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Stakeholder Engagement Strategies for Nonprofit Organization Financial Sustainability

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Abstract

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Orna T. Bradley-Swanson

MA, Webster University, 2015

BHS, Campbell University, 2006

Consulting Capstone Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Stakeholders are important to the financial sustainability of a nonprofit organization; however, heavy reliance on 1 stakeholder over another can place a nonprofit organization at financial risk. The purpose of this single case study was to explore strategies used by 3 senior leaders of a nonprofit organization in New York who have experience with stakeholder engagements efforts. The conceptual framework used for this study comprised general systems theory and transformational leadership theory. Data were collected using semistructured interviews, and review of organizational documents and online databases. Using thematic analysis, the 4 key themes that emerged from process and results strengths were leadership involvement in engaging stakeholders, persistent promotion of the organization's mission and vision, connection with the community, and workforce engagement activities. The implications of this study for positive social change include the potential to increase nonprofit leaders' understanding of practical approaches that may facilitate stakeholder engagement for improving financial sustainability, improve nonprofit leader–stakeholder relationships, and bolster philanthropic efforts to improve the economic stability of the nonprofit organization and the community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my husband, son, mother, sister, and *boys*. To my husband, Mark, you are the most loving person I know. Your unquestionable and unwavering support has made it possible for me to achieve this dream of mine, and I could never thank you enough. I am forever grateful and honored to have you as my husband, my friend, and my pillar of strength. To my son, Michael, thank you for being my motivation in life, and I am grateful every day to be your mother. To my mother, Rosemary, thank you for your prayers, support, and sacrifice. To my sister, Meshauna, thank you for your support and always being a phone call away. To my *boys*, Talos and Tenz, thank you both for your staying with me through long nights of writing and accompanying me on those morning reflective walks.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Throughout the world, nonprofit organizations contribute significantly to social development as well as the creation of employment, promotion of economic wealth, and reduction of poverty (Lin & Wang, 2016). In the United States, approximately 1.8 million nonprofit organizations affect the national economy by providing trillions of dollars in assets, wages, and gross domestic product (Gilstrap, Gilstrap, Holderby, & Valera, 2016). While some nonprofit leaders dedicate an abundant amount of efforts to supporting their community, they rarely devote the same energy on activities for sustaining their organization (Kim, 2017). Although several factors hinder financial sustainability in a nonprofit organization, Beer and Micheli (2017) found that nonprofit leaders' inability to engage stakeholders effectively was one of the critical factors that continues to affect the financial sustainability of a nonprofit organization.

Background of the Problem

The primary purpose of a nonprofit organization is to promote its social cause for the betterment of the community it serves (Gazzola, Ratti, & Amelio, 2017). As a result, nonprofit organizations contribute significantly to the global economy, and in most developed market economies, nonprofit organizations have increased their economic importance as providers of a broad spectrum of services (Burde, Rosenfeld, & Sheaffer, 2017). For instance, in 2012, U.S. nonprofit organizations constituted 70% of the total private employment in the education sector, 46% of healthcare and social assistance industry, 15% of entertainment and recreation, and 11% of management companies and enterprises (Friesenhahn, 2016). However, nonprofit organizations must rely on fluctuating funds from private contributions, public support, private sector donations, and government grants to maintain their operations (Hodge & Piccolo as cited by Lin & Wang, 2016). In some instances, these organizations must compete for a finite amount of available external funding (Lin & Wang, 2016). For example, during the 2008-2009 financial crises, the economic decline caused a decrease in private donations, government contracts, and foundation grants to nonprofit organizations, which resulted in 40% of nonprofit organizations failing to meet their financial needs (Lin & Wang, 2016). This financial challenge is exacerbated when there is a heavy reliance on one funding source over another, which can place an organization at financial risk, especially in times of economic decline (Hu & Kapucu, 2017). As a result, some nonprofit organizations fail to survive because of the lack of diverse, sustainable funding (Mitchell & Berlan, 2018). The survival and sustainability of nonprofit organizations is critical to the communities they serve; therefore, to ensure these organizations' longevity, nonprofit leaders must implement effective strategies to gain and retain stakeholder support to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations.

Problem Statement

Some nonprofit organizations fail to sustain their business due to declines in private donations, government contracts, and foundation grants (Mitchell & Berlan, 2018). Financial challenges affect nonprofit financial reserves, which in 2012, affected 11.4 million jobs, $532 billion in annual wages, and 10.3% of the total U.S. private sector employment (Friesenhahn, 2016). The general business problem was that stakeholder engagement issues can negatively affect funding streams. The specific business problem was that some human service nonprofit leaders lack stakeholder engagement strategies to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore stakeholder engagement strategies that some nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations. The target population consisted of three senior leaders of a single nonprofit organization in the social assistance industry located in the city of New York, NY, who implemented successful stakeholder engagement strategies to increase financial sustainability. The implications for positive social change include the potential for nonprofit leaders to increase their understanding of stakeholder engagement strategies. Nonprofit leaders need motivated stakeholders who have a shared understanding of the mission and are mission focused to accomplish their goals (Northouse, 2016). As nonprofit leaders influence their stakeholders, they can increase the numbers of stakeholders and the stakeholders' participation levels, which could improve the organization's sustainability, increase employment availability, and enhance nonprofits leaders' abilities to better serve and improve the lives of the people in communities.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative, single case study to explore strategies that nonprofit leaders use to gain and retain stakeholder support to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations. There are three research approaches available to researchers: (a) qualitative, (b) quantitative, and (c) mixed methods. Of the three methodologies, a qualitative approach was most suitable to this study because it is interpretive (see Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). A qualitative researcher can employ Yin's (2018) postpositivist viewpoint to explore a reality that is objective and predictable (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013) while exploring the *what, how,* and *why* of the phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). A quantitative methodology is investigatory (Saunders et al., 2015). Specifically, Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) asserted that "quantitative researchers use an array of statistical procedures and generalizations to determine what their data mean(s)" (p. 271) in efforts to explain the changes in social realities (Firestone, 1987). Furthermore, researchers use a quantitative approach to examine relationships and differences among variables and groups (Saunders et al., 2015). Since this was not the intent of this research, a quantitative approach was an unsuitable methodology. The mixed-methods approach consists of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Saunders et al., 2015). Since a quantitative method was not a viable option, the mixed-method approach was not suitable for this study.

I employed a single case study design in this qualitative study. Researchers can use a case study design to conduct an in-depth inquiry into a topic or problem in a real-life context to generate insights into the phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). As a result, a researcher can explore the dynamic situations of any *case* that includes studying an individual, group, organization, association, change process, or event (Saunders et al., 2015). Since some nonprofit organizations struggle to survive due to declines in private donations, government contracts, and foundation grants (Mitchell & Berlan, 2018), a researcher can use a single case study design to explore strategies that nonprofit organizational leaders use to gain and retain stakeholder support to improve their organizations' financial sustainability.

Research Question

The primary research question for this study was: What stakeholder engagement strategies do some nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to engage different stakeholders in improving your organization's financial sustainability?
2. How do you measure the effectiveness of each strategy used enhancing stakeholder engagement?
3. What were the key barriers to implementing your organization's strategies for enhancing stakeholder engagement to improve the organization's financial stability?
4. How did your organization address the key barriers to reduce their impact on your organization's stakeholder engagement strategies?
5. What skills, knowledge, and processes do you use to support your organization's stakeholder engagement strategies?
6. What additional information would you like to share regarding your organization's stakeholder engagement strategies?

Conceptual Framework

General systems theory (GST) and transformational leadership theory (TLT) were the composite conceptual frameworks for this study. GST was a suitable theory because researchers can explore an organization as a system while emphasizing its interrelated parts (Mania-Singer, 2017). General systems (GS) theorists emphasize the significance of interdependence, as opposed to independence (Mania-Singer, 2017), where the organization subsystems have both direct and indirect impact on other subsystems, thereby affecting the stability of the total system (Palombi, 2016). Additionally, Von Bertalanffy (1972) described organizations as open systems, where internal and external environmental factors have an impact on the organization. Furthermore, organizations have operational and relational elements that involve hierarchies, such as departments, teams, functions, and divisions, with each component having their boundaries similar to other relational parts (Kahn, Barton, & Fellows, 2013). Therefore, GST was relevant for exploring strategies nonprofit leaders use to engage stakeholders to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations.

Similarly, TLT was an appropriate theory to employ because researchers can use it to explore a leader's ability to inspire change within subordinates to achieve mutual goals (Northouse, 2016). Burn's (1978) TLT focuses on the leader's visionary aptitude coupled with their abilities to influence "followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them" (Northouse, 2016, p. 161). Therefore, personal relationships are vital to promoting TLT, whereby leaders possessing transformational leadership (TL) qualities can motivate stakeholders to alter beliefs and views as well as work towards a shared organizational goal (Maloş, 2012; Sosik, 2007). TL theorists promote long-term goals, vision, and as a result, mission accomplishment (Tyssen, Wald, & Heidenreich, 2013). Above all, TL theorists have advocated for social good where leaders practicing TLT inspire volunteerism among cohorts, influencing them to move past self-centeredness and pursue philanthropic efforts (Dwyer, Bono, Snyder, Nov, & Berson, 2013). Therefore, I expected GST and TLT to be suitable frameworks to understand and explain the phenomenon.

Operational Definitions

Financial sustainability: The implication that an organization can financially survive to meet the needs of its constituency as promised by its mission statement, regardless of changes in environments and funding conditions (Jean-François, Drew, & Lankas, 2015).

Nonprofit advocacy: The ability to voice a broader set of interest, correcting an imbalanced political representation (Neumayr, Schneider, & Meyer, 2016). Nonprofit advocacy includes lobbying, which is to gain access and influence business and government leaders to influence change (Ljubownikow & Crotty, 2016).

Nonprofit organization: An organization that generally performs various types of public or community benefit, without the purpose of making a profit ("Starting," 2017).

Organizational effectiveness: The extent to which an organization's inputs and outputs balances with the amalgamation of internal processes and external programs to reach predetermined goals (Willems, Jegers, & Faulk, 2016).

Stakeholder: Internal and external groups that influence the existence of an organization, such as employees, suppliers, customers, local communities, governmental groups, and financial institutions (Carroll, 2005; Manetti & Toccafondi, 2014).

Stakeholder engagement: The constructive actions that an organization performs to involve stakeholders in organizational activities (Provasnek, Schmid, & Steiner, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

In this qualitative, single case study, I made a few assumptions. Ross and Halleberg (2016) asserted that assumptions were key statements made without proof that provided an explanation about the unit of analysis. I assumed that the nonprofit leaders who were participants of this study volunteered of their own free will. Additionally, I assumed that a single case study would provide enough data to develop a detailed study of the phenomenon of stakeholder engagement strategies and sufficiently answer my research question. Another assumption was that organizational documents corroborated data gathered during the interview process. As a result, I presumed that all organizational documentations would be factual and accurate. I further assumed that the participants were truthful and accurate in their responses to the interview questions.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses of the study that preclude generalization or the conclusiveness of a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). As a result, limitations are unmanageable threats to the internal validity of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2009). One limitation of this study was its relative size, which consisted of three nonprofit leaders from a single nonprofit organization. Another limitation was the geographical location of the target population because I focused the study solely on a nonprofit organization located in New York, NY. As a result, the findings of this study might not apply to other nonprofit organizations outside of that region. An additional limitation of this study was the sector specificity of the nonprofit organization, which may potentially prevent its applicability to other nonprofits operating outside the human service sector. By focusing the study on nonprofit leaders from a single organization, the findings only reflected patterns and relationships that are unique to those leaders and that organization.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to aspects of the study that are within the control of the researcher, and the researcher defines the boundaries of the study, which consequently, could affect the external validity of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2009). The main delimitation within this study was the use of a single case study design, which limited the scope of the study. The participants of this study were restricted to three senior leaders from a single nonprofit organization who had experience with stakeholder engagement activities and had sustained their organization financially. Due to the sample size of this qualitative, single case study, the results of this study lacked generality and are not a representation of the larger population of nonprofit senior leaders in the United States.

Significance of the Study

Nonprofit organizations require predictable and recurring funds from sources, such as private contributions, public support, private sector donations, and government grants, to support their operations (Lin & Wang, 2016). Stakeholders are capable of influencing actions that could impact organizational sustainability, and as a result, nonprofit leaders should consider stakeholders' interests and perspectives (Carroll, 2015). Nonprofit leaders often struggle to improve financial sustainability because they do not adequately engage stakeholders (Manetti & Toccafondi, 2014). Though nonprofit organizations provide support to communities and contribute to the economy, they struggle to overcome funding challenges (Lin & Wang, 2016). The lack of financial sustainability in nonprofit organizations because of failures to implement stakeholder engagement strategies can negatively impact nonprofits' financial reserves, daily operations, job retention, and community support (McDonald, Weerawardena, Madhavaram, & Sullivan Mort, 2015). Consequently, a nonprofit leader's lack of knowledge regarding effective stakeholder engagement endeavors affects their organization's financial sustainability and justifies the need for conducting this study.

Contribution to Business Practice

Nonprofit leaders use stakeholder engagement to gain and maintain relationships with different stakeholder groups, which can influence their ability to achieve their financial objective and sustain their organization (McDonald et al., 2015). Therefore, stakeholder engagement is a crucial factor that pertains to the financial sustainability of a nonprofit organization. Some nonprofit leaders actively engage with their stakeholders; consequently, I explored the strategies that some leaders used to successfully engage stakeholders. The results of this study might provide nonprofit leaders with an understanding of practical approaches to facilitate stakeholder engagement for improving nonprofits' financial sustainability.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study may contribute to positive social change by providing nonprofit leaders with stakeholder engagement strategies that can be used to improve their organization's financial sustainability. Nonprofit organizations are invaluable to society because they not only support their communities through multiple initiatives and innovative actions, but they contribute to national economies (McDonald et al., 2015). The successful employment of stakeholder engagement strategies that stimulate communication and collaboration might enhance nonprofit leader-stakeholder relationships to improve financial sustainability. By having a financially sustainable organization, nonprofit leaders might subsequently focus on supporting their communities and promoting the organization's mission and vision. The results of this study might provide nonprofit leaders with an understanding of practical stakeholder engagement strategies to improve nonprofit leaders-stakeholder relationships, which can improve the organization's economic stability and increase philanthropic efforts to include community involvement.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore stakeholder engagement strategies that nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organization. Therefore, in this literature review, I provide a comprehensive summary of scholarly works as it relates to the research topic. Botte and Beile, as cited by Randolph (2009) asserted that researchers must first understand the literature in the field before they can make any significant contribution through research. Consequently, this literature review was intended to provide a contextual understanding of the conceptual frameworks and phenomenon as it relates to nonprofit financial sustainability. As a result, I organized the literature reviews in the following topic categories: (a) general systems theory; (b) transformational leadership theory; and (c) nonprofit organization characteristics, the impact of nonprofit advocacy, the nonprofit organizations' financial challenges, values of stakeholders, and stakeholder engagement strategies. I present the literature review in this manner in an effort to provide a comprehensive assessment of scholarly works on stakeholder engagement strategies and the application of general systems theory and transformational leadership theory to the business problem.

The literature review consists of peer-reviewed articles; dissertations; and books related to nonprofit organizations, stakeholder engagement, and nonprofit financial challenges. The primary databases used to conduct this literature review were ProQuest, Google Scholar, ScholarWorks, SAGE, EBSCOHost, and Walden University online library resources. I also examined information on websites, such as The Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some key search terms used in my search of databases, that included keywords, abstracts, and titles, were *nonprofit organization, nonprofit sustainability, nonprofit financial challenges, government funding, funding sources, nonprofit financial resiliency, stakeholders, stakeholder theory, stakeholder engagements, transformational leadership theory,* and *general systems theory*.

Table 1

Source of Data for Literature Review

Literature review content	Total	Total within 5 years of 2019	% within 5 years of 2019
Peer-reviewed journals	94	90	95.7%
Dissertation	1	1	100%
Books	6	1	16.7%
Total	101	92	91.1%

General Systems Theory (GST)

GST emphasizes the significance of a system, its boundaries, and overall stability (Caw, 2015; Von Bertalanffy, 1972). Von Bertalanffy's (1972) GST is a framework that organizational leaders can use to enhance their understanding of interrelationships among departments, and subsequently, develop appropriate strategies to improve their organization. GS theorists promote *wholeness* (Caw, 2015), specifically by emphasizing the interrelationships of components and stability of the system (Von Bertalanffy, 1972). Additionally, GST can be used to examine the nuances of an individual or group behavior as members of an organization; therefore, leaders can use this theory to consider the intricacy and dynamics of an organization where the state of a component can influence another, thereby affecting the overall stability of the system (Von Bertalanffy, 1972). Consequently, GST is a suitable framework for leaders to use to guide the exploration of an organization's operations and make predictions about potential opportunities to improve the overall organizational environment and sustainability.

Organizational leaders can use GST to understand organizational dynamics where its people, operations, and departments must integrate and align to affect organizational sustainability. Mania-Singer (2017) and Williams and Marcus (1982) tested the relevance of GST through their exploration of the interrelatedness of school districts' subsystems. Mania-Singer explored the interrelationship among members of a district central office and principals of elementary schools within an urban school district. In contrast, Williams and Marcus explored the permeable boundaries, structures, and processes within the various organizations of the public school districts. Although Mania-Singer and Williams and Marcus focused on different aspects of the school districts, the findings of both studies supported the relevance of GST to assess relationships. Specifically, both studies indicated that leaders possessing an understanding of other subsections within the organization improved coordination and collaboration, which might result in increased organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Mania-Singer and Palombi (2016) found that subsystems had both direct and indirect influence on other subsystems, which can affect the balance of the entire system. Specifically, Mania-Singer found there were weak relationships between members of a district central office and principals, where the structure might have inhibited the transfer of knowledge and communication and eventually, hindered school-level improvement efforts. This finding suggested that when subsections are detached, the disconnection impeded organizational effectiveness. The similarities among the findings of their studies revealed that organizational leaders should consider the dynamics in each subsystem as well as the interactions among subsystems because internal conditions have an impact on the balance of the organization and may influence organizational sustainability.

Although GST provides a framework to explain the internal environment subtleties of an organization, leaders can use the theory to understand their external environment by adjusting their frames of reference concerning where their organization is the subsystem of a greater whole. Walker and Earnhardt (2015) asserted that for a sustainable system to develop, both an organization and its individuals must view the world in a unified, holistic, and systemic manner. Therefore, leaders should not focus only on the single area of their organization but on the interdependency of the social, economic, and environmental forces (Walker & Earnhardt, 2015). Furthermore, Cabrera, Cabrera, Powers, Solin, and Kushner (2018) found GST a suitable framework to understand the relevance of mobilizing constituents of communities as well as the significance of community outreach activities. Together, these assertions suggest that the scope of GST is flexible and could expand beyond an organization to its network, alliances, and subsequently, its industry.

GST is suitable for the study of social organizations and, therefore, can be extended to explain and predict the behaviors of individuals or groups as members of that organization. Nonprofit leaders may benefit from understanding the dynamics among individuals and groups of the organization because an individual's or groups' behaviors and interactions could affect organizational performance and sustainability. For instance, Simola (2018) proposed GST was a suitable theory to explain expressions of moral courage in organizations where organizational leaders advocated acts of moral courage to foster mutual growth, vitality, and virtue. Simola asserted that understanding GST could help organization leaders avert potentially chronic, intractable, and destructive patterns and processes that can emerge following acts of moral courage by offering insights into techniques used to foster organizational growth that include a more nuanced and energetic environment. As a result, a dynamic internal environment may impact performance and, subsequently, affect sustainability. Simola's assertions were consistent with Orrock and Clark's (2018) findings that validated the appropriateness of using GST to understand individual and group interrelatedness within a social organization. Orrock and Clark explored factors that influenced the successful academic achievement of African American males in at-risk settings. The researchers found emergent themes of family values, self-concept, belonging to a school community, and community support/outreach where the school community is the system, thereby confirming GST as a suitable theory to explain interrelations of components within a system. These studies indicated that an individual's or group's actions could impact the dynamics of an organization. Any change to the internal environment could affect the balance of the organization; therefore, nonprofit leaders should attempt to understand the nuance of interconnectedness among organizational departments and groups because it could affect the organization's performance and sustainability.

A person's characteristics can influence behavior among the stakeholders to include the workforce in such a way that affects the sustainability of a nonprofit organization, and therefore, it is crucial that organizational leaders understand the nuances of human attitude and its impact on organizational performance. In a study, Iwu, Kapondoro, Twum-Darko, and Lose (2016) used GST to examine the relationship between employees' attitude and performance criteria, such as profitability, quality, and customer service. The researchers found that attitudinal human resource outcomes influenced performance as a unit of system components (Iwu et al., 2016). As a result, Iwu et al. proposed that strategic human resource metrics should measure the relationships that the human resource management outcomes have among themselves and with organizational outcomes, thereby stressing the significance of interrelationships in a social organization. Grohs, Kirk, Soledad, and Knight (2018) expanded on the practicality of GST by suggesting that system-thinking was applicable across various fields of knowledge where there were requirements for complex problem-solving within the context of a system. The researchers suggested that organizational interdependence and intergroup trust may facilitate collaborative focus on problems facing society (Grohs et al., 2018). These studies indicated that GST is an interdisciplinary theory that may explain social organizations, such as nonprofit organizations wanting to understand the connection between human resources, organizational performance, and organizational sustainability.

Organizational leaders may use GST to gain an understanding of a current phenomenon. The relevance of GST in today's business environment is such that Rousseau (2015) asserted that GST supported interdisciplinary communication and cooperation and facilitated scientific discoveries in disciplines that lacked correct theories. Caw (2015) proposed that the use of GST would inspire coordination and partnership among social organizations because leaders would be more considerate of each other. Relationships among organizations would support Rousseau's findings that the use of GST stimulates unity of knowledge. Consequently, nonprofit leaders may perceive GST as a suitable theory with which to understand interrelated and interdependent components within their organizations as well as external business relationships, such as partnerships and customer relationships. Furthermore, nonprofit leaders may use GST to understand the complexities of the nonprofit sectors and its link to the business environment in an effort to improve the organization's sustainability.

Although leaders can use GST to explain a phenomenon, it is not an inclusive framework. Kast and Rosenzweig (1974) found that while GST attempted to offer a holistic point of view for assessing an organization, it did not address purposeful entities where there were subelements that possess and can exercise their free wills. Although they highlighted those instances of independence, subsystems will have an inherent connection to the *whole* system and, consequently, some level of dependency. In addition, Kast and Rosenzweig stated that GST focused on the longevity of the system rather than its effectiveness within the environment. This finding contradicted the subsequent findings of Caw (2015), Mania-Singer (2017), and Williams and Marcus (1982), which advocated GST as a systems-focused conceptual framework that promoted organizational effectiveness. Although there are diverging viewpoints at the microlevel of the theory, nonprofit leaders can use GST to understand internal sections and their interrelationships in efforts to influence organizational change by implementing stakeholder engagement strategies to increase financial sustainability.

Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT)

Burns (1978) was the first to propose the TLT to guide organizational change; however, Bass (1985) later advanced the construct. According to Bass and Avolio (1993) and Yildiz and Şimşek (2016), TLT is composed of four core behaviors: (a) idealized influence, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (4) individualized consideration. Idealized influence is the ability of a leader to become a role model that a subordinate respects and desires to emulate (Yildiz & Şimşek, 2016). Intellectual stimulation is a leader's ability to influence subordinates in a manner that modifies their way of thinking to stimulate innovative thinking (Yildiz & Şimşek, 2016). Inspirational motivation is the degree to which a leader can inspire subordinates to accomplish beyond expectation (Yildiz & Şimşek, 2016). Individualized consideration is the extent to which a leader mentors a subordinate (Yildiz & Şimşek, 2016). TLT can be used to explain the attributes of a transformational leader, whereby the leader can inspire subordinates to achieve organizational goals (Northouse, 2016). Therefore, TLT can provide an appropriate perspective for exploring strategic change within nonprofit organizations.

Leaders can use TLT to understand how a leader behavior can influence organizational change. Doucet, Fredette, Simard, and Tremblay (2015) compared TLT with transactional leadership theory and found that TLT was more strongly related to effective commitment than transactional leadership theory because transformational leaders were able to inspire subordinates to exceed individual expectations and work towards the betterment of the organization. Similarly, Kunnanatt (2016) assessed the difference between transformational leaders and transactional leadership and found that while transactional leaders influenced followers by managing day-to-day operations efficiently, transformational leaders motivated followers by satisfying their higher-order needs by engaging them in decision-making. These findings aligned with existing studies on TLT through which leaders can influence effective organizational change.

Transformational leadership theorists emphasize the leader's role in guiding the change of an organization. According to Northouse (2016), guiding organization change includes more than the promotion of the mission, shared vision, and values, it also includes the leader's ability to motivate others to influence that change. For instance, Porter (2015) discovered that a transformational leader influenced organizational commitment, while Valero, Jung, and Andrew (2015) found that transformational leaders facilitated organizational resiliency. These findings aligned with existing studies on TLT showing that leaders can influence effective organizational change; however, none of the researchers discussed the influence of TLT on the day-to-day activities that would contribute to the overall goals of the organization.

Leaders may use TLT for broad applications, or they may use this theory for specific applications to contemporary phenomenon such as multicultural studies. For instance, Ramsey, Rutti, Lorenz, Barakat, and Sant'anna (2017) used TLT to examine the relationship between leaders and followers within a cross-cultural context. The researchers found a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and transformational leadership and therefore suggested that global leaders with a high level of transformational leadership and a high level of cultural intelligence were most effective because they could understand cultural differences among followers, and self-regulate, appropriately to influence a culturally diverse group (Ramsey et al., 2017). Ramsey et al.'s findings complemented Banks, McCauley, Gardner, and Guler (2016) findings that leaders can use TLT to help predict attitudinal and performance-related outcomes, namely task performance, leader effectiveness, follower job satisfaction, and follower satisfaction with the leader. The results of this study indicated that TLT might be an appropriate theory that nonprofit leader to use to understand a leader's capacity to inspire subordinates, regardless of their cultural background.

A beneficial aspect of TLT is its usefulness to leaders; where nonprofit leaders could use this theory to enhance their understanding of ways trust impacts cohesion, and motivation between leaders and subordinates. For example, Yildiz and Şimşek (2016) argued that trust facilitated the influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction in a nonprofit organization may affect a leader's ability to motivate the workforce to include volunteers to develop a cohesive team. Ewell (2016) explored the impact of applying TLT to foster team cohesion and found that organizational leaders who effectively applied the principles of TLT not only inspired a cohesive team to achieve organizational goals during times of significant leadership turnover but increased the organization's membership and improved its member retention. Correspondingly, Gilbert and Kelloway (2018) found that leaders could use TLT to predict follower perceptions of leadership behavior. Having the ability to predict a follower's perception, leaders may then self-regulate behavior to influence follower to gain the desired effect. Nonprofit leaders may use TLT to understand the significance of trust and adopt principles to model a type of behavior that facilitates the building and maintenance of trust within the organization to boost organizational cohesion, motivation, and; subsequently, commitment to the organization's mission, vision, and purpose. As a result, TLT would be an appropriate theory to understand the impact of trust on organizational change within a nonprofit organization.

Transformational leadership theory remains relevant to modern research; where researchers may use TLT to understand an organization's change in contemporary society. Berkovich (2016) explored the value of TLT to determine the viability of the theory in the present-day field of educational administration. Specifically, Berkovich assessed the (a) falsifiability, (b) utility, and (c) fit of TLT, and asserted that TLT remained a highly relevant theory in present times; whereby, school leaders can better understand the educational administration community. This finding is consistent with Yildiz and Şimşek's (2016) assertion that prior research proved that leaders who used TLT had an explicit influence on followers, which improved follower performance and; subsequently, organizational performance. Together, the researchers' affirmations suggested that not only does TLT remain a viable conceptual framework for future research, but practitioners can still use TLT for practical application to affect organizational change.

Nonprofit Organization Characteristics

It is crucial for a researcher to develop a basic understanding of nonprofit organizations as foundational knowledge to explore the nuances and complexity of the nonprofit sector, effectively. The two general categories of nonprofit organizations are (a) organizations that serve their members and (b) organizations that serve the public

(Frumkin, 2003). However, since the phenomenon of nonprofit organizational sustainability is focused on public-serving nonprofit organizations; this literature review will contain only public-serving nonprofit organizations. Public-serving nonprofit organizations operate in nearly every field of civil society to include hospitals and community-based organizations (Burde et al., 2017). These public-serving nonprofits are classified under section 501(c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax code (Burde et al., 2017; Frumkin, 2003). In a study, van Puyvelde and Brown (2016) argued that there was a very high positive correlation between county population size and the number of public charities in each county, where counties with a more significant percentage of individuals over 65 years old had a more considerable demand for nonprofit provision. Correspondingly, Kim (2016a) asserted that nonprofit leaders accepted civic engagements as an industry norm. These assertions would indicate that the nonprofit sector is an integral part of modern society, where both the public and nonprofit leaders are aware of the organization's significance to its community.

Nonprofit organizations are multifaceted organizations; each providing a unique value to the community while coping with distinct challenges that influence its sustainability. Nonprofit organizations' unique value includes preventing or reducing poverty, discouraging social exclusion, and promoting local social development routinely (Proença, Proença, & Costa, 2018). In a study, Mitchell and Berlan (2018) examined the operational aspects of nonprofit organizations and found that nonprofit organizations dealt with a myriad of challenges associated with external pressures and internal requirements. Specifically, the researchers discovered that internal conditions were positively associated with evaluation culture, external pressures were positively related to evaluative rigor, and evaluation culture was positively correlated with both evaluative rigor and monitoring frequency (Mitchell & Berlan, 2018). While internal conditions included organizational culture; it may also relate to organizational climate, which could affect the organization's performance and; ultimately, its sustainability. By focusing on the internal environment, Silard (2018) found that nonprofit organizations appeared to be an ideal place to work because the workforce perceived a healthy organizational climate filled with positive emotions. Similar to the internal conditions, the external conditions of a nonprofit organization may affect its sustainability. For instance, Kim and Kim (2015) focused on the examining challenges in the external environment; where the researchers discovered that there was a significant government-nonprofit relationship where there were mutual interdependence and reciprocity between organizations. These studies indicated that a nonprofit organization's internal and external environment could influence the organization's sustainability. Therefore, nonprofit leaders should determine the internal and external factors that have an impact on their specific organization's sustainability before making an effort to resolve the phenomenon.

Although nonprofit organizations are charitable entities, nonprofit leaders tend to operate the organization like businesses in efforts to maintain relevance and currency and; consequently, sustainability. For instance, Kim (2016a) found that nonprofit organizations possessed a diverse network, where the organizations were active in both economic and social environment at varying degrees. In addition, Gazzola et al. (2017) found that social responsibility was mandatory for nonprofit organization whereby these organizations have an ethical obligation to their stakeholders and to the public to conduct their activities with accountability and transparency. Consequently, nonprofit organizations must implement business strategies to sustain themselves (Gazzola et al., 2017). Additionally, Witmer and Mellinger (2016) revealed (a) commitment to the mission, (b) improvisation, (c) community reciprocity, (d) servant and transformational leadership, (e) hope and optimism, and (f) fiscal transparency would improve sustainability in nonprofit organizations. These findings demonstrated that nonprofit leaders must operate like a business, which included implementing business strategies to improve financial sustainability. Communities expect continuous support from nonprofit organizations, and therefore, nonprofit leaders should consider business strategies to cope with fluctuating funding sources especially since any anomaly in the economic environment can affect nonprofit finances and the nonprofit leaders' ability to sustain its service in support of its mission.

Although nonprofit organization tends to operate as a business, nonprofit leaders have regulatory requirements that they must comply with to maintain tax-exempt classification and nonprofit status of the organization. Therefore, local, state, and federal government regulatory requirements may influence nonprofit organization operations. New laws may require the most adjustment as nonprofit leaders must revamp organizational structures and operations to achieve compliance. Since the government regulations that govern nonprofit organizations vary from state to state; I focused on the targeted population of this study geographical location, which in this case is the state of New York.

Nonprofit organizations operating in the New York state must abide by state-specific laws. One of the state's most recent and notable law is the 2013 Non-Profit Revitalization Act (Kahn, 2015; Karl, 2015). Kahn (2015) stated that since the enactment of the Non-Profit Revitalization Act (NPRA), nonprofit leaders are experiencing conflicting emotions about attaining regulatory compliance or fulfilling their organization's mission because this law requires organizational resources of both time and money. According to Kahn, until NPRA compliancy is achieved, New York nonprofit leaders will be forced to focus less on their organizations' ability to provide quality service to their community and more on organizational sustainability. As a result, nonprofit leaders may need to reprioritize organizational goals to highlight the significance of regulatory compliance and the organization's sustainability. However, both Kahn and Karl (2015) asserted that NPRA is beneficial to nonprofit organizations. Kahn (2015) stated that the NPRA reformation of statutory requirements for the governance of nonprofit organizations reduced nonprofit organization's regulatory burden. Correspondingly, Karl asserted that NPRA caused bureaucratic processes to be streamlined, a result of reducing the types of nonprofit corporations under the previous law from four to two types of the corporation; namely non-charitable corporation and charitable corporation; thereby increasing efficiencies. Nonprofit leaders must abide by with regulatory requirements that may have an impact on their organizations' sustainability. As a result, nonprofit leaders must gain an understanding of applicable regulatory requirements to include their benefits and challenges. Nonetheless, leaders may need to participate in open and candid discussions about new laws, whereby the exchanging of information could reduce apprehension to facilitate compliance efforts while maintaining organizational sustainability.

Impact of Nonprofit Advocacy

A nonprofit organization's need to improve financial sustainability may impact the organization's policy advocacy efforts. Some nonprofit leaders need to advocate successfully on behalf of their community may overshadow the need to improve the organization's financial sustainability (Ruggiano, Taliaferro, Dillon, Granger, & Scher, 2015). Ruggiano et al. (2015) asserted that nonprofit advocacy success involved access, openness, assurance, networking, sharing of tasks, and positivity, where relationships and communication had an impact on the effectiveness of the advocacy efforts. Nonprofit organizations have had a long history of defending the rights of their members, clients, and the community (Buffardi, Pekkanen, & Smith, 2017). Buffardi et al. (2017) examined the extent to which nonprofit organizations are involved in changing public policy, the nature of this engagement, and advocacy activities, organizational characteristics, and relationships with other associated with reported policy changes. As a result, the researchers found that nonprofit leaders were significantly associated with policies; specifically, Buffardi et al. found that more than 75% of the nonprofit respondents reported that they enacted, stopped, or modified policy. Similarly, Fyall (2016) explored strategies that nonprofit used to influence policy change and publicized seven propositions through which nonprofit organizations leveraged their nonprofit-government relationship to strengthen its power; thereby, affecting policy change. Nonprofit leaders also use emotions to influence stakeholder behavior; whereby, a leader's negative emotion display signaled to followers that a specific work outcome was important to the leader, resulting in increased follower effort and improved performance (Silard, 2018). Buffardi et al., Fyall, and Silard (2018) refuted the assumption that nonprofit organizations are the weaker actors relative to their government supporters. Additionally, these studies are consistent with emerging schools of thought on the influence of nonprofit organizations on governmental decisions and; consequently, legislative policies.

Nonprofit organizations use various forums to advocate their viewpoints, and the two most prevalent mediums used are social media and crowd-sourcing. Guo and Saxton (2018) focused on advocacy from a social media perspective, thus bolstering Buffardi et al. (2017) and Fyall (2016) strategies for nonprofit influencing policy change. Guo and Saxton examined the way nonprofit organization used social media to gain attention by testing the effectiveness of Twitter usage. Guo and Saxton found that different tweets served a different purpose and; consequently, produced diverse results. For instance, a mass reply might be ineffective for as a public reply message; however, it may strengthen ties with a targeted user, as demonstrated through its favoriting feature (Guo & Saxton, 2018). Additionally, Guo and Saxton found that when nonprofit joined existing conversations by employing existing hashtags; they garnered more attention and increased follower base. Similar to Guo and Saxton, Grønbjerg and Prakash (2017) explored a distinct forum for nonprofit organization's advocacy; namely crowd advocacy. Grønbjerg and Prakash described crowd advocacy as capturing a mass audience of an interested group to promote a cause. Therefore, nonprofit leaders may leverage crowd advocacy to influence both government and private firms and promote change (Grønbjerg & Prakash, 2017). For example, Grønbjerg and Prakash affirmed that environmental advocates could use crowd advocacy to target fracking laws. This argument would suggest that nonprofit advocacy capabilities have evolved, where nonprofit organizational leaders can advocate on a larger scale to the public. A further implication is that social media used as a tool to improve stakeholder engagement coupled with leveraging the power of crowd advocacy can generate change.

Nonprofit advocacy must deal with questions about the level of commitment; especially since advocacy does not equate to a definitive rigid stance on an issue. Lu (2016) provided an unpopular viewpoint by asserting that policies influenced nonprofit leaders' behavior. Lu addressed the autonomy of a nonprofit organization, and the challenges they must cope with as they advocate on behalf of the society, while requesting government funding to sustain. As a result, Lu found that government funding was a weak catalyst, rather than an obstacle, for a nonprofit to participate in the policy process. Similarly, Neumayr et al. (2016) addressed the same argument suggesting that a nonprofit that receives public funding would eventually reduce advocacy activities or refrain from them for fear of losing their funding. In opposite, Neumayr et al. found that seeking public funding did not have a negative impact on the nonprofit role as advocates. Both studies debunked the viewpoint that politician's had significant influences on nonprofit organization's advocacy goals. Instead, these diverging findings would suggest that the ebb and flow of the political environment had some influence on nonprofit organizational leaders' decisions on advocacy.

Nonprofit Organizations Financial Challenges

A nonprofit organization requires financial resources to maintain their support to the communities. In the United States, nonprofit organizations are crucial providers of human and social services (Hu & Kapucu, 2017). While the provisions of these services have caused nonprofit organizations to influence economic systems (Hu & Kapucu, 2017); nonprofit leaders are faced with unique internal and external challenges that can affect their ability to maintain internal operation and sustain public-serving activities. For instance, Burde et al. (2017) examined the relationship between nonprofit organization's vulnerability and government funds instability and discovered that small nonprofit organizations were more vulnerable to funding instability than larger organizations. Thus, during times of financial stress, Hu and Kapucu (2016) suggested that an application of strategic planning could help nonprofit organizations reduce financial vulnerability, regardless of the negative impacts that economic downturns have on the organization. Correspondingly, Von Schnurbein and Fritz (2017) asserted that the size, activity range, and legal status could affect a nonprofit organization's financial stability and capacity. However, Von Schnurbein and Fritz emphasized the significance of strategic planning that included diversifying the organization's activities as well as its funding sources in an effort to reduce financial vulnerability. Both Hu and Kapucu; and Von Schnurbein and Fritz affirmed that strategic planning could impact an organization's financial sustainability. Strategic planning is the process of the decision-making that leaders use to determine the direction of the organization, its outlook, goals, and ways to achieve its vision (Oschman, 2017). As a result, nonprofit leaders may use strategic planning efforts to not only assist in reducing their organization's financial vulnerability but to improve its financial sustainability.

Nonprofit Organizations and Government Financial Relationship

Nonprofit organizations rely heavily on the government as a funding source. Cortis (2017) and Lu (2015) acknowledged the dependency and asserted that in many countries, government funding to support nonprofit operations is becoming scarce. In addition, Lu asserted that a dependency on government funding was more prevalent in the human service nonprofit sector. This assertion would indicate that nonprofit organizations providing social services may be the ones most affected by any lack of government funding, which could create secondary consequences that impact the supported communities. The scarcity of government funding described by Cortis (2017) and Lu supported Besel, Williams, and Klak (2011) findings that although 58% of nonprofit organizations in their study viewed government funding as the most reliable source of funding; 65% of the nonprofit organizations had, at a minimum, four funding sources. Besel et al. affirmed that substantial reliance on government grants could increase nonprofit organization's vulnerability and could come at a cost to the organization that includes loss of self-rule and mission distortion. Similar to Besel et al., Cortis, and Lu; Liu (2017) found that there was a relationship between the need for government funding source and the existence of nonprofit organizations. Moreover, Liu's study is consistent with Burde et al. (2017), Cortis and Hu and Kapucu (2017), where the researcher recommended the need for strategic planning to enhance financial resiliency and improve financial sustainability. In addition, Liu mentioned that nonprofit organization should shift funding source from the government only and implement other funding sources such as private individual and enterprise donations; and own revenues such as service fees and products sold to improve financial sustainability. With the unpredictability of government funds, nonprofit leaders must assess and understand their level of financial vulnerability and develop appropriate strategies to sustain their operations financially.

Nonprofit Financial Sustainability Strategies

Funding fluctuations from funding sources could affect some nonprofit organization’s ability to sustain daily operations and; consequently, impact their support to the communities. Gilstrap et al. (2016) found that some funding instabilities were a consequence of organizational crises that emerged from disasters, disruption of mission delivery, internal stakeholder challenges, and unanticipated occurrence. Subsequently, Gilstrap et al. asserted that not only should nonprofit leaders be able to make sense of the organizational crisis but nonprofit leaders must be (a) team players, (b) strategic thinking; (c) transparency with stakeholders, (d) responsive, (e) self-composed, and (f) prepared to resolve the range of crises. Correspondingly, McDonald et al.’s (2015) discovered that nonprofit leaders could reduce their organization’s financial vulnerability by using organizational strategies that comprised of revenue-enhancing strategies, donations-enhancing strategies, cost-reduction strategies, and awareness-raising strategies. Nonprofit leaders could combine Gilstrap et al. leaders’ attributes with McDonald et al.’s normative strategies to influence their organizations’ sustainability efforts. While nonprofit leaders consider leadership development and strategy implementation, they should also consider an organization's characteristics, which can affect an organization's sustainability. Krawczyk, Wooddell, and Dias (2017) described organizational characteristics as the organizational quality and reputation; administrative and fundraising efficiency; an organization's fiscal health; and the sources of revenue. According to Krawczyk et al., organizational characteristics were significant to philanthropic efforts where organizational factors such as organizational reputation and fundraising and administrative efficiency on charitable giving influenced the level of charitable donations to nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit leaders may need to develop a thorough understanding of internal operations so they may determine suitable strategic approaches to influence the organization's sustainability.

Preparation is an essential aspect of maintaining organizational sustainability. Nonprofit leaders struggled to balance money and mission as they seek to sustain their mission and financial objectives (McDonald et al., 2015). As a result, nonprofit leaders are encouraged to maintain an operating reserve to support the organizations' financial sustainability (Sloan, Charles, & Kim, 2016). However, Sloan et al. (2016) found there was an immediate and apparent disconnection between the observed organizational operating reserves ratios and executives' beliefs regarding operating reserves (Sloan et al., 2016). Therefore, an accurate assessment of the nonprofits' financial status can support the strategies of nonprofit leaders seeking to improve the sustainability of their organization. As nonprofit leaders prepare financial sustainability strategy, they must also consider the public's perceptions throughout the entire process, since they may have an impact on the financial state of the organization. For instance, Charles and Kim (2016) found that when the number of nonprofit organization's website visits increased by 10%; charitable giving reduced by .08%. According to Charles and Kim, the reasoning is that when organizations attracted larger attract larger audiences to their programs and more visitors to their websites; they received fewer contributions because of the perceived image of success. Nonprofit leaders may benefit from understanding the ebb and flow of financial contribution. As a result, nonprofit leaders may develop strategic plans that address the impacts of securing funding for their organization in order to sustain it.

Nonprofit leaders may use diversifying funding source as a strategy to improve financial sustainability. Von Schnurbein and Fritz (2017) examined the degree of revenue diversification on financial growth and asserted that diversification among different revenue sources enabled organizational stability. As a result, the researchers specified four sources, namely (a) income from donations, (b) income from government, (c) income from own revenues, and (d) income from investments (Von Schnurbein &Fritz, 2017) for nonprofit leaders to leverage for financial sustainability. Similarly, Kim's (2016b) found that nonprofit organizations were likely to perform better when they diversified revenue streams and; consequently, reduced their dependency on individual donations. While some researchers view the diversifying of funding source as beneficial to the financial position of a nonprofit organization, others may consider this action as producing a negative impact on the organization's financial sustainability. According to Sacristán López de Los Mozos, Rodríguez Duarte, and Rodríguez Ruiz (2016) increased or changing the patterns of diversifying funding source affected nonprofit organization fundraising efficiency negatively, as well as create the perception of less need and an image that the organization has ample funding to potential donors. Additionally, Sacristán López de Los Mozos et al. stated that diversifying funding sources could lead to nonprofit leaders developing services that did not align with the core organizational mission. While diversifying funding source is critical to a nonprofit organization's sustainability; the selection of funding source may be equally important. Nonprofit leaders may want to select funding sources that support or align with their organizational mission. These findings aligned with other scholarly works of literature such as Mitchell and Berlan (2018); and Von Schnurbein and Fritz on the value of diversifying funding source, where this strategy may have an impact on not only the nonprofit organization's financial vulnerability but also its financial sustainability.

Nonprofit leaders may use other strategies besides diversifying funding source to improve the organization's financial sustainability. For instance, Mitchell (2014) found that nonprofit leaders use alignment, subcontracting, perseverance, diversification, commercialization, funding liberation, geostrategic arbitrage, specialization, selectivity, donor education, and compromise to develop strategies that will support financial sustainability. Stakeholder engagement strategy would be another strategy that nonprofit leaders could use to improve the financial sustainability of their organization. While there are numerous strategies to improve the financial sustainability of an organization, nonprofit leaders will need to decide on the most appropriate strategy to support their organizational goal. In one case, Chikoto-Schultz and Neely (2016) found that nonprofit leaders' investment in talent management was an appropriate strategy that yielded high financial nonprofit performers. In another case, Hyánek, and Prouzová (2015) found that leveraging indirect funding source was the appropriate strategy that causes nonprofit leaders to benefit financially through indirect sources such as tax allowances, tax exemptions from local and administrative fees, discount sales, and loans or leasing of property. As a result, nonprofit leaders may leverage a strategy or combination of strategies to improve their financial sustainability.

The Value of Stakeholders

Different stakeholder groups can affect the pursuit of organizational sustainability. Freeman (1984) defined a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives” (p. 46). In the nonprofit sector, Van Puyvelde and Brown (2016) differentiated the stakeholder groups as internal and external stakeholders, while Mason (2016) identified (a) the organization’s board of directors, (b) elected officials and other policymakers, and (c) donors, members, and volunteers of the nonprofit organization as three leading nonprofit stakeholder groups that can affect the organization’s sustainability. For each nonprofit organization, the stakeholder groups may vary; however, it is important that nonprofit leaders understand the distinct group of stakeholders to include their roles and ability to influence organizational leaders’ behaviors and subsequently, affect change that may affect the organization’s financial sustainability.

Stakeholders are critical to a nonprofit organization’s organizational success and; therefore, to its financial sustainability. Weitzner and Deutsch (2015) affirmed that most individuals considered stakeholders as influencers because they can use attributes of power, urgency, and legitimacy to influence the behavior of others. For instance, Mason

(2016) discovered that organizational leaders had a significant amount of discretion in guiding their organizations' activities and operations. Correspondingly, Hu and Kapucu (2017) asserted that a nonprofit board of directors were key stakeholders because of their connections to the external environment to include the community, which they can leverage to affect the organization's financial sustainability. With the varying of each stakeholder roles, so is the varying of their span of influence to affect change within the organization. Nonetheless, Hoque, Clarke, and Huang (2016) found that stakeholders are capable of exerting their influence through the use of direct withholding, indirect withholding, direct usage, and indirect usage of various resources to influence leaders' decisions that create organizational change. With stakeholder groups able to motivate behavior that can affect the organization's financial sustainability, nonprofit leaders may need to engage stakeholders in a manner that cause a positive organization's sustainability outcome.

The influence of the stakeholders is unparalleled in a nonprofit organization. Both internal and external stakeholders are equally important where Beer and Micheli (2017) and Gilstap et al. (2016) asserted that internal stakeholders tended to affect an organization's performance, while external stakeholders affected the organization's credibility and acceptance in the community, reflected through its customers' satisfaction. Furthermore, according to Barbero and Marchiano (2016), and Brummette and Zoch (2016), nonprofit stakeholders tended to use their values as criteria to predict the values they expect from an organization with which they intend on conducting business. For nonprofit leaders, it may be valuable to understand their stakeholders' values in order to determine ways to engage them. Having a wide network of stakeholders can have a significant impact of organizational financial sustainability whereby, organizational leaders could leverage this network to gain substantial sources of capital, competencies, and opportunities for innovation (Santoro, Bertoldi, Giachino, & Candelo, 2018). Santoro et al. (2018) findings support Sulkowski, Edwards, and Freeman (2017) assertion that organization leaders were important influencers that could leverage their relationships with stakeholders to improve their organization's sustainability. Specifically, leaders can use stakeholder engagement to influence fundamental changes to the organization's core operations that benefit not just the organization but to the community, and the business environment (Miragaia, de Matos Ferreira, & Ratten, 2017; Sulkowski et al., 2017). These findings are aligned with Ostrow and Hayes (2015) findings that stakeholder involvement in organizational activities is a crucial component for gaining commitment and support from stakeholders. Together, these researchers demonstrated the importance of the relationship between stakeholders and organizational leaders in achieving the organization's financial sustainability.

Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

Nonprofit leaders must develop appropriate strategies to engage stakeholders in an effort to impact their organization's financial sustainability. Manetti and Toccafondi (2014) found that 87% of nonprofit organization representatives did not engage their stakeholders in their sustainability and strategic planning efforts. Lack of involvement could lead to uninformed stakeholders experiencing a declining sense of commitment, which can affect an organization's sustainability. According to Proença et al. (2018), stakeholder engagements must involve stakeholder interaction involved (a) networking and trust development (b) formal character of interactions, and (c) the environment of cooperation, adaptation, and commitment among stakeholders. Similarly, Lemke and Harris-Wai (2015); Nowlin (2018); and Willems, Jegers, and Faulk (2016) asserted that transparency and communication enhanced trust between an organization and its stakeholders. For example, Greco, D'Onza, and Sciulli (2015), and Martin-de Castro, Amores-Salvado, and Navas-Lopez (2016) stated that nonprofit leaders used sustainability reporting as a tool to inform stakeholders about activities and performance; thereby promoting accountability and legitimacy. Furthermore, collaborative engagements with stakeholders provided greater transparency (Desai, 2018). These assertions would suggest that nonprofit leaders aiming to improve their organization's financial sustainability may need to enhance relationships with stakeholders through various engagement strategies to achieve their desired outcome.

Stakeholders' perception of an organization may affect their level of involvement with the organization; and as a result, impact the quality of the stakeholder engagement activities. For instance, O'Rourke, Higuchi, and Hogg (2016) found stakeholder perception changed based on (a) felt need, (b) vision, (c) shaping the vision, (d) sharing the vision, and (e) protecting the vision. Therefore, nonprofit organizational leaders could use collaborative planning tools that support the communication of stakeholder values, and as a result, the leader could (a) assess the range of stakeholder values, (b) identify bottlenecks, (c) find compromises, and (d) discover trade-offs to support negotiation to promote stakeholder engagement (Eikelboom, & Janssen, 2015). These assertions not only support transformational leadership theory but highlighted the link between strategic planning and stakeholder engagement activities.

Nonprofit leaders can use various techniques and tools to enhance relationships with stakeholders. According to Willems et al. (2016) stakeholders rely on indicators to inform their views of an organization and; therefore, nonprofit leaders aiming to develop trust and communication with stakeholders should ensure stakeholder accessibility to organizational indicators of quality such as self-assessments, mission statements, websites and printed materials, fundraising activities, annual reports, and program descriptions. In addition, Wyllie et al. (2016) found that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter afforded nonprofit organization the ability to identify and manage valuable stakeholder relationships, where nonprofit organizational leaders can engage, communicate, and collaborate with their various stakeholders. Together, the researchers suggest that nonprofit leaders may use direct stakeholder engagements to create opportunities that could improve their organization’s performance and sustainability.

Like most organizations operating in today’s globalized business environment, nonprofit leaders may boost stakeholder engagement strategies using digital platforms. While Viglia, Pera, and Bigne (2017) found emotional activations such as shared photos and videos were not enough to generate interactive stakeholder engagement; the researchers proposed that organizational leaders should aim to achieve interactive stakeholder engagement and develop functional and rational shared content that is complementarity across stakeholders. Moreover, Viglia et al. and Wilkin, Campbell, Moore, and Simpson (2018) recommended that organizational leaders stimulate comments that facilitated and promoted a shared understanding and a shared purpose. As a result, nonprofit leaders may use digital social networks to improve the exchange and contribution of knowledge while increasing opportunities for stakeholder engagement. Digital platforms offered real-time, low-cost transmissions that are generally accessible and usable so that individuals can interact directly and freely with each other (Wilkin et al. 2018). These studies are consistent with other studies that emphasized the value of digital platforms to bolster stakeholder cooperation and communication; and consequently, relationship building and engagement activities. Furthermore, nonprofit leaders may use digital platforms to increase responsiveness to stakeholders in an effort to build and maintain relationships that could affect their organization's financial sustainability.

Stakeholder engagement strategies must be a continuous process if organizational leaders aim to affect changes that could impact their organization's financial sustainability. Slack, Wilkinson, Salzwedel, and Ndebele (2018), and Stosich and Bae (2018) proposed that stakeholder engagement strategies should be broad and inclusive; early and sustained; and dynamic and responsive. Additionally, stakeholder engagement should elicit stakeholders' "concerns, objections, advice, experiences, expectations, needs, preferences, perceptions, perspectives, beliefs, inputs, feedback, responses, recommendations and suggestions and other crucial information relevant to the success of the organization" (Slack et al., 2018, p.22). As a result, nonprofit leaders may use a variation of activities to increase engagement opportunities with stakeholders. For instance, Slack et al. recommended meetings, consultations, local events, suggestion boxes, focus group discussions, interviews, a continuing forum, and a formal stakeholder advisory board as stakeholder engagement activities. Any activities that could elicit stakeholders' "concerns, objections, advice, experiences, expectations, needs, preferences, perceptions, perspectives, beliefs, inputs, feedback, responses, recommendations, and suggestions are relevant to the success of the organization" (Slack et al., 2018, p. 22). Correspondingly, Rawhouser, Cummings, and Marcus (2017) proposed crowdsourcing as a practical stakeholder engagement tool, which the researchers described as "outsourcing a task to a *crowd*" (p. 226). According to Rawhouser et al. (2018), the crowdsourced process maximized stakeholders' involvement and freedom; thereby fostering the perceptions of credibility within the community. These studies aligned with Canella et al. (2018) affirmation that even though stakeholder engagement strategies provide information and motivation which result in awareness among stakeholders, organizational leaders should evaluate and integrate shared stakeholders' values, needs, and preferences into organizational strategies to enhance a stakeholder's sense of value and the quality, relevance, feasibility, and success of future stakeholder engagement activities. Stakeholder engagements strategies are a compilation of collective and collaborative efforts to support the *good* of the overall organization to include its financial sustainability.

Transition

In Section 1, I discussed the foundation for this study. The section contains a review of professional and academic literature of critical strategies that leaders can use to improve stakeholder engagement in the nonprofit sector. The section began with the foundation of the study followed by the background of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose statement, the nature of the study, and the overarching research question. Next, I presented the conceptual framework, operational definition, assumption, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study. Lastly, I reviewed professional and academic literature relevant to the context of the research study and the conceptual framework. I used general systems and transformational leadership theories as the framework to analyze stakeholder engagement and establish a conceptual foundation for this study.

In Section 2, I provide an in-depth description of the project to include details on my role as researcher, participants for this study and research methodology and research design for completing this study. Additionally, in Section 2, I explain my ethical responsibility as a researcher; and describe the strategy I used to collect data, organize the data, and analyze the data. I conclude Section 2 with an assessment of the reliability and validity of my study.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 comprises the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, and the research method and design. I explain the data collection and data analysis processes that I used for this project. In this section, I also explain the process that I used to ensure data reliability and validity as I explored the stakeholder engagement strategies that nonprofit leaders can use to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore stakeholder engagement strategies that some nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations. The target population for this study consisted of three senior leaders of a single nonprofit organization in the social assistance industry located in the city of New York, NY who had financially sustained their organization by effectively engaging stakeholders. The findings and conclusions of this study may lead to positive social change by enhancing nonprofit leaders' understanding of stakeholder engagement strategies. Nonprofit leaders need motivated stakeholders who have a shared understanding of the mission and are mission focused to accomplish their goals (Northouse, 2016). As nonprofit leaders influence their stakeholders, they can increase the numbers of stakeholders and their participation levels, which could enhance nonprofits leaders' abilities to better serve and improve the lives of the people in their communities.

Role of the Researcher

The role of researchers in qualitative studies consists of the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data (LeBaron, Iribarren, Perri, & Beck, 2015; Yin, 2018). Therefore, the qualitative researcher is the primary instrument of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In a qualitative study, researchers use structured questions to assist in the gathering of data related to the primary research question of the study (Yin, 2018). During this qualitative, single-case study, I served as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. I ensured accurate data reporting and adhered to ethical research guidelines throughout my exploration of stakeholder engagement strategies to improve financial sustainability in nonprofit organizations.

Researchers facilitate the flow of information in a qualitative study. Roulston and Shelton (2015) stated that the researcher's bias in a qualitative study could impact their objectivity, the credibility of the study, and research ethics. In this study, I used multiple techniques to avoid inadvertently altering the way I collected and analyzed data to include: asking the same interview questions to all participants, using a recording device, safeguarding original raw data, and organizing data. Fusch, Fusch, and Ness (2018) stated that researchers mitigate bias by using an interview protocol that includes structured interview questions, whereby the same questions may be used for multiple participants. Additionally, the researcher can conduct member checking and attain data saturation to resolve bias behaviors (Fusch et al., 2018).

I conducted my research in an ethical manner. Saunders et al. (2015) stated that research ethics involved protecting participants from harm by gaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and enforcing anonymity throughout the research process. Therefore, I adhered to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) committee requirements of Walden University and obtained IRB approval before contacting and collecting data from participants. My Walden IRB approval number for this study is 05-17-18-072550. I addressed ethical considerations, such as voluntary informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity, as I worked with nonprofit leaders to gather, examine, manage, and report data (see Saunders et al., 2015). I only began interviewing participants after receiving their signed informed consent. According to Saunders et al., any situation that contributes to the altering of the researcher's interpretation of the data can lead to researcher error. Therefore, I used member checking to verify my interpretation of information gathered from participants. Boblin et al. (2013) described member checking as the interviewer providing the participant with restated information to confirm the accuracy of the information, thereby increasing data credibility. I attained data saturation through the interview process and the review of documents. Fusch and Ness (2015) asserted that in a qualitative case study, researchers achieve data saturation when there is no new data collected that are significant to the study or that can be themed and there is no requirement for further coding.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of three senior leaders of a nonprofit organization located in the city of New York, NY. I used a purposeful sampling method, which Nikolaos and Panagiotis (2016) described as a technique that researchers use to select a predetermined target group in efforts to achieve the purpose of the research.

According to Ruzzene (2015), the participant selection process is an essential step in data collection. Therefore, I selected participants who possessed knowledge of the research problem and research question of the study. I also selected leaders who had been in their senior leadership position for a minimum of 2 years to ensure they were knowledgeable about the organization's current situation. By using this selection criterion, a researcher can attain data saturation; Saunders et al. (2018) stated that during interviews, data saturation is reached when a researcher begins to hear the same comment again and again.

I gained access to the target participants through e-mails; however, I did not contact potential participants until after the receipt of both the IRB approval and the signed Walden Doctor of Business Administration Research Agreement. Upon receiving IRB approval and the completed research agreement, I began interaction with potential participants to get their signature on informed consent forms. First, I sent e-mails to each participant that explained the purpose of the study and included the participants' consent forms. Next, I followed up the e-mail with a phone call to explain the content of the e-mail. According to the Creswell (2017) and Saunders et al. (2015), participation in the study should be voluntary and therefore, participants should not be pressured into signing consent forms. Consequently, I informed senior leaders of the voluntary nature of the participant role in addition to other participants' rights that include confidentiality, anonymity, and the ability to change the scope of their participation (see Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). I required a signed informed consent for each participant of the study.

Upon receipt of signed consent, I used telephone calls to build rapport and conduct the interviews with participants. I paid close attention to the tone of my voice, since Arsel (2017) asserted that the "the tone, context, and delivery of how one asks why" (p. 945) could influence a participant response, such as encouraging participants to reflect on their behavior and shaping their narratives resulting in a richer and detailed response. I also limited all telephone interview to 30 minutes in length. After the completion of each interview session, I organized and labeled the data to protect each participant's identity on password-protected devices. I stored my password-protected device containing data in a safety deposit box and will retain the resulting data for 5 years after study completion and then destroy it.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

Researchers use three types of research methodology when conducting research: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method (Saunders et al., 2015). I used the qualitative methodology for this study. Qualitative methodology is interpretive, and therefore, researchers can collect data through interviews, observations, or archival document to determine and understand patterns, ideas, and perceptions of the social phenomenon (Firestone, 1987; Yin, 2018). As a result, qualitative researchers can use multiple sources to explore, describe, or understand the research problem holistically (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005; Saunders et al., 2015). By using the qualitative methodology, I gained a greater understanding of the nonprofit leaders' stakeholder engagement strategies that could lead to a sustainable financial future.

A quantitative methodology focuses on objective measurement, testing of hypotheses, and analysis of causal relationships between variables (Makrakis & Kostoulas-Makrakis, 2016; Saunders et al., 2015). As a result, quantitative researchers can use "an array of statistical procedures and generalizations to determine what their data mean(s)" (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005, p. 271) in efforts to explain the changes in social facts (Firestone, 1987). The quantitative methodology was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of the study was the exploration of successful stakeholder engagement strategies as opposed to the examination of hypotheses and the comparison of variables (see Saunders et al., 2015). A mixed-method approach includes both quantitative and qualitative methods (Saunders et al., 2015). Since I was not examining the relationship between variables, the mixed-method approach was not appropriate for this study.

Research Design

I employed a single case study design in this study. Researchers can use the case study design to conduct an in-depth inquiry into a phenomenon within a real-life contemporary setting (Saunders et al., 2015). As a result, a researcher can understand the dynamics of any case, which includes studying an individual, group, organization, association, change process, or event (Creswell, 2017; Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). Additionally, a case study research design involves researchers using formal conceptual frameworks to understand and examine the data collected and guide the analysis of the data to answer the research question (Yin, 2018). By using the case study design, I was able to explore the contemporary and dynamic situation of nonprofit leaders' use of stakeholder engagement strategies to influence their organization's financial sustainability.

Alternate research designs to case study include (a) phenomenological, (b) narrative, and (c) ethnography (Creswell, 2017; Saunders et al., 2015). A phenomenology study design is a subjective way of gaining information about a phenomenon of human experience by having dialogues with people who are sharing their experience (Creswell, 2017; Ridder, 2017). A phenomenology study design was not suitable for this study because I did not want to explore leaders' lived experience or perception of the phenomenon but instead stakeholder engagement strategies used by nonprofit leaders. Next, researchers use a narrative design to explore the lives of individuals as described through their stories (Lewis, 2015). A narrative design was not appropriate for this study because I did not require individual experience for this study but instead information regarding strategies that were used by that nonprofit leaders. Last, researchers use an ethnographic study design to explore the cultural patterns and perspectives of participants in their natural settings (Marion, Eddleston, Friar, & Deeds, 2015). The ethnographic study design was not appropriate for this study because I did not want to explore culture in a natural setting but instead the way leaders use strategies to engage stakeholders.

Population and Sampling

The target population for this qualitative single case study was senior leaders in a New York, NY nonprofit organization who had information about stakeholder engagement strategies. Walden administrators and faculty assessed and selected the client organization for the study, and therefore, I used a purposeful sampling strategy that involved the subjective selection of three senior nonprofit leaders. Purposeful sampling is widely used in qualitative research to help researchers obtain the most information from limited resources (Nikolaos & Panagiotis, 2016). Similarly, Fusch and Ness (2015) suggested that researchers select a sample size that offers the best opportunity to achieve data saturation. I used 2 years of time-in-position as a senior leader as a criterion for participating leaders because a leader can develop enough knowledge of the organization's current and future operations during this length of time. The sample consisted of senior leaders who were also decision-makers in the nonprofit organization. Marshall and Rossman (2016) and Nikolaos and Panagiotis (2016) affirmed that in purposive sampling, the participants must be knowledgeable about the overarching research problem to improve the value of the study. Therefore, I expected a sampling comprising senior leaders with the knowledge to answer the research question would result in useful insights into the business problem of the study.

Ethical Research

Saunders et al. (2015) defined ethics as a "standard of behavior that guides your conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by it" (p. 239). The design of this study required me to interact with human subjects; therefore, I considered ethical issues that may affect participants. Marshall and Rossman (2016) and Saunders et al. (2015) stated that researchers must deal with ethical dilemmas throughout the entire research process, especially as they gather, examine, manage, and report data from participants. As a result, I sought IRB approval for this study before contacting participants. Upon gaining IRB approval, I obtained participants' informed consent, maintained participants' confidentiality, and safeguarded participants' anonymity to avert any ethical issues. I introduced myself to potential participants and explained the scope of the study before seeking informed consent. Participants may provide researchers with informed consent acknowledging they have a full understanding of the scope of the research and the expectation of them as participants of the study (Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). I also provided potential participants with additional time to consider my request for access to data to include providing them with additional information to enhance their understanding of the research process, as recommended by Saunders et al.. Marshall and Rossman asserted that researchers should inform potential participants that their role is voluntary and that they have the right to participate or withdraw from the study. Chen (2015) implied that researchers must remain transparent throughout the research process. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2016) explained that transparency involved information disclosure, clarity, and accuracy and, therefore, could promote trust. As a result, I disclosed to the participants that I would use a password-protected recorder for recording interviews and a journal for taking notes during interview sessions.

I preserved the anonymity of each participant in the study. Lancaster (2017) removed roles and association to particular cases that could serve as identifying information in his studies; erring on the side of caution to avoid personal and professional harm to participants and to preserve their privacy. As a result, I assigned pseudonyms names to both the organization and the participants when referencing participants in an effort to protect identities, sensitive information, and proprietary information.

I maintained a high level of confidentiality and security to avoid causing harm or distress to my participant. According to Yin (2018), researchers must demonstrate an effective plan to protect the participants of the study. I safeguarded collected information and protected the privacy of each participant, and the organization to comply with data protection legislation, as noted by Saunders et al. (2015). I used password-protected devices to record and store electronic data. I store all printed data in a fireproof, password-protected safe for the duration of the study. After completion of the study, I will transfer electronic documents and printed documentation to a safety deposit box and store for 5 years.

Data Collection Instruments

I am the primary data collection instrument for this study. Saunders (2015) and Yin (2018) stated that in a qualitative study, the researcher is the instrument for data collection. Therefore, I followed Yin case study protocol list, where researchers must (a) obtain relevant permissions to include IRB approval, and participants' consent (b) collect case study evidence, and (c) analyze case evidence and (d) report the study. I used semistructured interviews as the primary collection method and conducted telephone interviews using six interview questions related to the overarching research question. A researcher can use semistructured interviews to clarify and verify information by asking the same questions to different participants (Nagasaka, Bocher, & Krott, 2016). Additionally, I used public and organizational documentation as the secondary collection method, where I collected data such as financial reports, press releases, and minutes from the organization's internal meetings. Yin stated that researchers should maintain a chain of evidence to increase the validity of the overall value of the study. As a result, I maintained a field journal to record key details during interactions with participants such as time and date of interviews. A researcher's ability to reference research data can increase the credibility within the research process (Morgan, Pullon, Macdonald, McKinlay, & Gray, 2017). I further enhanced the reliability and validity of the data collected through member checking. Researchers may use member checking to verify the participant's rephrased data after their semistructured interview (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016).

Data Collection Technique

The central research question for this study was: What stakeholder engagement strategies do some nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations? In this qualitative single case study, I used semistructured interviews as the primary data collection technique. Researchers also used semistructured interviews to introduce follow-up questions to explore a phenomenon further (Hashim, Noordin, & Saifuddin, 2015). I used the telephone to conduct interviews and schedule interviews at the convenience of the participants. I interviewed three participants using the same open-ended questions to reduce bias and increase the participant's freedom of response. Researchers should avoid questions that would stimulate a monosyllabic response during the interview (Arsel, 2017; Saunders et al., 2015) and end the conversation. The interview protocol is in Appendix A.

A qualitative researcher directs the entire interview process to include preparing for the interview and developing the script that aligns with the central research question

(Anyan, 2013). I used an interview script to ensure I adhered to a prescribed structure for the interview sessions and disclosed key information such as the use of a recording device. Upon the completion of interviews, I conducted member checking with each participant to verify the data. Marshall and Rossman (2016) affirmed that member checking ensures trustworthiness by sharing data and interpretation with participants. Yin (2018) found that researchers can use organizational documents as a data collection technique to develop contextual information to complement their research. Organizational data can also be used to substantiate interview data to improve data saturation, validity, and credibility (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Therefore, I used organizational documents to validate and support the data gained through interviews.

Data Organization Techniques

Yin (2018) affirmed that a well-arranged database enables easy retrieval of data in the future. Similarly, Morgan et al. (2017) discussed the importance of organizing data to enhance consistency; thereby, researchers can easily find and correctly identify files for use. I established an electronic database to organize collected research data to support easy retrieval. Furthermore, I developed a filing system using appropriate codes to disguise file content. All confidential data and hard copies documentation are stored securely in a password-protected safe in my home office for the duration of the study. After completion of the study, I will transfer data and documentation to my safety deposit box and store for 5 years. I will destroy all data and documents after 5 years using a secure shredding service.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore stakeholder engagement strategies that nonprofit leaders use to improve the financial sustainability of their organization. I will use data gathered from interview responses and organizational documentation for data analysis. Nelson (2016) asserted that researchers conduct data analysis by exploring the meaning of data and reviewing the emergent themes to formulate a logical explanation. Marshall and Rossman (2016) described data analysis in a qualitative study as the search for relationships and underlying themes from general statements. As a result, I will use triangulation to ascertain the meaning of collected data from different sources.

I used methodological triangulation to analyze collected data and enhance the credibility of the study's findings. Methodological triangulation involves the use of more than one data collection methods to gather data; therefore, corroborating data and achieving triangulation (Yin, 2018). By using multiple data source, a researcher can achieve data saturation and enhance the reliability and validity of data in the study (Fusch et al., 2018). I used methodological triangulation to develop a holistic view of the situation for data analysis.

Following methodology triangulation, I used thematic analysis for data analysis. The primary purpose of thematic analysis is to search for themes or patterns that occur across data set such as interviews; in addition to, it supports a large quantity of data (Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). Furthermore, pattern matching is one of the most popular and relevant techniques for case study analysis since the exploration nature of the study focused on the *how* and *why* of a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). I used computer software applications (i.e., QSR NVivo) to facilitate themes and code development to support data analysis. Researchers use computer software as a tool to facilitate the analysis through coding, linking data, and identifying emerging themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I used the conceptual framework of GST and TLT and the 2017-2018 Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (2017) to identify patterns and themes that contribute to stakeholder engagements strategies in nonprofit organizations.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are the most critical components for evaluating the quality of research (Saunders et al., 2015). In a qualitative study, researchers assess the (a) credibility, (b) dependability, (c) transferability, and (d) confirmability of the data to determine reliability and validity (Houghton et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Morse, 2015). Data saturation and triangulation are critical to achieving reliability and validity (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Researchers may use triangulation to verify if there is a convergence of information in their study (Yin, 2018) and reach data saturation when there is (a) no new data exist, and (b) no new themes (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Reliability

Golafshani (2003) explained that reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time and provide an accurate representation of the total population under study. Researchers achieve reliability when there is enough data to replicate the research and produce the same consistent findings (Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). In a qualitative study, reliability is comprised of the dependability and transferability

(Houghton et al., 2013). I improved reliability throughout this study by (a) adhering to the interview protocol during my engagements, (b) using organization documentations to cross-reference and confirm collected data, (c) reviewing the interview transcripts for errors and omissions, and (d) conducting member checking with all participants. Researchers use member checking to minimize errors in data recording and achieve rigor (Morse, 2016). Additionally, researchers use the member-checking process to increase confidence in their research and consequently, improve research quality (Boblin et al., 2015).

Validity

Saunders et al. (2015) described validity as the accuracy of the data and the research; precisely, the (a) correctness of the measurements, (b) analysis of the results, and (c) generalization of the findings. Researchers achieve validity by applying the correct process and collecting accurate data (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). In a qualitative study, validity is comprised of credibility and confirmability (Houghton et al., 2013). I used methodological triangulation and member checking of participants' interviews and collection of company documentation to enhance the validity of the study. Houghton et al. (2013) suggested that researchers achieve methodological triangulation by combining data from different sources to gain data completeness. Conversely, Boblin et al. (2013) asserted that researchers use member checking to confirm the credibility of data collected. Houghton et al. suggested that member checking should occur after transcription to show the way their opinion and assertions are interpreted and portrayed. I conducted member-checking following the transcription of the interviews.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I provided information on the purpose of the study, the structure of the study, and the research participants. I also explained the research methodology and design as well as provided information on the data collection instrument, data collection technique and organization, and data analysis techniques. Lastly, I concluded Section 2 with explanations of ways to assure the reliability and validity of the research findings. In Section 3, I present XYZ's organizational profile, and the organization's performance system, which will include (a) leadership, (b) strategy, (c) customers, (d) measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, (e) workforce, (f) operations, and (g) results. I conclude Section 3 with a presentation of the study findings and recommendations for future research.

Section 3: Organizational Profile

XYZ (a pseudonym) Incorporated is a nonprofit organization that advocates for equal access and opportunities for the blind, the visually impaired, and the print disabled. The founder and chief executive officer (F/CEO), whom himself became blind in 2006, started the organization in 2009 with a commitment to increase awareness about blindness and promote inclusion, proselytizing that the loss of sight created opportunities for an individual to experience the world in new and different ways. To date, XYZ has been in business for 10 years, focusing on educating society about visual impairments, advocating social inclusion of disability, and inspiring positive social change. Thus far, XYZ has successfully improved the accessibility and usability of a myriad of digital offerings, facilitating the independence of blind, visually impaired, and print-disabled individuals to use digital platforms and, as a result, empowering the disabled community. XYZ will continue to leverage and sustain relationships with government agencies, private corporations, small businesses, and schools in an effort to inspire accessibility to all.

Key Factors Worksheet

Organizational Description

XYZ is a 501(c) (3) organization based in New York, NY that was incorporated February 2009. Specifically, XYZ is an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 508, ISO 40500, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 international consultant. XYZ is also one of a diverse group of founding member organizations for an international association for accessibility professionals. XYZ promotes an inclusive culture focused on the accessibility of digital platforms to afford people with disabilities equal access to employment, education, recreation, and independent living opportunities. XYZ provides outreach, advocacy, training, and consultancy services to government agencies, private corporations, educational institutions, and community-based organizations.

Organizational environment. Organizational leaders can influence the future of their organization. Therefore, leaders should have a clear understanding of their organizations to include its mission, vision, and purpose (Northouse, 2016). Leaders use their understanding of their organizational environment to effectively make and implement strategic decisions that support the organization’s future (Baldrige, 2017).

Product offerings. XYZ’s primary product offering is its inclusive Digital Information Technology (IT) solutions. XYZ bolsters access, understanding, and opportunities for the blind, visually impaired, and print-disabled individuals by providing a wide of range services to include customized training to companies and end-users across the nation. Specifically, XYZ offers expertise in accessibility software development and testing, project management and quality assurance monitoring and mentorship for accessibility, risk management, ADA compliance services and assessment and corrective action plans, vendor management for third party accessibility services compliance, and project management reporting services for accessibility best practices. XYZ also specializes in remote and in-person training, help desk support, and manual usability spot check services to assist organizations with meeting regulatory requirements while reducing risk to legal action. Overall, XYZ strives to improve the accessibility and usability of digital offerings for all disabilities.

Mission, vision, and values (MVV). XYZ's core competency, of inspiring accessibility, has a direct correlation to the MVV. XYZ leaders emphasize the MVV to gives the organization a leading edge in the human service nonprofit advocacy sector to achieve its purpose. XYZ purpose is to maximize inclusive solutions that will empower people of all abilities to contribute to business success, economic growth, and community sustainability.

Mission. XYZ's mission is to inspire accessibility for people of all abilities. According to Cortés-Sánchez (2018), an organization's mission underpins its leaders' strategic planning efforts because it (a) guides strategic planning, (b) provides common purpose, (c) promotes shared expectations, and (d) defines the scope of organizational operations. The mission of an organization also provides stakeholders with a sense of purpose as well as support positive organizational ethos (Pernica & Tyll, 2018).

Vision. XYZ's vision is to provide outreach, advocacy, education, and consultancy services in an effort to facilitate a disability-inclusive culture and provide accessible digital infrastructure to ensure equal access to employment, education, recreation, and independent living opportunities for people with disabilities. According to Gulati, Mikhail, Morgan, and Sittig (2016), a vision is an essential aspect of strategic change because it clearly describes the direction of the organization and the desirable future state. Additionally, leaders can create organizational vision that motivate stakeholders to overlook their self-interests (Saxena, 2014).

Values. XYZ's values are tolerance, integrity, advocacy, acceptance, encouragement, honesty, respect, commitment, and effort. XYZ senior leaders believe that all individuals are entitled to acceptance, encouragement, and respect as well as freedom from discrimination, labeling, and stereotyping regardless of their disabilities in life. They also believe that every person, regardless of age and level of ability, has the potential for growth. XYZ senior leaders advocate that access to and use of the right tools, to include technologies, can enhance an individual's ability and may create immeasurable opportunities.

Workforce profile. XYZ has 34 employees who promote the organization's MVV through strategy development, operation execution, and community engagements. Ninety percent of XYZ workforce is disabled and require the use of adaptive and assistive devices or technology to improve functional capabilities. XYZ has no educational requirement for its workforce; however, senior leaders prefer staff members with a minimum educational level of high school diplomas or an equivalent because they consider the possession of high school diplomas or higher will translate to effective verbal and written communication skills. XYZ senior leaders focus instead on developing expertise through certifications in areas of accessibility. As a result, senior leaders are all encouraged to achieve the possessing IAAP Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC) certifications. XYZ's goal is to maintain a 50% average of its entire workforce be certified, credentialed, and recognized as International Accessibility Subject Matter Experts.

Table 2

Workforce Profile

		Educational Levels
Senior executive level	4	100% earned bachelor's degree to master's degree
Program management	4	100% earned associate degree to master's degree
Information technology	2	100% earned master's degrees
Manual usability testers	24	100% met disability criteria

Assets. XYZ's main assets are its equipment and technologies. In 2016, XYZ developed a new website to replace an obsolete website; the total cost at activation was $17,200. XYZ leaders capitalize on all fixed assets with a value of $500 or more. The donations of fixed assets are recorded as support at their estimated fair value. XYZ leaders report these donations as unrestricted support unless the donor has restricted the donated asset to a specific purpose. Additionally, XYZ leaders ensure assets donated with explicit restrictions regarding their use are used to acquire property and equipment reported within the parameters of restricted support.

Regulatory requirements. XYZ is licensed in New York as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. As a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, XYZ is required to file an IRS Form 990 for financial reporting annually. XYZ leaders must also adhere to the rules and regulations required by the IRS to maintain compliance state laws. In New York state, an audit is required for all nonprofit organization under statute N.Y. EXC. Law 7A § 172-b ("Section 172-B," n.d.).

As a result, XYZ leaders ensure that audited financial statements are submitted to the state and that a certified public accountant (CPA) conducts an independent financial and operational audit annually. XYZ also adheres to New York state laws to include the recent amendments to the NY NPRA. Additionally, XYZ leaders abide by internal policies, including bylaws and guiding principles.

Organizational relationships. The relationships among stakeholders may impact the ability of an organization to accomplish its mission. Saxena (2014) asserted that a leader's responsibility involved establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships in order to achieve the organizational goals. However, organizational leaders wanting to maintain effective organizational relationships must use goal interdependence, transparency, and inclusiveness as core components of their relationships (Pittz & Adler, 2016).

Organizational structure. XYZ has a traditional hierarchical organizational structure and governance system. The F/CEO provides overall governance and strategic oversight as well as actively leading XYZ personnel towards the organizational mission and goal achievements. Currently, XYZ has a dormant five-member board of directors (BOD). Senior leaders acknowledge the need for an active board and are actively recruiting members with a preference for legal and marketing experts. XYZ senior leaders' perspectives align with Whitler, Krause, and Lehmann's (2018) findings that board members with marketing experience might increase an organization's growth by contributing their expertise to improve the organization's revenue growth strategies and assisting the organization with prioritizing growth as a strategic objective.

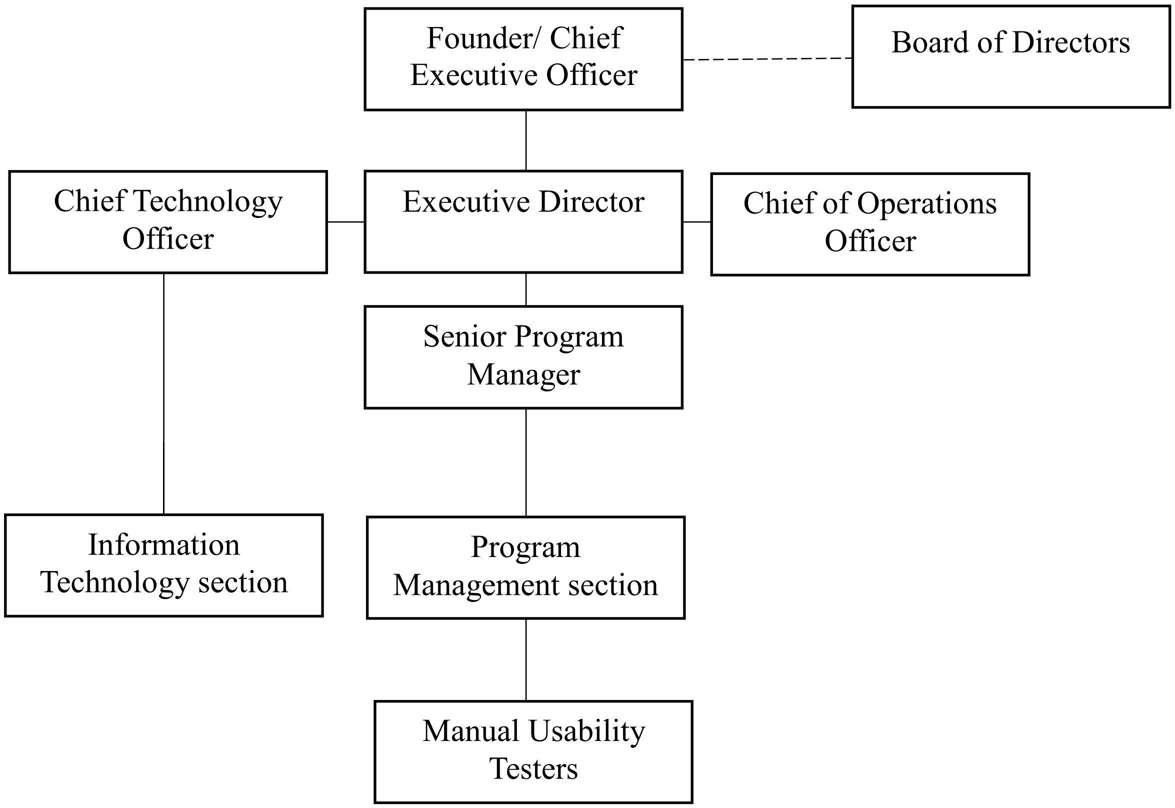

Figure 1. Organizational structure. This structure depicts the organization's leadership structure.

Customers and stakeholders. XYZ senior leaders promote direct customer and stakeholder engagement, such as outreach activities, as well as provides direct services to customers that include training and consultant services. As a result, XYZ senior leaders developed assumptions about their customers and stakeholders' expectations. Senior leaders believe their customers and other stakeholders' primary requirements of their organization are to remain steadfast to the MVVs and advocate for digital inclusivity on behalf of the disabled community. This single focus would improve the usability and accessibility of digital platforms to disabled end-users, thereby expanding employment opportunities and improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities. XYZ key customers consist of corporate customers and private citizens with disabilities who require assistive technology to assess digital platforms. Over a 10-year period, XYZ customers have included: city and state public universities; city and state-level government agencies; major, national, and regional airlines; national chain restaurants; national chain grocery stores; financial institutions; and international cruise lines.

XYZ key stakeholders are (a) its workforce and (b) the disabled community. With each stakeholder group having their respective interests, requirements, and expectations of XYZ as an advocate for digital inclusivity and equity, XYZ senior leaders work to maintain collaborative relationships with each group. XYZ's workforce relies on senior leaders to provide guidance and direction through the delivery of tasks, purpose, objectives, and priorities that support the organization's strategic plan. Similarly, the disabled community requires XYZ to foster a digitally inclusive environment through advocacy, outreach programs, and social engagements.

Partners and collaborators. XYZ senior leaders collaborate with other nonprofit organizations, local and state government entities, and international organizations. XYZ key partners and collaborators play a significant role in the organization's ability to achieve its mission. As a result, their partners and collaborators expect XYZ to (a) maintain steadfast stance on its MVV, (b) practice transparency, and (c) be a source of knowledge and insights on trends and changes to the digital environment that may impact the accessibility and usability of digital platforms for the print disabled, the visually impaired, and the blind. Consequently, XYZ leaders maintain a substantial understanding of ADA and WCAG, to include WCAG 2.0 and WCAG 2.1 guidelines, so they can share insights and expertise, provide education and training opportunities, and work to influence change within society. XYZ leaders maintain close scrutiny of information and environment change to increase their credibility during information sharing sessions, supporting a candid exchange between the organization and its partners and collaborators. XYZ senior leaders use in-person meetings, conference calls, and e-mails to share and exchange information, develop and maintain business relationships with partners and collaborators. Senior leaders also use the same tools and forum to plan future actions and communicate their objectives to partners. These modes of communication increase the likelihood of innovation, foster collaboration, and facilitate effective and timely feedback.

Organizational Situation

Competitive environment. Some nonprofit organizations must compete against other organizations with similar services to secure financial resources, membership, visibility in appropriate communities, and media attention (Baldrige, 2017). Therefore, leaders seeking to achieve and maintain organizational sustainability must develop a detailed understanding of their competitive environment (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders could use their understanding of the competitive environment to develop appropriate strategies to improve the sustainability of their organization.

Competitive position. XYZ competitive differentiation is its manual accessibility testing. Manual accessibility testing is essential to ADA WCAG compliance. XYZ manual usability testers improve the accessibility of digital platforms by proposing solutions to ensure the usability of digital offerings. Currently, XYZ senior leaders are not aware of any competition within the nonprofit sector with similar product offering that consist of manual accessibility and usability testing. Research findings revealed Knowbility Incorporated, a nonprofit organization located in Austin, Texas, has comparable service offerings to that of XYZ, which includes manual accessibility and usability testing using a disabled workforce. There are also for-profit organizations that provide some comparable services. As a result, XYZ senior leaders target for-profit organizations as potential collaborators to assist with educating the public about regulations governing accessibility for the disability community, advocating accessibility, and promoting an inclusive society.

Competitiveness changes. Advancements to assistive technology often affect XYZ internal and external environment and may have an impact on its strategic future. For instance, an innovation for a sensor-based assistive device may facilitate XYZ’s mission concerning digital accessibility and; conversely, lead to a saturated market that results in XYZ’s competitive differentiation to lose its value. As a result, XYZ senior leaders closely monitor technological changes and assess their impact on organizational strategic goals. Additionally, funding fluctuations and funding sources continue to have impact strategic plan for organizational growth. Accordingly, XYZ senior leaders must continuously seek opportunities to boost collaborative engagement activities to increase and foster relationships with stakeholders and partners.

Comparative data. The sources of comparative and competitive data were difficult to research for this nonprofit organization. The reasoning for the lack of data may be the uniqueness of the manual usability testing service, which is currently only provided by XYZ and Knowbility, Incorporated. XYZ senior leaders use manual usability testers, who are disabled and may have a vested interest in the digital offering to evaluate its accessibility and usability and provide immediate feedback that will generate solutions. There are for-profit organizations that provide comparable services to XYZ; however, for-profit organizations information is proprietary. Additionally, any comparison of for-profit and nonprofit organizations data would not be valid.

Strategic context. XYZ senior leaders' key strategic challenges are the rate of technological advancement and a dispersed geographical workforce. XYZ leaders perceive technological innovations growth as being beneficial and detrimental to their organization's strategic mission. Since the incorporation of XYZ as a company in 2009, senior leaders considered the organization's mission and purpose innovative. to date, senior leaders continue to observe positive changes toward digital offering accessibility, which they attribute to technological advancement. Although, these changes supported digital inclusivity; XYZ senior leaders are aware that the rate of technological innovation will impact their organization's product offering in the near future and potentially the organizational strategic future.

Another strategic challenge that XYZ senior leaders must cope with is the management of a dispersed geographical workforce, where several of its employees work remotely across the contiguous United States. A dispersed workforce may affect the effectiveness of organizational strategic planning, employee engagement, finances, operation, resources planning, and; subsequently, growth. However, senior leaders use this challenge as an opportunity to advocate on a broader scale through a dedicated workforce that supports its MVV. As a result, XYZ strategic advantages include the potential for growth, innovation, partnerships, due to its expertise in manual testing, services, and reputation.

Performance improvement system. XYZ senior leaders hold scheduled weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings to gather key information to improve its performance. Leaders also conduct conference calls as needed to facilitate performance improvement actions. XYZ leaders use (a) feedback from customers, (b) the number of returned customers (customer retention rate/ customer loyalty), and (c) the number of referrals (referral conversions) to informally gauge their performance. To date, there is no formal performance improvement system to evaluate the performance management cycle of critical projects and processes.

Leadership Triad: Leadership, Strategy, and Customers

Leadership

Senior leadership. XYZ senior leadership team consists of the F/CEO, executive director (ED), chief technology officer (CTO), and senior project manager (SPM). These senior leaders are essential to the workforce's ability to maintain their steadfast commitment to promoting digital equality and inclusion to the disabled community. The mission statement and purpose for this organization originated from the personal experiences and perspectives of the F/CEO, who experienced vision loss and subsequently encountered multiple challenges of conducting everyday activities because of the lack of accessibility and usability of digital systems. Collectively, XYZ senior leaders used their experiences, and feedback for the disabled community to bolster their commitment to the organization's vision and values. At XYZ, senior leaders are committed to positive social change and strive to *lead by example* in an effort to exemplify the behaviors they want their workforce to emulate while integrating XYZ's vision and values at every stakeholder integration or collaboration opportunity.

Legal and ethical behaviors. To date, XYZ senior leaders have not encountered any legal or ethical behavioral issues. XYZ senior leaders strive to be role models to the workforce and work to promote a commitment to legal and ethical behavior. Specifically, XYZ's F/CEO promotes an ethical stance that is uncompromising and historically refused any business dealings perceived as unprincipled. XYZ leaders and workforce admires the F/CEO's values, beliefs, and principles, and they make efforts to model this behavior. XYZ senior leaders also promote ethical behavior with external stakeholders by requiring the use of Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreements and Independent Contractor Agreements to convey the organization's commitment to ethical workplace practice. They encourage open, honest communication and organizational transparency with external stakeholders. Additionally, senior leaders seek to prevent any legal issues and proactively monitor legislative changes. XYZ senior leaders will work to gain and maintain legislative compliance, which they demonstrated in their efforts to achieve compliance with the 2016 Amendment to the 2013 NRPA while coping with increased cost for external audits.

Engage workforce and customers. XYZ workforce is a team of dedicated individuals with extensive background and expertise in delivering digital accessibility solutions to governmental agencies, private sector corporations, and community-based organizations. XYZ workforce is geographically dispersed across the contiguous United States; therefore, XYZ leaders emphasize effective communications. They value collaboration and use various methods to enhance interactions with their workforce. Senior leaders engage the workforce through daily emails, weekly conference calls, and as-needed telephone calls for one-on-one discussions. XYZ senior leaders value the insight of their workforce and use the weekly meetings to provide updates on current and upcoming projects, in addition to gathering feedbacks, updates, and ground level insights from the field. XYZ leaders also use weekly meetings to recognize members of their workforce publicly. Senior leaders also meet in-person, with many face-to-face meetings occurring during conferences and community events.

XYZ leaders engage with key customers routinely to bolster and maintain customers relationships. Leaders and staff utilize the telephone as the primary method for initial communications with customers. Subsequent communications are usually conducted through a combination of telephone and e-mail correspondence; tailored to the needs of the customer.

Promote an environment for success. Although most of XYZ workforce works remotely, XYZ senior leaders advocate and promote a professional and inclusive work environment during employees' interactions and workforce engagement activities. Senior leaders also hold each other accountable for enforcing a level of professionalism and fulfilling their duties based on their distinct roles and responsibility within the organization. Most importantly, leaders recognized the challenge of its workforce operating in different time zone and make efforts to schedule meetings at times that are most convenient to the majority of its attendees. Additionally, senior leaders hold their entire workforce responsible for their actions to include meeting attendance and provide meaningful feedback in support of an action plan. Leaders provide feedback to employees through public recognition of an employee's effort or private mentorship to guide an employee's behavior. The F/CEO and other senior leaders encourage employee recognition and support this effort in various ways to include inviting employees to leadership retreat as a demonstration of appreciation and gratitude; when funding is sufficient to enable this effort

Focus on action. XYZ's central strategic plan focuses on achieving digital inclusivity for the disabled community and organizational growth. Senior leaders envision the word disability added to equal opportunity diversity programs. The ED is responsible for leading the organization's strategic planning efforts. Senior leaders use weekly meetings as one of the forums to discuss near-term projects and initiatives; and long-term goals that are linked directly to the organization's mission, vision, and growth. Senior leaders encourage workforce involvement by communicating up, down, and across the organization; thereby keeping the entire workforce informed and focused on the organization's efforts and goals. Senior leaders acknowledged the need to develop, structure, and schedule routine strategic planning meetings to support the strategic decision-making process.

Governance and societal responsibilities. Theil (2012) asserted that organizational leaders face unsurmountable challenges and pressure to perform in uncertain conditions that may lead to unethical behavior. Nonprofit leaders may promote core values, manage societal responsibilities, and follow applicable regulations to ensure effective corporate governance. Therefore, nonprofit leaders should emphasize ethical behavior among stakeholder as well as communicate expectation and be role models for the workforce (Baldrige, 2017).

Governance system. XYZ has a traditional hierarchical organizational structure and governance system, where the F/CEO provides overall governance and strategic oversight. However, all four senior leaders work collaboratively and collectively to ensure responsible governance within the organization. Although XYZ has a small and intimate leadership team, senior leaders hold each other accountable and use organizational values to guide their actions. they understand the purpose and direction of the organization and are receptive to giving and receiving constructive criticism. additionally, senior leaders ensure responsible governance within the organization by promoting personal accountability among employees. As of 2019, XYZ F/CEO was working to recruit members for BOD.

Evaluate senior leaders. Within the organization, some senior leaders share areas of responsibilities as well as have individual responsibilities. The F/CEO and ED share the responsibility of building and maintaining stakeholder relationships. The F/CEO provide guidance and direction for the organization, while the ED leads the organization's strategic planning efforts. The F/CEO also reviews financial statements with bookkeeper and CPA and ensures the completion of an additional annual audit by an external certified public accountant. The SPM coordinates and leads teams to deliver services to customers, while the CTO oversees the management of customer-related tasks; technology-related initiatives; and interactions with customers regarding the delivery of services. Additionally, XYZ's CTO, as well as other senior leaders, conduct routine follow-up with customer organizations for feedback to assess performance and measure customer satisfaction. Altogether, senior leaders work in unison to maintain oversight of the organization's workforce efforts.

XYZ F/CEO encourages leaders to follow core behaviors that reflect the organizational values. The F/CEO also fosters an environment that supports open and honest communication without the fear of reprisal, ridicule, or disregard. As a result, leaders across the organization work to emulate similar behavior among the workforce. As of 2019, XYZ does not have a formal evaluation process to assess leadership performance or development.

Legal, regulatory, community concerns about products and operations. XYZ provides digital offerings to a wide range of customers around the world. XYZ senior leaders encourage all organizational members to develop an understanding of regulatory standards and guidelines associated with the information and communications technology (ICT) industry that may have an impact on their operations to include regulations governing digitized communications and information. XYZ leaders work to stay informed by monitoring changes and trends in the industry, exchanging information with partners, and maintaining a strong social media presence. XYZ also has a strong social media following that informs leaders of issues, concerns, or changes via email or the XYZ's official website. Given the span of their span of influence and awareness, XYZ senior leaders consider themselves strategically postured to be in the know of any changes that may impact their products, services, or operations. Additionally, XYZ partnership with New York State Preferred Source Program for the Blind creates opportunities for XYZ leaders to influence digital accessibility policies within the state of New York.

Table 3

Key Legislations

Key Legislations
• Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
• US Rehabilitation Act Section 503 (federal government contractors) Section 504 (rights in education, employment, and other settings) Section 508 (requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by the Federal government)
• Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) Department of Transportation legislation requiring all airline websites to meet the WCAG standards
• 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA) Federal Communication Commission legislation requiring communications services and products to be accessible to people with disabilities
• W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for international standards
• UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
• EN 301-549 Europe comprehensive set of accessibility requirements for public procurement of ICT products and services; considered as an international standard.

Ethical behavior. XYZ senior leaders strive to not only lead by example but promote an ethical organizational culture underpinned by transparency. XYZ senior leaders encourage and practice up, down, and across the organization communication strategy to influence ethical behavior. senior leaders communicate about organizational values and exemplary behaviors of individuals worth emulating. One example given was of the F/CEO, who, on several occasions refused sizable sums of money for requested service for ethical reason, while accepting minuscule amounts of money for comparable services, simply because the senior leader felt it was the right thing to do.

Societal responsibilities. Societal well-being is ingrained in every aspect of XYZ operations as leaders and employees work to achieve the organization's mission. Thus, XYZ's mission, vision, and value are fundamental aspects of XYZ advocacy activities. XYZ leaders and its workforce demonstrate their social responsibility through their consistent and persistent focus on digital inclusion for the disabled community. XYZ leaders and employees dedicate their time, efforts, and talents to produce a positive change to the community through the provision of services that ensure accessibility and usability of digital platforms. The services provided by XYZ not only improve everyday activities but create employment opportunities as well as educational opportunities for the disabled community. XYZ leaders are aware of the organization's positive impact on the community and actively seek to coordinate, collaborate, and partner with other agencies that have aligned organizational goals and want to address challenges associated with disability inclusion.

Strategy

Strategy development. Leaders may employ strategic planning to achieve organizational goals; and consequently, organizational sustainability. Oschman (2017) asserted that senior leaders must conduct strategic planning to successfully cope with organizational challenges and capitalize on opportunities in order to improve their organization. Nonprofit leaders should use strategic development to make decisions and allocate resources (Baldrige, 2017).

Strategic planning. XYZ's primary strategic plan is to advance digital equity and inclusion. As members of the disabled community, XYZ senior leaders use their challenges of dealing with digital exclusion to outline their strategic plan. XYZ F/CEO wants everyone, regardless of ability to have equal access and use of information and communications technology to include digital platforms, websites, mobile apps, and software programs. While the ED is responsible for the strategic planning process; the strategic development process consists of inputs from senior leaders with final approval from the F/CEO. XYZ strategic plan to increase its strategic partnerships across industries to include the education, finance, and healthcare industries. XYZ senior leaders long strategic plan is to increase partnerships with agencies within the U.S. government and educational institutions; targeting in Arizona, Texas, Florida, California, New Jersey, Colorado, and Pennsylvania. Senior leaders use weekly staff meetings to review action plans and determine progress. To date, XYZ does not have scheduled strategic planning meetings.

Innovation. XYZ senior leaders use the organization's mission, their personal experiences, and the experience of members of the disabled community to establish goals, develop strategy, and execute the plan. Consequently, XYZ senior leaders use strategy development to encourage and incorporate innovation in an effort to increase digital inclusion. Additionally, XYZ senior leaders seek to achieve organizational growth and; therefore, they will need to develop innovative engagement strategies to appeal to potential partners. XYZ senior leaders' innovative goals include (a) increase hiring within the organization and assist other organizations with the hiring and retention of print-disabled employees, (b) expand long-term strategic partnerships across industries, and (c) continue to advocate for digital equity and authentic inclusion.

Strategy considerations. XYZ leaders collect and analyze relevant data and develop information for the strategic planning process by using key performance indicators (KPI). XYZ senior leaders evaluate feedback from customers, the number of returned customers, the number of referrals received, and the annual revenue to gauge organizational performance. XYZ senior leaders also use information from disabled end users, external partners, and potential customers to increase their understanding of the external environment.

Work systems and core competencies. XYZ workforce provides services that assist organizations with providing digital access and use of their digital systems. As a result, XYZ core competencies is accessibility services such as remediation services, quality assurance testing, manually testing, and training. XYZ leaders ensure the workforce has the necessary skills and disabilities to deliver the *right* support to customers. XYZ senior leaders also assess workforce capacity to determine if they any skill gaps. Thus far, manual usability testing is the most critical skill within the organization, so senior leaders emphasize the hiring and retaining of employees with this skill set, as well as, maintaining a listing of manual tester contractors to support increased workload beyond the normal day-to-day demand. Additionally, XYZ workforce utilizes a train-the-trainer model to promote a forward momentum for inclusivity and accessibility.

Customers organizational leaders can use this model to get their employees trained so they can self-maintain their digital systems.

Key strategic objective. XYZ F/CEO's most important strategic objective is to advance digital equity and inclusion of people with disability. Senior leaders' long-term strategic goal is to grow the organization to million-dollar organization. XYZ leaders want to increase and strengthen partnerships with organizations in both the private and public sectors targeting Arizona, Texas, Florida, California, New Jersey, Colorado, and Pennsylvania. XYZ senior leaders will need to conduct strategic planning to evaluate the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats on a systematic basis to support strategic efforts.

Strategic objective considerations. A crucial strategic consideration is XYZ senior leaders' steadfast stance on digital equity and inclusion. XYZ senior leaders use aligned organizational values to initiate relationships with potential business partners. As XYZ senior leaders increase and strengthening relationships with partnerships, collaborations, and customers; they work to understand each stakeholder's interest to engage them effectively. Senior leaders state they understand the challenges of the organization's finite resources and; therefore, analyze and prioritize resources. XYZ leaders use its geographically dispersed workforce as a strategic advantage to advocate its mission and increase awareness of digital inequality and exclusion affecting the disabled community.

Strategy implementation. The implementation of a strategy may impact the accomplishment of organizational goals. Nonprofit leaders wanting to transform strategic objective to action plans and achieve strategic goals will require resources, performance measures, alignment among action plans, and consistency among organizational processes and procedures (Baldrige, 2017). Senior leaders must also involve key stakeholders such as managers, employees, customers, and suppliers to foster commitment, cooperation, and support of organizational goals (Oschman, 2017).

Action plans. XYZ leaders develop both short-term and long-term action plan to support their strategic objectives. XYZ key short-term actions plans include (a) 50% of the workforce earning the IAAP CPACC certification, (b) hire project managers and usability testers globally, (c) increase the numbers of business partnerships, (d) increase business partnership revenues, (e) extending long-term strategic partnerships, (f) increase participation in speaking engagements, (g) increase employment opportunity for people with disability, (h) maintain services being provided customers, and (i) assist in updates to New York State's ADA-related policies, regulations, and laws. XYZ key long-term action plans include (a) achieving Preferred Source Vendor status for the states of Arizona, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, Colorado, New Jersey, and Texas; (b) solidify partnerships with public universities in the states of Arizona, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, Colorado, New Jersey, and Texas; and (c) increase employment opportunities globally.

Action plan implementations. XYZ senior leaders' evaluations and progress review of action plan vary. Leaders discuss short-term action plans during weekly staff meetings, and as needed on a day-to-day basis. Leaders work to balance their competing efforts to support growth, reorganization, and allocation of resources. A senior leader recognizes that establishing a schedule to conduct deliberate strategic planning and development and adhere to it would improve the strategic planning process and implementing short-term and long-term action plans.

Resource allocation. Budgeting is critical to XYZ's ability to execute its mission. XYZ F/CEO ensures funding is available to support each action plan. A senior leader acknowledges that as XYZ grows; good budget management to develop budget forecast, track expenses, make midyear adjustments will be a crucial factor of their strategic planning efforts.

Workforce plans. XYZ senior leaders explained that one of XYZ's short-term plan is organizational growth. Senior leaders intend to increase opportunities for advancement within the organization as well as hire new employees. XYZ senior leaders will need to formalize human resource policies to support personnel management of an increased workforce.

Performance measures. XYZ senior leaders work to achieve an appropriate balance between the pursuit of strategic objectives and sustaining current operations. XYZ senior leaders use KPI established at the beginning of the year and then monitor their progress from year to year to assess the effectiveness of the plans. Based on each KPI, leaders make revisions, as needed, to support their desired outcome to include reallocating resources. XYZ senior leaders publish any major accomplishments to stakeholders via the organization's website and other social media sites; in addition, the XYZ F/CEO publish a yearly reflection summarizing the accomplishments of the previous year and goals for the current year.

Performance projections. Senior leaders seek to expand XYZ's partnerships with public educational institutions and state-level government agencies in an effort to increase a disabled person's access to and use of digital offerings in those environments. Leaders also aim to strengthen stakeholder relationships with current partners. In addition to social media sites, XYZ senior leaders will increase advocacy activities using forums such as TED conferences and WebAble TV to increase awareness of the disabled community digital exclusion.

Customers

XYZ senior leaders and workforce engage customers differently based on customer's interests and need. XYZ leaders use a detailed process to capture each customer's needs, wants, and concerns. They conduct research using all available medium to include social media sites, telephone conversations, e-mail correspondence, conference, and in-person meetings to gather data to develop actionable insights. XYZ senior leaders make an effort to conduct in-person meetings with new customers when possible. New customers requiring accessibility evaluations are offered an incentive in the form of a *quick look* accessibility report at no cost. XYZ senior leaders seek to engage customers regularly through phone calls, email, and at conferences to determine customers' true needs and expectations. Leaders develop and maintain customer relationship through steady interactions on social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter as well as following-up with customers to assess the quality of service provided. XYZ senior leaders ensure the monitoring of social media sites to enhance customer engagements and outreach activities.

Voice of the customer. XYZ senior leaders follow up with their customers to determine customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. XYZ senior leaders' goal is to transform each new customer into a regular customer. XYZ's current stakeholders include customers, business partners, workforce, and fellow leaders.

Customers. XYZ leader's engagement frequency varies with each customer and ranges from daily interaction via telephone calls, social media, and e-mails correspondence to annual conferences or community events, along with, as needed in-person meetings. XYZ also conduct quarterly follow-up with customers who subscribe to certain services. XYZ senior leaders leverage customer engagement opportunities to share XYZ's mission, vision, and goals.

Business partners. XYZ senior leader engagement frequency varies with each partnered organization. Senior leaders use telephone calls, social media, and e-mails correspondence to communicate with partners. They also use conferences and in-person meetings to engage with partners on an as-needed basis.

Workforce. XYZ leaders engage with the workforce on a systematic basis through schedule weekly staff meetings. Workforce engagements include as needed daily staff meetings, e-mails, and social media interactions. XYZ leaders also use one on one meetings as needed to improve relationships with employees. Additionally, XYZ senior leaders are working on adding Webinars as another forum to improve communication with employees.

Leaders. XYZ senior leaders engage each other through multiple forums and on a frequent basis. Leadership engagements include one-on-one meetings, executive staff meetings, e-mails, and telephone calls. Leaders also use conferences and community events to communicate and collaborate with each other.

Satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. XYZ senior leader value customer voice and seek to maintain two-way communication with each customer. Senior leaders are proud of the services their workforce provide to customers to include making an extra effort to be of service to customers. In an effort to support customer satisfaction, XYZ workforce uses the latest version of all software and guidelines, to include the WCAG guidelines, when providing service to customers. XYZ leaders rely on customers to provide feedback to determine satisfaction or dissatisfaction. XYZ senior leaders use follow-up sequence to gather information regarding service or product to evaluate customer satisfaction. XYZ senior leaders determine customer satisfaction through positive product/ service testimonials, renewal of services, or expansion of services. To date, XYZ senior leaders are not aware of any customer dissatisfaction but envision being responsive to any hint of dissatisfaction. Senior leaders state they would use additional resources at XYZ expense to remedy any issue to include providing remote training and in-person training, help desk support, and manual usability spot check services. Senior leaders would also seek to increase the frequency of customer engagements with any dissatisfied customers to improve customer relationship and service. To date, XYZ does not have a systematic tool to measure customer satisfaction.

Satisfaction relative to competitors. XYZ senior leaders seek to maintain a level of currency within their industry. This knowledge includes legislative changes and technological advancements that may impact their services and products, and subsequently affect their customer's compliance with ADA guidelines. To date, XYZ senior leaders are not aware of any legal issues facing any their customers as a result of the services they provided. XYZ senior leaders credit this accomplishment on their emphasis on customer relationships, and their vested interest in the outcome to support the disabled community.

Customer engagement. XYZ senior leaders determine product offering for each customer through customer engagement; focused on identifying and understanding the need of the customers. XYZ's customer base consists of customers from both the public and private sectors. Seniors leaders use different strategies to engage these customers based on the sectors regulatory guidance. For customer organizations operating within the public sector, XYZ leaders and workforce use a Request for Service Vendor process to determine the level of customer engagements. This procedure restricts customer interactions to the content of the request forms and limits opportunities to develop and maintain customer relationships. Customer organizations operating within the private sector have fewer restrictions than customers who operate within the public sector and; therefore, XYZ senior leaders use multiple methods to interact and engage customers to determine needs and interests. XYZ senior leaders seek to develop personal connections with each customer, to include a level of trust and transparency. This relationship of trust and transparency includes senior leaders informing customers of the XYZ inability to support a request for service and providing recommendations and referrals to another organization with the capability to support customer need. XYZ product offerings promote digital accessibility and usability to create opportunities for the disabled community. XYZ senior leaders seek to improve their impact on the community through strategies to attract potential customers, such as offering free access to help desks. XYZ approach not only increases awareness of XYZ product offerings but enhance customer engagement; creating XYZ workforce opportunities to connect with customers on a personal level.

Customer segmentation. XYZ's current customer segmentation includes other nonprofit organizations, government agencies, the disabled community, and business professionals and entities from the states of New York, Arizona, Texas, Florida, California, New Jersey, Colorado and Pennsylvania, and the country of Canada. XYZ key stakeholders are disabled end-users, education professionals, business leaders, and state and local government officials. XYZ senior leaders determine customer groups by understanding key stakeholders' interests and their impact on XYZ's mission. XYZ senior leaders also consider the needs of the customer and XYZ's ability to provide quality service. XYZ F/CEO also considers the ethical stance of the customer.

Relationship management. XYZ senior leaders use current business and personal relationships with leaders across different communities to assist with developing customer relationships. XYZ leaders nurture and expand relationship other time through shared values and goals. XYZ senior leaders believe that their workforce's reputation for providing quality service attracts potential customers and their ability to over-deliver on customer expectation assist in customer retention. Senior leaders work to make each customer feel valued, and XYZ is their right choice by understanding the customer preferred method of communication to engage them effectively.

Results Triad: Workforce, Operations, and Results

Workforce

Workforce environment. XYZ senior leaders assess workforce capability and capacity needs by analyzing their workforce's ability to support the organization's objectives and workload requirements. Leaders focus on the individual employee and the workforce as a whole entity. XYZ leaders measure employee capability by assessing their performance during the delivery of services. Through consistent observation and assessments, leaders determine whether current employees can manage any increased responsibility, workload, capacity, or whether there is a requirement for new hires. XYZ leaders also consider the workforce projected loss, such as relocations and retirements, to assess the future need for recruiting, hiring, and placing new employees. Leaders recruit based on the organization's workforce need. XYZ leaders utilize a consistent workforce retention strategy that includes a flexible work environment, competitive salaries, and flexible scheduling plan, as well as professional development, certification programs, and training at zero cost. XYZ uses varying hiring procedures for different job positions; however, a candidate must complete an interview, and a proficiency assessment, at a minimum to secure employment with the organization. These interviews are in-depth, and senior leaders provide candidates with opportunities to demonstrate their expertise ahead of any customer interactions. However, senior leaders have identified deficiencies within the current hiring procedures used for program managers and sales employees and are revising policies and streamlining processes to improve efficiencies.

XYZ leaders prepare their workforce for the changing workforce capability and capacity needs through mentorship, coaching, financial incentives, and professional development to support professional development. Leaders also communicate changes to employees during weekly meetings and workforce engagement activities. Leaders use an up, down, and across the organization communication strategy to maintain a work environment of transparency and trust. Senior leaders noticed discussions about change at the lowest level among supervisors, managers, project managers, and employees encouraged workforce involvement and boost employee morale. Due to the geographical dispersion of its workforce, XYZ leaders rely on various forms of telecommunications technology to maintain contact with the workforce. As a result, leaders use weekly conference calls as opportunities for inquiries, feedback, employees open-forum recognition; and project planning, coordination, and progress updates. However, leaders acknowledge that there is a need to introduce more technology and ancillary support to facilitate internal operations such as employee transitions.

XYZ senior leaders foster an organizational climate underpinned by their workforce's commitment to the organization's mission. Although, senior leaders acknowledge that strained resources sometimes cause workplace stress; they maintain a healthy organizational climate that is pleasant, supportive, and inclusive. However, the organizations grow, senior leaders recognize the need for expanding workforce engagements among manual usability testers and project managers. Leaders work to achieve a healthy climate through frequent workforce engagement activities and interactions. XYZ workforce and leaders use an up, down, and across the organization communication strategy to improve leaders' approachability and enhance communication throughout the organization. As a result, XYZ senior leaders use workforce morale, productivity level, and performance level to gauge the workforce climate of the organization.

XYZ leaders promote workplace security, health, and accessibility for its workforce. XYZ workforce is geographically dispersed and; therefore, leaders stress employee safety at worksites during the delivery of services. Leaders also support employee health and even acknowledge the need for more emphasis on employee health to include fitness and nutrition. One current initiative that leaders are pursuing in the near future is employer-provided healthcare insurance. In addition to medical insurance; leaders support its workforce through various services, benefits, and policies and opportunities for promotion, professional development, competitive pay, and flexible work schedules. Leaders also advocate accessibility, which aligns with the organization's mission and vision. This approach includes hiring disabled personnel to promote inclusivity.

Workforce engagement. Although XYZ workforce is geographically dispersed workforce, leaders work to build a productive and supportive work environment that is conducive to their workforce success. Leaders use internal meetings, XYZ website, social media sites, emails, and phone calls engage the workforce. Leaders rely on open communication to promote workforce engagements that foster a caring workplace environment, promote transparency, and support high performance. Leaders across the organization provide employees with their contact information, so they are reachable to provide support. Senior leaders exercise an open-door policy; encouraging employees to ask questions, share concerns, or discuss issues. Leaders also use open communication to establish performance standards. Leaders use the onboarding period for new employees to demonstrate their expectation regarding levels of proficiency, quality work, and performance. Leaders assess employees and will provide individual and team mentorship to foster employee development. At the beginning of each project, leaders ensure their workforce have an overarching understanding and awareness of the purpose behind the project and its potential positive impact on someone's lives. At the conclusion of the project, leaders congratulate each team member for their contribution to the project completion. Senior leaders also recognize and reward high performing teams and individuals using monetary and nonmonetary forms of awards.

XYZ senior leaders assess workforce engagements by monitoring their employees' performance longitudinally. Leaders maintain a state of awareness; paying attention to changes in an employee level work involvement, work productivity, and work performance. Leaders also use training participation, meeting attendance, and information dissemination to evaluate workforce engagements. If leaders observe a decline in employee interactions, productivity, and performance; they will engage the employee in an attempt to determine the root cause.

Thus far, XYZ does not have an automated work performance management system that supports high performance and workforce engagement; instead, senior leaders use a hands-on approach that consists of day-to-day interactions. XYZ leaders rely on their established open communication channels and *family-like* culture that foster a cohesive, and intimate work environment to support high performance and workforce engagement. Leaders use XYZ's small size to create opportunities that support high performance and workforce engagement such as one-on-one calls, and small group teleconference to discuss day-to-day operations, projects, and action plans, as well as training opportunities to support employee development, and team development.

XYZ senior leaders promote a learning work environment to support the organizational need and the personal development of organizational members. XYZ senior leaders provide mentorship and encourage employees to develop short-term and long -term goals as part of their professional development. XYZ senior leaders also invest in their employee professional training financially; to support employees' personal growth, professional development, work performance, and promotion opportunities. Investments in the workforce support the organizations, whereby senior leaders can use workforce training and qualifications to bolster the organization's statistics that may attract customers, collaborators, and partners.

XYZ senior leaders evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their learning and development system by the number of employees trained and the number of employees possessing specific certification within the industry. While XYZ leaders are usually responsible for encouraging their workforce to attend training; there are times when employees will contact leaders and request training. During those instances, XYZ leaders will support employee self-development efforts by researching, coordinating, and paying for training. Once training coordination is complete, leaders provide employees with date and time of training along with all required educational resources to include practice examinations to support a successful training completion.

XYZ senior leaders manage the career progression for their workforce and future leaders by assessing each employee's potential for increased responsibility. XYZ senior leaders oversee, mentor, and counsel new leaders as they deal with challenges that impact new leaders such as coping with increased responsibilities, and delegating tasks. Although the F/CEO will not retire for an estimated 15 to 20 years, the senior leader has identified a succession candidate and is working to develop the internal talent through one-on-one mentorship, and shadowing opportunities.

Operations

Work processes. XYZ senior leaders determine key services and work processes requirements by aligning the organization's mission to promote digital equity within the disabled community to its services, products, and performance. Senior leaders seek events, relationships, and opportunities capable of advancing their mission, increasing brand awareness, and organizational awareness within their industry. Key work processes support the development and delivery of products and services that support the blind, visually impaired, and print disabled. Senior leaders direct and design their products and services to meet or exceed the most stringent regulatory standards to support functionality, usability, and accessibility of digital platforms, websites, and digital documents. Therefore, they align products and services to international accessibility guidelines. XYZ senior leaders also align work processes to international accessibility guidelines to ensure their workforce are trained at the highest level to support the delivery of service in support of the customers need. XYZ senior leaders ensure the day-to-day operations of work processes meet key process requirement through anticipatory training of the workforce, modification of procedures and processes; and if necessary, upgrade to service and product to support new regulatory standards. Leaders ensure employees are kept informed of regulation changes, training requirements, scheduled training events, and training opportunities. The enforcement of standard reduces product variability and increase its reliability. However, senior leaders will assess work based on stakeholders' feedback and modify as needed to enhance product quality and performance. XYZ senior leaders encourage everyone within the organization to pursue opportunities for innovations to improve digital accessibility. With 90% of its workforce disabled and requiring assistive devices; XYZ leaders and workforce are evaluating different customer relationship management systems and operational management systems for accessibility and usability so leaders can select and implement systems to support internal operations.

Operational effectiveness. XYZ senior leaders seek to ensure effective management of the internal operations. To date, XYZ uses manual information systems to support internal operations due to the lack of accessibility and usability of some software. As the organization grows, XYZ senior leaders recognize the need to implement automated operations systems to support operations management. Senior leaders expect that the implementation of an automated operation system will reduce time-consuming tasks, decrease operating costs, and improve efficiency. XYZ senior leaders are evaluating software solutions for accessibility and usability; while pursuing innovative ways to improve the accessibility of current software. Once senior leaders approve a software solution, it will be gradually integrated into the operations management process.

XYZ senior leaders ensure information systems are reliable by using secure servers. XYZ leverage its IT support teams and Help Desk to monitor its information systems. Senior leaders ensure security in cyber security of sensitive privilege data in information by limiting access to sensitive information such as payroll systems, staff files, and other sensitive information.

XYZ senior leaders provide a safe operating environment by maintaining a high level of preparedness and exercise safety and emergency preparedness protocol routinely. For instance, XYZ's Active Shooter protocol includes (a) locking main doors remaining during the workday, (b) upgrading door locks to keyless entry and bio scan, (c) installing cameras with views of the front and back of the building as well as entrance ways and hallways, and (d) marking of exits. Additionally, XYZ leaders ensure employees are aware of all building exits to support an orderly evacuation plan. XYZ leaders also assist with evaluating local schools' safety and emergency preparedness protocols and provide recommendations to improve their safety policies.

Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

Measurement, analysis, and improvement of organizational performance.

XYZ senior leaders and staff use informal systems to assess the organization's performance. Leaders use the number of overall goals accomplished, the number of strategic goals achieved, the number of customers retained, and revenue growth rate difference from the previous year to estimate organizational performance. One strategic goal achieved in 2018 was XYZ selection as an affiliated member of New York State Preferred Source Program for the Blind, with the purpose of providing digital accessibility and usability testing and remediation supports and services to the residents within the state of New York. For leaders, this goal signified that persons with authority to represent New York State endorsed XYZ as an ideal service provider, and a direct reflection of the organization's performance. To date, XYZ does not have a standardized process to measure, and analyze organizational performance; however, senior leaders recognize that a formalized method to measure organizational performance measurement may benefit their strategic planning process.

XYZ senior leaders use weekly executive meetings to review objectives and goals; develop, review, and revise project priorities; discuss areas requiring improvement, and identify opportunities for organizational growth. In this forum, senior leaders also review current customer base to include changes in the number of customers with retainer agreements, and strategies to increase customer base. Additionally, senior leaders review financial statements and cash flow with XYZ accounting team quarterly and annually to assess financial sustainability. Senior leaders use increases and decreases in revenues, along with increases and decreases of customers with retainer agreement to estimate organizational performance results. Leaders interpret an increase in both customers on retainer and revenue as an indication of customer satisfaction and the result as a consequence of workforce performance.

XYZ senior leaders are working to improve the organization's performance by modifying the organizational structure and revising personnel management process.

Leaders considered performance results, and inputs from their workforce, customers, and disabled end-users to determine areas that could impact organizational performance. Senior leaders realized that as the organization grew, a requirement emerged for a project management element to streamline the coordination and completion of projects within scope and budget and on time. XYZ project managers manage projects that are exclusive and are in support of blind, and print-disabled end-users, which underpins XYZ mission and improve its success. Senior leaders expect project managers to possess strong leadership skills and technical expertise and demonstrate an understanding of disability challenges. Senior leaders also expect project managers to speak *the organizational language* and be aware of each team member disability challenges and their assistive device requirements. Currently, senior leaders estimate that a project management element of six personnel is appropriate to support XYZ emerging requirements and to work to implement personnel requirement change as well as organizational structure change. Currently, senior leaders estimate six as the ideal number of project managers to support XYZ service requirements.

XYZ senior leaders recognize the emerging need for personnel management improvement. XYZ leaders use a flexible workforce model to manage workforce requirement where XYZ workforce consists of both permanent and temporary employees who work to support the organization’s requirements. Due to the organization’s growth and fluctuations in requirements; senior leaders maintain a listing of available temporary employees with specific expertise and talents to support no-notice increases in organizational requirements. While senior leaders acknowledge the merits of this mitigation strategy; they also recognize its impact on financial resources. Typically, XYZ senior leaders use historical data coupled with data gathered from research on the external environment, and assumptions about industry change to determine the number of new employees to hire and onboard. However, as the organization grows and the organizational requirements increase; the workforce capability and capacity requirement increase, so XYZ senior leaders are working to determine the *right* numbers for each skillset to retain. Senior leaders are also revamping their process for forecasting workload to improve accuracy in terms of cost, workforce requirement, and scheduling. A senior leader believes that the implementation of analytical software to support workload planning could help justify changes in workforce capacity.

Information and knowledge management. XYZ has historically been ahead of its time within the nonprofit sector with regards to digital accessibility and usability for disabled end-users; and consequently, senior leaders recognize the significance of information and organizational knowledge management. XYZ senior leaders manually review information to validate the quality of the organizational data and information. This verification extends to XYZ websites and social media sites, where organizational data is available for public access. XYZ has a social media and a marketing person dedicated to overseeing their social media site. XYZ is also supported by a watchful and dedicated social network community whose members are quick to notify leaders of any issues or concerns with content information. XYZ leaders work to safeguard information internal to the organization. Currently, XYZ leaders and workforce use Dropbox, a file hosting service to store and transmit data. Leaders selected Dropbox because it is not only accessible, usable, and secure, but it offers file recovery features and collaboration applications.

XYZ leaders develop and manage organizational knowledge by investing in their workforce. XYZ senior leaders advocated and facilitated leadership and employees' professional development. For example, the International Association of Accessibility Professionals certified professional in accessibility core competencies is a training course all leaders are encouraged to complete and to date, Currently, XYZ has ten leaders are training are in-progress with an additional eight leaders enrolled and awaiting training. Since most training is industry-specific training, XYZ leaders sustain training through practice, where there are opportunities to demonstrate that knowledge. Additionally, XYZ senior leaders are in the process of formalizing the organizational knowledge process through the development of an employee handbook, specifying new employee training requirement and codifying onboarding process for new hires.

Senior leaders use data and information to support all aspect of the XYZ operations to improve performance. Leaders and staff have minimal access to comparative data due to the uniqueness of XYZ's product offering within the nonprofit sector. There are for-profit organizations with similar product offerings, but these companies are protected by information and data protection and privacy laws to include proprietary information laws. If XYZ leaders receive information regarding another company's product offering; the data were usually from the company's previous customer seeking service from XYZ. Leaders will use information gathered from complaints of other businesses' dissatisfied customers to inform their employee training plans; ensuring that their workforce possesses the right tools and skillsets to performs quality work and achieve customer satisfaction. Since a significant amount of XYZ's customers are organizations dealing with ADA related compliance issues such as demand letters and litigations; XYZ leaders will use content information to advise the customer on potential scope service while spreading awareness about disability and digital inequity and exclusion.

Collection, Analysis, and Preparation of Results

Product and Process Results

XYZ leaders have a wide range of products and services that support their mission of promoting digital equity and inclusivity. XYZ's most notable product is XYZ JAW scripts specific for QuickBooks so a blind or print disabled person can manage their personal or business finances as well as seek out employment in the financial services industry. XYZ collaboration with Intuit began in 2011, and together they produce annual JAW Script to support Quickbooks with a current cost ranges from $275.00 to $1,025.00. XYZ services include Accessibility Program Management; Accessibility Evaluations and Testing; Usability Testing; and Quickbooks Scripts and Training. The cost for services varies based on the scope of work but can range from 50 to 400 hours with a cost range from $125 to $200 per hour/per customer organization. XYZ leaders measure their service and process results by the number of customers on retainers, annual revenues, and percentage of organization growth. XYZ senior leaders gauge the results for their products and customer service process by their responsiveness to customer inquiries and service request and their ability to transform a new customer into a repeat customer or long-term customer. Leaders and workforce collaborate, coordinate, and integrate their efforts to tailor customer engagement activities that support not only customer acquisition but a new customer transitioning to a repeat customer or a long-term customer. XYZ workforce administers quarterly quality assurance testing for long term customers to ensure regulatory compliance, as well as accessibility and usability of the customer organization websites and web applications after ICT system and security updates. XYZ leaders consider customers' testimonials a result of their products and customer service process. There is not a performance measurement system in place to measure the effectiveness of the process. A leader believes through research, the right software, and focussed effort, XYZ could improve processes effectiveness and efficiency and align those efforts with organizational resources.

Although XYZ leaders have never had to deal with a real-world emergency; however, XYZ has a formal emergency preparedness plan in place to keep their employee safe should an emergency occur. Employees working within the XYZ building rehearse drills to include fire emergency drills and active shooter drills regularly. XYZ use evacuation plans as well as facility lockdown to keep employees safe.

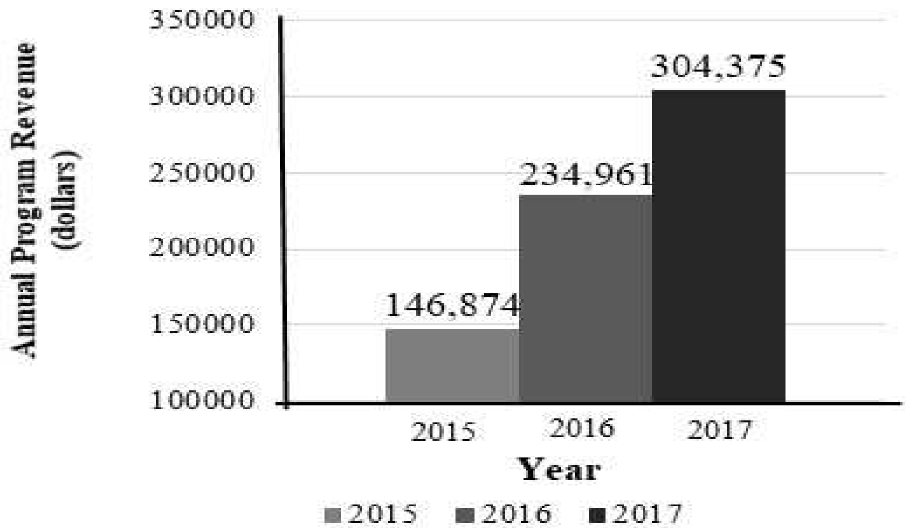

Figure 2. Comparison of the annual programs (i.e., products and services) revenues from 2015 to 2017.

Customer Results

XYZ leaders and staff do not have a formal performance measurement system to measure customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. XYZ customer-focused performance results are based on XYZ senior leaders' estimation of customer satisfaction. Senior leaders begin assessing customer satisfaction from the first customer engagement. XYZ customer-focus approach results in XYZ leaders investing the effort to explain services, process, and the metrics of the testing to the customer in order to reduce any apprehension. Leaders also provide customers with after-service feedback from the testers' perspective on how the implementation and adjustments made will improve a disabled end-user experience. By using a customer-focused approach, XYZ not only ensures ADA compliance of a customer organization's digital systems, but they contribute to advancing of digital equity and inclusivity for the disabled community.

Thus far, XYZ leaders have not dealt with any customer dissatisfaction. Senior leaders encourage open communication and would consider any customer signal of disapproval as an inference of customer dissatisfaction.

Although XYZ senior leaders use a wide range of customer engagement approach, leaders estimate the customer engagement results as high. A leader believes XYZ commitment to customer satisfaction has an impact on the customer engagement results, and even when customers postpone or cancel meetings, or not fulfill their portion of the deliverables; XYZ leaders make efforts to follow up and engage customers. A leader noted that XYZ's customer engagement efforts were not perfect due to random instances when they failed to follow-up with customers. XYZ senior leaders' goal regarding customers is to develop an enduring relationship with customers by converting new customers to repeat customers.

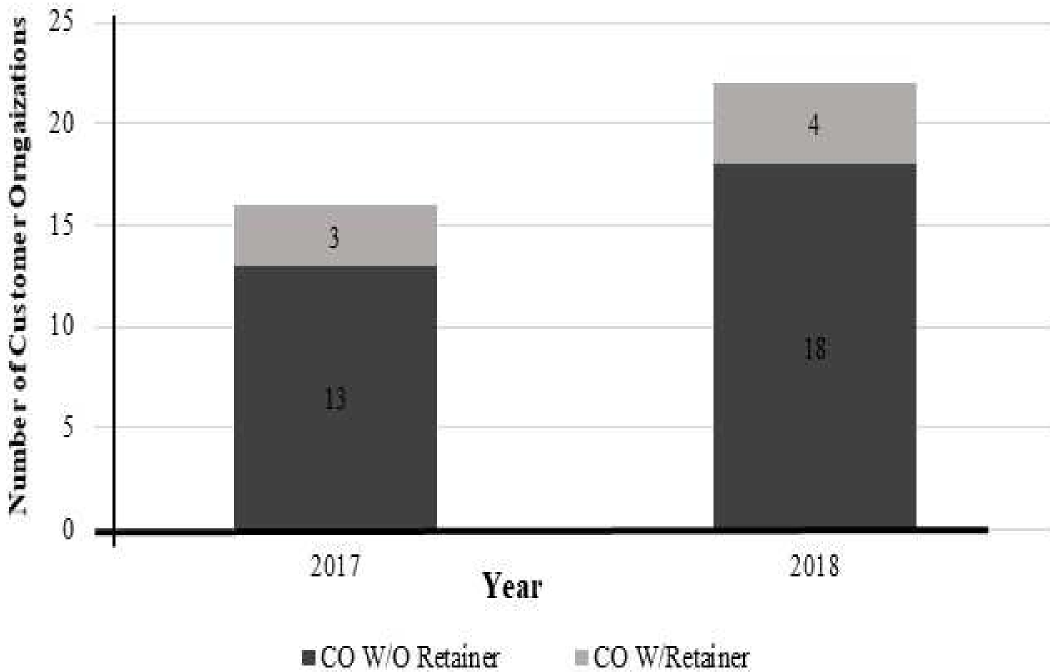

Figure 3. Comparison of total customers organizations in 2017 versus 2018. Comparison of total customer organizations with retainer agreement in 2017 versus 2018.

Workforce Results

XYZ does not have a formal performance measurement system to evaluate workforce performance. Senior leaders base XYZ workforce-focused performance results on the workforce capability and capacity to accomplish organizational objectives. Besides the BOD, XYZ is fully staffed to support its current workload. As the organization grows and workload increase XYZ leaders will use temporary employees to fulfill new requirements. Although, XYZ leaders do not have a formalized means of determining workforce climate results; XYZ leaders assess workforce climate results as healthy based on feedback gathered through regular interactions with the workforce. Senior leaders' encouragements of open communications, coupled with their open-door policy, boost transparency and morale throughout the organization. Senior leaders promote an inclusive and supportive work environment for their workforce regardless of their abilities.

XYZ senior leaders assess their workforce engagements results as strong due to leaders using effective communication and engagement methods to interact with the workforce. Leaders maintain constant communication and use different mediums to engage workforce; ascertaining employee well-being as well as assessing employee performance. Senior leaders also assess XYZ workforce and leader development results as improving. Senior leaders are promoting industry-specific training by publicizing and paying for employee training and; thus far, XYZ workforce and leaders are eagerly taking advantage of professional development opportunities.

Table 4

Key Workforce Expertise

	Key Workforce Expertise
Founder/Chief Executive Director	M.S. degrees in education (early childhood; administration and supervision), IAAP CPACC certified, motivational keynote speaker, published author, advocacy expertise; business management expertise.
Executive Director	B.A. degree, IAAP CPAAC certified, motivational keynote speaker, published author; advocacy expertise; business management expertise.
Chief Technology Officer	B.S degrees (electrical engineering; computer science) specializes in computer and cloud networking; custom software designs; web presence, and accessibility expert.
Senior Program Manager	A.A. degree; IAAP CPACC certified; program manager expertise.
Senior Accessibility Specialist	B.S. degree; Cisco certified network associate; specializes in computer and cloud networking; custom software design and web development; accessibility and usability testing including digital offerings, mobile apps, and websites expert.
Research Advisor	Ph.D. degree; research focuses on the implications of web accessibility and usability on business, education, employment, public policy, and societal inclusion.

Leadership and Governance Results

Organizational leaders use their leadership and governance result to assess the extent to which organizational behavior is fiscally, ethically, and socially responsible (Baldridge, 2017). XYZ senior leaders assess the result for their senior leaders' communication and engagements with their workforce and customers as highly positive. Senior leaders noted that the practice of open communications throughout the organization improved workforce and customer engagements. Senior leaders attributed increased customer retention and acquisitions; improved workforce engagement activities; and enhanced workforce development to effective communication. Senior leaders assess the result for governance accountability as weak due to the lack of an active BOD. Senior leaders are aware that an active board of director could motivate corporate accountability among senior leaders, by creating checks and balances, prevent improper behavior and reduce risks of one person having absolute control over all organizational decisions. Separately, XYZ senior leaders assess their result for legal and regulatory as extremely high. Leaders based this result on their responsiveness to new legislation, and their recent selection as an affiliated member of New York State Preferred Source Program for the Blind. To date, senior leaders are not aware of any other nonprofit organization in the United States with claims to a similar achievement. Next, XYZ leaders assess their results for ethical behavior as strong. XYZ leaders pride themselves to be authentic advocates for digital inclusivity and equity and; therefore, they adhere to a strict code of ethics that support inclusivity. Leaders noticed that their authenticity resonated with external leaders such as business and government leaders who also want to promote inclusivity within their communities.

Additionally, XYZ senior leaders assess the result for their social responsibility and support of their key communities as high. Senior leaders believe social responsibility is the foundation of XYZ mission of advancing digital inclusivity for people with disability. XYZ leaders and workforce work diligently to assist in reducing physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that hampered individuals with disabilities from achieving full integration into mainstream society through relationships, engagements, education, and services. XYZ-provided services and training supported the disabled communities through increase employment opportunities, which may reduce the use of federal and state programs and entitlement for people with limited income and resources.

XYZ leaders also assess the result for the achievement of organizational strategy and action plan as improving. Senior leaders expanded the organizational strategy and action plan to promote accessibility in both the digital and physical environments. XYZ now conduct a full organizational assessment for accessibility and providing training to staff members of customer organizations that support the recruiting and hiring of individuals with disabilities. While senior leaders work to support the organization's strategic plan, not all leaders are decisive for fear of executing action plans that may have an impact on the organization's reputation or financial sustainability.

Financial and Market Results

XYZ senior leaders assess their organization's financial performance results as effective. XYZ is funded by fees for digital accessibility services, speaking engagements, and contributions from supporters. XYZ leaders direct 80% of charitable dollar to support programs and services that support people with disabilities, with a focus on the blind, visually impaired, and print disabled. XYZ leaders use the remain 20% of charitable dollar to administer programs and services; maintain their accessible website and social media sites; and attend conferences and conventions for marketing and outreach. XYZ target audience for services are: governmental agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and community-based organizations. XYZ currently markets its services nationally and internationally. Senior leaders use (a) the number of service contracts they can secure; (b) the number of partnerships they were able to develop with organizations whose services complement XYZ's deliverables; (c) the number of training delivered to boost digital usability or training that facilitate the procurement of employment; and (d) use the number of successful grants they secure to gauge the organization's financial performance results. Senior leaders also use the number of partnerships developed and maintained with state and local government agencies; and multibillion-dollar organizations. Equally important to XYZ leaders are the non-financial results, such as roundtable discussions, industry events, podcasts and interviews, and conferences like the 2018 United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities that provided opportunity to advocate and promote global awareness. XYZ senior leaders recognize there are opportunities for improving financial and marketing results but view their ten-year longevity as a reflection of that achievement.

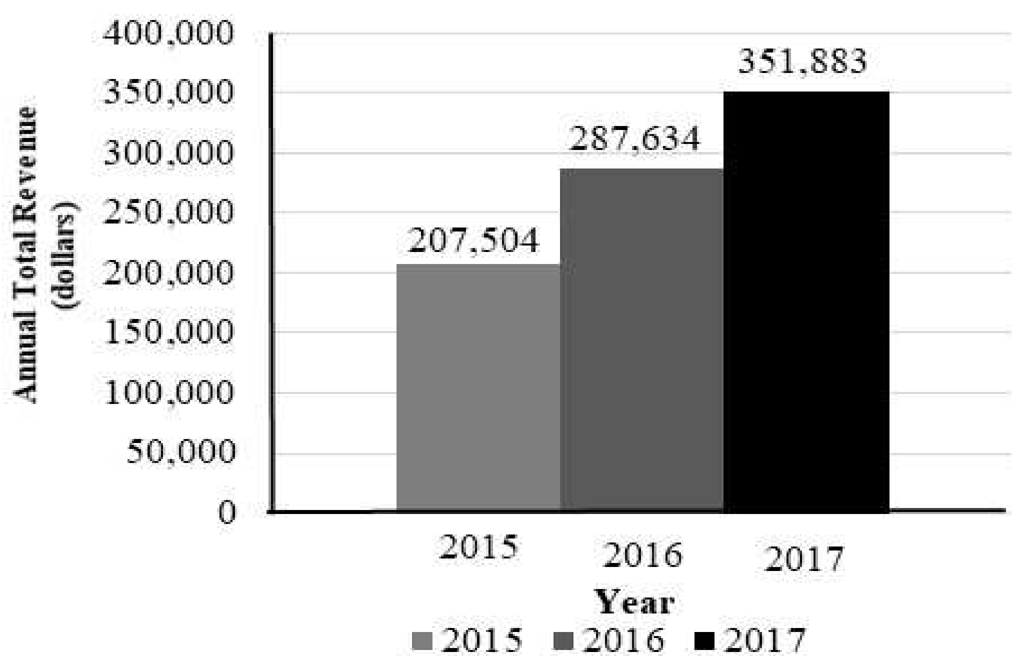

Figure 4. Comparison of total annual revenue for 2015, 2016, and 2017.

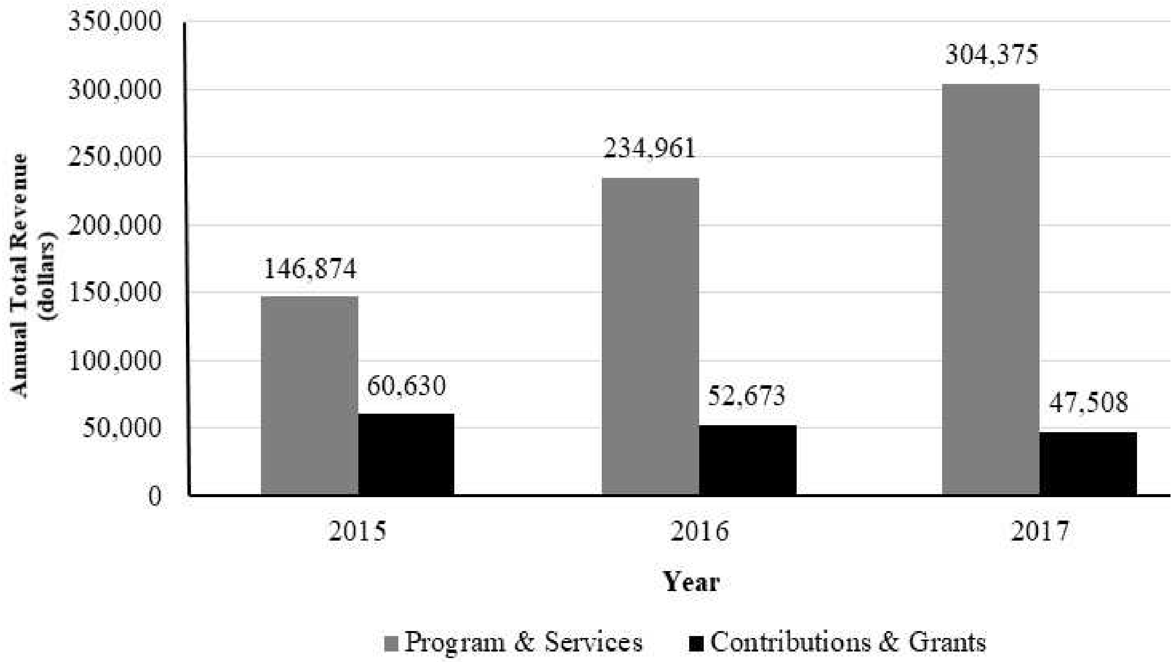

Figure 5. Comparison of total annual revenue breakdown for 2015, 2016 and 2017. Program and service increased from 2015 to 2017, contributions and grants decreased from 2015 to 2017, and overall revenue increased from 2015 to 2017.

Key Themes

The themes that emerged from the data analysis of XYZ's were (a) process strengths, (b) process opportunities, (c) result strengths, and (d) result opportunities. XYZ's process strengths and process opportunities were identified from data collected during categories 1-6 of 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework. XYZ's result strengths and result opportunities were identified from data collected during category 7 of 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework.

Process strengths. The process strengths for XYZ are (a) leadership involvement in engaging stakeholders, (b) persistent promotion of the organization's mission and vision; and (c) connection with the community. First, the findings from data analysis indicate that leadership involvement is an essential aspect of engaging stakeholders effectively. XYZ senior leaders consistently work to motivate, involve, and interest stakeholders. XYZ senior leaders use communications tools that include quarterly newsletters and email marketing; press releases; and social media to engage stakeholders regularly. The dissemination of organizational information is crucial to sustaining relationships with stakeholders. According to Tysseen et al. (2013), "committed individuals might at some point fail to recognize what needs to be done because they lack information" (p. 386). XYZ senior leaders ensure staff collects and compiles photos from events that XYZ senior leaders participate in and create quarterly newsletters comprised of chronicled engagement activities, which is later disseminated via blog or e-mail. XYZ senior leaders maximize the use press releases that depict F/CEO, leaders, and workforce advancing the mission and vision of the organization as exposure opportunities. XYZ leaders also seek exposure through media such as web-based outlets; local and national newspapers and periodicals; talk shows, and radio interviews. XYZ leaders use social media sites to maintain frequent communication with stakeholders and share XYZ's news or information of significance to the disability community. XYZ leaders' actions align with Wyllie et al. (2016) finding that social media platforms afforded transformational leaders a wide range of opportunities to influence, engage, communicate, and collaborate with their various stakeholders to achieve change. XYZ leaders also get involved in relevant groups to establish connections with potential partners as well as learn of new information that may be significant to XYZ and the disability community. XYZ leaders also monitor current stakeholders' activities as well as potential stakeholders' activities to understand their concerns, issues, and viewpoints. Wilkin et al. (2018) asserted that organizational leaders who stimulate comments that facilitated knowledge contribution and promoted a shared understanding and a shared purpose. Participants A and B stated in-person engagement activities was their most effective method to engage stakeholders.

XYZ senior leaders also engage stakeholders through brand positioning and identity integration strategy that consists of establishing and maintaining the brand, image, and identity that communicates XYZ’s purpose, mission, and vision. Seniors leaders use all mediums to convey the organization’s social impact and relevance to the community. XYZ senior leaders action support Viglia et al. (2017) findings that organizational leaders should develop functional and rational shared content that is relatable across stakeholders. Senior leaders ensure (a) a consistent use of visual aesthetic in online and offline platforms and materials; (b) creation language identity, using language that supporters associates with XYZ’s mission and vision; (c) additions of reviews to generate word-of-mouth recommendation; and (d) use of F/CEO’s biography and vision to stimulate a conversation. Additionally, senior leaders confirm XYZ’s website is (a) populated with appropriate keywords for search engine optimization, (b) linked to Building Initiative, and (c) photos are tagged to support search engine photo search.

Second, the findings from data analysis indicated that senior leaders’ persistent promotion of the organization’s mission and vision was a key strength. Transformational leaders communicate a clear mission and vision to supporters, which can motivate organizational commitment from supporters (Doucet et al., 2015; Porter, 2015). XYZ leaders and workforce are committed to the organization's mission and vision, and they promote them in a systematic and deliberate manner. Participant A sense of commitment to the organization's mission and vision pervaded throughout the interview, whereby, the participant compared the approach that should be used to inform and educate mainstream society to evangelism. Senior leaders ensure all leaders and staff understand the organization's mission and vision. In turn, leaders ensure the entire workforce know and understand the vision and objectives of the organization. Northouse (2016) asserted that individuals that have a clear vision of the overall mission and direction of the organization and understand the significance of their contribution to the overall plan are empowered. All participants stated that their objectives were to inform and educate mainstream society members about the challenges of the disabled community. Participant A found ignorance and lack of knowledge about the disabled community slowed the engagement process with non-disabled stakeholders. However, Participant B found that when a nondisabled person interacts with a person with a disability and observe the limitations while being informed of the disability challenges; it changes perspectives. O'Rourke et al. (2016) found organizational leaders can influence their stakeholder in such that manner that result in stakeholders developing feelings of commitment to the vision to the point of protecting the vision. XYZ senior leaders promote XYZ's mission and vision in their everyday life, outside of the organization.

Third, the findings from data analysis indicated that senior leaders have a connection with the community was a key strength. XYZ senior leaders and workforce have a strong connection to the disabled community and; therefore, are committed to the support of this community, which is reflected in the organization's mission and vision statements. Participant B noted that with 90% of XYZ employees being members of the disability community; they were all stakeholders in the outcomes of XYZ's projects. Community success is dependent on its stakeholder's interrelationships, participation, and commitment to define and solve the community's problems (Orrock, & Clark, 2018). One way that XYZ senior leaders support their community is through empowerment. Participant A stated that outspokenness and attitude can change the mainstream societal perspective and stigmatizing attitude about disability and incite action. In 2018, XYZ senior leaders worked with a major airline company senior executive to develop and implement changes to the airlines' Emotional Support Animal policy. Additionally, in 2018, XYZ senior leaders worked with an online grocery delivery service to ensure its consumer interfaces were accessible, usable, and functional to all shoppers. One result from this project was improvements to the grocer's voiceover compatibility to support mobile device applications, where a blind consumer could hear the announcement of cart content and facilitate their grocery checkout process. XYZ leaders and workforce use everyday activities to advocate and educate about disability in an effort to disprove societal perceptions that include stigmatizing a person with a disability that may lead to avoidance, discrimination, and condescension of disabled individual in communities. Cabrera et al. (2018) found that individuals must develop a shared understanding and vision within the community to successfully engage and serve the community's interest. Through the delivery of its product and services coupled with their advocacy efforts, XYZ leaders and workforce increase employment opportunities for members of their key community, in such a manner that customer organizations with accessible digital systems can support the hiring and retaining a blind or print disabled individual. One of XYZ's long-term goal is to help reduce the global unemployment and underemployment rate for people with disabilities. As a result, XYZ's 2019 goal is to assist other organizations with hiring and retaining 100 people with a print disability. Sulkowski et al. (2017) found that organizational leaders can influence stakeholders to create positive changes with social and economic impacts. Participant C noted that XYZ leaders and workforce also support local schools to include providing safety advice and assisting with fire and active shooter policies updates. XYZ senior leaders and workforce actions align with Mania-Singer (2017) findings that subsystems had both direct and indirect influence on other subsystems, which can affect the equilibrium of the entire system, which in this case is the disabled community.

Process opportunities. The process opportunities for XYZ are (a) the lack of performance measurement system and (b) lack of formalized processes and procedures. XYZ use informal methods to gauge individual performance for leaders and workforce. There are opportunities to improve and sustain leader and workforce performance using standardized evaluation systems that support the objective assessment of employee performance.

XYZ workforce uses informal processes, and procedures to support operations. Senior leaders are developing an employee handbook to facilitate the onboarding process for new employees. There are opportunities to develop and implement standard operating procedure guidebooks that support key work processes to streamline operation requirements and expectations. A senior leader asserted that implementing accessible and usable software to support daily operations and strategic planning efforts could improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of work processes.

Results strengths. The result strengths identified for XYZ are (a) workforce engagement activities and (b) design of key products and services. First, the findings from data analysis indicated that workforce engagement activities were a key strength. Senior leaders credit their workforce engagements along with XYZ's inclusive work environment, and *family-like* workplace culture for their high employee retention. Participant B stated that XYZ members treat each other family because their culture is very important to them. Lawton and Paez (2015) found that when organizational leaders promote an environment that supports the welfare of their employees, they elicit trust, commitment, and support of their employees. Participant B further noted that communication was extremely important to workforce engagements and changes occurred within the organization; XYZ senior leaders ensured its workforce was informed, prepared, and mentored through the changes. Gilson, Maynard, Jones-Young, Vartiainen, and Hakonen (2015) asserted that trust among a geographically dispersed workforce is influenced by "communication behaviors, timely responses, open communication, and giving feedback" (p. 1321). Additionally, all participants noted that XYZ senior leaders sought out opportunities to recognize workforce achievements to include training certification completions and work performance. Senior leaders' approach aligns with Northouse (2016) assertion that the recognition of top performers nurture and motivate other employees to perform as well as promote a healthy organizational culture. Saks and Gruman (2014) asserted that workforce engagements must include “sustainable workload, feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, a supportive work community, fairness and justice, and meaningful and valued work” (p. 161).

Second, the findings from data analysis indicated that XYZ’s design of key products and services was a key strength. XYZ senior leaders leverage collaborations to promote innovative thinking. For instance, XYZ senior leaders’ collaboration with Intuit Inc. resulted in the creation of JAWS script for QuickBooks for blind and print disabled individuals. According to Bouncken and Fredrich (2016), business alliances allow access to complementary resources for innovation and value creation. Participant B stated that XYZ products and services remain groundbreaking within the industry and; therefore, XYZ leaders dedicate time to educate customer organizations. Participant B expounded that XYZ senior leaders want customer organizations to understand *why* and *how* to make their websites, mobile applications, workplace tools, and software products accessible to people with disabilities. The participants explained that ADA regulatory guidance is unfamiliar to some customers, so XYZ senior leaders’ customer engagements are focused on educating and coaching their costumer organizational leaders on the benefits of accessibility and inclusion for their customers or employees with disabilities. XYZ senior leaders guide customers through the development of disability-awareness and inclusive policies, IT procurement practices; accessibility training and testing; customer-facing accessibility statements, support for customers with disabilities, building organizational accessibility *maturity* in both process and knowledge, workplace tools assessment, risk reduction, and ADA-compliant recruiting practices. XYZ senior leaders' practice of educating, coaching, and mentoring to develop an awareness of ADA requirements aligned with Burns (1978) assertion that transformational leaders raise their cohort level of awareness about the significance and value of a desirable outcome.

Results opportunities. The results opportunities for XYZ are (a) customer satisfaction and (b) lack of an active BOD. XYZ does not have a formal method of determining levels of customer satisfaction. XYZ leaders observed an increase in followers, increased interaction with content, and increased XYZ website visits from social media presences; however, none of these are definitive indicators of customer satisfaction of product or services. XYZ leaders could implement surveys to quantify the level of customer satisfaction with service rendered or product used. XYZ does not have an active BOD to support governance accountability. The F/CEO is actively working to recruit board members, but to date, the BOD is still inactive to support governance and management.

Project Summary

Nonprofit leaders need the support of their stakeholders to improve their organization's financial sustainability. Beer and Micheli (2017) found that organizational leaders' interrelationship with stakeholders can affect an organization's performance and goal achievement. In this case study, I explored successful stakeholder engagement strategies senior leaders of a nonprofit organization use to engage stakeholders. The four themes that emerged were leadership involvement in engaging stakeholders, persistent promotion of the organization's mission and vision, connection with the community, and workforce engagement activities. Nonprofit leaders can use information from this single case study to develop and implement their strategies to engage stakeholder.

The result of the data collected from participants supported aspects crucial to organizational performance to include: Leadership; strategy; customers; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; workforce; operations; and organizational result. Leaders who review data in this case study will increase their understanding of strategies they can use to engage their stakeholders. Leaders who use the results of this study to implement stakeholder engagement strategies may enhance stakeholder relationship, increase the organization's performance, and improve financial sustainability.

Contributions and Recommendations

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study could contribute to positive social change by providing nonprofit leaders with stakeholder engagement strategies, which may be used to improve their organization's financial sustainability. Nonprofit organizations are invaluable to society, where they not only support their communities through multiple initiatives and innovative actions, but they contribute to national economies (McDonald et al., 2015).

Successful employment of stakeholder engagement strategies that stimulate communication and collaboration may enhance nonprofit leader-stakeholder relationships to improve financial sustainability. By having a financially sustainable organization, nonprofit leaders may subsequently, focus on supporting their communities and promoting the organization's mission and vision. The results of this study may provide nonprofit leaders with an understanding of practical stakeholder engagement strategies to improve nonprofit leaders-stakeholder relationship; which could improve economic stability and increase philanthropic efforts to include community involvement.

Recommendations for Action

Throughout this study, evidence-based themes and results support the need for stakeholder engagements. Thibodeau and Rueling (2015) found that organizational leaders must nurture relationships, strengthen social and emotional bonds, and create a shared urgency between stakeholders and organization to influence specific outcomes. XYZ leaders displayed their strategies for engaging stakeholders that enhanced relationships with workers, customers, partners, collaborators, and the disabled community that positively impacted their organization's financial sustainability and growth. Despite its financial sustainability, XYZ has areas for improvement to ensure organizational performance and; subsequently, organizational sustainability. I recommend XYZ leaders place emphasis on board member recruitment, implement methods for measuring customer satisfaction; and implement formalized work processes and procedures to support internal operations. Hu and Kapucu (2017) found that board involvement and commitment positively correlated with a nonprofit financial performance due to their influences in the external environment of the organization, regular financial contribution, and involvement in the organization's strategic planning efforts. XYZ leaders could recruit board members through a Help Wanted advertisement, similar to the manner in which they advertise for available positions within the organization. As a result, leaders could place Help Wanted advertisement in XYZ newsletters, on their websites, and social media sites; on free job-posting websites; in local universities newsletters; or in local newspapers, and on bulletin boards of local organizations/agencies.

Next, XYZ senior leaders could seek opportunities to assess customer satisfaction. Luo, Wang, and Sakura (2019) found that by strengthening customer service, customer loyalty is enhanced. Organizational leaders need to develop a good understanding of customer's needs and desire to be able to prioritize customer relationship management initiatives. Customer satisfaction measurements can inform overall satisfaction to include service quality, loyalty, and customer intentions for repeat business (Elommal, Manita, & Chaney, 2019). XYZ leaders could develop customer satisfaction metrics and use surveys to assist in quantifying customer satisfaction data. Surveys may be post-service surveys or email surveys using surveys like Net Promoter Score, and Customer Effort Score. Nonprofit leaders may use customer satisfaction metrics to support customer retention and service/product quality.

Additionally, XYZ senior leaders could seek to standardize processes and policies. Machfudiyanto, Yusuf, Budi, and Prisca (2018) asserted that standardized processes and procedures strengthen transparency, reduce errors in execution, improved efficiencies, reduced uncertainty, and improved quality of service. Similarly, Münstermann, Eckhardt, and Weitzel (2010) affirmed that standardized processes not only improved the chances to achieve financial sustainability but also increases transparency and controllability within an organization. XYZ leaders could formalize work processes and procedures to support operations. A well-written document of work process can be a resource to integrate new employees as well as support continuity of organizational information and knowledge; and organizational stability.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

1. Introduce myself to participants.
2. Introduce the research topic and explain the purpose and scope of the topic.
3. Thank participant for participating in the interview.
4. Inform the participant of the estimated length of time the interview will take.
5. Assure the participant that all the collected information will be kept confidential.
6. Inform participant of his or her right to stop the interview process.
7. Ask permission to record the interview session.
8. During the interview, ask follow-up probing questions to get a better understanding, as needed.
9. Complete the interview by thanking the participant for his or her participation and schedule follow-up member checking interviews.

Follow-Up Member Checking Interview

a. Introduce follow-up interview.

b. Share a copy of succinct synthesis for each individual question.

c. Ask probing questions related to other information that I found about the research topic, as needed.

d. Walk through each question, read interpretation, and ask: Did I miss anything? Or, what would you like to add?

e. Complete the follow-up interview thanking the participant.