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Strategies for Developing Millennials and Generation Z into Future Nonprofit Leaders

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Webster University, 1995

BA, San Diego State University, 1986

Final Dissertation Submitted

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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November, 2022

Abstract

In the United States, leaders who manage the one and a half million nonprofit organizations (NPOs) nationally are aging and preparing to retire. The nonprofit sector faces a leadership development deficit as many NPOs are without a succession plan. The management problem is that NPOs have struggled to employ strategies to prepare Millennials or Generation Z (Gen Z) workers to assume leadership roles in NPOs. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Gen Z workers to assume leadership roles. The research question asked: What strategies do NPOs employ to prepare Millennials and Gen Z workers to assume leadership roles. The study's conceptual framework included human capital and succession planning theories undergirded by constructivism. Administering surveys through a purposeful sampling of eight leaders in San Diego County and Orange County, California, provided the study's population. Data analysis used a linear analytic structure appropriate for exploratory case studies. Research results showed that too much corporate involvement can hinder the growth and logical trajectory of NPOs and a supportive position gives NPOs and their leaders the flexibility and speed to analyze the landscape and make customized and relevant strategic initiatives relevant to the NPO. This study's potential positive social impact might be the creation of a tool to help NPOs offer more robust plans to ensure their survival and raise awareness for NPOs that effective and well-defined succession planning should go above just grooming an individual to take over an NPO when the current NPO leader vacates the role.

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Dedication

I am dedicating this long and arduous journey to my daughter, McKenna and my son, Kian who as I write this dedication, are on their own academic journeys in college, and trying to carve out their own paths in the world. Despite how hard and long this journey has been for me, I hope I have been able to instill my tenaciousness, energy and love of learning to you both as you find your own personal and professional callings. I love you both very much and I am very proud of the people you have become. I hope I have influenced you both not to quit when the going gets tough. Thank you both for understanding and supporting me when I had "homework" and could not be available for you. It was very selfless and understanding of you both, especially at times when you probably needed my attention.

I also would like to thank my parents for their support, for always believing I can do something, even at times when I did not think I could. Thank you for being proud of me and cheering me on.

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The one person that comes to mind when I think of acknowledging someone for helping me through this journey, is Dr. Hamid Kazeroony. I do not know how or why you put up with me, but I am glad you did. Thank you for always lighting a fire under me when I felt like, “I am so over it.” I appreciate you always trying to make me a better writer and researcher. I am still not perfect, but I think you have made me a little better.

Thank you to my Dissertation Committee, who also supported and moved me along so that I could finish, and thank you to the IRB Committee for not only giving me approval, but for adding they thought I had a great, little study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

I explored strategies that non-profit organizations (NPOs) employed to prepare Millennials and Generation Z (Gen Z) to assume leadership roles. The workplace landscape in the United States has witnessed a dramatic transition as over 75 million baby boomers are retiring (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Bozer, Kuna & Santora, 2015; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018). Meanwhile, Millennial and Gen Z members in the workforce will take over those roles including nonprofit leadership (Bozer, et al., 2015; Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018). The nonprofit sector's lack of leadership development has created a "leadership development deficit" (Landles-Cobb, Kramer, & Smith Milway, 2015; Bozer, et al., 2015; Lee & Suh, 2018). Executive boards of NPOs are challenged to find and recruit potential managers and leaders qualified to assume these leadership roles (Stewart, 2016; Tierney, 2006; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018; Norris-Tirrell, Rinella, & Pham, 2018). Understanding and predicting nonprofit leadership turnover expected from leader defections and retirement is essential in determining what strategies are needed to attract new leadership.

Professional recognition has become outdated to the Millennials and Gen Z workforce as the concept of making a positive difference in the world is far more meaningful based on over 80% cited by these generations of workers (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018). Millennial and Gen Z members are far more interested in meaningful work with a purpose that incorporates creating social value rather than making money (Costa, 2017). In alignment with this philosophy, even stakeholders review and assess the external environment's positive and negative elements and expect organizations to act on their corporate social responsibility principles and efforts. People actively choose to work and patronize companies that operate to give back to society or do what is in the community's best interest (Pearce & Stahl, 2015). Further, this type of work can help Millennials and Gen Z leaders cultivate an awareness regarding the diversity of distinct groups of people (Costa, 2017). This evolution makes it all the more essential; it introduces a serendipitous opportunity for NPOs to prepare to seek out and train future Millennial and Gen Z leaders for a career that involves being a part of meaningful work and a management path that involves the good of society (Hansen-Turton & Torres, 2014).

Chapter 1 contains the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, the research question, conceptual framework, and the nature of the study. The chapter includes significance, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and scope. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Background of the Study

Eisenberg, (2004) and Stewart and Kuenzi (2018) noted a significant lack of new leaders available to assume executive roles in NPOs. Those future leaders joining NPOs are too small to impact filling the leadership deficit. Eisenberg, (2004), and Stewart and Kuenzi (2018) emphasized addressing the leadership gap as a prime goal for NPOs considering the current landscape and challenges associated with survival. They noted that future leaders joining NPOs are too small to make any kind of impact to fill the leadership deficit. Lee and Suh, (2017) indicated that NPOs have not prepared to manage the executive succession phase of their operations and do not find leadership development imperative to their operational strategies. Meanwhile, Chandler (2015) posited that community needs are growing, putting pressure to demand more NPOs and provide services to these communities. However, they note that NPOs do not have the financial resources to handle new demands or transition new leaders.

Often, nonprofit foundations have missed opportunities to fill these positions from young, future leaders because of a lack of effective succession planning, to address that gap in leadership transitioning. The tactics and techniques of NPOs need improving to achieve better organizational effectiveness and maintain leadership and employee sustainability (Lee & Suh, 2017; Nikolova & Andersen, 2017). Bozer, Suna, and Santora (2015), conducted a study addressing this exodus of nonprofit leaders in vast numbers. Further, Dobrai and Farkas, (2016), conducting a study on NPOs and the effect of organizational development agree that NPOs are struggling with a lack of leadership transition planning. Their research identified the external environment fluctuations as making it increasingly difficult for NPOs to manage their daily operations, rendering succession planning as not a priority.

McKee and Froelich (2016), supported the leadership deficit concept but noted that a lack of leadership transition planning should be a part of long-term strategic planning among NPOs. Their work found that NPO boards are not overly concerned about finding replacements for their executive leaders and, do not take succession planning seriously despite the gap. With this lack of prioritization about succession planning, Deshwal (2015) recommended preparing succession planning before any exodus of leaders. With the workforce's fluidity and the unpredictability of the external environment, it is crucial to find the right talent with a plan of action. NPO leadership strategies can provide a more straightforward path into a broad range of business and society networks, including vast and practical experience in real-world management and preparing them for management and leadership roles. Perhaps current leadership may identify those gaps and be better prepared to find and train future leaders in succession planning (Nikolova & Andersen, 2017; Romsa, Romsa, & Wurdinger, (2017).

Problem Statement

In the United States, leaders who manage the 1.6 million NPOs nationally are aging with an average age of 52 years old (Connelly, 2020; Morgan, 2018). Currently, Baby Boomer and Gen X generations comprise 51% of leadership roles. Baby Boomer and Gen X nonprofit leaders prepare to retire within several years (Connelly, 2020). Millennials and Gen Z members in the workforce will take over those roles, including nonprofit leadership (Bozer, Kuna & Santora, 2015; Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018). The nonprofit sector faces a leadership development deficit (Bozer et al., 2015; Landles-Cobb, Kramer, & Smith Milway, 2015; Lee & Suh, 2018). Executive boards of NPOs are challenged to find and recruit potential managers and leaders from the Millennial and Gen Z members who are qualified to assume these roles (Stewart, 2016; Tierney, 2006; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018; Norris-Tirrell, Rinella, & Pham, 2018).

The general management problem is that NPOs have not identified strategies for an active pipeline for nonprofit executive succession (Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018; Regan, 2016). The specific management problem is that NPOs have been struggling to employ strategies to prepare Millennials or Gen Z members to assume leadership roles in NPOs (Kearns, Livingston. Scherer, & McShane, 2015; Gamble & Ingersoll, 2017; Tuomala, Yeh, & Milway, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Gen Z members to assume leadership roles. I intended through this study, to provide strategies for leaders and executive boards of NPOs to fill the vacating positions of retiring NPO leaders, presenting a leadership gap. The participant population comprises of current NPO leaders within San Diego County and Orange County, California, who develop future leaders within the NPO environment.

I identified strategies to prepare Millennials and Gen Z members to assume leadership roles in NPOs through triangulation of questionnaires and internal and external artifacts. If organizational leaders do not get this gap under control, they will risk their future sustainability. I may provide a positive social change by better preparing future NPO leaders to operate their organizations more successfully by developing better operating practices. As a result, current NPO leadership may find the outcomes helpful in improving their sustainability.

Research Question

What strategies do Non-Profit Organizations employ to prepare Millennials and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles?

Conceptual Framework

The framework that grounded this study was based on human capital and succession planning. Human capital focuses on how organizations utilize training and education to invest in their people and their organization's future productivity and competitiveness (Becker, 1964; McCracken, McIvor, Treacy, & Wall, 2017). Succession planning examines the development of current and future leaders' knowledge, skill sets, business acumen, and associated traits deemed successful in this environment (Schultz, 1961; Tunheim & McLean, 2014). The constructs represent the foundation that succession planning augments the cycle of perpetuating human capital, social capital, and managerial acknowledgement with the organization's board of directors and executive leaders (Cragun, 2017).

These theories also parlay current leaders continued successful growth and productivity while preparing new leaders for succession planning. I chose this framework to determine executive leaders' needs for planning and implementing the requirements for succession planning and the development of new leaders to assess NPO leaders' use of strategies to find effective pipelines for executive succession. I aimed to gather and utilize information from local leaders' perceptions and experiences in NPOs to provide a practical and useful platform to prepare Millennials and Gen Z for succession planning into NPO leadership roles. I further examined what impact these experiences provided to leaders in NPOs.

When organizations commit to investing in their human capital and its continued growth as part of their planning process and long-term strategy, it creates the foundation for maintaining and keeping top talent in an organization (Crews & Scherron, 2013). A qualitative case study was applicable because it is flexible, allowing inquiry through qualitative surveys combined with other detailed interviews, making it most effective for this type of study (Kahlke, 2014; Percy et al., 2015). A case study design provided an in-depth exploration of a single participant's problems, questions, and answers with a time frame, within different organizational settings (Yin, 2014). A qualitative case study provided a better perspective of the many dimensions and opinions representative of this leadership deficit gap and what will be required of NPOs to prepare for succession planning (Bryman, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Merriam and Tisdale (2016) and Yin (2014) posited that research using a qualitative case study could produce in-depth stories and descriptions of experiences through carefully constructed interview questions. A qualitative research plan enabled me to gain more knowledge from individual NPO leader experiences to achieve more insight for this study as to what makes for a successful NPO leader (Stake, 2010).

A few key factors that contribute to an organization’s viability and sustainability are the development of effective leaders and succession planning. However, research indicates that NPO organizations have not prioritized succession planning or contingency plans for this strategic planning (Froelich, McKee & Rathge, 2011). To better understand the needs of NPO leaders for planning and implementing the requirements of succession planning and to determine NPO leaders' use of strategies to find effective pipelines for executive succession, it was necessary to examine the theoretical perspective for this study.

Constructivism is a knowledge-seeking method that stipulates individuals willingly create their learning. The results of this learning are driven by the achieved knowledge and training of the individual (Elliott, et al., 2000, p. 256). Arends (1998) explains that the theory of constructivism considers the individual development of meaning through experience and shaped by the collaboration of existing information and new developments. The main belief of constructivism supposes that human education is constructed. Individuals expand their current knowledge of a subject from the foundation of prior knowledge. This new knowledge impacts the previous foundation of knowledge by augmenting what is already known and adding to its relevancy (Phillips, 1995).

Obtaining new knowledge is an active approach. Constructivism postulates that individuals develop knowledge and understanding through dynamic action with experimental learning or present-day problem-solving. Dewey (1938), states that obtaining new knowledge or education is a social platform. Individuals interact and collaborate rather than as some abstract theory. The leadership deficit gap is a problem shared by NPOs therefore, collaboration and solving the problem of this phenomenon as a group may yield better results to mitigate this lack of leadership succession through a social constructivist lens (Brown, 1999).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this qualitative case study was to identify strategies to prepare Millennials and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles (Kahlke, 2014; Percy et al., 2015). A qualitative case study was applicable because the design was flexible, allowing qualitative surveys and interviews (Kahlke, 2014; Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). A case study design provides a customized, in-depth exploration of problems, questions, and answers of a single participant, a time frame, or a group (Yin, 2018). A qualitative multiple case study provides a better perspective of the many dimensions and opinions representative of this leadership deficit gap and what will be required of NPOs to prepare for succession planning (Bryman, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Administering surveys to five to 10 individuals through purposeful selection, engaged in leadership development within five to ten organization in San Diego County and Orange County, California, provided the study's sample population. Data analysis was based on emerging patterns from the data triangulation (Yin, 2018). Data triangulation included surveys completed by NPO leaders, emails, and follow-up of Millennials and Gen Z employees working in an NPO setting to establish the study's validity. Data analysis utilized a linear analytic structure appropriate for exploratory case studies (Yin, 2018).

Definitions

Terms are defined in this section to explain the context for their use.

Baby Boomers: A term that refers to an individual born between the years of 1946 and 1964 (Reester, 2008).

Generation X: A term that refers to an individual born between the years of 1960 and 1980 (Salahuddin, 2010).

Millennials: A term that refers to an individual born between the years of 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2019).

Succession planning: A process of classifying and establishing the right employees to assume future roles in an organization due to a shortage (Helton & Jackson, 2007, p. 336).

Assumptions

Data collection utilized an online survey, which may impact the effectiveness of responses since data collected from participants may skew reliability and accuracy. Participants may have little time and hurry through the study questionnaire thereby not providing responses as accurately as possible, leaving the validity and reliability of answers to be questionable (Heiervang & Goodman, 2011).

A further concern of this researcher was that participants were authentic with their feedback to the online survey. The researcher administered an online survey, so participants have to be relied upon to be truthful. In considering this assumption, leaders' perception is to set an example to be genuine (Hewlin, Dumas, & Burnett, 2017). NPO leaders might be concerned that direct responses might create issues with their standing as influential and respected leaders if the feedback is not aligned with company missions or is contrary to the NPO brand.

Scope and Delimitations

The study's scope was limited to local leaders of NPOs. Their regional backgrounds focused narrowly within the Counties of San Diego and Orange for efficiency, accessibility, and feasibility. The researcher did not encompass any for-profit organizations. However, it is expected that the information provided throughout the study might have value for the for-profit industries.

Limitations

Limitations are flaws in a research study and cannot be controlled by a researcher. One of the limitations of this study is perhaps the small sample size. When considering a broader population relevant to this study, the smaller sample size may not encapsulate the entire population.

The researcher and the study participants' bias are also potential limitations. In contrast, the researcher may analyze data through a biased lens affecting the findings, and the study participant may respond in a biased manner to study questions (Yin, 2012).

Significance of the Study

This research may fill a gap in understanding by focusing specifically on identifying strategies for an active pipeline for nonprofit executive succession by developing Millennials and Gen Z generations as future leaders. Information gathered from a sample of executive leaders in NPOs for this study could provide additional insight and better professional preparation for NPOs, Millennials, and Generation Z workers. My intent may even provide valuable professional insights for future succession planning initiatives to current leaders. Finally, this study could promote positive social change by addressing leaders' influence to develop and improve the management and leadership skills of Millennials and Gen Z generations. They want to get involved in NPOs, increasing their understanding and empathy for the external environment. Millennial and Generation Z leaders can focus their attention and resources on helping and improving individuals' lives and the needs of the communities and organizations they serve when they have a better grasp of the external environment and society as a whole. This study's outcomes may lead to continuous growth as new leaders address and solve societal needs, compelling them to become change agents (Canto de Loura, 2014; Nikolova & Andersen, 2017).

Significance to Theory

The research might fill a gap in employing strategies for developing Millennial and Gen Z leaders for a leadership career path in NPOs (Hansen-Turton & Torres, 2014). This research will use strategies for an active pipeline for nonprofit executive succession by developing Millennials and Gen Z generations as future leaders (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018).

Significance to Practice

The surge of NPOs and their mission to provide service to the public necessitates NPO executives' professional training. These NPO leaders are responsible for ensuring organizational accountability and performance. NPO leaders have a crucial role in which they must possess and utilize specific knowledge, skills, and competencies to address unpredictable situations and know how to create successful organizations. Research points to leaders' qualifications as an essential indicator of the success of NPOs, underscoring the significance of management to organizational accountability (Lee & Suh, 2018; Seidle, Fernandez, & Perry, 2016).

Significance to Social Change

Professional recognition seems to have become passé to Millennials and the Gen Z workforce. The concept of making a positive difference in the world is far more meaningful based on over 80% cited by these generations of workers (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018). Millennial and Gen Z workers are far more interested in meaningful work with a purpose that incorporates social value creation rather than making a lot of money (Costa, 2017). In alignment with this philosophy, even stakeholders will review and assess the external environment’s positive and negative elements and expect organizations to act on their corporate social responsibility principles and efforts. People strongly choose to work and patronize companies that operate to give back to society or do what is in society's best interest (Pearce & Stahl, 2015). Further, this type of work can help Millennials and

Gen Z generations cultivate an awareness regarding the diverseness of distinct groups of people (Costa, 2017).

Summary and Transition

Research has indicated that executive leaders of NPOs are challenged with actionable plans for an effective succession plan for transitioning Millennials and Gen X workers as future NPO leaders. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify and to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Gen Z generations to assume leadership roles. The researcher could provide strategies for leaders and executive boards of NPOs to fill the vacating positions of retiring NPO leaders presenting a leadership gap. In a study by Weiss and Molinaro (2010), they have identified a consensus among leaders that the gap has become severe. They point to a lack of leadership, not prioritizing filling the leadership gap, and these leaders are not compelled by current leadership.

Chapter 1 provided the background, introduced the problem statement and purpose statement and explained the conceptual framework, research question, the nature of the study, assumptions, limitations and delimitations. Chapter 1 provided the guidance, direction, and intention of the research. Chapter 2 contains the literature review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The management problem is that NPOs have been struggling to employ strategies to prepare Millennial or Gen Z generations to assume leadership roles in NPOs (Gamble & Ingersoll, 2017; Kearns, Livingston. Scherer, & McShane, 2015; Tuomala, Yeh, & Milway, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennial or Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. In the United States, leaders who manage the 1.6 million NPOs nationally are aging with the average age being 52 years old. Currently, the Baby Boomer and Gen X generations comprise 51% of leadership roles (Connelly, 2020; Morgan, 2018). The Baby Boomer and Generation X nonprofit leaders prepare to retire within the next several years (Connelly, 2020). Millennials and Generation Z (Gen Z) in the workforce will take over those roles to including nonprofit leadership (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Bozer, et al., 2015; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018). A challenge facing the leaders of many NPOs is a decrease in leadership personnel, vision, and strategic perspective (Reunanen & Kaitonen, 2017).

A reduction in financial support from the government and donors contributes to organizational leaders failing to hire the right talent (Cox, et al., 2014). Financial stability is essential when hiring the right person or persons to lead an organization. The complexity of NPOs requires someone with a diverse background, strong leadership skills, an understanding of the enterprise, the ability to work across boundaries, and knowledge of how to grow the business through executive communication, financial planning, and strategic planning (Palumbo, 2016).

Literature Search Strategy

Two venues researched have been EbscoHost and ProQuest in which the researcher reviewed articles and publications that were peer-reviewed. These two sources are engines that can digitally help a researcher locate scholarly articles, books, and a wide range of other academic resources. Finding quality, in-depth, complete material from Google Scholar was difficult. Therefore, the researcher applied research terms to various databases, including EbscoHost, Business and Management, ProQuest, Emerald Insight, Google Books, Sage Journals, Sage Research Methods Online, ScienceDirect, and Library Works. The research collection of sources and materials consisted of peer-reviewed journals, books, articles, dissertations, Internet websites, and reports on leadership, training, and succession planning in NPOs, including Millennial and Generation Z generations data.

The literature search included seminal work and germane peer-reviewed articles from the last 5 years. Keywords used for the literature search included but were not limited to *succession planning, nonprofit organizations, nonprofit executives, needs of nonprofit leaders, leadership deficit gap, succession planning in nonprofit organizations, leadership transitions, Millennials and Generation Z in the nonprofit workforce, Millennials and Generation Z in leadership roles, succession strategies, future of nonprofit organizations, traits of nonprofit leaders, and leadership development nonprofit leaders.*

Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework was rooted in human capital and succession planning. Human capital focuses on how organizations utilize training and education to invest in their people and their organization's future productivity and competitiveness (Becker, 1964; McCracken, et al, 2017). Succession planning examines the development of current and future leaders' knowledge, skill sets, business acumen, and associated traits deemed successful in this environment (Schultz, 1961; Tunheim & McLean, 2014).

This theory represented the foundation that succession planning augments the cycle of perpetuating human capital, social capital, and managerial acknowledgement. The process is adjusted by the organization's board of directors and executive leaders (Cragun, 2017). These theories also conformed to the continued successful growth and productivity of current leaders while preparing the succession planning of new leaders.

The expertise and input of leadership during succession planning provides an effective leadership transition process while preserving the knowledge and skills of exiting leaders and integrating new knowledge and skills from incoming successors (Darvish & Temelie, 2014; Gothard & Austin, 2013; Klein & Salk, 2013). Tunheim and McLean (2014) found responses from their study participants that transitioning out of non-profit leadership roles requires a serious effort be made to search for next-generation leaders purposefully. The best asset an organization possesses is its human capital. Developing succession plans, ongoing training, and investing in human capital is one of the best investments for an organization that wants to continue to be competitive and sustain its viability (Becker,1964). Rothwell (2005) supports the importance of succession planning for transitioning in new leaders and to continue effective habits of NPOs to expand upon performance improvement, professional development of employees, improving transparency and communication, and best practices with organizational strategy. The value, knowledge, and talent that human capital brings to an organization provides a long-term benefit strategically and is carried down to benefit leadership successors (Tunheim & McLean, 2014). A crucial component of this succession theory is the essential human capital development and training principles for the long-term and successful tenability of an organization and its stakeholders. Having well-developed contingency and succession plans in place, specifically for a leadership transition is imperative for all organizations to address. Yet executive boards and leaders of NPOs have not prioritized succession planning when the need is immediate with baby boomers stepping down from these roles (Froelich, et al., 2011).

This framework was suitable for NPOs in need of finding a way to identify strategies to prepare Millennial and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. The distinct characteristics of NPOs provided a framework for investigating why.

Literature Review

The research on this topic affirmed what other researchers found and noted that there was a plethora of research related to identifying and preparing succession plans, in for-profit organizations and nonprofit organizations and recommendations for future leaders in a nonprofit field. The research was voluminous, but unfortunately, reiterated the same content among a variety of industries. The theme of this research was saturated with the same underlying factors, helping me to reach a stopping point and select the literature I felt best suited the purpose of this study. My results of researching this topic uncovered the same message of a leadership deficit gap and that NPOs needed to have succession plans, but most do not. The other theme centered on characterizing the attributes of what comprised of successful leadership and why these leaders need to be thinking about transitioning from their roles and next steps. My research combed as much as was available on why NPOs do not have succession plans or what a successful succession plan looks like, but the research was limited in this regard.

Leadership influence and deficit

Leadership has been determined to be an essential component for success for NPOs (Palumbo, 2016), but noted that experts emphasize the issue that NPOs are facing a leadership deficit. The purpose of this study by Palumbo was to present preliminary awareness regarding what type of leadership approach was best suited for the nonprofit industry, albeit still providing little research and minimal studies in the literature and servant leadership. The philosophy of the servant leader is encouraged by helping others in the organization, consequently to build up their wisdom, helping them develop their independence, and more inspired to become involved in servant leadership. Palumbo uncovered data working with charitable organizations in Tanzania and found contrary results regarding servant leadership's influence on the actions of others. In many instances, servant leadership is prone to inhibiting instead of empowering, becoming disheartening to the engagement of the organization's followers. Palumbo's assessment suggested that followers become more dependent upon the servant leader themselves, encouraging their reluctance to embrace an ardent attitude to come together for the organization's needs. In the end, Palumbo recommended research for additional knowledge on the subject.

In a 2017 survey administered by *Nonprofit HR*, a consulting firm based in Washington, D.C., its *Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey* determined that fifty percent of the 420 NPOs in the United States and Canada expected to increase their employment ranks in 2017. Contradictorily, these same NPOs preparing to increase their employee numbers also dwindled by seven percent in that same year. Concurrently, it was noted that hiring at the corporate level was most significant in the decade, including 40 percent of for-profit organizations planning to recruit more talent in 2017, having increased by four percent from the previous year as noted by CareerBuilder's annual jobs forecast (Maurer, 2017).

During the 2016 Alliance for Nonprofit Management-ARNOVA conference, Tebbe et al. (2017) explored and discussed the disparity among principals and processes in leaders' nonprofit succession. Participants in the sessions, noted that regardless of considerable altruistic expense concerning establishing methods for the continuation of transitioning executive leaders to include interim leadership succession. While twenty years of attempts to implement these transitions into prevailing nonprofit executive processes, a compelling disparity persists among traditional principles and accurate methods. The outcomes of this conference entailed suggestions for future practices for better governance of succession steps and procedures.

To add to that, *The Nonprofit Sector's Leadership Deficit,* from the Bridgespan Group, noted the need for 640,000 new NPO leaders within the next decade equating to double the roles that are presently in existence. In Change Ahead: *The 2004 Nonprofit Executive Leadership and Transitions Survey,* a national study commissioned by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, determined that 55 percent of present NPO leaders are over 50 years old. Of the 2,200 NPO leaders surveyed, sixty-five percent anticipated their NPOs to have changes in leadership by 2009. According to The Bridgespan Group, the exodus towards retirement for the Baby Boomer generation is a problem catalyst for the nonprofit sector. Other challenges also found by the Bridgespan Group included an increasing growth of other NPOs, the migration of existing NPO leaders into different career paths inside and outside the nonprofit industry, and the increasing numbers of growth size in NPOs. Other considerations on the part of NPO investors and grant-makers should be on the type of nonprofit purpose. What type of work is an NPO doing? In the study, 33 percent stated they desired to be leaders in the nonprofit sector while 47 percent state the nonprofit field is where they want to be.

With the certainty of nonprofit leaders moving toward retirement, leadership's necessary objective is to attract the next generation of their replacements. Despite the obvious next step, Nonprofit HR's *2015 Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey,* the nonprofit sector remains problematic in finding suitable applicants, keeping top talent, relevant pay, lack of professional development paths, and the overload of work (Hackbarth, 2017). They also suggest that these issues are the key reason NPOs' make employee engagement the focal point of their efforts. Their exploration discovered 58 percent of employee engagement in NPOs that places NPOs three-quarters down the list from eighteen different sectors. Hackbarth (2017), recommends some ideas for finding and keeping Millennial and Gen Z leaders. First, given these two generations' attitudes and feelings, there should be a focus on diversity and inclusion. These two generations desire working environments that have a significant and fruitful influence to benefit others. Hence, the working atmosphere they want looks diverse, well-balanced, and all-embracing climate.

While the analysis noted employees' diversity in general, many NPOs still do not meet that definition. A leader who commands trust will fare more strongly with younger work generations. Younger working generations want leaders who exemplify their principles and beliefs. However, according to *Engaging Nonprofit Employees*, a survey conducted determined 58 percent of people working in NPOs stated their company had a healthy or relatively healthy culture. But the feedback of these people also felt trust in NPOs to be second in importance as a component of employee engagement. Finally, positivity needs to be emphasized. Those working in NPOs need assurances that there is a promising future for them and that their organization has a long-term and sustainable future. Because Baby Boomer leaders are exiting in profound abundance, Millennials and Gen Z future leaders will undoubtedly incorporate their style, skills, and philosophies to exert influence, augmenting their NPO's future. With the chasm in available leadership, NPOs need to promote their entity's appeal as an outstanding opportunity for Millennials and Gen Z to find their career path. When NPOs promote their mission and philosophy effectively showcasing their brand and values and how career opportunities they offer can align with the principles of Millennials and Gen Z, it can be more conducive to attract them to their organizations. It further behooves the NPO to emphasize the ability of Millennials and Gen Z to participate in continuing education to further their professional development.

NPO leaders play a pivotal role in NPOs, which has not been disputed. In previous research, based on empirical evidence, the results discovered leaders with larger-than-life-type characteristics and transformational attributes, impact the course and achievements of the NPO (Newman & Wallender, 1978). In 1990 and again in 1994, studies by Herman and Heimovics strengthened the belief that the NPO leader is lone. The most significant element fundamental for NPO performance, the authors affirm that NPO leaders fill a position of emotional and intellectual essence, taking accountability for the favorable and failed results of any activities of the NPO compared to board members who view their influence as minimal and results as few (Herman & Heimovics, 1990). And even with this knowledge of the power and influence of NPO leaders, specific studies on succession planning have been minimal (Allison, 2002; Austin & Gilmore, 1993; Fletcher, 1992; Herman & Heimovics, 1989; Richie & Eastwood, 2006; Santora, et al., 2007). This study on NPO organizations and NPO leadership found the preponderance of inquiry on NPO governance, targeted boards rather than on NPO leaders. The authors of this study ruminate whether the penchant of NPO leadership is to lean on the methods and information from for-profit organizations to influence and direct NPO leadership. Typically, this does not best represent the NPO framework given the essential contrasts among the for-profit and nonprofit industries and NPOs' dependence on volunteer support, an ambiguous liaison among NPO leaders and NPO boards and more and more a complex combination of income avenues (Froelich, 1999; McFarlan, 1999; Gronbjerg, 1993; Herman & Heimovics, 1989; Middleton, 1987),).

Characteristics of Successful NPO Leaders

Norris-Tirrell, et al (2018), found outcomes gathered in their study to continually emphasize that efficient and competent leadership for NPOs has not only not been prioritized, but is woefully lacking in the tools and resources needed for succession planning. Further, what type of career paths have NPO leaders followed that led them to the nonprofit arena and how much has their background augmented their nonprofit success. In the findings of Norell-Tirrell, et al., those aiming to serve in nonprofit executive roles, examined characteristics that were especially relevant to achieving an executive NPO role. Norell-Tirrell, et al. (2018) collected data from an arbitrary sampling of participants from a professional Internet site to include twelve nonprofit organizations.

The study uncovered information on the prior paths taken by these executives, which produced an understanding that typified nonprofit executives' role backgrounds getting to this point. This study found that these NPO positions impacted executives' direction: education, age, gender, specific career, and definitive industry backgrounds. This study gave rise to new knowledge for decision-making within the nonprofit industry and in shaping executive selection by nonprofit boards.

Stewart and Kuenzi (2018) noted a minimal amount of research regarding nonprofit executives' career paths had been presented. Yet, time is of the essence in preparing for the transitions of nonprofit executive leadership and determining what constitutes the requirements needed for this career. They encourage an analysis that delves into what characterizes a fair and effective set of traits in a nonprofit executive and what steps need to be taken to the nonprofit executive office. Stewart and Kuenzi's study gathered information from a sample of leaders in nonprofit organizations in the health and human services sector and their backgrounds. When this group collected and analyzed data, these nonprofit leaders' education, knowledge, and attestations were reviewed. The information revealed differences in professional traits and employed professional classifications inside and outside the nonprofit environment. This study's participants presented qualitative narratives of the journey to reach the top executive role, which were astute and eye-opening that could impact the elements outside of just the credentials and resume of a nonprofit leader. Lastly, this study's results were determined to be helpful in testing to develop approaches out of research in the future regarding professional paths or trajectories and how they embody the nonprofit environment.

Typically, some NPOs are small in size. Hence, the leaders of these smaller NPOs play a more pivotal role in many areas within the organization, often wearing many hats, covering departments such as human resources to long-term planning (Dargie, 1998; Drucker, 1990; Heimovics and Herman, 1989; Kearns, et al., 2004/2015; Menefee, 1997; Phipps and Burbach, 2010). The influence and impact that nonprofit executives hold also reach the organization's governance and its relationship with its board of directors (Herman and Renz, 1998; Kearns, K.P., et al., 1989/2015). In essence, most NPO leaders are the focal point of the nonprofit organization, asserting expressive power, and directing their actions to guide the organization (Kearns, et al., 2015 from Herman and Heimovics, 1990). Also, according to these authors, the research on nonprofit leadership is minimal. As indicated by Kearns, et al., (2015), NPO leaders apply many skillsets that are trainable to others, with some skillsets that can only be achieved through learned experiences. Different opportunities for service learning can help those wishing to learn more about nonprofit leadership in preparation for the executive rank (Kearns, 2013, 2014). Kearns, (2013, 2014) findings compelled them to examine whether the skillsets of executives of government bureaus, small businesses, or large firms are equivalent to those skillsets of NPO leaders. The authors recommend that a more in-depth examination of the skills needed for successful nonprofit leaders be explored through more sample populations and more conventional research.

The Issues of Succession Planning

The current work landscape represents a swiftly changing external environment creating much ambiguity and instability, resulting in operational instability. To be competitive in the present landscape requires organizations to place importance on one of their most valuable assets their human capital. To stay competitive and successful, organizations need to have the right people in the right roles and placed in the right cultures. When roles within the organization become vacant, the right people must be available to fill these crucial positions; An organization cannot run the risk of being without the right talent when change happens unexpectedly. Strategizing ways to inspire and galvanize their people can help organizations develop a competitive advantage and promote greater expediency.

Organizations can create this competitive advantage and profitability through succession planning and with leadership promoting the professional growth of their people and maximizing their knowledge, skills, and talents who can, in turn, leverage their abilities to attack issues that have come about from demanding conditions. Building an effective succession plan is the foundation for creating a long-lasting competitive advantage. It provides a continuous resource of the right talent for essential roles within the organization. A progressive succession plan includes finding the right fit for top level managers and developing and preparing the right personnel for transitioning into management roles within the organization. This study explored the risks inherent in succession planning and management and its approach and how to design some protocols that align a succession management plan with the strategy and mission of the organization. Investors and fundraisers must be attentive to the next-generation nonprofit leadership. They need to be assured about where the next leaders are coming from to develop and grow the nonprofit sector. The human element is the foundation for the sustainability of this industry. This concern is echoed among many fields in the nonprofit sector about who will be leading NPOs and how these leaders will maintain successful sustainability in the future; Therefore, the worry about the leadership deficit gap. Tartell (2019), discovered that 75% of NPO leaders in the *Daring to Lead 2006,* study by CompassPoint Nonprofit Services and The Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation.

A well-organized and thought-out succession plan supports the probability that the right people with the right capabilities and knowledge are available when the organization requires their talent. Despite size or type, succession plans are similar, though larger organizations may need more intricate plans due to their definition and purpose. A successful succession plan requires leaders to know the market, the external environment, and the strategies to get the organization on the right path and have purposeful direction. NPO leaders need to incorporate the organization's needs, knowledge of their key people, and what professional protocols will prepare people for future leadership roles.

There are serious leadership gaps impacting NPOs (Landles-Cobb et al., 2015). They indicate a quarter of top leaders have resigned over two years, with this number continuing for several years to come. With such a considerable continuity, this transition makes succession planning challenging and contributes to being the top issue for NPO leaders and boards. Landles-Cobb et al., (2015) point out that this concern can be alleviated by training and readying the internal employee as a potential leader. They indicate that for-profit organizations currently hire almost 60% of executive positions with internal candidates. NPOs employ much less, with 30% of leadership positions coming from internal candidates. This significant difference creates this ubiquitous leadership deficit within the NPO arena.

A survey conducted by The Bridgespan Group which comprised over 400 nonprofit C-suite leaders for a study found some answers to the leadership development deficit. According to their survey, in 48-months, one-fourth of all c-suite leaders vacated their roles, with another quarter of the survey participants making plans to also leave their position in another two years (Kramer, et al., 2015). Those leaders are replacing existing ones comprised of 44% coming from the ranks of other NPOs. Studies that forecast the leadership landscape over the next decade, predict the nonprofit arena to have to supplant every nonprofit leadership role, much like the prospect of musical chairs for NPO leaders.

Rhine, (2015), in a study conducted within the nonprofit arts sector, noted a general decline as experienced by NPOs from two decades ago. Rhine (2015) examined stakeholders' opinions about genuine leadership and strategic planning efforts in the nonprofit arts sector. The study included eight NPOs in the arts sector. The research outcomes presented an inadequate administration of natural leadership characteristics, such as conviction and compassion for the strategic portion of the planning process. Their results also found an inequality between an arts-type mission or purpose and a commercial-type task thereby impeding efficient planning, resulting ineffectual conclusions.

Commentary presented by Gamble & Ingersoll (2017) posited that establishing a succession plan need not necessitate an extraneous endeavor. They suggested an acceptable succession plan, including NPOs, with complex business models that could be created in less than two months. However, NPOs suffer from a few issues that hinder their succession planning efforts. One of those issues concerns the term period for NPO leaders and the fact that serving long terms equates to decades and not a period of several years, which is especially prevalent for the founders. When long-term executive leaders transition out of NPOs, it can significantly disrupt the whole NPO. The NPO's ability to administer this transition revolves around the succession plan's nature, eventually leading to a new successor. Unfortunately, they state that NPOs face protracted records of issues that need addressing, above, and beyond succession planning, which takes away from succession planning. Besides this complication, succession planning is not prioritized until it becomes a critical priority. Since the term for for-profit executive leaders tends to be briefer than NPO leaders, it requires for-profit organizations and boards to manage succession planning regularly. This argument for succession planning is exacerbated by the fact that unprepared and even abrupt departures of executive leaders in NPOs can disrupt their everyday activities and purpose. It can create a cessation in the normal functioning success of these organizations.

Further, a concern of NPO boards is the cost and depletion of organizational and NPO awareness and education, which results from a long-term NPO leader who retires or vacates the organization. Individuals experiencing a leader's departure can be impacted negatively, thereby affecting productivity, donor insecurity and concerns, and the resulting problem of declining financial contributions when one leader exits the organization and a new leader is brought in. While a transition is not escapable for an NPO's lifetime, once it presents an expensive and confusing experience for all involved, experiencing this type of change more than once is risky for the organization and its people.

In line with Gamble & Ingersoll (2017), and Kramer (2016), the NPO arena's leadership deficit may not be as benign as initially thought. In recent research, the Bridgespan Group that their survey of over 400 NPOs, a quarter of NPO leaders, vacated their roles in the last 48 months, with more NPO leaders making plans to leave their roles in the next several years. If this movement continues in this pattern, NPO organizations have to find new NPO leaders equating to replacing an NPO leader for every NPO organization in existence for the next eight years. This information highlighted the exorbitant expenses in terms of financial capital and the loss of productivity. The Bridgespan Group found this high attrition missing the leadership growth and advancement, including internal hiring. Their study, *The Nonprofit Leadership Development Deficit*, published in the periodical, *SSIR.org*, shared that 29% of NPO roles employed internal hires. Kirk Kramer noted that 50% of potential internal hires do not get an opportunity to rise the corporate ladder as they do not keep their employment with their NPO organization long enough.

To add to the growing number of authors who believe in the benefits and power of succession planning, Cain (2017), asserts that NPOs are evolving marks in both type and breadth. The anticipation of four million retiring Baby Boomers though some are anticipated to stay longer in the workforce than their predecessors, this exodus of professionals at the executive level, some who hold or have held executive roles with the NPOs, either as CEOs or board members, jeopardizes the human capital side of NPOs. Cain (2017) therefore, recommends that the focus of priorities for NPOs concerning succession planning should not be about what is to be done if an executive role needs to be filled but about what is to be done when an executive role needs to be filled. However, the timing of retiring executives can never be predicted when this occurs, it can create discord. Succession planning needs to be factored in and is an important part of long-term strategies by executive leadership and boards. These strategies will be contingent upon the breadth and depth of the organization.

When succession planning takes place, it is critical that the gap from outgoing executive leader to incoming executive leader needs to be carefully guided along with the flow of work, administrative details, and those on the executive team, the board members, and employees. The one barrier for NPOs is their vulnerability to the chasm in their relations with partners, stakeholders, and benefactors. When leaders exit their roles and leave the organization in shock, NPOs need to assure the job role and the job details and definition summed up and prepared for new successors to minimize feelings of uncertainty and confusion. This requires the board of an NPO to create a job analysis, a job design, and the job description that best fits this NPO executive role and how this leader can be successful. A larger NPO might consider creating a team whose sole mission is to prepare succession planning efforts and manage the transition process, handle the decision-making, and establish priorities.

Recruitment and Onboarding Strategies

In the case of onboarding, a formal and long-term process for acclimating and preparing recruits in their roles, 63% of NPOs have an onboarding process with only 31% claiming an informal plan for attracting talent. More than one-fourth of NPOs are challenged with attracting top talent as their small budget for talent acquisition stymies their efforts and is the most noted reason for this hindrance according to the NPOs studied. It is recommended that, a serious plan of action be made toward establishing the right financial capital to back the growth and development of your people to be competitive in attracting talent. Talent acquisition, onboarding, and retention strategies are best coordinated with the mission and long-term strategy of the organization while advocating continually investing in talent acquisition. It has been noted that less than one percent of NPO investing in sources has been made traditionally toward supporting their people (Deshwal, 2015).

In a study by Ha, et al., (2017), participants noted that their board of directors is inadequate when attracting and onboarding recruits. Their research pointed out that a little over fifty percent of participants did provide for an onboarding plan for new leaders and managers. Adversely, less than half of the participants believed their onboarding process effectively prepared them for their roles as board members. More specifically, they noted that twenty percent of them did not get an opportunity to communicate with their CEO. In comparison, 36% were unable to connect with their senior leadership. During their study, a cross-comparison of nonprofit organizations and public companies indicated, according to the *2016-2017 NACD Public Company Governance Survey, 75%* of participants stated their board has an onboarding process. Eighty-four percent of participants further noted their company's onboarding experiences as productive or very productive (Ha et al., 2017). In this case, almost 100% stated they could connect with their senior leadership while onboarding. The paradox is that many public companies' executive leaders serve on the board of nonprofit organizations, hence contradicting the onboarding processes.

The findings from organizational onboarding practices indicate less than adequate standards and quality found in their boards (Ha et al., 2017). The more serious issue for nonprofit boards is that 75% of them have term limits for their directors. Hence, nonprofit boards regularly experience turnover, unlike for-profit boards that rarely see turnovers and disruptions to their purpose. Between shorter tenures of board members and the chaos of higher turnovers, it prohibits executive leaders and board members from being prepared, ready, and well-versed in the nonprofit environment and determining how best to leverage their skills for the nonprofit organization.

Mitchell (2015), examined key factors in identifying differences in nonprofit and nongovernmental success and efficiency. A study was conducted in which 152 nongovernmental (NGO) leaders representing many different sectors from humanitarian relief to the environment were interviewed. In this study, these leaders' interviews revealed a unique awareness of what best characterized the features and leadership principles influencing the approaches to improved efficiencies and performance of an organization. This study noted that while the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations nationally was researched in-depth, there lacks research on the features and leadership principles that characterize NGOs' efficiencies and best practices both by a broad scope and across regions and categories. Further, the review of NGOs has not sought any connections between leadership principles and the opinions that make for NGOs' efficiency and best practices. This issue presents a specific problem for NGOs as they do not operate similarly across national and international regions and are unique compared to local or domestic nonprofit agencies.

Tartell (2019), brings up three points that need to be identified in the nonprofit sector as recommended by the Nonprofit Sector Workforce Coalition (comprised of 70 national nonprofit partners administered by American Humanics) to attract and keep the next generation of top talent. The first point is to promote workforce diversity. That is, seeking strategies or an agenda that promotes improved protocols and outcomes for the NPO’s recruiting, retaining, and professional growth of organizational talent. Next, financial impediments need to be considered. What this means is focusing on the growing constraints of monetary burdens of young people to go into and stay sustained in nonprofit roles that are in most cases, under paying. Next priority should be promoting careers. This means identifying and supporting the growing demand for talent and the misconceptions of potential recruits who are heedless of opportunities in the nonprofit sector as future NPO leaders. When future leaders align and reflect the communities with which they serve as nonprofit representatives that include their backgrounds and culture only serves to make the NPO more successful and effective.

More organizations face a crisis in finding top talent and effectively attracting that talent known as Generation Z (Gen Z) (Fatemi, 2018). Those individuals born between 1996 and 2010 are a unique and unmistakable class of employees. This group's demographics have distinctive values, prioritize work factors differently, and have perspectives that are different from that of the Millennial generation. Fatemi (2018), asked what is needed to adequately and thoughtfully recruit Gen Z workers, who by the year 2030 will comprise 75% of the workforce.

One tactic in preparing for the inevitable succession of leaders is to reach out to the services of talent acquisition organizations who can begin the process of searching for qualified candidates, eliminating some of the excess time necessary in the hiring process and in preempting any panic or last-minute positioning for a readied executive to take over. The typical time frame for attracting, recruiting, and onboarding an executive leader can require from six months to twelve months, so one recommendation would include having the board of directors put together a provisional procedure when the role is not filled immediately.

Recruiting Challenges

Jacobi, (2017) also notes the challenges experienced by NPOs due mainly to their smaller budgets and resources. Despite this limited financial resource, this author cautions that NPO leaders need to not short-change the talent acquisition process. The success of an organization in achieving its goals and missions is predicated on its leaders and people. Even though it is challenging and work to create intelligent and successful talent acquisition practices, the cost of culture, productivity, and expenses incurred, when making mistakes with talent acquisition are far more expensive in many ways if the approach is not well laid out. Further findings include the expense of turnover equates to 150% of the exiting leader's pay. This cost can be significantly problematic for NPOs. The talent acquisition strategy that is successful needs leaders to be skilled at identifying the right individuals who will be dedicated to the organization, its mission and purpose. This dilemma requires NPO leaders and boards to make adjustments and sacrifices in reaching the right balance of compensation and benefits based on these fiscal limitations that exist. It further requires the art of knowing how to push your employees to do more work for less pay or ask employees to put more effort in because the organization is unable to be able to pay for more employees. Finally, and one of the most important aspects of retaining your people, is to have an effective plan of onboarding which helps your people to become successful. Though many leaders and managers might feel that finding the right fit is a challenging and arduous task, requiring much time and effort that many cannot spare, it is highly recommended by those successful in doing so for NPO leaders to follow the hiring practices found to be best practices by other successful NPOs, to assure they are doing the right thing when it comes to recruiting talent. NPO leaders need to determine what responsibilities their people should have, what the expected performance outcomes should be, identify the core competencies that will make for success, and create what that information looks like in writing and make as part of the and job description going forward.

Lee, and Suh, (2018) in accordance with the topic of recruitment challenges also noted the mounting leadership deficit along with the demand for better performance, accountability, and rising competition for the same investment and charitable dollars, NPOs and governmental agencies have been more prone and open to providing the necessary training and professional development opportunities for their leaders and incoming leadership. But, the authors note, there exists a lack of research in supporting or substantiating the importance of developing professional growth and managerial programs and training that will provide that performance and accountability needed for the nonprofit and public framework. The study conducted by Lee and Suh (2018) explores the results of nonprofit leadership engagement in professional development and growth training correlates with the acceptance and embracing of their nonprofit organizational processes in the areas of finance, customer service, and performance accountability, with the use of a survey of NPOs. The outcomes that ensued confirmed that NPOs whose leaders engaged in professional development and training were more prone to include these processes. More specifically, the outcomes of the study indicated that engagement in professional development, training, and mentoring in general is emphatically aligned with being more accountable in all areas, with finance, customer service, and performance accountability. In general, the results of the study conclude that supporting existing leaders with professional development and training is as essential as recruiting the right people in assuring that an NPO is on the mark when it comes to performance and accountability.

In better understanding how younger working generations felt about the workplace environment and what parts of working made them most fulfilled, Bradt, (2012), noted that 40% of NPO leaders and managers starting new employment do not succeed and all within 18 months of starting that employment. As some of the research provides, Millennials and Gen Z have been in the spotlight for being negative work stereotypes. However, what this author discovered is that this misconception has actually misaligned these generations and in fact, found them to be loyal to their leaders who take the time to make them feel valued and train them with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful at their work. These generations want to have meaningful work, make an impact, and give back to their communities.

Bradt (2012) brings up the concept of reverse mentoring programs as a solution to traversing a divide among several work generations and making that connection. Bradt, (2012) states that reverse mentoring promotes a learning climate which is more conducive to being an inventive approach to inspiring education, information, and skill sharing, at the same time, prioritizing the professional development of leaders on behalf of Millennials and Gen Z interns and new recruits. When deciding to integrate reverse mentoring programs or approaches into an organization requires a reversal of an established mentoring approach. With the reverse mentoring approach, a newer and perhaps younger employee is the mentor in this scenario, who will provide their knowledge, skills, and perspectives with the leader in the organization, who in this case, will act as the mentee.

With the reverse mentoring approach, it can give new perspectives and understanding into older status quo work processes and issues with Millennials and Gen Z employees having the capability to bring technological skills to the table, as well as social media and trending ideas (Greengard, 2002). This reverse mentoring approach provides for a voice for newer and younger employees and interns, providing them the ability to feel engaged and to help them seek meaning and find satisfaction in their work environment (Zielinski, 2000). Reverse mentoring provides benefits for both sides of the program and are abundant, being a significant tool for retaining and recruiting Millennials and Gen Z. Reverse mentoring serves as a customized process for both sides to remunerate and serve as an inspiration and impact in the workplace.

The reverse mentoring approach is a learning tool when cross generations are working together and helps support and build future leaders and provides a conventional leadership philosophy on how to interpret trends, find and resource the most relevant technology, and how to attract and keep top talent. In offering distinctive mentoring programs, where incumbent employees mentor new employees, but in offering a reverse mentoring program as well, introducing a cross generational learning experience (Murphy, 2012).

For the first time in history, today's workforce has generations working together in both private and public industries. Those five working generations include Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z workers. Despite differences and even similarities, each generation offers up new and distinctive approaches to the work environment. The two work generations which receive the most grief are the Millennials and Gen Z. The media has portrayed in a negative light of Millennials and Gen Z workers as they have become part of the workforce. These negative reflections of Millennials and Gen Z are described as narcissistic, lacking in focus, entitled, lazy, and hard to lead. In fact, Bradt (2012), noted while all working generations have had their share of negative commentary however, Millennials and Gen Z have received the worst stereotypes about the active generations than any other age. Murphy (2012) suggests it is the media that may perpetuate these stereotypical characteristics.

The advanced technology that we use daily is that same technology of which Millennials have been the first generation to be raised on it. Millennials and Gen Z groups have been raised on Facebook, Instagram, snapchat, along with many others. Being familiar and comfortable with this technology has provided opportunities for these two generations to fine-tune their lives and become their best and going forward put the best of themselves out there, However, this technology brings on new concerns and that is how does face-to-face a one-on-one communication, and even the ability to speak in a phone conversation look like? Have these technologically-driven generations have the competence for these skills? The question to ask is whether Millennials and Gen Z are able to handle honest and balanced criticisms, and face-to-face confrontations that are often apart of a working environment. Contrary to misperceptions about these two working generations, Millennials and Gen Z workers desire to be satisfied in their jobs have meaning in their work. It is crucial to gain an understanding of the unique viewpoints and mindsets and the work ethics of each working generation. Millennials and Gen Z workers have more of a penchant than any other work generation to want to understand why things are or why things be in the workplace, simultaneously finding meaning in work and being inspirational. Millennials and Gen Z are more apt to prefer a coach or mentor rather than a boss so as to have coachable feedback, support and inspiration, and opportunities to grow in their role through this coaching (Trunk, 2007).

Millennials and Gen Z approach to life has shown distinct differences than other generations (King, 2019). Being involved in activism has never been more popular, and these two work generations are on the front lines with activism. They are two generations that want to give back to communities and desire to make a difference in the world and make an impact (King, 2019). Altruism is their mantra and they are eager to take on meaningful roles. This mantra and work philosophy eases well into the current workplace.

Lack of Career Advancement and Resources

As a result, lack of career advancement opportunities remains the explanation behind NPO employees' attrition. Hence, since NPOs are challenged with finding new leaders to fill NPO roles since attrition is a real problem for NPOs, they are more likely and motivated to find potential leadership potential outside the organization. That means swiping the staff from companion NPOs and preserving what the authors coin as transitioning without leaders' available roles. This dead-end problem explains the lack of spending time and money on developing future, internal leaders with NPOs concerned over leadership training resulting in the subsequent NPO acquiring the talents and knowledge of that NPO leader trained from another NPO. On the positive side, this study noted that people trained and developed by the NPOs they work for will remain with their current NPO and perform well, as long as professional development and training are provided in place of moving up the leadership ladder as an incentive to stay on. Kramer (2016) noted that if one can keep top talent productive for a few more years, until they leave for another job role, they should be considered a bonus with the lengthiness of their recent stay to be a positive return on investment for the organization. Kramer (2016) recommends the 70-20-10 model regarding training and career development opportunities equating to a blend of mentoring assistance, traditional learning, and experiential learning on the job. The issue for NPOs is having enough capital and sources to endow into training and development. Kramer (2016) instead advises that NPOs do not disregard the importance of leadership development; instead, NPOs consider reaching out for grants.

For NPOs to be successful and sustainable, the leader's role is essential in seeing that happen. In addition to the preceding authors, Froelich, et al. (2011), also maintain that Baby Boomers leave leadership roles in record numbers. With this transition comes, the leadership deficit presents a devastating problem for NPOs. According to (Allison, 2002; Austin & Gilmore, 1993; Fletcher, 1992; Herman & Heimovics, 1989; Richie & Eastwood, 2006; Santora, et al., 2007), the development of research concerning NPO leaders and succession planning has been minimal. However, that succession of incoming leaders presents more of a challenge for NPOs as NPO leaders' number and availability are few and far between to choose from (Allison, 2002; Tierney, 2006). Nevertheless, low pay, an effective infrastructure, and an expanding demand for NPO leaders to take on more duties have left this position less than desirable (Tierney, 2006; Von Bergen, 2007). These nonprofit leadership features contribute to a lack of interest on the part of future leaders (Kunreuther, 2003; Von Bergen, 2007). Minimal attention has been paid to succession planning and NPO leadership (Allison, 2002; Austin & Gilmore, 1993; Fletcher, 1992; Herman & Heimovics, 1989; Richie & Eastwood, 2006; Santora, et al., 2007). The research also shows that small NPOs struggle with a greater lack of capital and sources for survival, let alone time and money to devote to succession planning.

The implication of NPO transitions will be more impacted when Baby Boomers create this retirement exodus leaving this large void. The U.S. Census Bureau calculates those workers over the age of 65 will increase continually for the next decade, eclipsing four million by 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). NPO leaders who are capable, experienced, and driven are hard to find to hold these NPO roles and will introduce critical issues for nonprofit and for-profit organizations for the same reasons. As a NPO, this issue becomes even more exacerbated since the NPO sector struggles with a bigger gap of qualified leaders available (Allison, 2002; Kunreuther, 2003; Tierney, 2006; Von Bergen, 2007), again, note the benefits offered for NPO leadership roles are not attractive to incoming generations. Given the important focus of NPO leaders and their influence and the increase in transitions of leaders, this study states the need for succession planning.

A recommendation for the interim period is to have a board member act temporarily as executive leader or taken on some of the duties of the role until a proper placement can be found. Eventually, when transition appears to be less than seamless and other competing interests within the NPO need attention, the NPO must decide how to designate its monetary responsibilities, boards need to allocate its priorities. What makes this decision-making difficult is when the members of the board do not agree on what is in the best interest of the organization or what the mission of the organization represents as a unanimous opinion. Further, when an organization makes decisions and decides the standards of its operational protocols, the members need to acknowledge the influence all the decisions made and the effect made on its reputation and purpose for being. Proactively, NPOs have actions they can employ to unite the leadership faction with the board's long-term goals. As an example, Cain (2017) suggests NPO leadership consider presenting several strategy scenarios with the upsides and downsides to its board to review with the ultimate goal to adopt one strategy that all parties can agree upon. These mock strategies would encompass mission, capital, reputation, and brand and the impact the strategy would levy on all elements. When organizations experience executive disorder, some kind of resolution can always be found, however, the Cain (2017), suggests that NPOs and their boards contemplate the idea of adding in a "transformational leader" from the beginning who would not only be an influential source in educating important shareholders, develop a strategy for guiding and restoring unity between NPO executives and the board of directors, and anticipate assumptions and govern results. If the best laid plans or a strategy does not work according to expectations of an NPO leader, and departure is inevitable, it will no doubt create at a minimum, discontinuity or worse, disintegration of direction and leadership of the NPO, but this mistake can serve as a resource and guide for creating better support in the form of a communications strategy and succession strategy. As positive as transformational developments can present, each event or development can propose special obstacles or dilemmas for NPOs and call for meticulous scrutiny, examining the risks associated and which direction should be taken. NPOs and their boards that are forward-thinking enough to have contingency plans in place, can concentrate more effectively, arriving at unanimity while making adjustments as events and changes necessitates, making NPOs ready to maneuver the changing course or trends that unavoidably be encountered.

In his research, Hirschfield (2014), U.S. economists state that recovery for the U.S. economically will remain slack before organizations in this country eventually and escalate financial investing on items such as supplies, material, machinery, and automation and robotics. In comparison, businesses in the U.S. are spending money and that is for investment in leadership development and training. These capital investments increased from 15 percent in 2013 by U.S. organizations, to $70 billion dollars and more. Following, an additional two years of more progress, rated at more than 10 percent. Fortunately, more organizations are spending money on their employees with increased and enhanced dynamism, though the nonprofit sector persists in falling behind in providing and supporting nonprofit leaders and employees with the financial investment needed to helping them grow. The professional development of leadership and talent is a necessary expenditure to assure the right talent at the top are prepared to create a successful organization, and this philosophy includes NPOs that should be following the script of private organizations. Hirschfield (2014) concluded with the necessity in further examining why the nonprofit sector continues to not make financial investments into their leadership and to reverse their downward course of direction in this area, which Hirschfield (2014) points out is one of the essential elements of positive social change. Spending time, money, and training on leadership not only produces more productivity and a high performance in your leaders, but it can also bring about an honest and more balanced and stable society.

CSR and the Attraction of Meaningful Work

The attraction of organizations offering corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and meaningful purpose behind their missions are diminishing between the for-profit sector and the nonprofit sector. This closing of this gap is due to the increase in popularity of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and more organizations touting themselves as purpose-driven, an element that studies have shown to attracts Millennials and Gen Z who are enthusiastic about committing to organizations that hold a positive mission and vision. Since social enterprises and organizations with an altruistic purpose are growing significantly, it distinctly exemplifies the need for NPOs to place importance on their people, along with the talent acquisition and performance strategies that support this endeavor (Lisa Brown Alexander, President and CEO of *Nonprofit HR).*

The current workforce, in particular, Millennials and Gen Z want to know that they are putting forth something meaningful in the world noted Paul D'Arcy, senior vice president at job search engine Indeed. Since Millennials and Gen Z desire work for organizations with more meaning and purpose, there has been an increasing interest to be a part of NPO work and careers that demonstrate their commitment to a social purpose and as a part of their mission. However, with this focus brings competition as both NPOs and for-profit organizations recruit talent by using their messages and branding to tout their focus on CSR, making the race for quality people much more competitive along with the issue of NPOS not keeping abreast of the latest strategies for talent recruitment and acquisition. Deshwal (2015) contends that 64% of NPOs lack in a standardized talent acquisition plan, and with 70% purporting not to have a budget for recruiting at all. Further, 81% do not have any strategies for retaining talent once they have attracted them to the organization. Of those NPOs, 70% have not created an organizational brand, despite the significance that branding provides in finding and keeping talent. NPOs need to effectively utilize the tools of tracking applicants in order to maximize recruitment of top talent. When it comes to customer relationship management (CRM), it is essential for NPOs to be more organized and cost-effective therefore, 33% of NPOs are now using applicant tracking technology.

The study defined next generation leaders as those people who are under 40 years old, who are capable and ready to direct NPOs going forward. While the skeptics rationalize that younger generations cannot commit and sacrifice to the demands of nonprofit roles, the recent research found in this study that younger working generations are interested and desire nonprofit careers. These younger generations desire a work-life balance. Though pay is important, these younger generations want the workplace to understand and honor their need for other workplace benefits such as meaningfulness of work, making an impact, a positive culture, the tools and resources to do their job, flexibility, professional growth, a life outside of work but to make a decent enough salary to support a family, by a home, and other desires that support their personal lives. Like many workers, even NPO workers want networking opportunities to meet with like-minded peers to share ideas and challenges and to be in organizations with relevant technology with additional productivity-promoting tools and infrastructure.

Bozer, et al. (2015) analyzed the features of NPOs that include organizational leadership development (OLD) actions combined with succession planning to assure the continuation of flagship leadership. A survey outcome conducted with the responses of

54 nonprofit leaders from Israel discovered the significance of OLD and how much its presence has with a positive succession plan. The results comprised the degree to which these executive directors or OLDs provide guidance regarding succession planning and assisting with talent acquisition and organizational protocols, and even finding their successors. The study determined the impact of such leaders and their involvement, allowing for future studies and recommendations. The issues impacting Israeli NPOs encompass how to retain people from key roles and dealing with competing factions for grants and funding. With Israeli nonprofit boards of directors, the leadership deficit has been identified by nonprofit research. The study noted the development of leadership as one strategy that can augment the availability of capable and skilled leaders for NPOs to relieve the problems associated with the gap. Regardless of this realization of the essential role that the development of leaders play in NPOs, (e.g., Herman, 2010; Hopkins et al., 2014; Ritchie & Eastwood, 2006), the development of leaders and ongoing research has ignored the nonprofit sector.

In a time when Bill Gates retired from his leadership role at Microsoft and when Steve Jobs became ill and had to step down from Apple, it made worldwide news, in particular when it was made public that their replacements would need to be identified. The concept of succession planning commands much notice when it involves leaders at *Fortune 500* companies but not as much focus is placed on the daily operations of an organization. The reality is that succession planning is needed and required in any business or organization and must be part of the formulation in any business that wants to be successful. The outcomes of this research found that more than 60% of organizations have no plans for the transition of new leaders. According to Sandra Richtermeyer, former IMA® Chair, succession planning is crucial for the boards of these NPOs as the board members have a propensity for feeling similar to “indentured servants” if they do not prepare for a new leader to take the vacated role. This same propensity occurs for leaders and managers of NPOs. This study goes onto explore the development of succession plans of specific organizations and elaborates on recommendations and philosophies of other NPOs as well as for-profit organizations and how they can design these plans to be successful (Ledgerwood, & Morgan, 2013).

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the current research pertaining to leadership in the nonprofit sector centered on essential challenges troubling the industry and the leadership deficit gap that affects NPOs. While the research identifying the issues was minimal, solutions to this gap were even more nominal. The research identified a lack of succession planning, prioritizing the recruitment of succession leaders and their training, and a lack of attractive offerings to entice Millennial and Gen Z generations to become future leaders in the industry. A succession process needs to be a part of NPOs’ strategic planning. While an important protocol, NPOs do not prioritize the planning of transitioning leaders, let alone consider unique ways to attract Millennial and Gen Z generations to the ranks of NPO leadership. Capital allocation, lack of time for recruitment, onboarding, and training measures of qualified prospects are cited as issues preventing the succession of new leaders. The inability of NPOs to prioritize attracting and developing new candidates to their leadership roles, could significantly affect long-term development and sustainability. As it currently stands, most NPOs have not prepared for the exodus of the Baby Boomer generation retiring from leadership positions nor have they prepared any type of succession plan addressing this phenomenon.

Chapter 3 contains research method.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennial and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. This chapter details the research design for this study and the researcher's rationale for its use, including the researcher's role and how participants were chosen for the study. This chapter also introduces the instrumentation, the rationale for using the tools, the procedures for conducting the study, the participant selection, and the data collection and analysis.

Research Design and Rationale

What are the strategies NPOs create to prepare Millennial and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles? The phenomenon investigated in this study is the strategy NPOs employ to prepare Millennial and Gen Z generations to assume leadership roles.

I conducted a multiple qualitative case study to determine what strategies NPOs create in preparing Millennial and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. This chapter summarizes the procedure I adopted when outlining the study and in gathering and interpreting the data. The quality of the research and the criteria approach is assessed in this study. Given the topic of this study which explores the experiences and perspectives of NPO leaders regarding succession planning of Millennial and Gen Z workers, the chosen methodology that most aligns with the study was a qualitative approach. A qualitative method provided in-depth feedback and narratives to better understand the phenomenon versus a quantitative study which summarizes only numerical patterns (Lodico, et al., 2010). In a case study, finding and analyzing themes from the data collected expects to answer the central research question (Lukka, 2014). The design of a case study research needs to reinforce the study objectives, instruments used, and the analysis (Yin, 2014).

Further, a qualitative design examining this type of research is appropriate because the design is not constrained by the same structure as would other typical qualitative designs. Many research studies highlight the subjective viewpoints, beliefs, attitudes, and real-world experiences. These types of psychological findings are not easy to measure statistically therefore, a qualitative method can prove to be more useful. Generic qualitative inquiry is a worthwhile method when using tools such as questionnaires and other qualitative elements (Percy, et al., 2015).

Typically, qualitative research designs generic in nature, commit to gathering data in the following manner: 1) quasi- or completely controlled evaluations, verbal or written. In these types of information gathering, questions are predetermined by the researcher with flexibility to add to the feedback; 2) surveys which tend to ask preferences of participants, how much the participants are agreeable, and the ability to add more qualitative feedback. The online survey and foundation were developed by the researcher from preexisting knowledge of the topic; and 3) using an online survey above and beyond the standard survey or voter poll. The online survey provides more profound information and is more sophisticated than simpler surveys and polls and was developed from the foundation of preexisting topic knowledge (Percy, et al., 2015).

When evaluating other research designs, this researcher found phenomenology, ethnography, and grounded theory were not best suited for this study. A phenomenological design studies the lived experiences of study participants to determine meaning behind the research study rather than finding out about perceptions and recommendations for succession planning and preparing Millennial and Gen Z generations for transition into NPO leadership (Chen & Deterding, 2013). An ethnographic study focuses on people, their culture, and the study of a phenomenon within their community (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). The grounded theory represents a standardized process that develops approaches and strengthens theories (Lewis-Pierre, et al., 2017). In this study, the research question seeks to find answers to what strategies are needed for preparing Millennial and Gen Z generations for NPO leadership and not develop theories.

Role of the Researcher

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the agent for gathering data and guiding the research process while managing meticulous commitment to ethical guidelines (Yilmaz, 2013). In this design (Kahlke, 2014; Percy, et al., 2015), an online survey was utilized. I collected data concerning NPO leaders' perspectives of their NPO leadership experience (Miles, et al., 2015), and details about particular components of NPO management and leadership.

This multiple case study explored the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. I intended through this study, to provide strategies for leaders and executive boards of NPOs to fill the vacating positions of retiring NPO leaders, presenting a leadership gap. The results collected from this study presented a more significant knowledge base for NPO leaders providing a vision and guidance on the process for understanding and incorporating new best practices to NPO leadership and succession planning. This supposes NPOs embrace and build upon current leadership and succession planning endeavors to include providing opportunities for Millennials and Gen Z to develop their practical skill sets. This research explored the integration of leadership and succession planning protocols; and for Millennials and Gen Z to attain useful skill sets and better prepare them for the type of workers expected of today's NPO employers.

My role in this study was that of the primary researcher and directed the participants' engagement of the online survey of the phenomenon using open-ended semi-structured questions. My role as a researcher was that of the principal data collector collecting and analyzing and interpreting the research (Yin, 2014). As the researcher, I gathered information through a semi-structured survey with NPO leaders. I reviewed and documented organizational protocols on succession planning and their standard working procedures. I also classified themes and established the meaning of results. In an effort to mitigate bias during the study, several methods were used. I standardized the data collection, selected similar participants from an equivalent industry with similar professional experiences, and I provided the same questions in the study to all participants (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2011). Journaling, keeping meticulous data records, and reporting results was also a useful measure for mitigating researcher bias (Tufford & Newman, 2012).

Participant Selection Logic

This qualitative multiple case study population included approximately eight NPO leaders in San Diego County and Orange County, California. The selected NPO leaders had experience creating strategies for succession planning and working or training Millennial and Generation Z workers. Participants' selection was a purposeful sampling to align with the representative population of NPO leaders who work, have worked, or are seeking Millennial and Generation Z workers as potential leaders to succeed them. The specific participants might be able to present new knowledge or bring greater clarity to the phenomenon (Poulis, et al., 2013; Wilson, 2014). Participants must have expertise with nonprofit organizational environments and succession planning knowledge to address the phenomena under study (Cleary, et al., 2014). Chief executive officers (CEOs), chief financial officers (CFOs), and directors who are a part of the nonprofit sector were a part of the study. The researcher provided online surveys for approximately 100 NPO leaders and administrators.

Yin (2018) suggests that having a strategy for analyzing the data collected is essential in being prepared as the analytic stage can either stall a researcher or spur progress of the study depending on the researcher’s methodical and practical reasoning, including the satisfactory presentation of data and examination of the meaning of that data. While a computer-assisted software tool was used in the study to help in coding and classifying considerable volumes of data, especially when the data is taken from narrative text, it was still incumbent of the researcher to analyze emerging themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Saldana, 2016; & Yin, 2018). The product of coding from the computer-assisted software was more rudimentary than the “how” and “why” questions asked in the study, including the analysis of those codes. Thus, more critical thinking and pattern matching was necessary of the researcher in establishing relevant themes (Yin, 2018). Pattern matching refers to the method of using the conclusions of the case study and comparing with observed or anticipated sequences (Yin, 2018). Analyzing the data may introduce a relevant concept or more. This awareness can create the strategy needed for analysis providing a deep dive into the data and opening up new connections (Yin, 2018).

The technique for collecting data included initial contact with possible participants by accessing the names of NPOs and their leadership from colleagues known to these NPO leaders. The researcher obtained additional names of NPOs from online research and reaching out directly by email and social media, such as LinkedIn, to NPO leaders for permission to conduct the study with them. In this study, this researcher performed an in-depth analysis with a continual review of participant feedback, creating a method to assure authentic explanations and meaning of the data. One way to reach authenticity is by asking probing questions (Bernard, 2012). Therefore, the online survey contained contain in-depth questions to assure a better opportunity to reach authenticity and meaning of the responses based on quality not on quantity of feedback. This researcher provided twenty questionnaires to NPO leaders selected for the study. This number was chosen to assure that the most appropriate participants were enough to be included to assure meaningful information was obtained, and in the event some participants could not finish the survey.

Ensuring completeness of responses, a final question was made to participants asking whether there could be additional information not asked in the survey that participants feel would be noteworthy to add to the study outcomes (Morse, 1995). Lastly, it is crucial for the success of any study to develop trust among participants and to create that trust, confidentiality is an important component. This researcher designed questions that were probing but comfortable enough for participants to feel free to answer and elaborate on (Morse & Coulehan, 2015).

Instrumentation

The researcher in a qualitative research study is the primary agent in gathering data (Wagstaff & Williams, 2014). For this study, I gathered all the data. Semi-structured questions in an online survey from participants was the strategy used in collecting data for this qualitative multiple case study. A semi-structured survey used as the essential information for this study was applicable for a qualitative case study (Yin, 2012). The link provided in the email to NPO leaders for survey purposes was online questions from a survey conducted by SurveyMonkey, a free, online survey site. Based on the variables supplied by the researcher, the questionnaire asked relevant queries of NPO leaders to establish the applicable information needed to analyze this study. Survey Monkey facilitated the process of data analysis. SurveyMonkey as a software program, offered the ability for users to create and host customized surveys based on the field or purpose of their needs (Lauter & Bellantoni, 2015).

The collection of data comprised of an online survey and was the fundamental base for information. The process of collecting data comprised of twenty qualitative open-ended questions (see Appendix B). When a researcher needs to assess why, what, how, and when specific developments arise then a case study is effective (Yin, 2013). A survey that includes semi-structured questions contributes to an opening to explore the knowledge and experiences of the participants to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research findings. The online survey process was the same during the study. After a period of two weeks where potential participants were provided the time period to review the invitation letter and a copy of the online survey, I reached out to potential participants to determine if there were any questions or concerns that needed to be addressed and extend a gentle reminder to complete the survey. Participants consented to participating in the study by replying to my invitation email with the words, “I consent.” Once the participants responded with “I consent,” the surveys were administered to participants. The semi-structured questions listed in the survey provided the ability for me to assess the responses more in-depth in order to provide more context and narrative to the study (Cachia & Millward, 2011). The data collection process for this qualitative study included the online survey, and if applicable, secure documentation from participants that included succession planning protocols, onboarding criteria, and any other documentation that discussed hiring and promotional history and practices.

Participants completed responses to open-ended questions that addressed the issue of succession planning of nonprofit organizations and the efforts toward recruiting and onboarding Millennials and Gen Z workers to assume nonprofit leadership posts. If participating nonprofit leaders of this study had succession plans, I requested review of them to add more information to research findings. While any documentation received for this study may not have told a complete story concerning onboarding efforts of Millennial and Gen Z generations to these nonprofit organizations; however, garnering information from these documents was a part of triangulating data.

The expectation of research is to generate knowledge and produce new theory, however, for research to be of value, it must also possess useful results. In utilizing a qualitative study, a presentation of the study and the purpose was provided to participants of the study, a condensed sketch of how the research was to be conducted, and an introduction into the use of the study surveys. In extending a synopsis of the research findings to participants to gather feedback on outcomes, the study can be validated by those participating in the study lending more credibility to the study and to the research findings. With these tools and resources, data were able to be generated from NPO leaders and consenting through email, was able to use this information for research purposes and a deeper comprehension of how much NPO leadership can impact the viability of a NPO and its succession planning (Wood, 2010).

Assuring the completeness of data gathered through this study, reliability and validity needed to be ascertained. The concept of reliability assures uniformity and the ability for duplication of the data (Simon & Goes, 2013). In order to establish this duplication, the survey was provided to participants for review and authentication. When a study is reliable, it can mitigate the issue of bias. As researcher, there is a duty to choose and utilize the tool or means that brings the most trustworthiness and dependability to the study.

Establishing validity for this study required that the research question was compelling and logical for the study conclusion, the study design was aligned with the methodology, and the methodology selected for the study applied to the research question (Leung, 2015). Finally, member checking was included in the study. Member checking establishes the credibility of the study, the outcomes, and the responses of participants (Hadi & Closs, 2016). The process of member checking encompasses substantiating written responses with any verbal responses or information from participants to assure veracity (Bygstad & Munkvold, 2007). Included in this process was sequencing, consistency, and frequency while performing member checking to reinforce the integrity of the study. The importance of member checking augments the certainty that the established ideas and codes align with responses given by participants (Carlson, 2010).

This type of research is intended to be interpretive in nature and examines a specific point in question or experience at greater length. With this type of design, it did not require me to subscribe to a particular data gathering process, instead provided me the flexibility to pursue specific analysis giving way to a more meaningful experience and knowledge provided by the NPO participants. The goal of the research was to identify and share the knowledge of NPO leaders with their approaches and methods for transitioning successors into their organizations, in particular, Millennial and Gen Z prospects. The survey represented the primary data gathering method. The intention of making each questionnaire an in-depth experience was to completely acquire the details that represented the knowledge and abilities of NPO leaders to successfully attract and transition the workforce representing Millennials and Gen Z. The survey targeted views, ideas, and recommendations of NPO leaders to answer this research topic. The plan was that the survey will lead to new perspectives and new knowledge surrounding this phenomenon but still provide for future research study on the topic.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Data collection is the foundation for which the research study can be studied and have the research focus answered (Pederson, et al., 2013). While researchers have a variety of sources that can be used to obtain data for qualitative case studies, this researcher used an online survey (Yin, 2012). The data collection technique comprised of this researcher initially making contact with possible participants by accessing the names of NPOs and their leadership representatives from colleagues who are known to these

NPO leaders. In addition, I obtained additional names of NPOs from online research and reached out directly by email to NPO leaders for permission to conduct the study with them.

Upon permission from Walden University IRB 03-21-22-0996136, I began the enrollment of participants. Upon agreement of possible participants, online surveys were sent out to participating parties at the commencement of the study with an accompanying email to participants that the surveys had been sent and a deadline for completing and returning the surveys. If the study ran the risk of falling short on responses from the survey, I considered a telephone interview as an option if preferred by subject participants for purposes of convenience (Lechuga, 2012). This contingency plan was not necessary. A tactical plan to ensure honesty in this study provided opportunities for each participant to refuse to participate and extricate themselves from the study and present only data gathered from individuals who truly wanted to participate and were unencumbered from offering their opinions freely. Participants had the knowledge they may at any time extricate themselves from participation without any explanation to the researcher. Participants needed to be supported to speak honestly from the commencement of the study and throughout the process with the researcher solidifying a basis of trust and rapport emphasizing to participants of their responses not needing to have right answers to the questions being asked. I also emphasized the status of independence and lack of bias related to the study. These parameters help set the stage for participants to contribute ideas and conversation freely without fear of retaliation or loss of credibility (Shelton, 2004).

When the collection of data was complete, I performed a review of the elements to determine any significance to that data pertaining to the study (Klassen et al., 2012). Qualitative data software was used to analyze the data gathered from this study. The survey included semi-structured questions and predetermined questions to guide the process and elicit the information needed to answer the research question. The participants' feedback from the survey was the primary base of data analysis. To ensure confidentiality, I assigned customized codes to participants and their organizations in place of names or any other identifying descriptions. Following this process, the coding of data involved a coding method to identify critical information, experiences, and recommendations gathered from the survey.

The data collection process consisted of three communication phases where the first phase was the introduction of the survey. I provided contact information and a quick overview to the participants concerning the instructions and time deadline needed. The second phase was a check-in with participants to check on the status of the survey completion and to see if there were any questions or concerns among them. Finally, the third phase was closing out the survey process by checking in with subject participants and requesting final submission and explaining next steps in the process. The duration of this period included two weeks, giving ample time for subject participants to complete the survey. Member checking served to ascertain, if collected, that data was feasible and if the themes discovered during the study emerged as authentic and valid (Jeffers, 2014). The participants have had a chance to review outcomes from the final analysis on the data and study transcripts which were coded by me that only I had knowledge of and will provide confidentiality (Koelsch, (2013). A one-to-two-page summary was provided to participants upon commencement of data analysis.

All hard documentation will be stored in a locked cabinet in which only myself having access whereupon, it will be shredded after seven years. All digital feedback and data gathered will also be stored on a secured server and in a zipped file that is password-protected in which only I have access. Like the paper documentation, the e-files and digital feedback and data will be destroyed in seven years by me through securing the services of a professional shredding company to dispose of the documentation properly and safely. The questions queried in the study of the participants and the responses received by the participants were innocuous enough to not be a concern to privacy, anonymity, and any concerns the IRB might hold.

Further, to mitigate issues of concern such as confidentiality and to allow participants to be a part of the study freely, all participants were allowed to remove themselves from the study at any time without question. If a participant was uncomfortable with any question, they were informed they can skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. There were minimal risks in this study. Some risks included participants being uncomfortable answering questions about their views about their organization.

Data Analysis Plan

Reviewing data is a methodical process that analyzes the data components and interprets these components to identify the fundamental context (Klassen et al., 2012). In this case study, the process of pattern matching was followed. In case studies, pattern matching is considered one of the most beneficial methods for data analysis (Trochim, 1989). With the method of pattern matching, the technique examines the similarities and contrasts of the outcomes of the study with an anticipated finding prior to the study's commencement (Yin, 2018). If the findings from the study are comparable to the anticipated standards, then the outcomes of the case study can assist in reinforcing its internal validity, and further strengthening the relationship between the "how's" and "why's" of the case study with emerging patterns (Yin, 2018).

For the data coding process, this researcher established a coding method to secure ideas, responses, and experiences gathered from the surveys in the study. This method in assigning specific codes to the data collected with each code representing some point or code of promising significance (Yin, 2018). For this study, qualitative data analysis software was used for analysis of the data results. The semi-structured questions were predetermined for this study in an effort to guide the extrapolation of information and for a more extensive data collection experience. The survey was the main source for data analysis and the main source for information in this study. Responses were interpreted for common themes, ideas, and new information by the researcher.

I analyzed this information using open coding qualitative methods to develop specific and applicable codes and themes and to ensure the integrity of the data. A definitive, qualitative technique more prevalently uses codes developed from information gathered (Sandelowski, 2000), also incorporating codes or a composed set of numbers or letters using the same terminology taken specifically from the data. The outcomes of the data and study were then introduced in commonplace language (Neergaard, et al., 2009; Sandelowski, 2000). Specific consideration was directed to comparison of the themes that emerged from each participant (Percy, et al., 2015; Miles, et al., 2015). Differing data and feedback from participants can lead to insights concerning the worth, strengths and weaknesses of NPO leadership succession.

Within this analysis, any preconceived views or preunderstandings of the topic were set aside commencing the study. Each set of data from participants was gathered on an individual basis. After all individual data was examined and assessed, the next step was identifying repeating patterns and themes that were fused together into an amalgam endeavoring to translate the significance and meanings of the study (Percy, et al., 2015). In reviewing the synthesized information, key and meaningful points were underscored. In reviewing these identified points, I examined whether it related to the topic question of the study. If some points did not, those unrelated points were removed from the study material but set aside in a different file. This information may be reevaluated later.

I triangulated the data to construct the study's quality and rigor using the various data sources obtained (Yin, 2014). It was sufficient for the analysis of the data for this qualitative multiple case study. Besides the gathered data from the survey, NPO succession plans and other documentation would have been gathered as well, but was not necessary. As recommended by Yin (2014), the five steps of the data analysis process included gathering the data, dividing the data up among groups, assembling the data into themes, evaluating all the information, and generating the results. When all participants finished the survey, the feedback was evaluated to determine its relevancy to the study. Further, any documentation reviewed regarding succession planning was assessed for its worth. The assembling of data started with connecting main themes established from literature review which served as the base for categorizing the data that was gathered (Johnson & Campbell-Stephen, 2013). Assembling data into subgroups provides a seamless path for the research to be transferable to other contexts (Yin, 2011). Codes were designated and aligned with the factors represented in the literature review (Yin, 2011).

The method of coding applied raw data collected and then bracketed by different backgrounds and responses to exclude any bias (Yilmaz, 2013). The coding process earmarked any notable findings from the collected data while statements that were coordinated into themes were color coded (Yin, 2013). A research log, codebook created from using Coding Analysis Toolkit (CAT), and QDA Miner, a data analysis software was a part of this researcher's repertoire to coordinate and record all information that presented itself which backs up the data analysis. To manage and classify developing themes from the data analysis, a spreadsheet was adopted. Data was assessed on a regular basis to identify and mitigate bias or any unusual occurrences. Qualitative data software supported the researcher by collecting, codifying, and administering the data gathered from the study which served the purpose of enhancing constancy and stability of the research (Pfaff, et al., 2014). Qualitative data software promotes the operation of examining the crude data collected from surveys or other forms of collection to classify groups and themes established from study feedback and responses (Yilmaz, 2013). During this juncture, this researcher identified the significant points and had the ability to clarify any distinct problems while in this stage of analysis (Carcary, 2011). The questions set forth to participants in this study are expected to bring about new phenomenon on this research study along with supplementary feedback provided by subject participants.

Since qualitative research garners a significant quantity of data, it was necessary to design a process whereby the following steps include data collection, divide and group the data, categorize the data into themes, evaluate the information, and establish the results (Yin, 2011). Determining significance from the data comprised of the coding of study responses into groups of constant factors, individual ideas, or approaches to promote groups of various themes (Stone, 2013). Each piece of data were coded using a simple coding system in order to keep track of the information and to categorize it. The data which appeared to have similarities, or a connection was combined and patterns were identified and noted. For each pattern identified, a summary was written up succinctly describing the pattern. With this pattern identification was the assignment of new terminology by the researcher adapted from the study participants. As patterns were observed, a determination of where the data should be categorized was analyzed and data was placed under the appropriate patterns.

All patterns were reviewed to find any overreaching themes. These themes represented the flagship of patterns. Once themes were identified, the patterns were grouped and integrated into similar themes together. The patterns were used to explain the themes. A detailed analysis of the themes was written up by me expounding on the breadth and significance of those themes (Percy, et al., 2015). The main themes or ideas that emerged were compared with the current literature, and research outcomes were analyzed pertaining to the research question that was directing the study (Johnson and Campbell-Stephens, 2013). The coding and themes method was used for this study (Miles, et al., 2013).

The information will be kept confidential with only this researcher who proctored the survey carrying out the research and deciphering the data. Further, any identification of participants will not be named or published in the study.

Credibility

The validity of the study may not be an issue as the participants comprised of local NPO leadership who could benefit from the findings of such a study that may provide insight and recommendations for leadership training and succession planning. Reliability and validity had to be established to make certain the data collected for this study is thorough. Reliability relates to the consistency and repeatability of the data source (Simon & Goes, 2013). A copy of the survey responses and results have been completed and submitted to all participants to ensure repeatability. Reliability reduces the chances of bias within the study. The researcher's responsibility to the study was to select the most reliable instrument.

Transferability

The ability to transfer qualitative research or to be able to take the research and transfer its findings to other contexts or studies refers to the depth of its validity (Morse, 2015; Yin, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). Those future researchers wanting to transfer the outcomes of this study to be used in a different setting should decide as to its applicability for their scenario. Steps have been created from the study outlining the process so that future researchers may be able to duplicate the efforts for their own studies.

Dependability

To assure validity in this qualitative study, the evaluation and analysis employed during data collection needed to be dependable and constant (Anney, 2014). Research outcomes needed to assure dependability and the ability for replication in future studies, therefore, the researcher created thorough and methodical notes of the study research methods outlining specific steps (Byrman & Bell, 2015; Frambach et al., 2013; O'Brien et al., 2014). Member checking provided an opportunity for participants to assess their study responses for accuracy (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Koelsch, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2011, 2016). Dependability is enhanced when participants can examine their responses to assure interpretations are accurate and the process is authentic (Byrman & Bell, 2015; Frambach et al., 2013; and O'Brien et al., 2014).

Confirmability

When data is consistently maintained and used correctly, it can assure the authenticity of the study and demonstrates integrity. When integrity is achieved, there is continuity when evaluating outcomes (Hunt, 2011; Pagaporn et al., 2012; Ritchie et al., 2013). The art of a credible research study lies in the comprehensive extent to which a researcher goes to deliver experiences, perspectives, and new knowledge (O'Brien et al., 2014). When that data collection has become exhaustive enough leading to sufficient rigor, then it can be said that the research has met the requirements of reliability and credibility (Hunt, 2011; Ritchie et al., 2013).

One way that the credibility of a qualitative study can be achieved is through member checking, to be included in this study. Part of attaining credibility is providing the opportunity for participants to review for completeness and accuracy (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2013). Another way for a researcher to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of their study data is through triangulation of the data collected (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2013). Such methods for member checking are allowing participants to confirm the feedback that they provided. Triangulation may comprise of the study's transcripts and examination of the company's records or archives (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2013).

Ethical Procedures

Protecting the confidentiality, comfort, and respecting study participants is paramount to ethical research (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Ethical research should only be conducted with willing participants who are offered the opportunity to stop at any point in the study should they need to and are communicated that option. But to prevent participants from discontinuing participation in the study, all efforts were made by this researcher to safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of the study participants (Yin, 2014).

Soundness and authenticity of the study is crucial and the theory and outcomes arising from any study are only effective and genuine if these characteristics are present. Therefore, checks during the process of the study need verification and assessment for accuracy by the participants. This verification needs to determine that what was said by participants is what was meant by them. Detailed synopsis of this material is an essential part for achieving and sustaining credibility allowing for participants to make sure what they provided is true and not taken out of context (Shelton, 2004).

All participants will be regarded in conformance with the protocols of the Walden University IRB Committee and the American Psychological Association (APA). There were no recognizable risks for participating in this study. Out of respect for participants, I obtained informed consent responses through email, communicated what the process of the study looked like, the rights of each participant, and any possible benefits from participating in this research. NPO leaders might not feel comfortable discussing information about their organization or providing information that might be perceived as sharing too much (Walden IRB, 2017). If a participant was uncomfortable with any question, they were informed they could skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. There were minimal risks in this study. Some risks included participants may have been uncomfortable answering questions concerning their views about their organization. Participants responded to the researcher’s invitation email with the words, “I consent” before participating in the study and were informed of their right to discontinue at any time during the study without consequences.

The invitation email explained to the participants what, if any specific risks that may pertain to the study, and what steps the researcher would take to minimize any possible risks. In addition, the researcher furnished her contact information if study participants wished to leave the study or wished to view the study outcomes. If at any time a study participant wished to depart from the study, either prior or during, they needed only to notify this researcher by phone or responding to the original invitation email.

No payment or incentive was provided to participants for being part of the study. With the ending of the study, a formal thank you note and an overture of the study’s outcomes for their review was presented, if requested. In conforming to the Belmont Report’s ethical procedures, safeguarding the privacy of the participants is a paramount step in the study process (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2015). As stated, the study that was collected will be saved on a computer hard drive that will be password-protected from my home study and will be shredded seven years after the study’s completion. For the study, a study alias was assigned to each participant in the form of a code for confidentiality purposes.

To protect all participants' privacy and safety, I created protocols providing confidentiality by removing any qualifiers that consisted of the names, phone numbers, emails, addresses, roles, or organizations' names. Participants were also notified that any information gathered will continue to be protected on a flash drive in my possession. While being locked and stored in my home safe, the flash drive will be decimated when seven years have concluded.

Summary

The exploration of the study involved assessing the strategies of NPO leaders in developing succession plans to prepare and recruit Millennial and Gen Z workers for NPO leadership roles. The framework of the methodology, design, and analysis for the study were also assessed. My role as a researcher was to act as the conduit for collecting the data, assuring ethical standards were followed pursuant to guidelines. The information used for analyzing this study came from the online survey. The methods used served as a guide to record and control essential features during the data gathering stage. NPO leaders were provided surveys, strategies for succession planning were examined, coding was performed from the data, and a quest for themes, patterns and conclusions were constructed from the analyses. Reviewing the transcriptions from these surveys was a part of gathering the data to augment reliability and validity of the study. Maximizing the advantages of validating sources was best done by triangulation. Chapter 4 includes the data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that NPOs leaders employ to prepare millennials or Generation Z workers to assume leadership roles. The research question is, What strategies do NPO leaders employ to prepare Millennials and Gen Z workers to assume leadership roles?

I examined the strategies that leaders of NPOs use to refill leadership and executive positions due to retirement. The participant population comprised of current NPO leaders within San Diego County and Orange County, California, who develop future leaders within the NPO environment.

In Chapter 4, I presented the data collected and analyzed the findings based on triangulation of questionnaire results and the respective organizations' external artifacts. Chapter 4 included a summary of the data; and the participants' narratives of succession planning and management in nonprofit organizations. Eight surveys were completed and analyzed. Participants included nonprofit executives, CEOs, and nonprofit board members from diverse organizations with a mix of purposes. Data collection included use of an online survey. To analyze the participant responses, I used a software program.

Participants described extreme short-staffing, financial challenges, and the inability to secure top talent as only part-time work was the only option. One respondent indicated that there was only one management role available with the remaining positions as volunteer only. A few respondents emphasized that they do not purposely look for Millennials or Gen Z employees; rather, they search for the appropriate skillset and fit. One participant said that emphatically they do not look for or recruit millennials or Gen Z prospects.

Setting

The research setting comprised of online communication. The criteria for selection of participants included they had required a background of NPO leadership or board of director's role within the NPO field. NPO leaders from across Southern California were eligible to take part in the study. Due to the span of areas that the participants resided and worked in, which accounted for most of the Southern California region, it was necessary to use a digital venue. My first contact with potential participants involved sending an introductory email via LinkedIn to participants with whom I had already established a professional relationship. From feedback received from participants, it was clear that participants came from varied backgrounds; and led NPOs with different causes, and different sizes and scope. One NPO as described by the participant had declined due to the September 11th attack in New York, despite having a successful run prior to this tragedy. The impact led to the demise of this NPO as funding and support ceased being available. Another NPO leader had experienced slow growth due to economic conditions, the pandemic, and a challenge in being able to financially support anyone in a management role, let alone recruiting for any management roles. Yet another participant stated they only could afford to provide part-time roles which made recruiting and finding top talent challenging. Finally, another participant who did not consider recruiting for NPOs a challenge had specific ideas about what makes for successful recruiting. Some of these ideas included networking, social media, partnering with universities, churches, obtaining referrals from donors, and even hiring volunteers full-time. Other than these observations, there were no other issues or experiences that were out of the ordinary.

Demographics

The study participants were an even mix of men and women. All having reported years of experience as leaders in NPOs. Although NPOs share the same premise of giving and helping others, the NPOs represented in this study had a unique mix of philanthropic platforms, which allowed for an interesting and meaningful comparison. The age range of participants aligned with the baby boomer generation. Some spent part of their professional careers in nonprofit industries and for-profit industries, some spent their entire careers in the nonprofit industry, and some whose careers were spent in for-profit industries had simultaneous leadership positions in the nonprofit field. All participants covered the Southern California region and used local resources sometimes as a means to recruit for their NPO. Some of the participants' NPOs while in the Southern California region were a part of a bigger NPO on a national level that offered more support and a recruitment and onboarding framework. These NPOs have greater support and more standardized platforms. Indeed, some of the participants who were associated with small NPOs indicated that this limited their ability to offer much to potential candidates for leadership positions. Furthermore, their limited budgets preclude them from offering high salaries to top talent, leaving them to work within their limitations.

Data Collection

For this study, eight participants consented to take the study. I designed the data around online data collection due to the logistics of where participants worked and lived. The requested criteria parameters were specified in the invitation letter/consent form, and I purposefully searched for potential participants based upon the established criteria. After consenting to be a part of the study, each potential participant was sent a link to the online survey through SurveyMonkey. The survey included the same interview questions. After completing the survey, each participant returned their responses through SurveyMonkey. I reviewed for completeness. I allotted participants 2 weeks to complete their surveys; this was important because some participants agreed late to take part in the study, and some had technical issues with the online survey platform and needed my help. Approximately 100 emails containing the survey link were sent out. After waiting for 2 weeks, I gathered the data. Data collection took place in my home in a private study. I transcribed the survey responses collected using SurveyMonkey. Before transcribing the data, I compiled responses from SurveyMonkey. This took at least 2 hours every night during the week with about 4 to 5 hours taking place on the weekends. I then uploaded the data to MAXQDA, a data analysis software application that can integrate data from Survey Monkey. The software allows for analysis of qualitative responses that are uniform and creation of themes (SurveyMonkey.com). The first step was creating a “project workbook” to upload all the survey questions and their associated responses. I designed this workbook to only be accessible through a secure password, and I saved it to a flash drive. The data once uploaded were then grouped by each interview question and given a code for each response for that specific question. This required 16 hours of coding time. After completing the coding for each question, I analyzed each response looking for similarities, differences, and themes. This phase took about 5 hours.

I gathered information administered through a semi-structured survey to NPO leaders. One variation in the data collection involved the ability to review organizational documents. For purposes of privacy, I was not able to view the documented organizational procedures at participants’ organizations; instead, participants shared some of that information within their responses. In Chapter 3, I noted my plan to send online surveys to approximately 10 to 12 NPO leaders. Unfortunately, I did not receive much response in the beginning, so I sent out 100 invitation letters with the objective of receiving 10-12 responses. This approach was not much better in terms of responses, and I turned to my NPO contacts on LinkedIn. Of those 40 contacts, 13 offered to participate and responded with “I consent” in an email to me once they received and read the invitation letter and consent form. However, due to technical difficulties, no responses, and tight schedules, the number of actual study participants was 8 NPO leaders. Finally, although my original intent was to use SurveyMonkey, I determine that doing so was impossible because SurveyMonkey had many feature limitations. Instead, because the survey had already been provided through SurveyMonkey, I found a compatible data analysis program, MAXQDA, that could be used where SurveyMonkey became ineffective.

I reproduced the data into a spreadsheet to create charts for visual evaluation before writing up the findings. I prepared a brief abstract of each response to reflect differences in how participants responded to the same question. I also engaged each participant in member checking via email to ensure that I accurately captured their responses. The participants were provided the opportunity to make any changes to their responses or add new information they felt added relevance to the study and to clarify any particular responses. The process of member checking is crucial in ascertaining the legitimacy of participant responses in a study; and authenticating the interpretation of information that is analyzed (Harvey, 2015). If properly endorsed, it gives the researcher the ability to exemplify the knowledge shared by experts participating in the study, influencing the credibility of the study (Harvey, 2015). The validity and quality of a study is predicated on reaching data saturation (Fusch & 74 Ness, 2015). Because no new information or knowledge was introduced during member checking, it was not necessary to repeat this process.

Data Analysis

The responses from participants were reviewed for completeness and to observe what kind of trends resulted and note the differences among responses, looking for responses that indicated no success and those responses that might have some unique best practices to share regarding succession planning of Millennials and Gen Z in NPOs.

I performed all collection of data, searched for a data analysis software that was compatible, integrated the data into this platform, developed and assigned my own codes, and analyzed the findings that were presented. This process gave me the opportunity to deeply engage myself with the entire scope of the study. By being involved in all facets of the study made the process of classifying and coordinating trends. The conclusions obtained from trends noted in this study are the foundation for guidance for successful standards and the motivation for expanding this study topic as subsequent exploration.

The survey consisted of open-ended questions asking participants what they considered as successful protocols for recruiting Millennials and Gen Z to fill NPO leadership positions and discuss any challenges or issues that barred them from being able to effectively recruit and onboard Millennials and Gen Z. The invitation letter and consent form were combined for purposes of being efficient and easier for prospective participants to follow through the process. This document can be in Appendix A, on page 115. The participants included men and women equally who were active within NPO leadership roles and the types of NPOs they head represented a mix of NPO causes. This sample was chosen due to convenience for the completion of the research.

To construct the collected data into meaningful groupings, I uploaded survey responses from Survey Monkeys to MAXDQA enabling a filtering of data for analysis. The MAXQDA software allows a researcher to import data into it from a Word document or Excel document. Conversely, when data coding is completed, it can be exported into Word or Excel. With the use of MAXQDA, I was able to take responses directly and code them, organize them into sets and subsets, and classify themes from the collection. Analyzing themes helps researchers to coordinate and decipher the responses from participants to clarify the significance of the data (Crowe et al., 2015).

I expanded upon this filtered data to draw out all feedback from the study into similarities and differences and new information not yet introduced. Analyzing the data of different responses from participants and measuring those responses with the survey questions, different assumptions arose from the feedback of participants. To draw out themes from repeated information or data, researchers use the tools of classifying, coding, and characterizing the data (Rowley, 2012). When I imported the responses into the MAXQDA software program, the qualitative open-ended responses and the responses which were patterned were divided up. Every response subset results in an individual "text document" which houses the responses to the queries in the survey. For those responses that were open-ended, the titles of those responses become code names with responses which were immediately matched to the correlative codes from the content details. Finally, the numerator referenced with every code in the "Code System" framework illustrates the measure of cases that yield responses to the open-ended queries possible for evaluation (Radiker & Kukartz, 2022, pg. 7). Lastly, when coding was completed from the survey responses, I reexamined all responses and coding to ensure accuracy.

Coded units comprised of analyzing the data by research questions. The coding system was developed into five themes that represented recruiting processes, recruiting and onboarding plans, effective recruiting strategies, preparation for Millennials and Gen Z, and the support of Board Directors. The codes were identified specifically with the first two letters of “DS” followed by a number which represented the research question number in order with a name to identify what the question entailed. Each response within that research question was given the same code as a subset of the parent code but without the theme name. Of those five themes, the subsets under Theme One: Recruitment were Recruiting Challenges and Specific Challenges. Under the Theme Two: Recruitment/Onboarding Plans were Characteristics of these plans, planning of or recruitment of Millennials and Gen Z, and recruited and groomed for management. For Theme Three: Effective Recruiting Strategies, the sub category included the tools in place for leadership and succession planning. The topic of Theme 4: How Millennials and Gen Z can prepare included the importance of a degree or formal education, the skillsets needed to go with a formal education for a leadership role, the top 5-10 factors necessary to become a NPO leader without an education, an effective recruitment and onboarding process that finds the right management fit, if no effective recruitment/onboarding plan, what is the recommendation, and how Millennials and Gen Z can learn about NPO management opportunities. Theme 5: The support of the Board of Directors included subsets of changes in process and Board of Directors support and additional thoughts and musings of participants.

Within theme one, the theme that emerged were social media being the most effective plan for recruitment with most participants indicating no challenges with recruiting. Within theme two, the prevalence lent to having a recruitment/onboarding plan, rather than not. The composition of recruitment plans ran to social media, working with universities, and receiving help from community leaders. Typically, the majority of responses regarding onboarding protocol had relatively similar steps for welcoming new people into the organization. Most recruiting included Millennials and Gen Z in their plans and in fact four out of the three participants stated they hired Millennials and Gen Z in the last year. Within theme three, the concept of social media as a tool for recruitment along with internships were touted as most effective. Features participants felt would help attract Millennials and Gen Z included flexibility, remote work opportunities, free medical, and a chance for networking opportunities. The main basis of tools used included training and support. Within theme four, an overall theme about preparation suggested having or getting a college degree, getting real-world experience, and perform mentoring and volunteering work. The majority of responses emphasized having a college degree. The skillsets listed several soft skill characteristics but the overriding answers included communication skills, critical thinking, and the willingness to be taught. The top factors to possess without a college degree exemplified reliability, communication skills, aligning with the mission, and passion for the cause. The effectiveness of their plans split down the middle between being effective and not. The underlying theme about plan effectiveness resulted in the majority stating more could be done. Lastly, the main theme of where Millennials and Gen Z can learn about management opportunities was the recommendation that leadership have those conversations with people about the subject.

Any diverging qualities brought up in this study pertained to the strength and robustness of the NPO and its recruiting and onboarding plans, or lack thereof. Those participants who lacked those benefits were added into study data as a means to compare the numbers of NPOs that are prepared and those that are not. The common denominator between both groups was a consensus of what was needed and what needed to be followed.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

This study represents a potential benefit from the feedback received. The participants represent leadership from a variety of NPOs and such study outcomes may further their knowledge in the field. The outcomes of this study may contribute additional awareness and advocacy in the area of succession planning and training new leaders, thereby augmenting the study’s validity. The data collection must be exhaustive enough to ensure reliability and validity are present in a study. Making sure that data saturation is reached is a crucial component to qualitative research. If a researcher cannot reach data saturation within a study, it can negatively impact the study’s validity (Fusch & Ness, 2015). When a researcher has acquired enough data which does not produce any new insights from the study or of participants, then it is said that data saturation has been reached (Baillie, 2015; Nelson, 2017). While in the member checking phase, I provided my study participants a chance to confirm responses made, add additional information, and withdraw any data that they deemed to be imprecise. In doing so, this may enhance the study's validity and effect additional ideas. When the result of additional ideas gets introduced, a thorough analysis is probed with participants before the data starts to repeat.

The importance of reliability is its function to diminish the probability of bias, an objectionable feature of a study due to its penchant for tainting study outcomes. In this case, participants have the same level of knowledge and expertise, have experience in leadership roles in the nonprofit field, and participating in the same, anonymous online study can avert any chances of bias.

Credibility

Credibility gauges the level of assurance that another researcher or scholar can put toward the certainty with which the original researcher analyzed the data collected (Morse, 2015). The analysis and results of the data collection is the core for establishing credibility rather than the procures used in gathering that data (Birt et al., 2016).

The concept of validity is the foundation to which transferability, confirmability, and credibility that supports the integrity of a study (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Once completed, copies of the outcome of the online survey were present to participants for review and endorsement, including establishing repeatability.

As indicated in Chapter Three, the study did comprise of local NPO leaders who could benefit from this study. Since all participants were given the same online survey with the same questions sent through the same online source, the element of reliability was met for consistency and repeatability. A copy of the survey responses and results were completed and submitted to all participants to ensure repeatability. Since the researcher is responsible to select the most reliable instrument, a qualitative online survey was used with only purposeful questions asked and keeping the process for all participants identical and unbiased.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the capacity to implement a study's outcomes under a different framework or faction (Noble & Smith, 2015). Assigning qualitative research to other studies or applying the findings of a study to other conditions or situations indicates ascribes to the extent of the study's validity (Morse, 2015; Yin, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). The ability to apply research findings of a study into different contexts or situations would be determined by researchers in the future.

In keeping with the purpose of transferability, I maintained a strict and rigorous data collection process adhering to the same steps with each participant and following the protocols outlined in this study precisely. The processes were clearly specified and followed without any variance in procedure provides an opportunity for future researchers wanting to transfer the outcomes of this study to be used in a different setting should decide as to its applicability for their scenario. Steps have been created from the study outlining the process so that future researchers may be able to duplicate the efforts for their own studies.

Dependability

It is essential the interpretation and findings applied concurrently with gathering data must be reliable and consistent in order to assure validity of a study (Anney, 2014). In addition to dependability, the results of a study must also include the capacity to repeat the premise of the study in the same and in different contexts, hence the reason for this researcher to take copious annotations developed out of the research to include the exact process being circumscribed (Byrman & Bell, 2015; Frambach et al., 2013; O'Brien et al., 2014). After collecting data and analyzing the information, the process of member checking which came next was an additional assurance not only for participants to make sure that the feedback they provided was correct, but also attaining validity of the study (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Koelsch, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2011, 2016). The characteristic of a study's dependability is further enriched and accepted if participants have an opportunity to corroborate the study outcomes to ensure what has been interpreted was the intent of their responses and the technique for capturing their information was genuine (Byrman & Bell, 2015; Frambach et al., 2013; O'Brien et al., 2014). Incorporating member checking into the process of a study can provide a baseline of reliability and in turn fulfilling the element of dependability (Smith & McGannon, 2018). The element of reliability in a qualitative study is demonstrated when the process of a study is able to be duplicated with congruity (Yin, 2018). In the member checking process of this study, I reached out to the participants for verification of the feedback they provided.

Participants additionally endorsed the themes captured with the online survey in the data collection phase. Participants confirmed and consented to the recap of the findings without including any supplementary observations. The elements of reliability and dependability were captured with the application of an online survey and a follow up with member checking. Staying true to the questions in the online survey augmented data that was reliable and dependable as all participating in the study were provided equivalent surveys (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The process that I followed encompassed the purpose and design of the study presented to participants, the consent form informing participants of their rights and options, the online survey itself, member checking with participants, and finally, bringing to a close the outcomes of the study, shared with participants (see Appendix). If other researchers wish to adopt this study in the future, the process laid out by this researcher has been described succinctly to be able to repeat this particular study confirming the steps are followed by an equivalent approach. While it is crucial to maintain the integrity of reliability and dependability, another element that requires researcher consideration is the element of bias. One particular step to mitigate any bias by the researcher or otherwise is the approach of member checking. For a qualitative study like this one conducted, member checking or the act of reaffirming the feedback from participants impedes researcher bias by reason of following up with participants to authenticate the veracity of what was answered further enhancing credibility (Birt, et al., 2016; Harvey, 2015).

During the member checking phase, a synopsis of the findings and subsequent themes from this survey was sent to participants via email for review and confirmation. From this email, participants had the opportunity to review over the synopsis presented, affirm or affirm with corrections, changes, or to add extra material, hence bettering the study's element of dependability. After all the follow up emails were sent via email to participants for review, responses came back in agreement with what was transcribed for the study without additional data.

Confirmability

It is crucial that the genuineness of a study is achieved and recognized as it promotes the continuum of a new study arriving at the same conclusions when replicated and reaching a similar result (Hunt, 2011; Pagaporn et al., 2012; Ritchie et al., 2013). Creating a sound and feasible study is predicated upon an extensive degree that the researcher pursues to choose the right participant audience, select the right tools and methods for the study, and securing new insight and theory of a topic (O'Brien et al., 2014). Upon a thorough compilation resulting in no new knowledge or information, the process has been deemed to have reached sufficient exploration, therefore, the study has achieved the standards for authenticity and validity (Hunt, 2011; Ritchie et al., 2013). The certainty to which one researcher can substantiate study outcomes obtained by other researchers, concluded just by data, is the measure of a study being conclusive (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The method used by one researcher needs to be designed so that the study can be repeated bearing the same outcomes from the point of the study participants devoid of any bias from the researcher (Hays, et al., 2016; Moon, et al., 2016). Achieving credibility is granting participants the chance to inspect and affirm the veracity of what information was provided to the researcher, a concept known as member checking (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2013). The survey questions were not only innocuous to participants, but also kept strictly in line with the study topic, objectivity of any researcher bias on my part was mitigated. In keeping with confirmability, I maintained a neutral position while recruiting and communicating with participants, while collecting and analyzing data, and with member checking to eliminate or at least mitigate any lack of objectivity.

When data is consistently maintained and used correctly, it can assure the authenticity of the study and demonstrates integrity. When integrity is achieved, there is continuity when evaluating outcomes (Hunt, 2011; Pagaporn et al., 2012; Ritchie et al., 2013). The art of a credible research study lies in the comprehensive extent to which a researcher goes to deliver experiences, perspectives, and new knowledge (O'Brien et al., 2014). When that data collection has become exhaustive enough leading to sufficient rigor, then it can be said that the research has met the requirements of reliability and credibility (Hunt, 2011; Ritchie et al., 2013).

Study Results

While the survey yielded a small sample size for a multiple case study, it still conforms with the process for academic exploration however, not as discernable as a larger sampling (Baillie, 2015). Researchers can accomplish data saturation with six to 12 in-depth interviews (Boddy, 2016). The findings of the research questions are summarized.

Theme 1: Current Methods for Finding Candidates

This is the first time in history that all four work generations are represented in today's workplace. I am referring to Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Gen X (1965-1980), Millennials (1981-1996), and Gen Z (1997-2012). As noted in the responses, print media appears to be no longer a popular tactic for find top talent. Support for the lack of choosing print media is affirmed by general consensus that all active working generations are not turning to print media as a source for finding jobs, but rather are turning to their phones and social media, despite the label given to Baby Boomers as not being digital savvy. (Smith, 2021). While recruitment strategies for finding and onboarding Millennials and Gen Z ran the gamut of venues, two particular sources stood out as the most popular choices and was indicative of the changing tide for recruitment of future working generations. Social media was identified as the most popular method followed by word-of-mouth recruiting. According to my responses, 24% selected social media as their recruitment venue of choice. This selection was followed by word-of-mouth recruitment at 18% and from current employees at 12%. Recruitment from universities, local churches, referrals, local community, clients, applicants, and volunteers came in at .05% each.

Recruiting Challenges

The challenges with recruiting for participants surprisingly stated that at 57% do not have challenges in finding appropriate applicants. However, the response rate for this question had one participant not responding as her NPO had closed its doors. Of the remaining reasons for challenges, 14% indicated a no response but did add that salary expectations continued to be an issue. A final response at 14% responded with the challenge is dependent upon the role itself and the time of the year.

Specific Challenges

Specific challenges presented more of a non-structured type of response which did not seem to fall into any one bucket. One respondent there were no challenges as long as they remained flexible with employees and applicants. Another respondent stated that they did not have any challenges because their mission touches so many lives. One respondent stated their challenges stemmed from having only part-time, or limited hours and lower pay. Another respondent stated finding qualified candidates was their impact. Again, one respondent could not respond due to the recent demise of her NPO, while another respondent pointed to salary as their point of contention. A more uncommon response from one participant stated they look for a “cultural fit along with an experienced background and a nuanced perspective to add to the team.” Finally, a point on logistics was made from one participant who pointed out, the immediate need for candidates does not always align with finding the right ones.

Theme 2: Recruitment/Onboarding Plans. When queried about current protocols for their recruiting and onboarding, 38% said they had both a recruitment and an onboarding plan. One respondent stated they did not have either while another respondent stated they were in the process of creating them. Another participant stated they have corporate support only and hence, no need to create any plans. Another participant responded that they do have an onboarding plan, but no recruitment plan. Finally, one participant stated their process of recruiting and onboarding is only set up for a 12-month cycle with no plans beyond that.

Characteristics of these plans

Again, the responses ran the gamut of creative ideas. One participant indicated their plans were based on their "culture, mission, values, and purpose" with the need to find applicants that fit their mold. Another participant affirmed that they currently work with universities and start with interns. One participant who stated they use community leaders to find potential applicants and receive applications through those "solid community leaders." Another participant opted out due to lack of NPO activity and movement. One participant's organization uses social media and email to their listserv to attract recruits. Yet another respondent explained that with onboarding they start with a half day of activities which include orientation, meet and greet, training, mentoring of roles, and learning about the culture. One participant reported they have three variables that encompassed what their plans include. Those factors are the annual budget, the fiscal shape of the NPO, and forecasting decisions made by the Board. The Executive Director drafts the recruitment plan which is then reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors. Lastly, one participant explained their process began with "phone screenings of appropriate applicants followed by rounds of panel interviews conducted virtually. The onboarding process commenced with introductions in staff meetings of department heads, followed by one-on-one conversations with team members along with platform trainings and document sharing for the particular roles."

Planning of or Recruitment of Millennials and Gen Z

When queried whether these participants were actively recruiting Millennials and Gen Z for their organizations, the majority came in with a no response at 38% with an additional and interesting response from one participant stating, "we do not recruit for specific age ranges." Two participants stated they have been recruiting Millennials and Gen Z, but funding makes it a challenge. One participant opted out of this question due to closure of the NPO. Finally, one participant said they have been recruiting Millennials and Gen Z with some Millennials in their organization having leadership roles.

For this question, two participants declared the question was not applicable to their organization. One participant said they did not recruit Millennials and Gen Z in the past year. Other participants responded with 4 were recruited, another participant responded with 2 were recruited of which on was "26 years old and the other was 30 years old." Another participant stated one recruit was added to their organization with another participant stating, "70% of recruits" came from these groups last year. Finally, a participant affirmed of those recruited last year, "40% were Millennials and 20% were Gen Z."

Recruited and groomed for management

When asking this question of participants, three respondents declared not applicable to their current plans. Another participant stated, “none have been groomed.” One participant indicated, “of the two recruits they obtained, one recruit is being groomed for management upon completion of a Master’s degree; while the other is not being groomed.” Another participant remarked they are not grooming anyone for management as they are “a small NPO with only one paid position.” One response to this question from a participant was “there are no differences in grooming. There are limited management positions because it is a small organization, but as we grow, we will add a grooming process.” Lastly, a participant indicated yes, but stated they have no differences in their grooming protocols.

Theme 3: Effective Recruiting Strategies. When asked what strategies participants and their organizations had in recruitment effectiveness, one participant stated not applicable, while another participant stated no. with another participant stating they have “no strategy that is different than recruiting in general.” Another participant explained that “working with local universities has been a wonderful strategy to get this demographic of volunteers and interns to our organization.” To reiterate that same idea, another participant agreed “starting with internships has been effective because you find folks that align with the culture and believe in the mission.” Another participant explained they do not have “unique strategies,” but rather “start with posting on social media and scaffolding leadership development with paid training and fellowships.” One comment from a participant stated they have no grooming strategies because though this participant is retired, the organization has this participant on call for support and help. Lastly, one participant responded with "to attract candidates in those generations, we need to ensure we are appealing to them that includes flexibility, remote modality, and board member experience. We also post on social media to try and find them. We also offer free medical coverage. Reiterating to these recruits the honor that it is to serve on a board. There is networking opportunities which is definitely a selling point to these two generations."

While two of the participants declared not applicable, another participant stated they have no tools. One participant affirmed they offer a succession planning process and profile, while two other participants indicated their process includes training and support by leadership. Another participant discussed the protocols of their "Board creating strategies along with long range planning" with this path. Finally, one participant stated they "do not have any formal succession plans in place, but it is often informally discussed."

Theme 4: How Millennials and Gen Z Can prepare. An interesting and elaborated answer by one participant explained, "Millennials and Gen Z are afraid to make mistakes or rely too much on data, or overanalyzing the simplest decision. There is a need to create an environment where taking appropriate risks or exploring options is expected and each wrong decision is viewed as a learning experience and not a failure." Another response stated, "starting as interns, getting degree, letting the NPO know what their future goals are, and asking where the need is." One participant suggested "get experience on board positions and committees." One participant stated, "we tend to hire college grads, so it is important for them to have a college education." Another participant suggested, "they should work for a NPO first. Cultures for NPOs and for-profits differ drastically." Finally, a participant recommended, "practice team management and conflict resolution and facilitation whenever possible such as mentoring youth groups, managing interns, etc.."

The importance of a degree or formal education

Two of the participants stated that a formal education or degree was not a prerequisite to a management role in an NPO with one participant adding, "life experience was more important than a degree." Another participant echoing the same sentiments but with an added comment said that a degree or formal education "was not mandated but welcome." A more elaborated response came from one participant who said, "this requirement can be overcome with enough experience in the organization, outside training and skill building." With three of the participants stating yes, a formal education or degree was necessary, however, an additional participant stated, "it depends on the role, but in this NPO, typically yes." A final response by a participant was that a degree was necessary "for most, but not all jobs we have. We need licensed therapists, but a degree in Marketing is not necessary to run our social media department."

The skillsets needed to go with a formal education for a leadership role

A response from one participant explained, "reliable, interpersonal communication skills, passion for cause, written and verbal communication." Yet another participant suggested, "connection, high level thinking, and strategy development." Other participants shared the same recommendation of willingness to learn with one participant stating, “teachable and willing to be trained,” with the other indicating “willing to learn leadership method.” Another response articulated that “it is important to have critical thinking skills, communication skills, public speaking skills, ability to speak your mind, also possess previous volunteering experience.” More specific to the tasks involved with an NPO leader, one participant stated, “academic research for grant writing and writing roles, written and oral communication skills, the ability to adapt within formal and professional settings.” Lastly, two participants chose not applicable due to the statuses of their NPOs.

The Top Five-10 Factors Necessary to Become a NPO Leader Without an Education

There were many soft skills chosen participants felt were important sans a formal education. One participant suggested “being on time, being accountable, keeping goals, good public relations skills, being visible in your community, and being a good example of a leader.” Another participant added, “1) experience, 2) ethics and values align with the NPO, 3) servant mentality, 4) fiscally responsible; spending doner money like it is their own, 5) charismatic and good communicator, and 6) comfortable asking for help.” Another response indicated, “reliable, interpersonal communication skills, passion for your cause, and written and verbal communication skills.” Yet another response added these skills to the mix, “consistent, teachable, willing to be trained for the future, cooperative, and growth.” A different response added, “understanding that nonprofit doesn’t mean it should be a well-run organization that can stay in the black.” One participant explained, "1) having served as an executive director in another NPO, 2) having had a senior management position at an NPO, 3) possess excellent communication skills, 4) ability to make compelling arguments, 5) ability to make a persuasive argument and debate effectively, 6) reliability and dependability, 7) analytical and critical thinking skills, 8) proven results as an entrepreneur, 9) always network outside board meetings to socialize the work of the NPO, and 10) must be passionate about the Board's purpose/mission/vision." Echoing some of the same sentiments of other participants, another response was "1) communication skills, 2) diplomacy/emotional intelligence, 3) resilience/positivity, 4) people skills/likability, and 5) experience/competency with hard skills required for the specific department." One final response indicated not applicable due to closure of NPO.

An Effective Recruitment and Onboarding Process that Finds the Right Management Fit

Two responses from participants said they had an effective plan in place. Two respondents stated they "sometimes" have an effective plan in place while one respondent noted their plan was "somewhat" effective. One participant said their plan was "mediocre," with two other participants stating they have no plan in place and the other saying, "they haven't hired additional management because of the size of their NPO."

If No Effective Recruitment/Onboarding Plan, What is the Recommendation

With three respondents stating "not applicable, and one respondent skipping the question, one respondent stated, "yes" to mean their plan was effective. Another participant recommended, "lower salary for nonprofits limits our options." One participant suggested, "more, wider outreach plus more consistent onboarding across organization." Lastly, one participant elaborated that, "a formal plan should be created and implemented. Recruitment outreach should extend to advertising somehow with volunteer organizations with a similar cause/purpose/mission."

How Millennials and Gen Z Can Learn about NPO Management Opportunities

When asked this question, one participant recommended to Millennials and Gen Z, "this would be through mentoring with the leadership. Leaders should be looking for qualities and traits we desire in our Millennial and Gen Z workforce and have the conversation, "have you ever considered leadership?"." Another participant indicated, "I'm not sure," while another participant suggested, "follow specific groups." Lastly, two participants answered not applicable with one respondent skipping the question.

Theme 5 - The support of the Board of Directors. In querying participants about their Boards being supportive of a recruitment/onboarding process, four participants responded with yes and one participant adding in, "absolutely." Two other participants responded with yes and "engaged" as well. Another participant shared that while their Board is supportive, "they are hands off." One last participant chose not applicable as a response.

Changes in Process and Board of Directors Support

The largest, uniform response with a yes answer came from five participants when it came to Boards being supportive of changes to recruitment and onboarding processes. One participant stated, “advice from stakeholders is always valuable.” One respondent chose not appliable for this answer with the last participant responding with, “haven’t discussed change, but they are generally supportive if we give them good reason.”

Additional Thoughts and Musings of Participants

One respondent indicated not applicable due to the NPO closing down due to political and economic issues beyond their control which dried up their funding. Three participants indicated no further thoughts. Another participant added, “I think some of this is more about educating the employers about the benefits of hiring this demographic. We see great benefits of these generations.” Another participant encouraged “the importance of developing a culture and hiring based on it.” Concluding one last participant noted, “another thing I might suggest is that we survey folks in these two generations to find out what would make them gain interest in serving as a Board member, survey them on their priorities for the world. Its important to ask them as they will be very happy to talk about themselves (LOL). Other sources might be to go to think tanks or symposiums.”

For this study, Table 1 below depicts popular themes of each category.

Summary of responses based on category

	Effective recruiting plans	Recruitment & onboarding in place	Formal education needed	Board support and ability to make changes
Participant 1	Yes-social media	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participant 2	Yes-social media	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participant 3	Yes-universities & social media	Only an onboarding plan	Yes	Yes
Participant 4	Yes-referrals, volunteers & applicants	Corporate handles only	No	Yes
Participant 5	No-social media & word-of-mouth	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participant 6	No-Churches, word-of-mouth & clients	No	Sometimes	Yes
Participant 7	Yes-Anyone brought into the NPO	Yes	No	Yes
Participant 8	No-local communities	No	No	N/A

Note. From “Attitudes Toward Dissertation Editors,” by W. Student, 2008, *Journal of Academic Optimism*, *98*, p. 11. Reprinted with permission.

Summary

Data were collected from eight NPO leaders participated in the online, semi-structured survey providing responses about their experiences and successes for recruiting and developing Millennials and Gen Z professionals into leadership roles in NPO’s. From survey responses of these participants, I determined the foundation for a good succession strategy embodied five themes and 14 subthemes. The first theme expounded on recruitment plans and policies, including whether there were challenges. The second theme discussed recruitment and onboarding plans, their characteristics, and how it includes Millennials and Gen Z. Further, the theme included whether recruits are being groomed for management. The third theme focused on effective recruitment strategies and the tools in place for recruiting. The fourth theme encompassed how Millennials and Gen Z can prepare for these roles, the importance of a degree or formal education, the skillsets needed to go with a formal education for a leadership role, the top five-10 factors necessary to become a NPO leader without an education, an effective recruitment and onboarding process that finds the right management fit, if no effective recruitment/onboarding plan, what is the recommendation, and how Millennials and Gen Z can learn about NPO management opportunities. The fifth and final theme comprised of support of Board of Directors, support to changes, and final thoughts on the topic. Chapter 5 will include discussions, conclusions, and recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. I intended through this study, to provide strategies for leaders and executive boards of NPOs to fill the vacating positions of retiring NPO leaders, presenting a leadership gap. The participant population comprised of current NPO leaders only within San Diego County and Orange County, California, who develop future leaders within the NPO environment. The nature of this qualitative case study was to identify strategies to prepare Millennials and Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles (Kahlke, 2014; Percy et al., 2015).

Lack of leadership development in the nonprofit sector has created the "*leadership development deficit*" (Bozer, et al., 2015; Landles-Cobb, et al., 2015; Lee & Suh, 2018). Executive boards of NPOs are challenged to find and recruit potential managers and leaders who are qualified to assume these leadership roles (Norris-Tirrell, et al., 2018; Stewart, 2016; Stewart & Kuenzi, 2018; Tierney, 2006;). In Nonprofit HR's *2015 Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey*, the nonprofit sector remains problematic in finding suitable applicants, keeping top talent, relevant pay, lack of professional development paths, and the overload of work (Hackbarth, 2017). Understanding and predicting nonprofit leadership turnover expected from leader defections and retirement is essential in determining what strategies are needed to attract new leadership.

The key findings were somewhat of a surprise to this researcher whose sources for existing conditions of NPO recruiting and succession plans indicated challenges in finding appropriate candidates, keeping recruits, training and onboarding recruits, and support of their Boards. On the contrary, the responses from the study had a different experience. Only one response stated not applicable due to the closure of their NPO for an unrelated reason and another response stated not applicable because they were too small with only one leadership role. Six responses indicated that there were succession plans in place, one response said they were working on one, and the other one said they do not have a plan in place, but have no challenges finding recruits.

With no formal recruiting and onboarding plan, the majority of participants provided an elaborate list of sources they turn to for finding and recruiting workers and leaders for their NPO. Only half of the participants who indicated success in finding recruits, getting them onboarded, and preparing them for other roles to possibly include succession attributed this process to social media. The other factor they indicated which has brought them success is establishing relationships with local universities to provide internships with students. It provides NPOs with help and gives them a chance to become familiar with the students' skill sets to determine whether they might be a good fit with the organization. It provides the students an opportunity to give back to their communities through meaningful work and learn more about the nonprofit field and whether it is a path they wish to pursue. Universities have a rare opportunity to provide internships for students who wish to obtain some real-world experience in addition to their theoretical background, giving universities a chance to promote their brand and offerings to students. Other sources that were noted as successful for the participants included churches, local communities, referrals from employees and volunteers, and word-of-mouth.

In terms of the skill sets and qualifications recommended to be recruited as a potential NPO leader, all but one participant stated that a college degree was necessary. The lone participant stated with their NPO, experience was a more important element. Besides a college education, participants recommended additional skill sets that would augment the degree which were the desire to learn and the ability to be teachable as a factor leading to be a factor for success in a NPO organization and a willingness to be trained for future growth and to learn about leadership methodology. This aligns with a survey conducted by *Engaging Nonprofit Employees* (2015) that it behooves NPOs to emphasize the ability of Millennials and Gen Z to participate in continuing education to further their professional development.

Other more detailed responses noted the suggestion of starting as an intern, get a degree, network with NPOs to let them know what goals are, and find out what NPOs are looking for or what they need. The mention of practicing such activities like team management, conflict resolution/facilitation, critical thinking skills, strategy developing, written and verbal skills, high-level thinking, connections, ability to adapt within formal professional settings, mentoring, and interestingly, consider working for a NPO first as the culture of a NPO in comparison to a for-profit organization contrast drastically.

This comment is notable in that it validates what several authors in the literature review have ruminated on. They expressed concerns whether it is advisable for NPO leadership to lean on the methods and information from for-profit organizations to influence and direct NPO leadership. They point out that typically, this does not best represent the NPO framework given the essential contrasts among the for-profit and nonprofit industries and NPOs' dependence on volunteer support, an ambiguous liaison among NPO leaders and NPO boards and more and more a complex combination of income avenues (Froelich,1999; Gronbjerg, 1993; Herman & Heimovics, 1989; McFarlan, 1999; Middleton, 1987). Lastly, one participant advised an emphasis on academic research in order to be able to engage in grantmaking and the ability to write. An intriguing response that was shared in the study was the observation Millennials and Gen Z fear the prospect of making mistakes or are afraid to make mistakes, rely too much on data, and overthinking decisions. This participant recommended creating an environment where risk-taking within sensible parameters is encouraged, critical thinking beyond the expected, and making mistakes or not making the right decision is accepted as a learning experience. This observation coincides with research found from Hackbarth (2017), who suggested given these two generations' attitudes and feelings, there should be a focus on diversity and inclusion. These two generations desire working environments that have a significant and fruitful influence to benefit others. Hence, the working atmosphere they want looks diverse, well-balanced, and all-embracing climate.

When queried about characteristics that make for successful future leaders of NPOs, Norell-Tirrell, et al. (2018) found that NPO positions impacted executives' direction: education, age, gender, specific career, and definitive industry backgrounds. Stewart and Kuenzi (2018) noted a minimal amount of research regarding nonprofit executives' career paths had been presented, but their study gave rise to new knowledge for decision-making within the nonprofit industry and in shaping executive selection by nonprofit boards. The information revealed differences in professional traits and employed professional classifications inside and outside the nonprofit environment. Yet, their study still encouraged an analysis that delved into what characterizes a fair and effective set of traits in a nonprofit executive and what steps need to be taken to the nonprofit executive office.

Stewart and Kuenzi's study gathered information from a sample of leaders whose education, knowledge, and attestations were reviewed. The information revealed differences in professional traits and employed professional classifications inside and outside the nonprofit environment. This study's participants presented qualitative narratives of the journey to reach the top executive role, which were astute and eye-opening that could impact the elements outside of just the credentials and resume of a nonprofit leader. The study's results were determined to be helpful in testing to develop approaches out of research in the future regarding professional paths or trajectories and how they embody the nonprofit environment. However, neither study qualified specific traits or characteristics that would be useful to NPO leaders in search of recruiting new leaders, nor useful to new leaders trying to understand the qualities that would make them a good fit in the nonprofit field.

However, when asked in my study about the characteristics identified to be successful as a NPO leader, participants shared some similar responses with communication skills being the top recommendation along with public speaking skills, having a passion for the cause, diplomacy and emotional intelligence, ethics and values align with the NPO, charismatic and being visible within the communities served, reliability, resilience, and accountability, having experience in a NPO and for-profit organizations, the ability to make persuasive arguments and debate effectively, proven results as an entrepreneur, the understanding than nonprofit doesn't mean that a NPO should be a well-run organization that can maintain profitability, servant mentality, fiscally responsible, and being a good example of a leader. These factors aligned with the literature review by studies conducted in 1990 and 1994, by Herman and Heimovics who concluded the most significant element fundamental for NPO performance, is that NPO leaders fill a position of emotional and intellectual essence, taking accountability for the favorable and failed results of any activities of the NPO.

Of the remaining NPOs, Board support was accessible, flexible, and supportive of the NPO leaders' initiatives and objectives. All but two NPO leaders participating in this study, indicated having recruitment strategies that were working. One NPO leader stated their national headquarters handled this task successfully for them, while the other NPO leader was no longer recruiting for the former NPO.

Interpretation of Findings

The management problem is that NPOs have been struggling to employ strategies to prepare Millennial or Gen Z generations to assume leadership roles in NPOs (Gamble & Ingersoll, 2017; Kearns, et al., 2015; Tuomala, et al., 2018). My results of researching this topic uncovered a continual message of a leadership deficit gap and that NPOs needed to have succession plans, but most do not. In this case, only one of the eight surveyed did not have a succession plan in place. The other theme centered on characterizing the attributes of what comprised of successful leadership and why these leaders need to be thinking about transitioning from their roles and next steps. My research combed as much as was available on why NPOs do not have succession plans or what a successful succession plan looks like, but the research was limited in this regard.

A challenge facing the leaders of many NPOs is a decrease in leadership personnel, vision, and strategic perspective (Reunanen & Kaitonen, 2017). The current work landscape represents a swiftly changing external environment creating much ambiguity and instability, resulting in operational instability. To be competitive in the present landscape requires organizations to place importance on one of their most valuable assets their human capital. To stay competitive and successful, organizations need to have the right people in the right roles and placed in the right cultures. When roles within the organization become vacant, the right people must be available to fill these crucial positions; An organization cannot run the risk of being without the right talent when change happens unexpectedly. Norris-Tirrell, et al (2018), found outcomes gathered in their study to continually emphasize that efficient and competent leadership for NPOs has not only not been prioritized, but is woefully lacking in the tools and resources needed for succession planning. A well-organized and thought-out succession plan supports the probability that the right people with the right capabilities and knowledge are available when the organization requires their talent.

In this study, responses reiterated the same theme of needing the right people at the right time, but some participants noted this does not align in practice due to budgets not being available or the right people attainable at the time needed. Therefore, strategizing ways to inspire and galvanize their people can help organizations develop a competitive advantage and promote greater expediency.

A reduction in financial support from the government and donors contributes to organizational leaders failing to hire the right talent (Cox, et al., 2014). Financial stability is essential when hiring the right person or persons to lead an organization. As current leadership inevitably begins the process of stepping down from their professional careers, NPOs must find new leaders to replace them. However, according to Nonprofit HR's *2015 Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey*, the nonprofit sector remains problematic in finding suitable applicants, keeping top talent, relevant pay, lack of professional development paths, and the overload of work (Hackbarth, 2017). Typically, some NPOs are small in size. Hence, the leaders of these smaller NPOs play a more pivotal role in many areas within the organization, often wearing many hats, covering departments such as human resources to long-term planning (Dargie, 1998; Drucker, 1990; Heimovics & Herman, 1989; Kearns, et al., 2004/2015; Menefee, 1997; Phipps & Burbach, 2010). For those NPOs who are small in size, as were some of the NPOs represented in this study, its size had impacted them greatly by preventing them from recruiting more help, being able to expand their growth and breadth, and not having the ability to create a succession plan to assure its sustainability.

The closer examination and analysis of the raw data provided by participants through the study survey provided some clarification of the financial strains of some NPOs which included size, budget, and growth opportunities which negatively impacted recruitment and sustainment of potential NPO leaders, and therefore, limited with future options. Other NPO leaders did not have the same negative impact, and instead, noted success with social media recruiting and establishing connections with universities and the support of parent organization.

The complexity of NPOs requires someone with a diverse background, strong leadership skills, an understanding of the enterprise, the ability to work across boundaries, and knowledge of how to grow the business through executive communication, financial planning, and strategic planning (Palumbo, 2016). It further behooves the NPO to emphasize the ability of Millennials and Gen Z to participate in continuing education to further their professional development. As suggested by Palumbo (2017), in a preliminary review of leadership types that best align with NPOs, though there remains minimal research on the topic of servant leadership.

In Palumbo’s study, little information supported or indicated any specific or unique insights as to what defines an appropriate NPO leader, but responses did embark upon the soft skills necessary and the activities that Millennials and Gen Z can participate in that will. In a 2016 Alliance for Nonprofit Management-ARNOVA conference, Tebbe et al. (2017) confirmed an imbalance of leaders and processes in leaders' nonprofit succession despite the philanthropic expense allocated to designing processes and procedures surrounding succession planning.

Three criteria in the survey stood out emphatically as being crucial and advised by participants, and that included possessing a college degree and having some experience within the NPO field. While the majority of participants required a college degree for these NPO leadership roles, only one participant indicated real-world experiences as an acceptable substitute. The last criteria that appeared in responses was the need for recruits to have a “cultural fit” that ties with the need for having a passion for the cause.

The main focus of this study encompassed the question of what strategies for developing Millennials and Generation Z into future nonprofit leaders existed or worked. Using multiple case study with an online survey of twenty semi-structured questions, including how NPO leaders attract and develop succeeding leaders led to five themes developed: (a) the ease and ability with which each NPO leader is able to recruit Millennials and Gen Z individuals, (b) the modes or methods that are currently being used to attract new applicants to their organization, (c) the success of those current recruitment methods, (d) what Millennials and Gen Z can do to prepare for a leading NPO role, and (e) support and flexibility of board of directors.

The overarching issue of NPOs to find qualified people to assume leadership roles and not having established strategies for recruitment as noted by Gamble and Ingersoll, (2017); Kearns, et al. (2015), and Tuomala, et al., (2018) still reined true, but within this study, surprisingly half indicated no challenges with recruiting and onboarding potential leaders into their organizations. Instead, these participants indicated a strong national brand name with corporate support and a cause that impacts everyone's lives to be identifying factors for their success. This study's focus revolved around NPOs challenges of utilizing established strategies to employ strategies to prepare Millennial or Gen Z generations to assume leadership roles in NPOs. This premise was confirmed during the study in which only a couple of participants stated a formalized procedure for succession planning was in place.

They also suggest that these issues are the key reason NPOs' make employee engagement the focal point of their efforts. This point is further corroborated by this study from participants' feedback stating that lack of full-time opportunities and a less than competitive offering of pay has contributed to a shortage of available and experienced leadership applicants.

Similarly, Millennials and Gen Z feel professional recognition seems to have become passé to their workforce generation. The concept of making a positive difference in the world is far more meaningful based on over 80% cited by these generations of workers (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018). Millennial and Gen Z workers are far more interested in meaningful work with a purpose that incorporates social value creation rather than making a lot of money (Costa, 2017). People strongly choose to work and patronize companies that operate to give back to society or do what is in society's best interest (Pearce & Stahl, 2015). Further, this type of work can help Millennials and Gen Z generations cultivate an awareness regarding the diverseness of distinct groups of people (Costa, 2017). When NPOs promote their mission and philosophy effectively showcasing their brand and values and how career opportunities they offer can align with the principles of Millennials and Gen Z, it can be more conducive to attract them to their organizations.

A successful succession plan requires leaders to know the market, the external environment, and the strategies to get the organization on the right path and have purposeful direction. NPO leaders need to incorporate the organization’s needs, knowledge of their key people, and what professional protocols will prepare people for future leadership roles. In this study, participants indicated a high level of engagement with the causes their NPOs represented. Included with this observation was the response that a cause which impacted people personally was also a precursor to wanting to be involved. As substantiated by The Bridgespan Group (2012), the type of work the NPO was doing was a deciding factor with 33 percent having stated they desired to be leaders in the nonprofit sector while 47 percent stated the nonprofit field is where they want to be.

When participants were queried about the characteristics which make for desirable and successful NPO leader, study responses were emphatically answered with a college degree and NPO experience. However, a college degree was the catalyst for being considered for this role. Only one participant disagreed and stated that real world experience could take the place of education. Norris-Tirrell, et al (2018), found outcomes gathered in their study to continually emphasize that efficient and competent leadership for NPOs has not only not been prioritized, but is woefully lacking in the tools and resources needed for succession planning. In the findings of Norell-Tirrell, et al. (2018), those aiming to serve in nonprofit executive roles, examined characteristics that were especially relevant to achieving an executive NPO role. The study uncovered information on the prior paths taken by these executives, which produced an understanding that typified nonprofit executives' role backgrounds getting to this point. Their study found that these NPO positions impacted executives’ direction: education, age, gender, specific career, and definitive industry backgrounds. This study gave rise to new knowledge for decision-making within the nonprofit industry and in shaping executive selection by nonprofit boards.

While the answer of having a college education was overwhelmingly the popular and insistent feedback from participants, and the reason some NPOs recruited college campuses, additional criteria when describing the ideal candidate was trainability. That is, the recruit was willing and interested in being coached and trained. As indicated by Kearns, et al., (2015), NPO leaders apply many skillsets that are trainable to others, with some skillsets that can only be achieved through learned experiences. Different opportunities for learning can help those wishing to learn more about nonprofit leadership in preparation for the executive rank (Kearns, 2013, 2014).

To stay competitive and successful, organizations need to have the right people in the right roles and placed in the right cultures. When roles within the organization become vacant, the right people must be available to fill these crucial positions. However, one participant noted that the reality is when a qualified candidate is available, there is no applicable role to offer them, and conversely, when there are available leadership roles, qualified candidates are not available or not ready. Supporting this strategy from the study is research conducted by Tartell (2019), who notes a well-organized and thought-out succession plan supports the probability that the right people with the right capabilities and knowledge are available when the organization requires their talent.

Previous studies have emphasized an effective succession plan as key for creating a long-lasting competitive advantage. Previous studies note that investors and fundraisers must be attentive to the next-generation nonprofit leadership. They need to be assured about where the next leaders are coming from to develop and grow the nonprofit sector. This philosophy is corroborated by the responses from some participants that long-term partnerships have been established between their NPO and universities for the purposes of establishing internships and opportunities with university students and recent college graduates who have some of the appropriate characteristics NPOs are seeking. This strategy is accompanied by another strategy by using social media such as the professional site, LinkedIn to identify and recruit potential NPO leaders as explained by some of the participants who stated they did not have any challenges in finding potential recruits.

In a study by Ha et al., (2017), participants noted that their board of directors is inadequate when attracting and onboarding recruits. Their research pointed out that a little over fifty percent of participants did provide for an onboarding plan for new leaders and managers. Adversely, less than half of the participants believed their onboarding process effectively prepared them for their roles as board members. During their study, a cross-comparison of nonprofit organizations and public companies indicated, according to the *2016-2017 NACD Public Company Governance Survey*, seventy-five percent of participants stated their board has an onboarding process. The findings from organizational onboarding practices indicated less than adequate standards and quality found in their boards (Ha et al., 2017). Further, the more serious issue for nonprofit boards is that seventy-five percent of them have term limits for their directors. Hence, nonprofit boards regularly experience turnover, unlike for-profit boards that rarely see turnovers and disruptions to their purpose.

Contrary to this research, these participants did not indicate any term limits on their Board of Directors and instead, elaborated on the open relationships they had with their Boards, the flexibility with which their Boards let them be creative with the recruiting, onboarding, and succession planning processes. One participant noted no need for the work of developing these types of processes since the NPO was a national brand and did the work for them.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations are flaws in a research study and cannot be controlled by a researcher. One of the limitations of this study is perhaps the small sample size. When considering a broader population relevant to this study, the smaller sample size may not encapsulate the entire population. Further, since NPOs come in different sizes and possess different-sized financial budgets, the ability to attract and keep talent and expand their outreach will not be equal in effort. Some NPOs are smaller in stature and do not have the financial support to be able to attract the right type of qualified professionals to assume leadership roles. This precludes smaller NPOs from being able to attract the best candidates to help sustain the organization long-term. Other NPOs may be a regional chapter of a national NPO which can provide the financial backing and administrative support that assures the success and sustainability of that regional chapter. It is clear that the size and budget of a NPO impacts the ability to be able to follow some of the strategies discussed in this study such as offering high wages and opportunities for career development.

The researcher and the study participants' bias are also potential limitations. In contrast, the researcher may analyze data through a biased lens affecting the findings, and the study participant may respond in a biased manner to study questions (Yin, 2012).

Recommendations

While reviewing the responses from the survey platform of each and every participant, it highlighted that some NPOs had some informal plans for recruiting and succession and onboarding, some had one plan, but not the other, one had their corporate headquarters handling these processes, and some had neither of those plans. It showcased among all, a limited or nonexistent plan for succession, but with the compelling and standard reasons of time and money. Despite some participants stating success with their recruitment and onboarding processes, it is never prudent to rest on your laurels as an organization, whether for profit or nonprofit. Assuming your organization is running smoothly and you have a strong plan in place does not mean the long-term strategy has been achieved. Part of a successful business strategy is accounting for missed expectations, flexibility, continuous improvement, and making changes as external factors dictate. This strategy holds true for organizations that are not prepared that should examine current processes and strategies and make changes where necessary that can create opportunities. Having Board support is crucial for sustaining NPOs, so one recommendation would include Boards being open to new recruitment, onboarding, and succession plan ideas and innovations. Since your NPO leader is on the front lines and understands the nuances of the NPOs' cause, the external environment surrounding the NPO, the background of those living in the region in which the NPO serves, sources for finding the best recruits for the NPO, and best ideas on accessing volunteer and financial support, a NPO Board plays a better secondary role to further the success and sustainability of the NPO. Too much corporate involvement can hinder the growth and logical trajectory of the NPO. Instead of a controlling position, a supportive position gives the NPO and its leader the flexibility and speed to analyze the landscape and make customized and relevant strategic initiatives relevant to the NPO.

Many of the participants of the study extolled the success of using social media, reaching out to the communities they served, and partnering with universities to find the right recruits. The introduction and popular use of the Internet was a serendipitous turning point for NPOs, where access to resources, support services, volunteers and donors, and finding and recruiting potential candidates has opened a channel with endless opportunities. It has provided a zero cost or minimal expenditure to network with individuals and groups, brand and market your organization, and promote recruitment campaigns. In no other platform can budget-constrained NPOs amass a wide audience of volunteers, donors, and recruits. Utilizing more of the features of the Internet is a feasible and progressive approach for NPOs to step up their methods for increasing brand exposure and expanding their reach.

Some participants indicated success with establishing partnerships with universities. It affords them the opportunity to get in front of large audiences with college degrees and looking for their first or next career opportunity. In a sense, they could be considered a captive audience for NPOs. Following this path, provides a channel for NPOs to tap into a large number of possible recruits interested in nonprofit work without the time and expense of seeking out recruits from a myriad of venues which NPO leaders are ill-equipped to handle, and detract from the focus of running their organizations. With a large number of potential candidates from one source, it provides a “safety net” for NPOs by supplying enough possible candidates that the NPO has choices. This approach introduces another opportunity for NPOs in the form of a new communication track. By being out in front of your audience, in this case recent college graduates, is a natural segue to introduce your organization, the purpose or cause of the NPO, find out what your audience is interested in, make a connection, and develop a profile of prospective talent for the organization. Since the requirement of a college degree is a predominant sought-after qualification as attested by the participants in the study, recruiting college graduates right at the source assures that prerequisite is already met.

Another venue to pursue as suggested by one participant is to leverage the relationships of the community partners NPOs collaborate with and serve. Often, a known referral can have an edge over unknown applicant and can be an additional way for NPO leaders to better understand the prospects interested in working for the organization. It also grants NPO leaders some insight about these potential referrals that they normally might not be privy to if they found recruits directly. Another suggestion given by some participants included attaining referrals from trusted employees who understand the business, are already a fit with the culture, know what type of individual would be successful in the organization, and can attest to the background of the individuals being referred. This method might be considered less risky as current employees of the NPO have already “vetted” the candidate and would not want to recommend anyone if in doing so, jeopardizes their reputation.

Financial strategy can be a challenge to many NPOs and more than one-fourth of NPOs are challenged with attracting top talent as their small budget for talent acquisition stymies their efforts and is the most noted reason for this hindrance according to the NPOs studied (Deshwal, 2015). While NPO budgets are notoriously tight and leave little room for an elaborate or comprehensive recruitment and succession planning campaign, it might behoove NPOs to allocate a certain percentage of funding to ongoing recruitment and succession strategy development. The monetary amount may not be enough to support a growing recruitment or succession plan, but may provide quick wins and keep it sustainable.

For most participants, a succession plan remains non-existent, while some have an informal process. Even with no funding and no active recruiting for some NPOs, it is crucial for a NPO to at least have a backup plan for circumventing urgent matters or problems. The possession of standardized succession plans for NPOs even as a contingency plan would behoove the NPO in the event an emergency protocol requires it to be implemented.

Implications

Identifying weaknesses with regard to little or no recruitment, onboarding, and succession planning can help and promote change rather than hinder NPOs by putting the current problem out in front and compelling NPOs to act upon it or risk its purpose for being. Future planning initiatives and contingency plans are not just a want, but rather, an obligation in order to be sustainable and healthy. Change is inevitable and part of that change is the eventual transition of leadership in organizations, both for profit and nonprofit. As a profoundly populated and globally-interactive world, the strategies for doing business and being successful have changed as a result of our ardently dynamic environment. Other NPOs may benefit from this study to advocate the exigency in devoting time, energy and resources with respect to augmenting current recruitment, onboarding, and succession initiatives and guidelines.

This study's potential positive social change impact might be the creation of a tool to help NPOs offer more robust plans to ensure their survival, raises awareness for NPOs that effective and well-defined succession planning should go above just grooming an individual to take over a NPO when the current NPO leader vacates the role. The study may help to define or explain the importance of why a succession plan helps the NPO transition leadership, what that transition should look like, and the importance of taking the transition seriously, for it can be instrumental in advancing the capabilities which are necessary to encompass the attributes and credentials essential for prosperous stewardship of a NPO and providing a means for NPO employees to expand and cultivate their abilities and experience.

The framework with which this study was grounded on was based on human capital and succession planning. It was an appropriate theory based on human capital's purpose for highlighting how NPOs make use of education and training to provide for the future productivity and competitiveness of their people and organization (Becker, 1964; McCracken, et al., 2017). The concept of succession planning focuses on the growth and improvement of present day and future leaders' knowledge, skill sets, business acumen, and associated traits deemed successful in this environment (Schultz, 1961; Tunheim & McLean, 2014). This framework symbolizes the basis for succession planning to improve and carry on that cycle of human capital, social capital, and managerial acknowledgement with the organization's board of directors and executive leaders (Cragun, 2017). These theories further direct the growth and productivity of present day NPO leaders while qualifying new NPO leaders through succession planning protocols. This framework was selected to assess the planning and implementing requirements for succession planning to establish what is needed by executive NPO leaders to be successful and to determine appropriate strategies for identifying relevant pipelines for future succession opportunities.

. When organizations commit to investing in their human capital and its continued growth as part of their planning process and long-term strategy, it creates the foundation for maintaining and keeping top talent in an organization (Crews & Scherron, 2013). A case study design provided an in-depth exploration of a single participant's problems, questions, and answers with a time frame, within different organizational settings (Yin, 2014). A qualitative case study shared a better perspective of the many dimensions and opinions representative of this leadership deficit gap and what will be required of NPOs to prepare for succession planning (Bryman, 2012; Merriam & Tisdale, 2016).

What was discovered in the course of this study was that improving and enhancing the skillsets and talents of NPO leaders and developing a succession plan were essential criteria for contributing to the viability and sustainability of an organization. From the research and with responses from participants in this study, NPOs were not prioritizing succession planning or contingency plans for this strategic planning (Froelich, et al., 2011). To understand why succession planning was not being prioritized and to identify what strategies are needed by NPO leaders to find effective pipelines for executive succession, it was necessary to examine the theoretical perspective for this study.

Constructivism is a knowledge-seeking method that stipulates individuals willingly create their learning. The results of this learning are driven by the achieved knowledge and training of the individual (Elliott, et al., 2000, p. 256). Arends (1998) explains that the theory of constructivism considers the individual development of meaning through experience and shaped by the collaboration of existing information and new developments. The main belief of constructivism supposes that human education is constructed. Individuals expand their current knowledge of a subject from the foundation of prior knowledge. This new knowledge impacts the previous foundation of knowledge by augmenting what is already known and adding to its relevancy (Phillips, 1995).

Obtaining new knowledge is an active approach. Constructivism postulates that individuals develop knowledge and understanding through dynamic action with experimental learning or present-day problem-solving. Dewey (1938), states that obtaining new knowledge or education is a social platform. Individuals interact and collaborate rather than as some abstract theory. The leadership deficit gap is a problem shared by all NPOs therefore, collaboration and solving the problem of this phenomenon as a group may yield better results to mitigate this lack of leadership succession through a social constructivist lens (Brown, 1999).

This study addressed leaders’ influence to develop and improve management and leadership skills necessary for the transition of new leaders like Millennials and Gen Z generations in order to promote positive social change. Millennials and Gen Z want to be involved with NPOs and make a difference in the workforce and better understand and promote their empathy and involvement in the external environment. Millennials and Gen Z leaders can focus their attention and resources on helping and improving individuals' lives and the needs of the communities and organizations they serve when they have a better grasp of the external environment and society as a whole. This study’s goal was to identify and enlighten new leaders to solve societal needs, compelling them to be the change agent society needs to better address the purposes for which these NPOs serve and support (Canto de Loura, 2014; Nikolova & Andersen, 2017).

This study only accounted for eight participants via an online survey. The study may reflect additional insights, deeper insights, or variances if conducted with a larger number of participants and better authentication of the outcomes. NPOs are far and wide across the country with some being on a global level, but were not participants in the study. While the study focused on participants in the Southern California region, widening that study to other parts of the county, most likely would generate richer and robust responses that could be useful to other NPOs not privy to these best practices or experiences. Furthering this exploration of succession planning for NPOs acceptance to the research literature and the NPO industry that more standardization and succession practices need to be prioritized and implemented for NPOs to make that successful transition from leader to leader, while keeping the principles and purposes of NPOs actualized.

One key element which kept repeating in the study was the lack of experience and lack of education which can detract from the ability of future NPO leaders to manage the NPO successfully. Developing training for incoming NPO leaders such as Millennials and Gen Z might behoove NPOs to understand the philosophy about work and NPOs which may rise to deeper education and training that these generations may be missing, and whether a career in the nonprofit industry is right for them.

The responses garnered in this study highlighted ideas or strategies to create an active pipeline for nonprofit executive succession by developing Millennials and Gen Z generations as future leaders (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018). Some feasible methods were uncovered for NPO leaders to execute to fill the gap for developing Millennial and Gen Z leaders for a leadership career path in NPOs (Hansen-Turton & Torres, 2014). As the world continually becomes dependent on digital and virtual approaches for doing business, the adoption of in-depth social media usage for recruitment, succession planning, and branding provides a means for educating NPO leaders, finding new talent, and keeping the NPO prominently visible on the world stage. This direction also provides an almost effortless and minimal funding to implement. Partnering with powerful and respectful organizations to achieve these goals also presents a means for NPOs to build their framework with minimal expense and effort while building the brand and reputation of the NPO. The majority of participants with success in recruitment and succession planning indicated the predominance of social media networking to obtain visibility and find the appropriate people to join their organizations.

In addition to social media, participants noted the development of business relationships with local universities to attract students as interns and for possible full-time roles. This type of relationship provides a strong connection for finding the right types of people who may be studying in fields that align with the NPO, therefore, have the knowledge and perhaps experience to be a fitting candidate. This partnership also provides a large forum for NPOs in search of suitable applicants. Consecutively, this partnership offers a professional path for students to seek experience and employment.

The surge of NPOs and their mission to provide service to the public has necessitated NPO executives' professional training. These NPO leaders are responsible for ensuring organizational accountability and performance. NPOs serve the function of educating, supporting, and providing much needed assistance to the communities they serve and society as a whole. Without NPOs, parts of society would be hungry, thirsty, without resources for survival, without shelter, and with no guidance for getting help for illnesses and safety. This daunting responsibility rests with NPO leaders to possess and utilize specific knowledge, skills, and competencies to address unpredictable situations and know how to create successful organizations. Research points to leaders' qualifications as an essential indicator of the success of NPOs, underscoring the significance of management to organizational accountability (Lee & Suh, 2018; Seidle, et al., 2016). This research amplifies the gravity with which NPO leaders must be educated, trained, and prepared. Hence the reason for NPOs at all levels to educate and train their people and to have a solidified succession plan to carry on their legacy. By creating a more standardized approach and set of protocols for recruiting, succession planning, and branding, NPO leaders have a better grasp of the strategic picture, their role in it, what the expectations are, and the tools needed to be successful going forward in their professional path.

Professional recognition has become passé to Millennials and the Gen Z workforce with the focus instead on making a positive difference in the world and leaving behind a respectable legacy. Research has cited over 80% of these generations find positive social impact to be more meaningful (Buffett & Eimeke, 2018). Millennial and Gen Z workers are far more interested in meaningful work with a purpose that incorporates social value creation rather than making a lot of money (Costa, 2017). In alignment with this philosophy, even stakeholders will review and assess the external environment’s positive and negative elements and expect organizations to act on their corporate social responsibility principles and efforts. People strongly choose to work and patronize companies that operate to give back to society or do what is in society's best interest (Pearce & Stahl, 2015). Further, this type of work can help Millennials and Gen Z generations cultivate an awareness regarding the diverseness of distinct groups of people which is an important societal element and allies with their own ideologies about work and life (Costa, 2017). The paradigm shift in philosophies from one working generation to the next has exemplified the need for NPOs to recalibrate their own tenets to conform to the frame of reference shared by younger generations such as Millennials and Gen Z.

This research may fill a gap in understanding by focusing specifically on identifying strategies for an active pipeline for nonprofit executive succession by developing Millennials and Gen Z generations as future leaders. Information gathered from a sample of executive leaders in NPOs for this study could provide additional insight and better professional preparation for NPOs, Millennials, and Generation Z workers. The researcher's intent may even provide valuable professional insights for future succession planning initiatives to current leaders. Finally, this study could promote positive social change by addressing leaders' influence to develop and improve the management and leadership skills of Millennials and Gen Z generations. They want to get involved in NPOs, increasing their understanding and empathy for the external environment. Millennial and Generation Z leaders can focus their attention and resources on helping and improving individuals' lives and the needs of the communities and organizations they serve when they have a better grasp of the external environment and society as a whole. This study's outcomes may lead to continuous growth as new leaders address and solve societal needs, compelling them to become change agents (Canto de Loura, 2014; Nikolova & Andersen, 2017).

Conclusions

Concentrating on the criteria of recruitment and succession planning which are tied together, is a crucial plan of action for the continuity of NPOs. Participants of this study appear to acknowledge the importance of having a regular stream of potential candidates and available potential leaders to assume leadership roles and appear to see this path as one of the foundational elements for the successful continuity of NPOs. While many of the participant leaders of these NPOs found no difficulty in recruiting candidates and in fact, had recruiting methods and succession plans in place. Participants in this study appeared to understand and acknowledge the value of recruitment methods and succession planning, however, some participants noted budgets and support deterred them from further developing the breadth and depth of their NPOs, including the capacity for introducing potential leader roles or employees into the organizations. These particular NPOs were small enough that having additional management or employee roles was not an option, or a participant of the study faced leadership alone without backing and support to single-handedly manage a recruiting campaign, create and sustain a succession plan, or adopt a social media platform or partner with a university seeking potential recruits. The factors of time, financial support, and a means to establish these instruments for the future growth and sustainability of their NPOs has created an impediment to their sustainability.

If NPOs are to be the face of societal change and support for the general public, NPOs need the patronage or sponsorship of state and federal government agencies which can offer the kind of financial backing and resources needed by NPOs which can then invest in the purpose for which they were created to provide necessary support, resources, and services to society. The foundational support provided by government agencies can pick up some of the impediments or barriers which NPOs regularly face, prohibiting them from serving the local communities at their very basic levels and must deal with these adversities on their own without the proper resources to make their goals achievable. The burden of support should not be left to the NPO alone, especially if the NPO serves as a first line resource for the public.

In order to be successful and realize sustainability, recruiting, training, and preparing for succession are stand out actions to achieve this long-term goal. Strategies for developing pipelines for new recruits and succession planning were the focus of the study and of the survey questions. My recommendations which were based from the responses from participants, is to first determine what long-term goals the NPO wants to achieve. From the survey, it became clear that participants understood the type of recruit and manager it would take to carry on the stewardship of the NPO. Further, this group of participants also acknowledged the types of skill sets needed from these recruits making them the right fit. The preponderance of participants hailed social media and the partnering with universities, communities, and networking to be the greatest source of their success in finding appropriate people.

Social media was identified as the greatest source of finding recruits and finding support and assistance, therefore, one strong recommendation I would offer is for those NPOs not actively involved in the social media landscape, find a way to integrate it into the framework of the NPO's objectives and regular goals. For those NPOs not currently active in social media, starting with small steps into that sector which may include, but are not limited to creating an active website, providing contact information that is available and responsive on a daily basis. Whether people are doners, volunteers, potential recruiters, and even individuals seeking the services of what the NPO offers need to be able to reach members of the NPO easily and without waiting, or the NPO runs the risk of missing important opportunities. As researcher, I found it very difficult if not impossible to reach the vast majority of NPOs I sought for my study, even when I only left my name and number for a return call or email. If individuals or organizations find it difficult to reach an NPO, they will most likely go elsewhere. There are several online services for NPOs without a starting point about creating a website which include *Wix, Squarespace*, and *SITE123* which provide for the creation of free website without the skill of coding needed. Further, an NPO may want to consider the idea of securing the assistance of a high school student or a college student who are experienced with websites and social media. Many high schools in this region of California are requiring students to participate in volunteer activities to give them those experiences. Meanwhile, NPOs are challenged with finding enough people to assist as volunteers, not including an individual to run their social media campaigns. This creates a beneficial contract between the two parties that need help from each other. It also provides young people not yet entering the workforce a chance to experience altruistic endeavors and realize its importance, thereby starting the span of volunteers from a new generation. College students can also be an advantageous relationship with NPOs, especially if the college student is considering a professional path in the nonprofit field. Further, like high school students, these students have a greater understanding and experience with online venues and platforms. They are more technologically advanced than previous generations and their service can be a boon to an NPO, especially smaller organizations with not much funding or ability to grow that need support and an online presence.

Another important pathway to branding the NPO and finding more avenues to reach out to doners, volunteers, and recruits would be to identify the plethora of sites that are appropriate for an NPO to become a member. Those sites may be *LinkedIn, Facebook, SimioAudience Co-Op* (for finding global and diverse doner banks), along with the availability of donor management software to help identify, manage, and track the NPOs database of financial and donor support, accounting, volunteer support, event and social media management, thereby easing the overload of responsibilities that befalls an NPO leader. Such software may include *DonorPerfect, CharityEngines, Every Action, and Network for Good*, just to name a few choices. Lastly, if the amount of software available is daunting to the average NPO without software experience, there is *Capterra* which offers free support and recommendations to assist NPOs in selecting the appropriate software for their organizations. The software vendors pay Capterra for their efforts in aligning an NPO with a software platform.

Another tool that may be used by NPOs is an online organization called *Double the Donation* which provides a service for matching gift automation for NPOs through their extensive database, utilizing the 360MatchPro software tool to match NPOs with all their applicable donors, which minimizes staff and NPO time, increases monetary donations, and increases donor commitment. Many of the methods extracted from responses in this study concluded a variety of ideas and approaches for soliciting help and finding recruits that noted minimal to no expenses on the part of the NPO. While being actively engaged on social media equates to full-time work and not a task that a NPO leader can accommodate with their own time, a recommendation is to identify a third-party volunteer to handle the social media life of the NPO.

Partnerships with educational institutions such as colleges and universities were identified next as a means to network and find potential recruits. Many participants shared their success partnering with local universities that not only provided continuous stream of students wanting experience, but also the benefit of focusing on a concentrated audience of potential recruits for leadership roles once their college degree was obtained, and a prerequisite of the majority of participants of the study. The variety of degree programs available at many universities represent a seamless alignment from college student to working for an NPO with a particular cause. Some examples include business, health, public administration, sociology, communication and digital media, and computer science and technology to name a few programs that would be beneficial for an NPO.

I believe more research can be done through qualitative research studies such as multiple case studies or to identify other reasons for the struggles of NPOs, other ideas on how to combat those challenges, and identify trends of future working generations not yet in the workforce which may help when bestowing the responsibilities of running an NPO to these generations which may have new ideas, new philosophies, and be faced with a new external environment and challenges than their predecessors faced.

In addition, quantitative studies such as a descriptive quantitative research design might be able to extract quantifiable data which can be used to analyze a sample of the population involved in the nonprofit field the connection to, or probability of the success of an NPO with the level of education or skill sets of NPO leaders, or the cause that the NPO represents with the financial foundation of an NPO, the brand or reputation of an NPO, or the tools and resources used to secure long-term sustainability.

The importance of recruitment and succession planning strategies was identified by both me and the participants of the study. The responses from participants delved into some of their current strategies for recruitment and succession planning, identifying what was working and what could be done better. The results of this study demonstrated that the contributions to social change open up opportunities and provide new insight to NPO leaders for new approaches and ideas to enhance the mechanisms and business practices used in successfully managing their operations and the inclusive representation they champion in advocating for their communities.

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Appendix A: Invitation Letter and Informed Consent

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr.,

You are invited to take part in a research study concerning what strategies make Millennials and Generation Z into successful, future nonprofit leaders. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part. This study is being conducted by me Tracy Foote, a doctoral student candidate at Walden University, in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). I am inviting you to participate is in recognition of your position as a nonprofit leader. The purpose of the study is to find strategies for developing Millennials and Generation Z into future nonprofit leaders.

Should you consent, you will be sent an online questionnaire. I also invite you to share with me any additional information that you feel may add to the understanding of the recruitment strategies and grooming of Millennials and Gen Z workers into leadership roles. The online questionnaire should take about 30-40 minutes of your time. Once questionnaires have been completed and returned, I will provide participants a chance to review the outcomes from the final analysis of the data. To ensure confidentiality, the data will be coded by the researcher that only the researcher has knowledge of to maintain privacy. A one-to-two-page summary will be provided to participants upon commencement of data analysis for member checking which should take 20-30 minutes of your time.

Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study about Strategies for developing Millennials and Generation Z into future nonprofit leaders. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study seeks 5-10 volunteers who are:

- NPO leaders who have experience creating strategies for succession
- NPO leaders who working with or training Millennial and Generation Z workers.
- NPO leaders who work, have worked, or are seeking Millennial and Generation Z workers as potential leaders to succeed them.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Tracy Foote who is a student at Walden University.

Study Purpose:
The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore the strategies NPOs employ to prepare Millennials or Generation Z generations to assume leadership roles. The researcher intends through this study, to provide strategies for leaders and executive boards of NPOs to fill the vacating positions of retiring NPO leaders, presenting a leadership gap. The participant population will comprise current NPO leaders only within San Diego County and Orange County, CA, who develop future leaders within the NPO environment.

Procedures:
This study will involve you completing the following steps: Please complete the questionnaire provided to you if you decide to be a part of the study. It should only take 30-40 minutes of your time.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Research should only be done with those who freely volunteer. So, everyone involved will respect your decision to join or not.
If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this study could involve some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life such as sharing sensitive information. With the protections in place, this study will pose minimal risk to your well-being. To decrease the impact of these risks, you can: stop your participation at any time or skip any question.

Benefits:
This study offers no direct benefits to individual volunteers. The aim of this study is to benefit society by influencing and impacting the ability for nonprofit organizations to attract and develop future nonprofit leaders and better prepare for succession planning. Once the analysis is complete, the researcher will share the overall results by emailing to you by permission.

Privacy:
The researcher is required to protect your privacy. Your identity will be kept private, within the limits of the law. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. If the researcher were to share this dataset with another researcher in the future, the dataset

would contain no identifiers so this would not involve another round of obtaining informed consent. Data will be kept secure by being downloaded from the questionnaire onto the researcher's computer. Any and all hard documentation will be stored in a locked cabinet in which only the researcher has access whereupon, it will be shredded after five years. All digital feedback and data gathered will also be stored on a secured server and in a zipped file in which only the researcher has access. Like the paper documentation, the e-files and digital feedback and data will be kept for a period of five years by this researcher, as required by the University by securing the services of a professional shredding company to dispose of the documentation properly and safely.

Obtaining Your Consent

If you feel you understand the study and wish to volunteer, please indicate your consent by responding with the words, **"I consent"** to this email at tracy.foote@waldenu.edu. You can also email irb@waldenu.edu in case you want to discuss your rights privately or call 760.212.6437. Once I have received your consent response, an online, confidential questionnaire will be sent to you. Thank you.

Appendix B: Online Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study and completing the online informed consent. Your participation will be very much appreciated and it will be of great help for the study if you can!

Instructions:

- Please complete the following questions.
- Remember to click 'Finish' at the end of the survey to record your responses.
- Once you begin the questionnaire, please finish all questions.
- Answer all questions from the perspectives you have in your professional role. Please complete this questionnaire by INSERT DATE.
- The full questionnaire should take about 30 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept completely confidential.
- You may stop at any time or skip questions, but I do appreciate if you can complete the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for completing this important questionnaire!

Sincerely,

Tracy Foote, Ph.D. candidate Walden University

Part I. Demographic and Recruitment questions (5 to 10 min. to complete).
You can stop at any time and skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Please answer these questions with yes/no or a worded explanation as needed.

1. Where do you typically seek out candidates for recruitment for your organization?

2. Do you have challenges in finding recruits?

3. What are those specific challenges?

4. Do you have a recruitment/onboarding plan for your nonprofit organization?

5. If so, what does this process comprise of?

6. Are you planning or have you in the past recruited Millennials or Gen Z workers?

7. How many or what percentage of Millennials or Gen Z were a part of your recruitment/onboarding process in the last year?
8. If any of the Millennials or Gen Z workers you have recruited, have any been groomed for management? Is the management grooming process different than other roles in your organization? Are the strategies for recruiting these two work generations different than other work generations?
9. What specific strategies do you have that are effective in recruiting and grooming Millennials and Gen Z? Any that you use that you have not seen used elsewhere?

Part II. Characteristics, Skillsets, and Processes that make for a Successful Management Recruit (20 minutes to complete)
Please answer the following questions with one or more sentences.
You may stop at any time, but your answers to all questions would be very helpful for this study.

Some questions concern similar to issues those you have completed but more information is needed.

10. What type of tools or protocols do you currently have in place which integrates leadership and succession planning?
11. What preparations should Millennials and Gen Z make to better prepare them for leadership roles in nonprofit organizations?
12. Is a degree or formal education a prerequisite for being considered a good leadership candidate?
13. If yes, what skillsets best accompany a formal education with a nonprofit leadership role?

14. If no formal education required, what top 5-10 factors would you consider to be necessary in being a successful nonprofit leader?
15. Does your recruitment and onboarding process work effectively to find the right management fit?
16. If your current recruitment/onboarding process is not effective, what would you recommend that needs to be changed, added, or deleted to the process?
17. How do you think Millennials or Gen Z workers could best learn about how to get recruited for future management opportunities?
18. Is your Board of Directors/Stakeholders supportive of a recruitment/onboarding process?
19. Is your Board of Directors/Stakeholders supportive of any changes your organization would like to make with the recruitment/onboarding process?
20. Finally, is there additional information not asked in the survey that you feel will be noteworthy to add to the study outcomes?