

2018

# Strategies for Assessing the Effectiveness of Certification Programs for Youth Workers

Allen R. Turner  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Allen Turner

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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Walden University  
2018

Abstract

Strategies for Assessing the Effectiveness of Certification Programs for Youth Workers

by

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MSI, American Military University, 2007

MBA, Saint Leo University, 2004

BA, Saint Leo University, 2002

Consulting Capstone Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

May 2018

## Abstract

Leaders of youth intervention programs provide a significant social service by redirecting at-risk youth onto a productive path. The standards for youth-serving organizations are inconsistent from 1 organization to another across a wide range of youth-worker training certification programs in the United States. A single-case study was conducted to explore the strategies that 3 leaders of a nonprofit organization located in Minnesota, use to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for youth workers. The 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework provided the structure for a systems-based evaluation of the client organization; Freeman's stakeholder theory was the conceptual lens for the study. Data were collected from conducting semistructured interviews, reviewing the participating organization's internal documents and performance outcomes, and analyzing open-source resources. Through thematic analysis, 4 key themes emerged: (a) the social return on investment analysis and the overall cost savings by investing in and supporting youth programs, (b) the opportunity to focus research on certification for youth workers, (c) the value of providing training for youth workers, and (d) the opportunity to provide a platform for the youth to share success stories with their community. Specific recommendations stemming from the research findings were to create a state or national recognition standard for youth-worker certifications and to make youth work a paid profession. Implementation of these recommendations may result in positive social change by improving the lives and trajectories of youth.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family and how they supported, encouraged, and gave me hope throughout this very challenging journey.

First, my two amazing children, Jessika and AJ. You two are my inspiration, encouragement, and hope. We been through a lot together, have come a long way together, and we are still on a lifelong journey together learning, loving life, finding hope for the Cleveland Browns, and saving the world, with our “kitchen talks.” To my best friend Joey, you have the greatest “heart,” and the strongest will-to-live. You have tested the limits of human strength, courage, and hope. You have taught me never to take a single day for granted. My sister, Terri who offered her big sister support, experience, and guidance to me throughout my entire life. To my “boys” Dugan (RIP) and Charlie, my beloved Golden Retrievers who literally sat by my side through every second of this journey.

Most importantly to my parents. In loving memory of my dad, Allen Earl Turner, the older I get, the more I miss you. May you continue to watch over me and I hope you are proud of the way I lived my life and raise my children. I hope to become the man that you were. To my mom, you have selflessly dedicated your life to serving others, and you always put others before you. All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to you, you are the example that I strive to be.

## Acknowledgments

Completing this journey would not be possible without the support and encouragement of friends, my cohort, and individuals that have taken their time to educate me on the importance of youth development and for giving at-risk youth future hope. I am deeply grateful for being selected for the Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) Consulting Capstone program and under the guidance and wisdom of my committee chair Dr. Janice Garfield. I am thankful for her support, mentoring, thoughtful leadership, guidance, and hopefulness she provided. Dr. Garfield is one of the great ones that kept me on track and helped me not to overthink my research. I am also grateful for Dr. Gaytan for his feedback and the support he offered, which was greatly needed and sincerely appreciated. I would also like to thank Dr. Knight the University Research Reviewer for his expertise and advice made this a success

This accomplishment would not have occurred without the devotion and inspiration that I witnessed by working with my client organization and other individuals that give youth hope and encouragement. I am sincerely thankful to the participants who willingly made the time to share their experience. The relentless dedication and determination that I observed in their attempts to make the lives of at-risk youth more hopeful and productive were truly extraordinary. I hope that this research provides leaders of nonprofit organizations and at-risk youth workers further knowledge, tools, and for giving youth hope for a better life.

All of you have inspired, encouraged, and provided hope to me in your own way, and for that I sincerely thank you!

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

For this study, I used the 2017-2018 Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework as a tool for holistically evaluating the processes and performance outcomes of my client organization and exploring my specific research question. I used a single-case study to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations can use to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals who work with youth. I served as both the researcher and the consultant for this consulting capstone study, as per the degree requirements of my program. Section 1 of this study includes the (a) background of the problem, (b) problem statement, (c) purpose statement, (d) nature of the study, (e) overarching research question, (f) conceptual framework, and (g) comprehensive literature review.

### **Background of the Problem**

Youth play an integral part in the development of local and global economies. The successful integration of youth into the workforce enables countries and individual organizations to achieve short- and long-term economic goals and objectives, for example (Balfanz et al., 2014). Initiating a certification program for individuals who work directly with youth provides multiple benefits for someone who has received a certification, such as added confidence, tools to draw upon when needed, and possibility of increasing their income (Balfanz et al., 2014). Positive social change implications for such certification include the potential for organizations to obtain malpractice insurance coverage, expand

and provide documentation for background checks, and offer mandated professional development as part of the certification process.

However, certification programs for youth-serving individuals and organizations vary considerably and depend on the individual organization and industry (Lindstrom, Kahn, & Lindsey, 2013). Few states have professional development requirements for youth workers beyond crisis intervention and medical first aid (Gharabaghi, Skott-Myhre, & Krueger, 2014). In the United States, there are no requirements for certification for a youth worker, and training practices vary considerably amongst intervention organizations (Curry, Eckles, Stuart, & Schneider-Munoz, 2013). Leaders of nonprofit organizations lack data to support the value of certifying individuals who work with youth (Lindstrom, Kahn, & Lindsey, 2013). The data from this study might provide evidence that indicates the usefulness of standardizing training for individuals working with youth in the United States. Such training might improve the sustainability of youth-serving, nonprofit organizations in the country.

### **Problem Statement**

Despite the number of youth-worker training positions and programs throughout the United States, training development standards for individuals working with youth-serving nonprofit organizations remain inconsistent and unclear (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). Certified youth-serving individuals are 2.7 times more likely to be high performers than noncertified practitioners (Shackman, 2015). The general business problem is that leaders of nonprofit organizations lack data to support the value of certifying individuals

who work with youth. The specific business problem is that some leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations lack strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals who work with youth.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals who work with youth. The target population consisted of leaders of a Minnesota nonprofit association of organizations involved in youth-intervention programs. These leaders possess experience in successfully selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with youth. The implications for positive social change include the identification of strategies to certify, train, and mentor individuals working with youth to help ensure the effectiveness of these individuals in accomplishing measurable improvements in achieving a successful transition into adulthood for at-risk youth. Using these data, leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations may be better able to demonstrate the usefulness of regulatory standards in the United States for individuals who work directly with youth. Business leaders might be encouraged to create and maintain partnerships with nonprofit organizations that certify individuals who work with youth. Those



partnerships could benefit both business- and community-based social initiatives to raise competency levels for individuals who serve at-risk youth.

### **Nature of the Study**

Researchers employ the qualitative research method to explore connections among various issues to understand a phenomenon in a real-life context (Ruzzene, 2015). The benefit of applying a qualitative method over quantitative or mixed-method research method is that participants offer data that researchers can code and analyze to answer research questions (Saldaña, 2016). The quantitative method is used to examine relationships between variables or to compare groups using statistical analysis (Saldaña, 2016). This method was not appropriate for this study because there was no examination of relationships among variables or groups. Researchers use the mixed-method approach when combining quantitative and qualitative methods (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014). A researcher using the mixed method would include statistical procedures (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014). Because I did not conduct statistical analyses, I concluded that a qualitative or a mixed-method approach would be inappropriate for the study.

I used a single case study design for this study. Researchers use the single-case study design to explore a case, which is bounded in time and place, to generate insights from interviews conducted from diverse sources in real-life settings (Ruzzene, 2015; Yin, 2018). A researcher can use a single case-study to identify best practices in leadership and management methods (Ruzzene, 2015). The qualitative case study design is appropriate to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations can

use to determine the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth.

In this study, I wanted to identify the strategies and processes that leaders use to successfully analyze data associated with the development of volunteers working directly with at-risk youth. Researchers use a phenomenological research design to explore participants' lived experiences and perceptions regarding a phenomenon (Matchim & Kongsuwan, 2015; Onwugbuzie & Byers, 2014). Because the volunteers' lived experience was not the focus of my investigation, I determined that a phenomenological design was not appropriate. Researchers use the ethnographic research design to explore a culture in a real-life setting (Dresch, Lacerda, & Cauchick Miguel, 2015). The ethnographic design was not appropriate for this study because I focused on how the leaders can best employ effective approaches to vet, develop, and retain individuals who are competent in mentoring a vulnerable population. I did not seek to explore a culture in a real-life setting.

### **Research Question**

The overall research question for this study was, what strategies do leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs?

### **Interview Questions**

1. What strategies have proven successful for you in selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
2. How do you assess the success of the strategies you have used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
3. What strategies were most effective for you in selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
4. How does the Board of Directors (BOD) promote policies and values that align with the selection, collection, and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
5. What are some examples of strategies you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
6. Which strategies that you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program certifying and training individuals working with the youth were the least effective?

7. What role does leadership play in the implementation of strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
8. What are some of the measurable benefits of successful strategies you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
9. Based on your organization's experience, what were some of the consequences of not having strategies for the selection, collection, and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
10. What do you think it is important for you to say that I have not asked you regarding strategies used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?

### **Conceptual Framework**

Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory served as the conceptual framework for this study. According to the tenets of stakeholder theory, leaders base their actions on the needs, expectations, and requirements of interested parties more than on the self-interest of the organization (Harrison & Wicks, 2013). Stakeholder theory encompasses the vision of an organization and the role of the leaders whose objective is to maximize the value of the customer to achieve sustainability (Knox & Wang 2016). I used stakeholder

theory to view and understand specific leadership strategies for certifying youth workers. Stakeholder theory accounts for the purpose and motivation of the interest of the parties, and organizational leaders can maximize the performance of organizations (Maier, 2015). Stakeholder theory is a means to understand the perceptions of interested parties about their influence on a nonprofit organization (Shea & Hamilton, 2015). Freeman's broader concept of stakeholders includes government, consumer groups, environmentalists, special interest groups, communities, and nonprofit organizations.

Freeman (1984) formalized stakeholder theory by offering that business leaders maximize a firm's financial performance by meeting the needs of relevant stakeholders. Freeman defined stakeholders as suppliers, customers, competitors, employees, or individuals whose members influence the success of an organization. Keeping these interests aligned with all parties creates as much value as possible to everyone involved (Harvey, 2015). I used stakeholder theory because it keeps the interests of customers, employees, communities, and the youth-serving workers aligned to achieve the same goals and objectives.

### **Operational Definitions**

*Adolescent youth:* Adolescent youth who are 8 to 18 years of age. This is the lifespan period in which most of a person's biological, cognitive, psychological, and social characteristics are changing from childlike to adult-like (Ardoin, Castrechini, & Hofstedt, 2014).

*At-risk youth:* Young people who are more likely to experience delinquency (Cumming, Dowse, & Strnadova, 2014).

*Counselor educator:* A professional counselor who educates and develops future professional counselors (American Counseling Association, 2014).

*Social workers:* Certified professionals who help people solve and manage problems in their lives. Clinical social workers can diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues (Narey, 2014).

*Stakeholders:* All groups that are or might be affected by an organization's actions and success. Key stakeholders might include customers, members of the workforce, partners, collaborators, governing boards, stockholders, donors, suppliers, taxpayers, regulatory bodies, policy makers, funders, and members of local and professional communities (Baldrige, 2017).

*Workforce:* All people actively supervised by an organization and involved in accomplishing an organization's work, including paid employees (e.g., permanent, part-time, temporary, and telecommuting employees, as well as contract employees supervised by an organization) and volunteers, as appropriate. A workforce includes team leaders, supervisors, and managers at all levels (Baldrige, 2017).

*Youth development program:* A program geared towards positively helping youth flourish into healthy and productive citizens or adults (Rushing et al., 2017).

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

### **Assumptions**

For this study, I assumed that all participants were honest and truthful in their answers to the interview questions. Consistent with qualitative standards, assumptions are beliefs that are considered to be accurate and factual by the researcher without proof (Nkwake & Morrow, 2016). To avoid distortion and misrepresentation, researchers must identify and address potential assumptions (Hager & Brudney, 2015). Failing to identifying assumptions could cause research results to be in question. The information and data provided by the participants assisted me in determining the validity of the assumptions and strengthen the outcome of the research.

### **Limitations**

The limitation of this research was that the interviews were from one nonprofit organization located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Also, all interviews were via conference call and not face-to-face to ensure compliance with the requirements of, and approval by, Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Bailey (2014) described limitations as potential weaknesses that are not within the control of the researcher. Concentrating on leaders of a single organization gave me only a single point of view (that of my client organization) regarding youth certification education programs. Incorporating the experiences of leaders of other nonprofit organizations in my qualitative case study could have given me a different perspective.

### **Delimitations**

I selected participants from one nonprofit organization whose leaders provide training and certification programs for individuals that work with at-risk youth in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area. The delimitations of this study are the characteristics that were not included in the scope of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). I was also limited to the experiences from only one nonprofit organization that provided the certification training. The research did not contain experiences from leaders of other nonprofit training organizations from other areas of the United States.

### **Significance of the Study**

#### **Contribution to Business Practice**

This study is of value to the practice of business because leaders of youth-serving, nonprofit organizations could use findings from this study to design and implement strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of certifying and training individuals working with youth. The contributions to professional application may be relevant not only to decision makers in nonprofit organizations but also to the leaders of youth organizations throughout the United States seeking to train individuals working with at-risk youth.

#### **Implications for Social Change**

The implications for positive social change for this study include the potential to offer leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations the strategies needed to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of certifying and training individuals



working with youth. Having certified individuals working with the youth and using consistent principles and practices provides a measure of quality assurance for the programs and people that support the development of at-risk youth. The data from this study might lead to sustainability for youth-serving, nonprofit organizations and provide evidence that indicates the usefulness of standardizing training for individuals working with youth in the United States.

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

Youth play an integral part in the development of local and global economies. The successful integration of youth into the workforce can enable organizational leaders to achieve short-term and long-term economic goals and objectives (Balfanz et al., 2014). A growing number of organizational leaders, agencies leaders, policymakers, and practitioners recognized the need to prepare youth for the work environment and support them as they work towards acquiring skills and competencies needed to succeed in various settings (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). To help ensure that young people learn these life skills and competencies, leaders for nonprofit organizations and agencies have developed and implemented critical training programs and strategies meant for young employees (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). The basis of these initiatives is the realization that youth training and certification programs bring beneficial outcomes to individual workers and organizational leaders (Richard, 2014). Specifically, trainers provide the initiatives as a platform that employees can use to improve their skills and acquire competencies needed in the work environment.

Organizational policymakers have realized that trained youth workers who hold a professional certification as part of their education have years of experience, have additional training, and have completed certification exams are 2.7 times more likely to be high performers than noncertified practitioners (Curry et al., 2013; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015; Shackman, 2015). Education, experience level, and certification exam results on a pass/fail scale were all significant predictors of performance (Curry et al., 2013).

Certification and training remain complicated due to the lack of a conceptualized base to guide the certification and training criteria processes (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). There is no unified framework that organizational leaders can use to assess the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers. These challenges notwithstanding, training and certification remain significant initiatives that can contribute to high performance among youth-worker employees and the organizations where they are employed (Latham, 2014).

I explored the concept of assessing the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers with a focus on nonprofit organizations. In the first section of the review of the professional and academic literature, I explored the scholarly literature about the work environment and settings in nonprofit organizations. Briner and Walshe (2014) stated that when a researcher conducts a systematic literature review, the process of executing the review develops critical thinking and other research skills. The review of scholarly literature also includes an indepth exploration of how youth-serving nonprofit

organizations can select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. I also identified the use of Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory and explained why Freeman's theory is an appropriate lens for this study. In the second section of the literature review, I explored the scholarly literature on youth training initiatives as well as the importance of such training to assist in the development of at-risk youth. In the third section, I reviewed scholarly literature on the topic of selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for youth workers.

The overall objective of this literature review was to conduct comprehensive and critical analysis and synthesis of literature related to stakeholder theory and the existing body of knowledge regarding the research topic/research question. The process entailed conducting a critical analysis of various sources and content of literature on the research topic. Therefore, identifying and retrieving relevant literature was crucial to the successful completion of the task, I designed and implemented a systematic search strategy for the literature search process. Shackman (2015) provided information from which other researchers could draw conclusions and evidence on the strategies for assessing the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers.

### **Method for Gathering Information**

The research strategies include several resources used to conduct the literature review research. The Walden University online library provided many of the articles used for this literature review. Although this is a business problem, I found most of the

information from physiological, social work, and medical databases. I accessed databases such as PsycINFO, PsycExtra, SocIndex, and PsycArticles using the base terms *youth*, *mentorship*, and other words used to narrow searches consisted of *intervention*, *effects*, *formal*, *informal*, and *positive*. I also used Google Scholar to locate articles online. The purpose was to ensure that the review was not only objective but also thorough and comprehensive. In this case, I used various search terms that included *certification programs*, *certification programs for youths*, *youth training*, and *development programs*, and *assessing certification programs*. I identified additional sources from the references used in the study that obtained through the above search strategy. At the end of the search process, relevant peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, seminal scholarly books, and government reports were selected and used to achieve the objectives of the study. I carefully reviewed the chosen articles by looking at the purpose, methodologies, findings, conclusions, and limitations.

The academic sources and the literature-gathering process included peer-reviewed articles, books, and resources publically available on the internet. The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program rubric rule of 85%, of the overall academic sources referenced, must have publication dates within the 2014-2018 period, which represents the most up-to-date information available. There is a total of 177 articles, of which 152 were published within the last 5 years, 17 books, of which 16 were published in the last 5 years, and one dissertation (see Table 1) used throughout this research study. The

percentage of sources in the literature review published within 5 years of my expected graduation date (i.e., 2018) is 86%.

Table 1

*Literature Review Source Content*

<i>Literature Review Content</i>	<i>Total #</i>	<i># Within 5-Year Range (2014 – 2018)</i>	<i>% Total Peer-Reviewed Within 5-Year Range (2014 – 2018)</i>
Books	17	16	94%
Peer-reviewed articles	177	152	86%
Dissertations	1	0	0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>86%</i>

**Selecting data.** One of the key processes associated with evidence decision-making is selecting the right data and sources. Evidence-based decision making usually starts with the selection of the appropriate information that can help in understanding the process at hand (Velentgas et al., 2013). A review of existing body of research evidence shows that there is a wide range of primary and secondary sources of information used in assessing and evaluating a research problem (Velentgas et al., 2013). A researcher can obtain information from sources such as journals, books, government reports, and websites. Because not every source of information can help a researcher in making an appropriate decision in a study, it is imperative to select those that are relevant to the topic under investigation (Crawford et al., 2015). In other words, the selection process is limited to sources that can provide high-quality evidence that the researcher can use to

understand, explore, and answer the formulated research question.

The stakeholders for this study are the volunteer members (VMs) of XYZ that are receiving the youth worker professional development training. XYZ is a pseudonym for a 501(c)(3) nonprofit association, operating for the benefit of youth-serving organizations everywhere through advocacy and professional development resources. By applying stakeholder theory to the review of scholarly research, the researcher (a) increases the engagement of stakeholders, (b) keeps the stakeholders who possess the most critical data engaged, and (c) reduces chances of stakeholder disappointment or conflict due to unrealistic expectations and demands not met (Eskerod, Huemann, & Savage 2015). The process for a researcher of selecting appropriate evidence involves making critical decisions that influence the outcome of a study or an evaluation process. First, the researcher defines the questions for the participants to answer (Velentgas et al., 2013). The questions need to be clear, concise, and measurable. Also, the questions are designed in such a way that the researcher can either qualify or disqualify a potential source of research information (Crawford et al., 2015; Velentgas et al., 2013). Secondly, it is imperative for the researcher to decide on measurements during the study or evaluation process. The focus of the researcher or leader of a nonprofit can measure the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers. Finally, it is imperative for a researcher to consider how to capture the selected measures when choosing the appropriate sources of research evidence and data. This way, the researcher can use the available data and evidence to make appropriate decisions.

**Collecting data.** Evidence-based decision making entails using data and information from reliable sources when deciding an issue of interest (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). After the researcher determined the potential sources and selected the information needed in the decision-making process, the next stage is data collection. The researcher uses the data collection process to extract the relevant information from the selected sources with the intention of using it to support evidence-based decision-making. Before the researcher collects any new information, it is essential to determine the methods and approach that will be utilized in exacting and storing the data (Teherani, Martimianakis, Stenfors-Hayes, Wadhwa, & Varpio, 2015). Over the years, researchers used a wide range of methods and tools developed to collect data. Some of the data collection methods used include interviews, observations, and questionnaires (Teherani et al., 2015). Also, researchers can collect data from secondary sources by summarizing and recording appropriate information that will help in answering the research questions. The overall goal is to give the researcher access to high-quality information that will aid evidence decision-making process.

Researchers use methods such as observations and interviews to collect different forms and types of information and data (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Therefore, it is always imperative for the researcher to decide on the data collection method that will help in gathering appropriate and high-quality information (Sutton & Austin, 2015; Teherani et al., 2015). A potential limitation of stakeholder theory is the amount of data needed to fulfill the expectations of stakeholders (Shea & Hamilton, 2015). The data collection

method a researcher uses in each study or process will depend on the nature of research question or problem under investigation. Also, it is vital for the researcher to use a data collection approach that will ensure consistency and save the amount of time spent in the information gathering process.

**Analyzing data.** Researchers, scholars, and authors take different approaches when answering or exploring an issue of interest (Wright, O'Brien, Nimmon, Law, & Mylopoulos, 2016). Also, researchers present various findings on a matter of interest. Although researchers can focus on a similar problem in the studies, the results may not be similar due to a wide range of factors such as differences in sample population, methodology, and interventions (Stalmeijer, McNaughton, & Van Mook, 2014). Consequently, it is imperative for a researcher to carry out a more indepth analysis done to determine its suitability for use in responding to an issue of interest. The researcher's process of analyzing data can entail manipulating the collected information in various forms such as plotting it in graphs and finding correlations (Varpio & Meyer, 2017). Also, researchers use data analysis that entails calculating statistical differences and values such as the standard deviation, mean, and median (Varpio & Meyer, 2017). The overall goal is for a researcher to find meaning in the information collected from different sources, collectively used it to answer the research question, and make evidence-based decisions.

When a researcher is analyzing and manipulating data, it is imperative for the researcher to find what is needed to answer research question from the collected data



(Varpio & Meyer, 2017). In some cases, however, the information obtained from the sources may be related to the issue of interest but not exactly what the researcher wanted. A researcher can struggle when using stakeholder theory to demonstrate to leaders of nonprofits, board members, beneficiaries, and donors, the need to collect relevant and actionable data to support strategic action planning (Shea & Hamilton, 2015). In such situations, it is essential for the researcher to find the association between the collected data and the issue that needs addressing (Wright et al., 2016). The process for the researcher entails conducting an in-depth analysis of correlations, trends, and variations. Also, it involves the researcher comparing the information from a source to the results and information from other sources. Throughout the analysis process, the researcher strives to find information used in making appropriate and evidence-based decisions.

### **Stakeholder Theory**

I used Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory as the conceptual framework for this study. According to the tenets of stakeholder theory, leaders of an organization based their actions on the needs, expectations, and requirements of interested parties more than on self-interest (Harrison & Wicks, 2013). Maier (2015) stated that stakeholders are an integral part of organizational success and include both internal and external groups or individuals who can impact the success of the organization. Organization's stakeholder group requirements might include socially responsible behavior and community service. For some nonprofit organizations, group requirements could also include the cost of administrative services, cost reductions, emergency response, and business continuity

planning (Baldrige, 2017).

Using stakeholder theory, I researched ways to improve the functioning of leaders in an organization. Leaders who develop resilient relationships and interaction with internal stakeholders is the key to success (Maier, 2015). Harrison and Wicks (2013) defined organizational success and stakeholder support because the actions a leader takes in the interest of stakeholders over self-serving agendas. The key concepts that underly the theory are (a) the value of the stakeholder, (b) the mutual interest of the stakeholder and the organization, and (c) the stakeholder's relationship with the organization (Hörisch, Freeman, & Schaltegger, 2014).

**Scholarly research using stakeholder theory.** It is imperative to state that leaders of corporations and businesses can either create or destroy value for the stakeholders. Therefore, the organization's leaders' actions and decisions can determine the confidence or uncertainty of the stakeholders. Stakeholders expect those tasked with the duty of leadership to take their views, desires, goals, and interest into account when making decisions about what is best for the organization (Boulouta & Pitelis, 2014). Consequently, organizational leaders strive to predict the reactions of the stakeholders and to understand how stakeholders judge and view the value conveyed by the leaders of the organization. Researchers define this complex set of parameters in the environment in which business leaders operate and managers carry out their activities (Fuenfschilling & Truffer, 2014). Researchers develop theories and frameworks to explain the interactions between organization leaders and the stakeholders. Researchers use stakeholder theory to

focus on examining how organizations leaders strive to create as much value as possible for the stakeholders. While the theory and approach may not be accepted universally, researchers found significant application in management and organizational literature and research. For example, the stakeholder engagement is essential for effectiveness, increased transparency, and trust with organizational leaders. When leaders of an organization increase stakeholder engagement, there is a decrease in ambiguous information because of an increase in transparency (Cheng, Ioannou, & Serafeim, 2014). Also, as stakeholder perceptions of transparency increase, trust increases as well because stakeholders have confidence that leaders are being held accountable for their actions (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014).

Leaders use stakeholder theory to serve as a point of reference in discourses involving the different management approaches to achieve their business goals and objectives (Wu & Wokutch, 2015). Currently, stakeholder theory has emerged in the research as the focal point in debates over various approaches to the corporate social responsibility that organizations use to improve their images (Kristen, 2015). Researchers explain the proliferation of studies to clarify why leaders of organizations should carefully identify and respond to the needs of their stakeholders. Researchers provided valuable insights into the theoretical framework, but there are still ambiguities regarding stakeholder theory's place, influence, and significance in the current competitive world of business (Kristen, 2015). Stakeholder theory constitutes a critical yet divisive issue in the management and organizational research (Kristen, 2015). Also, the growing interest in

the framework shows that it is a vital concept that can change intellectualism and the understanding of the field of business and management sciences.

The term, *stakeholders*, evolved to become a widespread and essential concept in many studies today. Freeman (1984) defined stakeholders as any group whose members influence the success of an organization. Baldrige (2017) defined stakeholders as all groups that are or might be affected by an organization's actions and success.

Researchers contend that the concept of stakeholders rose to prominence in the United States with the primacy bestowed on financial values by influential citizens (Baumfield, 2016). Researchers questioned and raised critical concerns about the need for those tasked with management responsibilities to consider how their actions and decisions may affect and influence both primary and secondary stakeholders (Soin, 2016). Also, leaders will need to engage in practices that strive to respond to the needs of the stakeholders who interact with an organization in one way or another.

While researchers agree that organizational leaders concentrate on responding to the needs of their stakeholders, many researchers questioned how stakeholders are grouped and viewed by those leaders (Guenther, Guenther, Schiemann, & Weber, 2015). Guenther et al. (2015) stated that organizational leaders should count their stakeholders by grouping them into different categories depending on their association with the organization and its processes. Researchers grouped stakeholders to identify their interaction with organizational leaders at multiple levels (Guenther & Hoppe, 2014). One such group is internal stakeholders comprising of employees, unions, and managers.

These stakeholders have a direct or indirect influence on the capital structure in an organization. The stakeholder can directly influence the direction that leaders of an organization take to meet its business goals and objectives (Kristen, 2015). The other category is external stakeholders who may not directly influence the operations of the organization. External stakeholders include banks, the local communities, competitors, and other organizations (Kristen, 2015). Despite stakeholders' lack of direct influence on the organization, identifying and managing the needs of external stakeholders is imperative if organizational leaders desire to improve the organization's image and achieve a competitive edge in the market.

A review of scholarly research revealed that the development of stakeholder theories mirrors the transformation of traditional bilateral relationships. This transformation occurs between organizations, and the relevant groups and individuals they interact with, such as unions, employees, customers, and suppliers (Boulouta & Pitelis, 2014). In most studies on the significance of stakeholder theory, researchers have argued that any individual or group can affect or be affected by the actions and decisions of an organization. Martínez, López, Pedro, and Fernández (2016) examined the relationships of how parties and groups are involved in and how organizational leaders take part to achieve agreed-upon goals and objectives. It is imperative for business leaders and employees to differentiate between these parties and prioritize them to meet their expectations in a logical manner (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014).

Boulouta and Pitelis (2014) identified two groups of stakeholders: primary and secondary. The primary group consists of people who have formal contracts with the organization and play a critical role in its functioning. The primary groups include owners of the organization, unions, employees, customers, and suppliers. The secondary group is people who, despite their direct involvement with the organization, do not have contractual relationships with the leaders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014). Although the secondary stakeholders may not have contractual ties with the leaders of an organization, they can exert significant influence on its activities. Secondary stakeholders include competitors, citizens, governments, the public, and the local community (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014).

Researchers have concentrated on the power, influences, and claims that every stakeholder group has on the organization and its processes (Martínez et al., 2016). The outcomes of the studies have offered researchers a broad and robust theoretical framework and foundation based on the applications of stakeholder theory (Martínez et al., 2016). Researchers have shown that organizations can improve both their financial and nonfinancial performance through efforts meant to satisfy the interests and needs of the various categories of stakeholders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014). Also, researchers have shown that organizations can improve their sustainability and competitiveness in the market by recognizing and addressing the needs of their primary and secondary stakeholders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014).

Scholars and researchers have taken a broad range of approaches when studying and analyzing stakeholder theory. Some researchers consider how leaders identify the needs of the stakeholder; other researchers examine how leaders respond to the needs of the stakeholder. Researchers have also identified different methods to show how organizations can manage the interests of stakeholders. According to Martínez et al. (2016), researchers continue to use three major theoretical trends to analyze the stakeholder theory and examine the relationship between stakeholders and an organization. The first approach is the strategic method. In this approach, researchers argue that stakeholders often either hinder or facilitate the realization of the goals and objectives of an organization. When organizational leaders manage the needs of stakeholders appropriately, they position the organization to achieve short-term and long-term goals and objectives. In contrast, leaders of organizations that fail to identify and respond to the needs of their primary stakeholders may be unable to realize organizational leader's full potential in the market.

The second method is the responsibility approach. With the responsibility approach, leaders strive to create quality relationships with the stakeholder (Martínez et al., 2016). In other words, stakeholders can help organizational leaders to achieve their financial and nonfinancial goals when they have a positive and essential relationship with the organization (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014). Therefore, a leader's primary goal is to identify and satisfy the needs of the organization's stakeholders.

The third method is the convergent approach. Leaders use this convergent approach method to act as an intermediate trend with the other two approaches. In this method, the organization's leaders strive to take a strategic and thoughtful approach to develop and maintain a positive working relationship with the organization's stakeholders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014).

Researchers have also taken a different route when examining the significance and place of stakeholder theory in the operations of organizations in today's highly competitive world (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014). One such method is the descriptive approach, in which the researcher focuses on examining how leaders strive to define and prioritize various types of interest to respond to the needs of stakeholders (Martínez et al., 2016). The other commonly studied method is the instrumental approach. In this approach, researchers focus on explaining and analyzing the way organizational leaders rely on stakeholder management to achieve specific organizational goals (McWilliams & Siegel, 2014). The goals may include growth, stability, and profitability. Other researchers have focused on the normative approach, noting that the satisfaction of stakeholder' interests is the organizational leader's primary objective. Researchers also stated that leaders use the normative method to maintain economic goals, but the leaders should not view the goals as more important than the interests and needs of stakeholders.

Researchers have questioned whether stakeholder theory is practical and have examined its application to the operations and management of modern-day organizations (Kristen, 2015). In considering this question, researchers have started by revisiting the



primary principles and ideas of stakeholder theory. Researchers studied organizational leaders who use stakeholder theory work hard to maintain the relationships they have with the various people and groups affected by their processes and decisions (Fuenfschilling & Truffer, 2014).

Researchers argued that the success of an organization is dependent on the relationship the organization's leaders develop with the stakeholders, and how the leaders work to meet their needs (Wu & Wokutch, 2015). Researchers also studied the framework premise that an organization's leaders should strive to identify and meet these essential needs to remain competitive in the market. After researchers revisited the theoretical basis of the framework and its major premises have gone on to delineate the framework that surrounds the application of the stakeholder theory (Guenther et al., 2015). Researchers identified two variants use to respond to the question of whether the stakeholder theory is practical: the descriptive approach and the instrumental approach.

In the descriptive approach, researchers argued that stakeholder theory is a framework that considers leaders of an organization as well as the competitions that occur in the market (Baumfield, 2016). In this sense, researchers view the framework used to describe and explain the specific behaviors and characteristics that affect the operations and existence of an organization. Also, researchers described how executives make decisions and manage an organization in a manner that will lead to the realization of business goals and objectives (Baumfield, 2016). Baumfield (2016) stated that it is critical to say that the descriptive approach shows that stakeholder theory can only allow

for the exploratory analysis of an organization. In other words, leaders do not have practical insights and evidence to study and understand the connection between the traditional business objectives and the needs of various stakeholders in the market.

The other approach that researchers used to determine whether stakeholder theory is empirical is the instrumental approach. In this case, researchers believed that organizational leaders who optimize stakeholder management approaches would help to ensure an organization that is more stable and profitable, compared with other organizations in the market, assuming all factors remain constant (Baumfield, 2016; Soin, 2016). Researchers stated that the instrumental approach postulates positive results if organizational leaders manage the needs and interests of stakeholders in the right way. In some cases, researchers have used conventional statistical methodologies to demonstrate the relationship between the performance of the leaders in an organization and stakeholder management (Baumfield, 2016). However, researchers analyzed the diverse nature of outcomes in such studies made it difficult to come up with a clear relationship between the variables or to affirm the extent to which they may affect the operations of an organization. The researcher's diverse nature of findings demonstrated the complexities experienced when using stakeholder theory as the basis for understanding some of the processes that occurred for organizational leaders (Baumfield, 2016). Despite this, researchers can use the findings to offer valuable insight to organizational leaders as they attempt to achieve competitiveness in the market.

**Comparison to other conceptual framework theories.** I reviewed several other theories for the conceptual framework and concluded that those would not be the best theories to use based on the business problem and the literature review. First, I considered using transformational theory. Using transformational theory as a lens, the researcher would focus on the impact of the leader's abilities and relationship with stakeholders. Transformational leaders can empower employees, act as role models with high moral ideals, create an organizational vision, set up organizational norms and codes of conduct, build trust, and cultivate relationships (Rezvani et al., 2016). However, researchers recognize that there are critical concepts identified in transformational theory and how these concepts support leader's actions to influence employee satisfaction. The transformational theory would not work well with the stated business problem—that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations lack strategies to select, collect, and analyze data—because I am not researching the leader but rather how the leader uses data in decision making.

Second, researchers use the phenomenological design to study various phenomena and processes that occur in different areas and settings (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). This approach to research originates from the fields of psychology and philosophy and emphasizes the need to understand people's perception of an event or process. In this design, the researcher's focus is on the meaning that people give to an event and not on the separation of the individual from the event. Eddles-Hirsch (2015) stated that the focus of the phenomenological design is on what human beings experience about a

phenomenon of interest and how they interpret such experiences. Therefore, researchers who take the phenomenological, approach to research will strive to understand the way a population of interest perceives and understands a given situation (Bevan, 2014; Wilson, 2015). By looking at various perspectives on a similar situation, researchers can use the phenomenological design to create generalizations about phenomenon or an experience. The generalizations are the basis of future studies on the topic of interest.

It is important to state that researchers use phenomenological design to develop qualitative frames. In this regard, using the method helps researchers discover and understand a phenomenon in a data-rich environment and through the experiences of the people who interact with the phenomenon (Bevan, 2014; Wilson, 2015). Also, applying phenomenological design permits the researcher to explore and analyze the contextual meaning of an event through the situational knowledge and data gathered during the study (Wilson, 2015). Researchers use the investigatory approach to lead to valid conclusions to explain the events and processes that take place in a natural environment. The phenomenological design would not work with the business problem of this study because this design does not support how leaders use data to make decisions.

Third, researchers noted that ethnographic design could also be adopted and used to examine various issues of interest in the context of management and business processes. Researchers use the ethnographic design concept of using up-close and personal experiences to gather insights into a research problem (Baskerville & Myers, 2015). In this case, the researcher goes beyond mere observations to engage in various

activities in a study with the goal of gathering personal insights and experiences used to answer the research question (Baskerville & Myers, 2015). Researchers state that the ethnographic design and approach may require learning a new culture, intensive learning of a language, and the study of a single domain of interest. A researcher can also use ethnographic design to blend with interview methods, observations, and analysis of historical facts and data (Butlewski, Misztal, & Belu, 2016; Rashid, Caine, & Goetz, 2015). A researcher's overall goal is to gather information used to understand the topic of interest fully. In this approach, a researcher uses observations, interviews, and data to answer the research question. Thus, researchers can use the method to collect both quantitative and qualitative data related to the topic of study.

From a social sciences point of view, ethnography refers to the method researchers rely on to examine the behavior of individuals and groups in real contexts instead of experimental settings created by the researchers (Butlewski et al., 2016). This approach allows the researcher to gather data without interfering with the everyday activities and processes that take place in the area of interest. A researcher focuses on gathering data in a natural environment where the phenomenon of interest can be studied efficiently instead of creating an experimental setting (Rashid et al., 2015). Researchers use the data analysis process in the ethnographic design to interpret the function and meaning of human actions (Baskerville & Myers, 2015). Also, researchers may use statistical methods to make sense of the events that take place in the natural so that they can come up with appropriate answers to the formulated research questions. The

ethnographic design is not the right approach for this study because I am not observing the behavior of the leader; I am researching the how the leader uses data to make decisions in helping youth workers.

### **Certifying and Training Individuals Who Work With Youth**

The workforce is a critical ingredient for effective and efficient nonprofit organizations. The workforce is the people actively involved in accomplishing the organization's work (Baldrige, 2017). The workforce includes permanent, temporary, and part-time personnel, as well as any contract employees that fall under the organization's supervision structure. It also includes team leaders, supervisors, and managers at all levels. For an organization whose leaders rely on volunteers and membership, the workforce definition applies. The employees play a crucial role in driving nonprofit organizations to achieve their long-term goals and objectives. For this to happen, employees must possess the relevant skills, knowledge, and expertise that will enable them to carry out their duties proficiently and contribute to organizational growth.

Nonprofit organizations leaders work towards improving the quality of their staff through various professional development programs and initiatives. Even though the concept of professional development is not something new, their importance for workers has gained momentum at a slow pace (Raina, & Roebuck, 2016). Grasse, Davis, and Ihrke (2014) examined the indicators of members leaving a nonprofit organization because of the lack of professional development. Offering opportunities for professional development can provide greater rates among the organization's members (Cowlshaw,

Birch, McLennan, & Hayes, 2014). Leaders of nonprofit organizations use professional development as an avenue for meeting the needs of the targeted societies and individuals.

Maiden (2014) described training as a broad term that encompasses different education, support logistics, and certification opportunities that are available to workers. Maiden (2014) added that training has existed for decades in national and local nonprofits in addition to youth-serving organizations. However, the concept has increasingly become diverse due to the different paths that people and organizations take to achieve their professional and organizational goals. Some nonprofit leaders contribute to achieving the goals of the stakeholder no matter how diverse (Verbeke & Tung, 2013). Therefore, the opportunities for workers in nonprofit organizations may be diverse and target different areas of professional life (Maiden, 2014).

Researchers describe youth training initiatives meant to prepare members to become productive workers by offering opportunities, support, and helping them to gain the knowledge and competencies needed to meet increasing challenges they face as they work and mature (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). The program leaders provide a useful value and reliable avenue through which members can improve their skills and work towards contributing to organizational goals. Participation in such programs enables members to gain the knowledge and expertise that they need to deal with work and life challenges. Leaders that positively engage with their stakeholders build a relationship that can create long-term value (Ko & Hur, 2014; Verbeke & Tung, 2013). Recruiting new members with a history of volunteer work in high school and college can lead to a

stronger team dynamic with an increase in retention for the organization (Christoph, Gniewosz, & Reinders, 2014; Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015).

The efforts of practitioners, policymakers, and researchers concerned with enhancing the well-being and performance of the workforce and stakeholders have contributed to the emergence of positive youth development and training programs around the world. Rooted in these initiatives is the belief that human development contributes to the well-being of the individual workers and the organization as a whole (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). The overall objective is to address the issues, challenges, and barriers that may prevent young people from realizing their potential and contributing to organizational goals. Providing members with challenges but a barrier-free work environment can lead to job satisfaction and can retain volunteers for a longer time (Mandhanya, 2015).

Researchers study the training needs and determine that training is likely to drive nonprofit organizations to work towards coming up with systematic processes to measure the impact and effectiveness of various training development and certification initiatives (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Nonprofit leaders will be able to assemble and keep a team of professional and highly trained workers who will contribute to the realization of the organizational leader's goals and objectives (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016). Also, the organizational leaders will have a team of employees who can help them to identify and respond to the needs of the targeted individuals and groups. Leaders must recognize the need to support their



workforce to efficiently interact with all stakeholders, employees, and volunteer members (Schuchmann & Seufert, 2015). Volunteer members that face conflicts and constraints between their career, job, home life, and volunteer work can increase turnover for an organization (McNamee & Peterson, 2015).

Researchers have shown that the format and content of training and certification programs vary from one organization to the other (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006; Yilmaz, 2015). Leaders depend on the stage of development, available resources, and the organization's needs. A careful review of existing literature suggests that most leaders tend to differentiate between full-time, permanent, and part-time employees when creating training programs (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). The leaders objective is to ensure that the members of each group have access to opportunities aligned with needs, expectations, and requirements for professional development. Also, the differentiation ensures that leaders use their time and financial resources in a manner that will bring the best outcomes at minimal costs.

Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) suggested that some nonprofit organizations can only give new members limited opportunities for training and certification due to the limited nature of resources, inaccessible locations, prohibitive costs, and the lack of transportation. In other cases, organizations avoid such programs to limit disruptions to their everyday practices and operations. Researchers discussed the limitations and barriers notwithstanding, leaders of nonprofit organizations can develop different training delivery and certification models to help workers become more productive and efficient.

Researchers have also studied these models with focus on their nature, content, format, and effectiveness.

**Team and community training.** One of the most commonly researched and used training models is the team and community training. Leaders in small organizations tend to find it challenging to locate affordable and relevant training opportunities for their young employees (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). Also, researchers found that many programs that are readily available cannot offer the specialized training that youth workers require to work with nonprofit organizations because such work settings are different from contemporary work environment regarding demands, targets, and structures. Consequently, it is imperative for organization leaders to resort to models that allow them to address the training needs of their workers without impacting their budgets adversely.

Researchers found that teams and community training programs have proven to be effective in addressing the needs of untrained workers in nonprofit organizations. Leaders that empower their employees to build relationships with their stakeholders support the foundation of the stakeholder theory. More specifically, researchers discovered the approach to training empowers organizations by giving them an opportunity to determine and influence the kind of training that their employees will receive (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). Also, the training can model into a train-the-trainer instruction where one experienced staff member is sent outside to learn from others before coming back to help the rest of the workforce. Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew

(2006) concurred by stating that team, and community-based training initiatives provide an avenue for young employees to learn from each other. In the long run, the leaders of nonprofit organizations will be able to tap into the skills and expertise of individual employees to build a robust and highly qualified workforce.

Leaders who create an atmosphere of employee empowerment also can create continuous improvement for the organization and stakeholders (Schuchmann & Seufert, 2015). The other commonly studied and used approach is the in-service training programs and initiatives. A review of previous studies reveals that leaders of several nonprofit organizations view on-the-job training as a reliable and cost-effective means of improving the skills and expertise of their workers at a minimal cost (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006).

Unlike the community and team models that entail drawing a professional to conduct the training session, workers in the in-service program learn as they carry out their regular work duties and responsibilities. In this model, employees have an opportunity to share what they have learned with each other during regular staff meetings. One of the main benefits that researchers link to the in-service training method is that in such a model, untrained workers are at the center of the learning and development process. When workers oversee their education and the developmental process, they can capitalize on their desires to become better employees.

Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) researched the in-service training model and stated that it could be part of weekly, monthly, or bimonthly staff meetings. In such

cases, leaders can evaluate the kind of skills and knowledge that young workers can acquire while their job by using the in-service model. In other cases, trainers use the model as part of professional coaching programs. More specifically, it gives organizational leaders an avenue to work with qualified and highly trained professionals to impart knowledge on young workers. In the context of coaching, leaders that use in-service training programs enable workers and employees to apply what they learn from coaches and other workers. In the end, in-service training programs can ensure that employees understand their work and the organization's expectation of its employees' organization.

**Affinity groups.** A common model that has featured significantly professional training and development literature is the use of affinity groups. Affinity groups are independent systems made up of about five to 15 people working towards a common goal or objective (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). In some cases, the affinity groups work together over an extended period to ensure that they contribute to the realization of organizational goals. Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew (2006) examined members of affinity groups had formalized rules to ensure that they achieve the intended training and development goals.

The leaders of the groups guarantee that members work together to improve their skills and knowledge. The commonly cited benefits of the affinity group model include the opportunities for self-management and regulation, cost-effectiveness, and collaboration among workers. Also, the model strives to create intricate connections

between young employees and senior leaders. Different stakeholder's needs can influence an organization in varied ways over time (Verbeke & Tung, 2013).

**Technology.** Technology has emerged as a primary driver of training for employees, including those in the nonprofit sector. It is important to note that that technology is a training delivery model as well as a support mechanism for other training and development programs for organizational leaders. Consequently, researchers have strived to explore how technology impacts on and influence training. Siricharoen (2012), for instance, discussed the use of social media networks and how they are becoming a critical feature in the working of the organization. Siricharoen pointed out that the Internet and various social media platforms have become the cornerstone of communication in the current business world. In the study, Siricharoen describes popular and useful social media platforms, such as LinkedIn and Facebook, which have turned communication into a global, interactive conversation for individuals and organizational leaders. The Internet-based solutions allow new members to learn from each other and acquire vital skills from peers (Siricharoen, 2012). Therefore, Internet-based solutions are used to support training initiatives in nonprofit organizations.

Siricharoen (2012) provided an indepth analysis of how employees can learn through social media techniques and platforms. In Siricharoen the researcher reported that social learning provides a positive setting that supports both audio and visual learning. Also, social learning allows leaders to create individualized learning opportunities and strategies for employees, members, and stakeholders. Researchers have

linked social learning with increased opportunities for employees to work together to address various issues and challenges that affect their work (Siricharoen, 2012). The social learning goal is achievable because of increased expertise and skills as well as the empowerment of workers to take charge of their duties and development (Sabharal, 2013). Thus, social learning remains a valuable model that can help organizational leaders improve the skills and expertise of their workers. Leaders that add value by empowering managers and workforce can create value for the stakeholders (Harrison & Wicks, 2013).

Stephan, Patterson, Kelly, and Mair (2016) explored the concept of social learning and training by focusing on the process of driving social change in nonprofit organizations. Stephan et al. reviewed existing literature on organizations engaging in positive social change actions with a focus on the role of market-based organizations in positive social change. Stephan et al. identified four aspects of organization change (1) positive social change, (2) integrative framework, (3) categorization method, and (4) future opportunities. Stephan et al. proposed that positive social change is defined as a process that transformed thought, behaviors, and actions of individuals, corporation, society, and the environment (Stephan et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Stephan et al. (2016) revealed two categories of positive social change organizations. The first involved research in market-based institutions and the second is research in similar disciplines. The researchers identified gaps in the mechanisms and practices involved in the formation of positive social change

organizations and proposed the development of a conceptual framework to integrate and understand outcomes of positive social change (Stephan et al., 2016). Overall, Stephan et al. stated social learning could help organizations and employees to acquire information, knowledge, and skills on how to deal with various issues that emerge in the market. Therefore, organizational leaders need to support and promote positive social learning so that they can improve the capabilities and skills of their employees.

**Significance of training for employees.** Leaders must understand the significance of training for their employees; it is imperative to know the characteristics of the nonprofit organizations (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). Unlike other service workers, most of the members of nonprofit organizations are part-time or volunteers (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). Another critical characteristic of this group is that they enter the nonprofit sector through different paths. Therefore, the part-time or volunteer may have backgrounds and experience in a broad range of fields that include education, social work, public health, community education, and medical practice. Successful leadership transformation requires an understanding of the diverse needs of the stakeholder (Schuchmann & Seufert, 2015; Walker, 2014). In other cases, new members enter the sector without formal training and education. Instead, they rely on the skills and knowledge acquired on the job to be able to carry out their duties (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). Therefore, instructors for training programs offer an avenue to harness and improve the member's skills and expertise. Also, it allows organizational leaders to understand and improve the nature and capability of its workforce as they work towards

achieving short term and long term organizational goals and objectives (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006).

Researchers provided evidence that training can improve the quality of employees in an organization. The ability of organizational leaders to offer training opportunities for their workers influences the quality of the workforce (Reed & Bogardus, 2015). More specifically, researchers have pointed out that training program makes it possible for members to understand their needs and roles, develop into skilled professionals, and interact with peers. Furthermore, it provides an avenue for organizations to communicate their goals, missions, and policies to new members (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006).

Researchers showed that new members tend to demonstrate a unique trait known as *sigfluence*. Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) describe sigfluence as the desire to achieve positive influence over one's fate and activities. These desires affect the quality of a young workforce by influencing their academic, emotional, social, and personal achievement. Most members tend to rely on the professional development programs to make a healthy transition into the workforce and face some of the challenges that they may encounter. Sementelli (2016) discussed how imperative it is for employees to have an insight and a voice into organizational issues for overall improvement of an organization. Leaders intend to maintain a reliable workforce, organizational profitability and balance the interest of all stakeholders (Moriarty, 2014). Researchers found that in the longer term, the training programs will increase the quality of the labor force, thereby providing quality to the organizational leaders.



Secondly, training enables members to survive and succeed in the dynamic nonprofit sector. Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) researched that members who have undergone some form of certification training will be better equipped to meet the different needs of the groups and individuals that benefit from the services of nonprofit organizations. Through their training agenda, leaders of nonprofit organizations can invest in their workers and train them to address the individual needs of their service users. Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) point out that new members usually experience an overwhelming feeling of responsibility when working under conditions where there is little time to adjust and recover from events, situations, programs, and individual demands.

Some leaders of the nonprofit sector may also subject members to significant pressure as they work towards meeting the changing needs of the target groups. In such instances, members may experience significant burnout and emotional demand (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). The situation becomes worse in cases where the volunteer members join the nonprofit sector with little knowledge of the expectations of the leader. Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) state that training programs can significantly reduce cases of burnout and help volunteer members to stay in the nonprofit sector. Leaders, employees, members, and stakeholders' success and retention relate directly to stakeholder theory. By reducing burnout, volunteer members can acquire the skills that will assist them to succeed and advance their careers in the nonprofit sector.

Other researchers and scholars have argued that training initiatives and programs give members the chance to help each other to identify, understand, and address stressful work situations and issues. Akhavan, Ramezan, Moghaddam, and Mehralian (2014), for instance, conducted a study to explore the relationship between knowledge creation, ethics, and business performance. According to the researchers, ethics struggles with reconciling sets of values held by different groups and individuals. Using the Yokel model for organizational performance and the Takeuchi model for knowledge creation, the researchers were able to examine the link between knowledge and ethics, and business performance.

Akhavan et al. (2014) identified a strong positive correlation between both business performance and ethics, and knowledge creation and ethics. However, the researcher did not determine any correlation between knowledge creation and business performance. The findings of this study are useful to a researcher to demonstrate the significance of knowledge when it comes to organizational performance and ethics. Leaders must create an ethical relationship with stakeholders affected by their organization (Dawkins, 2014). Through training initiatives, leaders of nonprofit organizations can impart knowledge that will help employees address ethical issues and improve their performance. In this sense, professional development is an ingredient for the success of leaders of nonprofit organizations.

**Quality of training.** Researchers have verified the accuracy and integrity of data using appropriate methods of triangulation that quality is very critical in the context of

training. More specifically, leaders of organizations will only be able to benefit from professional training initiatives if they are in line with the specific needs of the trainees or members. Therefore, researchers have attempted to explore some of the issues that influence and define the quality of professional development understandings. Chung et al. (2009) conducted a comprehensive review of existing literature on the use and quality of training programs in the United States and the world. The researchers studied both qualitative and quantitative studies to determine what constituted quality professional training and development. The process entailed examining the policies and context of professional learning to identify how they impact workers. The researchers identified four significant features that defined the quality of training initiatives. They included the context of learning, professional communities, learning experience, and content. Chung et al. concluded that the organizations should strive to come up with sustainable and in-depth professional learning programs and that support collaborative and active learning.

Chung et al. (2009) believed that another factor that featured significantly in previous studies is the time span of the training and development scheme. Chung et al. reported that training programs sustained over time and include significant contact hours result in greater learning opportunities. The researchers noted that for organizations leaders to achieve this kind of duration, they must view training as part of their culture. In such cases, every member should be motivated to take some time to attend the programs while the organizations provide the necessary time and funding. Camaraderie, accomplishments, and such undertakings may positively influence stakeholder

engagement (Lu & Roto, 2016). Finally, organizational leaders should structure the programs in such a way that they offer opportunities for indepth analysis and understanding of work-related issues. Chung et al. added that when organizational leaders come up with a program that offers sufficient time for learning and development, employees will learn and gather competencies needed to succeed in the work setting. Also, organizational leaders will collaborate to come up with solutions to the issues that affect their practice.

**Training and intervention programs.** Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) conducted a study to define the quality of training interventions and programs. The researchers found that the size of training literature has grown significantly, only a few systematic reviews were done to explore the quality and impact of such programs or organizational and employee outcomes. Also, only a few researchers have examined the exact effect of various features of training programs on organizational practices and the results. Therefore, the researchers gathered data on a federally funded program known as Eisenhower Professional Development Program to determine the effect of the program on organizational performance. The researchers encompass different models and approaches such as peer coaching, workshops, conferences, study groups, professional networks, task force work, and collaborative work.

Garet et al. (2001) operationalized and integrated ideas on best practices to come up with a set of scales that described the features of the Eisenhower program. Furthermore, the researchers tested the impact of each characteristic to determine how

they influenced performance. The researchers found that time span and the contact hours significantly affect the learning and coherence opportunities. Also, the results revealed that emphasis on content ensured that participant acquired the skills needed to become high performers. Finally, the researchers revealed that communication was critical to the successful use of training plans to improve performance and enhance workforce quality.

**Professional development programs.** Another area that leaders look at when examining the quality and relevance of professional development programs is coherence. Hörisch et al. (2014) researched professional development programs for the employees and the similarities to stakeholder theory. Leaders use professional development programs to determine how to help employees make a positive connection to the stakeholder with active learning and training. The primary goal is to ensure that employees apply what they learn in the sessions to their everyday duties.

Content is the researcher's key feature that defined the quality of training initiatives. A study conducted by Chung et al. (2009) reported that sustained and collaborative training led to improved performance. Chung et al. indicated that training programs with the right content allow practitioners to become competent and proficient in their areas of specialization. In the nonprofit sector, leaders articulate and work towards developing relevant content that will allow members to become proficient and support their stakeholders. Leaders must recognize the requirements of stakeholders to understand their changing needs to sustain the competitive advantage (Verbeke & Tung, 2013). Also, leaders need programs to have content that encouraged professional

dialogue, exchange of resources, and professional learning (Chung et al., 2009). In the long run, leaders can use such programs to prepare members of their organization to take up the challenges that workers face in the nonprofit sector.

### **Effective Approaches to Key Performance Measures**

Leaders in organizations expect that certification programs will enhance the quality of their workforce and contribute to the realization of long-term and short-term objectives. However, leaders determine the impact of the interventions by evaluating the programs and measuring their impact. Knox and Wang (2016) provided a rationale for measuring and evaluating professional development and certification programs by noting that organizational leaders can only make responsible decisions when they understand the quality and ability of their workforce. Knox and Wang outlined a framework with five critical levels of development and certification to measure how the programs impact employees and organizational leaders. Researchers used this process to look at the participants' reactions, learning, use of knowledge and skills, and performance.

Measuring a leader's performance can have more than one purpose. Measuring a leader's performance can allow the stakeholder to see trends in how leaders operate an organization, which allows the leader to show the value of the organization to the stakeholders (Harrison & Wicks, 2013). In some cases, researchers understand the impact and effectiveness of the certification and development programs by measuring performance. Knox and Wang (2016) described the role of performance measurement (PM) systems in small and medium-sized nonprofit firms (SMNs). The researchers

provided empirical evidence to support the importance of leadership, technical competency, staff education, organizational culture, value for the stakeholders, and the success of performance measurement in SMNs.

Knox and Wang (2016) explored real experiences from researchers involved in the implementation of PM funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Knox and Wang concluded that for SMNs, leadership, technical competency, and supportive organizational culture were necessary drivers in the successful implementation of PM. Researchers take the results of PM into account, and organizational leaders need to monitor the performance of their employees to determine whether the certification programs are bringing the intended outcomes regarding individual and organizational learning. This way, the leaders will be able to make adjustments that will result in significant improvements to employee performance.

**Performance measures.** Gao (2015) explored the trends in global performance measurement focusing on measurement strategies, challenges, and outcomes. Gao conducted a literature review of strategies and tools used by public sector leaders in their performance improvement quests. Gao noted the importance of objective and subjective measurements along with the shift from performance measurements to performance management highlighted emerging trends in the literature.

Global leaders continue to face challenges with performance measures notably, the measurement techniques, the need for multiple tools in the evaluation of managerial performance and accountability, barriers to organizational change, stakeholders, and

organizational goals. Gao (2015) stated that there was significant progress in the development of objective, subjective, and performance management. However, researchers noted the usefulness of performance measurements in organizational performance remained mixed. Researchers also noted that performance measurement does not guarantee improved outcomes. Gao concluded that leaders need to recognize that multiple factors influence performance improvements, for example, culture, organization design, stakeholders, goals, social norms, and individuals. Nonprofit leaders could learn best practices in the use of performance measurements from the public sector as they attempt to determine the impact of certification programs on their workforce.

Researchers found that one of the primary relationships with the stakeholder theory is the active link between the performance of an organization and the bonds of the stakeholders (Hörisch et al., 2014). Hall and Gannett (2010) noted the effect of certification on staff development and quality could also act as an indicator of the effectiveness of the programs. Hall and Gannett reviewed two different credentialing and certification programs in Massachusetts to determine how they affected staff quality. The programs were Professional Youth Worker credential and School-Age Youth Development Credential. The researchers demonstrated that programs resulted in the creating of highly qualified and experienced staff. Also, the researchers noted the program enhanced staff quality by supporting the use of skills and knowledge, active learning, and collaborative practice. Hall and Gannett noted that while the actual impact of certification programs on staff quality may not be apparent and occurs over an



extended period, organizations stand to benefit when they embrace professional development and credentialing programs.

Hall and Gannett (2010) carried out a continuous assessment to determine the short-term gains that they realize during the programs. Certification programs are highly subjective and depend on the individual organization and industry (Lindstrom et al., 2013). In some cases, certification programs are a clear indicator of the existence of high-level proficiency and expertise. In other instances, such programs represent a minimal qualification (Bausman & Barry, 2011). Bausman and Barry (2011) found that the certification process may also appear to be time-consuming and cumbersome. These challenges notwithstanding, certification and the evaluation of its outcomes remain vital to the success of several organizations and industries.

**Selecting comparative data to support decision making.** Leaders planning for success is critical for any organization in any sector. Leaders that plan for stakeholder's interest should always take precedence over any other group's interests (Moriarty, 2014). Available research evidence shows that leaders in nonprofit organizations engage in strategic planning so that they can achieve their goals and objectives. Meerman and Huyser (2014) examined the literature on the process of strategic planning and its vital importance to the nonprofit organization leaders to understand and execute in a redeveloping community. Meerman and Huyser focused on the strategic planning and interviewed 13 human service providers. Using the theoretical framework, the researchers presented the concepts of how organizations collaborate and the extent of their

involvement with the community changing by using four strategic categories: defenders, prospectors, analyzers, and reactors. Strategies ranged from finding new opportunities to a shift in service and participation. The findings presented by the researchers provided useful information regarding strategic planning used during a change in the community based on its type. These results demonstrate the importance of planning in the work of nonprofit organizations.

It is also important to note that leadership in nonprofit organizations differs regarding their activities, structures, and practices. Guo and Musso (2007) framework demonstrated and provided a clearer understanding of the variety of nonprofit and voluntary organizations. The researchers created a scale consisting of five dimensions: (1) substantive, (2) symbolic, (3) formal, (4) descriptive and (5) participatory. The researchers used the conceptual framework of representation in nonprofit and voluntary organizations for identifying the various representations and social service programs. The researchers used the conceptual framework and provided useful information on certification of youths. It is evident that leaders for nonprofit organizations must carefully plan their operations, activities, and procedures so that they can achieve the intended goals, support decision making, and stakeholder needs. Furthermore, the researchers noted that leaders must make efforts to identify interventions and strategies that will help in responding to the specific human resource needs of each organization.

**Certification strategies.** By adopting a certification program, leaders can improve the workforce development and decision strategies to achieve their mission,

which can positively impact the growth of their organization (Reed & Bogardus, 2015; Richard, 2014). Meerman and Huyser (2014) suggest that certification programs usually promote positive attributes and ensure that leaders of an organization work with members who can bring a positive impact in the work environment as they fulfill their duties and responsibilities.

More specifically, the programs can help leaders in promoting social competence, academic competence, behavioral competence, moral competence, and technical capabilities (Reed & Bogardus, 2015; Richard, 2014). Also, researchers found that certification programs support the resilience and sustainability of an organization by creating a pool of highly qualified and competent workers. These highly qualified and competent employees are benefits that will not only contribute to the achievement of organizational goals but also improve the kind of services that leaders of nonprofit organizations deliver to the target audience. Harrison and Wicks (2013) noted that focusing on too much economic return instead of the employee and the stakeholder needs could result in adverse outcomes. Therefore, leaders of a nonprofit organization that seek to succeed in the market need to embrace and implement the right certification programs that will help in improving the skills and capabilities of young workers.

Researchers found that the current approaches to certifications tend to vary widely as organizational leaders and policymakers try to achieve their missions and goals amid of the current workforce development and economic challenges (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). In some organizations, leaders have introduced pathway programs that

integrate post-secondary education and preparation for career life with the goal of helping new members to gain licensure, industry certification, and relevant technical competencies. In New York and Ohio, leaders of organizations strive to promote the alignment of career pathways to the industry standards while also conducting job-specific technical evaluations and assessments (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006).

Other organizational leaders are collaborating with industry players to share the burden of creating and implement workforce certification programs. In such cases, organizations leaders work together and draw on a communal pool of resources and items to support certification and assessment models that will lead to the creation of a competent workforce and add value to the stakeholder. Shackman (2015) argued that there are going to be setbacks to credentialing in the field, but there are also recognized benefits such as baseline of the member's skills and knowledge, career development, and prestige associated with membership. Even in such instances, leaders must attempt to tailor the programs to suit the specific needs of each organization and its members. While the program in each organization may appear to be different, it is imperative to point out that all programs stress on the significance of a wide range of skills and competencies other than academic rigor and qualifications. Furthermore, the leaders strive to build on the skills of workers so that they can become better performers who can help their members to achieve the set organizational goals and objectives.

Researchers found a common theme that emerged in professional certification and human resource management literature is the influence of the complex local and global

economies on certification practices and programs. Meerman and Huyser (2014) argued that the existence of thousands of certification programs and options mirror the complex and vast local and global economies. The researchers further explained that the existing market trends tend to influence the development, implementation, as well as the governance of such programs. Researchers found that there are certifications created and implemented by specific professional associations and industry groups. In such cases, the industry representatives come together and develop industry-wide standards and measures that every member will embrace and practice (Meerman & Huyser, 2014). In other instances, leaders from organizations such as Cisco and Microsoft give propriety training and certification on the use of specific equipment and products (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006). In both cases, the overall goal is to document trainees' relevant skills needed to achieve their full potential.

**Nonprofit organizations.** Because I focused the study on the process of evaluating the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers in nonprofit organizations, it is imperative to understand such entities and the kind of work setting that employees are likely to encounter. Furthermore, it is useful to explore and understand the leadership and culture in organizations to appreciate the role and significance of youth training and certification. In most instances, leaders in nonprofit organizations focus on furthering a specific social cause in the society or advocating for a view and project. From an economic perspective, the organizational leaders use their revenue and resources to achieve a shared mission and purpose rather than focusing on

increasing profits and dividends for the stakeholder, shareholders, or proprietors (Dent, 2014; Mosley, 2016; Pope, Key, & Saigal, 2015). A review of the existing scholarly literature revealed that most leaders of nonprofit organizations are not the subject of taxation laws, as they work towards furthering a desirable cause in the society (Dent, 2014; Mosley, 2016; Pope, Key, & Saigal, 2015).

The nonprofit organization landscape is usually varied even through many people associate such entities with charitable work. Charities form the high profile and most visible part of the nonprofit sector; however, there are many other types of nonprofit organizations around the world. Using stakeholder theory for leaders insinuates that the decisions of the most prominent stakeholders influence altruistic behavior when salience is a function of power, legitimacy, and urgency (Shea & Hamilton, 2015). In most cases, leaders of nonprofits tend to advocate for the well-being of the community and the underserved population (Dent, 2014). Nonprofits include sports clubs, industry associations, trade unions, cooperatives, and advocacy groups (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012).

Dent (2014) claims that leaders of nonprofit organizations focus on providing critical and essential services to local and global communities through human service projects and programs, developmental initiatives, education, health services, and medical research. Regardless of the size and area of operation, leaders of nonprofit entities strive to generate revenue and resources that will enable them to provide a lifeline to those in need of services and products (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012). Therefore, nonprofit leaders employ a qualified and experienced team, made up of paid workers, executives, and

volunteers. The overall goal of these employees is not to help the organization make a profit or achieve a competitive advantage over other players in the local or global markets (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012). Instead, the employees work together to help the organization generate resources that can be used to meet the needs of the targeted groups and communities (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012). Nonprofit leaders are accountable to stakeholders beyond community members and consumers, including funders, board members, and staff members (Mosley, 2016).

**Work setting and culture in nonprofit organizations.** Another area that researchers have focused on while examining the work setting in nonprofit organizations is the existing work cultures and practices. Dressler and Jaskyte (2012) studied the relationship between organizational culture and innovativeness in nonprofit organizations with emphasis on human services. Dressler and Jaskyte hypothesized that corporate values and culture consensus is an essential predictor of innovativeness and efficient leadership in nonprofit organizations (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012). Researchers collected data through questionnaires administered to 19 organizations employees; the researchers presented that organizational culture and values are critical predictors of innovativeness and critical to the successful operation of organizations (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012).

However, Dressler and Jaskyte (2012) pointed out the differences in leadership, cultures, and values. Because of the differences in leadership, cultures, and values, the data results are at different levels of innovativeness among the employees. Also, leaders can influence the values and culture of employees of an organization (Dressler & Jaskyte,

2012). These considerations and factors notwithstanding, the culture and values of a nonprofit organization influence how employees go about their activities and contribute to the development of innovative products, services, and practices. Dressler and Jaskyte concurred by stating that the creation of a favorable culture and positive values have significantly spurred innovativeness in nonprofit organizations and enabled them to achieve their short-term and long-term goals. The researchers added that such organizations require effective leadership to create a favorable environment for workers and volunteers. Hamby, Pierce, and Brinberg (2017) linked the actions of leaders in a nonprofit organization to the actions of promoting social change through collaboration with stakeholders.

Researchers have strived to understand the changes occurring in the nonprofit sector to determine how organizations in the industry operate (Cunningham, 2016; Liao & Huang, 2016; Randle, Leisch, & Dolnicar, 2013). Cunningham (2016), for instance, studied the significance of nonprofit organizations as well as the employment policies embraced in the sector. Cunningham discovered that leaders of nonprofit organizations had adopted innovative practices such as cost-cutting, goal-setting, and performance monitoring to achieve their goals. Also, leaders have improved the working conditions to attract the qualified and experienced employees. Liao and Huang (2016) reported that nonprofit organizations' leadership created a clear vision and strategies to fill gaps between government supplies and social needs. Also, the organizations' leadership partners with relevant organizations, groups, and authorizes to enhance the living



standards of the targeted groups. Liao and Huang added that nonprofit leadership realized that they must improve their managerial capabilities and human resources to grow and achieve their goals.

**Social enterprise.** Financial sustainability is one of the most pressing issues facing leaders of nonprofit organizations despite many developments. Martin (2015) explored the challenges associated with investing in a nonprofit by offering an insight of various investment options. Martin described two types of social enterprises: *private good social enterprises* and *public good social enterprises*. Public good social enterprise is a mission-driven organization designed to address social and economic needs in a community. Public good social enterprises are based solely on grant funding. Private good social enterprises are also mission-driven not-for-profit and for-profit organizations designed to address social and economic needs. Leaders depend on grant funding, initially, but eventually, seeks other sources of income through investments and loans for funding a private good social enterprise.

Ecer, Magro, and Sarpca (2017) compared the traditional methods of funding for leaders of nonprofit organizations and the social enterprise methods of funding. Using three commonly used metrics, Ecer et al. analyzed each method of funding to determine which is most efficient in the nonprofit organization sector. The funding methods that Ecer et al. analyzed included: overhead ratio, administrative expense ratio, and fundraising ratio. The researcher's findings provide evidence that traditional nonprofit organizations rely on one primary source of funding compared to the diverse strategies

used by the social enterprise. As a result, the financial performance of leaders for a social enterprise is more efficient in managing overhead and administrative expenses. Nonprofit leaders handled complex issues; their external audience shed light on authenticity, stakeholders, and strategic management (Gilstrap, White, & Spradlin, 2015). Martin (2015) noted grant funding is needed; however, it limits the leadership's capabilities on how to implement their program.

As a result, researchers found that the hybrid financing strategies will potentially play a significant role in fulfilling social and economic needs. Reilly (2016) described social enterprise is the practice of selling merchandise or services to meet social needs which are a concept adopted by the United States. Reilly examined the literature on social enterprise models, and the researcher's findings provided some pros and cons. Reilly also examined social enterprise in the United States such as Goodwill and Clean the World. One change agent concern is the federal and state laws that apply to nonprofit may affect the status of the nonprofit. Other researchers argued that social enterprise could be the solution to additional concerns that traditional leaders of nonprofit organizations face such as adequate funding for attracting qualified staff, salaries, and retention.

As a best practice, board members and officers represent the mission, interests, and vision of the leaders of a social enterprise (Fyall, 2016). Fyall (2016) explored the work of leaders of a nonprofit organization by exploring organizational developments in the sector. According to Fyall leaders in nonprofit organizations require efficient management strategies and experienced staff to carry out their procedures and programs

effectively. In some cases, the leaders partner with public bodies and private enterprises to provide critical services to the public. However, Lurtz and Kreutzer (2016), noted that nonprofit organizations frequent environmental pressures due to the heightened competition for donations and public funds. Carey and Perry (2014) noted that leadership was responsible for maintaining stakeholder confidence to carry out the goals of the organization. Also, the changing roles of the government in the provision of social services have made it necessary for leaders of nonprofit organizations to improve their strategies and come up with an entrepreneurial plan for achieving their social goals.

Dobrai and Farkas (2016), however, contributed to the understanding of the work of leaders of nonprofit organizations by conducting a study to explore the growing professionalism in the sector. The researchers surveyed leaders about their organizational development programs that enhance their skills and knowledge to become more professional in their services (Dobrai & Farkas, 2016). The researcher concluded that organizational development plans and professionalism had enabled leaders of nonprofit enterprises to achieve their short-term and long-term goals (Dobrai & Farkas, 2016).

**Business nonprofit partnership (BNPP).** Sanzo, Alvarez, Rey, and Garcia (2015) state that effective partnership between leaders of nonprofit organizations and business leaders enabled the organizations to improve their performance regarding human resources, innovations, operations, and meeting of missions and goals. Sanzo et al. developed a conceptual framework with three distinct nonprofit components; (a) the perceptions on a relational development of business-nonprofit partnership (BNPP), (b)

the process of knowledge transfer, (c) and the effect of nonprofit organizations (NPO) performance. The authors surveyed 325 Spanish foundations via questionnaires with a 7-point Likert scale. The researcher found that the study revealed that BNPP formed on perceived value, communication, lower conflict, mission strategy alignment, and trust were beneficial to the sustainability of NPOs (Sanzo et al., 2015). These results show that leaders of nonprofit organizations, just like regular business, strive to put in place the right measures and human resource capabilities to achieve their goals (Grasse et al., 2014; Millar & Doherty, 2016; Sanzo et al., 2015). Harrison and Wicks (2013) noted that researcher could use stakeholder theory as a possible clarification on how an organization's success based upon the premise that leader's actions solely based on the interest of the stakeholders and not their agendas. The development of cooperative relationships with the leaders, internal, and external stakeholders, including alliances with other organizations, is critical for leaders of nonprofits (NPOs) to ensure mission accomplishment and long-term survival (Wellens & Jegers, 2014).

**Recruitment of volunteer members.** Employees and stakeholders are the most valuable resource that an organization has. Maintaining employee retention is advantageous for all stakeholders involved (Randle et al., 2013). The recruitment process for leaders in nonprofit organizations is another critical area that has attracted the attention of researchers. Volunteers face the task of balancing the needs of the organization they volunteer for, their home life, and possibly their principal means of income (Ching-Fu & Yu, 2014). Randle et al. (2013) explored the methods for recruiting

volunteers. Using quantitative data, the researchers examined the relationship between leaders of volunteering organizations and leaders of organizational recruitment strategies. Randle et al. challenged the decision-making approach for leaders in the nonprofit sector, specifically, whether leaders use a collaborative or competitive approach depending on their challenges faced. Some nonprofit leaders may struggle during a recession to maintain competitive advantage; therefore, leaders must consider radical and innovative approaches (Randle et al., 2013).

Findings of Randle et al. (2013) indicated that leaders' collaborative marketing may be a valuable opportunity for recruiting volunteers. The researchers used the results to demonstrate the efforts that leaders of nonprofit organizations continue to make to develop and maintain a productive and qualified staff. Joyce and Barry (2016) noted that having nonwage benefits can potentially meet the needs of stakeholders and can increase their retention. Also, the researchers showed that leaders of nonprofit organizations embrace various recruitment strategies that allow them to identify and work with skilled and experienced professionals and volunteers. However, Deery and Jago (2015) found that volunteer members of an organization that demands a substantial workload may not be able to balance the duties needed as a volunteer and their family obligations can become both emotionally and physically exhausted. Ching-Fu and Yu (2014) noted that stress on volunteers increases and volunteers are more likely to suffer from burn out at a higher rate.

Researchers noted that employees and volunteers working in a nonprofit organization is entirely different from the experience that employees and volunteers get when they work in a typical business organization. Researchers attribute the difference mainly to the underlying objectives of leaders in the two types of organizations. Whereas conventional businesses leaders strive to maximize returns for shareholders and proprietors, nonprofit entities driven by the desire to further a course in the society or provide specific services to the targeted stakeholders, community, or group (Dressler & Jaskyte, 2012; McKee & Froelich, 2016). Moriarty (2014) stated that democracy is the opposite of corporate governance, which is ruling stakeholder management in the corporate world. It is, however, worth noting that leaders in the nonprofit sector have significantly changed in the recent years to manage its limited resources efficiently and respect to the real environmental complexities and sustainability (Epstein & Buhovac, 2014). Cullom and Cullom (2014) noted that the focus and mission of the leaders are critical from a sustainability standpoint.

Kernbach, Eppler, and Bresciani (2015) reported that leaders in nonprofit organizations are working towards better knowledge management to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their undertakings. The process entails borrowing and using management approaches and solutions that researchers have traditionally linked to conventional businesses (Kernbach et al., 2015). Kernbach et al. reviewed previous studies and revealed that leaders have strived to explore and analyze some of the key

issues and factors that define the work setting in nonprofit organizations (Word & Park, 2015).

Word and Park (2015) explored employees' issues and challenges as they worked in nonprofit organizations around the world. Word and Park explored the factors and issues that motivate people to work in the nonprofit sector. More specifically, the researchers focused on the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that influence people to work in nonprofit organizations. To achieve this goal, the researchers surveyed to gather data from government databases in Georgia and Illinois. The participants in the study were mid- and upper-level managers in the nonprofit sector (Word & Park, 2015). The researchers demonstrated that the data collected during the survey showed that several factors motivate people to work in the nonprofit sector. Some of the main factors that the researchers highlighted included better policies, job security, opportunity to advance their careers, and healthy work environment (Word & Park, 2015). The researchers concluded that nonprofit agencies could attract qualified and highly motivated individuals to work within their ranks. By having motivated employees can add value to the organization's stakeholders.

Sutton and Austin (2015) stated that leaders in nonprofit organizations were trying to improve their managerial and human resource capabilities to achieve their goals. The researchers argued that administrative capacity and effective leadership be critical to the success of organizations. Sutton and Austin used a three module training program and were able to demonstrate that the lack of managerial skills and qualified employees can

prevent leaders of nonprofit organizations from achieving their goals. Also, it can create a conflict between the leaders organizational and professional values. In the long run, leaders in nonprofit organizations will not be in a position to impact on the life of the targeted groups or individuals.

**Certification programs for at-risk youth workers.** Researchers have identified numerous programs to assist at-risk youths that developed through different partnerships, communities, universities and government programs. Leaders provide at-risk youth programs through volunteer, a nonprofit, and charitable organization can provide positive intentions, but the purpose may be meaningless if the programs are not effective (Ardoin, et al., 2014). Leaders of youth programs need to have a structured foundation used to help youth development (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015).

Researchers have demonstrated that youth mentoring, in general, has shown to have many positive outcomes such as improving youths' relationships with other young people, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014) found that leaders have succeeded in maintaining a meaningful positive relationship with their stakeholders by training and mentoring their employees. Researchers have also provided studies that there is a decrease in positive youth development programs. The researchers conducted this research to explore strategies that leaders can use to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). Also, the efficiency of how leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to select, collect and analyze



data to conduct the assessment. Having a standardized training program for the youth worker that provides a certification that embraces the concept of young people as having the capacity to thrive can guide the young people into adulthood as a productive citizen (Schwartz & Rhodes, 2016).

Researchers have shown that certification programs have featured significantly in human resource management literature, including studies that focus on the leaders and operations of nonprofit organizations. Warmack (2008) suggested that leaders structure and design certification programs to engage youth and enable them to acquire skills and credentials that can allow them to become useful, experienced, and skilled professionals. The researcher adds that the certification programs further expose young employees to various contextual issues and factors that may affect their everyday work. In the long run, leaders ensure that organizations create a skilled and professional workforce that can help in achieving short term and long term organizational goals (Warmack, 2008). Therefore, such programs are critical to the success of organizations operating in the present-day world and society. Leaders have a responsibility to make decisions to develop their employees and members and to maintain a positive relationship with their stakeholders (Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2014).

Researchers and practitioners view certification as one of the vital strategic planning tools and approaches that organizations rely on as they attempt to improve the quality of their workforce. A review of previous studies reveals that researchers use the terms certification, licensure, and credentialing in an overlapping way to refer to the

initiatives that organizations undertake to improve the competence and capabilities of their workers (Shuls & Trivitt, 2013). However, a critical look at the terms and their definitions reveals significant differences. Licensure is the granting of permission and right to practice a profession or occupation, usually by the state (Yilmaz, 2015).

The licensing or state officials often use the standards developed by leaders of professional organizations and associations to test whether an individual has the skills and competencies to practice. Credentialing, on the other hand, refers to the process of granting a diploma or a certificate in recognition that a person has completed a defined scope or body of work needed for employment in a profession or occupation (Yilmaz, 2015). The leaders of professional bodies and organizations must grant such professional skills certificates based on test results and work experience (Yilmaz, 2015). Finally, the term certification is a synonym for credentialing or referring to a specific program that sets out people who have gained advanced competencies and skills within a profession. It is also worth noting that certification may require some legal licensure.

A review of previous studies revealed that several types of certification programs are available to youths (Reed & Bogardus, 2015). Moreover, leaders of such programs play various purposes within the work setting. In most cases, the certification programs characterized as either career readiness or work readiness programs that strive to capture skills, generic proficiencies, and qualifications needed to carry out specific job functions. Although the specific details of the certification programs may differ regarding scope and breadth, the overall goal is to confirm that employees have the relevant skill, qualities,

characteristics, and habits that will make them competent professionals. Also, the certified individuals must demonstrate desirable skills that include self-discipline, organizational skills, work ethics, punctuality, and academic qualifications that are required to contribute to the realization of organizational success. Most leaders focus the programs on addressing the needs of youth workers and preparing them to succeed in the competitive and dynamic work environment.

Bausman and Barry (2011) theorized that several employers are not only satisfied with technical skills and necessary academic qualifications when it comes to recruiting their workforce. Instead, they look beyond academic results and technical skills to ensure that they hire employees with the right characteristics, habits, and competencies that can make them useful members of the workforce. Bausman and Barry researched evidence demonstrated that most employers believe that some young employees and recent graduates may lack the skill and habits such as communication skills, punctuality, and willingness to accept guidance and supervision. Verbeke and Tung (2013) stated that developing a mentoring bond with young employees and stakeholder's is essential to maintaining the sustainability of the organization. Also, Bausman and Barry noted that there are those who do not possess the relevant proficiency and literacy skills that are critical to the successful entry into the workforce. Therefore, certification programs enable organizations to identify and work with people who possess the right skills and use their capabilities to contribute to the realization of organizational goals. While it is not possible to generalize the use of certification as a measure of an individual's

employability, such programs provide critical information that can help organizations to determine between employable people from those who are not employable (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006).

Researchers looked at the data about an individual's credentials, career readiness, job placement, and salary. Using the data obtained by the certification programs, leaders can enable nonprofit organizations to identify employees who are ready for employment in the nonprofit sector. This way, leaders will be in a better placed to select people with specific skills and capabilities as they work towards meeting the needs of specific individuals and groups that depend on the services of the nonprofit organizations.

McDavid and Huse (2015) concurred by stating that the certification of skills that employers require provides useful tips and signals that improve hiring decisions in an organization. Also, it allows leaders of organizations to measure the extent to which they can rely on their workers to achieve their organizational goals. However, it is also imperative to point out that little information is available to show the extent to which leaders of nonprofit organizations use the certification programs to make hiring decisions. Likewise, there is little research evidence on the direct impact of the certification programs on the performance and capabilities of employees working in the nonprofit sector. These limitations notwithstanding, certification program remains an essential tool in the human resource management practices in the nonprofit sector.

**Quality and efficiency of employee certifications.** Researchers and practitioners questioned the quality and efficiency of certification programs for youth workers in the

nonprofit sector. The interest originates from the fact that the quality of the programs determines the impact that they will have on employees and the whole organization. Balfanz (2014) researched that only quality certification programs can help nonprofit organizations to make the right hiring decisions and build a highly qualified and trained workforce. Also, Balfanz (2014) noted that leaders in an organization rely on quality standards when making decisions on the effectiveness of various certification programs that exists in an industry or the market. However, adherence to these standards is voluntary because there is no regulation requiring leaders of organizations to use the existing frameworks. In most cases, the standards developed by industry leaders in collaboration with researchers and human resource practitioners.

The process entails looking at the industry-specific credentials that employees require to succeed in a role. Therefore, leaders of nonprofit organizations may use different standards to determine the suitability of the certification programs. Having leaders focus on creating value for their employees, members, and stakeholders instead of strictly looking at profitability have increased sustainability for organizations (Strand & Freeman, 2015). Also, leaders of organizations must attempt to identify quality standards that will give an accurate picture of the abilities, skills, and competencies of employees.

### **Transition**

Section 1 includes my problem statement that outlines the issue that some leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations lack strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for

individuals working with the youth. Both the problem and purpose statement are the nature of the study and theoretical framework of the study. Terms listed that are specifically for this study and based on the Baldrige criteria for nonprofit organizations (Baldrige, 2017). I outlined and highlighted the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for this study. The collection and review of professional and academic literature described the research and current theories that present and future leaders could use to analyze the effectiveness of their youth training programs.

Section 2 of my study includes a comprehensive description of the research methodology and design, population and sampling, data collection instruments, and techniques used to complete this study. It also includes a description of the role of the researcher and the ethical considerations for this study. Section 2 also includes a discussion of the process for how I selected the participants based on the eligibility criteria, along with describing the data collection techniques used.

Section 3 includes a comprehensive explanation of the research conducted within the DBA consulting capstone guidelines. I used the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (2017) and Criteria for Performance Excellence to conduct indepth research for and about the XYZ client organization. My goal as a scholar-consultant in the DBA consulting capstone is to assist XYZ's leaders in exploring strategies of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. Section 3 continued, and I presented the findings of the study and how the client

organizations' leaders can further use the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (2017) and its Criteria for Performance Excellence and apply it to professional practice and implications for social change. The final components of Section 3 are key themes, project summary, contributions and recommendations, and an executive summary of key themes.

## Section 2: The Project

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. The target population consisted of leaders of a Minnesota nonprofit association of organizations involved in youth-intervention programs. These leaders possess experience in selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals who work with youth. The implications for positive social change include the identification of strategies to certify, train, and mentor individuals who work with youth. Also, to help ensure that youth workers are effective in achieving their goals to support at-risk youth. Using these data, leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations may be better able to demonstrate the usefulness of regulatory standards in the United States for individuals who work directly with youth. In addition, business leaders may find it useful to create and maintain partnerships with nonprofit organizations that certify individuals who work with youth. Those partnerships could benefit both business- and community-based social initiatives to raise competency levels of those who serve at-risk youth.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My role as the researcher began by gaining a deeper understanding of the research topic through literature review and the data gathering process. The role of the researcher



in a qualitative study is to serve as the primary research instrument (Michailova et al., 2014). The data collecting process and conducting interviews are the primary source of data in conducting qualitative research (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). As Cleary et al. (2014) noted, researchers can use interviews to allow participants to share in-depth information regarding their experiences on a specific topic. In this study, interviews with leaders of the nonprofit youth-serving organization XYZ based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, were the primary source of data. All interviews conducted were via telephone, and the exchange of electronic data was through e-mail. The semistructured interviews consisted of 10 scripted, open-ended questions directed to the leaders of the participating organization. I also conducted a review of XYZ's documents and their analyses of performance-outcomes data. In my role as the researcher, it was my responsibility to use reliable information and to analyze the data collected in an ethical manner.

The relationship that I had with the topic and with the participants was limited. I did not know of XYZ or anyone who worked for XYZ before I started my research. Walden University administrators of the DBA consulting capstone selected XYZ for me to act as a consultant. Dikko (2016) suggested that a researcher with limited views or knowledge of the subjects could allow for a non-biased opinion of the topic and research area. As a consultant, I served as both the researcher and the consultant for XYZ organization.

To gather further information on XYZ and a better understanding of how the organization's leaders operate and provide training, I reviewed the organization's website prior to the interviews. Also, I completed XYZ's Youth Intervention Certification (YIC) training program to further my knowledge of the material provided by XYZ instructors. The YIC trainers gave an overview of the many challenges faced by working with at-risk youth. The trainers also provided a firsthand look at the problems faced by youth today and delivered knowledge, skills, and new methods of working with at-risk youth. By learning about the programs, projects, and the leaders of XYZ organization, I was able to create an atmosphere, I believe, that increased participant cooperation and elicited honest responses from the organization's leadership.

In designing the study I adhered to the three ethical principles found in the Belmont Report (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare [DHEW], 1979). These principles include

1. Respect: Respect all participants as autonomous individuals and provide protection to the autonomy and showing the observance of all participants;
2. Beneficence: Beneficence relates to doing good to the individual, which includes a strong sense of obligation, trying not to harm participants, and maximizing all possible benefits; and
3. Minimizing potential harms, and ensuring justice; Minimizing harm and helping to ensure justice relates to the sense of fairness and entitlement (DHEW, 1979).

I ensured the protection of participants' identities during and after the research project. A researcher must maintain ethics, professionalism, and understanding the confidentiality of staying within the IRB approval process and the Belmont Report (DHEW, 1979).

Mitigating bias is vital to avoid viewing data through a personal lens or perspective (Olsen, Orr, Bell, & Stuart, 2013). Conducting research with preexisting notions can create a personal bias for the researcher; however, understanding personal biases can enhance and strengthen the outcomes of the research (Hager & Brudney, 2015). The researcher must identify his or her underlying assumptions to interpret research correctly.

A researcher should use an interview protocol to ask questions and to create a structure for the interview (Ishak & Bakar, 2014). As part of my protocol, I sought to approach all interviews without preconceived notions and be aware of any possible personal biases. Researchers can exhibit bias in the analysis of research data based on their experiences, personal values, attitudes, perspectives, and preconceptions (Morse, 2015). By using member checking, achieving data saturation, and reviewing documents, I believe that I mitigated any bias and reviewed the data through a much broader lens. Understanding assumptions and personal biases can reinforce research outcomes (Morse, 2015). I used member checking to maintain an open mind to this research and avoid any personal biases. Simpson and Quigley (2016) stated that member checking enhances the validity of a study. All participants used in this study received the interview questions, consent form, and confirmations of their participation prior to any interviews.

## Participants

The eligibility criterion for the participants involved was this: Participants must represent the leadership of XYZ a nonprofit organization with members that serve youth in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, area. The selection of eligible participants is important for data collection (Ruzzene, 2015). Establishing a relationship with participants is key to developing a high-quality and transparent qualitative study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). The three leaders interviewed were the executive director (ED), membership representative (MR), and membership director (MD). Before data collection, the researcher should define the eligibility criteria for participants, so the participants have an understanding before beginning (Robinson, 2014). Walden administrators and faculty review the client organizations for scholar-consultants selected for the DBA Consulting Capstone and assign an organization to each student.

I gained access to the participants through introductions from my doctoral study chair. I then contacted the ED of XYZ via e-mail to set up a time and date to begin conference calls and additional correspondence. Connecting with participants to answer research questions and learn from their knowledge it is vital to have proper coordination (Høyland, Hollund, & Olsen, 2015; Kondowe & Booyens, 2014; Martínez-Mesa et al., 2015). I obtained names of the potential participants from introductions from Walden University and had unlimited access via e-mails and conference calls.

The strategies for establishing a working relationship with the leadership were as a priority for me in this research. Getting to know the leaders of XYZ was vital in being

able to assist them in achieving their goals. Building an honest working relationship with members is essential for any research study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Koch, Niesz, and McCarthy (2014) described how a researcher must be transparent without biases and to be open and honest to start building a relationship. To establish a relationship, I reached out initially by conducting bi-weekly conference calls followed up by e-mails. Once the organizational leaders and I established a relationship, we started conducting conference calls, as needed, or if I had a specific question. Lovegrove, Hodson, Sharma, and Lanham-New (2015) noted that researchers need to establish a rapport with the selected participants to explore the business problem. I used the Belmont principles and maintained compliance with IRB preapproval data sources and compliance with DBA Research Agreement throughout the research.

The participants' characteristics aligned with this study's overarching research question. The participants interviewed have varied backgrounds and experiences for the different types of programs offered. A researcher needs to align the research questions to support and document the participant's experiences for using qualitative research (Koch et al., 2014). The participants also understood the mission, vision, and values and the operating components of the organization. The reason for selecting the three leaders of XYZ helped ensure the opportunity to triangulate and validate data and information provided from the interviews. Interviews for a case study can lead to recognizing leadership strategies to drive objectives and policy change (Ruzzene, 2015).

Each participant has served in the organization's role for the last 2 years or more and is involved with fundraising, training, membership, and decision-making for the organization. The data-gathering questions were based on the Baldrige Excellence Framework and Criteria for Performance Excellence (Baldrige 2017) and supported my interview questions. The leaders representing their respective nonprofit organizations, their input, and knowledge were essential to the overall study and its findings. Receiving information and feedback on an organization's strengths and opportunities are critical for success (Baldrige, 2017).

## **Research Method and Design**

### **Research Method**

I used the qualitative research method for this study. Using a qualitative method allows researchers to explore the connection between issues to understand the current phenomenon in a real-life setting (Ruzzene, 2015). The advantage of selecting a qualitative method over quantitative or mixed-methods research is that a researcher can use qualitative data as a way of describing an event in its context and for investigating unexplored areas (Saldaña, 2016). By using the qualitative method, I could explore the real experiences of the leaders of the nonprofit organization by conducting one-on-one interviews via face-to-face or electronic media. Yin (2018) stated the advantage of selecting a qualitative method is the flexibility of gathering relevant data and information first-hand from the participants.

The research methodology sets the foundation for a study (Ruzzene, 2015; Yin, 2018). Using the qualitative method over other research methods, a researcher can engage the participants so they can tell their story and the use of both data and theory narratives (Ruzzene, 2015). Quantitative researchers often gather data by using a 5-point Likert-type scale technique to research meaning associated with attitudes (Bryman, 2010). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argued that in quantitative studies, the emphasis is on measuring and analyzing the causal relationship between variables, whereas qualitative studies stress the intimate relationship between the researcher and research problem. Elingsson and Brysiewicz (2012) explained that quantitative research does not include open-ended interview questions for the exploration of strategies, unlike qualitative research. Researchers use the mixed-method to combine quantitative and qualitative methods (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014). A researcher would not use mixed-methods research methodologies to explore different strategies within a specific study (Srivastava, 2014). The quantitative and mixed-method were not appropriate for this study because there is no examination of relationships among variables or groups in this study. A researcher using quantitative and mixed-method would include statistical procedures (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014). Both the quantitative and mixed-method is not appropriate for this study because there is no purely mathematical component to this study and, therefore, I did not conduct statistical analyses.

## **Research Design**

I used a single case study decision to provide a systematic form of analysis from specific sources for this study. Conducting case studies can be a complicated procedure that depends on various pieces, data collected, and are appropriate for real-life analysis (Ruzzene, 2015). The purpose of this research study was to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. A case study involves collecting detailed information using an array of data collection procedures over a period (Yin, 2018). I identified specific ways that a nonprofit youth-serving organization can provide a nationally recognized certification for youth workers. Interviews are one way to validate the input in a case study, and document review is also relevant to the crucial phases of research (Lewis, 2015).

Researchers use case studies to conduct interviews, observations, and document review to gather different types of data (Vohra, 2014). I used a single case study over other key designs because I need to have leaders of XYZ answer the question on how they deliver training, certification programs, and advocacy so that youth workers have the resources and skills to help youth-serving programs succeed. Using a case-study aligns with the purpose to obtain an indepth view of youth-serving, nonprofit organizations to create strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of programs for certifying and training individuals working with youth.



Using a single-case study design provided the best way to explore strategies that leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations use in assessing the effectiveness of their training certification programs for individuals who work with youth. Lewis (2015) explained how researchers use a narrative design to focus on the lives of individuals as told through their stories. Using a narrative design was not suitable for this type of research study because the information that I needed was not individual experiences, but the strategies used by the organization's leadership.

Researchers use transformational theory to focus on the abilities of the leader and his/her relationship with the followers to the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Transformation theory would not work well with the business problem for this study, and I am not researching the executive director (ED) of XYZ but how the ED uses data to make a decision. Researchers use a phenomenological research design to explore participants' lived experiences and perceptions regarding a phenomenon (Ruzzene, 2015). The phenomenological design is not appropriate for this study because exploring participants' lived experiences and perceptions is not the focus of this study. Researchers use the ethnographic research design to explore a culture in a real-life setting (Dresch et al., 2015). The ethnographic design is not appropriate for this study because the intent of this study is not to explore a culture in a real-life setting.

Data saturation through the collection of appropriate sources reinforces the reliability and validity of qualitative research (DeFeo, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). I reached data saturation through the interview process and

document review. Failure to reach data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research conducted and hampers content validity (DeFeo, 2013). Member checking assisted me in reaching data saturation through obtaining indepth information and enhancing the academic rigor of this study. Member checking is taking data and the interpretation of the interviewer back to the participants from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible (Harvey, 2015). Member checking is a way of validating data analysis about the participants' experiences for the research (Smith, Sparkes, & Caddick, 2014). Researchers conduct member checking with participants to verify that the interpretations of data are accurate (Smith, Sparkes, & Caddick, 2014). Having a trusted relationship, I was comfortable with asking the participants to clarify and elaborate their information. Data saturation is critical for a study to validity and ensuring rigor in qualitative research, as noted by Reilly (2013).

### **Population and Sampling**

The ED, MR, and MD are the three participants in leadership positions at a nonprofit youth-serving organization chosen as a client for the DBA Consulting Capstone. Walden administrators and faculty vetted the leaders and selected the client organization for the scholar–consultants selected for the DBA Consulting Capstone. For this study, the three members were part of the nonprofit organization and purposefully selected. Researchers do not randomly select participants; instead, researchers purposely select participants to answer the overarching research question (Olsen, Orr, Bell, & Stuart, 2013). Purposive sampling participant selection comes from choosing an

individual based on their experience to provide answers to research questions. The use of purposive sampling can increase validity and deconflict information (Robinson, 2014). It is essential to select the participants with the most experience and knowledge to answer the research question to ensure accuracy (Masso, McCarty, & Kitson, 2014).

The justification for the number of participants for this study is the workforce of the youth-serving organization from Minneapolis, Minnesota. The population aligns with the overarching research question to identify the needed strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. Yin (2018) stated the appropriate sample size is an essential part of study design for proper data analysis. The focus of the sample size should be on the sample adequacy, not the number of participants. Reaching data saturation is when the efficiency of the data is adequate and validated (DeFeo, 2013; Olsen et al., 2013; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Yin, 2018).

To ensure data saturation, I collected historical documents, training records, procedures, policies, and other documents provided to me. A researcher collects documents joined with the research interviews reinforces the validity of qualitative research (DeFeo, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). I also used member checking to ensure data saturation. The member checking can help one reach data saturation through obtaining indepth information and enhance the academic rigor (Robinson, 2014).

The participants selected for this study were members holding leadership positions in a nonprofit youth-serving organization that provides a certification program and training courses to youth-workers from Minneapolis, Minnesota. The participants chosen for this study met Walden University DBA Consulting Capstone criteria, and I was selected to consult with the organization. The focus of the population is on the competence and not the number participating (Yin, 2018).

Conducting interviews with the primary organizational stakeholders can provide a holistic dataset (Yin, 2018). I conducted all interviews via telephone, there were no face-to-face interviews, and I did not meet or coordinate a specific setting with the participants during the interview process. The interviews were used to collect documentation to explore strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth service leaders. DeFeo (2013) indicated interviews with open-ended questions as effective methods for information collection. Using interviews in research allows participants to provide rich responses to research questions (Owen, 2014).

### **Ethical Research**

I began researching with the participants after I received approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB #: 09-16-16-0631202). When research involves human subjects, the researcher must receive prior approval from the IRB to ensure that there is minimal risk to subjects, and the selection of the subjects is not biased (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The consent form contains information related to the nature of the

study, the purpose of the study, the rights of the participant, and the representative's contact information from Walden University. I informed the participants the study was voluntary, they can refuse to answer any of the questions, and withdraw from participating in the study at any time. The participants agreed to the use of audio-recording as part of the interview process. I explained that I will use member checking and that all statements will be available for their review.

Transcriptions of senior leader interviews will be analyzed as part of the case study, along with any archival data, reports, and documents that the organization's leadership deems fit to share. Copies of your interview recording and transcript are available from me upon request. Also, any published reports, presentations, or publications related to this study will not identify the participants. I also explained that they are not obligated to respond to all the questions and could stop the study at any time. Each participant received a copy of the consent form prior to the interview. Schaefer, Kahane, and Savulescu (2014) discussed how researchers must be prepared to make correct decisions for assuring the integrity of both researcher and the participants. The participants had the choice to either accept or decline participation in this study.

I did not provide the participants with any incentives for participating in the study. Ethical conduct while conducting research is necessary to maintain the integrity of the researcher and the participants (Schaefer et al., 2014). The participants understood that the study was conducted to contribute to social change by helping youth-serving organizations and to contribute to the mission of XYZ. Hamby, Pierce, and Brinberg

(2017) noted that most leaders of nonprofit organizations do not need incentives to promote positive social change.

Agreement documents listed as appendices in the Table of Contents. Participants of XYZ received ethical protection and I will keep all personal information involving participants' names, roles in the organization, and background information secured. Evidence also indicates that researchers may face ethical challenges upholding confidentiality when attempting to gain knowledge through demanding studies (Greenfield, 2016). I will protect all of the sensitive data and information, which could include documents, transcripts, files, and audio files.

I will maintain all documents received in a safe place in my home for the next 5 years to protect the rights of the participants. I am the only person to have access to this information. Walden IRB approval number is 09-16-16-0631202. I ensured all documents did not contain the name of the organization, name of the employees, or information that could lead to identifying information about individuals or the organizations. Yin (2018) notes researchers must protect all documents used in research.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

I was the primary instrument for collecting all data for this study. Fusch and Ness (2015) noted that qualitative researchers serve as the data-collection instrument for the entire study. My objective as a research instrument was to collect as much information as possible to ensure data saturation. DeFeo, (2013) stated that conducting a semistructured interview with open-ended questions provides a reliable instrument for data collection. A

researcher can use interviews, observations, and group meetings for their data-collection methods (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard, & Snape, 2014).

In a case study, the primary data collection instrument is the researcher and guided by the instrument they choose (Leedy & Ormond, 2013). The data collection process consisted of a typed list of 10 open-ended questions. There are various data-collection methods in qualitative research including, interview questions, observations, and documents (Ormston et al., 2014). The collection process included a semistructured interview with open-ended questions via telephone interviews along with documents validated data triangulation. Hussein (2015) noted that procedural data triangulation increased case study validity.

To enhance the reliability of the data, I collected documents the leaders mentioned during the interviews for member checking and validity to ensure the information is accurate. Documents and interviews are a form of data collection and used to provide a more accurate and convincing case study (Yin, 2018). With the use of member checking, I ensured that the findings aligned with the leaders of XYZ organization. The collection of documentation for a case study strengthens the reliability of qualitative research (DeFeo, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, and Rees (2017) noted that, to validate research findings, a researcher will rely on member checking. I included a copy of the interview protocol in Appendix B. In alignment with Walden University policy, I will destroy all

documents after 5 years. Collecting and analyzing documents as a second form of data collection can provide an accurate and convincing case study (Yin, 2018).

### **Data Collection Technique**

Researchers must put aside previously held beliefs, attitudes, and expectations that pertain to the research topic (Palinkas et al., 2015). Within this study, I incorporated interviewing as a primary method for collecting data. Ormston, Spencer, Barnard, and Snape (2014) discussed the various data-collection methods in qualitative research including, interviews, observations, and focus groups. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), three methods commonly used for data collection are document review, interviewing, and report writing. Researchers conducting interviews implement an interview protocol before the interviews (Yin, 2018). I followed this protocol when collecting the interview data:

1. Identified potential participants via Walden University selection of the client organizations.
2. I requested participants participation in the study via an initial e-mail.
3. I sent an e-mail message to the participants providing an overview of the study, including interview questions and Walden's consent form.
4. I confirmed a date and time for the interview by phone or e-mail and answer any relevant follow-up questions.
5. I used the semistructured interview questions for the study and included a record of any probing questions participants expressed.



6. I followed up with thank you cards to all participants expressing gratitude for participation in the study.
7. I transcribed each interview.
8. I provided participants the opportunity to review the transcriptions for the accuracy of interpretations and factual information. I will follow this protocol procedure to ensure all interviews follow the same set-up process.

Bell (2014) discussed the advantages and disadvantages of conducting interviews in research. One of the advantages of the interview as a technique is the researcher gains the past experiences of participants. However, Bell (2014) also noted that a disadvantage is that a participant can use valuable time in sharing personal experiences or possibly even oversharing personal experiences. Another disadvantage as noted by Bell (2014) is that a new researcher still needs to develop interview skills to conduct interviews. For a new researcher to get advice, feedback, and shadow, experienced researchers could be invaluable to assist a new researcher.

The advantage of using semistructured interviews and documents provided by the participants was that the researcher and leadership engaged in an informal dialogue (Bell, 2014). A semistructured interview is one of the strengths in conducting qualitative case study research (Green et al., 2015). Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) noted that a researcher and participants could engage in a dialogue in real time during semistructured interviews.

A pilot study is an investigation of the feasibility of an actual study. A pilot study is also a small scale and exploratory investigation with the leadership of the organization.

A pilot study can assist a researcher to redefine data collection procedures and data collection instruments to prepare for better and more precise research (Solano, da Silva, Soares, Ashmawi, & Vieira, 2016). I received IRB preapproval to conduct this study (IRB # 09-16-16-0631202) and gather data and information from the participants. I did not conduct a pilot study to investigate the feasibility of conducting a study about the XYZ organization.

Triangulation and member checking increase the validity of case study findings (Hussein, 2015). As defined by Harvey (2015) member checking is taking data and the researcher's interpretation of the interview back to the participants and requesting if the results are accurate. I used an interview protocol and follow-up member checking to validate the information. Research conducted by Varpio et al., (2017) recommend member checking to ensure validation of the research findings to the participant's experiences. Robinson (2014) noted that member checking could help achieve data saturation by gaining information to improve research.

### **Data Organization Techniques**

A systematic assurance of value from information received through qualitative questioning regarding the collected data must occur (Mannay & Morgan, 2015). I documented the data by using a research journal, which included interview questions and responses by the participants interviewed. Chang (2012) indicated that interviewers could create a sense of accountability among participants, as participants may feel compelled to

justify their beliefs and actions toward others. Silver and Lewins (2014) stated that the use of a research journal could ensure thoroughness in qualitative studies.

I transcribed the interviews from voice recordings to electronic documents upon completion of the interviews. I used a color code to organize and sort specific sections that relate to my study and to serve to label, compile, and organize the data. Also, by using color codes, I summarized and synthesized the data that I used for analysis. Codes emerged from the analysis conducted on the interview transcript from both a short and precise to a detailed and elaborate conclusion (Saldaña, 2015).

Silver and Lewins, (2014) discussed using the single-case study methodology; a researcher will be able to gain insights to determine which is the best coding system to use for the study. Using the research design of continued improvements, a researcher can validate the data of his or her research and deconflict any responses that are outside the norm. The classification of the codes helps develop statements and grouping into the proper units (Probst & Berenson, 2014; Saldaña, 2015). By using color coding, I developed and provided a storyline for the research for the major themes of the study.

All recordings, documents, and transcripts are safely and appropriately secured to help ensure the integrity of the study (Leedy & Ormond, 2013). A locked file cabinet safe located in my home is used to secure all materials, electronic documents, electronic recordings, and archives used are password protected. Bell (2014) recommends shredding all materials from the research after 5 years. I will destroy all materials, electronic

documents, electronic records, and archives after 5 years as required by Walden University (Walden, 2016).

### **Data Analysis**

St. Pierre and Jackson (2014) noted difficulties in equating qualitative data analysis with coding. Interviewing people resulted in the collection of data based on their own experiences and words. Gläser and Laudel (2013) stated data analysis in qualitative research integrates an existing theory that identifies patterns within the data. It is challenging to separate a discussion of data analysis from a discussion of what counts as data and data collection (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014). St. Pierre and Jackson described interviewing as the customary method of data collection in qualitative research, and participants' input is pure and authentic based on the participants' experiences and understandings. Yin (2018) states that data source triangulation is the best suited for a case study.

The sequential process for data analysis is member checking with the participants to verify the interpretations of data is accurate and correct. I used the information provided to identify key themes to understand specific leadership strategies for certifying youth workers. Smith, Sparkes, and Caddick (2014) described the sequential process by how a researcher can analytically code the complexity of information in qualitative data collection. I used content analysis to interpret the data collected and ensure the validity of the data by conducting member checking. Kuckartz (2014) noted that a researcher needs to have a process of coding throughout the entire study and not just at one point in time.

In content analysis coding is set up in categories derived directly from the data provided (Mazerolle, Pitney, & Eason, 2015; Neal, Neal, VanDyke, & Kornbluh, 2014).

Information from literature reviews should not be used to code key themes, and literature review information should only provide context to the study (Leedy & Ormond, 2013). I also used the 2016-2017 Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (2016) as a guide to assist in data collection and to identify factors for strategies for certifying youth workers.

In the conceptual plan, the data collected included financial records, action plans, strategic plans, and workflow documents. I also maintain a research journal to document my interviews with the participants. Coding is theoretically a label for data (Saldaña, 2016). During the interviews, I maintained detailed notes and recorded the conversations with members of XYZ during phone interviews to ensure clarity of the questions answered. I used an Excel database to assist in developing codes and the information the codes represent. Software tools are an essential way to support coding and analyzing the data (Neal et al., 2014). Using code for data research is another name for documenting communication (Friese, 2014).

The interview process with the participants and the documents collected allowed for the finding of key themes related to the conceptual framework. I used Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory as the conceptual framework and as a lens to understand specific leadership strategies for certifying youth workers. Bell (2014) noted that a researcher could use research to examine data to identify key themes. The information

provided through interview questions and documents collected allowed me to focus on the key themes through my literature review and the lens of the conceptual framework. Reynolds (2014) noted that a qualitative method research allows a researcher to openness to the analysis to determine key themes and specifics of the research study.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The criteria for a qualitative study are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria are not measurable and need to be established using member checking during the research. In the context of academic or educational research, reliability refers to the repeatability of the findings of a study (Elo et al., 2014). A study becomes reliable if researchers achieve the same results when other researchers repeat the study (Bolarinwa, 2015). Bolarinwa (2015) also notes that the reliability of a study depends on the individual measures used in the process of answering the formulated research questions.

#### **Reliability**

Scholars have reported that research requires reliable measures and measurement processes to become reliable (Elo et al., 2014). Measurements tend to be reliable to the extent to which they are free from any random influence and repeatable under similar events and settings (Bolarinwa, 2015). In other words, the measurements should yield similar results when conducted in a different instance and provided that the setting and circumstances are similar. Reliability refers to the degree to which a study consistently measures what it sets out to measure (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

In this study, I addressed the dependability of the results and measurements by comparing the results with those from previous studies and literature. This way, I was able to compare best practices from previous studies. The more research a researcher conducts the researcher will be able to identify inconsistencies that may affect the reliability of the findings (Bolarinwa, 2015). Also, I reviewed all documents and notes from my journal to assist me in completing the study. A researcher will conduct transcript review to ensure that the information and data collected from the sample population in coming up with the findings and conclusions (Bolarinwa, 2015).

### **Validity**

Validity is a concept that is used to refer to the believability and credibility of the results of a research study or experiment (Silver & Lewins, 2014). In this study, I assessed the effectiveness of certification programs for youth workers in nonprofit organizations. Therefore, the findings of the study and ensure credibility if the procedures, methods, and research tools adopted can accurately measure, and determine the effectiveness of the certification programs. The credibility relates to the degree to which a test or a study measures what it is supposed to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Failure to achieve this milestone will lead to the reporting of results and findings that do not address and respond to this studies research questions. Credibility is an important concept that needs to be considered before, during, and even after research (Bolarinwa, 2015).

Several approaches and tools were used in the study to improve and ensure transferability. First, I reviewed all documents and compared their validity to my notes from the interviews. The researcher intends to carry out participant transcript reviews at the end of the data collection process to enhance the validity of the findings (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Secondly, I addressed the assumptions and identified the limitations of the study. I also addressed the issue of transferability by describing the research context and the main assumptions and limitations. Descriptions of research context include time, place, culture, and context (Reedy, 2015). This way, the participants or another researcher can use this study for future research. Any person who wishes to transfer the findings to a different context can make a sensible judgment on how to go about the process (Hoover et al., 2013).

Third, I addressed the confirmability of the study by creating and using a precise research methodology and approaches. Cope (2014) describes confirmability as an audit trail and flexibility. Confirmability is acknowledging the difficulty of prolonged engagement with participants and the methods undertaken, and findings linked to the researchers' philosophical position, experiences, and perspectives (Noble & Smith, 2015). Confirmability is one approach to addressing thoroughness of the research (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

Achieving data saturation is when there is enough information to draw a clear correlation between the results of the study and the formulated research question complete the study (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Data saturation is critical for a study to



validity and ensuring rigor in qualitative research, as noted by Reilly (2013). I reached data saturation through the interview process, and document review provided by the participants of XYZ. Failure to reach data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research conducted and hampers content validity (DeFeo, 2013).

### **Transition and Summary**

Section 1 included a problem statement that outlines the issue that some leaders of youth-serving nonprofit organizations lack strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals working with the youth. After the problem and purpose statements, I outlined the nature of the study and theoretical framework of the study. I continued with a discussion covering assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for the study. I conclude Section 1 with a literature review detailing the research and references used.

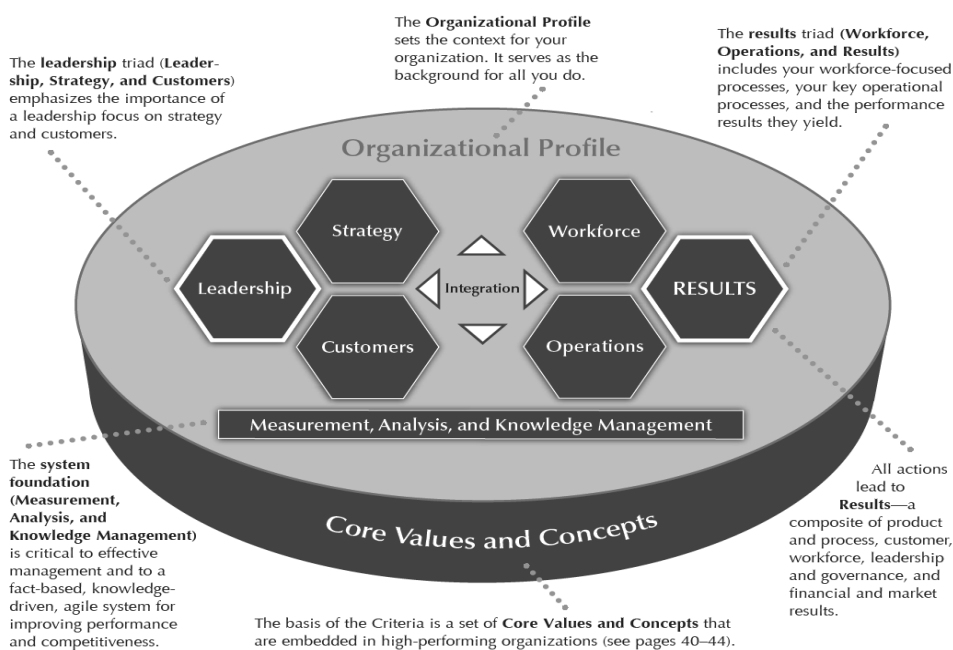
Section 2 of this study includes the overview of the plan and purpose of conducting the qualitative single case study. Electronic data files were created to organize the information collected. Harvey (2015) noted to use methodological triangulation to collect and analyze organizational documents. I collected the organizational documents and used methodological triangulation to help ensure the validity and credibility of my findings. By gathering performance data from a variety of sources such as organizational documents, IRS financial reports, GuideStar, and survey results I was able to increase objectivity to ensure that I considered all factors that impacted organizational performance. When I completed the data analysis, I shared the results with senior leaders

using member checking protocols to help ensure the validity of my interpretation of the data results.

I used the 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework and interview questions to collect data for this research study. The Baldrige criteria from the 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework are tools to help researchers assess an organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Section 3 includes the executive summary of key themes, project summary, and contributions and recommendations future research. Also, XYZ's Organizational Profile with specific details and analysis of the following categories (a) leadership, (b) strategy, (c) customers, (d) measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, (e) workforce, (f) operations, and (g) results.

### Section 3: Organizational Profile

The organizational profile sets the context and serves as the backdrop for an organization (Baldrige, 2017). The Baldrige performance system (see Figure 1) consists of six categories that integrate into a system anchored by an organization's core values and concepts. Leaders can follow the six categories to define the processes and to achieve results. Each category emphasizes the importance and critical linkage between the leadership of the organization and the results-produced categories.



*Figure 1.* The Baldrige Excellence Framework. Adapted from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. 2017. 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework. Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In 1976, the Minnesota Legislature established the Youth Intervention Program (YIP) grant to fund a variety of promising youth intervention programs (Minnesota

Department of Public Safety, 2017). The directors of YIP grantees understood the need for a collective voice to advocate for the grant program; therefore, in 1978 they formed the XYZ association. XYZ is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that provides advocacy and professional development resources for youth-serving organizations throughout the world.

### **Key Factors Worksheet**

Youth intervention comprises multiple programs and models. The multiple approaches to youth intervention reflect the diverse needs of youth and youth workers. XYZ's volunteer members (VMs) make the impact of its advocacy extensive and wide-ranging. As the leader of a nonprofit association comprised of participants of member organizations (MO) that serve youth in a variety of programs, XYZ's Leadership Team (LT) works to create positive social change by supporting youth workers' professional development.

### **Organizational Description**

XYZ is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit association located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. XYZ's LT is made up of three full-time employees, along with VMs serving youth in a variety of programs. XYZ's LT and VMs seek to assist youth to become productive adults and contributing members of society rather than consumers of public services. The association's VMs provide youth intervention programs such as mentoring, restorative justice services, diversion services, advocacy, education, counseling, and referral services to youth. In addition, XYZ's VMs offer services to the families of their youth participants

who have identified family, school, legal, chemical, and other problems, to help ensure that these youth do not develop severe and chronic social, emotional, and behavioral problems. The VMs are selected because of their dedication to developing skills to promote youth workers and continuous improvement in building the training programs needed to help youth workers succeed.

**Organizational environment.** The six dimensions of the Baldrige Framework organizational requirements and a results category provide a clear strategy to define, shape, and guide the leader's quality and productivity goals. The organizational environment is a composite of an organization's mission, vision, and values (MVV) and is a critical and essential element in the framework. Leaders can use the Baldrige Criteria as a guideline to improve results through system alignment, goal setting, performance measures, and stakeholder focus (Baldrige, 2017).

**Product offerings.** The primary product offerings that the XYZ's LT provide are professional development training and certification programs for youth intervention workers, members, volunteers, and program leaders. The success of youth training programs depends on the knowledge, skills, and self-assurance of their leadership and members (Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Perkinson, Bostic, & Zimmerman, 2015). To become competent in youth training requires an ongoing commitment to professional development. The LT developed *MyYouthPro*, which is a professional development framework consisting of eight training competency-focus areas. The framework is flexible and comprehensive, offering VMs an approach to enhance their skills, abilities,

and training programs.

***Mission, vision, and values.*** Table 2 shows the MVV of the association. Core competencies are an organization's area of most significant expertise and strategically important, specialized capabilities essential to achieving the mission or providing an advantage to an organization's service environment (Baldrige, 2016). The ED defines the core competencies that directly relate to serving as an advocate for youth and providing training and certification programs for youth intervention workers. The LT reinforces the core competencies by following organizational values that steer the decisions and reasons that initially established XYZ. The training areas are comprised of efforts to build the organization and to coordinate training courses to reflect diverse youth work programs.

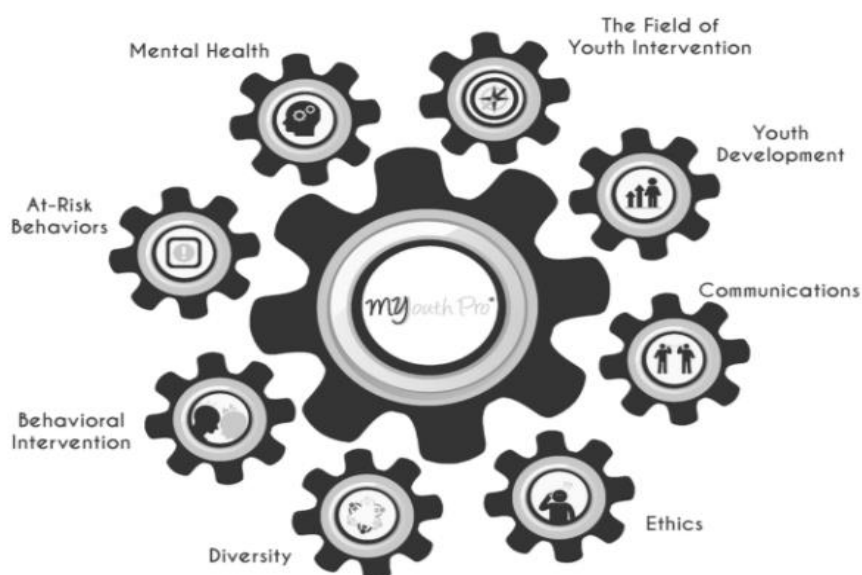
The achievement of youth programs depends on the youth worker's knowledge, skills, and confidence (Morrel-Samuels et al., 2015). The training areas are strategically essential and are specialized capabilities chosen by a special task-force of XYZ's MO that represent diverse youth work programs. The special task-force developed eight areas of training, which are the *Competency Framework for Professional Development in Youth Work* (see Figure 2 and Table 3). XYZ leaders used a special task-force to research a broad-based training spectrum and to ensure incorporation of real-world issues that youth face today. The LT uses the eight training competencies that include timely and relevant tools that members can use in learning how to serve at-risk youth and to assist in developing them to be productive adults.

In addition to the eight training competencies, the LT provides youth workers a variety of other training programs with specialized topics relevant to their needs and individual professional improvement plans. All of the training offered is part of XYZ's core competencies, and the LT focuses each training on providing youth-serving organizations with assisting youth workers. To become competent in youth work requires an ongoing commitment to professional development (Deutsch, Blyth, Kelley, Tolan, & Lerner, 2017). All training courses are available online and are taken in the VMs' own time to accommodate their schedules and priorities.

Table 2

*XYZ's Mission, Vision, and Values*

Attribute	Content
Mission	XYZ delivers exceptional training and relentless advocacy, so youth workers have resources and skills to help youth succeed.
Vision	With support from their communities all youth can succeed.
Values	Guiding principles. Actively build public awareness of and support for youth intervention.



*Figure 2.* XYZ’s Competency Framework for Professional Development in Youth Work. The success of any youth program depends on the knowledge, skills, and confidence of each youth worker and VM. The eight competency focus areas represent XYZ’s diverse youth work program.



Table 3

*Competency Framework for Professional Development in Youth Work*

Course	Descriptions
Youth Intervention Basics - About The Field and the Profession	Students explore youth intervention as a profession and the roles the youth-worker.
Youth Development - Understanding Milestones from Middle Childhood to Adolescence	Students develop key insights into healthy developmental outcomes and factors that support positive youth development.
Ethics - Guidelines for Professional Behavior	Students increase awareness of ethical issues that arise in youth work develop healthy boundaries and respect the responsibilities of the scope of practice.
Diversity - Transcending Inherent Biases	Students learn the importance of uncovering and addressing unconscious prejudice.
Behavioral Intervention - Implementing Key Strategies	Students develop a deeper understanding of conflict styles, levels of engagement, and as mediation strategies to solve problems.
At-Risk Behaviors - Identifying the Warning Signs of Youth in Need	Students learn tools to recognize warning signs of unhealthy and risky behaviors and understand the biological basis for risk-taking.
Mental Health Basics - The Intersection of Mental Health and Youth Intervention.	Students receive an overview of mental health disorders among youth.

*Note.* Youth development and course description.

**Workforce profile.** The LT profile for XYZ is the ED. The ED is the senior leader and assesses the LT's capability and capacity sets the vision to follow and motivate others. The ED has a profound understanding of internal group dynamics and how to build upon and incorporate the strengths that come from those dynamics. Also, the ED is the spokesperson for XYZ and conducts most of the public speaking engagements.

The membership director (MD) maintains interpersonal relationships and worked with information, and data to enhance customer relationship management (CRM) platforms. The MD is responsible for the monthly newsletter and other written correspondence. The membership representative (MR) is responsible for the marketing of the training courses. The MR develops and incorporates the actions plans and work plans, and collaboratively convey's XYZ's mission and provides information to share the association's story. All LT members have basic accounting and financial management knowledge. Also, each LT member understands government operations and the legislative process (see Table 4) workforce profile.

Table 4

<i>Workforce profile</i>		
Segment	Employee #	Educational
Executive Director	1	Bachelor's Degree (BA)
Membership Director	1	Bachelor's Degree (BA)
Membership Representative	1	Bachelor's Degree (BA)

*Note:* Workforce profile and educational requirements.

The benefits that XYZ's Board of Directors (BOD) offers to employees are an additional \$4,528 annually to help offset the cost of healthcare, the fact that all employees can work at home, and have flexible hours.

**Assets.** The most critical asset for the LT is their explicit knowledge, experience, and passion for what they do and their support for the youth workers. XYZ's BOD, LT or VMs do not own or operate brick-and-mortar buildings. All work accomplished is through teleworking from different locations including the homes of the LT. The technological work systems that assist the LT in producing and delivering the essential products and customer support services are software systems such as SalesForce; Salsa an advocacy donation software; Word Press; XYZ Website; and XYZ's training platform used by the VMs. XYZ's BOD and ED maintain approximately \$10,000 in office equipment and approximately \$160,000 in reserves and investments.

**Regulatory requirements.** Minnesota governs all nonprofit organizations by the legislators of the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act, Minn. Stat. ch. 317A. Leaders of nonprofit organizations must serve the organization's mission for the benefit the public and may not operate to make a profit (Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 2017). Also, the BOD and ED must comply with all applicable federal and state regulatory requirements, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the American's With Disability Act, 501(c)(3) incorporation annual financial reporting requirements, internal reporting procedures, and other regulatory requirements.

**Organizational relationships.** Organizational leaders must have a well-defined governance system with explicit reporting relationships and lines of communication. It is essential for senior leaders and the BOD to identify which functions need to be performed by organization (Baldrige, 2017). Both the BOD and leaders of nonprofit organizations must maintain sustainable funding and donor relationships to gain competitiveness and to support their employees, volunteer members, and stakeholders (Kim, 2015). The BOD and leaders provide a fundamental purpose of creating social value for the public good rather than creating profitable operations that result in a private financial gain.

**Organizational structure.** XYZ association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with an organizational structure and governance body. The Board Nominating Committee (BNC) is a standing committee that comprises the ED and four members of the BOD. The BNC seeks and submits nominations for the election of directors and officers to fill vacancies during the year and at the annual meeting. Nominations to the BOD are subject to majority voting approval of XYZ's voting membership.

**Customers and stakeholders.** Key customers of XYZ are the VMs for youth-serving organizations. Leaders segment the VMs into three groups: The first group is the youth-serving organizations whose leaders serve the youth directly. Youth-serving organizations are groups that include churches, membership, educational programs, mental health counseling, youth homelessness, juvenile justice programs, out-of-school time, workforce development, and wrap-around services, which are organizations that offer a full spectrum of support and an all-in-one service center. The second group is the

allied groups. The allied groups are like-minded agencies whose members offer consulting services and training for youth workers. Members of allied groups provide educational data and develop and deliver training programs. The third group is the individual youth workers. Individual youth workers are not affiliated with a specific agency but attend training to keep up with the current trends and training requirements. Focus on excellence and service are the essential requirements and expectations for the LT's customer support services, and operations for all products offered.

*Suppliers and partners.* The primary types of suppliers, partners, and collaborators are those that provide the technology platforms for XYZ's VMs to operate training platforms and electronic communications. Utilizing technology creates minimal cost associated with overhead and cost associated with conducting business because facilities and training areas are not needed. The LT uses platforms, such as Internet-based software, databases, CRM software, and Internet-based tools. The critical mechanisms for two-way communication with suppliers, partners, and collaborators include e-mail communications, phone, conference calls, Skype, and video conferencing.

### **Organizational Situation**

Leaders must understand the competitive environment in which their organization operates, including the key strategic challenges and advantages. Leaders must also know how to approach performance improvement and understand the measurement process (Baldrige, 2017). Researchers found that there are challenges with performance measurement techniques, the need for multiple tools in the evaluation of managerial

performance and accountability, and barriers to organizational change (Gap, 2015).

Leading organizational leaders have an in-depth understanding of their current competitive environment, including key changes that take place (Baldrige, 2017).

***Competitive environment.*** Leaders of nonprofit organizations must compete with other organizations of similar services for financial donations, volunteer membership, visibility in their community, and advertisement and social media (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders strive to improve the performance of their organizations to remain competitive by implementing their SP and creating and following their APs. Leaders that identify strategic challenges and advantages could improve competitive advantage for their organization.

***Competitive position.*** Since 1978, XYZ's initial BOD created a framework to build a long-lasting relationship with leaders of youth-serving organizations. The LT shares the same passion that the founding BOD did for helping youth workers thrive to help at-risk youths become productive adults. The position the LT takes to meet members needs is to create delivery methods for agencies and volunteers members serving youth in all different types of programs. The VMs are diverse and provide the needs of homeless youth shelters, education, out of school time, mental health and counseling, mentoring faith-based programs, health services, juvenile and restorative justice, and job training programs.

***Competitiveness changes.*** XYZ is an association, and the ED, the LT, and VMs do not have direct competitors. However, XYZ's BOD and ED receive funding from

state YIP grant funds. Changes that could affect the LT are funding fluctuations, membership fees, and financial support from their sponsors. The LT provides public outreach and community awareness that offers dynamic marketing strategies to support their efforts.

***Comparative data.*** The sources of comparative and competitive data were difficult to research in this association. XYZ is an association that leaders of other youth-serving organizations look for leading-edge approaches and ideas that reflect the diverse needs of today's youth. The LT brings together other advocacy groups to share and provide one voice for professional development for the individuals and groups that work with at-risk youth.

**Strategic context.** The key advantages and strategic challenges (see Table 5) that the ED uses to align the strategic objectives and goals every month are for improvements to services provided to the VMs. The ED analyzes data and information monthly to evaluate the accomplishments and ensure the LT is on the right track to accomplish future goals.

Table 5

*Advantages and Strategic Challenges*

Advantages	Challenges
Programs and Services	Organizational training programs.
Operations	Volunteer membership. Members must pay to receive training in addition to volunteering their time.
Societal Responsibilities	Ensures training is up to date and relevant to the members.
Workforce	Training and development of staff and maintaining volunteers and retention of members.
Programs and Services	Potential for standardized training with State or National Certification for Youth Workers.
Operations	Flexible member service process.
Societal Responsibilities	Ensuring training is flexible and relevant.
Workforce	Training and development of staff members.

*Note.* The ED outlined the advantages and the challenges of XYZ organization and leaders.

**Performance improvement system.** The ED creates an environment that supports improvement through innovation, training based on teaching-and-learning strategies, and methods for achieving the highest performance for youth training courses. The ED conducts quarterly meetings with other organizations for best practice sharing, training, development opportunities, and potential innovations. Internally, the ED reviewed XYZ's strategic plan (SP) monthly and updated annually with the LT. The SP



is also part of the LTs performance review cycle (see Figure 3) to ensure the LT's goals and objectives are in alignment.



*Figure 3.* XYZ's Performance review cycle and the three-step system of accountability, recognition, and performance review. The performance cycle also includes the formation of personal development plans, the strengths and skills the employee should develop to achieve goals, and a review of the employee's job requirements.

### **Leadership Triad: Leadership, Strategy, and Customers**

#### **Leadership**

**Senior leadership.** XYZ maintains three employees, which make up the LT. The senior leader (SL) is the ED that runs the day-to-day operations. The ED holds advanced degrees, experience as a psychologist with experience in youth behavior disorders, and passion for serving the youth and youth workers. The ED has served as a city council member and as a mayor in local government.

**Setting vision and values.** Leaders formed XYZ in the late 1990s with a clear direction from the BOD and with the SLs at that time. With the core of value-driven culture, the LT recognizes the importance of an MVV. The LT sets MVV through planning and strategic improvement (see Table 6).

Table 6

*Setting the Vision and Values*

ED	Approach	Deployment	Learning	Integration
Strategic Planning	Vision and core values incorporated into the strategic planning process.	The LT reviewed the strategic plan and integrated into XYZ's annual review.	All Action Plans are reviewed monthly by the LT.	The ED integrates individual goal setting with the LT.

*Note.* The ED's approach, deployment, learning, and integration of the setting of vision and values.

**Promoting legal and ethical behavior.** Leaders of nonprofit organizations have a legal and ethical obligation to their constituents and the public. Leaders need to conduct their activities with accountability and transparency about their mission, activities, finances, accomplishments and decision-making processes. Also, leaders should make organizational information easily accessible to the public. The ethics and legal integrity is an integral part of the mission statement, culture, and collaboratively set by the ED. The ED creates the environment of integrity, honesty, quality, and trust. The ED also uses an open, honest approach with employees and all members, and promotes transparency for the LT and VMs.

*Communication.* The LT members use social media platforms to communicate with stakeholders, volunteer members, the public, and youth advocacy communication platforms and methods (see Table 7). The communication methods included e-mail, newsletters, social media platforms, and other information-sharing mechanisms. For communications with the LT, the ED implements specific measures and monthly agile performance review. An agile performance review reduces the feedback gap as much as possible by focusing on regular check-ins with the LT instead of annual performance reviews. During the agile performance review, the ED does a monthly evaluation of the goals and objectives accomplished by the LT for that month and a review of the goals and objectives for the following month.

As part of the knowledge-sharing process and succession plan, the ED shares key organizational decisions, and information from the BOD. Also, for personal growth, the ED shares articles on leadership, TED Talks discussions, and encourages the rest of the LT to maintain a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and to set individual goals both personal and professional.

Table 7

*Executive Director Communication Plan*

	Stakeholders								Purpose			
	Members	MR	MD	BOD	Take Action	Stakeholders	Vendors	2-Way	Key Decisions	Motivation	Engagement	Strategic Planning
Communicate MVV	N	N	N	Q	N	Q, A	A, N	X	X	X	X	X
Phone Calls	N	N	N	N	N	N		X				
Facebook								X				
E-mail	N	N	O	W, N	N	Q, N	N	X		X	X	X
Staff Meetings			W	W	N			X	X	X	X	X
Newsletters												
One on One Discussions	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	X	X	X	X
Website	M	M	M	M	N	M	M			X	X	
Social Media	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	X		X	X	
BOD Meeting Minutes	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	X	X	X	X	X
Annual Fest			A	A	A			X	X	X	X	X
Staff Training			A, O	A	O, N			X	X	X	X	X
Leadership Meeting				W	O, N			X	X	X	X	X
Strategic Planning			O, A	O, A	O, A			X	X	X	X	X

*Note:* Frequency: D=daily, W=weekly, M=monthly, A=annually, O=ongoing, N=as needed

***Mission and organizational performance.*** Nonprofit leaders must create an environment for success (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders focus on short- and long-term action plan to achieve the mission and to maintain organizational agility. Leaders need to stress long-term organizational sustainability, and to maintain a competitive environment are key strategic issues that need to be integral parts of an organization's overall planning.

***Creating an environment for success.*** The BOD adopted an environment for success by establishing a framework that aligns its policies, mission, vision, and goals articulated in its by-laws. The alignment of policies and MVV facilitates leaders' ability to link action plans to the vision. The ED engages with the LT to align the strategic objectives with the tactical goals.

The ED leads the forward-thinking process that actively seeks potential employees and leverages the strength of the current employees. The ED updates and conducts detailed succession planning (see Figure 4) which is captured and updated in the succession plan. The ED lists requirements in the succession plan used during the hiring process.



*Figure 4.* Detailed succession planning process is an essential component of the broader human resources planning process. It involves an integrated, systematic approach for identifying, developing, and retaining capable and skilled employees in line with current and projected business objectives.

***Creating a focus on action.*** The LT uses advocate approaches and the Baldrige Framework to support an environment for continuous learning, improvement, and excellence. The action that the LT and ED focus is the lack of interventions that would help youth become more fully developed and contributing adults to society. The ED identifies the need for action as raising public awareness for the advocacy of youth intervention programs (see Table 8). By setting expectations, the ED is committed to a course of relentless advocacy so that policymakers and legislators will see youth intervention programs as an essential service.

The ED, with the support of the LT and VMs, provide multiple opportunities to advocate for youth. By creating a mechanism to reach policymakers and legislators are the needed action to raise awareness and to provide relentless advocacy to create and encourage action. The LT and VMs of XYZ reach out and communicate (see Table 7)

and the importance of creating a balance for advocating for the youth (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Focus on Action: Advocacy for Youth Intervention Programs*

Programs	Descriptions	Schedule	Reason
Youth Intervention Summit	The Youth Intervention Summit provides volunteer members to unite with like-minded individuals for ideas, designs, and best practices.	Annual	The summit is a catalyst for systemic change for volunteer members to share their ideas.
Action Center	Allows volunteer members to contact elected officials about key questions and essential initiatives.	Available anytime	Provides a way for volunteer members to add active advocate for youth.
Time for Change	Allows volunteer members a mechanism to contact their local and state lawmakers.	Available anytime	This program provides volunteer members voice as an active advocate for youth.
YIP Rally Day	The event is used to bring attention to the volunteer members agency to gain positive publicity in front of lawmakers.	Annual	Volunteer members meet with lawmakers to share program's successes as well as the local community's needs.

*Note.* The focus on the action for the programs, descriptions of the programs, schedule of when the programs are available and the reason for the program.

***Governance and societal responsibilities.*** Societal responsibilities are critical to ongoing success for leaders of an organization (Baldrige, 2017). Nonprofit leaders must incorporate how they govern the organization to fulfill societal responsibilities and protect the interests of the stakeholders. For nonprofit organizations, the BOD provides governance systems that include internal controls on the governance processes.

***Governance system.*** The Organizational Governance for XYZ is the BOD. The BOD consists of the position of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The president is to preside at all business meetings of XYZ, chair the nominating committee (NC), and to have supervision of the affairs of XYZ. The vice president supports the president in carrying out the duties of the organization. Also, the vice president has powers as the BOD as directed. The secretary is responsible for keeping XYZ's books and records. The secretary gives the ED all notices of the meetings of XYZ's membership and all other notices required by law or by the by-laws. The secretary and ED are the custodians of all books, records, correspondence, and papers relating to the business of XYZ, except those of the treasurer. The treasurer has general charge of reporting the finances of the XYZ and endorses on behalf of XYZ all checks, drafts, notes, and other obligations. The treasurer, along with the ED, maintains a full and accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of XYZ. The responsibilities governance of the BOD (see Table 9).

Table 9

*Responsibility Governance of the BOD*

Key Aspects	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
Accountability	X	X	X	X
Quarterly meetings	X	X	X	X
Duties of the organization	X	X	X	X
Public awareness	X	X		
Financial				X
Books and records				X



*Note.* The key aspects of the BOD.

## **Strategy**

Leaders must make decisions about their organization's core competencies and work systems as an integral part of ensuring their organization's success and future sustainability. A leader also must be adept at strategic planning, executing plans and understand the given market demands to be agile and prepared for unexpected change (Baldrige, 2017). A leader's understanding of strategic planning and the capability to execute the plans is vital for the future of an organization (Bryson, 2018).

**Strategy development.** Strategy development address how leaders approach to preparing for the future. Leaders use strategic development to allocate resources, revenue growth, operational flexibility, and community needs (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders use strategic planning for development of goals and objectives, employee participation and feedback for problem-solving, employee development, and to meet the needs of the stakeholders.

**Strategic planning process.** The ED developed a strategic planning process that is responsive to and aligned with VMs' needs. In addition to focusing on outcomes, the ED makes a concerted effort to focus on process management and improvement (PMI). The ED conducts quarterly meetings to participate in community-building and knowledge sharing. Each participant has a chance to network and gain new perspectives from a diverse membership and receives up-to-date information and insight on the direction, focus, and to enhance planning efforts for future needs. The knowledge sharing meetings

are a way for volunteer members to voice their needs, give their feedback, which allows the ED the best way to serve the VMs. The strategic and action plans are updated annually, and the ED reviews both plans monthly to ensure the LT is on the path to meet their goals and objectives (See Table 10). The BOD and ED developed long-term goals (see Figure 18) to establish goals to increase their grant funding through the year 2025. The grant funding is to increase the social change impact and work to create change in the world through persistent support and professional development.

Table 10

*Strategic Planning Process Inputs*

Training	Membership	Fund Development	Operations	Advocacy
XYZ's training is essential to youth-serving organizations	Membership provides services and value	XYZ's revenue streams are predictable and sustainable	Adhere to XYZ's Quality Service Standards and Values	Youth Intervention saw as an essential service
100% of organizational members are using XYZ training	Retention rate of 90%	Increase earned revenue by 10%	Analyze key organizational metrics monthly to determine adjustments for optimal results	All 134 MN legislative districts have at least one engaged Youth Intervention advocate, to contact all legislators.
Increase by 20% the number of organizational members that use the YIC	Conduct annual member satisfaction survey to establish a baseline to monitor year over year improvement.		Conduct at least one "Sprint" in each of XYZ's five organizational function areas.	Measure attendees of XYZ's first annual advocacy event to establish a baseline to measure future growth. Increase individual take action advocates by 10% over 2017. Increase YIP Rally Day Meetings with Legislators by 10% over 2017.

*Note.* Identifies how XYZ's planning process implemented through training,

membership, fund development, operations, and advocacy.

***Innovation.*** The strategy development process to stimulate and incorporate innovations is to identify and improve on strategies already in place. The ED created a continuous improvement process and tracking for the YIC, and an organizational certificate for members that utilize the training. The ED is continually researching members needs to improve youth training integrated into their YIC training programs. The ED conducts meetings for the VM for ideas, feedback, and strategies for presenting training to further their key strategic opportunities.

***Strategy considerations.*** The ED utilizes data and information for strategic considerations to plan for the future and ensure organizational success. By utilizing the data, the ED can provide all 134 Minnesota's legislative districts the most current information on how the LT and VMs are engaged in youth intervention. The ED uses the VM's information to identify advantages and to validate current goals and objectives to ensure the organizations is prioritizing the needs of the youth.

***Work systems and core competencies.*** The key processes that are accomplished by the LT and VMs to bring opportunities through youth advocacy and youth-worker training. By focusing on the MVV, the ED, LT, and VMs are committed to the needs of the youth and remain committed to helping youth achieve their goals. Also, the ED provides a more efficient process to track memberships dues, write and submit grants, and attract and retain sponsorships.

The creation of plan execution is a must and recognized as a fluid document given within the changing challenges of what is needed to sustain a successful organization of excellence. The value of an organization is subjective, and the ED emphasizes the culture of XYZ to actively highlight the importance of understanding the current needs of the members they serve and recruiting members for the future. By planning for the employees and members to focus on being proactive in the value proposition versus reactionary.

***Strategic objectives.*** Leaders require a view of the future that includes not only the current market segments in which their organizations compete but also how to compete in future market segments (Baldrige, 2017). How to compete creates many challenges and options. Leaders deciding how to compete requires an understanding of the competitors' strengths and weaknesses. Leaders' decisions also involve taking reasonable risks to gain or retain market leadership (Baldrige, 2017).

***Key strategic objectives.*** Through learning and strategic improvement, the ED has moved the organization from a reactive nature to a proactive nature where VM advocate what they do to support the efforts of at-risk youth. The ED established long-range organizational goals (see Table 11). Also, the ED incorporates the long-range goals into the strategic planning process and ensures that objectives are met to support the VM's needs.

***Strategic objectives considerations.*** Both short- and long-term goals are established and guide the ED in identifying organizational opportunities. The LT

leverages VMs by planning for quality professional development for youth workers. Also, the LT continues to guide by establishing a culture that focuses on its mission and values. The ED uses its performance model to continuously improve all aspects of the system to achieve its goals and objectives and to ensure that the organization remains on the correct track for positive results.

### **Customers**

In a rapidly changing technological, competitive, economic, and social environment, many factors may affect customer expectations and loyalty. Leaders continually need to listen and learn from their customers and evaluate actionable information. Information is actionable if leaders can tie the information to key product offerings and business processes to determine the cost and revenue implications of setting improvement goals and priorities for change (Baldrige, 2017).

**Voice of the customer and customer listening.** Leaders develop processes for listening to their customers and determining their satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The goal for leaders is to capture meaningful information to exceed their customers' expectations. Ways for leaders to capture this information include focus groups with key customers, close integration with key customers, interviews with lost and potential customers about their needs and expectations, customer comments using social media, and other organizations providing similar products, and survey or feedback information (Baldrige 2017). The ED uses social media as a form of communication and outreach. The ED engages the customer through advocacy events and provides initial

communication to determine the best media platform to communicate (see Table 20).

***Current and potential customers.*** There are five categories of membership in XYZ: Grantee, Organizations, Associate Organizations, Allied Members, Individuals, and Parent Organizations. The (a) grantee organizations are nonprofit or public entities that are community-based youth service organizations that are receiving direct lobbying and advocacy coordination for youth intervention youth services. Qualifying services include advocacy, education, diversion, counseling, mediation, mentoring, restitution, truancy prevention, anger management, theft prevention and drug/alcohol prevention and early intervention. Grantee organizations are voting members of XYZ. Each grantee organization has one vote during voting procedures. If authorized by the BOD, grantee organizations can have a representative serve and vote on committees, task forces and the BOD. Grantee organizations pay annual dues based on a percentage of their annual youth services budget. The (b) associate organizations are nonprofit, private or public organizations that provide community-based youth services but receive no lobbying or advocacy assistance from XYZ. Qualifying services are advocacy, education, diversion, counseling, mediation, mentoring, restitution, truancy prevention, anger management, theft prevention, and drug, alcohol prevention, and early intervention. Associate organizations are voting members of XYZ. Each associate organization has one vote during voting procedures. If authorized by the BOD, associate organizations can have a representative serve and vote on committees, task forces and the BOD. The (c) allied members are businesses, professional organizations, and foundations that signify their

interest and willingness to support XYZ at an annual rate set by the BOD. Allied members are not voting members of XYZ. However, if authorized by the BOD, allied members can have a representative serve and vote on committees, task forces and the BOD. The (d) individual members are those who support the mission of XYZ and are eligible to join at an annual rate set by the BOD. Individuals are not voting members of XYZ. However, if authorized by the BOD, individuals can serve and vote on committees, task forces and the BOD. The (e) parent organizations are a consortium, collaboration, nonprofit organization, or other legal entity that represents at least two community-based youth intervention entities serving at-risk youth. Parent organizations are voting members of XYZ. Each parent organization has one vote during voting procedures. If authorized by the BOD, parent organizations can have representatives of the parent organization member serve and vote on XYZ committees and the BOD.

***Determination of customer satisfaction and engagement.*** A leader must determine and customize the process for product offerings that serve their customers and to seek information and support. Leaders also should identify customer groups in specific market segments and how leaders build relationships with customers and manage complaints. Leaders should aim to improve marketing, build a more customer-focused culture, and enhance customer loyalty (Baldrige, 2017).

***Satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement.*** The LT regularly meets throughout the year with VM, stakeholders, vendors, and other representatives to maintain two-way communication. The MR coordinates and sets the training schedule.



The MD coordinates the monthly newsletters and e-mail communications. Also, the ED conducts quarterly meetings to participate in community-building and the sharing of best practices. Each member has a chance to network to gain new perspectives from a diverse membership and to receive up-to-date information and insight about what the LT is working on to enhance planning efforts for future needs. Most importantly, these meetings are a way for members to voice their needs, give the LT feedback, and to let them know the best way in which to serve their members.

**Customer engagement.** Customer engagement is the customers' commitment to the organization and the products offered (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders engage customers to increase their business and to provide support to the customers' willingness to advocate for the products and services that are provided. The goal of customer engagement is to make it easier to do business with and responsive to new and current customers' expectations (Baldrige, 2017).

**Product offerings and customer support.** Product offerings are the goods and services offered to the market. Leaders that identify products consider the essential characteristics of their products and how they provide their services to their customers (Baldrige, 2017). Having leaders build a more customer-focused culture and enhance customer loyalty could eliminate the cause of complaints and to the setting of priorities for process and product improvements (Baldrige, 2017).

**Product offerings.** Products include youth advocacy, education, diversion, counseling, mediation, mentoring, restitution, truancy prevention, anger management,

and theft prevention. The MR coordinates and provides training for drug and alcohol prevention and early intervention and comprehensive training for youth workers. Training is at no cost to members of XYZ. The training designed around the MyYouthPro's Competency Framework for Youth Workers. Also, XYZ's Youth Intervention Certification (YIC) instructors provide a comprehensive foundation for all eight competencies. YIC training effectiveness, every training supports evidence-based or promising practices that include tools and tips that members can use immediately after receiving their training. The instructors of XYZ provide a Certificate of Attendance and all relevant information the members may submit to other training organizations for their required Continuing Education Units (CEUs). The LT provides a customer satisfaction survey at the end of every training course (see Figure 7).

***Customer support.*** The ED provides quarterly meetings to provide a legislative update, outlined opportunities created for members, and member success stories. The quarterly meeting includes a traditional picnic lunch and the chance to work with fellow youth workers. The ED host an annual fest that brings in over 600 youth workers, youth advocacy organizations, and vendors from all over the country.

Also, the ED hosts a day-long celebration of youth intervention during which leaders honor contributions to youth intervention as well as their members and sponsors. The ED hosts an annual meeting of the association to present the Friends of Youth Leadership awards, adds a new class of inductees to the Youth Intervention Hall of Fame, provides the state of the association, and celebrates excellence in Youth Intervention.

*Customer segmentation.* The ED provides annual gatherings to enhance the outcome and experiences of those who work with youth. Gatherings are designated to meet new colleagues and to renew the stakeholders a passion for learning to help youth succeed. The ED reviewed the accomplishments and recognized what nonprofits and public entities that serve community-based youth service organizations. The ED also acknowledges the lobbying and advocacy coordination efforts for youth intervention and services. Lastly, the gatherings are a way to recruit new members into the organization.

*Relationship management.* The LT's advocacy is part of the strategy to increase support and funding for youth programs. Using advocacy strategy assists in the public and political awareness of the importance of youth intervention and the program leaders' ability to build training and membership capacity.

*Complaint management.* The information needed to understand a customer's complaint is valuable to the LT. The ED requires that resolving complaints through direct personal contact with the members, stakeholders, and vendors or whoever initiated the complaint. The ED ensures that appropriate resources and transparent communication are involved in the resolution process.

### **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management**

Leaders need key information on effectively measuring, analyzing, and improving performance and managing organizational knowledge to drive improvement, innovation, and organizational competitiveness (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders also rely on analysis, and knowledge management to further their competitive advantage and productivity growth.

Organizational leaders that have the ability to understand specific measurement dimensions can substantially improve their organization's performance (Soysa, 2016).

**Measurement, analysis, and improvement of organizational performance.**

Leaders select data and information, use data, and turn the data into useful information for performance measurement, analysis, and review in support of organizational planning and performance improvement (Baldrige, 2017). Cooper and Shumate (2016) suggested ways for leaders to improve nonprofit standards to include benchmarking, measurement and assessment, and the nonprofit. The aim of performance measurement, analysis, review, and improvement is to guide leaders process management to achieve key organizational results and strategic objectives, anticipate and respond to rapid or unexpected organizational or external changes, and identify best practices to share (Baldrige, 2017).

***Performance measurement.*** In support of the ED's leadership system approach, leaders use the organization's core competency to measure performance. The ED selects, collects, aligns, and integrates data for use in tracking, analyzing, and improving training programs. Overall organizational performance is used by the ED to support decision-making and encourage innovation and improvement. Selection criteria determine if data against the potential measure are (a) currently available or obtainable, (b) valid, and (c) aligned to the mission and vision statements.

To share information, the ED, LT, and VMs use knowledge sharing. The information gives the ED and the LT an external perspective to build upon their knowledge sharing (KS) and organizational performance review (OPR) (see Table 11).

Table 1

*Organizational Performance Review*

Strategic Initiative	Key KSS Method	Frequency
Strategic Plan	BOD Meetings	W, AN
	LT Meetings	W, M, AN, Q, A
	Strategic Planning Meetings	A, AN
YIC Training Agenda	BOD Meetings	Q, AN, A
	LT Meetings	M, Q, AN, A
	Strategic Planning Meetings	M, AN, A
Reform and Innovation Plan	BOD Meetings	Q, A
	LT Meetings	W, M, Q, AN, A
	SL Meetings	M, Q, AN, A
	Individual Workforce Meetings	AN
	Strategic Planning Meetings	W, M, Q, AN, A

*Note.* Weekly (W), Monthly (M), Quarterly (Q), As Needed (AN), Annually (A)  
 The frequency of organizational performance reviews, key knowledge sharing, and frequency.

**Comparative data.** The ED focus is on continuous improvement and new learning opportunities within the field of youth work. Results are then used to guide decision making at the BOD and ED level, process improvement opportunities, and for future strategic objectives. The ED uses this information to conduct benchmarking and collect comparative data to measure and analyze organizational performance.

**Customer data.** The LT uses a 10-point excellence assurance protocol to collect the voice-of-the-customer and market data to achieve a high standard of excellence (see Figure 7). The LT uses this method to build a more customer-focused culture and to support fact-based decision making. The LT also ensures that VMs experience and

receive the highest value of training and provide complete and honest feedback after every training course offered (see Figures 7 and 8).

***Measurement agility.*** The ED conducts planning, performance review, and corrective action that occur monthly. The performance reviews provide the opportunity for action plan modification and any changes needed in performance measures follow the data, collect, align, and integrate process. The ED can adjust their performance measurement system to respond to rapid or unexpected organizational and external changes.

***Performance analysis and review.*** The ED conducts an extensive review and analysis process of the organization's essential performance and training capabilities through the annual strategic planning process. The ED uses the strategic plan to document the long-range goals and the expected outcomes and measures of the organization. The ED tracks the expected outcomes and measures through monthly review meetings to ensure visibility, progress, and alignment for the organization.

***Performance improvement.*** Leaders should perform analyses to gain an understanding of performance and needed actions for future improvements, key customer's indicators and satisfaction, return on investment, and the benefits of the cost associated with education and training (Baldrige, 2017). Without sufficient and consistent funding streams, nonprofits may be forced to limit programs or go out of business. The underlying theory is that financially healthy organizations would function better because they are better able to cope with unexpected financial hurdles while continuously

supporting program and performance improvement (Kim, 2016).

***Future performance, continuous improvement, and innovation.*** Future performance evaluates and analyzes inputs from past performance as compared to projected performance, as well as the ED's long-term goals, updates, and projections accordingly. Opportunities for improvement and innovation are identified based on performance goals, benchmarks, and previous comparisons. The performance goals are then prioritized using the strategic objective criteria and updated in the annual strategic plan.

The LT communicates to VMs and vendors by utilizing integrated information technology (IT) system for data and information VMs, key stakeholders, and vendors (see Table 12). The IT systems include network drives, software Salesforce, Facebook, Twitter, and online training resources from the organization's website.

Table 2

*Data and Information for VM, Stakeholders, and Vendors*

Quality Assurance	Checks and balances Accountability
Integrity, Reliability, and Validity	Checks and Balances Code of Ethics Internet Use Agreements Backup systems.
Confidentiality and Security	Password protection for external security Firewall protection for external security Anti-virus software Network maintenance



**Information and knowledge management.** Leaders build and manage their organization's knowledge assets and ensure the quality and availability of data and information to help achieve organizational learning and improvement. Leaders look to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness and stimulate innovation (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders that use knowledge management solutions may lead to a higher level of effectiveness and efficiency (Szarleta & Ceesay, 2016).

**Data, information, and information technology.** The LT uses the methods to validate the organizational data, information and utilizing a systematic process (see Table 13). The ED oversees the availability and accessibility of computer access cybersecurity of information systems, training information, and any sensitive information.

Table 3

*Organizational Data and Information*

	Availability			Quality		
	Network	Servers	Sys Apps	VPN	Internet	Intranet
Employees	X	X	X	X	X	X
Members	X	X	X		X	X
Stakeholders	X	X			X	X
Vendors/supplier	X		X	X	X	

**Organizational knowledge.** Leaders should use knowledge management system to provide the mechanism for sharing organization's knowledge to maintain continuity throughout personnel transitions (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders need to determine what knowledge is critical for the operations of the organization and then implement systematic processes for sharing the information among other employees. Mueller (2012)

acknowledged project LT's share primarily technical knowledge, while project leaders share primarily organizational knowledge.

***Knowledge management.*** The ED integrates a systematic process to generate value from its intellectual and knowledge-based assets. The ED maintains the critical knowledge that the organization must capture to heighten learning and organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Table 14 identifies the system and how the LT, VMs, stakeholders, and vendors maximize these resources to learn, improve, and share knowledge continually.

Table 4

*Knowledge Management Sharing*

Stakeholder	Transfer Method	Frequency	Participant	Integration Points
Customers, suppliers, partners, and collaborators	Newsletter	A, M	Members	MVV, CC, SI
	XYZ Fest	A	Customers, suppliers, partners, and collaborators	MVV, CC, SI
	Satisfaction Survey	AN, A	Members and students	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
	E-mail Blasts	W, M, AN	Schools, Parents, Participants, Community	MVV, CC, SI
Workforce	Individual Workforce Meetings	AN, W, M	All Employees	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
	LT Meetings	W, M, Q, AN, A	All Employees	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
	Leadership Meetings	W, M, Q, AN, A	XYZ Leadership	SI, CVD
	Strategic Planning Meetings	M, Q, A	All Employees	SI, CVD
	Capability & Capacity Assessments	M, AN	All Employees	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
Other Stakeholders	Community Collaboration Meetings	AN	Community, Schools, SL	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
	SL Communication Plan	M, Q, AN	SL	MVV, CC, SI, CVD
	Supplier Meetings	Q, AN, A	Suppliers, SL	SI
	BOD Meetings	M, Q, A	BOD Members, XYZ leaders & employees, vendors, and sponsors.	MVV, CC, SI, CVD

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*Note.* W= Weekly, M=Monthly, AN= As Needed, Q= Quarterly, A= Annually CC (Guiding Principles)= Core Competencies, MVV= Mission, Vision, Values, SI= Strategic Initiatives, CVD= Customer Voice Data

***Best practices.*** The ED intentionally designed its performance review structure to facilitate best-practice sharing for the organization. The ED and the BOD review and provide a comparison to identify high performing practices and then disseminate their best practices within their organization. Gao (2015) acknowledged that nonprofit leaders share the same best practices results as the public sector by using performance measurements.

***Organizational learning.*** The ED uses knowledge and resources to embed learning in its operations through multiple mechanisms. The ED establishes key organizational performance reviews to monitor operational effectiveness and identifies opportunities for improvement. Also, for the promotion of internal and external best-practice sharing and the participation in the Walden University DBA Consulting Capstone. The DBA Consulting Capstone includes implementation of the Baldrige framework and holistic assessment of the organization's performance using the Baldrige criteria for performance excellence.

Ongoing enrichment and training activities provided through regularly scheduled professional development sessions. The venues or tools for transferring and managing knowledge include in-person meetings, video conferencing, transfer of knowledge to other stakeholders including suppliers, and partners. Also, the ED uses other knowledge management methods and the sharing of best practices to improve course instruction

along with increasing understanding of curriculum, assessment, and intervention strategies.

**Workforce.** Leaders that create a high-performance environment and engage their workforce can enable workforce members to adapt to change and succeed (Baldrige, 2017). Having the right number of employees that contribute the right skill set is critical to the organization's success. Leaders that can look ahead to predict those needs for the future allow for adequate training, hiring, relocation times, and preparation for work system changes (Baldrige, 2017).

**Workforce environment.** The ED maintains a culture of empowering the LT to deliver exceptional customer service to support their members. The LT focus is on the VMs and all that they do to create an environment where they can connect, clear two-way communication, direct involvement in training courses, actions plan, improvement efforts. The LT provides a clear focus and holds each other accountable for performing at the highest level.

**Workforce capability and capacity.** The ED, assess the LT's capability and capacity by the ability and willingness to do anything needed at any time. The capability to set the vision and inspire others to follow and the ability to supervise and motivate others. All employees must have a strong understanding of internal group dynamics and how to build upon and incorporate the strengths that come from those dynamics. Each employee must have a basic accounting and financial management skills, and a background in government operations, including an understanding of the legislative

process. The ability to work with the BOD and understanding what the BOD needs. Also, excellent writing and excellent public speaking skills.

***Capability and capacity.*** The ED conducts an annual assessment of the capability and capacity of the LT. The ED evaluates performance, job expectations, and to check for gaps in competencies across each of the LT's positions for current and future needs.

***New workforce members and change management.*** The ED creates an encouraging environment that supports flexibility and creativity while meeting employee needs. The ED uses the SP as a starting point when there is a need to recruit a new staff member. Being able to pre-identify potential new hire that will promote the success of the mission of XYZ. With XYZ having only three as part of their LT is part of the hiring process and decision making when hiring a new employee. Having the LT in the hiring process will help promote buy-in and ensure the on-going cohesiveness of the LT.

In recruiting for an opening, the ED offers a different work experience than direct service organizations. Many in the youth work field will find the ability to drive change at a macro level appealing. As a first step, the best option is to advertise the opening to the membership. The ED post all job openings on the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits online job board. The online job board offers statewide exposure for the position beyond the XYZ's membership.

***Work accomplishment.*** The ED has organized, managed, and engages the LT. The ED provides agile performance reviews and a measurement of their goals and objectives that align with the strategic plan. Every month the ED reviews the LT's work

accomplished and what work still needs to be done to complete the goals. Each LT member also participates in a performance meeting to collaborate on ideas, development efforts and offerings, involvement in process design and improvement, and reward and recognition (see Table 15).

Table 5

## Work Accomplished

Management of LT	Work accomplished
Accomplish organization's work	The planning process through STP, AP, and SP.
Capitalize on organization's Core Training Competencies	XYZ's TF conducts research to select youth work training programs and to provide to other members (see Figure 7).
Reinforce Customer focus	Annually XYZ LT validates the effectiveness of the YIC when XYZ members conduct pre- and post-training surveys (see Figure 7). The LT uses the survey to measure competencies and improve training courses regarding knowledge, skills, and confidence of the youth worker (see Figure 7).
Exceed Performance	XYZ maintains a high standard of performance by continually expanding educational knowledge and skills to keep up with new training methods while staying with the basics in youth worker education (see Figure 7).

*Note.* AP = Action Plan; STP = Strategic Plan; SP = Succession Plan; YIC = Youth Intervention Certificate.

**Workforce environment.** To become competent takes an ongoing commitment to professional development. The LT understands the dedication of new learning that is relevant to the job and knowing the basics to stay up to date with the changes that are needed. The ED maintains a culture of constant learning and engagement with the LT. The ED knows the importance of acknowledging the significant milestones that the LT has accomplished but also celebrates small accomplishments.



**Workforce benefits and policies.** The ED contracts with Professional Employee Association (PEA) to support the LT's human resources needs. As part of the benefits package, the ED offers Paid Time Off (PTO), a 5% cost matching for the LT's 401K, and a benefits package including an additional \$4,528 per year to offset health care and medical cost (see Table 16).

Table 6

*Basic Benefits Package*

Benefits	ED	MD	MR
Medical offset (\$4,258 per year)	X	X	X
Employee Assistance Programs	X	X	X
Sick Leave	X	X	X
Paid Time Off (PTO)	X	X	X
5% matching into a 401k	X	X	X

**Workforce engagement.** Word and Park (2015) examined the positive relationship between nonprofit employees and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for nonprofit jobs. Many studies have shown that high levels of workforce engagement have a significant, positive impact on organizational performance (Baldrige, 2017). The motivation for nonprofit leaders to hire and retain their workforce can impact the organization and community the workforce serves. Research has indicated that engagement by a workforce characterized by performing meaningful work; having clear organizational direction and accountability for performance; and having a safe, trusting, efficient, and cooperative work environment. In many organizations, employees and

volunteers are drawn to and derive meaning from their work because it aligns with their values (Baldrige, 2017).

***Organizational culture.*** The ED fosters open communication, high performance, and empowerment. Having an engaged LT ensures a robust organizational culture for collaboration and information sharing. KS and SP ensure that the LT is engaged and have knowledge of what other LT members are doing. Having the LT involved in decision making is a key driver that inspires everyone to give the extra effort to help ensure that all their members succeed.

***Drivers of engagement and assessment of engagement.*** Key drivers of assessment and engagement on how the LT accomplishes training through engagement and training conducted by the ED. Due to the small size of the LT, the ED can keep all employees engaged and current on new issues about youth development. Also, the ED provides support resources such as performance reviews, staffing metrics, and monthly action plan to manage the flow of information. The ED also uses the support resources for job performance by ensuring the LT skill levels needed to meet the goals and objectives and support the LT and VMs.

***Workforce and leader development.*** Workforce responsibilities, personal development, and workforce development needs might vary significantly. Different needs might include gaining skills for knowledge sharing, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving; interpreting and using data; exceeding customer requirements; analyzing and simplifying processes; reducing waste and cycle time; working with and

motivating volunteers; and setting priorities based on strategic alignment or cost-benefit analysis (Baldrige, 2017). A leader must also look at the educational needs of the workforce that might include advanced skills in new technologies or necessary skills, such as reading, writing, language, arithmetic, and computer skills (Baldrige, 2017).

***Learning and development system.*** The ED takes a holistic approach to learning and development not only to the LT but also to the VMs and stakeholders. The BOD and ED considered strategic planning initiatives and capability and capacity assessments in the development of workforce-development processes. The LT develops individual learning plans to encourage learning both personally and professionally.

**Operations.** Leaders must evaluate how they and their workforce members design, manage, improve, and innovate products/services and integrate work processes to improve operational effectiveness to deliver customer value and to achieve ongoing organizational success (Baldrige, 2017). Tasks, policies, responsibilities, and processes used to accomplish projects, as well as strategy and ethics used in decision-making, are all encompassed by an organization's operations (Ahola, Ruuska, Artto, & Kujala, 2014).

**Work processes.** Leaders must review key products and innovation with the goal of creating value for customers and achieving current and future organizational success. A leader's approach should consider the key requirements for their products and services. Factors need to consider in work process design include, safety, long-term performance, environmental impact, measurement capability, process improvement, and customer expectations (Baldrige, 2017).

***Product and process requirements.*** The ED established key processes for members that provide at-risk youth intervention programs. The programs include youth mentoring, restorative justice services, diversion services, advocacy, education, counseling, and referral services. The VM's also provide services to support the youth and their families who have identified family, school, legal, chemical or other problems.

***Key work processes and design concepts.*** The ED use a responsible, accountable, consulted, and a matrix of all XYZ activities and decision-making authorities undertaken in an organization for accountability of the employees and memberships roles. The accountability matrix (RACI) includes the following dimensions: Responsible is the employee or member who performs an activity. Accountable is the employee or member who is responsible for the task. Consulted is the member or employee that needs to provide the feedback and contribute to the activity. The informed is the member or employee that needs to know the decision and final action.

***Process management and improvement.*** Leaders must understand how to improve processes to achieve better performance. Improving performance can provide better quality from the customers' perspective, but also improve financial and operational performance (Baldrige, 2017). For leaders to be efficient and effective understanding organizations key work processes that produce employee, customer, and stakeholder value.

***Process implementation.*** Process improvement begins with the ED identifying opportunities for improvement and to solve problems. The ED systematically analyzes

the work system processes regarding alignment with the vision, resources required to do the job, cost, and member requirements. The ED tasks the ones that best fit the process needing improvement.

*Support processes.* Key work processes are managed by using the RACI and improved by the ED reviewing the process by reducing variation, eliminating waste, increasing member productivity, and saving or avoiding costs. Efficient and effective processes contribute to overall fiscal soundness which enables the ED to continue contributing to the value of the members and by increasing training programs for youth workers. The ED improves work processes to achieve better performance and improve services through the user organization.

*Product and process improvement.* Process improvement begins with the ED identifying opportunities for improvement and to solve problems. The ED systematically analyzes the work system processes regarding alignment with the vision, resources required to do the job, cost, and member requirements. The ED tasks the ones that best fit the process needing improvement (see Table 17).

Table 7

*Key Process Requirements and Measures*

	Requirements	Process Measure	Results
Key Customer/Stakeholder requirements and Expectations	Advocacy events	Take Action e-mails delivered	Table 20
		Take Action responses by supporters	
		Take Action response rate	
		Take Action e-mails opened.	
	Lawmaker events	Lawmakers met with XYZ's members	Table 21
		Lawmakers met with XYZ's member organizations	
		Lawmakers met with XYZ's grantee and associate members	
	Online Presence	Unique site visits	Table 22
		Join or renew page views	
		Newsletter sign-ups	
Facebook likes			

***Supply-chain management.*** The BOD and ED have established purchasing policies and procedures, and the evaluation process includes a review of supplier's qualifications and performance. The ED does not need to rely heavily on specific suppliers because most of their purchases are off-the-shelve products. Organizational leaders must calculate both the positive and negative effect of outsourcing their supply-chain needs before determining which direction is the most beneficial (Malhotra, 2014).

***Innovation management.*** The ED has conviction and concern for youth. The ED's goal is to unite people who share the same passion and to use XYZ to leverage a movement advancing the changes that help all youth thrive. The ED is committed to

helping members engage in the advocacy and lobbying efforts. Innovation and advocacy are about creating awareness to change the hearts and minds of people who do not understand the value of youth intervention. The ED provides advances specific legislation that benefits the youth. The ED promotes that the chances of success significantly increase when like-minded people are together and participate.

The VM's share the opportunities to participate in through regional summits throughout Minnesota, press conferences, campaigns to take actions by using e-mails. The ED promotes the Youth Intervention Programs (YIP) by testifying at the Capitol, established meetings with local lawmakers, and letters to the editor's campaigns. The ED meets with a legislative committee to form strategies and goals and most importantly the advocacy training. The ED innovation is to share the passion and create a movement among youth workers and drives the change that youth deserve.

**Operational effectiveness.** A leader must ensure efficient operations to have a safe work environment and deliver value to the employees, customers, and stakeholders. For leaders, it is crucial to utilize key measures for all aspects of operational management to improve effectiveness and operations. Leaders depend on effective processes to control the costs of an organizations operations and maintain the reliability, security, and cybersecurity of their information systems (Baldrige, 2017).

***Process efficiency and effectiveness.*** The ED ensures that the key processes are defined and are monitored, controlled, and evaluated by the process owners for performance during day-to-day operations. Further refinement or improvements are

identified and implemented based on process performance evaluations, stakeholder feedback and lessons learned.

***Safety and business continuity.*** The ED takes a proactive approach to emergency preparedness and ensures that work system and workplaces prepared for security, disasters, and emergencies. The planning process provides for several levels of activation and identifies critical systems and applications that are needed to maintain operations. The plan provides vendor contact information, data programming recovery processes, alternate sites, and hardware and software replacement. There are written procedures for all significant information system failures that might occur. The LT conducts business at their homes. Therefore, the risk associated with any one of the individual operations lessened due to the ability to replicate those operations from another location.

### **Collection, Analysis, and Preparation of Results**

#### **Product and Process Results**

XYZ is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit association, which the LT and VMs operate for the benefit of youth-serving organizations everywhere through their advocacy and professional development resources. As a nonprofit association, XYZ is made up of VMs organizations serving youth in a variety of programs. The VMs work to create change in the world through relentless advocacy and exceptional professional development. Regardless of method, what all youth intervention programs share is serving youth to become productive adults and contributing members of society. The VMs ensure that youth intervention programs support the communities they serve. The LT believes the



more competent a youth worker becomes; the more real difference they make in the lives of the youth they support.

***Process effectiveness and efficiency.*** Dedicated to helping youth workers, the LT provides and coordinates professional development for youth workers to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to assist at-risk youth. The LT provides youth development programs that target youth workers so that they can help youths of all ages. XYZ's ED and LT encourage leaders in every community to be advocates for supporting the youth. The ED provides policy and lawmakers information on how youth intervention programs are a necessary investment with measurable returns, results, and long-term goals (see Table 18 and Table 19). The ED also ensures the VMs have the resources needed to provide high-quality and cost-effective professional development training for youth workers. The professional development offered provides the training youth workers need to make a real difference in the lives of the young people they support. The LT uses the social change impact model (see Figure 5) as a guide to show youth workers have access for professional development and adequate resources, the youth they serve will do better and achieve more.



Figure 5. Social change impact model is made up of member organizations who serve youth in a variety of programs, and work to create change in the world through relentless advocacy and exceptional professional development.

Table 8

*Long-Range Goals*

Goal	Completion Date
Increase YIP grant to \$25 million.	2025
Increase earned revenue to eliminate 100% of YIP allocation	2025

The mentoring partnership of Minnesota and XYZ represents more than 500 professional development programs delivering a comprehensive support system for youth workers that service over 190,000 youth throughout the state of Minnesota. Youth workers involved in intervention programs can reach at-risk youth at an early age can save millions of dollars in future corrective expenditures and prepared citizens in our communities (Anton & Temple, 2007).

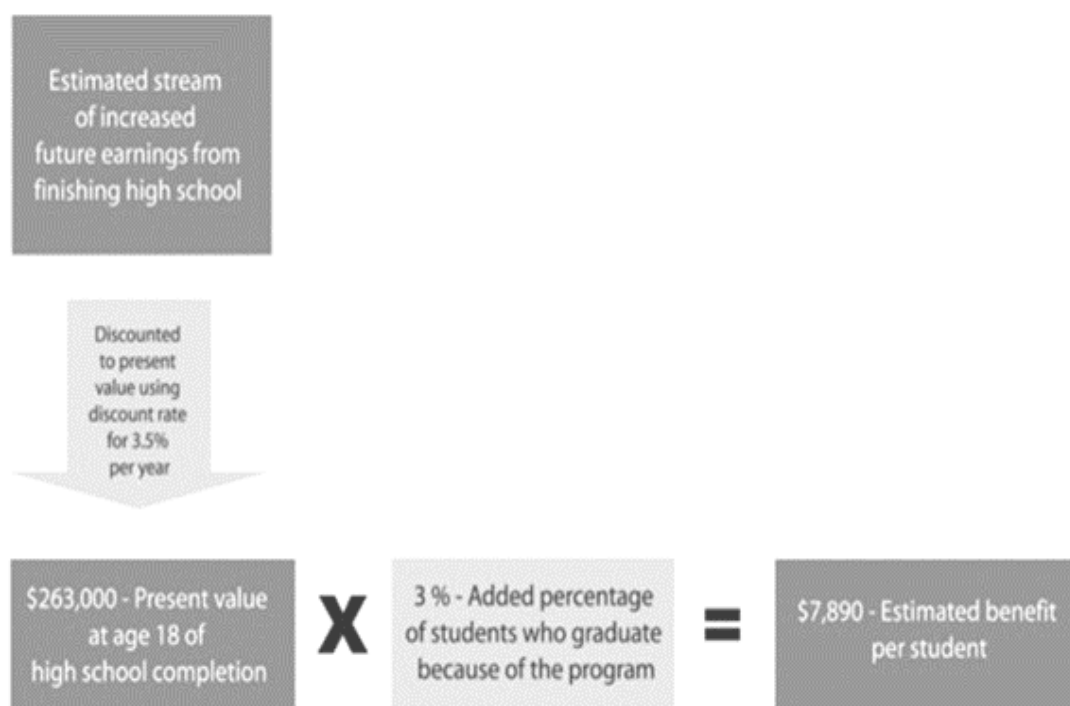
The social return on investment (SROI) study is the first formal economic analysis of the costs and benefits of youth mentoring and youth intervention programs in the state of Minnesota. Researchers for SROI quantify the value and benefits of mentoring and intervention of youth-serving programs. An effective, comprehensive program costing around \$2,000 per participant returns benefits of \$4.89 for every dollar of cost (Anton & Temple, 2007). Also, the program returns \$14.68 for every state dollar invested, assuming a 2-to-1 match of other funding. A targeted program to reduce recidivism of property crimes costing approximately \$200 per participant returns benefits of \$8.18 per dollar invested (Anton & Temple, 2007).

The SROI analyst compares the public benefits to public costs, the comprehensive program produces \$2.33 for every public dollar, while the targeted program produces \$8.18 for each public dollar invested (Anton & Temple, 2007). For a total cost of fiscal conservancy (see Table 19). The flow chart (see Figure 6) of the estimation benefit per youth in a youth development program.

Table 9

*Total Cost of Fiscal Conservancy*

Average annual cost per youth	Annual cost to taxpayers	Youth intervention cost
Residential treatment cost	\$75,300	
Group home cost	\$56,100	
Juvenile correctional facility cost	\$40,200	\$2,000
Juvenile court per case cost	\$3,500	
Total cost per youth	\$175,100	\$2,000

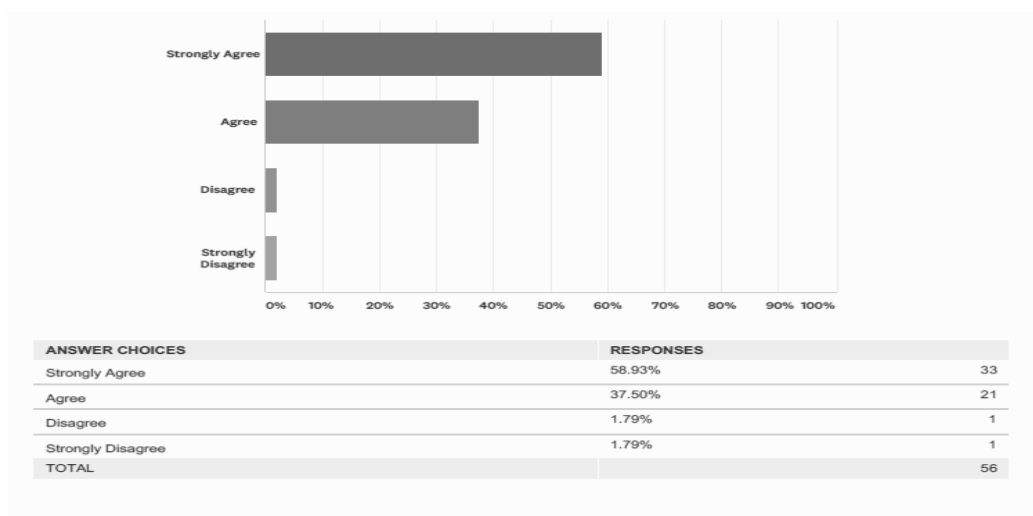


*Figure 6.* Estimation benefit per youth in an youth development program detailing high school graduates estimated increase of future earnings.

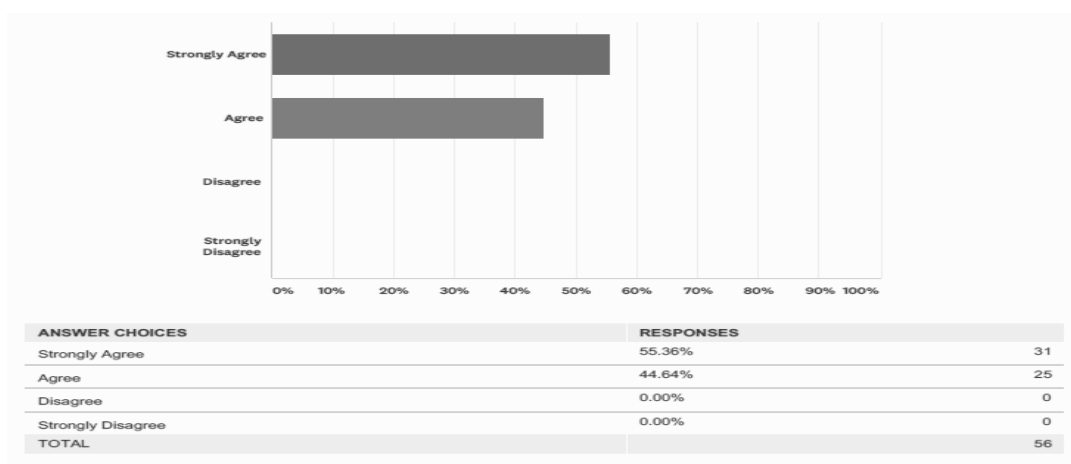
## **Customer Results**

Leaders need to measure customer-focused performance results to understand how well the customer is satisfied in engaging and loyalty-building relationships (Baldrige, 2017). Relevant data for improving customer relationships could include customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, customer retention, value and quality, access and ease of use, and advocacy for the brand and product offered. Leaders need to place emphasis and focus on building and retaining a strong customer base for the future of organizational sustainability.

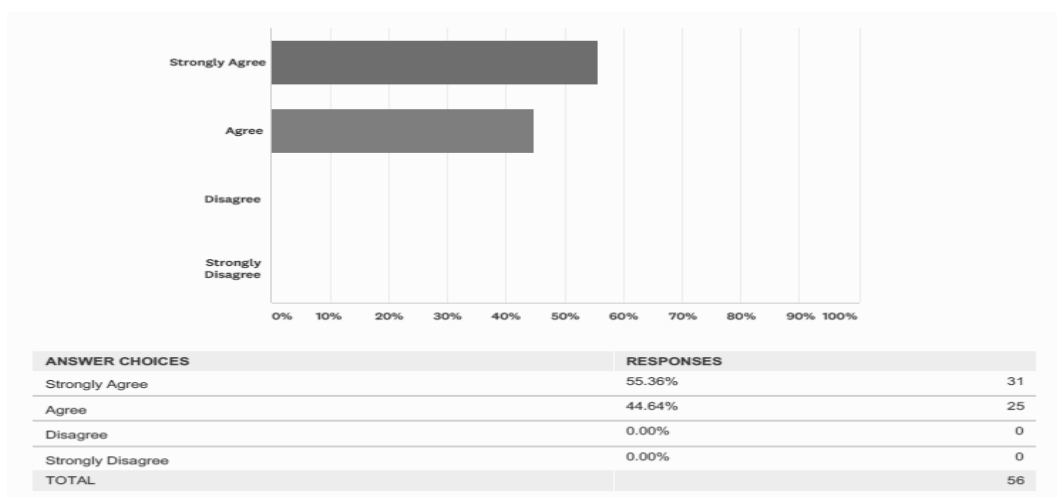
*Customer satisfaction.* The LT uses the following results to serve as a measurement to support their VMs. The LT understands the voice and needs of the VMs through active engagement, listening, and communication. Using methods such as e-mails, meetings, and online feedback from their training. The LT also uses other social media platforms to gain constant feedback and monitor the satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and retention of VMs. The LT uses the surveys to determine the quality of the training (see Figure 7), and to measure to see if the training met the VM's professional development needs (see Figure 8). The LT also conducts surveys to measure and reaffirmed the skills of the youth worker (see Figure 9), and if the youth worker would recommend the training to someone else (see Figure 10).



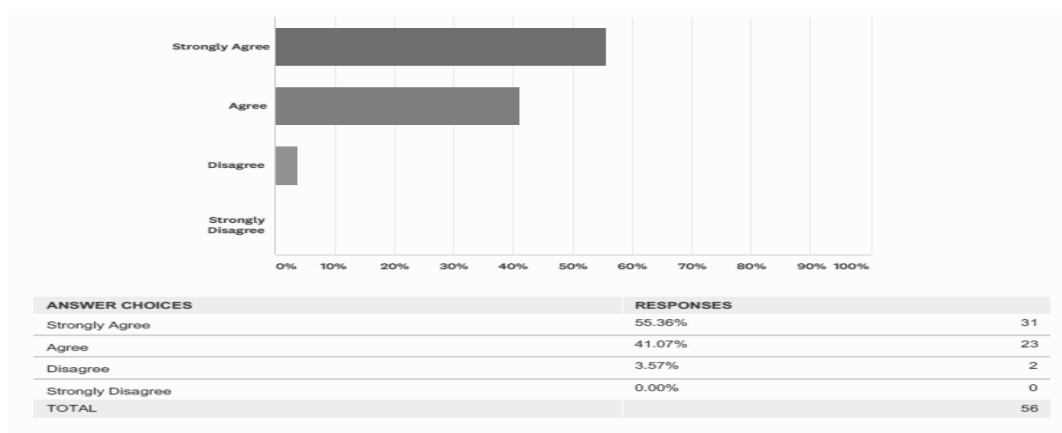
*Figure 7.* VM's feedback on the quality training (2017) based on the survey provided after the youth development training.



*Figure 8.* Training that met the VM's professional development needs (2017) based on the survey provided after the youth development training.



*Figure 9.* Learning that reaffirmed the skills of the youth work (2017) based on the survey provided after the youth development training.



*Figure 10.* Recommend this training to other youth workers (2017) based on the survey provided after the youth development training.

**Customer engagement.** The ED primary measure of engagement is the outreach provided to support professional development for youth workers and to engage policy and lawmakers. Engaging in outreach, such as advocacy events (see Table 20),

lawmaker's events (see Table 21), and monitoring online presence (see Table 22).

Table 20

*Advocacy Events*

Advocacy Events	2017 Cumulative
Take Action E-mails Delivered	36,056
Take Action Responses by Supports	845
Take Action Response Rate	2%
Take Action E-mails Opened	56.7%
Total Actions Completed	845

Table 10

*Lawmaker Events*

Lawmaker Events	2017 Cumulative
Lawmakers meetings with XYZ's Members	53
Lawmakers meetings with XYZ's Member Organizations.	20
Lawmakers meetings with XYZ's Grantee & Associate	9

Table 11

*Online Presence*

Online Presence	2017 Cumulative	2018 Goal
Unique sites visited	21,078	24,083
Join/Renew Page site	801	1,251
Total newsletter sign-ups	151	N/A
Newsletter signups (Facebook)	11	11
Facebook Likes	129	730



## **Workforce Results**

Leaders may review outcomes related to workforce safety, absenteeism, turnover, satisfaction, and complaints. For some measures, such as absenteeism and turnover, leaders review the results of other organizations of comparable size to provide a context for understanding performance outcomes. Results reported for indicators of workforce capacity and capability might include staffing levels across organizational units and certifications to meet skill needs (Baldrige, 2017).

*Workforce capability and capacity.* Providing professional development of the LT is essential and a critical component of the success of XYZ. The ED uses agile performance reviews to monitor the LT capacity and capabilities based on performance-versus-goal and to tie the AP to the performance of the LT. An agile performance is a piece-by-piece process that ties the employee to the AP, strategic objectives, and overall goals of the organizations. The ED also uses the agile performance to tie the LTs to the VMs needs, continuous improvement, and to make necessary changes as needed.

*Workforce development.* The ED's goal is to provide meaningful training and development to its workforce. The ED engages the LT through development and involvement in all process of the organization. The LT benefits from being engaged in all events, meetings, and outreach programs.

## **Leadership and Governance Results**

Organizational leaders measure appropriate internal quality indicators, field performance of products, defect levels, service errors, response times, and data collected

from customers, as well as customer surveys on product and service performance (Baldrige, 2017). Leaders use measures to track key processes for operational improvement. All areas of organizational and operational performance should be evaluated by measures that are relevant and important to sustain an organization.

***Leadership.*** In 2016, the ED began using the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program to implement the organization's professional development training and certification program for youth workers. The ED engages daily with each member of the LT and BOD to ensure that everyone meets the goals and objectives. The need for constant communication with the LT and BOD is also necessary to implement change and to share new information.

***Governance, law and regulations, and ethics.*** BOD develops the by-laws to hold the ED accountable for his actions and to provide clarity to the LT and VMs. The ED develops strategic plans and an AP to use as a roadmap to continue to work through actionable items. The AP is validated monthly and updated accordingly with the LT. The ED is responsible for the submission of the 990 tax form and the 501(c)3 charitable registration annually to meet the regulatory requirement of a nonprofit organization and any legal requirements that are needed to receive any grants. Each LT member is required to conduct business consistent with all mandated legal requirements and to adhere to the by-laws. Ethical breaches is a conflict between the Organizations Core Values that would result in immediate termination. Examples include fraud, record falsifications, member data breach, dishonest sales practices, and self-gaining. Each VM is requested to take a

survey of their knowledge and skills on ethics and professional behavior (see Figure 11).

	POORLY PREPARED TO SUCCEED	2	3	4	MODERATELY PREPARED TO SUCCEED	6	7	8	EXTREMELY WELL PREPARED TO SUCCEED	TOTAL
My current knowledge regarding ethics and professional behavior in youth work leaves me	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	41.18% 7	35.29% 6	11.76% 2	17
My current skill regarding ethics and professional behavior in youth work leaves me	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	52.94% 9	23.53% 4	11.76% 2	17
My current confidence regarding ethics and professional behavior in youth work leaves me	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	64.71% 11	11.76% 2	11.76% 2	17

*Figure 11.* Survey to measure the VM's skills in ethics and professional behavior based on a survey provided after the training.

## Financial and Market Results

**Financial performance.** Nonprofits should adopt clear policies for fundraising activities to ensure responsible use of funds and open, transparent communication with contributors and other constituents. The BOD and ED focus on the economic development and revenue to support the organization and create opportunities for individuals and organizations to donate to their cause. The ED is engaged in the interests of the donors and to utilize the donor's financial resources to achieve the mission. The BOD and ED established clear policies and practices to monitor the use of the funds. The ED uses AP and SP to maintain efficiency and effectiveness for the financial performance and sustainability. The ED provides opportunities for VMs, stakeholders,

donors, and contributors to give to causes they desire. The ED engages the interests and relationships of the stakeholders that have developed a culture of donating.

XYZ's revenue position (see Table 23) documents the last 4 years of growth from contributions and grants, program service revenue, investment income, revenue less expense. XYZ's expense position (see Table 24) includes salaries, benefits, and other compensation, professional fundraising fees, other expenses, total expenses, and revenue less expenses.

Table 12

*XYZ's Gross Revenue*

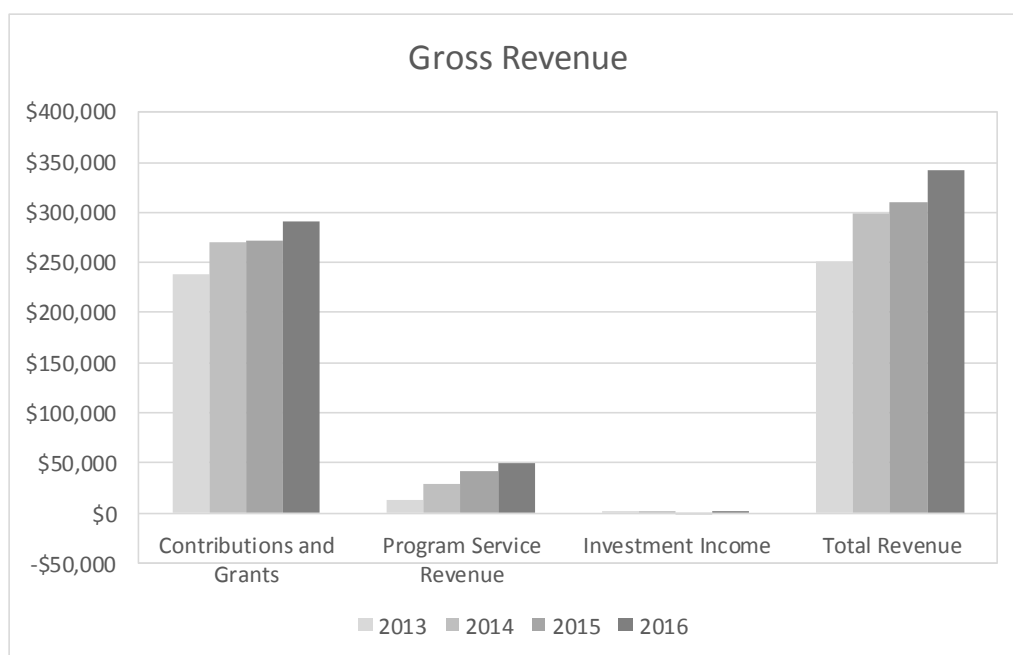
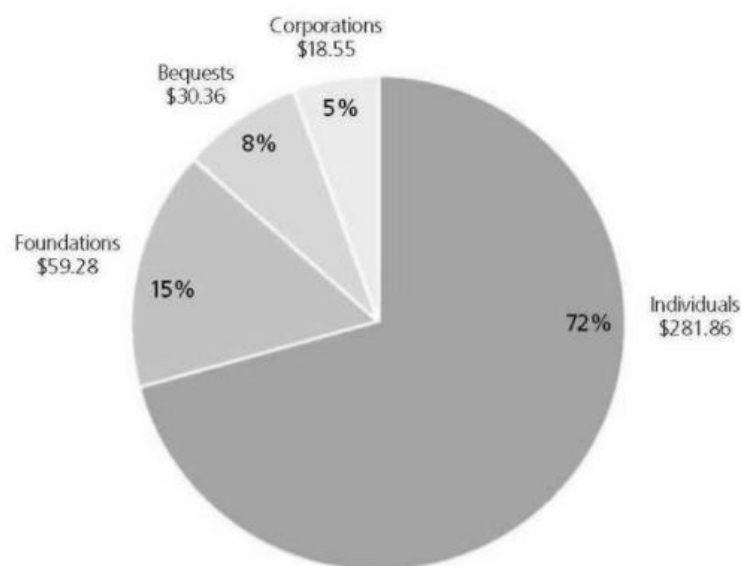


Table 13

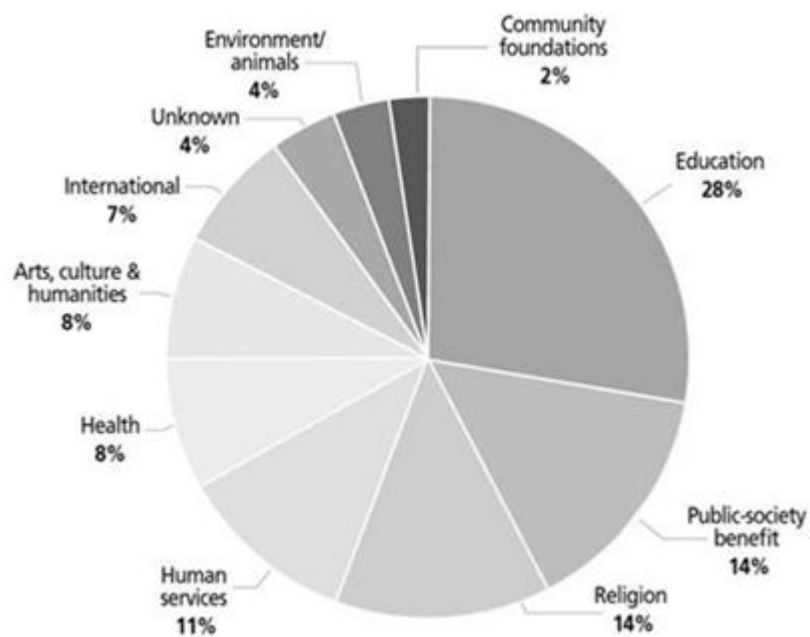
*XYZ's Expenses*

**Marketplace performance.** Performance results for most youth organizations to sustain and increase contributor participation for funding, VMs, and stakeholders. The competition for donations is a challenge for most nonprofit organizations. In 2016, individuals, estates, foundations, and corporations donated an estimated \$390 billion to charities in the United States (Curtis, 2017). Donor monetary giving by source and a break down on how much individuals, foundations, bequests, and corporations donated in 2016 (see Figure 12). To attract and retain philanthropy donor's nonprofits must work to build meaningful relationships with consistent communication.

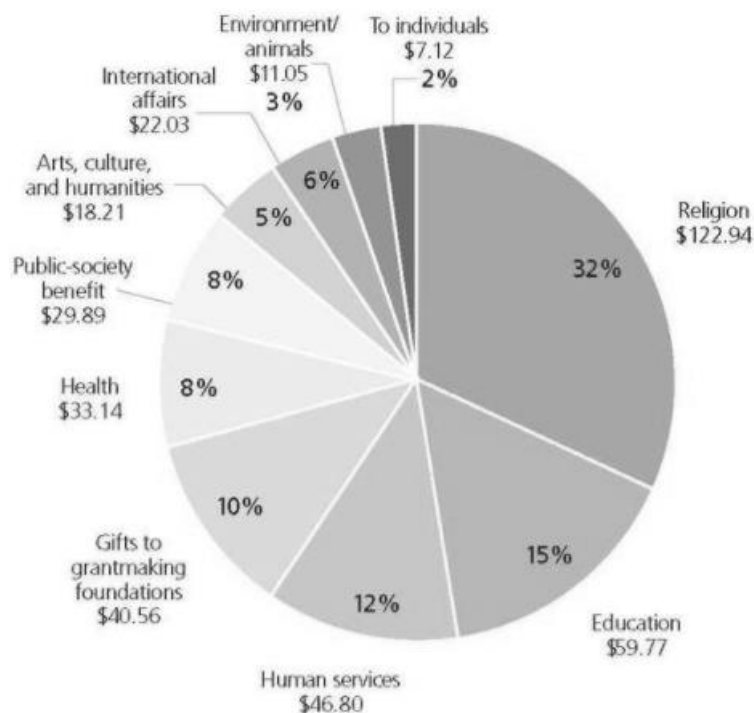


*Figure 12.* Giving by source (in billions, all figures rounded) highest earners continue to be top givers, accounting for about 50% of all charitable dollars.

Donors need to see a direct impact on their philanthropy investment (Curtis, 2017). Donor-advised funds (DAF) 2012-2015 (see Figure 13) increased 7.6% in 2016 (see Figure 14) to all nine significant categories of recipient organizations grew, making 2016 just the sixth time in 40 years that this type of increase in donations occurred (Curtis, 2017). It is necessary for nonprofit leaders to be more strategic in identifying, tracking, and engaging with DAF donors. Also, nonprofit leaders need to attract, retain and build long-lasting relationships with all their donors.



*Figure 13.* DAFs are used primarily by individuals committed to philanthropy. The highest-performing nonprofits have made strategic decisions to invest in their fundraising operations for all nine major categories.



*Figure 14.* The highest-performing nonprofits have made strategic decisions to invest in the health of their fundraising operations. The increase of 3.9% from 2015 to 2016 overall major organizations categories.

### Key Themes

**Process strengths.** The process strength is a critical part of the ED to consider and develop strategies to advocate for youth-serving programs and to provide opportunities, training, and resources to their VMs. The process strengths for nonprofit organizations are identified in Categories 1-6 of the 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework. Another process strength is the SROI analysis and the overall cost savings by investing in and supporting youth programs. Leaders use the process strengths to raise



awareness to policymakers and lawmakers, provide effective communication to the LT, VMs, and stakeholders. The leader also can establish long-lasting relationships, share information and knowledge, and provide essential service to the VMS and stakeholder.

**Process opportunities.** Researchers and educators found that youth surrounded by a variety of opportunities and positive role models are less likely to be involved in high-risk behavior (Bausman & Barry, 2011). While there may be widespread knowledge of the value of youth programs, there have been few studies that attempt to put into numbers and compare the costs and benefits of the programs. Most of the formal analyses focused on more general youth programs, rather than on certification for youth workers. Having a standardized program that provides professional development, updated training, and a national certification process to help youth workers provide the needed intervention tools to help at-risk youth.

**Results strengths.** The ED compliance with the MVV, advocacy for the youth, and communication among the LT and VMs. The results strengths identified in Category 7 of the 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework are fiscal management and increased growth in contributions, grants, and revenue over the last 4-years (see Table 23) XYZ's gross revenue. The LT utilizes the executive director's communications plan for the organization's website, newsletters, e-mail, and other social media resources to provide instant information to the VMs and other stakeholders. Using the SROI quantifies the value of providing intervention training for youth-serving programs for the financial cost of training a youth worker (see Table 19) of the total cost of fiscal conservancy. Although

there is research on youth development programs, the opportunities, skills, and training offered by positive youth development program can lead to better health, social, and educational results.

**Results opportunities.** The results opportunities for improvements for the LT to implement a survey for VMs so the LT can gather additional data on volunteer's experience in youth development, previous jobs, age, sex, income, education level, and other volunteer activities. Also, a VMs' satisfaction survey to measure and improve continuing training and professional development support for the youth. Working with the ED, LT, and attending their annual XYZ Fest, I found that most youth workers are humble in how they support the youth and even their communities. I would recommend a mechanism for VMs to *share their success stories* on youth development to the public and their community.

## Section 4: Executive Summary of Key Themes

### **Project Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative, single-case study was to assist leaders of nonprofit organizations in developing strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess successfully the effectiveness of training certification programs for individuals who work with youth. As a doctoral student participating in Walden University's consulting capstone study, I worked with the ED, MR, and MD forming the LT of the study association. The LT served as the purposeful sample population for this study.

XYZ's LT is an advocate for youth-serving organizations and supports volunteer members who work with youth directly. XYZ is a nonprofit organization located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. To gather the information, I conducted semistructured interviews with all three members of the LT as well as reviewed data I collected from documents, which included by-laws, action plans and strategic plans, and financial records of the association. I also reviewed XYZ's website and other social media platforms. Data collected and analyzed resulted in the four themes: process strengths, process opportunities, results strengths, and results opportunities.

XYZ LT's core competency of youth advocacy, professional development training, and social responsibility is a driving force behind the organization's programs and services. In researching the business problem, I collected data on (a) nonprofit leadership, (b) strategic and action planning, (c) goal and objective setting, (d) performance measurement, and (e) knowledge management. The findings of this study

can provide leaders of nonprofit organizations a roadmap to select, collect, and data to analyze professional development certification for their youth-serving workers.

Leaders of most nonprofit organizations in the United States need assistance to obtain sustainable funding sources for their services and sustainability and to contribute to social change and to maintain their services and meet the social and financial needs of the communities they serve. As Stecker (2014) noted, VMs and financial donors are needed to sustain most nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizational leaders identified that raising funds is their most significant challenge to sustaining their organizations (Chandler, 2015). Findings from this study may provide these leaders with pertinent knowledge on (a) recruitment and retention of volunteers, (b) employee and volunteer member satisfaction, (c) alternative funding methods, and (d) outreach and networking. The data from this study might also provide evidence that indicates the usefulness of standardizing training for individuals working with youth in the United States. In addition, leaders who read this will be better informed of the strategies used to analyze certifications for youth-workers.

### **Contributions and Recommendations**

The recommendations I provided to the LT may prove useful to identify methods to accomplish short- and long-term sustainability goals. Implementation of the results identified in this study may also contribute to business practice and social change. Leaders of nonprofit organizations must conduct strategic planning (Bryson, 2018). The premise for strategic planning is that leaders must be effective strategists if their

organizations are to fulfill their missions, meet their mandates, satisfy their constituents, and create public value (Bryson, 2018). The leaders must exercise as much discretion as possible in the areas under their control (Bryson, 2018). Nonprofit organizational leaders need to develop effective strategies to cope with changed and changing circumstances, and leaders need to build capacity and foster resilience so that their organizations are able to respond to significant challenges in the future.

I recommend using grounded theory for future studies. Grounded theory is typically used by researchers in qualitative research to discover the underlying social processes that shape the interaction being studied and to create knowledge about the behavior patterns of a group (Leedy & Ormond, 2013). The purpose of grounded theory is to pursue an approach that links to the evidence so that the theory is even with the data (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017). Using grounded theory as a framework for future studies can help researchers develop a concept to support advocating for certification of youth workers in the United States.

Researchers should continue to identify processes to lead to validation, certification qualifications, and licensure for youth workers prompted at the state or national level, mirroring licenses issued to teachers and social workers. Having a state certification and license program may result in consistency in training and professional development, legal protections for youth workers, and the establishment of youth work as a licensed profession. Such training might improve the sustainability of youth-serving, nonprofit organizations in the country.

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## Appendix A: Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

## A

AP  
Action Plans

ADA  
American Disability Act (ADA) Policy

AC  
Administration Committee

## B

BNPP  
Business-nonprofit Partnership

BOD  
Board of Directors

## C

CC  
Core Competency

## D

DBA  
Doctor of Business Administration

DD  
Development Director

DVDs

Digital Video Disks

E

ED  
Executive Director

F

FYs  
Fiscal Years

I

IT  
Information Technology

K

KS  
Knowledge Sharing

L

LT  
Leadership Team

M

MBNQA  
Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

MD  
Membership Director

MO  
Member Organization

MOU  
Memorandum of Understanding

MVV  
Mission, Vision, and Values

MR  
Membership Representative

MSS  
Minnesota Student Survey

N
---

NC  
Nominating Committee

O
---

OPR  
Organizational Performance Review

OSHA  
Office of Safety and Health Administration – Federal guidelines for health and safety

P
---

PDIS  
Process Design and Improvement System

PEA  
Professional Employee Association

PIS  
Performance Improvement System (PIS)

PM  
Performance Management

PTO  
Paid Time Off

S
---

SL  
Senior leaders

SMN  
Small and Medium-sized nonprofit

SI  
Strategic Initiatives

SO  
Strategic Objectives

SP  
Strategic Plan

SPP  
Strategic Planning Process

SROI  
Social Return on Investment

V
---

VM  
Volunteer Member

Y
---

YIC  
Youth Intervention Certification

YPQA  
Youth Program Quality Assessment

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Strategies for Assessing the Effectiveness of Certification Programs for Youth Workers.

1. The interview protocol begins.
2. I will introduce myself to the participant.
3. I will thank the participant for his or her agreement to participate in this research study.
4. I will provide the participant with the information on how to withdraw from the study.
5. I will provide information regarding how the data is gathered, and the member checking process.
7. I will inform the participants that the conversations are recorded for accuracy.
8. I will begin the interview process.
9. The interview will begin with Question 1 and will follow through to the final question (see Appendix G).
11. I will end the interview process.
12. I will thank the participant for his or her time and participation in this study.
13. I will reiterate my contact information for follow up questions and any concerns from the participants.
14. The interview protocol ends.



### Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. What strategies have proven successful for you in selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
  
2. How do you assess the success of the strategies you have used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
  
3. What strategies were most effective for you in selecting, collecting, and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
  
4. How does the Board of Directors (BOD) promote policies and values that align with the selection, collection, and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
  
5. What are some examples of strategies you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?

6. Which strategies that you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program certifying and training individuals working with the youth were the least effective?
7. What role does leadership play in the implementation of strategies to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
8. What are some of the measurable benefits of successful strategies you used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
9. Based on your organization's experience, what were some of the consequences of not having strategies for the selection, collection, and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?
10. What do you think it is important for you to say that I have not asked you regarding strategies used to select, collect, and analyze data to assess the effectiveness of your organization's program for certifying and training individuals working with the youth?