CROWDSOURCING STRATEGIZING: A VIEW FROM THE TOP

by

Priscilla L. Eddings

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Crowdsourcing strategizing is the application of crowdsourcing for organizational strategy development. While crowdsourcing is experiencing popularity in application and discussion, the concept is not new. However, literature on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing is not widespread in academic or business works. This qualitative case study explored crowdsourcing strategizing in Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofits. The study was conducted to explore the lack of understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing, with a focus on leaderships perspective of value. The results showed that nonprofit leaders found value in the crowdsourced data gathered through crowdsourcing strategizing.

Key words: crowdsourcing strategizing, strategy, nonprofits, leadership, organizational value

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Dedication

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Leadership has largely developed strategy based on the traditional top-down approach. Recently, the notion of crowdsourcing strategizing has allowed contributors outside the C-suite to impact an organization's strategic direction. In the simplest context, the idea has been implemented for many generations (Soliman & Tuunainen, 2015). Still, there is much that has not been discussed in literature about the importance of crowdsourcing's current applications to leadership. How crowdsourcing influences organizational strategy has scarcely been focused upon (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Therefore, the value crowdsourcing strategizing brings to a nonprofit organization, from a leader's perspective, was explored.

Background of the Problem

Crowdsourcing has been introduced as an alternate means of solving business problems. Organizations have been given another way of finding answers to corporate issues by outsourcing from an agent to a crowd (Afuah & Tucci, 2012) through social platforms (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Considered a problem-solving method, crowdsourcing relies on the collective creativity, ingenuity, intellect, and resources of an online group (Parvanta, Roth, & Keller, 2013). Crowdsourcing transports an answer from far away resources to the local need with better efficiency and effectiveness (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). The concept allows a fresh solution to old business challenges.

With closer inspection, however, crowdsourcing is not vastly new, although the topic has been mentioned in literature as a new phenomenon (Afuah & Tucci, 2012; Aten & Thomas, 2016). In fact, using a crowd to resolve matters has been a problem-solving method since biblical times. Pilate had to determine whether Barabbas or Jesus the Christ would be released from prison and the other crucified. After seeking the crowd's perspective, Barabbas was exonerated and Jesus sent for crucifixion because of the enthusiastic stakeholder response (Matthew 27:15-26, KJV). Similarly, the now forgotten taste-testing tables at the local grocery store were an early nod to crowdsourcing, which gleaned immediate responses of consumers' product reactions.

Those examples bear witness to the historical and functional use of crowdsourcing. Generally, individuals that share an interest in the firm and exist outside of the company are integrated into the firm's value chain when crowdsourcing is engaged, but internal stakeholders also serve as a crowd (Stieger, Matzler, Chatterjee, & Ladstaetter-Fussenegger, 2012). The newest element to the process is the online platform which has changed the level of access and permitted organizations to quickly gain insights from a broader more informed audience (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Though crowdsourcing has been around for an extended period of time, the Internet has broadened the possibilities (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). Now, through technology, organizations are quickly obtaining the combined brilliance of a larger population.

Problem Statement

The problem is a lack of understanding of the value crowdsourcing strategizing provides to leaders in the nonprofit industry. In the Richmond, Virginia area, nonprofits have been essential to developing the city and remolding the region's history (Corcoran, 2017). A nonprofit organization, institute, or corporation is considered a crowdsourcer (Blohm, Leimeister, & Krcmar, 2013). Crowdsourcing, which includes a relationship between crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee, is one tool being used to advance nonprofits. If an organization wants to use crowdsourcing, value should be offered in the solution, and the ability of crowdsourcing to capture value must be a primary consideration for selection (Bloodgood, 2013). This helps nonprofit organizations which are continuously seeking ways to improve.

Nonprofit leaders have multiple tools to design the organizational strategy; still, crowdsourcing is emerging as a strong resource. However, the benefit of crowdsourcing as a solution to organizational problem-solving is lacking because the value produced has not been established (Bloodgood, 2013). Additionally, there remains a need to discuss the influence of crowdsourcing on organizational strategy development (Amrollahi, Ghapanchi, & Talaei-Khoei, 2014; Aten & Thomas, 2016; Chesbrough & Appleyard, 2007; Erickson, 2013; Stieger et al., 2012). Thus, the general problem to be addressed was the lack of understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. Whereas, the specific problem to be addressed was the lack of understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofit organizations in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. The focus of the study was to find nonprofit leadership's value in crowdsourcing strategizing to offer knowledge that can be used by leaders professionally and contributes to academic literature.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study research was to investigate the value crowdsourcing strategizing provides to nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. A nonprofit's effectiveness is accelerated through leaders capable of identifying strategic priorities (Harrison & Murray, 2012). Also, Rhine (2015) discovered nonprofit leaders shift the direction of a declining organization. Therefore, literature on nonprofit leadership has centered on the board and chief executive officer proficiencies (Harrison & Murray, 2012). However, Aten and Thomas (2016) expressed that business literature has not included many discussions on crowdsourcing strategizing. Although, the practice of crowdsourcing is used by many organizations, such as the Library of Congress, Netflix, and Facebook (Afuah & Tucci, 2012).

Thus, a better understanding of the model's value to Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders was explored.

Nonprofit leadership's value of crowdsourcing strategizing was researched to enhance the business application and help bridge the gap in literature. In the traditional, closed-door model of strategy development, leaders were very influential (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik, Fabel, & Jonk, 2015). Given the assimilation of technology and communication, the strategy development process has changed from executives only to a company-wide inclusion of ideas (Aten & Thomas, 2016) or tapping into the knowledge of external stakeholders (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik et al., 2015; Parvanta et al., 2013). However, nonprofit organizations have strained resources. Parvanta et al. (2013) discussed crowdsourcing as a desirable alternative for organizations with resource limitations. Thus, the study focused on discovering the value crowdsourcing strategizing has for leaders of Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit organizations.

Nature of the Study

The nature of the study addresses the best research method and design for studying the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. Three research approaches were available: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Beyond the method, five research designs were open to explore how leaders gain value from crowdsourcing. Those designs were grounded theory, narrative, phenomenological, ethnography, and case study. The selected method and design, of qualitative in combination with case study, guided the research process and helped frame the discoveries. A discussion follows on which method and design was selected as well as why the other approaches were not suitable. The research method is discussed first followed by the research design.

Discussion of Method

Selecting a research method was primary to choosing a design. The quantitative approach focuses on numbers and close-ended inquiries, in comparison to qualitative research which is the use of words and open-ended questions (Creswell, 2014). Combining the quantitative and qualitative techniques yields the mixed methods style (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative method provides harder, fact-based data (Barnham, 2015). Also, quantitative research incorporates the use of survey and experimental exploration where numerical descriptions are applied, and test conditions are varied to examine results (Creswell, 2014). The structured nature of the quantitative method (Park & Park, 2016) would limit extraction of data to the elements bound by hypotheses. Leaving little room for open discovery, the quantitative approach would not fulfill the research criteria. Consequently, a mixed methods approach was not suitable either because the model contains elements of the quantitative style.

For the study of the value crowdsourcing strategizing provides to nonprofit leaders, the qualitative method was chosen. The qualitative approach is a softer research style, giving deeper insight (Barnham, 2015). According to Stake (2010), there is no single method but rather a collection of ways to accomplish qualitative research. Having an unstructured model, in the sense that there is no scientific test format to confirm, allowed a good range of material to naturally surface. The uniqueness of qualitative research (Walker, 2012) was showcased in the study. Therefore, the qualitative method was a more open research approach in discovering the value nonprofit leaders gained from crowdsourcing strategizing.

Discussion of Design

Grounded theory was one design alternative explored. Generating a new idea is the core of the grounded theory methodology (Yates & Leggett, 2016). When a reader is alerted to the use of grounded theory, the term is an indication that a discovery is occurring (Creswell, 2014). Glaser and Strauss (1967) believed using data to conduct an organized finding of a philosophy defines grounded theory. While the research added to the present body of knowledge, no theory was developed. Therefore, grounded theory was not suitable for completing the study.

Telling a story is considered a narrative and another approach to research. The narrative design creates an account of the findings to relive the moment (Yin, 2011). In addition, the narrative method assesses how a person organizes an encounter into a story to understand the series of events (Walker, 2012). This study did not recreate an encounter of crowdsourcing strategizing, nor was crowdsourcing strategizing observed in a real-time setting with engaged individuals serving as study participants. Redoing the experience as though making the readers an active part was not the intended research outcome. Therefore, the narrative approach was not suited to the research.

Phenomenology was another alternative to exploring crowdsourcing strategizing. The phenomenological technique studies immediate human events without regard for prior concepts (Yin, 2011). Phenomenology also focuses on the analysis of a phenomenon (Walker, 2012), as is crowdsourcing strategizing. However, the current research study considered present and historical information on crowdsourcing strategizing. Thus, the phenomenological method did not fit the current research model.

The present study could have been explored through ethnography as well. The ethnography approach includes the description and interpretation of the ideals, activities, viewpoints, and language of a culture group (Yates & Leggett, 2016). Yin (2011) stated a lengthy field study is needed to extract daily routines. Additionally, the validity of an ethnographic study is heavily weighed by interviews and field notes which result from the time expended in the research field (Walker, 2012). While the study of crowdsourcing strategizing included field-based research, the content did not deal with a cultural group and the characteristics of the society. As a result, ethnography was not appropriate for the current research on crowdsourcing strategizing.

The final research design consideration was a case study. Yates and Leggett (2016) suggested that when examining a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question, case studies are, generally, the desired research technique. A case study design is an excellent option for researchers wanting to preserve and relay the significant characteristics of an event within a study, like an organizational or managerial process (Yin, 2009). The goal of the present study was to explore the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofit leaders. Research questions included ‘how’ inquiries, and leaderships’ encounters with crowdsourcing strategizing, as an organizational strategy development tool, were investigated. Therefore, a case study design is the best approach.

Summary of the nature of the study.

The best research method and design selected to study crowdsourcing strategizing and the value related to nonprofit organizations was the qualitative method in conjunction with the case study design. A qualitative approach left the data collection process open to explore findings that naturally arose from the information gathered. In contrast, the quantitative methodology would have limited the researcher’s interpretive freedom through an emphasis on numerical facts. The new discoveries collected from the qualitative research were cultivated, using the case study design, to create a fresh perspective on the value obtained from implementing crowdsourcing strategizing. Establishing an understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing was the intent of the study and was best completed through the qualitative and case study techniques.

Research Question

This qualitative case study research explored crowdsourcing strategizing as a leadership resource within a nonprofit organization. Until recently, crowdsourcing had not been freely used in organizations (Stieger et al., 2012) and was not a major part of innovation literature (Di Guardo & Castriotta, 2013). Also, the significance developed from crowdsourcing strategies is based on the circumstance (Di Guardo & Castriotta, 2013). Thus, the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area was established through studying the primary and secondary research inquiries. The main research question was:

> How are nonprofit organizations impacted by crowdsourcing strategizing in the Richmond, Virginia metro area?

Additional questions that aided in understanding the key subject are the following:

1) How would the use of crowdsourcing strategizing impact the strategic direction of a nonprofit?
2) What circumstances would provoke the use of crowdsourcing strategizing for a Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit?
3) How does crowdsourcing strategizing bring value to a nonprofit leader in developing the strategic organizational direction?

Investigation of the questions was conducted through interviews, observation, and a review of existing literature. Document analysis helped provide historical knowledge, combined with evaluation of past interviews, case studies, and other online resources on the subject. Content for the topic remained within ten years of the present research, allowing a larger time span due to the limited availability of scholarly literature on crowdsourcing strategizing (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Di Guardo & Castriotta, 2013). The intent in answering the research questions was to discover a measure of value, from Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders, on crowdsourcing strategizing.

Conceptual Framework

This research was shaped around three themes which helped support the study matter. Each of the components were critical to understanding the value that crowdsourcing strategizing provides to nonprofit leaders. An introduction to the subjects has been presented, with in-depth knowledge given in the literature review. A pictorial description of the elements, and how each relates, is provided in Figure 1. The themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value served as the framework of the research and are discussed further in the following sections.

Discussion of crowdsourcing strategizing.

To begin, the concept of crowdsourcing strategizing is discussed. Crowdsourcing strategizing is the union of crowdsourcing and organizational strategy. Selecting a vacation spot, releasing a new product line, or even cataloging historical documents can all be applicable areas of crowdsourcing. However, the application of crowdsourcing to organizational strategy had not been explored; therefore, crowdsourcing strategizing was birthed (Aten & Thomas, 2016). The concept of sourcing knowledge from individuals for the firm's strategy conversation is a motivating idea (Stieger et al., 2012), where the crowd can be internal or external to the organization.

Additionally, the importance of researching crowdsourcing strategizing is rooted in the continual evolution of the business realm. Companies have changed the approach to organizational strategy formation due to disruptive trends in the environment (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik et al., 2015). Hence, strategy developed through crowdsourcing is being touted as an inclusive alternative rather than the traditional approach (Aten & Thomas, 2016), where individuals outside the executive level were excluded. The concept of crowdsourcing strategizing helps apply the collective knowledge of a group to overcome challenges faced in creating an organization's strategic direction. There are several ways to gather knowledge from individuals that have various levels of experience, but crowdsourcing is a successful avenue (Yoo, Lee, & Choi, 2013). Thus, exploring a valuable alternative to obtaining effective strategy was important for the knowledge of tactical leaders.

Crowdsourcing strategizing is the main concept of the study because the resource was assessed for value to nonprofit leaders. Figure 1 shows how the principle's application feeds into a nonprofit leader's implementation in practice. Crowdsourcing has been praised as being powerful and problem-solving (Blohm et al., 2013). Yoo et al. (2013) acknowledged crowdsourcing as an effective means of innovation and is beneficial for capturing business value (Blohm et al., 2013). Therefore, the relationship of crowdsourcing strategizing to the study is to understand the concept's value as an effective tool for nonprofit leaders.

Discussion of nonprofit leadership.

The second concept of discussion is nonprofit leadership. Leaders have the advantage of seeing a more rounded viewpoint of the firm due to the involvement level within the organization. In contrast, leadership can lack in-depth information regarding organizational needs based on the broad scope of knowledge. The theory of nonprofit leadership explains an organization's need to have the right individuals in top positions. Nonprofit organizations that have strategic leadership are prone to be more effectual (Harrison, Murray, & Cornforth, 2013). Effective leadership can properly set strategy, give direction, and make big-picture decisions that impact the future of the organization. Serfontein and Hough (2011) noted leaders who perform at a superior level are tasked with giving strategic direction to the business and to those individuals responsible for implementation. Thus, leaders have profound influence over the organization's future and are instrumental to success.

Nonprofit leaders should continue expanding the scope of knowledge to remain effective in practice. The information gained through exposure and experience would help to resolve daily issues. Afuah and Tucci (2012) declared that individuals in a firm are motivated to solve problems for multiple reasons, ranging from monetary to skill demonstration. Additionally, resolving issues aids in the progression of an organization. One can tell a firm's condition by viewing the leader (Halley-Boyce, Lachell Robinson, & Bradley, 2013), and the development of leadership is not independent of an organization's design (Swensen, Gorringe, Caviness, & Peters, 2016). Therefore, understanding nonprofit leaders is essential to knowing the direction an organization will follow because leaders are charged with creating and dispensing the strategy.

The research was centered on knowing the value of crowdsourcing strategizing through the eyes of a nonprofit leader. The whole organization is shaped through the performance of the leader (Harrison et al., 2013). Nonprofit leadership was chosen because nonprofits help mold communities and leaders spearhead the nonprofits, in part, by the strategy that is developed. Effective strategy does not include only leadership's opinion (Aurik et al., 2015), so understanding an alternative means of development is important. Studying nonprofit leaders was in direct relation to the research focus of seeing value in crowdsourcing strategizing through the eyes of a leader.

Discussion of value.

Finally, the concept of value is relevant to the study. Value explains the benefit that leadership receives from implementing crowdsourcing strategizing within a nonprofit. As shown in Figure 1, value will be the output of this study's research model. The map shows that crowdsourcing strategizing is implemented by nonprofit leaders and a benefit from the technique is received. Experts have noted that crowdsourcing always promises a benefit for all parties, crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee (Asmolov, 2015; Soliman & Tuunainen, 2015). The impact of the technique on the organization translates into a benefit, or value, received. Value in crowdsourcing is jointly produced by the crowdsourcers and crowdsourcees (Liu, Xia, Zhang, & Wang, 2016). For this research study, the value was any benefit identified by the nonprofit leader.

The importance of seeing value from crowdsourcing strategizing is to know what benefits can be received by a crowdsourcer. Di Guardo and Castriotta (2013) affirmed that crowdsourcing does produce value but is based on the implementation scenario. Value creation is important and can be understood, in part, through the resources assembled for crowdsourcing. Bonabeau (2009) believed value is created through the evaluation and governance of the gathered resources. Selecting the right crowd is important in crowdsourcing because the resources chosen determines the value developed in the process (Jayakumar, 2016). Individual resources can provide a diverse set of experiences and backgrounds which influence the collective knowledge of the crowd. Therefore, a unique value experience is had for each crowdsourcing venture.

The value theory is connected to the research because the objective is to learn what value is obtained by nonprofit leaders, as depicted in Figure 1. In the past, organizations did not recognize the potential value that could be created through crowdsourcing (Jayakumar, 2016). This study focused on the benefit gained by the crowdsourcer, namely nonprofit leadership, from the application of crowdsourcing to organizational strategy development issues. Presently, organizations must be more inventive when creating the organizational strategy (Aten &

Thomas, 2016). Studying value revealed what benefit is gained from the practice of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofit leaders.

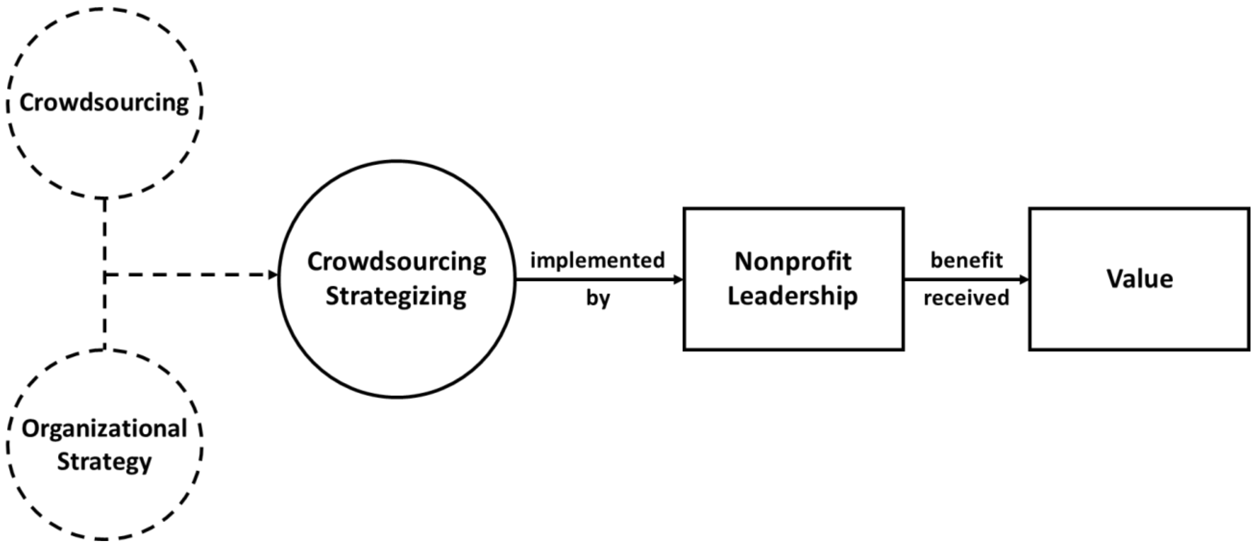

Figure 1. Conceptual framework depicting relationships between the key elements of the study.

Discussion of relationships between concepts.

The three concepts of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value are central to the study. As seen in Figure 1, crowdsourcing and organizational strategy are two key elements that, when combined, create crowdsourcing strategizing. Individually, crowdsourcing and organizational strategy are discussed more in the literature review. Collectively, the concept was designed to address the strategic needs of leadership through the tool of crowdsourcing (Aten & Thomas, 2016). For the intent of this study, the actual or potential implementation of crowdsourcing strategizing by nonprofit leaders was a key relationship that helped determine value. As the third concept, value was the output being measured by the study but was dependent upon the dynamic relationship between the previous concepts of crowdsourcing strategizing and nonprofit leadership.

Summary of the conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework helps to establish the structure for the study. Using the three concepts addressed the research issue of the lack of understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofit organizations. Crowdsourcing strategizing is the central concept of the study. Nonprofit leaders are the angle from which the value is examined. Integrating the three concepts of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value, as illustrated in Figure 1, resulted in the study's output that will be beneficial professionally and academically.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are presented to denote how each is relevant in studying the value leadership believes crowdsourcing strategizing adds to a nonprofit organization. Explanations are based on scholarly perspectives. Each phrase is deemed beneficial in knowing the contextual use within the research. For several words, the definition's scope has been constrained to a business function. The meaning applicable for the purpose of this study is provided here.

Crowdsourcer: A crowdsourcer is the requesting agent that seeks outsourced knowledge, typically through virtual means (Sievers, 2015).

Crowdsourcee: Crowdsourcee defines the individual or group that offers knowledge to resolve a matter through the process of crowdsourcing (Sievers, 2015).

Crowdsourcing: Crowdsourcing is the use of a crowd to accomplish an objective as opposed to the representative originally assigned, where the agent can be an individual, team, or organization and is mainly external to the crowdsourcer entity (Afuah & Tucci, 2012).

Crowdsourcing/Open strategizing: Crowdsourcing strategizing is many stakeholders communicating in virtual environments to meet the organizational strategy development needs, where participants are primarily internal to the organization (Aten & Thomas, 2016).

Open innovation: Open innovation is the precursor of crowdsourcing strategizing that was designed for high-technology industries in which organizations used external knowledge to create value for the firm (Jayakumar, 2016).

Organization: An organization is defined as a collection of people performing work that yields results on a promise by producing a product or service (Bentzien, Bharadwaj, & Thompson, 2015).

Performance-based rubric: A performance-based rubric is an output from measuring strategies and programs frequently used by organizations to improve the business (Danks & Allen, 2014).

Strategy: Strategy is, simply, creating an advantage (Everett, 2013).

Top-level management/Top-management team (TMT): TMT is the group of executives that report directly to the organization's chief executive officer (CEO) and have governance over strategic decisions (Guadalupe, Hongyi, & Wulf, 2014; Papadakis & Barwise, 2002).

Value: Value is a business benefit created by crowdsourced information (Blohm et al., 2013).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

This section addresses the study's assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. The assumptions give insight into what elements were thought to be true but had not been validated. Any possible weaknesses of the study are discussed within the limitations. Delimitations deal with what was in and out of scope for the study along with any other boundaries. These areas provide information to help frame an understanding of the research.

Assumptions.

A major assumption was the belief that leaders were willing to participate in the study and be recorded. Also, the researcher assumed engaged participants were accessible for follow up inquiries during the research period. Leaders involved in the study were thought to have influence over the strategic direction of the nonprofit, assuming the sample population was properly vetted by the selection criteria. To mitigate the risk of non-influential candidate data, participants were asked in the interview to describe the responsibilities of the top-level management position held. Any knowledge from candidates not aligned with the criterion was eliminated from the raw data. Additionally, the researcher offered a reward for being in the study and did not request extensive access from participants to increase the chances of individuals becoming, as well as remaining, involved.

Open dialogue regarding crowdsourcing strategizing and the potential, or present, influence on the organizational strategy was expected. Participants were presumed to have answered truthfully but not to the extent of exposing confidential information and negatively influencing the advancement of the organization. Gathering damaging material should be avoided (Creswell, 2014). The interviewer adapted a conversational format for the interview period (Yin, 2011) but did not diverge far from the interview guide to abstain from the risk of receiving confidential data. If any assumptions proved false, the study was put at risk of completion. To mitigate the risk, alternative participants were sought out and research was limited to locally accessible nonprofit leaders. The current assumptions proven true helped strengthen the research process.

Limitations.

A primary limitation was leaders with experience or awareness of crowdsourcing not being accessible. Additionally, organizations involved in the study were perceived to have an awareness of crowdsourcing or have been engaged at some level. For individuals lacking a background understanding of crowdsourcing, the researcher provided descriptive information to help frame the context of the work without introducing a bias toward the study. An organization's involvement with crowdsourcing was ascertained during the interview, which was taken into consideration for the data analysis and interpretation.

The possibility of participants falsifying replies or expounding beyond the scope of knowledge also existed. This could have taken place due to a lack of understanding of or intimidation surrounding the subject. The interviewees were encouraged to answer as honestly as possible, without exaggeration of experiences, to improve the quality of data collected. An audio recording of interviews was conducted. The recordings were conducted to help minimize error.

The idea existed that a commonality in value of crowdsourcing strategizing could be found among the study participants. Value was measured from the leader's perspective and was weighed by an opinionated metric. The level of value may have fluctuated from one leader to the other based on perception and understanding. The validity of the study was contingent on the honesty of participating leaders and the interpretation of the responses. An appropriate measure of value was denoted by achieving theoretical saturation. Lastly, the risk of researcher bias was reduced through open-ended opinion-based questions. Nevertheless, the researcher's personal experience may be applied during interpretations (Stake, 2010) to strengthen the findings.

Delimitations.

The research was bound by the nonprofit sector. While the results may benefit other business entities, organizations outside the nonprofit industry were not relevant in the exploration of the study. Nonprofit participants represented a subpopulation of business associates and provided information relevant within the broad business realm. A constraint of the study existed with leadership roles that were defined by individuals serving in a capacity to strategically shift the direction of the organization. These bounds were enforced through the researcher selecting organizations and leaders within the sample population restraints.

Additionally, this study of crowdsourcing strategizing addressed crowdsourcing's application to organizational strategy for a nonprofit. Nonprofit operations have similarities with corporations and would benefit from the use of crowdsourcing strategizing. However, the use of crowdsourcing for other business issues, outside of organizational strategy, was not addressed in the research. Though, leaders may have drawn on experiences with crowdsourcing in other areas for applicability to the study. The researcher used the interview guide to improve the likelihood of not engaging in other uses of crowdsourcing.

Ultimately, the value seen or experienced by leaders was the key focus within the scope of the study. The research did not include assessing the impact on the organization's financial performance. Changes to how organizational strategy is implemented were also excluded from the research. Those elements required an examination length and process not integrated into the breadth of this study. Therefore, the researcher examined value from a non-financial perspective.

Significance of the Study

The three significant topics covered here are how the study reduces gaps, the biblical integration, and the connection of crowdsourcing strategizing to the subject of leadership. First, the reduction of gaps handles the areas that the study addressed which have not been previously explored. Next, God’s biblical-based application of the topic is discussed. Finally, the study’s relevance to the field of leadership is reviewed. These topics add credence to the study of crowdsourcing strategizing within the business sector.

Reduction of gaps.

Understanding the value provided to leaders from the application of crowdsourcing strategizing adds to the present body of knowledge by addressing the intersecting subjects of nonprofit leadership and crowdsourcing strategizing. There is a need to explore the worth of crowdsourcing strategizing to an organization (Erickson, 2013). From the perspective of Rhine (2015), nonprofits lack authentic leadership and strategic planning. Nonprofit leadership and crowdsourcing strategizing have been addressed by scholars independently, and the value derived from combining the subjects is an addition to the literature body. Organizations are beginning to understand the importance of expanding beyond the leader to develop a strategy (Aurik et al., 2015). Still, leaders guide the organization and the tools applied in the process have an impact on the strategic direction. The business realm gains an advantage in using crowdsourcing strategizing when the industry understands the influence on the organization. Therefore, the study adds to the existing literature by providing an exploration of the value obtained, as noted by nonprofit leadership, from crowdsourcing strategizing.

Implications for biblical integration.

In business, one is often encouraged, through speech or action, to not discuss faith. However, viewing the matters of life from God’s vantage point offers the best insight, in business or otherwise. The biblical framework of the study involves leadership, crowdsourcing, and strategy. Each topic will be discussed with biblical support of the concept. The knowledge is presented to show the biblical relevance of practical, business applications.

Perhaps, the greatest example of leadership in the earth was Jesus. Looked upon as a servant leader, His focus was to do the will of God which sent Him (John 4:34, KJV). In an organization, there is a CEO, other chief officers, managers, and the remaining employees. God's kingdom is established in like fashion with God as CEO, Jesus as a chief officer, the apostles being managers, and the disciples carrying out the vision. The leadership of Jesus has provoked many to operate excellently, particularly in business (Blanchard & Hodges, 2008). The principles of Christ propel a leader to be just in business dealings, fair in partnership transactions, and compassionate toward employees.

While Jesus was effective as a leader, Christ understood that the work could not be done alone. A valuable lesson to any great leader is understanding the importance of entrusting the individuals on the team; Jesus understood this concept and empowered the disciples to be effective in the world (D. Robertson, 2015). The disciples received, and for new believers, continue receiving, the charge and mentorship of Jesus' life. Every protégé has the obligation to follow the mentor (E. Robertson, 2012). Jesus was, and through the legacy of life continues to be, an exceptional example of leadership.

Like Jesus, other biblical leaders relied on God as well. Moses had to stand before Pharaoh who did not want to release the children of Israel, God's chosen people, out of bondage (Exodus 5:1-3). Gideon was considered the least of Joash's children but rose to deliver the Israelites from the oppression of the Midianites (Judges 6-8). Esther went before the king without permission, at the risk of dying, and was willing to perish for the cause of the Israelites (Esther 4:16-5:2). The biblical framework of leadership gives many examples with varying levels of complexity, but all showcase how effective a leader can be in moving a cause, or organization, forward.

On the subject of crowdsourcing, the New Testament gives the example of Jesus' crucifixion decision. Though God's will was done, Christ was sent to the cross based on information from the crowd (Matthew 27:15-26). Also, according to Scripture, a vision or strategy should be written down that those who read the instructions will be able to execute (Habakkuk 2:2). Leaders have the responsibility of developing and assuring the strategy is clearly written for an organization. As Leavy (2014) expressed, leaders are not readily forgiven for errors in judgment, despite being tasked with making serious decisions and commitments. A leader's heart must be courageous to endure the challenges of being on the front line. Courage begins internally, like effective leadership (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003). Connecting leaders with impactful tools to advance strategic endeavors is based on God's example of walking in earthly dominion.

Relationship to field of study.

The study is related to leadership because the leader's perspective was the vantage point of exploring crowdsourcing strategizing. Being a leader requires perseverance and courage in a society that does not often overlook errors (Leavy, 2014). Choosing the right paths, directions, and mediums in conducting business is critical. One can better understand the direction a business will follow based on the strategic tools chosen by leadership. The target of crowdsourcing strategizing is for leaders to direct, motivate, and contest the organization in the strategy development process (Aurik et al., 2015), helping to deliver a better outcome.

Crowdsourcing strategizing has been offered as an alternative and the value to the business, as well as leaders that utilize the method, should be determined. The method allows the crowd to aid in creating strategy (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Technology has changed the development process and crowdsourcing strategizing has become one approach among several. Traditionally, select leaders gathered behind closed doors to develop a plan for the business (Aten & Thomas, 2016). The idea of sourcing knowledge from employees in the firm's strategy conversation is an encouraging venture (Stieger et al., 2012), where the crowd can be internal or external to the organization. Leaders that engage in the practice of crowdsourcing have another avenue of success.

Summary of the significance of the study.

The significance addressed how the study fills gaps, is important to God's viewpoint of business, and the link to leadership. This research helps close the academic information gap on nonprofit leadership and crowdsourcing strategizing by addressing the topics in a single study. Strategic planning is lacking in nonprofit organizations (Rhine, 2015), and the value of crowdsourcing strategizing has not really been studied (Erickson, 2013). Gaining an understanding of crowdsourcing strategizing's value to an organization provides applicable knowledge to the professional sector as well as influences decisions in the nonprofit realm and elsewhere. In like manner, one should consider the biblical perspective when making a strategic decision.

The Bible, which is universally referred to as God's manual for life, gives strong examples of leadership, crowdsourcing, and strategic planning. God's kingdom is a model for business and how an organization can operate successfully. Within God's model, Jesus is an excellent biblical and practical illustration of leadership. The research was strongly connected to leadership's viewpoint by exploring value through the eyes of leaders. Thus, the significance of the study was based on filling academic and professional gaps on the topics, supporting the research from a biblical angle, along with investigating crowdsourcing strategizing from leaderships' outlook.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The collision of crowdsourcing and organizational strategy development has created an opportunity of exploration in academics along with the professional sector. The notion of crowdsourcing, though increasing in relatively recent popularity (Afuah & Tucci, 2012; Aten & Thomas, 2016), is not new to the business realm. However, crowdsourcing strategizing and how value is created for organizational leaders is a joining of the topics. A review of existing works revealed three themes. The themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value will be explored in the literature to understand the scholarly viewpoint.

Crowdsourcing strategizing.

Crowdsourcing strategizing is central to addressing the research problem because the study focuses on unearthing some benefits of the business tool. Therefore, the theory is a main element of the literature review. The term was created by applying crowdsourcing to the process of creating an organization's strategy (Aten & Thomas, 2016). The traditional approach of using a few people within a closed setting to develop the strategic direction of today's businesses is considered narrow (Aurik et al., 2015). As opposed to the familiar top-down process, businesses are invoking a crowdsourcing method (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Crowdsourcing strategizing invites the opinion of individuals outside the executive suite to become part of the organization's strategy footprint. Thus, having a better scholarly understanding of the element is important to digesting the practical impact of crowdsourcing strategizing.

Customer involvement in a firm's invention process has been bolstered by the Internet (Sundic & Leitner, 2013). The crowd can be more active earlier in the innovation of any business area to which consumers are given access. A strategic use of crowdsourcing is to outsource the innovation needs from internal to external resources (Sundic & Leitner, 2013). The primary motivation for using crowdsourcing for innovation strategy is to quickly communicate with the customer and more readily understand the needs. Crowdsourcing strategy was profitable to the Galaxy Zoo project after giving online patrons the opportunity to catalog gallery images (Dieleman, Willett, & Dambre, 2015). In another study, Jayakumar (2016) described the innovative strategies of crowdsourcing as a co-creation process with the crowd. Seen as a variation of open innovation, the ability of a successful crowdsourcing strategy to give value creation depends upon choosing the proper crowd.

Crowdsourcing. A business determines the best means of accomplishing a mission and vision through strategy. Some companies have adopted a different approach to organizational strategy formation due to disruptive trends in the environment. A strategy developed through crowdsourcing is being touted as an inclusive alternative rather than the traditional approach (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Seen as a problem-solving technique, crowdsourcing combines the energy, knowledge, and creativity of an online global population (Parvanta et al., 2013). Inherently, there is a greater level of involvement in the creation of the company's strategy from outside the executive realm. The performance of crowdsourcing, however, is not optimistic considering the relationship risk between crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee (Liu et al., 2016). Therefore, crowdsourcing will be further explored through scholarly definitions, discussing platforms, and examining the applications.

Definitions. Crowdsourcing is using a crowd, or group, to accomplish a task as opposed to the agent originally assigned, where the agent can be an individual, team, or organization (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). Stemming from a 2006 issue of *Wired* magazine, crowdsourcing is a phrase given to business models that utilized the power of the Internet and the creativity of external company agents (Liu, 2014). Bentzien et al. (2015) developed the notion of actors as an extension of the crowd definition, and the idea includes people working with or for the firm as well as solving issues of interest to the business. Thus, if viewing organizations as coordinated actors functioning together, then, the external actors are the crowd (Bentzien et al., 2015). From the government's viewpoint, the notion of the state depending on citizens for services is not a recently developed concept. Therefore, with the addition of technology, crowdsourcing has become an advancement of the idea (Dutil, 2015). Despite crowdsourcing's origin, the technique is relevant to furthering business and can be achieved through technology.

***Platforms*.** Aten and Thomas (2016) examined the crowdsourcing approach through a case analysis. The assessment revealed that technology affordances have affected the process using open communication platforms via virtual settings. Thus, crowdsourcing was viewed as egalitarian, inclusive, multi-voice, and divergent. Additionally, specific social media platforms, namely micro-blogging sites, social networking sites, wikis, and video-sharing sites, were also studied (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). The authors supported social media as a channel through which organizations communicate with external stakeholders. Therefore, crowdsourcing gives companies a platform to execute ideas.

Social media, being a type of affordance, gives the promise of more collaborative and transparent communication throughout the company. However, the reality is that some organizations experience no improvement. Poor results are witnessed when companies view the implementation of social media platforms as a technological solution (Cardon, 2016). In truth, the platforms allow people to develop a sense of community because the solution is intricately connected with the concept of culture. Additionally, crowdsourcing has more avenues of fulfillment considering the various communication technologies. As an example, the Library of Congress commissioned help from Flickr members to identify old collection images. Thus, when problem-solving for distant-search solutions, crowdsourcing may emerge as the better option (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). To better understand the concept, numerous authors have assessed crowdsourcing for different purposes and through diverse research approaches which have yielded strategic applications.

***Applications*.** Crowdsourcing is used for several organizational issues, across varying industries. One study addressed the issue of catching the difference in user preferences for a recommendation system by highlighting that the internet has become a database with limited oversight (Costa, Silva, Antunes, & Ribeiro, 2013). All types of individuals can post and retrieve information without regard to accuracy. The practice of recommendation systems has become an area of study to understand data mining and machine learning. Sievers (2015) proposed the crowdsourcer-problem-crowd-platform-solution (CPCPS) model as a framework designed for practitioners to understand and apply crowdsourcing to state and local governments needing to decentralize emergency planning efforts.

There are two parties in a crowdsourcing arrangement, a group or individual needing information and an audience designed to give the data (Sievers, 2015). The connecting factor among the parties is a question or issue from the crowdsourcer to the crowd or audience. A forced relationship is not the typical makeup of the process. Instead, the crowd usually includes people willing to freely provide information and complete the desired assignment. In the recommendations system study, the crowd was used as a non-expert source for the learning systems (Costa et al., 2013). Four traits of an intelligent crowd were observed, which includes a diversity of opinion, independence, decentralization, and aggregation. The traits, combined with a human's ability to recognize speech and image, made crowdsourcing an advantageous solution.

A common example of crowdsourcing is a startup business utilizing a fundraising website to solicit initial cash (Sievers, 2015). The business owner becomes the crowdsourcer, while the users of the site serve as the crowd. Similarly, state and local governments can use crowdsourcing to meet emergency planning needs. The CPCPS framework recommends five steps. The first is to determine the feasibility of crowdsourcing based on the government's jurisdiction. Secondly, a screening process must be used for the problem to know whether the issue is a good crowdsourcing subject. Then, the crowd that is applicable to the state or local government's need must be identified. Fourth, the communication structure that would permit the parties to engage must be determined. Finally, select the solution based on the information provided by the crowd (Sievers, 2015). The CPCPS model is a means to mitigate the pressures that state and local governments experience to decentralize the emergency planning process.

In the case of state and local governments, the main idea supporting the study of active learning is using machine learning algorithms to gain accuracy with fewer samples. Active learning would fast-track the learning process and decrease human efforts (Costa et al., 2013). The results showed the crowd to be more useful in obtaining customized user preferences and active learning served a key role in the classification process (Costa et al., 2013). Crowdsourcing is also being applied in the educational arena (Hall, 2016). The crowdsourcing technique allows students to connect formally and informally with the benefit of broadening the learning and knowledge dimensions (Hall, 2016). Scholars can sharpen critical thinking skills through retrieving information from the crowd and different forms of crowdsourcing have been implemented. The three categories implemented in another government use were crowdcontests, macrotasking, and crowdfunding. Using a contest format, the government gains creative solutions (Dutil, 2015). However, there is no indicator of how much success is garnered with the results.

Organizational strategy. Crowdsourcing focuses on the use of the crowd to meet any company objective as compared to crowdsourcing strategizing which embodies the specific goal of using crowdsourcing to develop or refine organizational strategy. When referring to leadership and organizational strategy theories, the development process is essential. The progress of leadership is not independent of an organization’s design (Swensen et al., 2016). A performance-based rubric that would measure organizational strategy and enable leaders to capture, as well as identify, the core of organizational strategy was studied; additionally, the results aimed to connect performance outcomes to certain strategic actions (Danks & Allen, 2014). The idea of using a gauging rubric is due to the perceived measurement gap between strategies and overall outcomes. Results revealed that leaders should be concerned with creating better tools for measuring organizational strategies during the development stage.

Company leaders, or agents, are motivated to solve problems for multiple reasons, ranging from monetary to skill demonstration (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). To help in the process, businesses can communicate, via social media, with investors, customers, and various stakeholders that have an impact on the organization's financial outlook. Amongst many benefits, social media platforms permit external stakeholders to access and engage in conversations with companies (Argyris & Monu, 2015). In the end, work studied by Danks and Allen (2014) showed leaders may find using a performance-based rubric simpler to connect strategy and overall organizational performance.

Results of a study suggested that positions should be identified, first, to know every person's capability and a competency model that represents the organization can be established; the competency model should be a fit with the company's structure and strategies (Mahbanooei, Gholipour, & Ardakan, 2016). Rhine (2015) noted that strategic planning is priceless. The tool is used to organize resources, create plans for profitable growth, and make sure stakeholders know the state of the business. Another strategy is a networked organization. Small communities used to operate like an organization, but now companies have a global advantage (Everett, 2013). The company must start with recruiting partners to have a successful networked organizational strategy. A partner can be an individual or another firm. Through partnering, a simple network is developed (Everett, 2013). A community is created as partners begin to make connections with each other, which achieves phase two of the networked organization strategy. The third stage is a growth upon the previous where coalitions are created through multiple affiliate connections (Everett, 2013).

Leavy (2014) agreed that sustainable competitive advantage is a long-term process. Conventional strategy ideas are maximized when used in highly competitive environments. Leavy (2014) also acknowledged Rita McGrath's five-phase strategy outline as an antidote. The phases include launch, ramp up, exploitation, reconfiguration, along with disengagement and replacement. In a comparable study, a four-stage process was noted for meeting strategic goals (Danks & Allen, 2014). The first is detecting inputs to construct the strategic objectives. Next, define the success line. The third step in the process is resource allocation, and the final phase includes developing processes and auxiliary initiatives to obtain the preferred outcome. A traditional strategy does not have to be eliminated but supplemented to gain organizational success (Leavy, 2014).

Structure. Matching structure to strategy has been the attempt in modern business history. Mass production created large economies of scale, as well as ushered in a centralization of functions such as operations, sales, and finance (Kaplan & Norton, 2006). With the diversification of what companies offered and the shift into other regions, came the use of business units that were organized around products and geographic markets. The structure of division by product was the leading model for 50, or more, years. However, as the competitive environment became stronger and issues with the models became perceptible, businesses went in search of new ways to obtain corporate value. Due to the struggle associated with those issues, many organizations have become submerged in daunting and costly cycles of organizational change. In one study, the executives of DuPont Engineering Polymers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police sought to achieve corporate-level synergies and utilized the balanced scorecard strategy management system as guidance for the decentralization of units (Kaplan & Norton, 2006). The study's impact changed how the organizational strategy was perceived.

Additionally, the structure of strategy can be as diverse as the subject. Caldart and Ricart (2007) studied the subject from an exploitative and explorative angle. An analysis was operationalized and formalized through the development of a set of agent-based simulations. The evolution of companies led by practices on the organizational strategy level was captured and explained. For the purposes of understanding corporate advantage, the simulations were developed and encompassed various characteristics which allowed the modeling of exploitative and explorative organizational strategies, tuning the environmental complexity levels faced by the participating companies and the value of the strategic plans built by leadership. Caldart and Ricart (2007) studied corporate strategy as a method driven by three interlinked processes. The first of these is developing a representation of the firm's issue, by corporate leaders, which results in creating a strategic plan. From there, the business implements the plan, determining whether to use an exploitative or opportunistic (combination of exploration and exploitation) approach of the original idea. Last, of the processes, is to focus on insights gained from the complexity theory. The findings showed that the characteristics of the environment and the quality of the organizational strategic plan determine the relative performance of an exploitative strategy and an opportunistic strategy (Caldart & Ricart, 2007). Thus, the structure can be conditional to the needs of the business.

Influences. Just as leaders impact the organizational strategy, there are other elements of control and areas in which the strategy has influence. In times such as turnaround and decline, in the business climate, the organizational strategy still matters, particularly on shareholder value (Furrer, Rajendran Pandian, & Howard, 2007). A study was conducted, using a large sample of organizations from an extended period of time that were experiencing decline or turnaround, to determine the effect of a strategy on the shareholder value. Two focus elements of the study were beta excess returns and declining versus non-declining situations for firms. For the sake of the study, an extended period involves a year to a few years. The hypotheses were formed based on empirical research. First, cumulative beta excess returns will be negative and less than non-declining firms over the decline period for turnaround companies. Secondly, the cumulative beta excess returns from year to year will be negative and less than non-declining firms during the decline phase of a turnaround for organizations (Furrer et al., 2007).

To link strategy and shareholder value, know the latter is dependent on a future stream of income and is impacted by data on any factor that may influence that revenue flow. The beta excess returns do not change but remain negligible given the information impacts all corporations with similar risk to the same degree (Furrer et al., 2007). To further strengthen the research, strategic conduct variables were used, namely manufacturing cost, accounts receivable, accounts payable, marketing cost, and capital expenditure. The findings confirmed shareholder value gets modified as more information becomes available and not based on a single occasion. Turnaround firms experienced a decline in shareholder value that was not witnessed by non-declining firms, and, ultimately, shareholder value will depend on a significant number of factors. The conclusion of the study was there does exist a direct connection between shareholder value and strategic conduct (Furrer et al., 2007). Therefore, the handling of the organizational strategy is pivotal to shareholder value.

Strategic planning is another factor related to organizational strategy. The work of Hirsch, Burggraf, and Daheim (2013) was intended to make an argument for the benefits of quantified scenarios as a strategic planning foresight tool. Initially, the writing attempted to establish the framework of quantification approaches, where qualitative scenarios allow for a contingency perspective, within world models, but are limited in ability to connect organizational foresight to strategic planning. On the other hand, forecasts on key indicators are more easily applicable to strategy processes but lack the required capability to recognize uncertainty and decision points. To bridge the gap, a new participative and pragmatic approach is being studied and desires to reveal how the quantification approach can be combined with development construction on an operational level (Hirsch et al., 2013).

The research contained an argument of suitability for organizational foresight through a quantitative scenario process support. Findings disclosed quantified scenarios can raise the impact to organizational strategic planning by foresight thinking and could be relevant in corporate foresight projects to improve such planning activities (Hirsch et al., 2013). Planning includes the use of a corporate staff. For multidivisional firms, planning is central to the implementation of the organizational strategy (Kleinbaum & Stuart, 2014).

Also, influence can be applied outward. In a hotel study, the findings revealed that organizational strategy influenced hotel property level financial performance (Xiao, O'Neill, & Mattila, 2012). This is based on loosely or tightly coupled value-creating behaviors belonging to the organizational strategy realm (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2007). Additional influences include coordination, centralization, and collaboration (Lichtenthaler, 2007), as well as the size of the supervisory board (Matyjas, 2014). While the influence of strategy is important, there are some that propose the vision and mission will be valued above the strategy in the future (Abell, 2006). Still, strategy is one of the most actively investigated and taught subjects of the present time (Morris & Jamieson, 2005).

Frameworks. The concept of crowdsourcing is important to understand, but the relevance to organizational strategy is crucial as well. Parvanta et al. (2013) found that four Fs stimulate online contributors and offer an incentive to crowd engagement; the factors are Fun, Fortune, Feeling good (Fulfillment), and Fame. The authors used Nielsen’s 1/9/90% model as a standard for interacting with the right individuals during the development process and, when done strategically, crowdsourcing has the potential to give thoroughly researched and creative results. In another study, a framework for the pharmaceutical industry gave a consolidated perspective of crowdsourcing and allowed the methodology to be applied strategically (Bentzien et al., 2015). The researchers assessed the applications within the context of a pharmaceutical environment. Basing the framework on the key element of the organization, relationship patterns can be arranged between the company and other factors using an abstract coupling.

Innovation is a primary motivating factor behind the use of crowdsourcing strategizing. External innovation can be internally capitalized upon for a business through crowdsourcing (Bentzien et al., 2015). Scholars aligned a strategic crowdsourcing framework with traditional aspects of the pharmaceutical industry. The construct of the framework includes strongly, partially, and weakly coupled pairings of the key study contributors. The main players of the study were the organization and individuals, known as others, not making a direct contribution to the company's administration of products or services. In a strongly coupled arrangement, the objectives of the organization and others are greatly aligned. For a partially coupled scenario, there is a shared objective and others are connected to the organization. A weakly coupled situation shows the relationship between people barely connected to the organization via an Internet-enabled medium, also known as the crowd. Based on an Internet-enabled crowdsourcing platform, the coupling dynamic framework gives a layout of processes and activities that the company can use to maximize innovation (Bentzien et al., 2015).

In an application of crisis-based events, a computer-supported cooperative work (CSCW) framework was designed to address social, technological, organizational, and policy (STOP) interfaces (Liu, 2014). Several crowdsourcing configurations are necessary to strategically maximize the resources that unite in a crisis moment. The CSCW framework includes group-organized activities that manage the crisis by revealing concepts that allow cooperative work through crowdsourcing. CSCW utilizes why, who, what, when, where, and how to share information among participants of the crisis team (Liu, 2014). Why determines the crowd task need by identifying the problem. Who speaks to the type of crowd and level of expertise needed. What is designed to deal with the flow required for interaction. When addresses the disaster lifecycle. Where tackles the location of the crisis, crowds, and tasks. Lastly, how is designed to identify STOP (Liu, 2014).

Given the growth of the Internet and web-based platforms, companies have greater access to employees and a wealth of ideas to tackle strategy design (Stieger et al., 2012). This crowd of employees allows organizations to develop the strategy in a democratic manner. The traditional model of leaders only (Aten & Thomas, 2016), has a dictatorial connotation. A strategy does not typically come out of an individual or team but results from a social interaction hinging on the organizational member's combined beliefs and understanding (Stieger et al., 2012). Developing a smart crowd requires diversity, accurate information summarization, and decentralization. Diversity allows employees to offer a local perspective that leadership may not otherwise access. Summarizing data properly yields a correct overall opinion of the crowd, and decentralization alleviates top management's control of crowd responses (Stieger et al., 2012). The conclusion revealed that the methodology, culture of the organization, and nature of the problem are dimensions illustrated through crowdsourcing.

Utilizing agency theory, the thought remains that leaders are more likely to champion the interest of shareholders when the boards of directors are less subject to influence from managers and more independent. Outside directors are not corporate officers of the firm, and therefore not employed by the organization. This dynamic makes directors less prone to conflicts of interest between managers and shareholders. Agency theorists, in general, regard boards of directors that have a high proportion of outside directors as more effectual representatives of shareholder interests. Accordingly, the assumed hypothesis is employment stability has a negative relationship with the quantity of the board that includes outside directors. The concept of agency theory supports the thought that manager and shareholder interests will be co-aligned when referring to executive incentives (Grossman, 2010). This is believed because the two groups share in the resulting gains, and performance-based compensation arrangements give managers a motivation to engage in strategies that are beneficial to shareholders as opposed to diverting organizational resources to personal gain.

Nonprofit leadership.

The second element of the study is nonprofit leadership because the research focuses on unearthing some benefits of crowdsourcing strategizing from the perspective of nonprofit leaders. Harrison et al. (2013) expressed the importance of nonprofit leaders that understood strategy being in top position to have an effective operation. Additionally, leaders are a reflection of an organization’s status (Halley-Boyce et al., 2013) and the growth of an organization hinges on the leadership (Swenson et al., 2016). Therefore, studying nonprofit leaders provides insight into the success of the organization and helps calibrate the perceived value of crowdsourcing strategizing.

Leaders are an essential part of developing as well as shaping a business, serving in various capacities with the ultimate charge of making the organization successful. Success comes with the proper facilitation of business affairs, and a leader must know the design and structural elements that are best for accomplishing the firm’s outlined goals. Knowing some of the elements is a background to proper application. Therefore, design pertains to notions of innovation, change, influences from competitors and the government, preventing or dealing with ethical concerns, bureaucracy, as well as the power and politics among managers; the ideas of structure center on thoughts of formal reporting relationships, departmental groupings, along with systems for coordination and communication (Daft, 2016).

Leadership behavior. Leaders act as mirrors for the company (Halley-Boyce et al., 2013). The state of the organization is reflected in management, but a true leader manages oneself first. Leading from the top requires others not to be blamed when issues arise. As a leader is seen accepting responsibility, followers feel empowered to act accordingly. Modeling the leader's behavior is a sign of respect that is developed through trust. Listening is also a key action of the leader (Halley-Boyce et al., 2013). Though a simple trait, the impact of a leader paying attention can be great. Creating a connection is achieved through listening and actively engaging in the speaker's words. A third notable trait is navigating. The strategy is at the foundation of a leader's ability to successfully navigate the firm through challenges. Also, communication is key to overall success (Halley-Boyce et al., 2013). However, Rhine (2015) believed authentic leadership needs trust, emotional connection, and hope.

Communicating. Communication is a crucial aspect because there are elevated levels of uncertainty that must be managed in business. In an atmosphere of uncertainty, quick thinking and rapid actions are needed. Leaders are keeping organizations alive by responding to the need for greater flexibility and shorter lead times (Jerbrant & Gustavsson, 2013). Leadership sets grand expectations, expresses personal confidence, as well as defines roles and responsibilities for a team (Dutkiewicz & Duxbury, 2013). Today's wise corporate leaders strategically and consistently chase after management with sustainable value because organizations with large social systems are interconnected economically and offer greater sustainability (Corman & Tănăsescu, 2014). The social value of an organization should be viewed as a form of communication given value informs the community of a company's intents.

While a community is often represented by the surrounding physical area to the business and the inhabitants, the community can extend to the social media followers, a group of suppliers, in addition to various other individuals and entities impacted by the reach of the business. Each group's perspective will provide multiple viewpoints. Engaging varying opinions, values, and assumptions is pivotal for shared resource management, and leaders must take on the role of an unbiased and honest communicator (Sjölander-Lindqvist, Johansson, & Sandström, 2015). A leader serving in this capacity helps to solidify communication in the organization and strengthening communication within, as well as outside of, the company adds strategic value. Strategic and organizational management practices are closely tied to economic development (Corman & Tănăsescu, 2014). Therefore, as a communicator, leaders should socially uplift, economically impact, and structurally redefine the business. The values of management shape the structure of the organization. As a communicator, leaders help to mold the organizational behavior. Sustainable development depends on the effective uses (Corman & Tănăsescu, 2014) which could be minimized through the simple act of poor communication.

Developing relationships. The relationship amongst the top management and executive levels has an impact on the design of the business (Guadalupe et al., 2014). Support by top management can be obtained through relationship (Islam, Jasimuddin, & Hasan, 2015) that develops and leaves a powerful legacy. Organizations that are consistent with the founder’s value system withstand the hardships of time (Mueller, 2014). Additionally, the emotional organizational commitment of employees, which is relatively higher in the US, is impacted by the style and consideration of the leader (Hong, Cho, Froese, & Shin, 2016). Consideration is a crucial trait to have as a relationship developer because a leader remains mindful of how to treat others. Also, multinational organizations have effectively used collaboration and knowledge sharing to the benefit of the business (Islam et al., 2015). Therefore, a relationship developer understands that the need of the business should precede competitive natures and collaboration gives more gain.

Giving direction. Competent leaders can guide a team and provide the direction needed at varying stages of action. The knowledge and skills of leadership are relative to the skill set of the employees, which explicitly defines a company's success (Verle, Markič, Kodrič, & Zoran, 2014). Changes seen in an organization are often the result of a problem, and leaders seek answers that will accomplish goals and advance the company’s mission (Longenecker & Yonker, 2013). In a comparison of family and non-family headship, higher performance was experienced with a better structural equality of power in leadership (Tihanyi, Graffin, & George, 2014). In directing and leading, behaviors based on sophisticated motivation were proven to have greater efficiency than a task-oriented approach (Dunavölgyi, 2016). Therefore, managers should not only be mindful of guiding the organization but careful in the tactics and competencies utilized.

Training for leadership. The concept of training or executive coaching is designed to aid organizations in transforming leaders to new levels of understanding and performance which grows the organization. An increase in transformational leadership behavior has been witnessed, at various levels of the organization, after coaching (MacKie, 2015). Direct impacts from coaching have been observed in employee satisfaction with work, and indirectly influences on career commitment, dedication to the organization, and job performance have been noticed (Kim, Egan, Kim, & Kim, 2013). Still, a greater understanding of the topic can be explored.

Advancing human capital, through training and development, is one of the most significant investments an organization can make (Mello, 2015). Coaching aids in building a firm’s human assets to get the proper return for the business. Many companies may fail to see progress without coaching. Training does, however, require the client to be active in the process, clearly conveying that they do not operate underneath undue influence (Marsden, Humphrey, Stopford, & Houlder, 2010). Though the origins date back to the 15th century, only in the past ten years has coaching experienced growth and popularity. Estimations show approximately 40,000 coaches throughout the world with a reported one billion to two billion dollars in annual revenue (Marsden et al., 2010). Why has such growth been seen? The increase is credited to companies making external coaching a top priority for their leader development strategies (Underhill, McAnally, & Koriath, 2007). Coaching helps provide advanced leaders for the stability and growth of the organization.

Coaching concepts. By nature, coaching can occur in any environment. Executive coaching can happen within the family, in sports, in finance, in church, or, as is true for the present topic, in career. The definition for executive coaching allows one to understand that the results are geared toward accelerating the organization for which the leader is being coached. In other examples, the benefits are yielded toward a different party. For executive coaching, a number of concepts that bear significance to the subject could be highlighted, but five have been selected. Action coaching supports the notion of emotional intelligence (EQ). The four components of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2001) help foster a leader into a better asset for the organization. Inherently, EQ unites with the purpose of coaching because the idea helps to develop leaders.

Without such knowledge of the purpose or putting executive coaching into action, firms miss the opportunity to grow the organization's best assets, human capital. Corporate culture is another concept of executive coaching and is impacted by the mandates that leadership set as well as by how employees see leadership behave. Lastly, executive coaching of leadership is important because of the knowledge transferred across industries, functional areas, and executive levels. These concepts give a brief look into the foundational importance of executive coaching.

Based on the selected works, three central themes were developed surrounding executive coaching. The selected categories are behavioral impact, performance impact, and financial impact. All categories are in relation to executive coaching. These topics became recurring subjects in the articles, and, thus, were selected as themes. Behavioral and performance, or change, impact offered a greater number of writings. However, the length does not indicate a significance over the content relayed on financial impact.

Behavioral impact. The intent of the study was to determine the use of feedback from various sources in how effective executive coaching is when enhancing the full range leadership model. Based on coaching, the study looked at the impact of self-rater alignment on leadership outcomes. A total of 31 executives and senior managers were assigned to a coach or waitlist cohort (MacKie, 2015). Within the cohort, six leadership sessions were given that involved feedback on goal setting and strengths development as well as leadership and strengths. The outcome showed a significant increase in the coachee's transformational behavior. The self-raters, at prominent levels, were the most sensitive, and the self-other rating is a significant moderator.

Is the use of a coach necessary to the transformation of leadership? Kreuz (2015) proposed that companies have applied the technique on both ends, some making training mandatory, while others use coaching systematically. In other cases, business coaches are hired for an entire board to strategically guide the company toward a desired future. The research estimated, based on trends, a bottleneck will occur for coaches (Kreuz, 2015). To maintain the quality of direction, some industries have established a coaching certification. This is done to guarantee the level of performance and even involves a bi-annual review of the certified candidates. When utilized properly, coaching is preferred over other training tactics. The concept of shared experiences between the coach and coachee translating into the selection process was tested by impact on the goal. Results indicated that there is no correlation. Further, research shows that to establish a relationship upon mutual subject matter understanding would prematurely eliminate viable coaches (Chinn, Richmond, & Bennett, 2015).

As part of another study, data from 482 agencies was gathered to determine the relationship between managerial coaching behavior and the outcomes for employee work-relation. Findings showed that the hypothesized conceptual model was supported by collected sample data. The information revealed a direct and indirect impact upon managerial, or executive, coaching (Kim et al., 2013). An employee's satisfaction with work and the clarity regarding the role served were directly influenced. Whereas, indirect implications of executive coaching are seen in the areas of job performance, commitment to career, as well as dedication to the business.

Research findings empirically supported the hypothesized model of the study. The knowledge can be used, by coaches, in the selection and development of executives. Also, the management of employee behaviors and attitudes within the company will benefit. There is no commonly acknowledged conceptual framework for determining executive coaching impact. Therefore, the study begins building a bridge toward such purposes (Kim et al., 2013). As a supporting study, information was gathered from 234 South Korean employees. The conceptual model proved that managerial coaching had a direct impact on the clarity of an employee's role and one's satisfaction with work (Kim, 2014).

The art of coaching can be credited with contributing to specific outcomes. In a study of 10 participants, 30 interviews were conducted. The qualitative study was to characterize the coaching experience, between coach and coachee, and how such events contribute to the outcomes (Correia, dos Santos, & Passmore, 2016). Research showed that outcomes can come from three factors. Those factors are prediction of future self, perspective of present self, and verification of past and present self. Various coaching behaviors can derive from the named mechanisms. Important to note, however, is each factor contributes differently, but they can be collectively managed for sustainability.

Performance impact. During strategic endeavors, many organizations undergo vast changes. Such occurrences create temporary instability within the business, of which employees are the direct recipients. Grant (2014) acknowledged the issue and assessed the impact, during change, on an organization. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data was used to investigate the effect on 31 managers of a global engineering consulting firm. Participants showed an increase in goal attainment, a better ability to handle change, enhanced solution-oriented thinking, improved resilience and leadership self-efficacy, and a reduction in depression. Based on the results, the study supported the use of executive coaching.

In another study, executive coaching was examined from the perspective of an impact on need satisfaction at work. The work consisted of 127 executives from a Fortune 500 high-tech organization, conducted over the period of a year (Moen & Federici, 2012). Of the total participants, 19 were coached by external experts, while the remaining 108 were tutored internally. The split revealed that external executive coaching had a greater impact on need satisfaction, particularly the autonomy. The level of freedom an executive feels to carry out the initiatives of the organization can have a significant impact on the results received for the strategic objectives. Coaching has been touted with the ability to improve competitive advantage through bettering the learning process within organizations. Many would like to see the practice positioned at the core of management customs because coaching is a popular organizational development strategy (Hagen, 2012).

The concept of high performance through coaching is designed to yield a change in the executive (Dawson, 2014). Thus, executive coaching breeds a change for the organization. The opportunity to help someone who is good become better is the essence of coaching. Unlike remedial coaching, where an underperformer is being groomed to change behaviors, executive coaching works with high performers. The intent is to unlock the potential that lies within the person being coached. Research revealed, on average, only 40% of an individual's real capability is released in the workplace, leaving a 60% chance of improvement (Dawson, 2014). The potential changes with just a 20% upgrade in performance include improved career prospects, greater mastery of the current role, and better results for the organization.

Executive coaching is considered a practice and a research area. This gives a double implication of the benefits. As a practice, executive coaching has roots in positive and humanistic psychology, which results in an excessively basic view of the learning and change process (Ciporen, 2015). Considering such, coaches should work with a strong code of ethics to make an impact. Executive coaching can be viewed as a natural support to adult training because the development is learner focused, gives attention to goal setting, and has a self-governing stance. Though the reasons for using executive coaching may vary, the evidence strongly leans toward leadership development and performance as the main objective.

Financial impact. To determine the financial impact of coaching, a study utilized 12 coach-coachee sets (Levenson, 2009). The pairs were spread across the board, in terms of the degree of influence on the organization. Levenson (2009) found that the main conclusion resides in the level of impact on the organization is based upon the complexity of the executive's role, and to the relationship between individual performance and the environment of the organization. To get an impact on the business, executive coaching should be coordinated with the company's leadership development, performance improvement, and rewards initiatives. Also, a return on investment (ROI) study was constructed, using a three-step procedure, to determine the business impact. The three steps included 1) understanding the business worth that senior leadership expects, 2) documenting the learnings from the staff because of coaching, and 3) exploring how staff applied the knowledge gained to produce intangible and monetary value for the organization (Parker-Wilkins, 2006). Yates (2015) argued that the crucial aspect of calculating ROI was having each coach and coachee relationship set up properly.

Biblical view of coaching. With God as a coach, Abraham left his homeland and became the Father of Many Nations, Naomi and Ruth survived desolation to become women of honor, and Noah, with his family, outlived the flood to replenish the earth. In His infinite wisdom, the Lord left the Holy Spirit, or the Comforter, as a guide for each of His children. On a daily basis, the Holy Spirit directs as to which decisions to make, in business and other areas. All such choices help to advance God's purpose in the earth and His kingdom at large.

In like manner, the Old and New Testaments of the Bible have key players that were dedicated to the work of God's kingdom. In the Old Testament, God served in the role of coach, with coachees being prophets, judges, kings, and even shepherds. A coachee was whoever qualified in character and was willing to be used for the purposes of the Lord. The kingdom acted as the client, with God spearheading the organization. Stakeholders varied too, but the children of Israel were the chosen nation. A similar comparison can be made in the New

Testament with the Holy Spirit in the position of coach. The Apostles and Disciples of Christ are the best examples of a New Testament coachee; the kingdom of God would remain as the client. Stakeholders would, still, include the Israelites but expand to the Gentile nation.

Strategic leadership. A strategist has insight, a keen eye for detail, and thinks beyond the immediate answers to an issue. Strategists are innovators and know how to overcome personal bias in decision making. A leader that is a strategist is agile in nature and impactful to the company's future. A strategist is also known as a visionary, though a visionary may not be a strategist. As a leader, a strategist can define the scope of an organization's operation (Daft, 2016). Strategists cause the business to flourish beyond the present condition and into an imaginable future.

As a strategist, sharing knowledge is important to obtaining the right information for making decisions. A knowledge sharing culture is indicative of gaining, accessing, leveraging, and exploiting information to the benefit of the company (Taylor, 2013). Also, knowledge networks create information and strengthen communication (Mirić, 2014). As an additional benefit, innovation can be achieved through adopting improved knowledge (Hellström, Lifvergren, Gustavsson, & Gremyr, 2015). A strategist should also glean from the employees. Entrepreneurially minded employees foster a company's innovations (Klarner, Treffers, & Picot, 2013). The decisions a leader makes as a strategist affect the internal characteristics of the organization (Daft, 2016). Similarly, the organizational design includes a knowledge transfer among inter-organizational agents (Mirić, 2014). Keeping a connection of information among internal resources allows quick access to answers. Therefore, a leader’s use of knowledge sharing and innovation will lead to making decisions that advance the organization.

Sound leadership is the reason for successful strategic planning which is aligned to the overall mission and vision of the business. Leadership carries a great responsibility and does not have the luxury of blaming someone else if the process does not go right. To that argument, a study addressed several points that are helpful, which include strong leadership and purpose. There can be no alignment within the business without a purpose. Adding strategy to the elements directs a leader to be strategic in how the firm’s purpose is executed (Halley-Boyce et al., 2013). A total of twelve principles were discussed within the scholarly work and argued that the factors transcend any discipline. However, Everett (2013) believed that while strategy is important to the organization, the organization is just as important to strategy. Creating an advantage is the aim of strategy and a business offers that opportunity. Three phases used within the work are said to achieve a networked organization, which is the strategy. The phases are creating connections, crafting community, and convening coalitions (Everett, 2013). Success in the first phase creates a simple network. After the second and final phase, there should be a conscious competence to the networked organization.

Rhine's (2015) scholarly work examined leadership in the nonprofit arts area. Declines were much greater for the nonprofit arts organizations and proper strategic planning helped to reduce the deterioration. The study earmarked authentic leadership by several aspects. The ideas that surfaced were a sense of community, passion, collaboration with inclusion, a balance between art and business, along with motivation and shared vision. Traditional methods are no longer getting the desired results (Geer-Frazier, 2014). The strategies, culture, and structure of a business must be aligned with the leader in today's organizations. A study showed that 80% of participants believed in leadership's values (Rhine, 2015). Today's leaders should not view the company as a machine, rather a robust knowledge center that creates innovation, learning, and adaptation (Geer-Frazier, 2014). Also, leadership's development is not separate from the firm's culture and context (Swensen et al., 2016). Authentic leadership needs more trust and empathy in the strategic planning process (Rhine, 2015).

The competence of the leaders, however, is in question when there are paradoxes infused into the company's strategy. This has become a common approach, yet leaders grapple with the successful management of the inconsistencies in the strategy. Although this custom sounds strange, Leavy (2014) noted that practically all strategic tools used in present time are founded on the concept of obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage. The key is the correct management of the paradoxes because proper application impacts the organization's fate. Adding to leadership's challenge, three fundamental paradoxes exist in a competitive context (Leavy, 2014). The first is knowing how to build a company that evolves as quickly as change. Next, ensuring everyone has a responsibility with the business of innovation on a constant basis must be done. Finally, initiative, creativity, and passion are gifts from the employee, and leadership must figure out how to develop the firm in a manner that the gifts can flow freely.

One suggestion to help employees' gifts flow freely is having a strategy that is comprehensive, allowing all levels to engage in development will breed an inclusive organization (Aurik et al., 2015). Continuous reconfiguration is another secret that leaders can use to build an effectual organization (Leavy, 2014). Despite the advantages and tools, leadership must still set the order for strategic impact. The first concern is not to be ethical but, rather, analytical (Leavy, 2014). Executing initiatives that capture opportunities is also key (Aurik et al., 2015). However, Leavy (2014) expressed that strategy and setting direction does not give a guarantee. The responsibility of leaders is not to be taken lightly or overlooked. Crowdsourcing has caused a shift in the process of strategy creation for the business. Also, leaders have an increasing amount of knowledge that can hinder or help the execution of daily affairs.

As organizations transform, leaders must do the same. Companies were once viewed as machine systems but are now seen as a natural open system (Geer-Frazier, 2014). The dynamic has created a paradox for leaders, in which organizations are no longer independent but operate as social structures. Leaders are now responsible for a multifaceted adaptive type of company, which continues to grow in complexity. However, authenticity in leadership yields follower approval of the organization (Rhine, 2015).

Leadership effectiveness. A quantitative study conducted by Harrison et al. (2013) tested four hypotheses of nonprofit leadership effectiveness within Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The international study examined the opinions of board chair leadership's influence based on a previous grounded theory research investigation. After reviewing the grounded theory findings, four prominent theoretical perspectives were identified that gave an understanding as to why certain chairs were more impactful than others in the same position. In a complementary, qualitative study, Aulgur (2016) addressed the perceptions of board chairs and the senior leadership of nonprofit organizations. The first perspective addressed in the quantitative study was the relationship between board chair impact and the effectiveness in the leadership position (Harrison et al., 2013). Secondly, the study highlighted that effective board chairs were relational leaders.

The third perspective the scholars noted was an effective chair being viewed as a team leader (Harrison et al., 2013). Also, the effectiveness of chair's leadership was based on perceptions of leadership style and personality, which resulted in the fourth theoretical perspective. A fifth perspective was observed because of the hypothesized theoretical model developed, which is multiple leadership theories help explain chair leadership effectiveness. Contrary to prior studies, the research aimed at finding factors that best explained the perceptions toward leadership rather than discovering others. The results showed that chair leadership was a multi-dimensional academic theory with little cultural differences between North America and the United Kingdom.

Leadership's impact on a nonprofit can change the direction of the organization. In one study, the factors of leadership inclusiveness and leadership integrity were hypothesized with volunteer satisfaction, and volunteer retention in an organization. Senses-Ozyurt and Villicana-Reyna's (2016) intent was to develop greater insight on whether leadership inclusiveness and leadership integrity had a bearing on the retention and satisfaction of nonprofit volunteers. In comparing the four variables with a mixed-method research approach, the data supported all five hypotheses in varying manners. The results showed nonprofit volunteers were internally motivated and the inclusiveness of leadership rose as a clearer indicator of volunteer retention.

Servant leadership in a nonprofit. Servant leadership has been discussed in various formats over recent years. However, no consensus on the definition of a servant leader has been reached upon scholars (van Dierendonck, 2011). Greenleaf coined the term servant leadership in his 1970 essay The Servant as a Leader (Boone & Makhani, 2012). Servant leadership is often reviewed for application in a spiritual context. However, Parris and Peachey (2012) believed secular nonprofit organizations benefit from the ethical and spiritual ideologies of servant leadership. The forthcoming sections present a review of existing literature on servant leadership with a focus on the theory, criteria, impact, and challenges. Discussing the dynamics of servant leadership will provide a stronger understanding of the concept's relevance in the nonprofit sector.

Theory of servant leadership. The theory behind servant leadership has been addressed with complementary and contrary views. While van Dierendonck (2011) pointed out that servant leadership is a new field of research and there is no consensus on a definition or theoretical framework, the idea has received more attention in today's leadership study field (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). A systematic review of the existing literature was performed and confirmed there is no consensus on the definition, the theory is being investigated within various contexts, cultures, and themes, as well multiple measures are being implemented by researchers to study servant leadership (Parris & Peachey, 2013).

The more practically supported transactional and transformational leadership theories have been compared to servant leadership, sharing positive and negative perceptions from employees (Washington, Sutton, & Sauser, 2014). The theory of servant leadership is advanced by combining spiritual leadership (Lynch & Friedman, 2013) with workplace spirituality (Khan, Khan, & Chaudhry, 2015), where organizational culture plays a moderating role in servant leadership. Even with the mixed theoretical perspectives, servant leadership and nonprofit industry traits align because both aim to bring change to individuals and communities (Palumbo, 2016). Having insight into the theory of servant leadership gives a good academic foundation, but better understanding the attributes of servant leadership is equally important.

Criteria for being a servant leader. Several scholars have discussed the personalities necessary to be a servant leader and a few perspectives will be shared. The characteristics of a servant leader, as outlined by Spears (2004), are listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Boone and Makhani (2012) named servant leadership as a remarkably effective style for influencing a group toward the achievement of organizational goals. In the nonprofit sector, servant leadership was explored as a suitable response to the believed leadership deficit that nonprofit organizations face (Palumbo, 2016). While developing servant leadership skills, employees are supported through the connection of serving others with the leader's values, despite whether serving others is of interest (Mertel & Brill, 2015). However, the principle of leading without regard to service for others negates the foundational premise that servant leaders motivate followers through putting individual needs above satisfying a leader's needs (Liden, Wayne, Chenwei, & Meuser, 2014). Thus, the traits of servant leadership are multi-faceted with the goal of developing followers.

The impact of servant leaders. Organizational trust allows servant leadership to have a positive impact, where there is significance in the relationship between the two along with leader trust and organizational communication (Whisnant & Khasawneh, 2014). Critics debate if servant leadership is distinct, viable, and valuable to organizational success (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Nevertheless, scholars have accounted that the leadership format is a viable theory for the success of an organization (Rezaei, Salehi, Shafiei, & Sabet, 2012). Servant leadership fosters creativity and team innovation, which yields a competitive advantage to firms (Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, & Cooper, 2014). Chen, Zhu, and Zhou (2015) believed servant leaders affect the service quality and customer-focused citizenship behavior offered by frontline employees.

Challenging servant leadership. However, for all the positive backing received, there is a belief that servant leadership has a counterintuitive impact. The servant leader makes the needs of followers' primary, and, by nature, is motivated to aid others in completing the organization's mission (Palumbo, 2016). Though, Witmer and Mellinger (2016) concluded that servant leadership is one aspect of an organization's successful adaptation to change. In change, one should be willing to serve others, and a common thread in all models of servant leadership is the commitment to serve others (Parris & Peachey, 2012). Also, leadership style has been credited with organizational success when measured by follower influence (Harper, 2012). Given the attention placed on the follower, servant leadership encourages leaders to focus on individual growth, as opposed to organizational development (Palumbo, 2016). Howbeit, the growth of each employee helps to move an organization forward.

Value.

The final element to discuss is value. The research problem highlights the lack of understanding on the value that is obtained from crowdsourcing strategizing, making value a crucial component to the study. Any benefit received from nonprofit leaders is the foundational definition of value, for this study, and will be explored in the literature. The scholarly perspectives selected reveal various sources of value, such as the crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee, all under the umbrella of organizational value. Developing a clear view on value helps recognize the advantages nonprofit leadership gains through using crowdsourcing strategizing.

Value is added to an organization in many ways. For the crowdsourcing model, business value is developed through crowdsourced data (Blohm et al., 2013). Strategic use of resources is another avenue to create value. Setting targets, correcting actions, and trusting God's design aid in developing organizational value. Those areas are important in the daily execution of affairs and can help create a proper foundation.

Creating value through setting targets. Creating value with crowdsourcing strategizing is a shared engagement, where all participants gain. Kohler (2015) described three business models to create organizational value, the integrator, the product, and multisided platform models. Whereas, Fedorenko, Berthon, and Rabinovich (2017) attribute value creation to consumer participation. Though the focus is on value to the organization, customers are a vital component to value formation. Great strategies provide a value plan for the customer as well as the organization (Kohler, 2015). Being part of the creative crowd gives customers an identity awareness through self-expression (Fedorenko et al., 2017). Value creation is a two-party dynamic, where the crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee mutually benefit.

Achieving organizational value hinges on how targets are set. Target setting is accomplished in many forms, from the basics of brainstorming and coordinating thoughts to more elaborate methodologies. The procedure, despite the method chosen, is an active journey that requires iterations and updates as the organization progresses. As part of the process, leadership develops goals that ensure organizational targets are accomplished (Goetz, Janney, & Ramsey, 2011). When an employee has a low connection to organizational goals, there is an impact in areas like budgeting behavior, which may result in the organization not meeting the desired objectives and having a decline in value (Macinati & Rizzo, 2014). Consumers have different motivating factors for contributing to the value chain. Some participate to be a different individual, others engage to go beyond oneself, and the last category contributes to gain a social identity (Fedorenko et al., 2017). Leaders and employees are responsible for achieving the organization’s desired outcomes (Goetz et al., 2011); additionally, the crowd provides a critical value to the organization in the crowdsourcing process (Kohler, 2015). Thus, properly setting goals allows internal and external resources to create organizational value.

As the landscape of business continuously changes with time, so must the mindset of an organization’s leaders and resources. Leadership should determine what is true to the organization’s core and the areas that need adjusting. Resource allocation is an avenue of determining how firms grow and evolve over (de Motta & Ortega, 2013). Crowdsourcing incorporates the knowledge value of external resources, which gives a fresh perspective on issues organizations face. Utilizing the crowd at no or a minimal cost creates a financially friendly value model for the organization (Kohler, 2015), which is important for nonprofits. Setting targets, implementing action, and remaining on track with the objectives set forth are independent activities that all influence value.

Correcting actions. There are times when an organization, like a ship, must steer toward a different course of action. In such cases, the sooner one knows, the better for the company. Managers are tasked with having the foresight and insight to know such scenarios, even in relation to customer groups and decisions (Ştefan & Cardoş Ildikó, 2010). Leaders must expertly disperse the strategy for impactful implementation. The methods chosen in the execution of business help develop a leader's style and determine the direction of the organization. Lueg (2015) has touted the strategy map as being the vital link between the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and action. Causal relationships are a key factor in the success of strategy maps (Quezada & Lopez-Ospina, 2014). These two elements are important because they help an organization to develop a plan for future action based upon previous experience and desired outcomes. Also, activity-based cost (ABC) systems, utilized for budgeting, have been credited with producing more accurate costs than the standard cost systems (Kursh, Lant, Majeske, Olver, & Plant, 2014). The budget, like a strategy map, helps an organization to plan. However, the focus of the budget is on the financial goals of the organization and aids in planning what will be done during an established period of time. Participation in the budgetary process is believed to be a key factor in encouraging people toward certain behaviors (Macinati & Rizzo, 2014). Proper resource allocation and management is a fundamental part of the successful operation of an organization.

God's design for an organization. Business can transpire in many ways and be conducted by various individuals. These individuals carry distinctive beliefs and ways of thinking. Inherently, those thoughts translate into how each person operates in life and the affairs of an organization. Advancing God's purpose for business on earth looks different from advancing the purpose of an individual. The creation of organizational value is a call to be a good steward over that which God has given. What is done with a little will also be done with much (Luke 16:10), so being faithful translates to all areas.

Divine vision. As a believer in God's way of operating, there is a charge to write the vision and make the idea plain. Why? The text articulates the purpose. A clear vision allows the reader to be moved to action (Habakkuk 2:2). The strategy map serves as a visual representation of the plan an organization has set forth. The executives, managers, and employees, alike, are charged to use the vision as a guide in determining what courses of action to take in helping the organization reach the desired goal. One without a conviction of doing business God's way may have knowledge of the map but make a self-centered choice to conduct business in a manner that is only conducive to a personal objective. This mindset differs with the mentality that Keller and Alsdorf (2012) expressed, which is to see work as a service. When work is viewed as a service, actions are based on the perception of fulfilling a calling as mandated by God and not just having a job.

Lean operation. An additional point of discussion is the topic of lean and kaizen processes, which can be applied to several areas of an organization. Lean, in the academic environment, has been referred to as lean thinking as opposed to lean manufacturing. Lean thinking offers the same benefit of waste reduction through shared and differing areas as manufacturing. The administration's thinking is shifted from optimization of separate technologies, assets, and vertical departments to that of optimizing product and service flow via horizontal value streams across technologies, assets, and departments (Cristina & Felicia, 2012). Implementing the kaizen approach, at a university, required the use of champions or associates, in this case, faculty, staff, and administrators. Tying in an extended A3 process meant documenting procedures the team would use to solve the problem, which branches from the A3 issue resolution methodology that includes a seven-step technique. As a result, the university implemented a standard practice for electronic workflows that reduced touch time, data entry as well as copy errors, and allowed for process transparency (Olsen, Kraker, & Wilkie, 2014). In the biblical context, when Nehemiah accepted the charge to rebuild the walls, discussed in chapter 4 of the Bible, there was a period that required working and watching out for the enemy. To perform these efforts simultaneously, the work required dedication, obedience, focus, and a very efficient or lean process. Value is not only obtained from gaining more but also from honoring the present resources.

No limitation with God. Admittedly, there is a challenge to doing business the way God intended when the environment does not support it. There is a limitation based on ethics that will not permit one to operate in the same manner as those that do not believe the call of God (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012). For decades, though, the pursuit of business with God first has been a fruitfully implemented concept (Rienzi, 2013). Joseph, as a servant of God, held high rank and ruled well in the empire of Pharaoh. God’s way of doing, in business and otherwise, should be supreme to any other. This is not an avenue to disobey leadership as God’s way requires submitting to those in authority (Ephesians 6:5), especially understanding that there is a price to pay when in a position of headship (Velez, 2008). The appropriate use of resources, whether financial, time, or any other form, advances an organization and the kingdom because of an organized approach to execution. God's way is to function in excellence as He has declared all things to be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). Leaders can expect supernatural results when in partnership with God because He promises to do abundantly above all that one will ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Summary of the literature review.

The literature review addressed the three themes developed from the conceptual framework through scholarly works. First was crowdsourcing strategizing. Next, nonprofit leadership was discussed. Lastly, the scholarly perspective on value was explored. Each element was selected to develop a better understanding, through literature, of the research purpose and problem being tackled.

Through written work, scholars revealed that crowdsourcing strategizing is becoming a preferred method in the business sector. Nonprofit leaders are critical to determining how and when untapped resources, such as crowdsourcing, are used to influence the organization's strategy. The value to an organization from any business tool is contingent on factors such as organizational structure, leadership, and resources. Crowdsourcing strategizing, and the value obtained, is directly influenced by the dynamics of the crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee. Therefore, using research to explore the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofits through organizational leaders is important.

Transition and Summary of Section 1

This section established the foundation of the research by providing readers a base of knowledge on crowdsourcing strategizing and the study's intent. Hence, the problem remains that there is a lack of understanding of the value users get from crowdsourcing strategizing. This study addresses the issue from the perspective of a nonprofit leader, using interviews, observation, and document analysis. Terminology specific to the research is presented with the definitions, and precluding thoughts are addressed in assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Following is a discussion on the study's significance and the current landscape of crowdsourcing strategizing information is presented in the review of literature.

The forthcoming section introduces how the goal of studying the concept was achieved. This is realized through addressing the role of the researcher along with detailing the selected qualitative research method and case study design. Additionally, the population and sampling section reviews the participant demographic. What tools are used and how the researcher gathers material was addressed in a discussion on data collection and techniques. Finally, the reliability and validity which helped strengthen the research tools and approaches was addressed.

Section 2: The Project

This section covers elements of the research process. The focus of the study is provided through the purpose. Then, the researcher’s role in the data collection process is addressed along with the key function of participants. Next, the research method and design best suited for the study is described. The method and design section is followed by a characterization on the data collection and analysis process. Finally, a portrayal of data authentication techniques, for reliability and validity, is provided.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study research was to investigate the value crowdsourcing strategizing provides to nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. A nonprofit’s effectiveness is accelerated through leaders capable of identifying strategic priorities (Harrison & Murray, 2012). Rhine (2015) discovered nonprofit leaders shift the direction of a declining organization. Therefore, literature on nonprofit leadership has centered on the board and chief executive officer proficiencies (Harrison & Murray, 2012). However, Aten and Thomas (2016) expressed that business literature has not included many discussions on crowdsourcing strategizing. Although, the practice of crowdsourcing is used by many organizations, such as the Library of Congress, Netflix, and Facebook (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). Thus, a better understanding of the model’s value to Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders was explored.

Nonprofit leadership’s value of crowdsourcing strategizing was researched to enhance the business application and help bridge the gap in literature. In the traditional closed-door model of strategy development, leaders were very influential (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik, Fabel, & Jonk, 2015). Given the assimilation of technology and communication, the strategy development process has changed from executives only to a company-wide inclusion of ideas (Aten & Thomas, 2016) or tapping into the knowledge of external stakeholders (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik et al., 2015; Parvanta et al., 2013). However, nonprofit organizations have strained resources. Parvanta et al. (2013) discussed crowdsourcing as a viable alternative for organizations with resource limitations. Thus, the study focused on discovering the value crowdsourcing strategizing has for leaders of Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit organizations.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher served in several roles throughout the course of the study which included designer, administrator, recruiter, and analyst. For the present study, the researcher submitted a request to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of the suggested research. An IRB is a college- or university-based committee which examines studies to assess the potential risk level to participants (Creswell, 2014). The current research proposal included an application, CITI certifications, interview guide, observation form, recruitment material, a consent document, and signature page. The IRB application package (shown in Appendices A and B) was emailed to the review board with a standard processing time of one to two months. After approval by the IRB (Witmer & Mellinger, 2016), the researcher was granted authority to begin field work, starting with the official recruitment of participants.

Before recruiting individuals, however, the researcher built the tools needed to conduct the study. An interview guide was formed to help orchestrate the flow of the research period between interviewer and interviewee. The document contains questions that focus on the conceptual framework and primary themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value. The questions addressed crowdsourcing strategizing’s value toward nonprofits, through the eyes of leadership, and are shown in Appendix B. In a qualitative study, the researcher is a tool which is used for observation and serves a subjective role (Stake, 2010). An observation form (found in Appendix B) was created to make notations for first- and second-hand encounters. As the designer of research instruments, the researcher frames the wealth of data that are released from participants and begins to establish the findings.

The researcher also served as the primary recruiter of participants. Nonprofit organizations were chosen, in part, due to proximity to the Richmond, Virginia metro area. A list of 50 organizations was developed through online research of local nonprofits. Using the IRB-approved recruitment material, leaders of the selected nonprofits were first contacted by email. Given the lack of response, the list was narrowed to fifteen organizations and the researcher went door-to-door, gaining access to the nonprofit leaders. Collecting data began as participants agreed to be a part of the study. The process required a signed consent from each participant as an agreement to partake in the research. Additional participants were recruited after data collection began. Thus, the researcher vacillated between recruiter and administrator.

After the data were gathered, the researcher organized the information to prepare the raw data for interpretation. For this study on crowdsourcing strategizing, the researcher used Microsoft Excel and traditional, hard copy instruments as mechanisms of data organization. The researcher analyzed data through the winnow method, memo technique, and hand coding. These concepts were used to properly sift the material, and the researcher then focused on applying the analyzed data toward developing the study’s findings.

Additionally, the role of the researcher was to be aware during fieldwork to ensure, as much as possible, the integrity of the data. In the data collection process, being certain the information is accurate is important. Qualitative research is strengthened through validation where accuracy is measured from the researcher’s perspective (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the researcher used audio recordings to validate participant responses. To support validation, Creswell (2014) admonished that reliability is simply consistency from one researcher, or project, to the next. This study’s reliability was established in using the same process for all participants.

Participants

In the beginning, participants were contacted through a random selection of nonprofit organizations in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. A search using the Better Business Bureau’s database and looking up local nonprofits online provided the preliminary list. As key leaders responded to the study’s invitation, future participants were sourced through recommendations. In the process of gaining access, there were concerns of how to obtain the most qualified participants, but these issues were overcome through negotiations, references, and building relationships (Flick, 2009). Accordingly, the study relied on engaging and attracting the right primary contributors. Researchers are subject to lose participant interest at any time (Yin, 2011). Careful approach and treatment of participants was used.

The initial participant contact was an email communication, and email was used for intermediary and follow-up access. An introduction of the researcher, brief background on the study, in addition to eligibility requirements was given in the correspondence. For example, participants were asked to be 18 plus years of age, hold a strategic leadership position, and have a willingness to be interviewed. Also, potential participants were provided with the option of choosing from three time slots or giving one that worked best. A record of the IRB-approved communication, in Appendix B, details the recruitment materials. Phone communication was reserved as a substitute means of reaching participants. Furthermore, office visits were used to build relationships in the recruitment process.

To develop a working relationship with participants, face-to-face engagement was important. Gathering with others in a social environment is a part of research (Stake, 2010). In-person interaction allowed the visual and vocal barriers, associated with email and phone, to be eliminated. Creswell (2014) encouraged researchers to create a relationship of trust with participants and not to use individuals by collecting data then departing; a reward should be given for participation in the study. Therefore, the researcher offered two hours of volunteer time to each nonprofit organization that agreed to participate.

Providing assurance that ethical standards were upheld was critical for participants being open during the data collection process. Ethical protection is discussed by the majority of writers who conduct qualitative research because they are bound to honor the truths and standards of contributors (Creswell, 2014). Hence, no disclosure of identities or affiliations with the nonprofit were given to assure the integrity of data and protection of participants in the present research. Ethical issues must be addressed not only while the researcher is in contact with participants but prior to the study and through the phase of storing information (Creswell, 2014). Specific measures were taken as a defense against any ethical barriers.

First, participants were informed of the research purpose through recruitment communications. Secondly, the researcher gave everyone an opportunity to express any concerns regarding participation and have the option of being released from the study. As an indication of agreement, written consent was received of individuals taking part. Lastly, the participants were advised of the audio recording procedures being used for accuracy. Every ethical consideration is important to the integrity of the study (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, ethical mitigation measures were used to protect participants, the researcher, and the data.

Research Method and Design

The current research study on crowdsourcing strategizing used the qualitative and case study styles. Though quantitative is suitable, the qualitative method readily addresses a broad range of topics (Yin, 2009). Also, qualitative research is utilized for discovery (Park & Park, 2016) and allows the researcher to engage deeply with the data (Yates & Leggett, 2016). Furthermore, a case study model is used in the exploration of a contemporary phenomenon (Yates & Leggett, 2016; Yin, 2009). Hence, research to study the value of crowdsourcing strategizing in a nonprofit organization was conducted through the qualitative case study approach.

Discussion of method.

Research for the topic was conducted through the qualitative approach. Creswell (2014) distinguished qualitative research as the use of words and open-ended questions. Qualitative is a softer research style (Barnham, 2015). According to Stake (2010), the qualitative methodology is regarded for the integrity of thinking, noting that there is no one way but rather a collection of ways to implement the method. Also, the qualitative style is diverse and applicable in many disciplines (Yin, 2011). Thus, the value of crowdsourcing strategizing was explored without the bounds of rigid information because of the qualitative application.

Studying crowdsourcing strategizing through an open research model allowed a good range of material to naturally surface. Deeper insights, traditionally, are gathered with the qualitative approach (Barnham, 2015). Additionally, qualitative research has an inductive process, is not limited by structure, and subjective (Park & Park, 2016). While much qualitative research began as a criticism of quantitative cases (Flick, 2009), the approach became an independent model. In the study of crowdsourcing strategizing and the value provided to leadership, the qualitative method allowed the subject to be explored with open-ended questions and an unstructured style.

Discussion of design.

In terms of the design, a case study model was used. When a modern-day phenomenon is being investigated within a real-world context, a case study is the most favorable design (Yates & Leggett, 2016). The importance of crowdsourcing strategizing has not been widely explored (Amrollahi et al., 2014; Aten & Thomas, 2016; Chesbrough & Appleyard, 2007; Erickson, 2013; Stieger et al., 2012), leaving much unknown about the topic. Clarity was gained on crowdsourcing strategizing's value to an organization through the case study design.

Additionally, the case study design was appropriate for incorporating value from several leaders' perspectives. Yates and Leggett (2016) specified that the investigative case may include individuals or multiple individuals. Various nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area individually participated in the study. The research environment is also critical when conducting a case study (Yates & Leggett, 2016), and 'how' questions are commonplace within the model (Yates & Leggett, 2016; Yin, 2009). Therefore, the qualitative method through a case study design was more suited for understanding the value leadership received by implementing crowdsourcing strategizing in a nonprofit.

Summary of research method and design.

The qualitative method and case study design helped the researcher assess the problem statement in an organized format. Qualitative research gave the researcher an opportunity to explore the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofits with free-flowing questions and an uninhibited technique. The case study design was structured to allow the researcher to engage leaders within natural work environments and delve into the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. Both approaches are important to addressing the lack of understanding on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofits from the perspective of leadership. The qualitative method and case study design helped produce content that improves the professional use of crowdsourcing strategizing and closes the literature gap on the subject.

Population and Sampling

The population and sampling of study participants provides information on how and why individuals were chosen for research. A discussion on population offers an understanding of the derivation of the sample participants. Secondly, the sample discussion defends the methods selected to create the sample type and size. Also, the eligibility criteria for the inclusion and omission of nonprofit participants are supported. The population is discussed first, followed by the sampling.

Discussion of population.

The population that was used for this study included directors, board members, managers, and other key leaders with strategic impact over the nonprofit organizations. Access to senior level decision makers was needed because of top-level management's control of organizational strategy. Approximately 30 nonprofit organizations in the Richmond, Virginia metro area were targeted. Nonprofits were selected because findings have shown a disparity in utilizing authentic leadership and strategic planning in some nonprofits (Rhine, 2015). A list of organizations was developed using the BBB website and a general search of local nonprofits. The BBB was initially established with the strategic intent to inform consumers and investors (Balleisen, 2017), making the BBB a trusted source of information. Results from the general online search served as supplementary knowledge to the list developed from the BBB data. The preliminary contact with the organizations included an email providing a brief introduction, purpose for the communication, and an invitation to be a part of the study. Given a lack of response, organizations were reached through in-person visits.

The total number of participants was based on achieving theoretical saturation. Though initially presented for grounded theory studies, by Glaser and Strauss, the idea of theoretical saturation is commonly applied in qualitative research involving interviews (Rowlands, Waddell, & McKenna, 2015). An appropriate number of participants for a qualitative case study should be centered upon saturation, where no new revelations are gathered with additional information (Creswell, 2014). According to Walker (2012), there is no one means of determining saturation in qualitative research. Therefore, six to twelve nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area were targeted.

Discussion of sampling.

Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were used to reach the study population. The purposeful sampling technique is broadly applied in qualitative research to aid in finding and choosing cases that offer a wealth of data applicable to the selected study topic (Palinkas et al., 2015). Snowball sampling is beneficial in accessing interviewees that are normally unobtainable (TenHouten, 2017). Purposeful sampling was effective for reaching predetermined participants based on affiliation with and position in a nonprofit organization. Snowball sampling was helpful in gathering additional interviewees with prior knowledge of or an ability to implement crowdsourcing strategizing. Six to twelve leaders were targeted for the sample population.

Study participants were chosen based on their current position within a nonprofit organization. Previous leaders that were not board members, nor affiliated with the organization in a leadership capacity, were not included in the sample size. The omission of previous non-active leaders was to maintain a pure sample knowledge from executives with immediate influence over the organizational strategy and direction. The sample population did not have limitations on gender, time in present position, or length of experience in the field. Also, a variety of nonprofit backgrounds were considered.

Summary of population and sampling.

Overall, the target population was directors, board members, managers, and key organizational leaders with influence over the nonprofit's strategy. Roughly, 30 nonprofits were contacted to access six to twelve nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. Accessing this population happened through purposeful and snowball sampling techniques. Individuals presently holding an active leadership role or sitting on the board of directors were considered for participation. However, prior leaders serving outside the leadership board were not considered for the study to maintain a sample population of leaders with direct influence over the nonprofit's strategic direction. These leaders were the primary source of data collection for the study.

Data Collection

This section discusses the instruments, data collection, and data organization methods of the research. The tools that were developed to gather the study's data are first addressed. Secondly, the collection techniques describe the research instrumentation by detailing the processes implemented. The last subsection reports which systems were used to organize the data and how the information was secured. The data collection information will give insight on the researcher's tools, methods, and systems, as well as a preview of the reliability and validity required.

Instruments.

Instruments are the tools used in the research process. Yin (2011) revealed that instruments make the researcher capable of capturing life from the perspective lived and not as the researcher hopes to see but pieces of the researcher's personality are still subtly imbedded in the instruments. The interview guide (see Appendix B) was used as a collection tool for this study, with interviews as the main instrument. There are 10 questions listed which helped measure the value obtained from crowdsourcing strategizing. Much of qualitative data does not clearly conform to a statistical breakdown (Stake, 2010). Therefore, no scores were given to the responses from participants. Instead, data were gathered until theoretical saturation was reached.

The instrument used was checked for reliability and validity. Reliability of qualitative research addresses the necessity for explanation, and validity is to determine if what is being received is truly what the researcher perceives (Flick, 2009). A few measures were taken to assess the reliability and validity of the interview guide. First, inquiries for participants were developed prior to the start of interviewing with adaptations made after the first interview. Reliability of an interview guide can be completed through trial interviews or making adjustments after the initial interview (Flick, 2009). Further, the interview guide was submitted and approved by the IRB of Liberty University. Finally, audio recordings were employed to confirm participant statements and accuracy of responses.

Participants were asked to take part in a 30-minute, recorded, qualitative interview. In which, individuals were presented with several questions regarding professional experiences, crowdsourcing strategizing, value, and organizational direction. The same interview guide was employed for each participant. However, the interview flow of questions and answers was allowed to unfold organically. Yin (2011) called this model using a protocol as opposed to an instrument because of the liberty by which the interviewer operates outside of a scripted document. By design, qualitative interviews contain a sparse number of unstructured and open-ended questions, allowing the researcher to get the participants point of view (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, while other studies have comprised interview guides, the present research questions were not adapted from a standardized list. The research instrument is a customized tool developed to address the needs of this study.

Data collection techniques.

Data were collected through several forms, which included interviews, observation, audio recordings, and document analysis. The interviews were conducted, as much as possible, in-person and within each leader's environment. Staying inside the respective dwellings of every interviewee provided a sense of comfort, allowing the individual to remain relaxed during the question and response period. The unique environments for each participant gave more natural observation results as well. Creswell (2014) advised that qualitative field research involves using a participant's environment. The alternative to in-person discussions was phone or email dialogues. Inquiries by phone and email still provide an understanding of organizational processes, and interviewees have responded favorably to the means of communication (Hershberger & Kavanaugh, 2017). However, in-person interviews allowed a combination of completing the interview, observing the leader in a natural environment, and capturing an audio recording.

During a 30-minute interview period, the participant was asked to verbally acknowledge eligibility to partake in the study and sign a consent form. After a brief overview of the process, participants were given the opportunity to express any concerns. If expressed, the researcher spoke to the issues raised. Each participant was advised of the audio recording being captured for accuracy. After the audio recording had been engaged, the researcher posed each question to the interviewee. The recording device was used as the primary method of capturing responses, while the researcher used the interview phase to observe and make notations on the participant.

The early questions asked of leadership were designed to provide knowledge on the participants' influence over the strategic layout of the organization. From there, the researcher aimed to learn the participants' experience with crowdsourcing strategizing and what measure of value had been obtained from the encounters with the technique. The total knowledge informed the study on the primary research question related to the value crowdsourcing strategizing brings to a nonprofit. Appendix B contains the interview guide outlining the questions designed for the participants.

The data collection process also included first- and second-hand observation. Observation is important because the eye witnesses a lot (Stake, 2010). First-hand observation was conducted during the in-person interviews where the researcher drew additional conclusions from the non-verbal behaviors of the participants. Although contributors were not video recorded, as to maintain comfort, audio recordings gave an awareness of vocal inflection, hesitation in answering, and other observations captured. Second-hand observation was performed on audio and visual media aids obtained during document analysis. There has been a resurgence of second-hand observation for research (Flick, 2009) and the content, along with that from first-hand observation, was recorded on the observation form. Each observation had a separate chronicling of the events using the document shown in Appendix B.

The final data collection technique was document analysis. Approximately 125 documents were assessed to support or reveal additional findings on the value of crowdsourcing strategizing beyond the information gathered through interviews. Public information, such as online articles, and private documents, like emails, are inclusive of qualitative documents for research (Creswell, 2014). Visual mediums like photographs are also considered qualitative material (Creswell, 2014). This study considered all forms of information during document analysis, and records were collected through academic databases, online search engines, and library records.

Print, video, and audio mediums accessed were analyzed and memos recorded. For example, a video clip showing an organization's use of crowdsourcing and the results achieved would be viewed by the researcher. The researcher would make notations on topics related to the research questions (such as impact and leadership behavior) to help explore the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. This final form of data collection gives a means of triangulation between the information obtained in interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Data organization techniques.

To organize the data and insights from the study, Microsoft Excel and hard copies of the completed research instruments were used. Organized research data is important because a stronger analysis is developed as a result (Yin, 2011). Also, pseudonyms were issued for participants with the researcher being the sole individual knowing the identities. Qualitative research engages pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants and organizations involved (Creswell, 2014). A pseudonym codebook was kept on an encrypted storage device, independent of the raw data and insights.

Any electronic raw data produced will be maintained, for three years per agreement with the IRB, on a separate encrypted storage device accessible only to the researcher. Hard copies of data were kept in a locked storage device during the study period. After analysis, hard copies of completed research instruments were converted to electronic form and stored with the study's raw data. Following conversion to electronic form, the data will be securely destroyed and discarded after three years. These data organization methods helped protect participants and structure the understandings revealed within the study.

Summary of data collection.

Instruments, data collection, and data organization were addressed within the study. Interviews are the main research instrument, with an interview guide serving as the data collection tool. Data were also collected through observation, audio recordings, and document analysis of approximately 15 documents. A 30-minute, recorded, in-person interview was utilized, with phone or substitute interview mediums applied as needed. The recording was completed with high discretion to prevent participants from withdrawing due to an obtrusive device. Additionally, print, video, and audio sources were analyzed using the memo technique. Microsoft Excel and hard copies of the completed instruments were used to organize the information. Pseudonyms and a codebook helped organize the raw data that will be stored for three years. The proper collection of information will help yield a wealth of knowledge for analysis.

Data Analysis

After data collection had begun, the information was analyzed. Analysis is the process of taking information apart and putting the data back together (Stake, 2010). In a qualitative study, one data set can be analyzed in sequence with the collection of another; this method may place the researcher in a position of simultaneously collecting data, analyzing data, and developing findings (Creswell, 2014). The present research implemented this technique throughout the interviewing process. Therefore, the researcher was actively involved in interviews during the interpretation of data.

Themes.

A couple of methods could have been used to interpret the participant responses. Qualitative data analysis takes place on two levels; where, the first is general, and the second level is based on the qualitative design needs (Creswell, 2014). The current research engaged the case study design. The needs of a case study design involve describing participants in conjunction with a data analysis for themes; though, most qualitative researchers employ a general approach (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the present study used hand coding and Microsoft Excel. Hand coding included placing participant responses into categories based on the conceptual framework themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value. Several sub-themes arose during the analysis of information and were considered based on relevance to the research findings.

The analysis categories not only aligned with the conceptual framework, but additional research themes emerged from the data collected. Given the depth of information in a qualitative study, researchers should winnow the raw material, which means to focus on key aspects and disregard the other facts shared (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). The practice of winnowing creates a more efficient coding process because the researcher centers on a few relevant aspects from each participant. In addition, insights for this research were chronicled through memos. There is no one memo type, rather the outcome depends on the researcher’s style, and memos aid in making the raw data analysis clearer (Flick, 2009). The winnowed information, along with data from memos, was hand coded.

Summary of data analysis.

The analyzed data gave the researcher material to develop findings uniformed with the research questions and conceptual framework presented. The researcher focused on the impact of crowdsourcing strategizing to the nonprofit. Also, discovering findings applicable to the change, if any, of the nonprofit's strategic direction. Last, the value obtained through crowdsourcing strategizing was assessed. An explanation of the findings, based on analysis, was presented in the concluding thoughts.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity of this qualitative study on crowdsourcing strategizing used several measures. The uniformity in the methods and instruments of the research is unveiled through reliability. Validity discusses the measures needed to confirm the precision of the research data. Each concept strengthens the data gathered and reinforces the findings. Using the mentioned reliability and validity measures ensured the qualitative study meets scholarly standards.

Reliability.

Reliability is an important topic to the research. Kirk and Miller (1986) addressed three reliability standards by which a study can be examined. Determining the extent to which a research study can always arrive at the same results using a single method is quixotic reliability. The study explored this type through applying data collection methods. Diachronic reliability addresses the strength of observations in the chronological course of action. This technique would be applied if the researcher were witnessing crowdsourcing strategizing first-hand. However, the study is focused from a leader's perspective, leaving diachronic reliability inapplicable to the current research. Lastly, Kirk and Miller (1986) expressed synchronic reliability as the consistency of outcome when a single moment is measured by various tools. The use of synchronic reliability was engaged through gathering data by multiple instruments.

The quixotic and synchronic reliability of the study must be examined by the three main research means of interviews, observation, and document analysis. The selected methods are commonplace for a qualitative study (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 2010). Qualitative interviews allow the researcher to get the participant's perspective, and, through observation, the researcher will study participants in live settings (Yin, 2011). Documents for analysis can consist of public or private resources (Creswell, 2014). Individually, however, these methods are not sufficient to address the study of crowdsourcing strategizing. Yoo et al. (2013) surmised that the use of observation or experience alone is problematic when verifying the impact of crowdsourcing. Therefore, all three methods are essential to the study.

Though the researcher has professional and academic interview experience, the initial interviews were used as training. Flick (2009) urged that interview training provides data reliability. The interview guide, observation form (both shown in Appendix B), and memos were used as research instruments for the study. Reliability for the interview guide was performed through checking the questions and obtaining IRB approval of the information. Audio recordings were engaged to confirm accuracy. Qualitative researchers often use various data sources with audio as one (Creswell, 2014). Additional reliability measures include consistency in coding along with creating memos throughout the collection, analysis, and interpretation phases to compare data.

Validity.

Validity is equally important. Flick (2009) believed validity receives more attention in qualitative research than reliability. The concept can be examined from the perspective of the reader, researcher, or participant (Creswell, 2014). Validity, in a qualitative setting, means accuracy of the results has been confirmed by the researcher (Creswell, 2014). Several measures were taken to assure the validity of this study.

Triangulation was used as a validation method. Exercising the three primary data collection types of interviews, observation, and document analysis helped achieve this goal. Triangulation offers accuracy through cohesion, providing an opportunity to cross-reference findings and develop themes from the results of multiple sources (Creswell, 2014). Triangulation requires using a minimum of two of the techniques discussed (Yates & Leggett, 2016). The three instruments in tandem allowed the researcher to cross validate the information obtained from the various channels.

Researcher bias is another area to address. Qualitative research that has value will include the experiences and perspectives of the researcher in the findings (Creswell, 2014). Having the researcher’s interpretation strengthened by personal encounters is important but can give opportunity for bias to enter. Yin (2011) encouraged having evidence in the data to eliminate the bias or rejecting the thought will strengthen the study’s validity. Finally, validation was obtained through reaching theoretical saturation, which is the point in data collection where the same response is received from different interviewees. These measures helped address the need for validity in the study.

Summary of reliability and validity.

Reliability and validity of the research techniques helped to confirm the data collection methods were suited for the study. For the interview guide, reliability was confirmed through inspecting the questions and getting approval from the IRB. Audio recordings, consistent coding, and memo creation for data comparison were used as reliability metrics. For validity, triangulation was realized through engaging interviews, observation, and document analysis.

Confirming the collection instruments and processes ensured the value of the data gathered for the research.

Transition and Summary of Section 2

The preceding section re-addressed the purpose of the research and provided details on the researcher's responsibilities. A discussion on access to and treatment of participants followed, with the qualitative case study approaches being next. The population and sampling information helped to describe the eligibility and other criteria for participants. Additionally, the interviewing instrument and various research tools were discussed in combination with how the data was collected, organized, and analyzed. The section closes with a look into the reliability of the research instruments and study, along with an analysis of the internal and external validity.

The concluding section deals with the results of the research, making inferences on the knowledge presented early in the study. An overview of crowdsourcing strategizing's effectiveness in business is given. Then, the findings of the research will be expressed to show the data collected and any relationships between the research and real-world knowledge. An application of the professional and biblical implications on crowdsourcing strategizing will be addressed. Finally, recommendations for action and future study ideas, reflections, along with concluding thoughts are presented.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

This section provides research findings from the wealth of data that were collected, analyzed, and interpreted. A brief synopsis on how and why crowdsourcing strategizing is effective in business is presented. Also, a detailed discussion of the findings follows, which shows links between the research questions, data collected, and patterns discovered from the data. A dialogue on the professional application of crowdsourcing strategizing is given, with some paralleled views from the biblical framework. Finally, recommendations for action are offered as well as future study ideas, reflections on the research experience, and a research summarization with closing remarks.

Overview of the Study

The use of crowdsourcing strategizing in business is applicable in several industries, such as engineering, financial services, and retail. This qualitative case study research addressed crowdsourcing strategizing implementation, in the nonprofit sector, by searching for a value added to the business from a leader's outlook. The value was identified through any benefit the leaders reaped from professional experience with operating a nonprofit, developing strategy, and knowledge or execution of crowdsourcing. Bloodgood (2013) believed value capturing should be a top criterion when examining crowdsourcing for effective business use. Obtaining value is important because organizations can flourish by consistently implementing practices that assist in achieving the mission and vision.

Crowdsourcing is an essential tool in organizational success and an important topic in business literature. Still, crowdsourcing strategizing's value to organizations needed studying (Erickson, 2013) because of the limited knowledge about the subject (Aten & Thomas, 2016). Nonprofit leaders were interviewed to determine the influence of crowdsourcing while creating organizational strategy. Theoretical saturation was reached within six participants. Also, facts from observation and document analysis were included for data triangulation. The research results provide a metric of crowdsourcing strategizing's value to organizations through examining the perspectives of Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders.

To explore the issue, the primary research question addressed the impact on the nonprofit organization and was answered through tackling the sub-questions. The three supporting queries drilled further by first questioning the impact on the strategic direction. The nonprofit leaders responded in different manners, but the concluding factor was crowdsourcing strategizing helped keep the organization aligned with the strategic direction that had been set. Secondly, circumstances which provoke the use of crowdsourcing strategizing were discussed. Again, each organization had a unique experience. However, the leaders also shared a common desire to improve or advance and used crowdsourcing in those moments. Finally, the dialogue involved the value experienced by the nonprofit leader in creating the strategic direction. The findings showed value existed in the knowledge, feedback, and responses shared from the crowd.

Overall, nonprofit leaders found value in the data gathered through crowdsourcing strategizing. The process gave leadership knowledge and insight that could not be gleaned from the isolated walls of the executive circle. A technology platform was not utilized by some of the nonprofit leaders for crowdsourcing, which aligned with the traditional model. However, whether using a modern or traditional method, most leaders believed going beyond the executive level, and even the organization, was imperative. Access to the crowd's knowledge allowed leaders to discover critical information about the business climate within which the organization was operating.

Anticipated Themes

The themes of the data paralleled the conceptual framework and literature review. Three primary themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value were interrelated and resulted from subjects that continuously appeared while the research was being developed. Each theme was a major component in the research questions, resulting in Figure 1's diagram of the relationship (shown under Discussion of value). Nonprofit leaders rely on many resources beyond the allocated barriers of government and public support. Crowdsourcing strategizing provides these leaders with access to intellect that helps design par excellence organizations. In turn, the leader derives value from crowdsourcing to make the organization a better asset within the community. Thus, crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value became the main elements of the literature review.

The primary themes each have supplemental topics that were discussed in the literature review but are supported by the research findings. Secondary subjects of the study are considered emerged themes and are closely aligned with the primary elements. However, an additional level of meaning is revealed through the emerged theme based on the data. Resounding elements include the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced information. The emerged themes enrich the primary themes by showing why each subject is pivotal to the study.

Presentation of the Findings

This section focuses on key findings from the three data sources and outliers to the main opinions. The initial themes along with emerged themes are discussed. To highlight how the topics progressed, the conversion is addressed within the evolution of themes section. Also, the relationship of the themes to literature, the conceptual framework, and research questions are expressed. Finally, the summary of the findings captures highlights from data analysis and reviews the concluding results.

The findings were gathered using three research mediums, which are interviews, observation, and document analysis. Data collected from these sources were analyzed with the memo technique, hand coding, and Microsoft Excel. The initial themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value each translated to an emerged theme of the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced data. The interview guide, shown in Appendix B, included probing questions, and served as the basis of the dialogues. Six Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders were interviewed. Five of the six interviews were conducted in-person, with the other occurring by phone. Using the protocol model described by Creswell (2014), other inquiries were asked which naturally arose during the discussions and maximized each session. Theoretical saturation was achieved within the six interviews completed.

Additionally, the research data were validated using triangulation of the sources. Triangulation was achieved by incorporating observation and document analysis into the data collection process. Findings from each collection method supported the other and revealed additional dynamics of information regarding the themes. The observations were performed in conjunction with the interviews. Creswell (2014) advised that research participants should not be ill-treated through a misuse of the research time. Combining the observations with the interviews maximized each nonprofit leaders’ schedule. Finally, for document analysis, five videos, three online articles, and 120 scholarly works were reviewed.

Key findings from interviews.

Interviews were the first source for collecting data. The study included a main research question with three sub-questions. How crowdsourcing strategizing impacted the nonprofit's strategic direction was the first query. Secondly, circumstances that provoked the use of crowdsourcing strategizing were questioned. The third inquiry dealt with what value crowdsourcing strategizing provided to nonprofit leaders in the organizational strategy development process. Each preceding sub-question was asked to support the understanding of how Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofits were impacted by crowdsourcing strategizing, which was the primary research question. However, value to the leader rose as the most significant inquiry, given the measure of crowdsourcing strategizing's value to the nonprofit was from leadership's perspective.

Impact on the strategic direction. To address impact on the strategic direction by crowdsourcing strategizing, leaders shared organizational experiences. Nonprofit Leaders A, C, D, and F agreed that crowdsourcing strategizing helped promote the current strategic direction and communication of the organizational plan. Becoming more efficient and receiving internal buy-in were responses from leaders B and E. Nonprofit Leader A added that regular feedback and ideas were also obtained. Additionally, better decisions on how to advertise impacted the strategic direction of Nonprofit Leader A's organization.

Crowdsourcing strategizing is the conduit through which information flows that allows the leaders to make strategic decisions with lasting impact. Stieger et al. (2012) believed strategy is not a siloed activity but a process of engagement, resulting from the ideas and mutual awareness of employees. The participating nonprofit leaders used a combination of internal and external stakeholders. Outside resources, like volunteers and partnering organizations, are becoming essential to value creation (Chesbrough & Appleyard, 2007). Crowdsourcing strategizing impacted each nonprofit in a similar and different manner, but the crowd was a key component.

The overall impact was crowdsourcing strategizing helped the nonprofits maintain the strategic direction and become equipped to handle new program ideas extending from the present vision. “In some ways, [crowdsourcing strategizing] confirmed what [the organization] already knew…but it is also nice when [the crowd] comes up with new ideas and…[helps] refine the strategy,” stated Nonprofit Leader A. All the leaders were careful not to become distracted with any idea or suggestion from the crowd. For example, Nonprofit Leader A knew the organization was not financially equipped to handle providing wireless internet service to clients. Given the overwhelming request for the amenity, the organization was motivated to seek a feasible option. The leader was able to employ a solution that served the needs of the client and, consequently, the organization. In this scenario, while crowdsourcing did not provide the logistical response to having the new idea, surveying the crowd did gauge the need for a critical client service and pushed the organization’s leaders toward a strategic response.

Catalysts for crowdsourcing. The leaders also shared experiences concerning what scenarios or issues provoked the use of crowdsourcing strategizing. Nonprofit Leader F said, “It might be that [the organization is] looking to improve.” Nonprofit Leader B found crowdsourcing helpful when the organization desired new program ideas to create diversified revenue streams. During annual calendar events or for feedback were occasions when Nonprofit Leader C used the tool. The organizations operated by Nonprofit Leaders D and E were impacted by the political environment. Thus, changes in governing policies were the primary catalyst. Additionally, identifying a service gap to address client needs more aptly was also a scenario discussed by leaders E and F. Lastly, when the organization needed to obtain better results or sought improvements, Nonprofit Leader F engaged crowdsourcing.

The nonprofit leaders had varying degrees of experience with crowdsourcing strategizing, but all found a cause to implement the business practice. While all participants had some experience with crowdsourcing, many were unaware of the practice by name. Furthermore, Figure 2 shows 66% of leaders used the modern practice which included a technology platform. Conversely, a couple of leaders were more aligned with the traditional, top-down strategy development process. Roughly, 33% of the leaders utilized the traditional model which excludes technology. Crowdsourcing has been used to solve an array of problems (Afuah & Tucci, 2012; Stieger et al., 2012) and is positioned as a strong resource for handling future strategy challenges (Stieger et al., 2012). By using crowdsourcing strategizing, the leaders and the organizations have been positioned to achieve success within their respective industries.

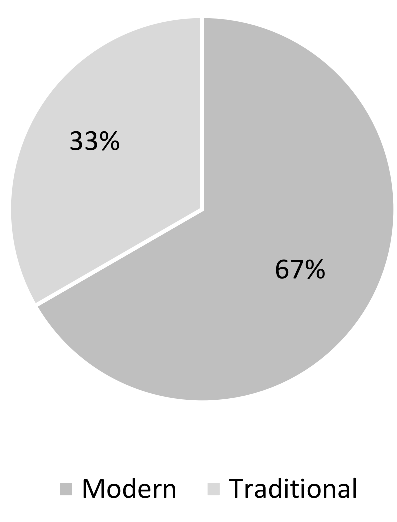

Figure 2: Comparison of nonprofit leaders' experiences with a technology platform (modern) versus those that have not utilized technology (traditional) for crowdsourcing.

Value to the organization and leader. Lastly, the value factor was explored in the interviews. While Nonprofit Leaders A through F used different terminologies, the concluding answer was the data. The fourth column of Table 1 summarizes the descriptions the leaders provided. Feedback, knowledge, information, and data were all responses to express the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to the leader, and thus the organization, is the data collected from the crowd. The feedback for leader A confirmed the strategic direction in which the organization was partaking. Nonprofit Leader B was more efficient in the organizational operations through the knowledge crowdsourcing yielded. Nonprofit Leader C found strategic communication improved when given crowdsourced information. Leaders D and E measured value through information and feedback, respectively, but agreed the results of having the data varied. Finally, Nonprofit Leader F found the data equipped the organization to maintain strategic alignment. Blohm et al. (2013) argued crowdsourced data to be the value of crowdsourcing. Nonprofit leadership confirmed the scholarly viewpoint that the value of crowdsourcing strategizing is in crowdsourced information.

Table 1

Usage and Value of Crowdsourcing Strategizing by Nonprofit Leaders

Nonprofit Leader (NPL)	Crowdsourcing Strategizing Used	Strategic Impact Received	Value Measured
NPL A	M	confirms direction	feedback
NPL B	M	more efficient	knowledge

NPL C	M	strategically communicate better	information
NPL D	T	varies	information
NPL E	T	varies	feedback
NPL F	M	maintain strategic alignment	data

M = Modern T = Traditional

Simply asking a group of people for help with a business issue does not guarantee value will be obtained. Dimmery and Peterson (2016) claimed a lack of oversight yields a poor crowdsourcing effort with unconcerned contributors. The success of implementing crowdsourcing strategizing depends on attracting and retaining the right crowd (Soliman & Tuunainen, 2015). Table 1 reveals whether the leaders used a traditional crowdsourcing model, meaning without a technology platform, or a modern approach that included technology. Additionally, the strategic impact received, shown in column three of Table 1, supports the conclusion and displays how each leader benefited from the data.

From this research, Nonprofit Leader B revealed, “[crowdsourcing strategizing] has helped me think bigger…and makes [the organization] more relevant.” The benefit to the organization varied for Nonprofit Leader E, but the leader found having the community rally behind the cause to be one dynamic. Corcoran (2017) believed nonprofits have been important in developing the Richmond, Virginia area. Thus, having open-minded leaders that are willing to keep evolving is not only important for the growth of the organization but the surrounding regions the organizations serve. As the leaders used crowdsourcing strategizing and began witnessing results, revolutionary advantages occurred. The nonprofit leaders were able to implement crowdsourcing strategizing in a manner that produced valuable benefits on an individual basis and for the entire organization.

Key findings from observation.

The second data collection means was observation. Studying the leaders during the interview process revealed a range of expressions which are highlighted in Figure 3. The observation grid shows the emotion portrayed, correlated with the number of participants that displayed the feeling. Apprehension, confidence, and uncertainty were seen in some leaders. Other leaders appeared intimidated regarding the subject but were eager to apply the existing years of professional experience to address each question.

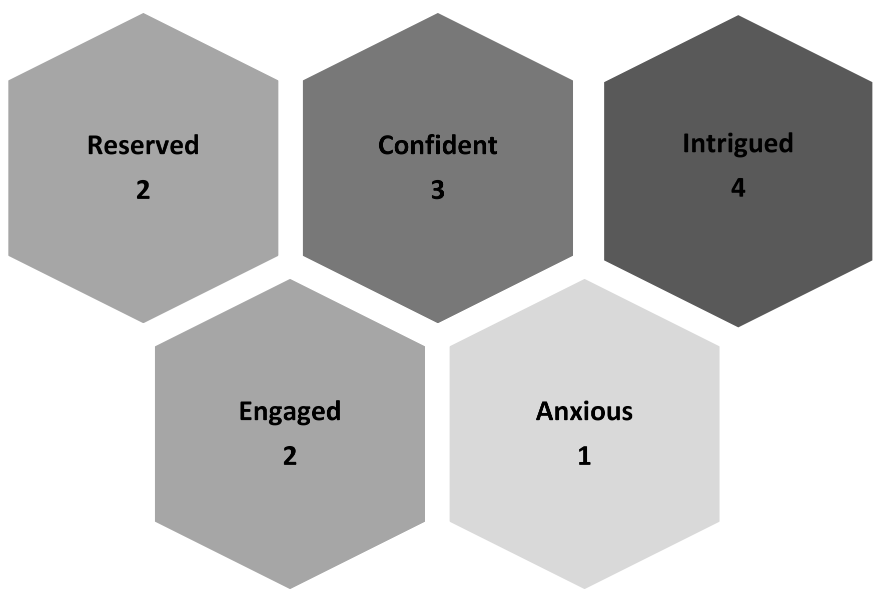

Figure 3. A grid of characteristics observed during interviews that depicts the traits expressed with the correlating number of leaders.

In some cases, the observed behavior was not aligned with the verbal response. For example, Nonprofit Leader D appeared hesitant about how to answer the questions and had fluctuating eye contact early in the interview. The behavior appeared as though the leader had no data of substance to include with the study or was too inhibited to reply. However, Nonprofit Leader D had the longest interview time and lengthiest responses while providing creditable knowledge. Also, the body language of the leader relaxed further into the discussion. These were signs that Nonprofit Leader D became comfortable with the details being shared, no longer intimidated by the terminology, and able to freely release information.

In another example, Nonprofit Leader A was uncertain when the term crowdsourcing strategizing was mentioned. By admission, the leader thought there were no professional experiences to share. This assessment was purely upon hearing the jargon. However, Nonprofit Leader A quickly engaged in the session when crowdsourcing strategizing was defined. This leader always portrayed confidence in each answer provided, indicating assurance in the level of experiences being shared. In fact, most participants were confident. As executive leaders of established nonprofit organizations, one expects a certain self-assurance has been attained at that level. The confidence observed converted into each interviewee speaking from the depths of the individual’s experience.

There is a tangible aspect of service and compassion that was witnessed by the leaders of the nonprofit sector. Palumbo (2016) argued that nonprofits must have leadership for success, and servant leaders are recognized by a desire to serve others in the organization. Each leader, through vocal inflection or body language, resonated a passion for the people being served and the work being done. While scholars have not come to a consensus on the definition of servant leadership (van Dierendonck, 2011), the study participants displayed servant leader characteristics like empathy, awareness, and stewardship (Spears, 2004). The leaders were genuinely engaged with the daily operation and desired to see the nonprofits succeed. However, the desire for success did not override serving the clients' needs. Rather, the leaders measured success, from one aspect, by how well the clients' needs were met. The leaders displayed servant leadership by showing a genuine regard for the missions of the nonprofit organizations which was observed during the interviews.

Key findings from document analysis.

Document analysis was used to finish gathering the findings. Information from the interviews and observations was supplemented with document analysis. Five videos, three online articles, and 120 scholarly journals were reviewed. Twenty-five scholarly works addressed crowdsourcing, while the remaining 95 concentrated on the supporting elements of leadership, nonprofits, organizational strategy, value, or an adjoining topic. The combination of videos, online articles, and scholarly writings provided an information tripod to validate document analysis within the research.

Table 2 depicts the correlation of information among the videos, articles, and journals evaluated. Specifically, the content of the videos expressed crowdsourcing strategizing as a disruptor to the current strategy creation process and an important component to the success of future business models. Information in the online articles discussed crowdsourcing strategizing as a successful option that gives voice to a larger audience, a point on which the video data aligned. Lastly, the scholarly journals assessed crowdsourcing from many directions. The overarching opinions gathered from the various mediums of information were crowdsourcing strategizing is an effective resource and viable alternative to the closed-door strategy development method.

Table 2

Data Highlights of Crowdsourcing Strategizing within the Three Document Types

Videos - 5 reviewed

- Provides global recognition for the crowd and gives the crowdsourcer assurance of a great idea
- Crowd is changing the strategic business model and now has power to talk to the boardroom
- Platform to effect change and convert information to knowledge through connection

Online Articles - 3 reviewed

- Successful implementation helps leverage strategic flexibility
- Promotes organizational alignment and improved decision making
- Allows ideas to be sourced from a larger group

Scholarly Journals - 120 reviewed

- An inclusive model compared to the traditional, closed-door approach
- Combines the collective knowledge of internal and external sources to solve organizational strategy challenges
- Effective innovation method and beneficial for capturing value

Some additional key findings were revealed during document analysis. Namely, the subject of crowdsourcing is often related to the practice of obtaining money from supporters to fund an idea, a method called crowdfunding. A few experts discussed crowdfunding, in TEDx Talks, but placed emphasis on the crowdsourcing of ideas for large organizations. Rob Wilmot, Founder of Crowdicity and TEDxKraków speaker, stated crowdsourcing helps convert information to knowledge through connection. Dr. Richard Swart spoke during TEDxSaltLakeCity and believed crowdsourcing gives the crowd power to talk to the board room. Those ideas were supported by Jess Ratty of TEDxBristol through expressing that crowdsourcing establishes a people-led economy. The experts agreed, and the online information supported, that crowdsourcing is a critical model to know and implement for success in the future business world.

Compare and contrast.

Though most of the data showed value in the modern strategy development model, there were a few outliers. Expressly, Nonprofit Leaders D and E felt crowdsourcing strategizing, implemented through a technology platform, was not suitable for the organization. Nonprofit Leader E said, "I [cannot] imagine that [external stakeholders] would be as well informed as [the] volunteers and staff. . .." Similarly, leader D held reservations because of the many governmental influences on the organization, believing few people could grasp the multi-faceted policies that shape the organization's strategy. Conversely, Nonprofit Leader A remarked "I [cannot] say enough how critical it is to get outside opinions." Afuah and Tucci (2012) agreed crowdsourcing should be used based on the organization and type of problem. The data from document analysis showed consumer goods, arts, science, government, event planning, and nonprofit organizations have benefited from crowdsourcing.

Furthermore, the videos depicted crowdsourcing as a money-making medium for the new age of business ventures. Swart used the example of a Fortune 500 company that gave each employee money to cast a vote, indicating the preferred research method. The overwhelming response caused the business to use that model in future decisions. Data from the videos of document analysis, largely, depicted crowdsourcing as helpful to getting ideas which generate more revenue. However, the interviews supported a different perspective. Crowdsourcing was only mentioned twice in connection with revenue. Each leader understood the importance of financial support. Nevertheless, the largest focus was how crowdsourcing strategizing aided the leaders in accomplishing the strategic objectives, and for a nonprofit, the focus was rarely on monetary gain. Despite how or from whom the knowledge is collected, the information gathered from the various sources matched the conclusion that crowdsourcing strategizing is valuable to organizations because of the data received.

Summary of data sources.

The three data sources revealed similar information with a few varying perspectives. Through interviews, study participants described crowdsourcing strategizing as a pivotal tool for collecting data to generate innovative programs, make the organization more efficient, and maintain strategic alignment. The data from observation showed each leader held a firm conviction in the responses given and strongly desired to see the nonprofits succeed. Characteristics observed through observation showed the interviewees operated as servant leaders. The study participants validated verbal responses with nonverbal cues of confidence and intrigue despite reservations or some leaders being intimidated by the term crowdsourcing strategizing.

Also, document analysis of videos, online articles, and scholarly works showed crowdsourcing as a valuable tool for today’s leaders. In the study, however, not every leader agreed that the modern practice of crowdsourcing strategizing was best for the corresponding nonprofit. In fact, two leaders thought the practice was not sophisticated enough to capture the strategic needs of the organization. Those leaders did regularly use the traditional crowdsourcing model, which lacks a technology platform. In the end, with or without technology, the data sources showed crowdsourcing strategizing provided value through the crowdsourced data.

Themes from Findings

The themes taken from the findings were the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced data. Initially, the themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value resonated most in the research. In particular, the topics were born while developing the research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review. However, through data collection and analysis, other themes appeared in the findings. The emerged themes enrich the primary themes by showing why each subject is pivotal to the study and not, simply, stating what is important to the research. Also, the themes that emerged from data analysis aligned with the research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review.

Importance of crowdsourcing strategizing.

The first emerged theme is the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing and is discussed from the perspective of applying the concept. Crowdsourcing strategizing combines crowdsourcing and organizational strategy. Aten and Thomas (2016) coined the term crowdsourcing strategizing to denote the application of crowdsourcing to organizational strategy development. Crowdsourcing is an alternative technique from the closed-door model, which only includes executive leadership in the organization’s strategy formulation (Aurik et al., 2015). Understanding the function of crowdsourcing strategizing is important because the concept rests at the foundation of the study. The central research topic is crowdsourcing strategizing and ignites the other themes of nonprofit leadership and value.

Crowdsourcing was used, primarily, based on the needs of the organization. A need for a new program, a need to fill a gap identified in the industry, or a need for information to determine the next best steps. A couple of nonprofits were impacted by the political environment. For those organizations, policy changes initiated the use of crowdsourcing. The nonprofit leaders also used crowdsourcing as a maintenance medium to get an indication from stakeholders of necessary improvements, program ideas or updates, even thoughts on how to diversify funding sources. Knowing the catalysts to using crowdsourcing gives an indication of when the tool is beneficial within an organization's development.

Crowdsourcing strategizing was important for nonprofit leaders because the tool was an aid in solving organizational challenges that arose. Nonprofit Leader E believed that lives changed was the bottom line for the nonprofit and changing lives occurred through fulfilling the needs of the client. "I look at [progress] differently. I look at [success] as lives changed, not as profit at the bottom line," commented Nonprofit Leader E. Thus, crowdsourcing strategizing was a resource for Nonprofit Leader E to successfully integrate a new opportunity into the organization's strategy, while staying aligned with the vision. The idea is used for multiple reasons and within various environments. However, crowdsourcing strategizing remains important for nonprofit leaders in dealing with the regular challenges of running an organization.

Necessity of leadership.

Secondly, the necessity of leadership became a prominent subject throughout the data analysis and arose as a supporting theme. Leadership is necessary to guide an organization and helps determine the impact of crowdsourcing on the strategic direction. Per Nonprofit Leader A, crowdsourcing strategizing provides regular feedback and, often, confirms the direction the organization is charting. Specifically, the nonprofit leader indicated, "In some regards, [crowdsourcing strategizing] confirmed what [the leaders] already knew." Crowdsourcing enables nonprofit leaders to decide the best use of resources, like volunteers, through applying the information collected. Nonprofit Leaders B and C expressed the importance of proper volunteer usage. Nonprofit Leader B stated, “Telling [leaders] what [volunteers] think or giving [leaders] new ideas is a form of volunteer engagement.” Also, crowdsourcing aids the leaders in keeping the nonprofit aligned with the organization’s core pillars, according to Nonprofit Leader F, and implement the strategic objectives more efficiently, per Nonprofit Leader B.

While crowdsourcing strategizing is useful, the tool is not self-sufficient. In fact, without supervision, poor results will be produced from crowdsourcing (Dimmery & Peterson, 2016). “A lot of times,” said Nonprofit Leader D, “it really is [a person] connecting the dots.” The nonprofit leaders were able to properly govern the application and implementation of crowdsourcing strategizing. Being at the top of the organization, the leaders had access and authority to guarantee the tool was being used in a manner that would yield benefits. Therefore, leadership is necessary to ensure crowdsourcing strategizing has the proper management to generate organizational value.

Value of crowdsourced data.

The third and final theme is the value of crowdsourced information. Nonprofit leaders were the only approved research source for understanding the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. Examining leaders was critical because an effective nonprofit organization is based on leaders with a strategy understanding being in key positions (Harrison et al., 2013). As Swenson et al. (2016) stated, an organization’s progress is directly related to the leaders. Nonprofit leadership had the best position in the organization to implement and evaluate crowdsourcing strategizing. The nonprofit leadership theme was the research element that connected crowdsourcing strategizing and value by using the leaders to provide a value definition of crowdsourcing strategizing.

Crowdsourcing provides information to nonprofit leaders that is imperative for developing the organization's strategic direction. Data, information, and knowledge were all descriptions given to explain the value that results from crowdsourcing (see Table 1). The process culminates in providing leaders with the proper information to set and achieve the strategic objectives of the organization. For one nonprofit leader, there is no single place to obtain data necessary for making strategic decisions. "[There is] not a place to go to get [the information]," declared Nonprofit Leader D. Thus, the leader found going beyond the walls of the organization essential. However, Nonprofit Leader D did not believe crowdsourcing strategizing, using a technology platform, would benefit the nonprofit because of impact from the political environment.

Nonprofit Leader E had a similar perspective, believing a unique understanding was required to give input on the organization's strategy. The leader did not feel such knowledge was accessible outside of internal stakeholders, particularly executives. Chesbrough and Appleyard (2007) debated that external stakeholders should not be overlooked because those contributors may create value for the organization. Yet, Nonprofit Leaders E and F agreed that obtaining buy-in from internal stakeholders was an added benefit of using crowdsourcing. Value derived for the leader translates into value for the organization, and crowdsourced information is the value of crowdsourcing strategizing for nonprofit leaders.

Summary of themes from findings.

The findings from interviews, observation, and document analysis revealed three themes that supported the original themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value. These topics were extracted early in the research and developed from the research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review. The importance of crowdsourcing strategizing was the first theme to emerge. Most study participants found the resource pivotal to the organization’s success because crowdsourcing strategizing equipped leaders to handle organizational challenges. Data from document analysis supported this idea and established the principle that crowdsourcing is important because the crowd becomes part of the organization’s strategic decisions through crowdsourcing strategizing.

The second emerged theme was the necessity of leadership. Leaders are needed in the crowdsourcing model to oversee the strategic direction. Simply having substantial amounts of data, whether relevant to the nonprofit or not, is not the objective of crowdsourcing. Providing users with solutions is the key component of crowdsourcing strategizing. Therefore, leaders are still needed in the modern business design, with implementing crowdsourcing strategizing, because someone must disseminate the information. Leaders understand the organization’s larger vision span and are best equipped to determine what information aligns with the nonprofits core objectives. These claims were, primarily, supported by the interview data.

The final emerged theme was the value of crowdsourced data. Crowdsourcing strategizing provides leaders with knowledge to create and adapt strategies for the organization. For this study, Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders were key and the focus of the interview sources. However, material from document analysis illustrated the data from crowdsourcing is crucial across industries. Three TEDx speakers and a several authors of online articles described crowdsourcing as a practice that should be known and regularly implemented because of the information obtained. In conclusion, the themes of the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced data support the notion that crowdsourcing is a viable resource for leaders.

Evolution of themes.

The transition from the initial to the emerged themes did occur during data collection and analysis. While identifying the problem statement to develop the research questions, three major components kept arising. As a result, the conceptual framework was designed with crowdsourcing strategizing as the major factor because the topic is the main subject of the study but without people the tool is irrelevant. Therefore, nonprofit leaders were assigned as the focal implementers for the study. Value was the final topic needed to address every aspect of the problem statement through the research questions. Thus, measuring value became the output of the conceptual framework. Figure 1 depicts the relationship between the initial themes.

Figure 4. Relationship of research questions and themes from the onset of study through the evolution of exploration.

For the emerged themes, there was a defining moment when each evolved. Figure 4 shows the corresponding relationship between the research question along with the initial and emerged themes. Nonprofit Leader A expressed passionately, during data collection, the criticality of differing views. The leader was exalting crowdsourcing strategizing as a pivotal resource. In that moment, the clarity of the theme became the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing. Secondly, during data analysis, the findings showed that crowdsourcing, alone, is not valuable unless there are key individuals engaged. Part of the study addressed the role of strategic leadership. Therefore, the necessity of leadership arose as a theme to address the need of tactical thinkers in the crowdsourcing process. Lastly, the conversion from value to value of crowdsourced data was from the consistent remarks of the nonprofit leaders. Each participant responded that crowdsourced knowledge was the value.

Relationship of themes to literature.

As revealed, the themes are closely related to the research questions, conceptual framework, and literature. The relationship to literature addresses the conceptual framework, scholarly works, and complementing research study. A textual and visual depiction of how the themes are joined is shown in the conceptual framework. Additionally, the main elements of the conceptual framework are mirrored in the literature review. Crowdsourcing and organizational strategy were combined to study crowdsourcing strategizing (Aten & Thomas, 2016) as a disruptive business trend (Aten & Thomas, 2016; Aurik et al., 2015). Prior scholarly works praised crowdsourcing as a good path for getting information from people on various experience levels (Yoo et al., 2013); an inspiring idea because internal and external knowledge is applied to the business strategy (Stieger et al., 2012); as well as a problem-solving technique and favorable for attaining business value (Blohm et al., 2013). Although, the benefit of crowdsourcing and an organization's successful design is not fully engaged without leadership.

Nonprofit leadership was the second research element of the conceptual framework and literature review. Leaders are critical to any endeavor. In business, however, Halley-Boyce et al. (2013) argued that the leader is a mirror of the organization, and one knows the organization's condition by seeing the character of the leader. Thus, the leader's growth does not happen separately from the organization (Swenson et al., 2016). These views are pivotal when implementing a tool like crowdsourcing because the organization will only mature at the rate at which the leader is willing to expand. Finally, value was the key factor to the current study. Research by Erickson (2013) suggested crowdsourcing strategizing should be explored for value. Aten and Thomas (2016), along with several other scholars agreed academic and professional literature on the topic was lacking (Amrollahi et al., 2014; Chesbrough & Appleyard, 2007; Stieger et al., 2012). Therefore, literature supported exploring each component of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value.

Relationship of themes to research questions.

There were four major research questions at the beginning of the study, but data collection revealed three of the queries as essential. The primary question about value to the organization hinged on the final inquiry regarding value to the leader. Therefore, analysis of value to the organization became a subset of value to the leader. The other questions dealt with the impact of crowdsourcing strategizing to the strategic direction and the circumstances under which the leaders used crowdsourcing. Themes were developed through creating the research questions, conceptual framework, literature review, as well as collecting and analyzing data.

The themes developed from the research questions, and depicted in the conceptual framework, were crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value. These themes were all main subjects throughout the research questions. After data collection and analysis, complementary themes were revealed, like the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced information. These subjects were undertones to the previous themes but became more prominent throughout data collection and analysis. Table 3 along with Figure 4 offers a visual summary of the themes. Scholars have studied the themes individually, but no literature was found for the collective subjects. Table 3 describes the nonprofit leaders' engagement with the primary themes as supported by data. The initial themes have a correlating emerged theme, and Figure 4 displays the connection to the research questions.

Table 3

Case Study Findings by Theme

Themes	NPL A	NPL B	NPL C	NPL D	NPL E	NPL F
Crowdsourcing Strategizing	Used regularly	Used in the past	Used annually	Used traditional model regularly	Used traditional model as needed	Used regularly
Nonprofit Leadership	CEO and President	Executive Director	Executive Director	President	CEO	Executive Director
Value	Value is obtained through the crowdsourced data					

Crowdsourcing strategizing was the primary focus. Aten and Thomas (2016) stressed the application of crowdsourcing to organizational strategy which helped develop the framework of the study and questions. The value and importance of crowdsourcing was seen in literature and in practice. Nonprofit Leader A passionately believed the value of crowdsourcing strategizing could not be stressed enough because feedback was critical to generating innovative ideas. Using crowdsourcing to integrate internal and external stakeholders into strategy discussions has become a problem-solving method for many organizations (Chesbrough & Appleyard, 2007; Parvanta et al., 2013; Stieger et al., 2012). Crowdsourcing strategizing, as the main theme and focus of the research questions, was revealed as the conduit through which information flows and leaders gain access to an abundance of knowledge.

To get an understanding of the tool’s effectiveness in the nonprofit sector, the study’s questions were designed to engage nonprofit leaders. Nonprofit Leader E deduced feedback was important, but leadership served a greater role in determining strategy. Halley-Boyce et al. (2013) believed leaders reflect the organization and looking at the leader is synonymous with looking at the organization. The premise of using nonprofit leaders was based on the leadership position at the top of the organization, which provided a unique insight in determining value. Therefore, the themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value were interrelated. Whether through the initial or emerged themes, the research questions helped address the key subject of the study, which was how crowdsourcing strategizing impacts nonprofit organizations.

Summary of the findings.

Crowdsourcing strategizing has value. The value of crowdsourcing strategizing is in the crowdsourced data. Each party, crowdsourcer and crowdsourcee, serves an active role in making sure the value is realized. As crowdsourcers, nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area found crowdsourcing strategizing important because the tool helped the leaders handle organizational issues. Leadership is necessary to govern the process of crowdsourcing strategizing because crowdsourcees may not remain engaged in the process without leaders. With both parties engaged, crowdsourcing strategizing provides nonprofit leaders with valuable crowdsourced information that allows leadership to set the strategic direction of the organization.

These findings were revealed through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Combining the three data sources allowed validation of the study through triangulation. Furthermore, six Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit leaders were interviewed with theoretical saturation reached. Observation of the leaders occurred during the interview sessions. For document analysis, there were five videos, three online articles, and 120 scholarly journals reviewed. Analysis of the findings was done through the memo technique, hand coding, and Microsoft Excel. Transcripts were not engaged to prevent the data from being emotionally diluted during analysis. The topic of crowdsourcing strategizing was aptly explored using these mediums.

Although some leaders implemented crowdsourcing in a more traditional method, meaning without a technology platform, the benefit of the tool was still received. A greater level of information is attainable when the platform is opened to a larger crowd. Whether implemented traditionally or through a technology platform, crowdsourcing strategizing still gave leaders a wealth of knowledge and data that was translated into strategic input for the nonprofit's growth. The data nonprofit leaders received aided in developing programs, implementing new processes, or becoming more efficient. Several nonprofit leaders expounded on the criticality of the information as relevant to obtaining strategic success.

However, there were a couple of opinions that differed from the majority view. Nonprofit Leader D believed the industry's climate and laws impacted the organization in such a way that the modern form of crowdsourcing strategizing could not be implemented in the nonprofit. The leader, nevertheless, articulated that the information gathered from internal and external stakeholders was the greatest value. For another nonprofit leader, strategy was at the core of organizational success. Having crowdsourced information gave Nonprofit Leader F confidence in decision making and foresight to maintain the strategic direction. Thus, the main results of the study are crowdsourcing strategizing enables leaders to overcome organizational challenges; leadership is needed in the crowdsourcing model to govern the strategic direction; and crowdsourcing strategizing provides nonprofit leaders with data to develop as well as adjust organizational strategies.

Applications to Professional Practice

The research findings are applicable to professional practice in two ways. First, the findings support the use of crowdsourcing strategizing through giving a measure of value by which leaders can argue the importance of implementing the practice. Leaders, nonprofit or otherwise, need creditable resources to help advance an organization. Several of the nonprofit leaders articulated an interest and intent to use crowdsourcing more formally. Nonprofit Leader B described a partner organization trying to get input from employees on better ways to modernize the nonprofit’s processes. In retrospect, the leader argued crowdsourcing strategizing would have been an ideal tool to implement for the desired results. The effectiveness is in the wealth of knowledge provided by the crowd.

Secondly, the research findings are applicable to professional practice as a supplement to the strategic planning process. The use of crowdsourcing does not replace leadership’s role in strategy development. Leaders will better understand proper implementation scenarios by knowing crowdsourcing strategizing’s value is in the data obtained. Advances to the time required and the amount of information gathered are accomplished by using a social platform or any technology medium. Therefore, leaders can implement quality suggestions sooner.

A key aspect of correct usage is knowing and accepting God's design for business. Leaders must operate according to God's way of doing business. Though CEOs, and other strategic individuals, are charged with organizational oversight, the biblical framework denotes God as Leader. The leadership field of study is impacted because this research provides knowledge about crowdsourcing strategizing and God's preferred business design, giving leaders a resource to further an organization's strategic objectives. When crowdsourcing strategizing is properly applied, leadership receives data from the crowd that translates to insights, and the organization is propelled forward.

Recommendations for Action

There were three conclusions of the study which require action. The first was crowdsourcing strategizing is important to help leaders overcome organizational challenges. Leaders must consistently implement crowdsourcing strategizing. Today's social media platforms make accessing the crowd a simpler process than 50 years ago. An organization should establish regular cycles of crowdsourcing, like a quarterly or bi-annual period. Systematic crowdsourcing will allow nonprofit leaders to develop an established relationship with a crowd familiar with the organization and issues faced.

Leaders are still relevant in the crowdsourcing model to manage the organization's strategic direction was the second research conclusion. Crowdsourcing strategizing does not replace the tactical expertise of leadership but enhances a leader's knowledge base in guiding the organization. Nonprofit leaders must embrace the developmental resources available to remain relevant in the current business climate. One way to become familiar with crowdsourcing strategizing and understand the strategic impact on the business is to use the process for small matters. Nonprofit leadership has the advantage of governing crowdsourcing strategizing in a way that is beneficial for the leaders and organization.

Lastly, crowdsourcing strategizing provides value to nonprofit leaders through crowdsourced data. Nonprofit leaders should utilize crowdsourcing strategizing on a regular basis because value is obtained through the information gleaned from the crowd. A simple implementation would be surveying internal stakeholders using a tool like SurveyMonkey. On a larger scale, the organizations can use social media to gather feedback and ideas from external as well as internal stakeholders. Though nonprofit leaders benefit from the research findings, for-profit organizations are also impacted because strategy development is essential in either business type.

Recommendations for Further Study

Recommendations for future study include conducting the research with a grounded theory design to develop a principle about the value of crowdsourcing strategizing. The principle would be relevant in academic literature and professional application to teach as well as support the practice of crowdsourcing. Additionally, conducting a case study design, using a single organization, may reveal a greater depth of knowledge about the concept. The study should be explored during the implementation of crowdsourcing strategizing. Also, using a specific type of nonprofit would allow greater examination as one organization, within this research, was impacted by the political environment.

Performing the study in the for-profit or corporate realm is another avenue of further research. Studying crowdsourcing strategizing under corporate leaders explores an additional dynamic of influence, considering corporate organizations are often driven by profit.

Additionally, discovering the fiscal impact of crowdsourcing strategizing would provide a value measure for budget planning and other economic purposes. Geographic location was also a component of the study. The research should be performed in other states and regions to determine similarities or differences in business operation.

Another factor to examine further in study is the significance of gender. All participants of the study were women. Though there was no exclusion of males, only female nonprofit leaders positively responded to the request. Actively seeking and researching the male perspective may result in different findings that show how males operate in business. Also, the study would expound upon a male’s acceptance or rejection of new business practices. Each dynamic has an impact on the strategic direction of an organization. Thus, the male viewpoint of crowdsourcing strategizing is worth exploring.

Finally, each participant was at the top of the organization, represented as a CEO or Executive Director. Top-tier leadership was desired for the current research. However, Nonprofit Leader E admitted to having and preferring a big picture view of the organization, while leaving the details to the next level of leadership. An organization’s tiers of leadership provide varying depths into the strategic perspective. Therefore, engaging others at the executive level would reveal a different value or perceived impact of crowdsourcing strategizing.

Reflections

Going into the study, biases were consciously eliminated nor were conclusions about the results developed prior to data collection. There was still a surprise, however, in the value that leaders received from the tool. Data being the biggest asset to leadership was not anticipated. The expectation was a narrower output, such as a 12-week plan or three strategic ideas for marketing. However, the results do align with the value description that Blohm et al. (2013)

expressed which is crowdsourced data. In hindsight, the received value metric may have been foreseen but was not predicted because of the goal to remove researcher bias.

Another aspect to consider is the interview process. Asking leading questions was avoided, preventing the data from being contaminated with preconceived notions. Using an interview protocol, as described by Creswell (2014), allowed additional questions to be asked based on the response of the interviewee. Each added interview presented an opportunity to ask leading questions of the succeeding participant as a pattern was revealed through previous responses. Not using the questions to insert an expected response became particularly important. Therefore, the interviewees were carefully given the liberty to respond according to firsthand experiences and without the influence of leading questions.

Lastly, the biblical aspect of the study is reviewed. Though each leader was given a certain level of autonomy over the organization, the individuals operated with a Christ-like mentality. Meaning, the nonprofit leaders spoke of the organization and the clients' needs as primary goals. The leaders were not interested in serving a self-fulfilled mission. Rather, like the example Christ gave of putting others first, each leader functioned and made decisions that promoted the vision of the organization with the client as the main benefactor.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The concept of crowdsourcing is allowing contributions outside the executive level to be expressed in the boardroom during strategy discussions. Incorporating views outside of management has become increasingly important because Stieger et al. (2012) argued that rarely is strategy created through the ideas of one person or a homogeneous team. Internal and external stakeholders of an organization have become part of the crowd. Obtaining value from the viewpoints of a crowd is not a new concept, though, the term crowdsourcing was, recently, introduced in 2006 (Soliman & Tuunainen, 2015). This research addressed the issue of the value of crowdsourcing strategizing.

The problem outlined within the study was a lack of understanding on the value crowdsourcing strategizing provides to nonprofit organizations in the Richmond, Virginia metro area. Value was measured by nonprofit leaders and was, often, synonymous with value to the leader. As a result, nonprofit CEOs in the defined region were targeted for sampling. The purpose of this qualitative case study research was to explore the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to nonprofits, as determined by leadership.

To address the problem, the following research questions were outlined: 1) how are nonprofit organizations impacted by crowdsourcing strategizing in the Richmond, Virginia metro area?; 2) how would the use of crowdsourcing strategizing impact the strategic direction of a nonprofit?; 3) what circumstances would provoke the use of crowdsourcing strategizing for a Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit?; and 4) how does crowdsourcing strategizing bring value to a nonprofit leader in developing the strategic organizational direction?. The interview guide, presented in Appendix B, was a tool designed for delving deeper with additional inquiries, and using Creswell's (2014) protocol method, created an open dialogue during the interviews.

The conceptual framework, diagramed in Figure 1, outlined the main elements extracted from the research questions. Crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value were the three areas of focus. Those themes were explored in the present research because nonprofit leaders determined the value of crowdsourcing strategizing to an organization. A scholarly evaluation was provided in the literature review, and each element remained relevant throughout data collection. During data analysis, a few supporting themes were revealed, which are the importance of crowdsourcing strategizing, necessity of leadership, and value of crowdsourced information. Yin (2009) cautioned that reviewing one’s data may denote new, developing themes correlated to the research questions. Thus, complementary themes were used in the findings to express the importance of the primary themes of crowdsourcing strategizing, nonprofit leadership, and value.

The findings showed nonprofit leaders in the Richmond, Virginia metro area received value from crowdsourcing strategizing through the data gathered. Some leaders found crowdsourcing imperative for staying strategically on task and developing new objectives. In contrast, a couple nonprofit leaders concluded the modern concept was too open an idea to meet the organizations’ needs, but a traditional method that excluded modern technology was effective. The future recommendations contain suggestions on additional areas of crowdsourcing strategizing that should be explored. However, this research does help close the gap, in literature, on the value surrounding crowdsourcing strategizing. Correspondingly, the study provides information on professional applications in the business sector. Whether in writing or practice, most of the literature and data collected showed the value of crowdsourcing strategizing is in the wealth of information gleaned from the crowd.

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Appendix A: IRB Application

The IRB application and consent form submitted to and approved by the university's IRB. These documents were provided as an illustration, to future doctoral candidates, of acceptable research material. Components of the application were referenced throughout the writing and are presented here. These contents were presented to provide readers with another level of detail about the research tools and process.

APPLICATION FOR THE USE OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

IRB APPLICATION #: 3113 (*To be assigned by the IRB)*

I. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete each section of this form, using the gray form fields (use the tab key).
2. If you have questions, hover over the blue **(?)**, or refer to the IRB Application Instructions for additional clarification.
3. Review the IRB Application Checklist.
4. Email the completed application, with the following supporting documents (as separate word documents) to irb@liberty.edu:
    a. Consent Forms, Permission Letters, Recruitment Materials
    b. Surveys, Questionnaires, Interview Questions, Focus Group Questions
5. If you plan to use a specific Liberty University department or population for your study, you will need to obtain permission from the appropriate department chair/dean. Submit documentation of permission (email or letter) to the IRB along with this application and check the indicated box below verifying that you have done so.
6. **Submit one signed copy of the signature page (available on the IRB website) to any of the following:**
    a. Email: As a scanned document to irb@liberty.edu
    b. Fax: 434-522-0506
    c. Mail: IRB 1971 University Blvd. Lynchburg, VA 24515
    d. In Person: Green Hall, Suite 1887
7. Once received, applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.
8. Preliminary review may take up to 3 weeks.
9. Most applications will require 3 sets of revisions.
10. The entire process may take between 1 and 2 months.
11. *We cannot accept applications in formats other than Microsoft Word. Please do not send us One Drive files, Pdfs, Google Docs, or Html applications.*

Note: Applications and supporting documents with the following problems will be returned immediately for revisions:

1. Grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors
2. Lack of professionalism
3. Lack of consistency or clarity
4. Incomplete applications

Failure to minimize these errors **will** cause delays in your processing time

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II. BASIC PROTOCOL INFORMATION

1. STUDY/THESIS/DISSERTATION TITLE (?)
Title: A Leader's Vantage Point of Crowdsourcing Strategizing

2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR & PROTOCOL INFORMATION (?)	
Principal Investigator *(person conducting the research):* Priscilla L. Eddings	
Professional Title *(Student, Professor, etc.):* Student	
School/Department *(School of Education, LUCOM, etc.):* School of Business	
Phone: XXX.XXX.XXXX	LU Email: XXXXXXX@liberty.edu
Check all that apply:	
☐ Faculty	☒ Online Graduate Student
☐ Staff	☐ Residential Undergraduate Student
☐ Residential Graduate Student	☐ Online Undergraduate Student
This research is for:	
☐ Class Project	☐ Master’s Thesis
☐ Scholarly Project (DNP Program)	☒ Doctoral Dissertation
☐ Faculty Research	☐ Other:
If applicable, indicate whether you have defended and passed your dissertation proposal:	
☒ N/A ☐ No *(Provide your defense date):* ☐ Yes *(Proceed to Associated Personnel Information)*	

3. ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL INFORMATION (?)	
Co-Researcher(s): N/A	
School/Department:	
Phone:	LU/Other Email:
Faculty Chair/Mentor(s): Dr. Kimberly R. Anthony	
School/Department: School of Business	
Phone: XXX.XXX.XXXX	LU/Other Email: XXXXXXX@liberty.edu
Non-Key Personnel *(Reader, Assistant, etc.):* Dr. Ed Moore	
School/Department: School of Business	
Phone: XXX.XXX.XXXX	LU/Other Email: XXXXXXX@liberty.edu

Consultant(s) *(required for Ed.D Candidates)*: N/A	
School/Department:	
Phone:	LU/Other Email:

4. USE OF LIBERTY UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANTS (?)	
Do you intend to use LU students, staff, or faculty as participants *OR* LU students, staff, or faculty data in your study? ☒ No *(Proceed to Funding Source)* ☐ Yes (*Complete the section below)*	
# of Participants/Data Sets:	**Department:**
Class(es)/Year(s):	**Department Chair:**
Obtaining permission to utilize LU participants *(check the appropriate box below):*	
SINGLE DEPARTMENT/GROUP: If you are including faculty, students, or staff from a single department or group, you must obtain permission from the appropriate Dean, Department Chair, or Coach and submit a signed letter or date/time stamped email to the IRB indicating approval to use students from that department or group. **You may submit your application without having obtained this permission**; however, the IRB will not approve your study until proof of permission has been received.	
☐ I have obtained permission from the appropriate Dean/Department Chair/Coach, and attached the necessary documentation to this application.	
☐ I have sought permission and will submit documentation to the IRB once it has been provided to me by the appropriate Dean/Department Chair/Coach.	
MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS/GROUPS: If you are including faculty, students, or staff from multiple departments or groups (i.e., all sophomores or LU Online), **the IRB will need to seek administrative approval on your behalf.**	
☐ I am requesting that the IRB seek administrative approval on my behalf.	

5. FUNDING SOURCE (?)
Is your research funded? ☒ No *(Proceed to Study Dates)* ☐ Yes (*Complete the section below)*
Grant Name/Funding Source/Number:
Funding Period (Month & Year):

6. STUDY DATES (?)
When will you perform your study? *(Approximate dates for collection/analysis):* **Start** *(Month/Year)*: January 2018 **Finish** *(Month/Year)*: May 2018

7. COMPLETION OF REQUIRED CITI RESEARCH ETHICS TRAINING (?)

List Course Name(s) *(Social and Behavioral Researchers, etc.)*: Social & Behavioral Researchers
Date(s) of Completion: 1/14/17

III. OTHER STUDY MATERIALS AND CONSIDERATIONS

8. STUDY MATERIALS LIST (?)	
Please indicate whether your proposed study will include any of the following:	
Recording/photography of participants (*voice, video, or images*)?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Participant compensation *(gift cards, meals, extra credit, etc.)*?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Advertising for participants *(flyers, TV/Radio advertisements)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
More than minimal psychological stress?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Confidential data collection *(participant identities known but not revealed)*?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Anonymous data collection *(participant identities not known)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Extra costs to the participants *(tests, hospitalization, etc.)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
The inclusion of pregnant women (*for medical studies*)?	☐ Yes ☒ No
More than minimal risk?*	☐ Yes ☒ No
Alcohol consumption?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Protected Health Information *(from health practitioners/institutions)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
VO_2 Max Exercise?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Pilot study procedures *(which will be published/included in data analysis)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Please indicate whether your proposed study will include the use of blood:	
Use of blood?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Total amount of blood:	
Blood draws over time period *(days)*:	
Please indicate whether your proposed study will include any of the following materials:	
The use of rDNA or biohazardous material?	☐ Yes ☒ No
The use of human tissue or cell lines?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Fluids that could mask the presence of blood *(including urine/feces)*?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Use of radiation or radioisotopes?	☐ Yes ☒ No
****Note: Minimal risk** is defined as "the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in everyday life or during the performance of routine physical or physiological examinations or tests. [45 CFR 46.102(i)]. If you are unsure if your study qualifies as minimal risk, contact the IRB.*	

9. INVESTIGATIONAL METHODS (?)
Please indicate whether your proposed study will include any of the following:
The use of an Investigational New Drug (IND) or an Approved Drug for an Unapproved Use? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Provide the drug name, IND number, and company):*

The use of an Investigational Medical Device or an Approved Medical Device for an Unapproved Use? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Provide the device name, IDE number, and company):*

IV. PURPOSE

10. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH (?)
Write an original, brief, non-technical description of the purpose of your research. Include in your description your research hypothesis/question, a narrative that explains the major constructs of your study, and how the data will advance your research hypothesis or question. This section should be easy to read for someone not familiar with your academic discipline: The purpose of this study is to determine whether crowdsourcing is valuable to a nonprofit organization when creating organizational strategies, based on the leaderships' perspective. How are nonprofit organizations impacted by crowdsourcing strategizing in the Richmond, Virginia metro area? is the primary research question. The data collected will allow the researcher to detemine if individuals in leadership gain strategic benefit from implementing crowdsourcing in the organization. The knowledge will add to business literature, expounding on whether crowdsourcing strategizing is impactful to leaders desiring to advance a mission or organization.

V. PARTICIPANT INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

11. STUDY POPULATION (?)
Provide the inclusion criteria for the participant population *(gender, age range, ethnic background, health status, occupation, employer, etc.)*: Richmond, Virginia metro area nonprofit owners, managers, board directors, board members, and strategic decision making personnel the age of 18+.
Provide a rationale for selecting the above population: This population will help the researcher determine if crowdsourcing strategizing has any value to nonprofit leaders.
Are you related to any of your participants? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Explain):*
Indicate who will be excluded from your study population *(e.g., persons under 18 years of age)*: Nonprofit owners, managers, board directors, board members, and strategic decision making personnel under the age of 18 and outside of the Richmond, Virginia metro area.
If applicable, provide rationale for involving any special populations *(e.g., children, ethnic groups, mentally disabled, low socio-economic status, prisoners)*: N/A

Provide the maximum number of participants you plan to enroll for each participant population and justify the sample size *(You will not be approved to enroll a number greater than the number listed. If at a later time it becomes apparent that you need to increase your sample size, submit a Change in Protocol Form and wait for approval to proceed)*: A maximum of 25 nonprofit leaders will be included in the study. This number will be large enough to reach theoretical saturation of the research subject. A definitive number for reaching theoretical saturation does not exist (Rowlands, Waddell, & McKenna, 2015), but is achieved when no new themes occur in the data (Walker, 2012). To achieve saturation, the sample size is based on adequately answering the question through gathering information with depth; thus, the number of study participants is contingent on the topic and obtainable resources (O'Rielly & Parker, 2013).
ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ONLY IF YOU ARE CONDUCTING A PROTOCOL WITH NIH, FEDERAL, OR STATE FUNDING:
Researchers sometimes believe their particular project is not appropriate for certain types of participants. These may include, for example, women, minorities, and children. If you believe your project should not include one or more of these groups, please provide your justification for their exclusion. Your justification will be reviewed according to the applicable NIH, federal, or state guidelines: N/A

12. TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS (?)	
Who will be the focus of your study? *(Check all that apply)*	
☒ Normal Participants (Age 18-65)	☐ Pregnant Women
☐ Minors (Under Age 18)	☐ Fetuses
☐ Over Age 65	☐ Cognitively Disabled
☐ University Students	☐ Physically Disabled
☐ Active-Duty Military Personnel	☐ Participants Incapable of Giving Consent
☐ Discharged/Retired Military Personnel	☐ Prisoners or Institutional Individuals
☐ Inpatients	☐ Specific Ethnic/Racial Group(s)
☐ Outpatients	☐ Other potentially elevated risk populations
☐ Patient Controls	☐ Participant(s) related to the researcher
Note: *Only check the boxes if the participants will be the focus (for example, ONLY military or ONLY students). If they just happen to be a part of the broad group you are studying, you only need to check "Normal Participants." Some studies may require that you check multiple boxes (e.g., Korean males, aged 65+).*	

VI. RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

13. CONTACTING PARTICIPANTS (?)

Describe in detail how you will contact participants regarding this study *(include the method(s) used—email, phone call, social media, snowball sampling, etc.)*: I will contact participants via email, phone, or in-person with addresses and numbers obtained from the Better Business Bureau, the organization's website, and/or online search engines.

14. SUBMISSION OF RECRUITMENT MATERIALS (?)
Submit a copy of all recruitment letters, scripts, emails, flyers, advertisements, or social media posts you plan to use to recruit participants for your study as separate Word documents with your application. Recruitment templates are available on the IRB website.
Check the appropriate box:
☒ All of the necessary recruitment materials will be submitted with my application.
☐ My study strictly uses **archival** data, so recruitment materials are not required.

15. LOCATION OF RECRUITMENT (?)
Describe the location, setting, and timing of recruitment: Participants will be recruited by email, phone, or in-person after a search for local nonprofit organizations through the Better Business Bureau, the organization's website, and online search engines. Leaders will be invited to participate in the study one to six weeks before the desired interview period.

16. SCREENING PROCEDURES (?)
Describe any screening procedures you will use when recruiting your participants *(i.e., screening survey, database query, verbal confirmation, etc.)*: In the initial contact, candidates will be notified that they must be 18+ years of age to participate in the study. To eliminate non-essential personnel, only individuals with top-tier titling (owners, managers, board directors, board members) or ones identified by the organization's management as having authority in determining strategic direction, will be invited to participate.

17. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (?)
Do you have a position of grading or professional authority over the participants *(e.g., Are you the participants' teacher, principal, or supervisor?)*? ☒ No *(Proceed to Procedures)* ☐ Yes *(Explain what safeguards are in place to reduce the likelihood of compromising the integrity of the research, e.g., addressing the conflicts in the consent process and/or emphasizing the pre-existing relationship will not be impacted by participation in the research.):*

Do you have any financial conflicts of interest to disclose *(e.g., Do you or an immediate family member receive income or other payments, own investments in, or have a relationship with a non-profit organization that could benefit from this research?)***?**

☒ No *(Proceed to Procedures)*

☐ Yes *(State the funding source/financial conflict and then explain what safeguards are in place to reduce the likelihood of compromising the integrity of the research.):*

VII. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

18. PROCEDURES (?)

Write an original, non-technical, step by step, description of what your participants will be asked to do during your study and data collection process. If you have multiple participant groups, *(ex: parents, teachers, and students)* or control groups and experimental groups, please specify which group you are asking to complete which task(s). **You do not need to list signing/reading consent as a step:**

Step/Task/Procedure	**Time (Approx.)**	**Participant Group(s)** *(All, Group A, Group B, Control Group, Experimental Group, etc.)*
1. Participate in a recorded interview.	30 min.	All
2. Participate in follow-up interview, if needed.	30 min.	All
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

19. SUBMISSION OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS/MATERIALS (?)

Submit a copy of all instruments, surveys, interviews questions, outlines, observation checklists, prompts, etc. that you plan to use to collect data for your study as separate Word documents with your application. Pdfs are **ONLY** acceptable for proprietary instruments.

Check the appropriate box:

☒ All of the necessary data collection instruments will be submitted with my application.

☐ My study strictly uses **archival** data, so data collection instruments are not required.

20. STUDY LOCATION (?)

Please describe the location(s)/site(s) in which the study will be conducted. Be specific *(include city, state, school/district, clinic, etc.)*: The study will be conducted at nonprofit organizations in the Richmond, Virginia metro area.
Note: For School of Education research*, investigators must submit documentation of permission from each research site to the IRB prior to receiving approval. If your study involves K-12 schools, district-level approval is acceptable. If your study involves colleges or universities, you may also need to seek IRB approval from those institutions. You may seek permission prior to submitting your IRB application, however,* **do not** *begin recruiting participants. If you find that you need a conditional approval letter from the IRB in order to obtain permission, one can be provided to you once all revisions have been received and are accepted.*

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS

21. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS/DATA SETS (?)
Estimate the number of participants to be enrolled or data sets to be collected: 25

22. ANALYSIS METHODS (?)
Describe *how* the data will be analyzed and what will be done with the data and the resulting analysis, including any plans for future publication or presentation: I will analyze the data using Excel and the memo technique. Once the data has been fully analyzed, I will include the data in my dissertation.

IX. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT

23. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT REQUIREMENTS (?)
Does your study require parental/guardian consent? *(If your participants are under 18, parental/guardian consent is required in most cases.)* ☒ No *(Proceed to Child Assent)* ☐ Yes *(Answer the following question)*
Does your study entail greater than minimal risk without the potential for benefits to the participant? ☐ No ☐ Yes *(Consent of both parents is required)*

X. ASSENT FROM CHILDREN

24. CHILD ASSENT (?)
Is assent required for your study? *(Assent is required unless the child is not capable due to age, psychological state, or sedation OR the research holds out the prospect of a direct benefit that is only available within the context of the research.)* ☒ No *(Proceed to Consent Procedures)* ☐ Yes

Note: *If the parental consent process (full or part) is waived (See XIII below) assent may be also. See the IRB's informed consent page for more information.*

XI. PROCESS OF OBTAINING INFORMED CONSENT

25. CONSENT PROCEDURES (?)
Describe in detail *how and when* you will provide consent information *(If applicable, include how you will obtain consent from participants and/or parents/guardians and/or child assent.)*: The participants will be provided the form immediately before the interview. After signing the document, the interview will begin. If the participant declines signing, they will not be included in the study.

XII. USE OF DECEPTION

26. DECEPTION (?)
Are there any aspects of the study kept secret from the participants *(e.g., the full purpose of the study)***?** ☒ No ☐ Yes *(describe the deception involved and the debriefing procedures)*:
Is deception used in the study procedures? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(describe the deception involved and the debriefing procedures)*:
Note: *Submit a post-experiment debriefing statement and consent form offering participants the option of having their data destroyed. A debriefing template is available on our website.*

XIII. WAIVER OF INFORMED CONSENT OR MODIFICATION OF REQUIRED ELEMENTS IN THE INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

27. WAIVER OF INFORMED CONSENT ELEMENTS (?) ☒ **N/A**
Please indicate why you are requesting a waiver of consent *(If your reason does not appear as an option, please check N/A. If your reason appears in the drop-down list, complete the below questions in this section)***:** Click to select an option.
Does the research pose no more than minimal risk to participants *(i.e., no more risk than that of everyday activities)***?** ☐ No, *the study is greater than minimal risk.* ☐ Yes, *the study is minimal risk.*
Will the waiver have no adverse effects on participant rights and welfare? ☐ No, *the waiver will have adverse effects on participant rights and welfare.* ☐ Yes, *the waiver will not adversely affect participant rights and welfare.*
Would the research be impracticable without the waiver? ☐ No, *there are other ways of performing the research without the waiver.* ☐ Yes, *not having a waiver would make the study unrealistic. (Explain)*:

Will participant debriefing occur *(i.e., will the true purpose and/or deceptive procedures used in the study be reported to participants at a later date)***?** ☐ No, *participants will not be debriefed.* ☐ Yes, *participants will be debriefed.*
Note: *A waiver or modification of some or all of the required elements of informed consent is sometimes used in research involving deception, archival data, or specific minimal risk procedures.*

XIV. WAIVER OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS TO SIGN THE INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

28. WAIVER OF SIGNED CONSENT (?) ☒ **N/A**
Please indicate why you are requesting a waiver of signatures *(If your reason does not appear as an option, please check N/A. If your reason appears in the drop-down list, complete the below questions in this section)***:** Click to select an option.
Would a signed consent form be the only record linking the participant to the research? ☐ No, *there are other records/study questions linking the participants to the study.* ☐ Yes, *only the signed form would link the participant to the study.*
Does a breach of confidentiality constitute the principal risk to participants? ☐ No, *there are other risks involved greater than a breach of confidentiality.* ☐ Yes, *the main risk is a breach of confidentiality.*
Does the research pose no more than minimal risk to participants *(i.e., no more risk than that of everyday activities)***?** ☐ No, *the study is greater than minimal risk.* ☐ Yes, *the study is minimal risk.*
Does the research include any activities that would require signed consent in a non-research context *(e.g., liability waivers)***?** ☐ No, *there are not any study related activities that would normally require signed consent* ☐ Yes, *there are study related activities that would normally require signed consent*
Will you provide the participants with a written statement about the research *(i.e., an information sheet that contains all of the elements of an informed consent form but without the signature lines)***?** ☐ No, *participants will not receive written information about the research.* ☐ Yes, *participants will receive written information about the research.*
Note: *A waiver of signed consent is sometimes used in anonymous surveys or research involving secondary data. This does not eliminate the need for a consent document, but it eliminates the need to obtain participant signatures.*

XV. CHECKLIST OF INFORMED CONSENT/ASSENT

29. STATEMENT (?)

Submit a copy of all informed consent/assent documents as separate Word documents with your application. Informed consent/assent templates are available on our website. Additional information regarding consent is also available on our website.
Check the appropriate box:
☒ All of the necessary consent/assent documents will be submitted with my application.
☐ My study strictly uses **archival** data, so consent documents are not required.

XVI. PARTICIPANT PRIVACY, DATA SECURITY, & MEDIA USE

30. PRIVACY (?)
Describe what steps you will take to protect the privacy of your participants *(e.g., If you plan to interview participants, will you conduct your interviews in a setting where others cannot easily overhear?)*: Interviews will be conducted in a private room where others cannot easily overhear.
Note: *Privacy refers to persons and their interest in controlling access to their information.*

31. DATA SECURITY (?)
How will you keep your data secure *(i.e., password-locked computer, locked desk, locked filing cabinet, etc.)***?**: Data will be stored on an encrypted storage device for 3 years.
Who will have access to the data *(i.e., the researcher and faculty mentor/chair, only the researcher, etc.)***?**: Only the researcher will have access to the data.
Will you destroy the data once the three-year retention period required by federal regulations expires? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Explain how the data will be destroyed):*
Note: *All research-related data must be stored for a minimum of three years after the end date of the study, as required by federal regulations.*

32. ARCHIVAL DATA (SECONDARY DATA) (?)
Is all or part of the data archival *(i.e., previously collected for another purpose)***?** ☒ No *(Proceed to Non-Archival Data)* ☐ Yes *(Answer the questions below)*
Is the archival data publicly accessible? ☐ No *(Explain how you will obtain access to this data)*: ☐ Yes *(Indicate where the data is accessible from, i.e., a website, etc.)*:

Will you receive the raw data stripped of identifying information *(e.g., names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, social security numbers, medical records, birth dates, etc.)***?**: ☐ No *(Describe what data will remain identifiable and why this information will not be removed)*: ☐ Yes *(Describe who will link and/or strip the data—this person should have regular access to the data and should be a neutral party not involved in the study)*:
Can the names or identities of the participants be deduced from the raw data? ☐ No *(Place your initials in the box: I will not attempt to deduce the identity of the participants in this study)*: ☐ Yes *(Describe)*:
Please provide the list of data fields you intend to use for your analysis and/or provide the original instruments used in the study:
Note: *If the archival data is not publicly available, submit proof of permission to access the data (i.e., school district letter or email). If you will receive data stripped of identifiers, this should be stated in the proof of permission.*

33. NON-ARCHIVAL DATA (PRIMARY DATA) (?)
If you are using non-archival data, will the data be anonymous to you *(i.e., raw data does not contain identifying information and cannot be linked to an individual/organization by use of pseudonyms, codes, or other means)*? **Note:** For studies involving audio/video recording or photography, select "No" ☐ N/A: I will not use non-archival data *(data was previously collected, skip to Media)* ☒ No *(Complete the "No" section below)* ☐ Yes *(Complete the "Yes" section below)*
****COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTION 31****
Can participant names or identities be deduced from the raw data? ☐ No ☒ Yes *(Describe)*: Participant names and titles will be noted during the interview process, inclusive of an audio recording.
Will a person be able to identify a subject based on other information in the raw data *(i.e., title, position, sex, etc.)***?** ☐ No ☒ Yes *(Describe)*: The name, title, position, and gender of the interviewee can be known.

Describe the process you will use to ensure the confidentiality of the participants during data collection and in any publication(s) *(i.e., you may be able to link individuals/organizations to identifiable data; however, you will use pseudonyms or a coding system to conceal their identities)*: Pseudonyms will be used to ensure confidentiality.
Do you plan to maintain a list or codebook linking pseudonyms or codes to participant identities? ☐ No ☒ Yes *(Please describe where this list/codebook will be stored and who will have access to the list/codebook. It should not be stored with the data.)*: Only the researcher will have access to the list which will be kept on an encrypted storage device, separate from the raw data.

****COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO QUESTION 31****
Describe the process you will use to collect the data to ensure that it is anonymous: The data collection process will include recordings with minimal use of participant names and handwritten notes with pseudonyms. These measures will help ensure the data is anonymous, and the raw data will not be published.
Place your initials in the box: I will not attempt to deduce the identity of the participants in this study: PLE
Note: *If you plan to use participant data (i.e., photos, recordings, videos, drawings) for presentations beyond data analysis for the research study (e.g., classroom presentations, library archive, or conference presentations) you will need to provide a materials release form to the participant.*

34. MEDIA USE (?)	
Will your participants be audio recorded?	☐ No ☒ Yes
Will your participants be video recorded?	☒ No ☐ Yes
Will your participants be photographed?	☒ No ☐ Yes
****COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO ANY MEDIA USE****	
Include information regarding how participant data will be withdrawn if he or she chooses to leave the study*: Recordings will be destroyed if the participant withdraws.	

Will your participants be audio recorded, video recorded, or photographed without their knowledge?** ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Describe the deception and debriefing procedures)*:
***Note on Withdrawal:** *Add the heading "How to Withdraw from the Study" on the consent document and include a description of the procedures a participant must perform to be withdrawn.* ****Note on Deception:** *Attach a post-experiment debriefing statement and a post-deception consent form, offering the participants the option of having their recording/photograph destroyed and removed from the study.*

XVII. PARTICIPANT COMPENSATION

35. COMPENSATION (?)
Will participants be compensated *(e.g., gift cards, raffle entry, reimbursement)***?** ☐ No *(Proceed to Risks)* ☒ Yes *(Describe)*: The researcher will offer two hours of volunteer time to each nonprofit organization that agrees to participate.
Will compensation be pro-rated if the participant does not complete all aspects of the study? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Describe)*:
***Note:** Certain states outlaw the use of lotteries, raffles, or drawings as a means to compensate or recruit research participants. Research compensation exceeding $600 per participant within a one-year period is considered income and will need to be filed on the participant's income tax returns. If your study is grant funded, Liberty University's Business Office policies might affect how you compensate participants. Contact the IRB for additional information.*

XVIII. PARTICIPANT RISKS AND BENEFITS

36. RISKS (?)
Describe the risks to participants and any steps that will be taken to minimize those risks. *(Risks can be physical, psychological, economic, social, or legal. If the only potential risk is a breach in confidentiality if the data is lost or stolen, state that here)*: The risks involved in this study are minimal, no more than the participant would experience in daily life.

Will alternative procedures or treatments that might be advantageous to the participants be made available? ☒ No ☐ Yes *(Describe)*:
ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION <u>ONLY IF</u> YOUR STUDY IS CONSIDERED GREATER THAN MINIMAL RISK:
Describe provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to the participants *(e.g., proximity of the research location to medical facilities, or your ability to provide counseling referrals in the event of emotional distress)*:

37. BENEFITS <u>(?)</u>
Describe the possible <u>direct</u> benefits to the participants. *(If participants are not expected to receive direct benefits, please state "No direct benefits." Completing a survey or participating in an interview will not typically result in direct benefits to the participant.)*: Participants will not receive a direct benefit as a result of participating in the study.
Describe any possible benefits to society: By exploring crowdsourcing strategizing's value to nonprofit leaders, the organizations can advance and better serve their communities.
Evaluate the risk-benefit ratio. *(Explain why you believe this study is worth doing, even with any identified risks.)*: The benefits outweigh the (minimal) risks in this study because any known value of crowdsourcing strategizing can help leaders pursue strategic directions for their organizations.

CONSENT FORM

A Leader's Vantage Point of Crowdsourcing Strategizing
Priscilla L. Eddings
Liberty University
School of Business

You are invited to be in a research study of effective leadership tools. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older and serve in a strategic leadership capacity within your nonprofit organization. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Priscilla L. Eddings, a doctoral candidate in the School of Business at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to determine if crowdsourcing strategizing has any value to nonprofit leaders.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in an audio-recorded interview with a duration of 30-minutes.
2. Be available for one to two recorded, follow-up interviews with a duration of 30 minutes.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants will not receive a direct benefit as a result of participating in the study.

Benefits to society include organizations better serving their communities because of advancements made through crowdsourcing strategizing.

Compensation: Participants will be compensated for participating in this study. Each participating nonprofit organization will be offered two hours of volunteer time which will be completed after the conclusion of all interviews with the nonprofit. The volunteer time is to be served with the primary nonprofit office, which participated in the study, and cannot be transferred to any affiliations. If a subject does not complete the study and the nonprofit organization has no other participants completing an interview, no volunteer time will be extended to the nonprofit.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I may publish, I will not include any information that will make identifying a participant possible. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participants will be assigned a pseudonym. I will conduct the interviews in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on an encrypted storage device for 3 years, then, deleted.

- Interviews will be recorded by audio. Recordings will be stored on an encrypted storage device for seven years, then, erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Priscilla L. Eddings. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at XXXXXXX@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Kimberly R. Anthony, at XXXXXXX@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 1887, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Investigator Date

Appendix B: Instruments and Recruitment Material

The interview guide, interview questions, observation form, and recruitment material are submitted to and approved by the university's IRB.

Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for allowing me to interview you. By verbal acknowledgement, please confirm you are 18 years old or above. (WAIT FOR CONFIRMATION) Thank you. This study focuses on crowdsourcing strategizing and will include a series of questions expected to last approximately 30 minutes. Please answer to the best of your ability and experience. Do you have any concerns before we begin? (ADDRESS, IF PRESENTED)

Questions

1) What responsibilities does your position entail?

2) What is your experience with crowdsourcing strategizing?
   Are there any additional examples you can share?

3) What circumstances would provoke the use of crowdsourcing strategizing for your organization?
   Are there other occasions?

4) How does crowdsourcing strategizing impact the strategic direction of your organization?

5) How do you determine when value has been obtained from the results of crowdsourcing strategizing?

6) What value does crowdsourcing strategizing provide to you as a nonprofit leader?
   Will you elaborate?

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. Your cooperation is allowing me to complete my doctoral degree requirements and furthering an understanding of crowdsourcing strategizing. I greatly appreciate your time!

Interview Questions

Name: ________________________________

Title: ________________________________

1) What responsibilities does your position entail?

2) What is your experience with crowdsourcing strategizing?

3) What circumstances would provoke the use of crowdsourcing strategizing for your organization?

4) How does crowdsourcing strategizing impact the strategic direction of your organization?

5) How do you determine when value has been obtained from the results of crowdsourcing strategizing?

6) What value does crowdsourcing strategizing provide to you as a nonprofit leader?

Observation Form

Participant: ____

Date: ____________________

Notes

This research instrument is for recording additional notes during an interview.

Recruitment Material

The proceeding email, follow-up email, and phone transcript provide an example of the potential interchange between the researcher and participants.

Recruitment email.

Subject Line: Nonprofit Leadership Interview with Doctoral Student

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to determine if crowdsourcing strategizing has any value to nonprofit leaders, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

If you are 18 years of age or older, serve in a strategic leadership capacity, and are willing to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview. The process should take approximately 30 minutes for you to complete. Also, a follow-up interview may be asked of you for a duration of 15 to 30 minutes. Your name, title, and responsibilities with the organization will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please confirm the best date and time, from below, for an in-person interview. If an alternative fits your schedule better, feel free to note the information in your reply.

[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 1]
[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 2]
[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 3]

A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. You will be given an opportunity to return the signed consent document immediately before the interview.

Also, two hours of volunteer time will be offered to your nonprofit organization as a token of appreciation. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to a reply.

Sincerely,

Priscilla L. Eddings
Liberty University
DBA Doctoral Candidate

Recruitment follow-up email.

Subject Line: Nonprofit Leadership Interview with Doctoral Student

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Last week an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to respond if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is March 10, 2018.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview. The process should take approximately 30 minutes for you to complete. Also, a follow-up interview may be asked of you for a duration of 15 to 30 minutes. Your name, title, and responsibilities with the organization will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please confirm the best date and time, from below, for an in-person interview. If an alternative fits your schedule better, feel free to note the information in your reply.

[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 1]
[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 2]
[INSERT INTERVIEW OPTION 3]

A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. You will be given an opportunity to return the signed consent document immediately before the interview.

Also, two hours of volunteer time will be offered to your nonprofit organization as a token of appreciation. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to a reply.

Sincerely,

Priscilla L. Eddings
Liberty University
DBA Doctoral Candidate

Recruitment phone transcript.

Hello, may I speak with [NAME].

Hi, [Mr./Ms. NAME], my name is Priscilla Eddings, and I am a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree and am inviting you, as a leader in your organization, to participate in my study. Are you interested in hearing more information?

No: Are you affiliated with any nonprofit leaders that may want to take part in the study?

No: Thank you for your time and have a great day.

Yes: Wonderful. Will you please provide their contact information?

Yes: Great. The purpose of my research is to determine if crowdsourcing strategizing has any value to nonprofit leaders. I am only selecting candidates that are 18 years of age or older, serve in a strategic leadership capacity, and can participate in an approximately 30-minute interview. Also, a follow-up interview may be asked of you for a duration of 15 to 30 minutes. Your name, title, and responsibilities with the organization will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

Also, two hours of volunteer time will be offered to your nonprofit organization as a token of appreciation.

Based on the criteria, are you still interested in participating in the study?

No: Thank you for your time and have a great day.

Yes: Great. Which of the following dates and times work best with your schedule? (Provide options and confirm meeting.)

Would you like to receive the consent form by email?

No: I understand. A consent document will be given to you at the time of the interview. The consent document contains additional information about my research. You will be given an opportunity to read and sign the consent document immediately before the interview. I am glad to have you as a part of the study and look forward to meeting in person.

Yes: (Obtain and confirm email address). The document will be sent within 24 hours. I am glad to have you as a part of the study and look forward to meeting in person.