront of creating a substantial donor base. Millennials, regardless of race, also want to see change and be a part of the change that nonprofits can achieve.

Being a part of that change process means being involved with nonprofit organizations and increasing engagement. Nonprofit organization leaders develop strategies around engagement but neglect communication strategies targeted to their audience (Kim & Lee, 2014). As it pertains to younger African Americans, there is a feeling that development directors do not reach out to them but expect donations and volunteerism (Jackson, 2001).

Paulin, Ferguson, Jost, et al. (2014) suggested that nonprofit organizational leaders should forecast impending economic and cultural changes. By being in step with trends and shifts, organizational leaders can begin to attract and retain newer or neglected donor bases for future funding. Nonprofits leaders or development directors that have a focused strategy and engagement plan for younger African American donors will create connectivity and greater involvement with that organization (Paulin, Ferguson, Schattke, et al., 2014).

Transition and Summary

African Americans have a long history of philanthropy and charitable giving that researchers have not documented thoroughly (Jackson et al., 2012). The need for consistent funding and dedicated donors is crucial for long-term nonprofit organization survival. As economies change and funding sources dry up, it is imperative that nonprofit agencies cultivate new donor bases (Marx & Carter, 2008). African Americans, when targeted and approached early, can develop into a stable giving market. African Americans comprise 12.2% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census, 2012). In Charlotte, North Carolina, African Americans comprise 35% of the population and have a strong

nature to support local and national social causes. Chapter 3 will include an outline of the research method used for this study. Chapter 3 will include (a) research questions, (b) the role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) ethics, (e) data collection, and (f) the process used to ensure trustworthiness.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand and explore the factors that address effective engagement strategies for African American donors. The results of the study may lead to increases in charitable giving from African Americans by highlighting engagement strategies that work. In the study, I outline how nonprofits attract and engage minority donors as well as maintain those relationships.

Research Questions

I used the following research questions to gather insight into the perceptions and beliefs of nonprofit organizations with the goal of answering the main research question:

RQ1: What are the central factors for donor engagement in the African American philanthropic community?

Subquestion 1: How do development directors explain the reasons for lower levels of charitable giving by African Americans in comparison to other ethnic groups?

Subquestion 2: How do development directors work to increase levels of charitable giving among African Americans?

Role of the Researcher

I was actively involved in the writing, planning, and document processing for institutional review and approval and for gaining permission to collect data from participants. The study included five organizations with an active role in the nonprofit landscape selected from the Charlotte community. As a board member for several area nonprofits, I have access to many organizations involved in the arts and nonprofit

community in Charlotte. These indirect relationships had no adverse effect on the interview process or the findings.

Upon securing the participants, my role transitioned to data collection. As the interviewer, I listened, recorded, and took notes to ensure interview transcripts would be accurate. Participants received their transcribed interview within 3 days and then had 5 days to look over the transcription and send back any errors or corrections to ensure consistency and accuracy. After the data collection and verification was complete, my role shifted to analyzing and evaluating the data. This process involved looking for patterns or themes in the data. Consistent patterns were explained and served as the basis for the initial research question.

Population and Sample

The interviewees were members of the governing boards or development directors of five nonprofit organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina, who had received donations in the past 5 years. To ensure ethical treatment and protection for participants, I received permission from the Walden University IRB (Approval Number: 03-28-17-0460748) before conducting the study. Purposeful sampling was the preferred method used to select participating organizations from existing lists of nonprofit agencies in Charlotte. I sent e-mails to 20 potential participants until reaching the sample size of five.

Three participants could have met the parameters of the study (Suri, 2011), but for a study to be rigorous, it should reach a point of data saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Given this information, I interviewed five participants to see if new data emerged and achieved saturation.

To gather the needed data for this research, I used a purposeful sampling protocol (Moustakas, 1994). Purposeful sampling allows a selection of sites and people that will procure the data needed. Collecting qualitative research falls directly into this category. The purposeful sampling strategy allowed for intentional organization selection from the community. Each organizational board member or development director chosen had previous philanthropic collection efforts. Recruitment strategies for participants included e-mails, phone calls, and face-to-face requests (see Patton, 2002).

Based on the qualitative methodology, the data collected encompassed open-ended interviews and any documents the organizations wished to share. The protocols used for collecting data were standard interviews with the participating organizations, and I recorded each interview using audio and by taking field notes (see Patton, 2002). There were no data collection issues.

Data Collection and Storage

After I identified potential participants from the Charlotte, North Carolina, area, I sent them an e-mail soliciting their involvement, along with the consent form. I then followed up with phone calls to obtain verbal approval and to schedule the face-to-face interviews. Privacy was paramount with the participant pool, so after data collection began, all participating organizations received a code. Using codes ensured confidentiality because I was the only person who knew the identity of the participants. The data collected remained stored in a locked drawer and all devices used were password protected. After completion of the study, I will maintain the records and collections for 5 years and then promptly destroy all records by paper shredding and

electronic erasure. Upon request, any participant will be able to obtain a copy of the findings upon completion of the study.

Research Method and Design

Qualitative research starts with general assumptions and the use of a theoretical framework that will guide and inform a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I had research questions intended to produce answers about a common problem among groups or individuals. In the qualitative research study, I used a case study approach to gain insight into African American charitable giving in Charlotte, North Carolina. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) described how researchers should place themselves in the natural environment of the subjects to gather information. Quantitative research involves surveys and questionnaires. Conversely, qualitative research involves open-ended research questions and relies heavily on an involved researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The focus of qualitative research is inductive (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained the characteristics that are common and distinct to qualitative case study: the researcher as an instrument, interpretation, comprehensive accounts, and normal or natural settings. In this study, I included a qualitative case study approach to answer the main research question and the subresearch questions. The study provided answers regarding African American charitable giving and ways to engage donors.

Case study research spotlights managerial and organizational processes through the lens of real-world processes (Yin, 2003). Case study researchers focus on the singular

experiences of a select group of participants. The group in this study was an organization that received funds from donors, particularly African Americans.

Historically, case study was only relevant in a few fields of study, but over time, it has branched out into others. Several factors make case study different from other methods. Yin (2003) noted that to begin a case study, researchers should locate or identify a specific case. Also, researchers must know the intent of the case study (Yin, 2003). Yin explained that after a researcher knows the intent, the researcher must choose between the case being instrumental or intrinsic. Instrumental cases focus on specific issues or concerns (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Intrinsic cases focus on rare research topics with a lot of singularity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted that case study is different from other methods due to the in-depth observations, interviews, and review of documents.

For this research study, I used an instrumental case study. The reason for this choice is the need for nonprofits to understand how to engage the African American community as it pertains to garnering donations. Knowing this information can help with engaging new donor bases and increasing financial stability. Most development directors have targeted engagement strategies for an entire community, but not segmented to attract specific demographics.

There were both strengths and weaknesses in this research design. The strengths of case study research and the results I anticipated convinced me to use the research design. Case study provides readers insight and can expand the experiences of the readers (Yin, 2003). I chose a qualitative case study because I believed that the natural setting of

nonprofits and their boards would allow me to gather insightful data and understanding regarding how engagement occurs with African American donors.

Ethical Research

Ethics and ethical codes are the chief principles by which organizational leaders and other individuals ensure fair treatment to others (Yallop & Mowatt, 2015). The intent of this qualitative case study was to gather information from nonprofits in Charlotte, North Carolina. Prior to starting the data collection process, I obtained permission from the Walden University IRB so that I could proceed with the study. I followed the correct protocols regarding the IRB process and then proceeded accordingly.

After I received permission from the IRB, I sought permission from all participants using a waiver. I also communicated to the participants that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. Participants who trust the researcher during a study offer more information (Wu, 2016).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Dependability

Merriam (1995) noted that research findings that researchers can find consistently over time are the foundation for reliability. Reliability refers to the trustworthiness of generated data and research procedures (Roberts, Priest, & Traynor, 2006). Three specific strategies that deal with qualitative reliability are peer examination, triangulation, and an audit trail (Merriam, 1995). Increasing reliability in qualitative research can take place in a myriad of ways. Roberts et al. (2006) outlined the following: use data analysis packages such as NVivo, make sure there are notes that detail decisions and changes made during

the process, make accurate transcription of notes and recordings, and have independent researchers review interview notes.

Quantitative research involves ensuring reliability and validity, whereas trustworthiness is the hallmark of qualitative research (Letts et al., 2007). Lincoln and Guba (1985) explored reliability and validity and concluded that both concepts are essentially the same as trustworthiness. Credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability are the four concepts Lincoln and Guba proposed that can establish trustworthiness. In qualitative research, the standards for reliability and validity are akin to these four concepts. As the researcher, I followed Lincoln and Guba's format to establish validity and reliability.

I established credibility by reviewing the transcripts from all participants to identify any similarities in the responses. I also used member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to establish credibility. Member checking involves presenting the transcripts back to the research participants to ensure all responses are accurate (Krefting, 1991). To establish transferability, it is important to see if the findings, results, or participant responses apply to others in the same community (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I provided descriptions of geographic limitations and demographics that detailed the population studied as the base for transferability. Thomas and Magilvy (2011) described dependability as the process when one researcher can mirror the research process of another. I established dependability by creating a clear audit trail that begins with proper document maintenance and coordination and by preserving audio recordings, transcripts, and notes. Taking care to produce neutral research is a definition of confirmability

(Krefting, 1991). Field notes captured my biases and personal feelings to manage confirmability.

Validity

In a qualitative research study, validity is the measure by which researchers check the data for consistencies and measures of truth in the content (Pandey & Chawla, 2016). Checking the findings and the accuracy for qualitative validity requires strategies. Yin (2011) explained the idea of validity being the process of collecting data properly and then interpreting them. Six strategies for creating a foundation for validity in a qualitative study are member checks, assumptions and biases, a statement of the researchers' experiences, triangulation, colleague or peer examination, and engagement or submersion in the research situation (Merriam, 1995). From the strategies outlined, I used member checks and a statement of my experiences as the researcher.

Transition and Summary

The primary focus of Chapter 3 was to provide (a) a review of my role in the development, collection, and data analysis in the study; (b) a brief overview of the participants and the selection process; (c) a discussion of why a qualitative research methodology was the best choice; (d) an outline of the population and the sampling method; and (e) the process I used to ensure reliability and validity for the study.

In Chapter 4, I highlight the full study and present the findings and data from the research. My intent is that the findings and study will help leaders of nonprofits in Charlotte, North Carolina, engage African American patrons and help create a solid

funding base. The findings will address social change, nonprofit development techniques, and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This chapter includes a description of the process of procuring and confirming

participants, collecting data, and analyzing data to answer the research question on how

leaders of nonprofit organizations can effectively solicit and engage African Americans

in fundraising processes. As nonprofit organization leaders seek to build solid revenue

streams, discovering what works or does not work for a segment of the market can help

them better meet engagement and fundraising goals. To determine the effects of

intentional engagement campaigns, I created additional subquestions to explore what

development directors or board members believe contributes to dedicated and consistent

fundraising. The hierarchy-of-effects theory and Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising

provided a stable foundation for the research given that communication and relationship

development promote consistent and stable giving from donors (Ki & Hon, 2012).

Discussions include any nonconforming data or discrepancies. Next, the chapter includes

patterns that emerged in the data collected and the findings from the data analysis that

related to the research questions. The chapter ends with evidence of the quality of the

data.

Data Collection

The development directors selected for this research all came from nonprofit

agencies located in Charlotte, North Carolina. The missions of each nonprofit varied, but

they all had 501(c)3 status and provided significant impact to the local community by

implementing initiatives that helped with health education, art engagement, and support

for families in distress. Participant selection was purposeful given the jobs or titles they held and their involvement in developing or implementing nonprofit engagement strategies or fundraising.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the method for recruiting participants for interviews was straightforward and intentional. To secure the necessary participants for data collection from each organization, with a minimum of five development directors or board members, I looked on the websites of 20 organizations that fit the nonprofit criteria. I then sent out correspondence to e-mail addresses listed on the websites outlining what I was doing and a consent form if they chose to participate.

The goal of the recruitment process was to secure five participants, and from the 20 e-mails sent out, eight responded favorably. This response exceeded the goal needed, so I placed three organizations in a backup status in the event any participating organizations decided to drop out. The five interviews with the development directors took place over 2 weeks. All the interviews were face-to-face in an office space located inside each of the nonprofit organizations. The interviews were audio recorded on my iPad, iPhone, and digital tape recorder to assist with transcription after all the interviews were complete. The application used to record the interviews on the iPad and iPhone was a recording application call Rev Notes.

At the completion of each interview, I wrote memos of the information gathered. Creating memos after each of the five interviews was a good way to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the amount of data collected throughout the process. Patton (2002) also noted that immediately following an interview, researchers should create memos to

record their thinking. The short memos created were one or two pages. These memos provided added context for the answers during the interviews.

The interviews ranged from 45 to 60 minutes and lasted the duration of the appointed hour each participant expected would be necessary. I started transcribing each interview on the same day the interview took place. Transcribing each interview took at least 2 days. The most significant challenge to the process was the amount of time each transcription took. There were at least 2 days between each interview during which I imported the transcriptions into NVivo11.

I provided each participant with a copy of the transcript for review to ensure accuracy of meaning and content. The transcripts allowed for member checking and added a layer of verification. The process of member checking gives researchers and respondents a chance to go over what they said and to make any corrections necessary (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The five participants received a copy of their respective transcript via e-mail. Each respondent had 7 days to review, verify, and confirm that the transcripts were valid or needed corrections.

Data Analysis

Following the confirmation of each transcript, I placed each interview into NVivo11 software for data analysis. The software was used to analyze each interview and attempt to answer the research questions.

RQ1: What are the central factors for donor engagement in the African American philanthropic community?

Subquestion 1: How do development directors explain the reasons for lower levels of charitable giving by African Americans in comparison to other ethnic groups?

Subquestion 2: How do development directors work to increase levels of charitable giving among African Americans?

Conducting word frequency, themes, and analysis of content helped to find the answers to the research questions. NVivo11 codes all transcriptions placed into the working file. The software then searches and locates common words in the collective data inputs. These collective words determine patterns and emerging themes in the responses, so word frequency was the initial form of analysis used. During the collection and analysis, NVivo11 identified several words used more frequently than others were. Although some words were fill words, or words used in sentences periodically but not significant to the research, others stood out and correlated to the research topic.

To mine down further and separate the significant words, NVivo11 coordinated those words into nodes or themes. This type of analysis highlighted the words that would become themes in the analysis given the use and the respondents' context for using those words. The words that stood out the most and were most often repeated by each respondent were community, connection, mission, relationship, social media, family, identity, intentional, and money. Given the questions were primarily about charitable giving, respondents often repeated words that underscored Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising.

The technique used for the last step of data analysis was content analysis. Prior to collecting data, the themes or codes initially laid out were donor, community, giving

back, caring, and change. These initial themes were standard with nonprofit agencies and the conceptual hierarchy-of-effects theory. People give to organizations based on their level of caring and connection to the community. During and after the data collection process, additional themes emerged. These themes were connection, relationship, engagement, intentional, mission, interaction, and family. Again, the highlighting and addition of these themes gave credence to the use of the conceptual frameworks.

Discrepant Cases and Nonconforming Data

While conducting the interviews and reviewing the transcriptions, there were no discrepant cases or nonconforming data with the development directors. All answers to the interview questions were consistent given the respondents were all development directors and played a similar role at their respective agencies. All respondents were responsible for their agency's development and engagement strategies, so they were well versed in the efforts tied to fundraising.

One respondent was unable to answer a research question as posed. The respondent was asked, based on the respondent's experience, where African Americans donated the most, the response was "I do not know the answer to that question." The development director seemed not to know where funds from African Americans went directly. This was a slightly nonconforming case. The respondent knew the organization received funds from African Americans and had experience with fundraising, but was not sure where African Americans donated the bulk of their resources outside of their organization. Subsequently, the respondent did not have the specificity to address the question appropriately or accurately.

Emerging Patterns and Findings

Word count analysis is a valuable tool for qualitative researchers to find patterns

and themes in data analysis (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2012). Combing through

the respondent transcripts revealed that respondents used certain words more often than

they used others. Common among all the respondents were connection, social media,

community, engage, and relationships. As this study was about engagement and looking

for ways nonprofits could build bridges into the African American community, it was not

surprising to see those words repeated. The essential characteristics that successful donor-

involved campaigns possess are developing deep connections to a cause and creating

strong relationships in the targeted community. Secondary words that emerged were

passion, build, and exposure. Table 1 shows the top five words or terms the respondents

used in the interviews.

Table 1

Most Frequently Used Words and Terms From Interviews

Word or term	Count
Community	53
Connection	26
Social media	9
Relationship	7
Engage	6

The word community was the most used word in the complete set of interviews

from all respondents. This was not a surprise given nonprofit organizations thrive on

community-based connections or having people in donor catchment areas be a part of the

organizational culture. Community was preselected as one of the words that would code

as a theme given its heavy use in the nonprofit landscape. Several references to

organizational work or donor engagement in the interviews substantiated the frequent use.

The development directors consistently made note of using community in donor-supplied pamphlets or e-mails to create a family feel or to develop a closer connection to the areas they affected through programs. The respondents also noted that content using the word community was shared by members of their social or professional networks in larger amounts. This sharing or engaging links back to the form of press agentry formulated by Kelly (1995).

Connection was the second-most-used word by the development directors interviewed, which was a surprise. Although the use of the word blends with community and relationship, it occurred more often than other words preselected for coding themes prior to the collection period. The development directors used the word when describing an engagement scenario or factors that played into successful campaigns.

With connections, development directors develop deeper and more intense relationships with donors or potential donors. The use of the word has front-end impact and back-end impact. On the front end of donor engagement, one development director said, "Our radio partnerships have usually yielded a great impact as far as connecting with the African American community." As it pertains to the back end of engagement, another development director pointed out, "We've done the listening and learning to know that we're providing programmatic experiences that they can connect to."

The words connection, connects, or connecting were used 26 times in the collective interviews. Connections help guide and drive the messaging for donor

engagement campaigns given they hold pathways for personal identification (Ki & Hon, 2012). Development directors can adequately target segments of the community when they have inroads or connectivity to the community they seek to solicit.

Not surprising was the multiple uses of the term social media. This buzzword is now standard in most, if not all, engagement campaigns for nonprofit organizations. Social media is one the quickest and most effective ways to get a message out to varying audiences (Ihm, 2015). The use of social media underscores the targeted efforts and use of all mediums if development directors are to be successful.

The fourth most used word in the respondent interviews was relationship. This use again made sense given development directors are looking to develop ties and create lasting networks for continued engagement. After using the word relationship, the respondents would often cite other forms of development that tied in with relationship or the building of bonds. Those words or expressions of the words were exposure, values, beliefs, and invite. Although relationship and engage were on the list of keywords preselected for themes, the others were not. The collective use of the words added a foundation for the original keyword. They also provided context for how development directors use relationship in materials and how prospective donors or donor engagement plans need to invite constituents to the table but also appeal to their values and beliefs.

It was also not a surprise to see engage as one of the words used in the interviews. In nonprofit development and among development directors, engagement is the overarching premise (Deigh et al., 2015). Engagement can encompass many things; however, the crux of it is keeping donors involved in the processes or functions of the

nonprofit. This consistency creates an investment mind frame in donors so they are willing to stay engaged over long periods.

Engagement must also speak to the potential donor. Development directors creatively think of ways to bring newer patrons to the fold by engaging them with messages or images. This level of engagement is primarily for introductory purposes and provides highlights of what the nonprofit organization is doing or plans to do. One development director said the following as it pertained to front-end engagement: "I think the first thing nonprofits have to do is just get out there and engage with them. To listen and learn." Another development director stated, "Then you work with them to identify what they consider to be a greater opportunity to engage the entire African American community." These examples provided insight into how engage and variants of the word create the structure for themes and emerging patterns.

The development directors who participated in the interview process all worked for nonprofit organizations that had varying scopes. A keyword-in-context analysis revealed common words used and some connection between how the respondents used the word and how many times they used it. Li, Liu, and Yu (2015) discussed keyword-in-context analysis as a tool used by qualitative researchers to hone in on words used by respondents but then pared down for their respective viewpoint. I looked at each transcript from the respondents to search for the following keywords: *community, relationship, engage, connection, social media, build, information, exposure,* and *intentional.* I then used NVivo11's text search function to conduct word queries and for

context pertaining to each keyword. Finally, I counted each time the respondents used the keywords. Table 2 displays the keyword use by the development directors.

Table 2

Keyword Use by Development Directors

Keyword	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
Community	2	11	11	14	15
Relationship	5	1	2	0	0
Engage	3	0	1	1	1
Connection	7	0	12	2	5
Social Media	1	1	2	4	1
Build	4	0	0	0	1
Information	0	1	1	1	0
Exposure	0	0	1	1	0
Intentional	1	4	0	0	0

Evidence of Trustworthiness

As outlined in Chapter 3, I established trustworthiness for this case study by ensuring credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated reliability and validity in quantitative research are parallel to four concepts used within qualitative research. This qualitative study followed the standards for each, as discussed below.

Credibility

As discussed in Chapter 3, to establish credibility, I reviewed the final transcripts for themes and similar responses immediately after all interviews were complete. I also sent a transcript to each respondent to ensure all responses were accurate and precise. Member checking ensures consistency with the recording and documentation process (Krefting, 1991).

Transferability

The focus of this research study was on development directors working at nonprofit organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina. To create transferability, I outlined the geographic limitations and population demographics for all respondents. Thomas and Magilvy (2011) noted that a final study should be comparable to other studies in the same geographic region provided the region is identified in the study. The findings in this study are applicable to other local agencies in Charlotte. Information in this study may assist leaders of similar nonprofits with engagement efforts and donor-involved campaigns.

Dependability

Creating a clear and concise audit trail established dependability. This trail began with the document preservation and continued maintenance of all collected material. The audit trail also entailed (a) explaining data collection measures and steps, (b) describing the participant recruitment process, (c) outlining the data collection process, (d) describing data analysis techniques, and (e) highlighting safe-keeping measures for all data and coded materials. A transparent and consistent audit trail can assist future researchers if they wish to explore and expand this study or other studies used to identify nonprofit engagement strategies pertaining to minority groups.

Confirmability

I used field notes and personal notations during all interviews. I was therefore able to notate any personal feelings or biases during the interviews. Krefting (1991) outlined this as the foundation for confirmability if a researcher's feelings will not be a part of the data collection process and noted this sets the standard for neutral research.

Results

The central research question for this study was as follows: What are the central

factors for donor engagement in the African American philanthropic community? The

five development directors in Charlotte, North Carolina, who responded to this question

worked at nonprofit organizations of varying sizes, scopes, and missions. From the 74

important statements analyzed from the interviews, five themes materialized as the

foundation for creating engaged African American patrons. These themes were consistent

throughout all the interviews and became the final themes (see Table 3).

Table 3

Final Themes With Supporting Respondents

Themes	Total supporting respondents ($N = 5$)
Community	5
Social media	5
Connection	4
Engagement	4
Relationships	3

Theme 1: Community

All the development directors interviewed stated that community and the idea of

community are the central cause and pathway to African American philanthropy. All the

respondents ($N = 5$) answered distinctly and supported this notion. Respondents noted

building community and a culture for future generations was important and expressed this

feeling through their personal and professional interactions. The theme of community

provides credence to Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising and the ways development

directors create marketing materials focused on community partnerships and cohesion.

Some of the statements expressed by the respondents follow.

Respondent 1 stated,

> I think for African Americans it could be around social issues, whether it's
> education, the community, it's just now with the economic mobility study being
> announced they just want to move the needle and give people of color, especially
> African American, opportunities.

Respondent 2 replied,

> I think sometimes folks in the African American community give to what they see
> their friends giving to. And . . . there is a legacy giving that I see. Sometimes it is
> they want to leave a legacy they want to do good, and they want to leave a mark
> in the community.

Respondent 3 said, "A lot of it, I think again, is that deep personal fulfillment to like
maybe there's a particular cause and then maybe particularly just passionate about the
community." Respondent 4 responded,

> Then also, with the indirect exposure, they usually like to get involved in
> philanthropic causes that they have an affinity to. That impact the community and
> the greater good for the underserved, but then also for that particular community
> subset.

Respondent 5 stated, "Since a lot of our dollars really go directly to impact the African
American community, we often look to the African American community to support
some of our endeavors."

Theme 2: Social Media

Social media is now one of the most important tools development directors have at their disposal. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow for a targeted campaign to reach potential donors around the globe (Ihm, 2015). In Charlotte, North Carolina, the development directors interviewed all noted that they are using social media to attract segmented audiences. This theme was also supported by 100% of the respondents ($N = 5$) and aligned with Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising. Comments from the respondents below highlight the importance of social media.

Respondent 1 stated, "With getting the message out we know that for African Americans, Twitter and Facebook and Instagram is very high so we've used those social channels and targeted with meaningful, relevant content that way." Respondent 2 noted, "I use a lot of social media. We are now . . . my agency is now on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram." Respondent 3 stated "Social media is the best way to go right now." Respondent 4 replied, "Definitely social media. Social media is key. Imagery is key. Short powerful messages, because if you make it extremely long we all know we have microwave brains these days." Respondent 5 said, "We have a marketing and communications director who has done a phenomenal job with outreach and social media."

Theme 3: Connection

The development director of a nonprofit is expected to create connections with current and potential donors. These connections can come from personal or professional experiences but allow the engagement process to take root. This theme of connection also

exists in Kelly's (1995) theory of fundraising and was supported by 80% of the respondents ($n = 4$), with comments highlighting this below.

Respondent 1 stated, "As for this sector, it's really about connecting people to their passions." Respondent 4 noted, "With targeted campaigns that we have put out, I still don't think that there is a significant increase in actually speaking to them if they don't have a direct connection already." Respondent 3 said, "I definitely think it has something to do with that personal aspect. There has to be personal connection there." Respondent 5 replied,

> Anywhere that a donor or a person that's in the African American community can feel connected to an agency, whether it be through volunteering, whether it be through personal asks, whether it be through just supporting the mission and being connected to the mission of an organization, I think it helps African Americans wanting to give.

Theme 4: Engagement

The sense that nonprofit leaders and development directors sought intentional engagement was important to the respondents and for connecting with African Americans. Eighty percent of the respondents ($n = 4$) expressed support for this idea and used the word in varying contexts during the collection period. Deigh et al. (2015) indicated that potential donors are more likely to become consistent donors when an organization engages with them. The donor engagement must be consistent and intentional with the premise of creating lasting relationships. Excerpts from the respondents demonstrate their insight about engagement and about how to go about it.

Respondent 1 stated, "I think the first thing non-profits have to do is just get out there and to engage with them. To listen and learn, provide opportunities for African Americans to gather and to provide content." Respondent 3 replied, "Really, it was more of an invitation, so extend that invitation, and it was more of a face-to-face connection." Respondent 4 noted,

I identify individuals that are not only affluent but influential in the community, and that gives them a greater buy-in when you give them more of that accountability. Then you work with them to identify what they consider to be a greater opportunity to engage the entire African American community.

Respondent 5 said, "I think just getting them engaged, again, volunteering, coming in to see what you do would really help elevate the cause."

Theme 5: Relationships

Creating deep relationships within the community for a nonprofit is to be expected (Boenigk & Scherhag, 2014). This last theme is in line with the previous themes and supports the hierarchy-of-needs conceptual framework. Respondents agreed that development directors must develop and nurture donor relationships. By coupling engagement and relationships, a nonprofit leader can positively leverage the organization's message and turn it into donor participation. Sixty percent ($n = 3$) of the respondents used the word *relationships*; their insight was as follows.

Respondent 1 replied, "In the end it's about listening and learning and about building relationships and responding to that." Respondent 3 responded, "I think a lot of it has to do with personal relationships to particular organizations or to faith-based

communities. When I think about why African Americans give specifically, I think about it in those two ways." Nonprofit leaders and development directors should know how to develop and nurture diverse relationships. As donor groups shift due to age or location transition, the development of relationships for new donors is vital (Carter & Marx, 2007). Respondent 2 noted that nonprofits should be "seeking out more diverse individuals to bring in to help support."

Transition and Summary

This chapter included a detailed presentation of the data collection process, analysis of the data, and conclusions drawn from the data analysis. The themes of creating community and using social media within giving campaigns emerged as the most important ways a development director can build inroads to the African American community. Connections, relationships, and engagement emerged as the other three themes.

As I have worked with nonprofit agencies in the past, I agree with the findings of this study. In the case study, I could generate and then see these themes from a different perspective, as outlined in this study. None of the themes were unknown to me; however, the context in which the respondents used the words was enlightening.

The study supported previous knowledge in the field of nonprofit management but it also provided up-to-date insight into this area. Subsequently, it highlighted emerging ideas of how to retain African American donors. In Chapter 5, I will give a full summary of the research and provide conclusions and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to discover ways nonprofit development directors in Charlotte, North Carolina, attempted to solicit African Americans for engagement campaigns. Nonprofit leaders continue to face challenges regarding attracting and retaining African Americans and other minorities. There is still a slight resistance by development directors to create a strategic plan that particularly attracts minorities and makes the outreach intentional. From this lack of strategic clarity and resistance to develop targeted campaigns, development directors do not develop consistent, stable, and new donor bases within the communities they serve. Strategic donor planning is for generic groups of individuals and primarily Caucasian males, as issues surrounding targeting minorities still exist. These issues include not fully understanding the market or not having the right communication tools.

During this study, two central reasons emerged regarding how development directors may be able to generate African American patronage. The first finding that may help nonprofit development directors to engage African Americans in Charlotte, North Carolina, is to create community. Community development refers not just to the physical community but also to the solicitation materials and programs offered. The inability to create messaging around strong communities and developing family will turn most African Americans away and they will choose to engage somewhere else.

The second finding that may assist development directors in attracting and engaging African Americans is using targeted social media. During the study,

respondents indicated that social media plays an important role in how minorities receive and interpret information. Organizations that had social media material for their specific target audiences had development directors who understood the goal of gaining engagement traction. For example, the five organizations all focused on social media to transmit their campaign messages across the Charlotte, North Carolina, market. However, the focus of these social media messages did not necessarily reflect a targeted mission of engaging African Americans.

Interpretation of the Findings

The reviewed literature for this study highlighted that development directors create and manage engagement strategies for various groups in their target markets. However, when it came to soliciting African Americans, there were no pertinent or practical strategies. Researchers indicated that strategies existed for generalized populations, mainly Caucasian males. There were also engagement strategies for older adults (Gregory, 2014), Hispanics (Marx & Carter, 2008), and segmented generations such as millennials (Bucic et al., 2012). The reasoning behind not engaging African Americans directly was that development directors did not fully understand how to market to African Americans or they did not see the full value in specific strategy engagement (Schneider, 2003).

The current model for nonprofit engagement strategies involves development directors looking over the local landscape and determining whom to engage from past donor lists. This leads to wooing or marketing to the same donor base consistently and leaves out potential or newer donor bases (Ko et al., 2011). Researching this example

revealed that the development directors participating in this study did not have a clear path to engaging or retaining African Americans. They devised engagement strategies for what they considered the entire community of Charlotte, North Carolina, but did not understand the need to target specific segments of the population.

Researchers have indicated that development directors struggle with gaining traction in minority communities given the clear path to engaging correctly. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, Marx and Carter (2008) discussed how fundraising efforts are constantly changing and will continue to evolve. If development directors do not learn more about racial, cultural, and gender differences, it will be very hard for them to earn and retain donors who fit those segmented categories. In addition, Flick (2014) wrote that nonprofit development directors will continue to struggle with engaging minority groups if the staffing of the organization does not reflect the community it is trying to serve.

Numerous examples support the findings of Marx and Carter (2008) and Flick (2014), and these findings were apparent in the case of the development directors in this study. When it came to understanding the best way to engage the African American community, the development directors of all the organizations felt they did not have a clear understanding of how best to attract or retain minorities. This unclear path was evident during the face-to-face interviews with the development directors and with how some responses seemed vague and without detailed plans. However, they all agreed on foundational ways to start the process but could not say if it merited worthy results.

A topic discussed in Chapter 4 was that all the development directors mentioned the concept of community regarding soliciting material for African Americans. The

sentiment is the basis of targeted engagement for African Americans is the feeling that community matters. However, some development directors in this research study did not create materials that would sway decision making based on the interests of African Americans. The current focus is to create material that is appealing to all races and genders, and a targeted engagement campaign would take place if the chance arises. The current engagement strategy would have to be expanded, but only after looking at all the available data. Bentley (2014) noted that development directors should not wait extended lengths of time before implementing targeted campaigns. I discovered during this research study that long periods of data collection and pondering whether a demographic was right to target could lead to missed opportunities with that segment.

In addition to slow or nonexistent implementation, development directors should be intentional about strategy creation and target engagement campaigns. Ford and Merchant (2010) described this view as paramount to gaining trust and inroads to new donors. African Americans, like other groups, want to feel as though there is intent and purpose behind the solicitation. The findings of this study supported intentionality as a base for soliciting new donors and particularly African Americans. The development directors understood that being intentional and seeking out diverse groups brings opportunities into communities of color and communities in need.

The other major finding from the literature review was the deep and long history African Americans had with philanthropy and giving campaigns. Studies conducted by Bell (1969), Carruthers and Wanamaker (2013), Carson (2000), Carter and Marx (2007), and Drezner (2009, 2013) all pointed to the rich heritage of African American

philanthropy. While this philanthropy was not traditional by typical societal standards, it involved the same hallmarks of past and current philanthropic efforts. The concerted effort to give and conduct community-wide engagement yielded great successes for local organizations and grassroots efforts (Edmondson & Carroll, 1999). The findings showed that while some development directors knew the history of African American philanthropy, others did not. This lack of awareness is evident in organizations that do not solicit or create engagement opportunities for African Americans given they do not recognize the collective giving done in the past.

Marx and Carter (2008) discussed how development directors can solicit and engage Hispanics. The crux of the research was how development directors can tug at historical heartstrings and bring Hispanics to the collective fold when properly motivated. This information blends seamlessly with attracting and engaging African Americans. There is a strong historical link between philanthropy and the African American church and clear evidence that nonprofit strategists are overlooking this link. In this study, the development directors who knew about the African American church did not create any strategic plan to involve the church or solicit its members. I also showed that development directors felt they could glean significant engagement techniques from the church's historic presence and ability to galvanize African American philanthropists.

In the case of Respondent 2, the urge to tap African American churches was a topic of discussion with the respondent's organization. Evidence of this struggle was uncovered during the face-to-face interview. The development director expressed that

churches implement targeted strategies for donor engagement but noted it hard to copy or implement that strategy without consistent communication or training from church staff.

Regarding strategies for engaging African Americans, the literature review also spotlighted the use of social media to pique the interest of potential donors. Bentley (2014), Cho et al. (2014), Drezner (2013), Ihm (2015), and Paulin, Ferguson, Schattke, et al. (2014) discussed how to use social media platforms to engage newer and younger donors. When studying the use of social media for this study, the findings showed that social media was the preferred platform for attracting African Americans.

An example of social media and its importance arose in the case of Respondent 4. During the face-to-face interview, the development director reported using a lot of social media and felt it was key to the organization's engagement efforts. The development director also had a strategy on how to deliver those messages on social media based on attention span and powerful imagery. The use of, and adjustments to, this thought process may have resulted in social media campaigns that did not adhere to those guidelines.

Another example of using social media to increase engagement came from Respondent 2. During the face-to-face interview, the development director stated that they use a lot of social media but did not in the past. The development director felt it was vital to be on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to provide extended engagement that did not include personal meetings. However, the development director wanted to ensure social media did not disconnect the organization from current or future personal interactions with potential donors in the African American community.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study, outlined in Chapter 1, primarily concerned trustworthiness and how those limitations could affect the study. The limitations listed were participant responses, the data collection process, and author bias. The following paragraphs include a discussion on the limitations of trustworthiness introduced in preceding chapters and on how I coped with them during the actual research process.

Respondents could only be responsible for answering the research questions based on their personal and professional experience. Each respondent worked for a different nonprofit organization with differing missions and budgets. During the collection process, respondents answered each research question to their best ability and did not find it difficult to match their expertise to the question asked.

The second limitation outlined in Chapter 1 was the process of collecting the actual data. Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted that researchers often attempt to collect too much data during case study research or they allow too much time to pass during collection periods. In this study, data sets included only the recorded interviews and subsequent field notes taken by me. To further limit the scope of the data sets, the study did not include any marketing plans, engagement plans, or business documents used by the development directors.

Yin (2009) noted that during case study and qualitative research, the researcher is the collection instrument for data. Therefore, researchers bring their preoccupations, past experiences, relevant perspectives, and expertise, along with biases, when collecting and analyzing the data. In Chapter 3, a topic of discussion was that member checking helps to

improve accuracy and reduce author bias (Krefting, 1991). The respondents verified the

data collected and increased accuracy levels by reviewing the transcriptions through

member checking. Member checking also decreases the level of author bias in research.

Finally, case study research involves general or common challenges. As it

pertains to qualitative case study, Yin (2009) wrote that a familiar challenge for

researchers is picking the right case or cases to study. To avoid this challenge, I sought to

solicit nonprofit organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina that employed a full-time

development director. By selecting organizations that were in the scope of the study, the

common challenge of participant selection mentioned by Yin was not an issue.

Recommendations

Based on the literature review conducted for this study and the subsequent results,

the recommendations for further research regarding the subject of nonprofit engagement

strategies for African Americans are as follows. While the recommendations are not

meant to solve all engagement issues for nonprofit development directors, they are meant

as a guide. The possible implementation of the recommendations may assist with

enhanced and targeted engagement.

Recommendation 1

Further research is necessary regarding the creation of targeted engagement

strategies for African Americans. The focus of this study was understanding why African

Americans give and some of the behaviors associated with philanthropy. In the study, I

showed that African Americans are willing to give and have personal priorities regarding

how they give. Further research is therefore necessary to determine the best ways to target African Americans for nonprofit giving campaigns.

Recommendation 2

Further research is also necessary regarding potential African American millennial donors. The current literature has indicated that this population is steadily growing in influence and financial distribution (Drezner, 2009). However, there is not a lot of research on how to target or solicit this new and potential donor base. The literature review revealed how generations are turning over and development directors need to cultivate the next generation of donors (Drezner, 2009). Thus, further research is necessary regarding how best to solicit, engage, and retain this emerging donor base.

Recommendation 3

Further research is necessary to understand how development directors create messaging and marketing materials for minority-based groups. Social media is the new normal when it comes to advertising and engagement. Nonprofit leaders should be involved in the process of creating donor-specific messages or messages that resonate with the communities they are intended to serve. More research is therefore necessary on social media messaging and engagement plans for African Americans to see what works as well as what does not work.

Recommendation 4

In addition to the previous recommendations for further research, a practical recommendation is for nonprofit leaders to commit resources to training for development directors in the areas of cultural competence and community-building initiatives. By

committing resources to these areas, development directors can learn how to be versed in communication efforts and develop strategic engagement plans around community needs and gaps. Increased community presence through training recommendations could lead to increased community vestment and achieving donor participation.

Implications

Background

Development directors in Charlotte, North Carolina, struggle with donor engagement campaigns. More specifically, they struggle with engaging African Americans and other minority bases. This study involved soliciting nonprofit organization development directors to ask about engagement strategies or techniques they felt worked best for African Americans. As stated in previous chapters, I have significant experience working and volunteering with nonprofit organizations in Charlotte. I also sit on the board of directors for several nonprofit organizations. The purpose of this study was to find out how and if nonprofit organizations in Charlotte had specific engagement strategies for African Americans. By finding the methods and challenges associated with targeted engagement for the minority community, this study could help nonprofit organizations with donor engagement, fund procurement, and strategic advancement. Improving donor engagement strategies could lead to increased donations as well as greater community involvement, and an increase in donor engagement could lead to higher donations received and more services provided by the nonprofit organization, thus pointing to positive social change for the communities they serve.

Application to Professional Practice

The findings and results of this study can be applied to nonprofit organizations and can be used to assist nonprofit development directors with attracting and retaining minority donors. The information uncovered and the strategies outlined by the respondents begin to create a plan for recognizing potential donors and the development of a committed donor base. By locating and appealing to often overlooked groups in the community, nonprofit development directors can justify the need for training, resource allotment and executive level fundraising support.

To provide further context of this case study, the nonprofit sector in Charlotte, NC is continuing to grow, however, outreach efforts remain traditional and unchanged. However, the demographics of Charlotte, NC are changing and the nonprofit development directors need to adopt newer strategies to attract different donor bases. As with many cities of Charlotte's size and scope, there are challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges include: (a) retaining large sum donors, (b) having consistent and effective methods to solicit new donors, (c) creating loyalty amongst donors, and (d) procuring financial means to attract donors.

The city of Charlotte has a great reputation for supporting philanthropic efforts and supporting community wide efforts. However, many of these efforts are supported by the same large families, foundations or grant making agencies. Development directors must target the pockets of the community that are not being solicited. There are segments of the community that donate to specific causes or specific organizations because that is all they have been exposed to. Development directors that create in-roads to African

Americans and other minorities create relationships that can be nurtured for long term growth.

Nonprofit leaders can do a better job when it comes to developing relationships and creating outreach to the communities they serve. Relationship building strategies involve inviting the community to the table and discussing service provisions, fundraising, solicitation efforts and how to stay mission focused. Development directors should not focus solely on gaining financial support. By creating and nurturing solid relationships within the community, the community in turn will invest in the nonprofit agency and help establish the nonprofit-donor continuum.

Positive Social Change

The results of this study should warrant ongoing discussion among nonprofit leaders in Charlotte, North Carolina, on how they can address engagement issues and attract more funding from the African American community. The data generated from this research study might lead to positive social change in the local communities that these nonprofits serve. Calabrese and Grizzle (2012) noted that nonprofit organizations that are healthy, viable, and sustainable deliver higher impact resources for their communities.

Carruthers and Wanamaker (2013) studied the effect of nonprofit development directors consistently using older and more traditional models to attract and retain donors. However, the dynamic of engagement is changing, and development directors must create newer pathways to minority communities. The research in this study may help current nonprofit leaders attract and cultivate African American donor bases. It also

delivers practical information and recommendations on how to solicit funds with this targeted population.

Nonprofit leaders and the nonprofit organizations they lead have tremendous sway on community development and positive social outcomes. Social environments and demographics of major cities are changing. Charlotte, North Carolina, is a southern city attracting and developing a diverse population, and nonprofit organization leaders must look at the trends and patterns. The donor makeup of Charlotte should reflect the makeup of the community. Mottino and Miller (2005) pointed to data showing growth for African Americans in educational attainment and increases in financial capital and home ownership due to nonprofit program assistance. Increasing the positive experiences African Americans have with nonprofit agencies creates a supportive mind-set and continued engagement. Subsequently, it helps create and support healthy and vibrant communities across Charlotte. Nonprofit leaders across the country might use the findings to develop sustainable organizations that perform significant work in the communities they serve.

Reflections

Having worked and volunteered for years in the Charlotte nonprofit sector, it was enlightening for me to study the strategies used by development directors. This case study set out to look at how development directors engaged, attracted and attempted to retain African American donors. Five participants working at nonprofits in Charlotte, NC were solicited to take part in this study. The information cultivated from the research interviews was refreshing and very informative.

This case study allowed me to see what development directors thought not only about African American patrons but also how they saw their agencies efforts in targeting them for solicitation. I learned that a development directors job is hard and it takes considerable time and training to learn the community nuances. I am thankful and appreciative to the participants of this study that allowed me into their space to ask questions and learn from them. Their openness, honesty and transparency allowed me to gather the results of this study.

I also learned that gathering a participant pool for a research study is hard work and takes time and patience. I solicited 20 participants for this case study and only received eight favorable responses. The study only needed five for saturation so I was fortunate to get the number of respondents needed. This process took over a month and then arranging the interviews was an additional two weeks. During this process, I had to stay in contact with my participant pool to make sure they still wanted to participate but also keep them updated on my progress before the interviews. A few of the participants had questions about bias or the release of donor information but those concerns were addressed prior to the interviews taking place.

Given I had worked in the nonprofit sector and was familiar with many of the agencies, my position was to minimize and eliminate any influence I could potentially bring to the interviews. I wanted the participants to be as comfortable as possible and answer the research questions to the best of their abilities. My interview style allowed for the participants to feel at ease, deliberate on the questions being asked and expound

where necessary. Each interview was transcribed and then member checked for accuracy.

The results of this qualitative case study may help nonprofit organization leaders and development directors in Charlotte, NC develop techniques for soliciting African Americans and other minority donors. During this study, I learned that development directors want to solicit the entire community, however, they do not always know or have the best methods to doing it. This study may shed light on how to engage untargeted community members and develop ties into donor retention.

Methodological, Theoretical, and Empirical Implications

The methodology for this study was a qualitative case study. This methodology was suitable because the study involved looking at comparative nonprofit organizations with development directors who created engagement and donor strategy. Case study is suitable when researchers seek the *how* or the *why* of a phenomenon (Yin, 2009). This study involved seeking out how nonprofit organization leaders engaged with African Americans or why they did or did not choose to engage.

The theoretical frameworks for this study were hierarchy-of-effects and the theory of fundraising (Kelly, 1995). These frameworks helped create the parameters of the study given their focus on development strategies, marketing, engagement, public relations, and targeted messaging (Barry, 2012). The decision to use hierarchy-of-effects and theory of fundraising was effective, as the frameworks are saturated in the daily processes nonprofit development directors use to attract and engage donors.

The empirical implications of this study resulted from face-to-face interviews with development directors working at nonprofit organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina. Key observances from the data collected were that development directors did not have targeted strategies for African Americans but understood the importance of creating them. Additionally, the responses highlighted the rich giving culture of African Americans and, although the roots of this culture have been in the church, the findings indicate African Americans can be persuaded to give through the right social media campaigns and engagement material.

Conclusion

The number of nonprofit agencies in the United States continues to grow. The reviewed literature showed that donor bases are decreasing, as not many engagement strategies target African Americans. With every change in society, the nonprofit sector needs to adjust. Adesaogun et al. (2015) wrote that the internal dynamics of nonprofit organizations influence the external outputs. This study revealed what engagement strategies development directors can create internally or are using to cultivate increased donor bases.

Andreoni et al. (2016) noted that culture, and the historical context by which certain cultures give, influences donations. African Americans have a long history of nontraditional giving and philanthropy. Due to previous historical exclusion with traditional giving campaigns, African Americans developed community-based engagement giving protocols that translated to helping the community (Carson, 2000).

The inclusion and intentional targeting of African Americans is a relevant strategy to cultivating this often-forgotten group.

A goal of this study was to find the engagement strategies that development directors used, or if they had any strategies at all, for African Americans. Although nonprofit leaders want to reach out and engage African Americans in Charlotte, North Carolina, the findings indicated they do not know the most effective and efficient means. Development directors understand the historical context and value of the African American population to the community, but apprehension remains about how to engage the population most effectively.

The first step development directors should take when looking to engage African Americans is to form effective communication protocols built around community and relationships. The results of the study showed that African Americans gave more to causes rooted in developing and uplifting their community. Comments from the face-to-face interviews with the development directors highlighted that it was paramount for development directors to connect donor material to the development of the community.

A second step development directors can take is to develop social media campaigns that intentionally target African Americans and the millennial generation. Strategic planning is also rooted in future results. The next generation of African American donors is coming of age and needs to be engaged. Results from this study showed that although social media is a big platform for getting messages out, it is rarely done with the intent to engage specific groups of people.

The additional recommended steps in this chapter may not solve all the engagement issues that development directors face. More research is necessary to develop effective engagement strategies further. However, the recommendations highlight the steps to begin the process of creating a targeted engagement strategy that attracts African Americans.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Engagement Strategies Research Questionnaire

RQ1: What are the central factors for donor engagement in the African American philanthropic community?

- What are the primary reasons African Americans engage in philanthropy?
- What do you see as the driving force for these giving efforts?
- Based on your experience, where do you see African American's donating the most?

RQ2: How do development directors explain the reasons for lower levels of charitable giving by African Americans in comparison to other ethnic groups?

- Based on your experience, do you see African Americans responding to targeted campaign strategies?
- If so, what are some of the components of that strategy?

RQ3: How do development directors work to increase levels of charitable giving with African Americans?

- Based on your experience, what methods of engagement create interest for African Americans?
- What marketing and communication tools do you use to motivate African Americans?

Is there anything you would like to add that has not been said or asked?

Appendix B: Letter of Cooperation

Community Research Partner Name

Contact Information

Date: February 9, 2017

Dear Keith Cradle,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled "African American Charitable Giving in Charlotte, NC: Engagement Strategies" within the "Insert Name of Community Partner". As part of this study, I authorize you to collect data by conducting interviews. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: providing a quiet area to conduct the interview. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I understand that the student will not be naming our organization in the doctoral project report that is published in ProQuest.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Authorization Official

Contact Information

Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Email

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT EMAIL SCRIPT

Good Afternoon,

I am in the process of collecting data for my doctoral research study "African American Charitable Giving in Charlotte, NC: Engagement Strategies."

You have been asked to participate in this research study given your position at your agency. As Development Director or a member of the Board of Directors, you have some responsibility when it comes to donor engagement and development strategies. Your information was located via the organization's website.

Subsequently, while this study seeks to explore engagement strategies, it does not intimate that this study is an official program of your organization. This study will not be used to assist or provide advice that could be seen as helping with your organizations donor engagement campaigns. I will not provide recommendations or suggestions to your organization either.

I thank you for helping me with this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me immediately.

 Keith E. Cradle, MHA, MBA/MSL

Walden University Doctoral Candidate
XXX@waldenu.edu