NONPROFIT BOARD GOVERNANCE:
BARRIERS TO MILLENNIAL
AND RACIAL MINORITY
DIVERSITY IN BOARD SERVICE

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Shawn S. Edwards
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Examining Committee Members:

Dr. Lynne Andersson, Advisory Chair, Department of Human Resource Management
Dr. John Deckop, Department of Human Resource Management
Dr. Matt Wray, Department of Sociology
Dr. Wayne W. Williams, Department of Accounting – External Reader

ABSTRACT

Nonprofits need dedicated people to meet the mission of the organization and to address the social and societal conditions they were established to address. How are nonprofit organizations cultivating the next generation of leaders? With five generations of workers in the workplace, the field for new, nonprofit, board-level volunteers is large. However, research shows that young professionals and marginalized racial minorities are underrepresented or not represented in this area. Why is this our current reality and what is hindering the service of these leaders on nonprofit boards? This dissertation examines the role of representation in generational and racial terms on the board of directors of nonprofit organizations in South Carolina.

This is dedicated to my late father, Alfred Spann, with a 10th grade education,

you were my ultimate example wisdom.

This is also dedicated to my husband, Derrick J. Edwards,

you continue to be my latest and greatest inspiration.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Nonprofits need dedicated people to meet the mission of the organization and to address the social and societal conditions they were established to address. How are nonprofit organizations cultivating the next generation of leaders? With five generations of workers in the workplace, the field for new, nonprofit, board-level volunteers is large. However, research shows that young professionals and marginalized racial minorities are underrepresented or not represented in this area. Why is this our current reality and what is hindering the service of these leaders on nonprofit boards? This dissertation examines the role of representation in generational and racial terms on the board of directors of nonprofit organizations in South Carolina.

South Carolina is an extremely historical and unique place. According to the American Battlefield Trust (2020), South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union and is home to Fort Sumter, where the first shots of the Civil War were fired. South Carolina, Charleston in particular, houses the port where half of the enslaved Africans entered into the United States (National Geographic, 2020). As a result, in 2018 there were 1.35 million African-Americans residing in South Carolina (Data USA, 2020), many of them are descendants of enslaved people. Likewise, largely due to the farming industry harvesting fruit, vegetables and tobacco, many Latinx individuals came to South Carolina seeking work opportunities in the late 1960's early 1970's (SC Encyclopedia, 2020). Latinx individuals in South Carolina were 178,000 strong in 2018 (Data USA, 2020). In comparison, total Whites in South Carolina in 2018 were 3.23 million. Earned

Bachelor's degrees or higher achieved by African American, Latinx and those with two or more races within the state of South Carolina account for approximately 17% or 200,000 individuals. As racial minorities are a major focus of this study, the context related to South Carolina is integral to understanding the findings, particularly since this is where the research is being conducted.

Corporations are beginning to realize the costs of the absence of diversity on boards of director, from bad decisions perceived as racist at lower, supervisory levels, to executives' repeated use of racially offensive language and the use of blackface. With the addition of Mellody Hobson to the Starbucks board of directors and Ambassador Susan Rice to the board of directors of Netflix (Starbucks, 2018; Netflix, 2018), the public is paying close attention to how corporations, organizations and political structures operate and are making socially conscious decisions about where they spend their time and resources. According to the 2018 Millennial Survey conducted by Deloitte (2018), the diversity within an organization as a whole and its top leadership increases the sense of loyalty that millennials have to the organization. This thought pattern could also be applied to when and where Millennials choose to use their talents outside of work. The results of the 2019 Millennial Survey (Deloitte, 2019) conducted by Deloitte differed slightly from the 2018 survey. Millennials social consciousness has increased (Deloitte, 2019) and they also have a strong sense of social responsibility and are weary of what they perceive as slow-moving social progress; therefore, they exercise great care with where they spend their time and money. Additionally, this group embraces diversity, specifically, age and visible minority status (Ng et al., 2010) and desire to have this inclusion in their work and social situations. This generation of professionals are diverse,

inclusive and are not inclined to see the world with boundaries (Bannon et al., 2011).

Important to note, for Millennials diversity is a part of life, a way of life and when it is

not present it is noticeable and displeasing (Kelan et al., 2009). Therefore, these attitudes

of acceptance are likely to transfer to governance activities when they have the

opportunity to serve.

While there remains a need to expand the diversity on nonprofit boards from a

management, economics, mission-focused and values-based prospective, increases in

diversity continue to lag. Millennials—a population I define below----are one of the

largest generations in population size (US Census, 2018), yet only approximately 17%

hold seats on nonprofit boards (BoardSource, 2017). Additionally, although the rate of

women on nonprofit boards is increasing, the rate of minorities serving on nonprofit

boards lag in comparison; moreover, approximately 91% of nonprofit board chair seats

remain occupied by white males (Alliance for Board Diversity, 2017) [see Table 2 for

additional information]. Considering the demographics of the United States, the

percentage of millennials and racial minorities serving on nonprofit boards should be

significantly higher. According to the 2010 US Census (US Census, 2018) data, there

were 308 million people total living in the US who submitted census data. Of the 308

million people, close to 27% were included in the Millennial age group and 25.2% were

identified as members of the racial minority (US Census, 2018). Narrowing our focus to

South Carolina, where this study will be conducted, of the 4.6 million people counted in

the population, 27% were millennials and 32.4% were minorities (US Census, 2018).

Using this data as a representative model for nonprofit board service, the demographics

of a nonprofit board of directors should reflect or be very close to these percentages.

As we discuss Millennials and racial minorities, it is imperative to outline the working definitions we will use for this study providing a frame of reference. Millennials will be defined in two ways. First, I follow Gong and colleagues (2018) who define Millennials as those born between the years 1980 and 2000. Second, I use Allen and colleagues (2015) term "generational habitus" incorporating Bourdieu's (1984) construct for habitus. Essentially, generational habitus has a focus on the cognitive, social and behavioral characteristics of a particular social group and is less focused on whether an individual identifies as a member of that group (Allen et al., 2015). The thoughts and perceptions are weighted more than the date range, examining patterns and perspectives (Allen et al., 2015). For the purposes of this study, racial minority is defined as those who are referred to or identify as Black, African-American, or related diaspora, and those who are referred to or identify as Latinx, Latino/Latina or claim Hispanic as an ethnicity. Given that there are many races contained in the Hispanic ethnicity, we apply only the broad term racial minority and attempt to specify the individual races of the participants.

Given the dearth of research, this study focuses on diversity within nonprofit boards, reviewing board governance and recruitment practices to help answer why the percentage of millennials and racial minorities is not more representative of the U.S. population. In particular, I'm interested in identifying the barriers to increasing the presence of millennials and racial minorities on nonprofit boards. Because this is a fairly novel area of study, my research will be exploratory and aimed toward hypothesis-building rather than theory-testing or standard causal analysis. The purpose of this study is to determine significant areas for further exploration and possible theory building,

using the methodology and data collection techniques for grounded theory (Glaser &

Strauss, 1967), qualitative, exploratory studies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Board governance is of great importance to firms and organizations. The board of directors, a group of people who manage or direct a company or organization, bears the weight of high-level decision-making within an organization. For-profit and nonprofit organizations have a responsibility to their shareholders and stakeholders to ensure that they are governed properly and that their decisions are in the best interest of all for optimal organizational performance and sustainability. This is especially true for nonprofit organizations that may be operating with limited staff and resources. Including different perspectives on the nonprofit board increases accountability and reduces risk due to diverse oversight.

Over time, researchers (e.g., Houle, 1989; Chait et al., 1996) have found that boards of directors have taken different approaches to how they govern based on what they believe to be the primary purpose of the board. One common belief among nonprofit organizational leaders is that in addition to their service to an organization, board members should bring the three W's: wealth, wisdom, and work (O'Regan & Oster, 2005). With this in mind, who occupies the seats on the board is an ongoing topic of interest and importance. In a study on board composition, O'Regan and Oster (2005) suggest that concern regarding the lack of diversity of boards indicates that personal characteristics of board members matter in board composition. Most studies addressing diversity and firm performance use measures of workforce diversity as opposed to board-level diversity, thereby neglecting an important dimension of diversity in an organization (Erhardt et al., 2003).

Additionally, board diversity has been cited as a visible indicator of the absence of discrimination, but the impact of board diversity on organizational performance remains unclear (Erhardt et al., 2003). Buse and colleagues (2016) found that it is essential for nonprofit boards to establish policies on diversity to assist in articulating the values of the organization on these areas and results in the improvement of "effective performance of internal and external governance practices" (p. 187). They also found that the adoption of inclusive practices at the board level resulted in a positive impact on board governance practices.

This literature review is focused on diversity and its connection to organizational practices of board recruitment. Several theories have been employed to understand organizations, including agency theory (Baysinger & Hoskisson, 1990; Brown, 2005; Miller-Millesen, 2003; Mwenja & Lewis, 2009); resource dependency theory (Brown, 2005; Goodstein, et al., 1994; Miller-Millesen, 2003; Mwenja & Lewis, 2009; Siciliano, 1996; Treichler, 1995); institutional theory (Callen et al., 2003; Miller-Millesen, 2003); and group decision/process model theory (Brown, 2005; Mwenja & Lewis, 2009).

The composition of the board of directors is a major factor in the overall decision-making capability of a nonprofit organization. Board members affect donor giving, fundraising, and organizational effectiveness—all of which contribute to sustainability of the nonprofit organization. Both for-profit and nonprofit boards can be comprised of members inside of as well as outside of the organization (Callen et al., 2003), who vary in terms of occupation and functional background (e.g., Goodstein et al., 1994; Kosnik, 1990), cognition (e.g., Treichler, 1995), education, age, gender, race/ethnicity (e.g., Buse et al., 2016; Watson et al., 1993) and a host of other demographic differences. Harris

(2014) found that, historically, both nonprofit and for-profit boards have largely consisted of whites of middle- to upper-class socioeconomic status. Ideally, the board member recruitment process is led by the executive director and the board using specific criteria or behaviors previously established (O'Regan & Oster, 2005). If this process is followed, then nonprofit organizations would have to be intentional about diverse board member recruitment. To capture the full spectrum of board diversity, Houle characterized it as "the human richness as defined by gender, age, ability, socioeconomic class, ideology, cohort history, status as a service client or person being impacted by the policy decision, length of time a person has served on a board or lived in the community, political influence or connections…" (Houle, 1989, p. 29-31, Daley & Angulo, 1994). As the majority of previous studies on board diversity have focused primarily on gender (Erhardt et al., 2003), there is limited literature available on the generational dimension of nonprofit board diversity.

Why is this important to study? The Pew Research Center (2018) reported that in 2016, Millennials became the largest generation in the U.S. workforce at 56 million, surpassing Generation Xers (those born between 1965–1980) by 3 million and Baby Boomers (those born between 1946-1964) by 15 million. According to BoardSource (2017), 56% of board members are 50 years old or older, whereas only 17% of board members are less than 40. As the generations continue to age, nonprofits will have to rely on millennials to sustain their organizations. Critically, very little of the millennial generation are engaged with nonprofit organizations, and it is imperative to understand now what the hinderances are in order to overcome them for continuity of services provided by the nonprofits. Notably, there are varying date ranges set to define each

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generational category. For the purposes of this research we will use the date range of anyone born between 1980 and 1996 to define the Millennial generation.

While there has been limited research conducted on the relationship between age and board governance, there is a wealth of data to support research on race and board governance. In a recent study of nonprofit organizations, BoardSource (2017) found that diversity in board composition remained mostly unchanged between 1994 and 2005, with minority representation consistently between 9% and 18%. In 2017, 27% of boards identified as all white (BoardSource, 2017). Similarly, in the for-profit sector, the Alliance for Board Diversity (2017) noted in their report (*Missing Pieces Report: The 2016 Board Diversity Census of Women and Minorities on Fortune 500 Boards*) that, while the percentage of women on Fortune 500 board increased significantly from 2010–2016, the percentage of minorities on Fortune 500 boards remained steady over the same period of time. Increasing diversity, particularly racial minority diversity, remains an ongoing challenge for both nonprofit and for-profit entities. This phenomenon exists even when the nonprofit organization is a minority-serving organization (Ostrower, 2017).

Although nonprofit leadership recognize the lack of diversity among their board members, it is not a focus or priority for future board recruitment. BoardSource (2017) reports that 30% of top executives and 28% of board chairs rate demographics as low or not a priority for board recruitment. Conversely, when asked to rate the importance of diversity for their nonprofit organization, executives rated the following as important or very important at 89%, 85%, and 82%, respectively:

- Understanding external processes from a broader perspective
- Developing creative new solutions to new problems

- Understanding the client populations served by the organization (BoardSource, 2017).

Notably, each of these challenges can be addressed by increasing nonprofit board diversity. However, even with the knowledge of how greater diversity can provide greater benefit to nonprofit organizations, nonprofit leaders still neglect to increase the number of minorities on their boards (BoardSource, 2017).

Board members often sit on multiple boards, both nonprofits and for-profit, and thus the practices of corporate boards often infiltrate nonprofits due to common practice (Ostrower, 2017). The Sarbanes-Oxley Act (referred to as SOX) governs for-profit accounting practices and includes mandates for corporate board of directors. Passed into law in 2002 after the Enron and WorldCom debacles, SOX provides guidelines for auditors and a system of checks and balances for oversight (Catanach & Ketz, 2012; Ostrower, 2017). SOX requires that corporate boards have several mandatory committees – including audit, nomination, and compensation committees – as an extension of the board of directors (Fisch, 2004; Ostrower, 2017). Unfortunately, the minority and female representation required on board committees by Sarbanes-Oxley is low, as illustrated by the findings in the Alliance for Board Diversity report (2017) shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Standard Board Committee Demographics			
Committee	White Male	Women	Minorities
Audit Committee	73.9%	17.9%	11.4%
Nomination Committee	66%	24.4%	14%
Compensation Committee	77.4%	13.9%	10.4%
			Alliance for Board Diversity, 2017

Nonprofits have similarly structured their boards, and they, too, have less minority and female representation on committees (Ostrower, 2017). Furthermore, the Alliance for Board Diversity report (2017) also revealed that Board Chairs and Directors are predominantly white males, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Board Leadership Position Demographics			
Position	White Male	Women	Minorities
Board Chair	90.5%	5.6%	4.2%
Lead Director	81.8%	10.7%	8.6%
			Alliance for Board Diversity, 2017

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate dissonance between perceptions of the value of increased diversity on nonprofit boards and the actual shift in recruiting activity to increase board diversity. For improvement to occur in the area of board recruitment for women and minorities, boards need to define what their needs are with regard to diversity, share that with the board and the staff of the organization and be vigilant about locating that talent

by moving beyond their individual networks to consider nontraditional methods for board member recruitment (BoardSource, 2017). In a study of Canadian nonprofits, Bradshaw and Fredette (2013) learned that board member recruitment is essential to the diverse board goal and that specific types of recruitment yielded greater impact. That said, if boards do not value diversity, it will not be a priority. Perhaps if the potential impact of diversity were more thoroughly understood and conveyed, boards would make better decisions to intentionally increase it.

A small body of research from both the for-profit and nonprofit governance literature has associated board diversity with various organizational outcomes of value to the organization. Harris (2014), for example, found that nonprofit boards with more diverse racial composition are better able to understand clientele needs and thus perform better. Nonprofit board of director diversity is correlated with a broader array of expertise on the board, enhancing the ability for the organization to communicate values to a variety of stakeholders (Daley & Angulo, 1994). Moreover, nonprofit boards that include minority and female representation are more likely to follow accountability guidelines (Ostrower, 2017) and have better governance practices (Buse et al., 2016). Board diversity can help prevent the cognitive homogeneity and potential for group think inherent in the "good old boy network" (Anderson et al., 2011; Treichler, 1995), avoiding board complacency and narrow-mindedness (Kosnik, 1990) as well as unrecognizable blind spots in decision making (BoardSource, 2017). Interestingly, as firms grow and become more complex, the demands for varying talents, perspectives, and problem-solving skills also grows, suggesting that board heterogeneity is useful in situations of operational complexity (Anderson et al., 2011). A board with varied experiences and

expertise increases the organization's ability to analyze and understand the environment in which the organization operates (Mwenja & Lewis, 2009). With these proven, positive correlates of diversity to organizations, what is preventing nonprofits from moving forward with diversity efforts?

Most studies of organizational governance focus on organizational performance and neglect to examine why board recruitment continues to produce homogeneous groups. Few studies have linked diverse boards of directors directly to organizational performance. Siciliano (1996) studied boards of director by occupation, gender, and age diversity across 240 YMCA organizations, and found that the YMCAs that having a diverse age range serving on their board was positively correlated with donation levels. Erhardt et al. (2003) examined a sample of 112 large public companies in various industries and found that racial and gender diversity of a for-profit board is positively correlated with firm financial performance. Brown (2002) conducted a study focused on inclusive governance practices within nonprofit organizations and found "a fairly consistent positive association between systematic recruitment, increased sensitivity to diversity, and a board that is more inclusive" (Brown, 2002, p. 382).

Nonprofit performance has many dimensions and is viewed differently in different contexts: No one theory can explain the whole impact of a nonprofit board of directors on performance (Miller-Millesen, 2003). In addition, due to highly publicized mishandlings within corporate governance, board accountability sometimes overshadows issues of performance in nonprofits (Ostrower, 2017). Although Bradshaw and Fredette (2013) found that successful board member recruitment requires formal diversity practices to be embedded within the organization, there are few studies focused on the

barriers to nonprofit board diversity. Understanding these barriers could help nonprofit

boards that are struggling with diversity and how to accomplish it, as well as help

millennials and racial minorities who have a desire for board service and have been

overlooked for the opportunity.

Two theories – agency theory and resource dependence theory – offer a lens for

understanding the relationships between nonprofit boards and their recruitment of diverse

individuals. Agency theory is one of the most prevalent theories used to explain corporate

governance and the collaborative work of the for-profit board of directors and top

management. The theory contends that there is a conflict of interest between top

management and the stockholders, and if not carefully monitored, the top managements'

interests will not be aligned with those of the stockholders (Brown, 2005; Miller-

Millesen, 2003). As stated succinctly by Zahra and Pearce, "the board is seen as the

ultimate mechanism of corporate control" (1989, p. 301). The board of directors have a

duty to ensure that every decision is focused on achieving the mission of the organization

and not on the self-interests of top management (Mwenja & Lewis, 2009). A premium is

placed on the strategic contribution of the board in agency theory, which establishes a

direct link to organizational performance (Zahra & Pearce, 1989).

Board members have the "legal right to evaluate internal management"

(Baysinger & Hoskisson, 1990), which allows boards of directors to provide guidance in

decision making and keep the corporation focused on stakeholder interests. Agency

theory supports the board's activities in this area, facilitating a sort of separation of

duties, suggesting "that a major board function is to monitor costs and the allocation of

resources" (Callen et al., 2010, p. 107). Therefore, diversity in board composition may

enable a board to make better decisions regarding addressing the needs of organizational

stakeholders, particularly if those stakeholders are from diverse populations.

Resource dependency theory offers a conceptualization of boards of directors as

connectors between the organization and the environment, providing information and

resources to the organization to protect it from ambiguity (Brown, 2005; Siciliano, 1996).

Mwenja and Lewis (2009) asserted that the board "serves as a link between the

organization and sources of necessary resources" (p. 36). Likewise, Zahra and Pearce

(1989) viewed boards as a resource to "absorb environmental uncertainty by providing

information, thus enhancing company performance" (p. 297). Board of directors are

chosen for their ability to influence outsiders to the advantage of the organization,

through collaboration with policy makers or other organizations, or improving the image

or brand of the organization (Callen et al., 2010). Miller-Millesen (2003) posited that the

boards perform four different functions in alignment with resource dependency theory:

- Reduces organizational uncertainty by developing exchange relationships with external constituencies;
- Assures that the organization remains adaptive by gathering and interpreting information from the external environment;
- Protects the organization from environmental interference by passing on only that information that is essential to organizational operations; and
- Represents the organization to external constituencies (Miller-Millesen, 2003).

Under resource dependency theory, diverse board composition could constitute a

competitive advantage, as board activities such as boundary spanning, development and

fundraising help top managers or executive directors achieve stronger organizational

performance (Brown, 2005; Goodstein et al., 1994; Green & Griesinger, 1996).

In closing, given the relative dearth of research on diversity in nonprofit board governance, and using agency and resource dependence theories as an analytical framework, I propose a grounded theory approach to investigate the following question: What are some of the possible barriers for millennials and minorities to nonprofit board recruitment?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) as a research design is often used for undertheorized and understudied phenomena. Because grounded theory seeks to develop theory that is grounded in data and systemically analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), its application is appropriate for this study.

My initial approach is to explore nonprofit board diversity and its connection to nonprofit board of directors' recruitment and selection processes, both of which are an integral part of nonprofit governance practice. To capture the real-time thoughts, perceptions, and emotions of nonprofit leaders experiencing the phenomenon of diversity practices in nonprofit board governance, I conducted semi-structured interviews with non-profit leaders. To facilitate these interviews, I partnered with Together SC (2019), an organization focused on supporting and strengthening the state of South Carolina's nonprofit community, to identify nonprofit leaders as potential participants.

Fifty-three nonprofit leaders who met one or more of the following criteria - millennial, racial minority, executive director, board member and/or board chair - were selected to be contacted for participation. Honoring the exploratory nature of the study, I employed theoretical sampling to obtain participants. These individuals were identified not because they are statistically representative of anything, but because they are presumed to possess knowledge and insights crucial to the understanding of the phenomenon of nonprofit board diversity. Their experiences and perspectives could provide insight into some of the themes or areas for concern hindering nonprofit board service (Crimp & Wright, 1995) in ways that a probabilistic sample would not. Executive

directors and those with board service are familiar with the recruiting practices for

nonprofit boards and have knowledge of the history of their board recruitment efforts and

issues they have faced with recruitment. These characteristics are essential to gaining

insight into the barriers to millennials and minorities on nonprofit boards from a

recruitment perspective. Following the ground theory sampling approach, individual

participants were selected for representativeness, specifically diversity of demographics

and roles among the participants (e.g., not all executive directors or board chairs, etc.),

and with the expectation that diversity of participants would increase the probability that

new insights could be provided.

Each potential participant was contacted via email and invited to participate in the

study. The invitation email included details about the study, a copy of the IRB-approved

consent form, and available times to schedule the interview along with the logistics of

how the interview will be conducted. Each selected participant signed the consent form

and agreed to a scheduled time in consideration of the calendars of both the researcher

and the participant.

Of the 53 individuals contacted, 9 (17%) were selected and agreed to be

interviewed, with 67% female (n=6) and 33% male (n=3), and 44% (n=4) identifying as

African- American and 56% (n=5) identifying as Caucasian. Three generations were

represented, with two identifying as Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), five

identifying at Generation X (born between 1961 and 1981), and two as Millennials (born

between 1980 and 1996) (Pew Research, 2018). Four of the participants were serving in

the role of executive director, three in the role of board chair, and two were board

members. Because several of the research participants had experience with multiple

organizations of varying size, their experience and perspective were the focus of the research rather than organizational size. The organizational size differentiation was not explored and is therefore noted as a limitation of this research, as there may be unobserved correlations between organizational size and board governance practices.

Semi-structured interview style was the selected data collection method to allow for a flexible framework for all participants to be asked the same questions (Dearnley, 2005) in general. During the interviews, participants were encouraged to discuss their experiences through the use of open-ended questions and the following questions were determined by their responses (Dearnley, 2005), while using the preset interview questions as a guide. Using this format for interviewing created a conversational environment conducive to the emergence of new concepts. Each semi-structured interview was conducted and recorded using Zoom (2019) web-conferencing software. Various literature reviewed on conducting interviews utilizing a virtual versus face to face modality support the use of technology and also highlights its challenges (Janghorban, Roudsari, Taghipour, 2014; Lo Iacono, Symonds, Brown, 2016). Roulston (2010), Brown and Durrheim (2009), and Dearnley (2005) underscore the importance of place, context and setting for research interviews, and the significance it has in building trust and rapport with informants. Challenges included possible omission of nonverbal cues, issues with headshot versus full-body view of participant, and possible connectivity limitations (Janghorban, Roudsari, Taghipour, 2014; Lo Iacono, Symonds, Brown, 2016). While the goal of the virtual interview was convenience and the objective to increase the likelihood of informant participation, the virtual environment also served as stabilizer; allowing participants to be more relaxed in their own environments which resulted in an

engaging, less constrained conversation. This contributed positively to the depth of data collected on a topic that particularly for some, could be uncomfortable. Each interview was scheduled for 60 minutes and lasted approximately 45–60 minutes. The interviews were recorded using the video option included in the Zoom (2019) software. As explained, the video option was chosen to provide convenience to the interviewer and interviewee and avoid the use of time and money in travel. The video option assisted in eliciting face-to-face contact, therefore making the conversation more personable and intimate, allowing for the observation of nonverbal cues. Once the video interviews were transcribed, the document was sent to each participant to ensure accuracy and to assist post-transcription editing.

The complete interview guide, provided in Appendix A, provides a bank of questions to determine the experiences and observations of subjects in relation to the topic. In crafting the interview questions, attention was given to the pertinent topics that arose from the literature review in order to extend existing literature. It was important to understand the participant background in nonprofits for increased value and analysis, Q1 was created and asked at the start of each interview and assisted in grounding the interview as additional questions were asked. In order to ascertain participant experience in board member recruitment specifically, Q2; and Q3 were created and to gauge perceptions of board member value and identifying those values in others (O'Regan and Oster, 2005); Q4 and Q5 addressed these areas. Likewise, as we seek to collect information to address the research question, Q6 assesses the participants understanding of the nonprofit's connection to the community (Mwenja and Lewis, 2009) and the people contained in that community. The research on race and nonprofit board service as

cited in the literature review (Ostrower, 2017; Alliance for Board Diversity, 2017; BoardSource, 2017; Buse et al., 2016; Erhardt, 2003; Harris, 2014; and Watson et al., 1993) contributed to the formulation of Q11; Q12; Q13; and Q14 which focus specifically on racial minorities and attempt to uncover the current attitude about their engagement in nonprofit board service. Comparatively, the research on age in nonprofit board service (Siciliano, 1996; Brown 2002; BoardSource, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2018; Buse et al., 2016; and Watson et al., 1993) outlined in the literature review section, created the foundational basis for Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10 regarding consideration of Millennials in nonprofit board service. The final question, Q15, allowed participants to share any additional thoughts based on the questions asked and provided great insight into additional information since their focus was sharpened during the course of the interview.

In accordance with the grounded theory approach, data collection and data analysis occur together, as the researcher moves simultaneously between both processes. Thus, transcribed interview data was analyzed as it was collected, providing the basis for constant comparison as new data was collected. This method highlights similarities and differences by enabling the researcher and coder to compare codes, concepts, and categories as the data is collected and processed (O'Brien & Linehan, 2014). The interview data was transcribed using an online transcription service, Rev, and analyzed using the coding software Nvivo (Nvivo, 2019).

My coding procedure followed commonly used methods: (Myers, 2013, p. 167-168). As I received the transcribed data, I analyzed them using line-by-line open coding. Then, I developed an initial list of codes from the first two interviews, revising as

necessary as additional interviews were analyzed. A short descriptor phrase or code was assigned according to its importance to the research, to the words and phrases used by the participant. Using the constant comparison model, I built concepts by grouping together codes from participant responses that related to one another. Ultimately, I was able to group the concepts into categories. For example, codes in the 'Intentional Engagement' category included, among others, 'stepping outside of the business and more into the human side"; 'trust the process and know you're doing the right thing for your organization'; 'we work within our small circles'; and 'we make an effort to reach out'.

Concepts built from these initial codes included organizational history, personal connections, availability and knowledge of opportunity, and lack of trust. These concepts were gathered under the theme of 'Intentional Engagement'. (The concepts for the other themes are outlined in the table below.) This category was deemed an appropriate one to use because it captured the meaning of and summarized what was being described by the participants. Referred to as axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the three themes - Intentional Engagement, Tradition, and Recruiting Processes - were developed by using this same process of looking across data for instances and occurrences to identify concepts that were then placed into categories. Table 3 provides a detailed explanation of each category along with the concepts used to build each category and representative quotes from the semi-structured interviews.

Table 3. Breakdown of Data Analysis – Study One

Concepts	Category	Description	Representative Quotes
Organizational History Personal Connections Availability/Knowledge of Opportunity Lack of Trust	**Intentional** **Engagement**	Actions that involve actors who take advantage of opportunities to connect with others in a meaningful way. In this instance, the term "others" refers to those of varying races and ages for discovery and further committee or board placement with the nonprofit organization	…really thinking outside of the walls of our own phone or our own contact list, and be an active recruiter in the community for our own work and for people who are interested in this type of work the organization does …almost any conversation I have, there's always a consciousness of is this a volunteer? Is this a new board member? I've been very intentional in cultivating… more people of color, period. And it's intentional of making sure that our board reflects the community that we serve and seek to connect. Be willing to get out and talk to millennials about your organization and the type of people you're looking for and why they might be a good fit.
Experience Skills/Expertise Skill Needs Assessment Board Matrix	**Recruitment** **Processes**	Ways in which various nonprofit organizations conduct recruitment activities for board service. Nominating committees, board matrices, individual	Nonprofit 101 is that you need legal background, you need somebody who knows accounting, and you need somebody who understands marketing -- off the top. A board has to have those roles represented in the

Table 3 continued

		board members, etc. are varying ways recruitment processes are conducted. Professional areas of expertise necessary for the board to function (accounting, legal, etc.) are also included.	composition at a minimum. It could be a very methodical approach that you look at what your needs are, and then you start filling based on what the needs are. And those needs change over time. I think it's important to look to a matrix of or nomination that is really paying attention to industries that that nonprofit might intersect with i.e., help, or need help from.
Perceptions Fundraising/Financial Resources Intimidation Processes Societal Norms Tokenism	**Tradition**	Defined as "the tradition of customs or beliefs from generation to generation" (Merriam-Webster, 2019). It is the common way in which roles are assigned or the norms of an organization. It also includes cultural or societal norms and perceptions of Millennials and racial minorities regarding traditional nonprofit board service. Additionally, it includes the practices that are mandatory and/or common in board	I think that that has something to do with number one, tradition bias because the people who have served on boards in the past, we expect those to be the people to serve on the boards in the future. I don't think we even do a good enough job of reaching out to the people who might be good fits for our boards. [Millennials] Not always showing up for meetings. Not necessarily contributing to the conversation at board meetings. I think a lot of times they feel intimidated to do that. So, they're very task oriented, they want a task. I mean they typically want to help with an event.

Table 3 continued

		engagement such as following bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order.	I think more pathways into an organization. Again, bring somebody who's never served on a board and then asking them to go straight to board service, I think is detrimental to both

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Three broad categories of information regarding the diversity of nonprofit boards emerged from the interview data. As participants shared their perceptions and experiences, the categories of Intentional Engagement, Tradition, and Recruitment Processes were consistent in the responses. Each of these categories is explained in further detail below.

<u>Intentional Engagement</u>

Throughout the nine interviews, participants discussed the varying ways in which potential board members are identified. Intentional Engagement is separate from the Recruiting Processes theme because it is a precursor to official board member recruitment activities. When successfully done, board member recruiting processes result in increased diversity of board member nominees. The data from the nonprofit leaders that participated show that there are qualified millennials and racial minorities available to serve, but the companies have to do a better job of reaching them. As expressed by one nonprofit leader,

> *Because there's so many people that are capable and talented and have so much to give, but we're not always connected. And so, we're trying to conscientiously foster those connections so that we can discern it and ask for people to be part of our board. That really give us new ways to see this and new ideas and ways for this organization to go to the next level, but it's about connectivity.*

Participants expressed the goal of being intentional when engaging with millennials or racial minorities. The data shows an increased awareness by the participants as they engage with others, regardless of the context or setting, to determine if they are a viable option for service to their organization. This level of intentionality and

awareness also produces a shift in the approach with others, as mentioned by an African-American executive who is spending his retirement using his experience serving on nonprofit boards:

> *If I go to someone, talk to a millennial, from my perspective, I'm not going to get through because they don't get me. And if I go to them from my standpoint as a mature senior board member, and I try to recruit them on the same basis that I was recruited, and not try and understand what motivates them, I'm not going to reach them.*

The participants deemed intentional engagement as a form of discovery about individuals, noting that this may not come naturally for some, particularly those in position to make decisions about board service. As noted by one participant, "People are scared to make real connections with people." This could be due to the comfortableness that comes with engaging with those we are most familiar with. Homophily, the principle that says a contact between people who are similar happens more often than those who are not (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 416) describes what is occurring in these situations. Participants also shared that there may be hesitation on the part of others to engage with millennials and people of color and expressed a need for all people, regardless of characteristics, to increase their social connectivity. One participant suggested,

> *Just sit down and talk to them. And what I've found is that, when you have conversation, you find more things that you agree about than what you disagree about.*

Intentional Engagement may be required in order to increase connectivity and expand networks for ongoing involvement. When we engage intentionally, we are giving particular interest to individuals when we meet them to determine if there is a current or future need that they are well-suited to fulfill. Different than random networking, intentional engagement requires an individual to connect with others, ask the right

questions to determine their fit, listen to their responses intently and remain engaged after

meeting. The responsibility to remain engaged remains with the leader who is searching

for board members and the individual who desires to serve.

Recruitment Processes

When asked about the recruitment processes, 88%, of the participants referenced

word of mouth as their main resource for board recruitment. Research says the primary

way to increase the participation of underrepresented individuals, including race and age,

is via recruitment, specifically, systemic recruitment strategies to identify potential

members (Brown, 2002). Coupled with other forms of recruitment, word of mouth could

be an effective strategy for recruitment. The study participants strongly desired the board

recruitment be done by the board leadership stating,

> *Even on the organizations and my boards, I've found that the way that we've been able to attract and retain board members, is if we have board members actually recruit them themselves. That's not a function that I as a CEO manage, that the board has to manage that.*

> *Of course, the biggest thing is people in our leadership positions offering other people, so word of mouth is obviously the most used.*

Recruitment is managed by nonprofit leadership, and 33% of participants

mentioned use of a board matrix to determine the gaps of skills and experience at the

board participation level. Sherwin (2003) wrote that boards are turning to nontraditional

resources to ensure that boards are diverse and have a sufficient mix of skills and

experience, and that a matrix of the skills and experience of existing board members is

helpful in this endeavor. BoardSource (2019) defines a board matrix as a document that

outlines the desired skills, experience, demographics, community connections and other

characteristics desired by a nonprofit board and lists it as a best practice for board

recruitment. Given the reported usage, this is likely an area that needs further exploration

to determine the reason why its use is not more prevalent.

While there was a general sense that diversity of nonprofit boards is becoming a

topic of discussion for nonprofit leaders, several participants expressed frustration with

board recruitment practices that have not adjusted to increase diversity. Specifically,

> *The 50-plus white man is recruiting the 50-plus white man to sit on the board*
>
> *The friends-and-family approach to board membership is such an issue to me, because while I'm not questioning a person's devotion to an organization because their friend or their brother or sister is involved with the organization, but typically we operate in relatively small circles personally, maybe not necessarily professionally.*

There is an underlying fear that diversity efforts will not reach millennials and racial

minorities due to the recruitment models in play. Intentional engagement, as discussed

earlier, could help address this issue and expand nonprofit leader outreach efforts to these

groups, though further exploration is necessary to substantiate this.

One participant referenced a program that no longer exists to expand millennial

participation in nonprofits. The program—supported by the local chamber of

commerce—was focused on training young professionals for non-profit board service and

then made those individuals available to non-profit organizations for service. While this

program no longer exists, it could be a remedy to the issue. Additional research could

reveal the need for this and other resolutions. Their need for intentional engagement

would still be necessary to ensure that we also include racial minority millennials while

recruiting millennials more broadly. A program such as this would not be something a

nonprofit would necessarily take on unless it aligned with their mission.

<u>Tradition</u>

The theme of Tradition is the largest and broadest of the themes that emerged from the study. Participant responses reflected on this theme from the organizational and the individual perspective. Tradition reflects the particular customs and beliefs for, in the case of this study, nonprofit organizations and individuals. Tradition encompasses the common ways in which roles are assigned and norms are generated within an organization. From the individual perspective, tradition includes the cultural, generational, or societal norms of Millennials and racial minorities that challenge their susceptibility for board service.

Several participants described a presence of apathy along with a sense of a lack of trust from potential diverse board members pertaining to recruitment. This idea of apathy and distrust was particularly expressed when discussing the barriers to increase participation of racial minorities. As evidence by one participant, as she was discussing an individual who decided to leave a board because he grew weary of being the voice for the African-American community to, from his perspective, no avail.

> *...he left was because he was the only African American member on that board. And he was pushing for change and he wanted to see African American communities receive the kind of support they should receive from that organization. And he was not feeling like that was happening*

Occurrences like this are shared with others and often shapes distrust, lowering the desire to serve due to fear of repeated poor treatment. Tokenism is an important factor that will be discussed later in this section.

In her research on race and trust, Smith (2010) explicates this topic and points to several factors that could explain this phenomenon. Smith found that the trust gap is stark

between blacks and whites and multiple factors account for it. Beyond class, "there is historical and contemporary discrimination, neighborhood context, and ethno-racial socialization" (Brown, 2010, p. 470) that contribute to the presence of distrust. Ethno-racial socialization exists when verbal and nonverbal messages about race and ethnicity are given to the younger generation (Brown, 2010). This level of socialization impacts racial minorities as adults and could be a factor in their ability to (or levels of) trust.

What is not clear is whether the lack of trust is due to not knowing the process of board service or not understanding how to serve. Is the lack of involvement due to not *understanding* or not *trusting* the processes of the organization? If there is a lack of understanding, is there also a lack of trust coupled with embarrassment as a result? Participants described this as intimidation, stating,

> *Also, intimidation is a factor because I've had people say to me, "There are PhDs and lawyers and CPAs on your board, and I don't have any of those degrees. I don't see where I would fit into a group like that and what do you think my contribution would be?*

> *so some of it, you believe are mindset of the individuals who could be serving, that maybe they're not qualified to serve, or maybe it's not time for them to serve. They're supposed to wait until they're older*

Rather than show signs of weakness, racial minorities and millennial individuals may refrain from or decline participation to deter potential exposure to what could be considered a weakness. As stated by one of the participants, distrust stems from intimidation and lack of exposure, and it could stem from current board members' level of professional attainment in comparison to the invited individual. The presence of individuals with doctoral degrees, medical degrees, and professional certifications could be intimidating to an individual who has the skillset necessary to serve but not the same

level of educational or professional attainment. Individuals who have not been exposed to formal board service may also be intimidated by the lack of understanding of processes, procedures, Robert's Rules, etc., and therefore may decline a position due to fear of being perceived as ignorant or less knowledgeable. Assumptions are easily made about an individuals' knowledge base for nonprofit board service due to their profession. These individuals have likely seen service occur in their community at varying levels, so they have been exposed. However, the formality may be lacking. As described by study participants,

> *I think that often people of color have not been provided those opportunities, not even asked if they would like to serve and then feeling comfortable enough to ask the questions that they might have about what that looks like.*

> *I didn't grow up knowing about people serving on boards. That's not an active part of my background.*

In addition to issues of trust and intimidation, individual also face isolation, or tokenism. As expressed by one participant response, there is a contingent of individuals who are experiencing exhaustion due to operating in isolation on a board—the only young person, the only racial minority, etc. This expression or experience of being the only person representing a group on a board is commonly referred to as tokenism. Jonsen and Schneider (2011) defined tokenism as having "less than 15-20 percent representation of a specific demographic minority" (p. 45). A shared experience is that there are one or two millennials or racial minorities who are asked, repeatedly, to serve on boards, only to discover that they are the sole representative of their demographic group when they accept. This can make for an awkward situation for that individual with little voice and limited access to resources (Jonsen & Schneider, 2011). One participant expressed,

> *He was the only person of color that was on the board and so he was operating in isolation. And then, perhaps maybe another barrier could be not feeling like you're being heard because you're the only person operating in isolation.*

A critical mass—three or more individuals (Konrad et al., 2008)—is necessary in order for real value and change to occur and to be accepted on a board, or any team, to help minorities move from presence to inclusion (Jonsen & Schneider, 2011). Participants recounted second-hand and personal experiences of serving in isolation and attempts to engage in the spaces they were invited to, lead to feeling like their contributions and opinions were not valued or heard and their attempts to impact change were futile. When individuals determine that they are in place for display versus action, whether real or perceived, this is representative of tokenism. No one should be made to feel like they are checking a box for the organization. As expressed by a study participant,

> *I think a barrier would be that people don't want to feel as if they are a token. They don't want to feel as if they're sitting in a seat just checking a box for you.*
> The pathway to nonprofit board service is typically linear: An individual gets

engaged with an organization, usually via volunteering or giving, and then they are invited to serve in varying capacities until they reach the level of board service. For some, this process moves more quickly than it does for others. Participants shared that in their experience, Millennials do not embrace the linear progression to nonprofit board service, which is not encouraged by older non-Millennials. As one participant shared about Millennials,

> *They [Millennials] see it as a very interactive process, where all the numbers are up there but in this case, one might be followed by three. You don't have to go through two to get to three. And people in my generation say "No, you can't do that. You're messing up the system."*

Is the road to nonprofit board service linear? If so, should it remain linear? It appears the expectation of Millennials is for things to move as they should, not as they are ordered. In other words, they believe that no process should keep someone from serving: Tradition gets in the way. This also explains the sentiment expressed by participants regarding Millennials' desire to be less formal in their practices. The formality of board meetings and processes put in place to maintain order are often shunned by Millennials as unnecessary, as noted,

> *The millennials that have served on our board, pardon me for this, but kind of laugh at the methodologies of board service. The Robert's rules. Millennials don't operate that way. They operate more in the way of like a tech startup, of you sit around couches with coffee and people are not wearing shoes and that's how you meet. And I feel like a board environment is so non conducive to a millennial point of view.*

The sentiment that certain people within a community have to serve on a nonprofit board is also part of tradition. Traditionally, a nonprofit board may have representatives from this large employer of from a well-known individual, and they may not be ready for the future due to potential lack of innovation and creativity from board members. One participant stated,

> *And time and again I see with organizations that are considered powerhouse boards, they have every big name in town on the board, but is that organization really ready for its next decade?*

Nonprofit boards should be poised to move into the next decade. Sustainability, relevance, financial stability are all factors in the preparedness equation. Having diverse individuals at the leadership level could be an indicator of organizational capacity to properly prepare for the changing demographics and challenges of the future.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

I observed several processes in play that pose barriers to Millennials and racial minorities in nonprofit board service. Considering the three broad themes uncovered of Intentional Engagement, Recruitment Processes and Tradition, there are many individual, organizational, and societal factors that contribute to the lack of these groups' participation on nonprofit boards.

The concept of intentional engagement seems to be key to increasing diversity and expanding the outreach efforts of nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit leaders responsible for board member recruitment should shift their approach to intentional engagement by connecting with others that do not match their characteristics and viewing everyone they meet as a potential board member. This could have an exponential impact on the diversity of their nonprofit board. The practices of intentional engagement align well with tackling the top challenges that boards face today, as outlined by BoardSource (2017): viewing external processes from a broader perspective, developing creative solutions to solve problems, and better understanding client populations.

Board of director recruitment processes vary from one nonprofit organization to another. Whereas some organizations use a "nominating committee" model, others also use a board matrix that outlines the skills and experience gaps on a board, and some handpick their board members to serve. The latter approach is generally done either by the board chair, board members, or the executive director of the organization. As stated previously, the Alliance for Board Diversity (2017) noted in its report that the required committees, as outlined by Sarbanes-Oxley, are often occupied by white males simply

because they are the majority serving on the nonprofit board. Because there does not seem to be a standard process for recruitment across nonprofit boards, adjusting processes to increase diversity could be a necessary first step. Nonprofit boards will follow the recruitment processes as outlined in their bylaws and therefore strategic adjustments could be made to ensure they are continued.

In the area of Tradition, nonprofit boards have an opportunity to be flexible and make adjustments that are conducive to Millennial members. Society as whole needs to shift the image of the 'ideal' board member. Traditionally, the typical profile of a board member is a white male of middle to upper-class socioeconomic status (Harris, 2014). As nonprofit leaders shift to more inclusive cultures, they should determine what the needs are for all members of the board, understanding that trust and intimidation could exist among any group, not just Millennials and racial minorities. The efforts exercised by any nonprofit organization to increase the diversity of their board leaders will benefit all members of the board, not just the Millennials and racial minorities.

The findings of this study do not necessarily concur with the ideas inherent in agency theory. The majority of board recruitment practices outlined by the participants called for board members to recruit new board members; only a few of the participants described the executive director as heavily engaged in the board recruitment process. Thus, the agency of the executive director in determining board composition and linking it with organizational performance was not clearly supported.

Conversely, resource dependency theory offers some plausible explanation of these findings regarding the barriers to Millennials and racial minorities in nonprofit board service. Millennials and racial minorities are often perceived as either not having

residual income or lacking a desire for philanthropy. In reality, these are not valid or accurate assumptions. Robertson (2017) found that while the dollar amount may not be the same as the more established Baby Boomers, 60% of Millennials gave to nonprofit organizations and causes that shared their values. Resource dependency theory implies that those serving on boards of directors are a link to necessary resources for the organization. If the perception is that Millennials and racial minorities do not or are unable to have these connections, then they will not be considered potential candidates for nonprofit board service.

Several limitations were noted while analyzing and compiling the data for this study. The small sample size, which represented participants of various generations, race and gender, contained within this study is undoubtedly a limitation. While there was a representative sample of nonprofit organizations, the organizational size, by revenue and by number of employees, varied among those interviewed. Future research should use these organizational measures to determine if there is any correlation with the themes. Additionally, future research should expand the number and diversity of participants and attempt to build upon the three themes uncovered representing the barriers to nonprofit board diversity.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

It appears that a combination of standardized recruitment processes, intentional engagement, and practices facilitating board education, onboarding, flexibility, and readiness would conceivably help to remove some of the barriers to nonprofit board service for Millennials and racial minorities. These practices could be viewed as a first step in addressing board diversity issues within nonprofit organizations.

STUDY TWO

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION

Study one revealed three overarching themes regarding the possible barriers to increased Millennial and racial minority participation on nonprofit boards. These barriers included the influence of tradition, the lack of intentional engagement with prospective board members who are diverse and recruiting processes that limit expansive outreach. The fact that study one utilized a small sample size of nine participants suggests that there may be more to uncover about barriers to diversity in nonprofit board participation. Theoretical saturation is required in the pursuit of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and an expansion of study one is the impetus for achieving such saturation.

An expanded study two will aim for greater diversity (gender, age and race) among participants and will include nonprofit organizations of varying size and scope (in terms of revenue, size of board, number of employees, mission), both of which may broaden and deepen our understanding about diversity in nonprofit boards. Moreover, study two will include members of boards identified as having exemplary representation of Millennial and/or racial minorities, and thus will offer the researcher the ability to compare and contrast processes at boards with Millennial and racial diversity with those that are less diverse. Thus, study two, as an expansion of study one, will address the limitations outlined in study one.

CHAPTER 8

LITERATURE REVIEW

My exploratory research suggests that intentional engagement, tradition, and board recruitment processes are leading factors contributing to the exclusion of Millennials and racial minorities in nonprofit board service in South Carolina. The individuals who serve on nonprofit boards "provide the general framework for organizational policies and conditions under which an organization operates and functions" (Claringbould and Knoppers, 2007, p. 495). Nonprofit boards vary in their focus. Some are considered working boards (those that are very hands-on with the nonprofit), whereas others are considered governance boards (those that function at a high level guiding the work of the organization). Moreover, many operate in both functions. Aulgur (2016) found that the perceived stature of the organization, sans identified skills or nonprofit experience of potential board members, matters in their selection processes. Based on the data collected in study one, nonprofit boards in South Carolina lean more toward potential board members' knowledge and skills in their selections. While this may or may not be the case, the practice of board member selection still relies heavily on current board member professional networks. This could produce results that are antithetical to diversity goals: "a board built on a handful of relationships has the inherent risk of insularity" (Russell Reynolds & Associates, 2019, p.1). How can current board members reach beyond their lists of contacts and connect with other individuals who are primed for board service?

The U.S. Census Bureau (2019) and Data USA (2020) confirm that the median age for a South Carolinian in 2018 was 39 years old. With the range currently used for

Millennials as those individuals born between 1980 and 1996, the median age is at the top of this generation. Yet, BoardSource (2017) reports that the average board member remains a white male over the age of 50. Conversely, African-American and Latino individuals within the state of South Carolina totaled approximately 50% of the white population in 2018 (Data USA, 2020). However, in 2018, white men held 81% of the board seats for Fortune 100 companies and 84% of the board seats for Fortune 500 companies (Deloitte, 2018b). This suggests that board service in for-profit and nonprofit entities do not mirror the current population.

Intentional engagement is a key theme in nonprofit leadership practices and appears to be a missing ingredient when it comes to board member recruitment. Intentional engagement, defined within the context of this research, is the ability to connect and engage with individuals who are visibly different from you, to authentically understand and uncover information about them beyond their visible characteristics. In the previous study, we learned that nonprofit leaders invited individuals to become board members solely based upon who they knew, i.e., who was in their professional networks. In her article on recruiting a diverse workforce, Lieber (2012) cites the ineffectiveness of word of mouth recruiting, which solely relies on individual networks. Instead, she suggests tactics such as "breaking from the familiar…and actively networking in targeted communities" (p. 88) as ways to increase the diversity of applicants. This is a sound example of intentional engagement from an employee recruitment perspective. As we consider its use within the nonprofit, intentional engagement both challenges and encourages nonprofit leaders to expand their contacts to include younger individuals and racial minorities by building genuine relationships, on purpose. This resourceful tool of

intentional engagement continues beyond the initial recruitment and should evolve into the fabric and traditions of the nonprofit board.

Tradition, the second theme of impediment to nonprofit leadership practices noted in my previous exploratory study, implies that board selection plays into the image or perception of what we think the board should look like. Tradition, due to bias, limits our ability to see others, namely millennials and racial minorities, as qualified to lead; when we do invite others to join in, it is merely to check a box rather than a desire for valuable input. Oftentimes, this is masked as 'fit', a broad term that is defined as "a suitable quality, standard, or type to meet the required purpose" (Merriam-Webster). When the observation is made that a person does not 'fit', it is imperative for nonprofit leaders to get a detailed explanation of such a broad term, both in meaning and use, to ensure that tradition is not residing at its core.

Organizations focused on obtaining and retaining the brightest talent often end up with a diverse result to include individuals from many different backgrounds and cultures (Lieber, 2012). However, when tradition is at play, tokenism arises, and we are disappointed when there is a lack of engagement or the board appointment is short-lived. This results in a 'we've tried, and it didn't work' attitude going forward, and the board falls back into their prior traditions. In their study of organization readiness for the inclusion of diverse individuals, Egan and Bendick (2018, p. 12) focused on organization climate as an integral component to effective recruitment and retention, concluding that it is in the best interest of the organization to create an organizational climate that is inclusive to everyone. Devoid of this, the benefits sought through increasing diverse members will not be achieved. Nonprofit organizations must do the internal of work of

preparing its existing board members, employees, and other stakeholders for the added diversity. This can be done through training, policy review and change, and candid discussions of what further adjustments are necessary to shift the traditional views currently in place. Intentional engagement can shape new traditions and reduce the risk of exclusion and marginalization that could arise when new members, who are not a part of the dominant group, join the nonprofit board of directors. Thus, intentional engagement and strategically reviewing their traditions will help nonprofit board leaders develop the board recruitment processes necessary to expand the inclusion of millennials and racial minorities in nonprofit board service.

The third theme uncovered in my exploratory study, board recruitment processes, is focused on how board members are recruited to board service. Organizations enhance their reputations with stakeholders when they increase diversity for improved governance (Singh, 2007). As previously mentioned, the most common recruitment practice is the network of current board members. There are some nonprofit boards who enlist the assistance of a governance committee, which is a validated practice. It relegates the selection of new board members to the nominating committee, which is comprised of current board members and external members. This can be problematic, though, as external members are predominantly those who are known by other board members, and thus the process is cannibalized once again.

In a study of governance structures in sports organizations, one white male participant noted that he had previously come in contact with two qualified women and then intentionally remained in contact with them to nominate them for service when the opportunity was available (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007). It is important to note these

board members were selected because of their ability, with their gender an added consideration (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007). Nonprofit board leaders do the organization and the person selected a disservice when they are only chosen to serve based upon their visibly diverse characteristics. In order to enact recruitment processes that help us effectively attract millennials and racial minorities, nonprofit leadership must recognize that a concentrated effort leads to success (Capozzi, 2014).

Although there is no silver bullet approach to diversity recruitment, there are other methods that nonprofit boards could use to recruit members. Tactics such as looking to those individuals who have been engaged with the nonprofit in different ways, perhaps through program participation or committee service, or by publishing the opportunity with organizations known to attract diverse individuals with the knowledge, skills and expertise they seek could be part of an overarching strategy towards increased diversity.

Prior to my preliminary study, I identified several existing theories that could explain the prevalence of millennial and racial minority exclusion from nonprofit boards. Of the theories identified, resource dependency theory emerged as the most useful in helping to explain the results of my preliminary study. Under resource dependency theory, nonprofit board members conceivably serve as a link to necessary resources (Mwenja & Lewis, 2009) such as money, talent, donors, etc., and this was clearly evident in my results. Study 1 identified a close connection between the resources necessary to sustain a nonprofit organization, the leaders who serve on the board of directors and their potential connection to resources, and the perceptions or stereotypes that nonprofit leaders may have in relation to millennials and racial minorities and their connection to

resources. In support of this, Hillman and colleagues (2002) created a taxonomy which considers board composition from a human capital perspective and concluded that minorities bring important resources to corporate boards. Thus, by considering the importance of human and social capital (Singh, 2007), resource dependency theory helps to establish support for the inclusion of millennials and racial minorities on nonprofit boards by recognizing that they bring monetary and other resources of value.

The three initial themes uncovered in my preliminary study—intentional engagement, tradition, and recruitment process—are most aligned with resource dependency theory. However, given the small sample size of the initial study, further exploration with nonprofit board leaders who have already made the commitment to add age and racial minority diversity to their boards is warranted. Thus, my research question remains: What are some of the possible barriers for millennials and minorities to nonprofit board recruitment and service? Study two will further investigate this question, examining not only nonprofit boards who perceive these barriers but also by nonprofit boards who have overcome them successfully.

CHAPTER 9

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

      As stated in study one, there is a dearth of research on diversity issues in nonprofit board governance. Because of this, a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) research approach was employed to continue the exploration of nonprofit board diversity and its connection to nonprofit board of directors' recruitment and selection processes, both of which are an integral part of nonprofit governance practice. Because grounded theory seeks to develop theory that is grounded in data and systemically analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), its application was appropriate for this exploratory research. While a quantitative approach using a survey instrument may have been more expedient and would have increased the generalizability of results, I continued with an expanded inductive, qualitative approach to allow the organizational governance paradigm perceptions of nonprofit leaders to be further uncovered and theoretically integrated (Auglur, 2016). Lastly, this approach is highly desirable as it is seen as a "democratizing force" (Sandelowski, 2002, p.105).

Sample and Data Collection

      Employing the assistance of Together SC (2019) and a strong contact list of contacts from previous interviews, 63 nonprofit leaders who met one or more of the following criteria - millennial, racial minority, executive director, board member and/or board chair – were contacted for participation. As supported by Kristensen and Ravn (2015) the selection criteria and definitions are outlined here to quantify the participants and demonstrate quality research. The goal was to conduct interviews with at least 16

additional participants, to expand the data collection from the 9 participants in study one, and we would interview until theoretical saturation was reached (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). With a desire to expand the diversity of the sample, participants were sought out to include a greater variety of age, gender, and racial diversity over the study one sample demographics. In addition to the diversity measures, participants from nonprofit organizations with exemplar boards in terms of representation will also be included. Social science empirical research lacks a definition for an exemplary diverse board. Time was spent reviewing methodology from organizations that award employers and others for their diversity efforts which resulted in an unclear understanding of the statistical data required to compete for the award. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, exemplar is defined as a as a minimum 10% Millennial and/or racial minority participation as supported by data tracked by Harvard Law School (Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, 2020) on U.S. corporate board trends. The individual participants were selected for representativeness, specifically diversity of demographics and roles among the participants (e.g., not all executive directors or board chairs, etc.), and with the expectation that diversity of participants will increase the probability that new insights can be provided. As explained in study one, such non-probability sampling is appropriate for exploratory research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as is theoretical sampling (Strauss, 1987).

     A total of 61 potential participants were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. The invitation email included details about the study, the IRB-approved consent form, and available times to schedule the interview along with the logistics of how the interview will be conducted. Of the 61 contacted, 25 interviews were

scheduled, and 18 interviews were conducted. Each of the 18 participants signed the consent form and agreed to a scheduled time that was convenient for the researcher and the participant. The total number of participants, to include the participants from study one, was 27. The demographics of the participants is integral since the focus of the study is on age cohort and racial minorities, so this information was collected from each participant. Of the 27 participants, 51.8% (n=14) identified as African-American, 33.3% (n=9) identified as Caucasian, and 14.8% (n=4) identified as Latinx. As previously explained, generational cohort date ranges, as described by Pew Research (2018), were used to categorize the age of the participants. Of the 27 participants, 18.5% (n=5) were Baby Boomers, 25.9% (n=7) were Millennials, and 55.5% (n=15) were Generation Xers. The gender of the participants was approximately 50/50 with 51.8% (n=14) identifying as Female and 48.1% (n=13) identifying as Male.

The role of the participants within the nonprofit organization varied between board chair, board member, and executive director, often occupying more than one role at a time within a different organization. Therefore, due to the multiple roles of each participant, we focus more on their perspective of the topic versus where that perspective may be coming from as we analyze the data. The participants represented several different types of organizations that fell into three categories: Education, Human Services, or Public & Societal Benefit. The main organizations represented by the participants were Regional within South Carolina 40.7% (n=11), local to the area where they resided within SC 33.3% (n=9), 22.2% (n=6) were considered statewide organizations, and one national nonprofit organization headquartered in Charleston, SC. Participants from exemplar nonprofit boards, as earlier defined, were sought out in order

to understand their practices. While the goal was to examine nonprofit boards that had 30% of their board representing racial minorities and/or Millennials, only 13 (48%) of the nonprofit board represented had racial minority diversity, especially African-American. Although Latinx and Millennial individuals were represented in the data, they did not reach the 30% threshold.

To start his discussion on qualitative research, Kvale (1996) expounds on the role of the interviewer and interviewee from a listening and information sharing standpoint highlighting the goal of this form of data collection is "to understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, [and] to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations" (Kvale, 1996, p.1). Identical to study one, semi-structured interviews were conducted using Zoom (2019) web-conferencing software. Using Zoom (2019) allowed participants, due to self-selection, to be comfortable and relaxed in their own space, create a level of privacy to meet their needs and an atmosphere of informality to have an intimate conversation with the interviewer as suggested by (Dearnley, 2005). Also, unlike face to face interviews, the online modality allowed participants to withdraw from the process with the click of a button" (Janghorban at al., 2014, p.24153), lessening the discomfort that could exist in these instances. Similar to study one, the goal of scheduling the interviews virtually was convenience and time savings for all parties. In an effort to have ample time to gather the necessary data, each semi-structured interview was scheduled for and lasted about 60–75 minutes. The semi-structured interviewed technique worked well during study one and replicated during study two for consistent and comparable results for aggregation. As noted by Dearnley (2005), the open-ended nature of the questions allowed for conversational flow that

guided the discussion. Roulston in her research on quality, qualitative interviewing, describes the neo-positivist concept highlighting that returning for multiple interviews with participants while also eliminating bias by asking non-leading questions adds quality to the qualitative research process (Roulston, 2010). Considering this, when the need to conduct follow-up interviews arose, the rapport was already established and the conversation continued naturally from the prior interview, using the virtual platform.

The interview questions, detailed in the Interview Guide in Appendix B, were open, as supported by Roulston (2010), and used as a guide for the conversational style interviews. While the interview questions for study two remained the same as study one, two additional questions were added for theoretical understanding and clarity and the question order was slightly adjusted to ensure sound progression. The two additional questions, now Q3, which zeroes in on overall board governance evolvement and Q8, which focuses on education and information nonprofits provide to potential board members, were created as a result of study one findings. Study one findings revealed three overarching themes, intentional engagement, processes and tradition. Q3 and Q8 expands the aperture to explore these areas in a meaningful way.

As is standard with grounded theory research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), data analysis commenced and continued concurrently with data collection. As new information was discovered, we revisited previous Millennial interviewees in particular to explore those discovered items further. These interviews were shorter, lasting 20–25 minutes and aided in uncovering "what is really going on or what participants really think, believe and do" (Roulston, 2010, p. 217). In addition to the interviews, IRS Form 990 data filed for the each of the nonprofit organizations associated with study

participants was collected to reveal the revenue, size of the board and number of employees for each organization, this information is detailed in Appendix C along with board type which was categorized as working or governance. BoardSource (2019) defines a working nonprofit board as one where the board members are expected to fulfill management duties by engaging in the work of the nonprofit (programming, activities, serving, etc.); whereas a governance board is only focused on fiduciary responsibilities or how the organization is run (by-laws, budget, fundraising, etc.), and less on fulfilling or assisting with staff or management activities. Nonprofits boards can be a governance board without being a working board, however a working board will also be tasked with the fiduciary responsibilities just like a governance board.

Data Analysis

As typical with grounded theory research, the data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection, as is indicative of the grounded theory process. Thus, transcribed interview data was analyzed as it was collected, providing the basis for employing constant comparison as new data was collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Using this method, similarities and differences were highlighted by continually comparing codes, concepts and categories within the data as it came in (O'Brien & Linehan, 2014). The interview data was transcribed using an online transcription service, Rev, and analyzed using the coding software Nvivo.

As with the analysis of the study one data, data collected for study two went through multiple stages of coding, which included open and axial coding. This allowed the data to be captured via codes, which were then grouped into concepts and categories and ultimately into themes that were theoretically situated and connected. Specifically,

following the identical commonly used methods of coding procedure (Myers, 2013, pp. 167–168) from Study 1, transcribed data was analyzed using line-by-line open coding. An initial list of codes was developed from the first three interviews and revised as necessary as the additional interviews were completed and analyzed. According to its importance to the research, a short descriptor phrase or code was assigned to the words and phrases used by the participant. Using the constant comparison model, concepts were built by grouping together codes from participant responses that related to one another. Then the concepts were grouped into categories, which is the typical process for neo-positivist concept building (Roulston, 2010).

Study one uncovered the categories of tradition, intentional engagement, and recruiting processes as barriers to nonprofit board diversity, the study two data was compared using these categories and analyzed for additional categories. The interview data collected from participants representative of nonprofit boards that are exemplary, employed additional comparative analysis as these data could help to elucidate the processes that actually contribute to overcoming these barriers. Study two yielded 25 categories that represented barriers to millennial and racial minority participation in nonprofit board service. Many of the categories that emerged were similar to those in study one, and we found each worthy of individual exploration. Table 4 displays the codes and definitions from both studies along with representative quotes.

Table 4. List of Codes Combined

Code	Definition	Representative Quotes
Availability • **Time** • **Flexibility**	In reference to the time constraints that could be experienced due to other obligations	*A lot of times millennials either don't have the time or the ability to give what a lot of organizations are giving* *So they're busy, busy people. Right in the heart of their career* *You can't get an elementary school teacher to be on your board*
Bias • **Implicit** • **Unconscious** • **Tradition**	Thoughts, opinions and responses due to preconceived prejudices	*There's a bias against millennials* *I think there's a huge implicit bias against millennials as being selfish, self-absorbed* *There's this implicit bias that is self-absorbed, and they don't do much to add value* *I will say the biggest barrier is implicit bias*
Board Matrix	Document used by board leaders to measure the characteristics of current board members and determine necessary qualities for new potential new members	*Look, we need an accountant or we need a lawyer or we need someone that's in PR* *You're looking for those substantive skill sets that are needed to support the board* *I think the most impactful ones are boards who first do a matrix around their needs*
Community Connection	Engagement with the community	*I think the board of every non-profit should reflect the diversity of the community that that they serve* *You have a white staff and a white board, they just have tremendous blind spots for what they might miss or mess up* *It's really we know what's best because we went to school for this, as opposed to, well the people in the community live this day in and day out*

Table 4 continued

Culture	The behaviors and norms of a particular group	*You have to understand the culture of where you are going to and if you want to be there* *Well, with the Hispanics Spanish, the language of course* *That's really the only way you can create a culture where the resident from the community can be themselves*
Education • **Knowledge** • **Training**	Information given to enhance the ability and understanding of others	*But there wasn't a high understanding of what it took, why boards need me* *But as someone who's being recruited to be on a board, I don't know what I don't know* *I think that educating the minority population and that includes the millennials as well*
Expectations	The outcomes desired through participation	*They need to be engaged, they need to ask good questions, they need to come prepared* *That they keep the mission of the organization first, and those are the intangibles that I think all of us should have some sense about before we serve a board* *So it takes the guy with all the money, for sure. But it also takes the board member with the knowledge and the experiential knowledge*
Fundraising	The act of bringing in monies for organizational support	*You make it one of your top three priorities from a charitable standpoint* *You're looking for people who can either give gifts or they think you will get gifts from somebody else* *When I came on the board, there was zero expectation taught to me about donation*

Table 4 continued

Intentional Engagement • **Networking**	To engage on purpose and with purpose	*...it's networking, because it's all about talent identification, recruitment and stewardship* *When you don't have time to create those experiences, you are not looking for opportunities to be on nobody's board* *If there is never any reason for your paths to cross, people just do not know about people*
Mentoring • **Support**	To assign a guide to provide assistance to a novice	*You can bring somebody on the board who really isn't ready from the skills set standpoint, but he or she is at a point in their career where adding that dimension can really be important* *If you know that a person is good for the board eventually, there's ways to potentially be a mentor within a board* *They work in tandem with a senior board member and have some type of way that they just kind of explain how things are run*
Mission • **Brand** • **Trust** • **Nonprofit Size**	A guiding principle in place to provide insight to internal and external stakeholders	*So having an understanding what the psychographic profile is of somebody who would fall in love with your mission, I think it important* *And I always feel that all choices that millennials make are an extension of the personal brand* *I think the governance boards tend to be, let's get the person who's got a name or got money, and the working boards are the people who say, who's passionate about this issue and is willing to help us execute on this type of work* *Where that stage of development is for the organization is extremely important because it can be frustrating both for board members and for staff when there's a need for the board to now be*

Table 4 continued

		strategic, but it's still trying to be very hands-on and operational
Opportunities	Awareness or notification of positions to advance to the board of the nonprofit	You often don't get asked to come in the door because it's still a, I have to give you the nod to come in And another blocker is, I don't think I knew about the opportunity
Orientation/ Onboarding	The process of indoctrinating new members of the board	I think they can have better onboarding processes We do in-service for incoming board members. And not all boards do that
Processes	The steps put in place to complete a task such as board member recruiting, meeting proceedings, etc.	So, a proper vetting process, which really is important to have Often times I've seen it where somebody will say "Give me your picture and your resume" And you'll send it out to the board Governance committee works with the executive director or CEO
Power/Privilege	The earned or unearned authority exercised by certain individuals	Boards are traditional nonprofits are traditionally structured with people of either money for influence It needs to be expanded to not just be access of the current power structure Folks who are, certainly, really well connected in their own industry, can have influence over their peers and their colleagues in their industry certainly is helpful
Tokenism	Representation of individuals from protected groups in low numbers	It was an articulated desire to check a box, but unless somebody was a head of an institution, there wasn't ability for them to be on the board No one wants to be on a board just to be in the black voice or the Latino voice

CHAPTER 10

FINDINGS

There were several barriers that emerged from each of the 25 individual interviews. Surprisingly, both millennials and racial minorities are recognized in each of the categories. When we consider the barriers, the issues uncovered were not just attributed to the nonprofit organization but also to the millennial and racial minority.

Data was collected on nonprofit organizational type and size as outlined by revenues listed in their Form 990 data. Based on the information collected, organizational size or type did not prove to be a relevant factor on the outcomes on the views of the organization on millennial and racial minority participation on their boards. This data is shown in the Participant Demographic Data in Appendix C.

There was much discussion throughout the interviews regarding millennial attitudes and how they differ from the status quo. Likewise, there was also discussion of racial minorities' quest for opportunities that yield financial benefits above service. The following sections while dive into these phenomena and explain each category in detail.

Availability

When discussing millennials, the data revealed that there is both a perception and a reality that millennials have limited time. More importantly, the reason for the limited time availability varied in description between millennials and others interviewed. The perception focused on millennial career building and family responsibilities. As spoken by a white male, baby boomer nonprofit board leader,

> *I mean, these people are generally in some of the sweet spot of their career, right? They're working hard to trying to get the next promotion. So they're busy, busy people. Right in the heart of their career and it's hard to get their attention just from a time perspective.*

A White male GenXer shared a similar sentiment, while also recognizing that he may be

stereotyping in his statement,

> *Well, maybe this a stereotyping here, so it's not universal, but like a lot of times when you're at that age, you're very focused on your sort of career and family.*
>
> *Like millennials are in the process of building their resumes and the process of building their wealth, if they're on that direction, if they're in the process of building their connections.*

A White, female GenXer reflected on what she was doing when she was the age that

millennials currently are,

> *I was on my way up in my career working like crazy. I had young kids at home. I was just traveling all the time, trying to keep it together. Particularly, I really think there's something to those millennials that if they're as busy as I was when I was in my thirties, oh boy. I don't know if I can take on anything else, but maybe they're confident.*

This perception or mode of thinking was not only held by white nonprofit leaders. An

African-American, male GenXer shared similar sentiments,

> *A lot of times millennials either don't have the time or the ability to give what a lot of organizations are giving. If you see under-representation, I think it's more for those reasons as opposed to, "Hey, we can't connect with millennials."*

Interestingly, the realistic perspective given by actual millennials was slightly different

and consistent across the race of millennials. They share a desire to be connected, a focus

on balancing student loan debt while dealing with middle management challenges. As

spoken by an African-American, millennial male,

> *You're just focused on living and because you're just focused on living, you're not able to gain those experiences or those contacts that are going to allow you to be a desirable candidate for a non-profit organization.*
>
> *I have to go to my principal and take time off to go to a board meeting that's at eight o'clock in the morning. Those little decisions tell you what kind of person you want. So, even if you want a millennial, you obviously want somebody who has a freer schedule, which means they're going to have to have either an entrepreneurial*

background or a job where they're high enough up where they can just come and go as they please.

Also recognizing the strain that the timing of board service commitment could produce for millennials, an African-American female, GenXer stated,

So I think depending on what type of board it is and what that level of commitment or service is, unless you're in a work environment that supportive of particularly younger individuals serving on board and giving back in that way, there can be a challenge there.

The cost of living in certain areas is high, forcing millennials to work more than one job. Thus, unless an employer is supportive of volunteer work, there remains a lack of time to commit. This was supported by an African-American male, GenXer, who said,

Maybe they've got to work two jobs, and so they don't have time to serve on a board because I work as a schoolteacher during the day, but I drive Uber at night. Or I work at the bank during the day, but I work at outback during the evening because my money is not enough to afford to live in a city like Charleston, so I've got to work two full-time jobs

Among the racial minority population, particularly Latinos, a lack of availability was expressed that was focused on contributing their time to activities that made them money, not to give back. As expressed by a Latino female GenXer,

In general minorities, we are more on the surviving. Then we are surviving. We don't have the mentality. And sometimes we need to create that. We need to switch that first to be able to, because it will be like, "Are you asking me to do something? And I won't get paid?"

The sad reality is that some racial minorities do not understand what they glean from nonprofit board service because they do not see an immediate financial reward. The state of many individuals in these communities does not support the giving of their time to nonprofits. It was clear that the lack of knowledge about the nonprofit structure and insight of what could happen in a boardroom was prevalent. The naivety of how deals are

made and opportunities occur in the boardroom are strong indicators of why this lack of

availability may exist.

Bias

Bias was repeatedly mentioned during the interviews. Whether implicit or

explicit, many declared this is as a significant reason why millennials and racial

minorities are not invited to nonprofit board service at a higher rate. We will focus on

millennials first and then discuss racial minorities.

Nonprofit leaders have bias and stereotypes about millennials, that they openly

express. The perceived millennial attitude towards work and service are used to restrict

their participation in nonprofit board service. That bias reflects a strong dislike for

millennials' proclivity toward having strong opinions, being expressively unbothered by

other opinions of them, and their unwavering desire to not wait their turn. To start,

several participants said,

> *I think there is also a certain level of resentment towards… young people tend to challenge the status quo. They tend to question both from a programmatic standpoint, but also from just I think sort of leadership standpoint like, "Why are we continuing to do thing the way we've always done things?"* **Female, GenX, African-American**

> *Well, I think on the non-profit side, I think that there is a little bit of a conscious or unconscious bias of maybe folks in that age range aren't as experienced as we're looking for.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

> *"Oh, we won't be doing that again," and so I do think that there's a perception that young people tend to be more challenging as board members because they can tend to be more vocal as board members.* **Female, GenX, African-American**

> *I think there's a huge implicit bias against millennials as being selfish, self-absorbed, they want a trophy for everything, they want to be rewarded for just showing up, and there is a challenge of non-profit boards or even executive directors of non-profit boards picking people like that to serve on their board, unless they're a millennial themselves.* **African-American, Male GenX**

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Then also understanding that sometimes that person who may not look like it, or that young person, that black person, whatever can actually check all three of those boxes and shift your own, once again, biases that gets in the way of you understanding that. **African-American, Female, Millennial**

I think the current mindset of people who are on boards or nonprofit leaders, there's a bias against millennials so they've got to change that perspective. **African-American, Male, GenX**

These kids don't have any experience nor do they look like they want to serve, so why are we going to waste our time with people with no experience, no money and who don't look like they have a dime and are willing to serve? That's where the disconnect comes from. In my opinion, that's the disconnect. **Male, Millennial, African-American**

As previously stated, millennials are not the only ones who have to struggle

against bias from nonprofit board leaders. Racial minorities, namely African Americans

and Latinos, also struggle with this, and have done so arguably for much longer than have

millennials. There are biases around the wealth of African Americans and Latinos as well

as their ability and willingness to serve.

So they'll make a decision to exclude people because they're implicit bias about their ability to give, when it's actually the opposite because if you look at the number of minorities in people of color, that give to their religious institutions. **Male, African-American, GenX**

That's the damaging part of labels because it's easy to just classify you. It's like, "Oh, you're a black woman? I automatically know what you think about this subject, so I'm not going to reach out to Shawn because we are into ceramic pottery at this non-profit organization. Black women don't do ceramic pottery." You know what I mean? **Male, African-American, Millennial**

I will say the biggest barrier is implicit bias again. The belief system that minorities of women and people of color don't have anything to contribute, or that they don't have money to contribute. That is a barrier that the larger percentage of minorities in persons of color don't have the economic means that the majority white persons have had. **Male, African-American, GenX**

I think the implicit bias is a reason why they don't and they don't have the relationship, they don't know no people of color. You know, if your circle is who you recruit from, and you don't have diverse relationships, that you're not going to identify diverse people to recruit. And so I think those are the two biggest barriers,

is that they don't know people of color, and that's why they can't recruit them to the board. **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

The participants determined that periodic implicit bias training can assist nonprofit board leaders with recognizing bias. Specifically,

I would say do some implicit bias training. As a matter of fact, for both contexts, every board should do some implicit bias education in training every year.

This could be as step in the right direction if the training includes steps individuals can take to overcome their biases as well. Recognizing bias is important, but overcoming bias is more essential. Overcoming bias will minimize the interference of bias as nonprofit board leaders are considering who to bring on board for service. Implicit bias is hugely impactful and shows up in various ways. Have periodic reminders for board leaders to check their biases could go a long way in removing this barrier for millennials and racial minorities.

Board Matrix

A commonly used tool in nonprofit board recruitment, the board matrix, appears to be another barrier to the inclusion of millennials and racial minorities. Board matrices usually contain synopses of skills that already exist on the board, along with the terms of the individuals represented. In most cases, these matrices do not include demographic data. Notably, some progressive organizations have begun collecting and using this data to gain a clearer and accurate picture of the board and determine ways to make progress. For those that do not include demographic data, there seems to be a colorblind approach to board recruitment in that the focus is on the skills that are lacking rather than what that person represents. This colorblind approach causes nonprofit organizations to repeatedly choose individuals who are non-millennial and not a racial minority.

Here we have the sentiment of a Baby Boomer, white male,

I've not been under nonprofit board that has consciously targeted millennials. It's not consciously targeted any age demographic. It's really more skills, financial resources, mission connectedness. I was surprised when you said millennials and minorities.

The focus here is not to reinforce a check the box mentality, but to realize the value that inviting diverse individuals to the table. Expanding the net rather than recruiting the same type of individuals for nonprofit board service that have the necessary skills you seek. A White female, GenXer participant spoke of the importance of DEI as an organization and how that translates to action within a nonprofit,

In my organization everybody understands as a board and as an institution that the value of DEI which is not just about having a demographic spreadsheet that says you checked your boxes, but we're here to include the best thinkers and to bring the best skills to bear on our mission.

In support of this and to deter a check the box mentality, nonprofit organizations could create a goal to help hold them accountable to inviting diverse individuals to the table, as stated by an African-American, male GenXer,

They also should attempt to reflect the demographics, and I would say just make it a policy that our board has to be X percentage women, X percentage people of color.

Using the skills outlined in the matrix, a White male, GenXer concluded,

And they sort of, okay, well we need to record this kind of person to the board at this point and this kind of matrix

Another African-American male GenXer described the approach nonprofits should take to recruit diverse members using the matrix, he states,

But I think the better way to do it is to say, "Look, we need an accountant or we need a lawyer or we need someone that's in PR. Do we happen to know any people in these fields that are exceptional and persons of color?" If you leave with what the need is rather than the saying we need a black person or we need a Latino, I think that allows the person to be more successful. You're looking at that person beyond race for what they bring to the board. I think a lot of the board will do it

the other way around the saying, "Hey, we need a black person or we need a black female."

Some take issue with the use of the term 'exceptional' because it is often used when describing a diverse individual and almost never used when describing a White person. This concept or *"rock star mentality"* as described by an African-American female GenXer, happens where there is a focus on one diverse individual that is garnering lots of attention in a community. That individual is then expected to serve on every board, be on every council and always be in attendance at public events and programs. They are deemed a "rock star", and everyone else that meets the same demographic is ignored. It is a tiring way of operating, as spoken by one "rock star" individual: In addition to the five boards that he has served on, he has turned down at least 10 invitations to others. He provided recommendations for other individuals just like him, but the majority were not selected to serve.

While we learned that the board matrix itself is not a barrier, what it contains, or lack thereof, could be. Nonprofit organizations would benefit by the creation of a board matrix that includes demographic information for each of the individuals already participating. This will help them have an understanding and a full picture of who is serving on their board. The most important step is to use that information to identify a pool of candidates that possess the skills necessary for the board being intentional about recruiting diverse individuals as it relates to age and race.

Community Connection

Nonprofit organizations usually exist to serve a community. Whether that community is local, regional, statewide or nationwide, their mission is aligns with some level of service to an identified community. In relation to gathering feedback, "the most

common way that nonprofits …obtain input from their clients in by administering surveys…" (LeRoux, 2009, p.510). Participants were asked about the importance of the community that a nonprofit organization serves, in relation to board service. While no participant made mention of surveying their clients, some agreed that hearing from the community was important but did not see a need for that community to be involved at the level of governance in the organization. According to a Baby Boomer, white male, the thought of involving folks from the community being served at the board level is rarely discussed,

> *Well, it's interesting, the idea of actually putting some of those people on the board is not something I've seen happen a lot. I'm happy to involve more advisory committee, that sort of thing. Yet, again it depends on the population you're trying to address and serve*

In a study conducted on client participation in the governance of nonprofit organizations by LeRoux (2009), one of the findings was that client participation in governance had a direct correlation with how they were funded. Specifically, "as dependence on private charitable income increases, organizations become less likely to have a client serving on the board (LeRoux, 2009, p.512). Comparatively, other participants found high value in engaging individuals from the communities they serve at the board level. In a study conducted by Andrasik and Mead (2019), they found that "board membership provides a ready means by which nonprofits can engage members who demographically reflect their clients/community" (p. 39). However, one nonprofit leader described her perspective on community engagement at the board level from the viewpoint of the services the nonprofit provides,

> *I think it varies depending on the work that the nonprofit does. I think that if the work of the nonprofit is rooted in the community, I find it hard to understand why*

people from the community are not serving on that board and that's because their perspective is a valuable perspective to bring to the board.

This same African-American, Gen X participant, also recognizes the need to incorporate those voices into the work of the nonprofit even if it is not at the board level,

I think it's not one size sort of fits all, but I do think no matter what the nonprofit is, if you're work in, anyway, touches the community, there has to be either some sort of committee, some process whereby you're getting to hear the voices of the people in the committee.

Another participant, a Latina female Baby Boomer, recognized the importance, particularly within the Latino community to incorporate the views of the community,

Well, if an organization wants to be successful in serving the community that they serve, they have to be out there understanding that community, and learning what it is that that community needs.

Likewise, a white male, nonprofit leader who runs a community focused organization states clearly the importance for his organization and nonprofits in general to be connected to the communities they serve,

I think that it's hugely important in the sense that if whatever solution a nonprofit organization is pursuing and they're in business to pursue solutions for the common good, that's why they get their charitable status. That's why they have report nonprofit board. It's kind of preposterous to think that you could build a sustainable solution without the clear participation of the people for whom the solution is being built. Right?

He also provides advice to nonprofit organizations who do not have representation from the communities they serve on their boards, cautioning the need for creating participatory solutions,

But I think that from a mission standpoint, it's just really critical that outsiders and typically nonprofit boards are made up of outsiders to the communities they are trying to help. That they figure out a really intentional way to be approximate and to build sustainable solutions. So you can't have a sustainable solution unless it's a participatory solution.

When asked about community engagement at the board level, participants also expressed

the lack of community participation and the feelings of benevolence or savior complex

that some nonprofit organizations possess. One African-American female millennial said,

> *There are a few organizations that do more harm than good, and not really asking or not really having a people centered mindset when making decisions at their organization. It's really we know what's best because we went to school for this, as opposed to, well the people in the community live this day in and day out.*

An African-American, male GenXer described his perception of boards that do not have

community representation as,

> *Those traditional organizations have not been because they have a more benevolent mindset that it's my job as a white male or white female to help these poor people who don't have stuff, or to help these people of color who don't have stuff. So there's… I don't know if you want to call it, God complex or do-good-a-complex, or white liberal guilt, whatever terms you want to use, they deem that it's my job to serve you, and that's your job to be a part of me, be a part of helping me to serve other people.*

He continues,

> *I think the board of every non-profit should reflect the diversity of the community that that they serve. If you are a neighborhood-based, non-profit then you should have the majority of the board members be from that neighborhood. If you are a city-wide non-profit, then the majority, if not all of your board members, should be from that city.*
>
> *You know this. It's harmful when you see an organization who mainly serves black and brown spaces, and then their board make up or their organizational make up looks nothing like the individuals that they serve.* **Millennial, African-American, Male**

While it seems counterintuitive, community engagement is a barrier to the inclusion of

millennials and racial minorities, particularly if the nonprofit organization serves that

population. LeRoux (2009) found that even when controlling for the percentage of

African-American's in the population, "as boards become less racially representative of

their clientele they are less likely to elicit their participation in the form of advisory

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board" (p. 511). Nonprofit leaders should evaluate how they engage with the communities that they serve and ensure that those voices are at the table to provide direction and guidance. While not suggesting the invitation of community representatives haphazardly, to maintain relevance, some advisory or committee level service with the goal of advancement to the board level would be wise.

Culture

Culture, for the purposes of this study, is defined as the attitudes, thoughts behaviors and traditions of the nonprofit board and the culture from which millennials and racial minorities are coming from. In the culture of the board, we are paying attention to the norms that exist among the members of the board. The board culture is usually similar to that of the organization. If the organization is known as lighthearted, eclectic, and innovative, then who is selected to serve on the board will share those characteristics. Similarly, if the organization is old, traditional, and upscale, then the culture of the board would reflect that as well as those individuals selected for board service. The culture of the board matters greatly when considering selecting individuals for board service and when those individuals are considering serving.

> *It just varies, and so I think that in understanding and saying that you want to serve on a board… and it is no different to me than saying you want to work at a certain place. You have to understand the culture of where you are going to and if you want to be there, you cannot.* **Female, African-American, GenX**

If board member prospects are not familiar with your organization, they may be scanning your website or other materials leaving the explanation of the culture to their interpretation. Sometimes, that could work in favor of the nonprofit organization but oftentimes, it does not.

I'm like, I don't know what's true or not, but I'm not seeing a lot of me or anybody that looks like me on that team. What might that say about the culture? It's just a question that I have in mind and not just for perception's sake. **Female, White, GenX**

Potential board member candidates will try to understand the culture of an organization and it should be easy for them to locate. Additionally, they are paying close attention to who is currently serving on the board, if they do not see current directors that represent them, the organization could lose them as a candidate. However, if boards are looking to shift their culture, or add someone who does not fit the mold of their culture, it is imperative to have a discussion with that individual regarding the efforts leading to the reason why they are being invited to serve.

I don't know like whether this is going to be the organization for you, but then I will tell you that after a while, what we began to see was it was important to have very, very different voices on your board because those people help prepare you for the very, very different voices that you may run in to whether it's when you're doing political advocacy or whatever the case may be, but I do think that boards have cultures and you have to understand what that board culture is if you want to be a part of that board.

Nonprofit boards should work towards creating an environment where regardless of how much your opinion differentiates from the norm, you feel comfortable sharing it as a board member,

In a board where you've built climate of trust, so that people can openly and honestly disagree with one another or offer different opinions, and then you have a real diverse set of perspectives around topics, you tend to get better results. **White. Male, Baby Boomer**

So, creating the environment where it has to do with sort of the board chair's role to whoever's running the meeting to make sure you're calling forth the experience of people who might be like, "I'm not sure if I should be speaking up in this meeting or not." **White, Male, GenX**

Maybe I wouldn't say totally opposing views but share your views because that's going to help strengthen our argument for whatever it is we're trying to accomplish. **GenX, Female, African-American**

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From the individual perspective, it is important to understand the culture that prospective board members represent. This will enable a greater understanding of the individual and promote cohesion early on. As we focus on the Latino culture in particular, it is imperative to understand the Latino culture as you engage.

> *We don't have the culture of serving. We don't have the mentality and sometimes we need to create that. We need to switch that first to be able to serve, because it will be like, "Are you asking me to do something? And I won't get paid?"* **Latino, Female, GenX**

> *The Chamber of Commerce at one point wanted to kind of create a branch for Hispanic business owners, and that didn't do very well because of the cultural difference.* **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

> *Sometimes that person may not be the right fit for the organization or may not have the needed qualifications, but they're Hispanic, they speak Spanish, so that they can say that they have diversity. I heard from a particular leader at one time that the board was not really interested in doing what is required to connect to the community in one of the boards that I serve.* **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

This represents tokenism in its simplest form. We discuss tokenism in more detail later in this section. There are cultural barriers for African-Americans as well. Particularly in the South, there are societal norms that must be overcome as well as old practices that continue to linger and be repeatedly practiced by others. It is the board leadership's responsibility to ensure that those voices are heard when they are present.

> *So, creating the environment where it has to do with sort of the board chair's role to whoever's running the meeting to make sure you're calling forth the experience of people who might be like, "I'm not sure if I should be speaking up in this meeting or not."* **Male, White, GenX**

> *Point two is that the structure of the board is such that all the voices matter, okay? And that the board is operating in a way that the best ideas win. Not the loudest voices of people with longest titles or the biggest resumes.* **Male, White, Baby Boomer**

When considering board members, it is essential to consider who is being selected and whose influence is affecting that choice. Our default is to select individuals that we know well and identify with rather than considering other individuals we have engaged with. A participant called attention to this during the interviews,

> *It's the same way when you're recruiting for board members. It's the same thing. You're going to go to those people who you trust. Nine times out of 10 it's going to be somebody who looks like you or who identifies with you in some cultural way.*

Nonprofit organizations must break the cycle of recycling board members and shift their cultures to be accepting of different individuals. Walker found that "effecting culture change requires building a shared vision for diversity, inclusion and equity grounded in the organization's values, mission and principles" (2019, p.S88). In other words, board leaders must put in the work to ensure a culture of acceptance. Although it may be lucrative to recruit someone who recently served on another nonprofit board, considering the culture and getting your board ready for participation from a diverse population would serve the organization well.

Education/Knowledge/Training

What emerged from the research is a lack of understanding of what board service is, what are the expectations of board service and how you get involved in nonprofit boards. This lack of understanding is not germane to millennials and racial minorities. One white, female GenXer who currently is serving as board chair describes her experience,

> *…there wasn't a high understanding of what it took, why boards need me…so there was a little bit of a lack of understanding on the potential recruiting side. I got involved with… because I was really interested in the issue and had met some people. And then they asked me will I be on the board? And so I was like, "Sure, that sounds like a lot of fun."*

She was asked and accepted here first nonprofit board seat at 40 years of age, having

joined the board naively, she was unaware of what that entailed. She shares her

experience here,

> *And when I joined the board, I didn't even really know what my job was. I mean, I'm sure there are a lot of people that were a lot more experienced than me. I think that there's an experience gap just around what is a board member and here I was at 40 years old with that.*

While recognizing the busyness of her life leading up to the age that she joined a

nonprofit board, she expressed not having education around the opportunity was the main

contributing factor,

> *So if I had more education and I felt like I could fit it into my busy life, I would be way more interested, I think.*

She explored what could be done to help encourage more millennials and racial

minorities to participate in board service, education was her response,

> *Education is the word, big time, from the why of it, to the tactics and then education of the potential board members who really hadn't thought about board service and don't understand what it really means.*

This lack of understanding could exist for a variety of reasons. One African-American,

millennial male describes the recruiting processes he has experienced, saying,

> *But as someone who's being recruited to be on a board, I don't know what I don't know and sometimes I think that's where the dynamic can go astray is that you just have two people who want what's best for the organization or what's best for the community, that don't know what questions to ask, either as someone who's doing the recruiting or someone who's looking for opportunities to be on a board or being recruited, so I think that would be a big area of emphasis for me going forward.*

If millennials or racial minorities are approached to serve on nonprofit boards, they may

not have a full understanding of what that means. Moreover, they may be embarrassed to

ask because they do not know what to ask and feel like they are in a position where they

should know.

For the Latino community the barrier of education is even greater. According to

our GenXer and Millennial Latino female participants, the lack of education regarding

board service is rampant. As they stated,

> *It was a challenge, because some of the members are under the impression that you need to know English to be able to be part of the board, but at this time, there other part of the board that think doesn't matter if you don't speak English. They still want your voice.*

> *The mentality of serving the struggling and how we filter the information. And we have this concept that I have been learning of that's for white people*

> *I think it's a lack of knowledge, a lack of...maybe just not wanting to do certain things and to connect because of just ignorance, lack of knowledge which leads to fear.*

There is a level of fear that exists within the Latino community due to lack of knowledge.

Nonprofit organizations, especially those with a focus on the Latino community, should

consider providing education about board service to remove the barriers to participation

for these individuals. For the African-American community, the experience is slightly

different in that the focus is on income generation—specifically, immediate income

generation. Describing what he encounters in the African-American community about

participation in nonprofits, one African-American male Baby Boomer said,

> *The perception of board service as an income stream, we need to sort of help minorities get out of that mode now. If the minorities understood that capital is just not finance, there's reputational capital that you reach. There's social capital, there's moral capital. We've got a lot of minorities doing good things in the community and good work could be amplified if they served in a board capacity. They need to understand that you may not have to write a check for $1,000, can you write check for $100?*

These barriers haven't always gone unnoticed. Organizations that are serious

about increasing the diversity of their boards recognize the importance of education. Two

White, Male Baby Boomer nonprofit leaders described the need for education as follows:

And so I think better education, if you will, is necessary. I don't know exactly how you pull that off, but there's got to be a way to do it.

Getting them to understand their responsibility as citizens to give back and helping prepare them to be candidates to be board members is a part of that.

Despite these findings, there are some nonprofit organizations that are doing their part to educate individuals about board service before inviting them to join. A female, GenX African-American shared the approach her organization took to inform members before inviting them to join the board,

Some of the training was more general, bringing in outside facilitator to just talk about what does board service mean, and then some of it was very specific and targeted about, "This is our organization. This is the type of nonprofit. This is how we are financed. This is our staff and our structure," to help them really feel and understand kind of what we did on a day-to-day basis sort of, "This our short- and long-term plans," and so I think giving people that really kind of, I think, robust overview of the nonprofit, what the expectations of them as a board member helped people to decide...

The way this organization delivered education, where every potential board candidate is invited, provides a level playing field and helps those who may be ignorant to board service gain a greater understanding, without embarrassment or fear. Another way of providing education to potential recruit could be through your website or documents. Two African-American, male, GenX nonprofit leaders describe this in the following terms:

I think that educating the minority population and that includes the millennials as well. So what is it to the board? I think of a capability statement as an awesome tool to use for this purpose

They had a lot of institutional knowledge, number one, and they had a governing body that made education of best practices and board training one of their priorities.

There also needs to be general education around the process of joining a nonprofit board. While this may be difficult because each board does it differently, it might be

helpful to nonprofit organizations to publicize their process. If the information for service were posted on their website along with when they open for nominations, that might help remove this barrier of lack of training at least for those who have a poor understanding of how to join a nonprofit board. Additionally, nonprofit organizations have to realize that not everyone who raised with an example of service and if they were those examples, particularly for African Americans, was tied to a certain entity. African American's penchant for religious services, sororities, fraternities, and masonic organizations may be the only example provided. Moreover, despite their usefulness, these examples may not translate to serving on the board of the local YWCA or United Way. Offering information to educate others in many different formats, as described, will positively impact the diversity of candidates that desire to serve.

While the nonprofit organization holds some responsibility for education, the potential candidate holds the same level of responsibility to educate themselves. There are thoughts and perceptions, particularly within the millennial population, of prejudice and bias towards nonprofit organizations. This displayed itself during the interviews as nonprofit organizations, especially those more traditional long-standing organizations, were referred to as 'the nonprofit industrial complex.' Further probing revealed a strong dislike for traditional nonprofits for several reasons, the problem addressed by their mission has not been resolved, the top executive earnings and bonus structure, and the lack of understanding of the internal processes designed to protect the organization. Individuals should take a vested interest in understanding nonprofits before passing judgement. Until that happens, this will continue to be a barrier.

<u>Expectations</u>

Closely tied to education is expectations. Among the millennial and racial minority population, there is a lack of awareness around expectations for nonprofit board services. The participants were asked what makes a board member valuable and how do nonprofit leaders go about identifying these valuable attributes in potential board members. The response overall was described as some version of talent, time, and treasures. Nonprofit boards seek individuals to serve who are willing to do just that— serve. This means that individuals are expected to show up in whatever capacity that is necessary for the nonprofit. Depending on the expectations and how they are described or perceived by the potential board member, this could be a barrier to nonprofit board service for millennials and racial minorities. One African-American, female millennial explained,

> *So I think making your seat valuable includes showing up and being present in the moment, willing to give up your time and your space and your expertise on whatever the issue is. Then always kind of questioning and challenging or pushing the organization to be a little bit better when you see that they're not living up to their mission.*

This perception provides a clear focus for the board member while also embracing a close adherence to the mission. She continued,

> *Or if you feel that things are getting a little bit ... mission drift is happening, to then bring them back on course to say, how do we truly live up to our mission in a way that doesn't pull us in so many different directions, but one that keeps us aligned with what we're truly called to do. But I think a true, or what makes a person valuable is just bringing themselves fully and wholly to the table.*

Some may perceive this as a negative, especially from a millennial, if they have the belief that younger individuals should always follow the elders without question. An African-American male millennial described an experience that demonstrates this,

He is a millennial and he's on the board of directors for a university. His university. One he wants to make change in. And he, even as a board member, a very successful lawyer, he's still looked at as, "Oh, you graduated when, 2005? You're a baby." You know what I mean? So, then there's even a thing of getting people on the board and not respecting what they could bring to the table.

On the younger spectrum of it is, one, not really seeing either the value of sitting at that table or thinking that I'm qualified for that table because it goes back to that first part of being seen as too young and inexperienced. **African-American, Female, Millennial**

It is also important to be clear about the expectations of board members. Providing this

information up front allows the individual to decide whether they can meet or exceed

those expectations. There is a concern about bait and switch tactics and several

participants cautioned against that, stating,

So I think it changes board members in that they may have a certain idea going in of what they need to do and when they come out of it they realize oh wait a minute, we have to switch this around. **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

I think that the first thing that a board should do is be very clear on what the expectations are, right? So if I were being recruited to a board and they said, our expectations of board members are you attend two in-person board meetings, two on the phone, we have a minimum give ask of $5,000 to whatever the minimum is. And our expectation is also that you are proactive in how you open up your network to other potential donors. And because you're an attorney, we specifically have this need for your skill set, and this is how we would use you, and then you say to them, "Now, what do you want to get out of a board seat?" So it's a two way fit. Expectations are very clear upfront. There's no bait and switch. – **White, Female, GenX**

Further expounding on the expectations, one participant stated,

Then I think someone who is willing to either give or help the organization get the resources that they need and that's not always financial resources. Sometimes that's social capital. Sometimes that's human capital helping the organization maybe attract staff that they normally would not have. **African-American, Male, GenX**

Thinking beyond having a diverse board toward what that board would demonstrate to

potential employees and donors could lead to a more diverse staff and donors.

Nonprofit boards may need a review of the expectation they have of board members to ensure that it is communicated clearly to those individuals they are attempting to attract. The benefit of them doing that is increased productivity, because everyone knows what the expectations are and more time spent on things that matter versus deliberations around expectations or the lack of someone meeting those expectations. Doing this would have a two-fold result. Clear communication of expectations will increase the participation of millennials and racial minorities, while also elevating the participation of their current board members.

Fundraising

Nonprofit organizations receive their funds from grants, payment for services provided, and donations, with donations being a largest contributor. Because of this, usually one of the major points of focus for the board is fundraising. We mentioned in the section on expectations that nonprofit organizations expect time, talent, and treasures from their board members. The sharing of treasures often come at differing levels of expectations. One participant described his experience as,

> *I'll just add that almost every board that's relatively high function I've been on, one of the things they ask is that if you serve on the board, you make it one of your top three priorities from a charitable standpoint, or at least from a time standpoint.* ***African-American, Male GenX***

The expectation exists for board service that you would give. However, there is also a perception that members give in other areas as well. This could be a potential barrier for millennials and racial minorities. The same participant explained,

> *The only other thing I might say is maybe financial, because there are several boards that… Particularly, the more higher functioning ones that if it's not a paid board, if you're on the board, they want you to be able to contribute financially and in a lot of folks just aren't in that place yet.* ***African-American, Male GenX***

The financial substance of an individual plays an important role in their selection

for board service. If that person does not have significant financial means, their access to

others with financial means is considered a strong attribute as well.

> *You're looking for people who can either give gifts or they think you will get gifts from somebody else. So, you look at people who have either some financial substance themselves, or they have access to people who have financial resources that might benefit the organization.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

> *And yet, because of the need for money, mostly it's all like a lot of this is driven by economics. I think, you know, nonprofits have to pay their bills. So, they really salivate and getting a board member. Who's got a lot of money and, you know, unfortunately again, race and class being heavily aligned in Charleston, like just don't have as much.* **Male, White, GenX**

> *When I came on the board, there was zero expectation taught to me about donation. And my first board meeting, there was board shaming about how much people have given. I'm like, "Is it a high dollar commitment?" It would have been nice to know that before you all invited me to join.* **Female, White, GenX**

Again, going back to expectations, nonprofit organizations should ensure that potential

board members understand the expectation of fundraising if one exists. Most nonprofit

boards have a give/get annual obligation in addition to supporting their programming and

events in certain ways. This could be a barrier to millennials and racial minorities if a)

they are not working for a supportive organization, b) their income level hasn't reached

the point of access, or c) they are stretched thin from prior commitments.

Recognizing this barrier, nonprofits should open themselves to more unique ideas

to raise funds. Many individuals that support nonprofit organizations host social media

fundraisers to gain donations and recognition for the mission they support. One

millennial participant created a unique opportunity to fundraise for a nonprofit. It was a

free laundromat, in a low income area, that also hosted code training and tutoring for

children in the neighborhood at the laundromat.

For my 33rd birthday, I had all my friends bring quarters and laundry detergent so we can donate it to this nonprofit. And I hosted my party there, in the laundromat. So just even using me as a socialite, millennial whatever to bring awareness about nonprofits. That's just the most exciting part.

Nonprofit organizations who want to have millennial voices at the table should move beyond their lack of financial capability and embrace the unique ideas millennials may bring to fundraising. Tradition often quells creativity and innovation; although millennial board members may not be able to afford tickets to your annual gala, they can raise the awareness of your organization in different ways to different communities.

Intentional Engagement

Intentional engagement was prevalent in study one and remains a huge factor in this study. Intentional engagement takes traditional engagement a step further by highlighting purposeful and meaningful connections with individuals who have differing characteristics than yours. Many of the subjects in this study focused on high level engagement with means to establish clear relationships for future engagement. One millennial participant described it best when he said,

> *When you interact with somebody and find out more about their desire to help for the greater good, and you hear them volunteering their time or you hear of their desire to have positive change in the community, or concerns about gaps and that sort of things. Those are little flags to go up or you say, "Okay, maybe that somebody and we can talk to them more about serving on a board or get them more involved."* **Male, White, Millennial**

Intentional engagement involves listening and drawing on key words and phrases to determine the next best step that you may have control over, for the individual you are engaging with. While that opportunity may not be in the near future, you are actively listening for potential and determining how best to further engage with the individual. Intentional engagement is focused on expanding your network with individuals who

would not typically show up there for one reason or another. Building relationships with individuals takes time and effort. It is clear that there will be some who do not want to put forth the effort and would rather revert back to their homogeneous circle.

One millennial participant challenged an individual who did not put in the work and decided to use the common phrase of "there's just not enough out there" to make up for his lack of effort. She describes speaking with someone who was explaining his lack of African-Americans in his technology firm,

> *We're a tech company, and I don't really see too many minority tech-ers in the area. It was just like kill that noise. That's just a fallacy. That's just a lie. You just haven't engaged a lot of people in conversation ... because I did take that person out for drinks afterwards and what came out was just this idea that it's just hard to find them, and not really wanting to put forth the effort of trying a little bit harder.*

She further explains,

> *There are reasons of the fact that people just don't want to put in the time and energy to go to the places where African Americans, they're ideal candidates may be. The fact that they're consistently working with their own personal spaces and not going out to search for them is evident.*

Many nonprofits leaders have shifted their tactics, focusing on diversifying their boards by age, race, and other factors. Some of the participants described this in different ways:

> *Well, I definitely think that there's a greater push for nonprofits to have diversity and so I do see nonprofit boards being intentional about seeking out diverse candidates whether that's women, whether that's African Americans, Hispanics. I do see that which was very different than when I first started.* **Female, GenX, African-American**

> *I think another thing is identifying professional organizations that are already catering to millennials. So the Urban League Young Professional Network, not here in Charleston Young Professionals is where you can find the greatest talent in any community, who are already committed to something, and committed to growing themselves professionally and board service can do that for you.* **Male, GenX, African-American**

> *What you're more likely to do is find somebody who has the potential and has the connectedness to your mission, to get them to come on to your board and then you*

*make investment of time and energy and you help bring them along. You don't just wait for them to come along, you pull them along a little bit, and sometimes you push them along a little bit…**Male, Baby Boomer, White***

True intentional engagement is about building authentic relationships. Relationships are at the heart of many communities. Nonprofit leaders will excel greatly in securing millennial and racial minority leaders by building authentic relationships with individuals within those demographics.

> *It's about relationships especially, like the African-American community it's about relationships, it's about community and if you don't have that you will not engage with Latinos. And you have to build those relationships genuinely, impeccably.* **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

> *I do know that when we are more intentional about building relationships and we understand why it's important, then that happens much faster.* **White, Female, GenX**

> *It takes time to cultivate relationships that can let you understand who the individual is. I think that's what happens is the label stops us from getting to know each other as individuals.* **African-American, Millennial, Male**

> *I think, a natural people… connect to people they know. If we're not in the same social circles, if we're not in the same professional circles, if we never cross paths, then I may not know you exist, and you're out there, and that you have a desire to serve on a board.* **African-American, GenX, Female**

The power of intentional engagement is strong. When two different individuals take the time to engage with one another intentionally, great things can grow from that relationship. A millennial participant described how intentional engagement with someone who was her exact opposite—older, white, and affluent—landed her a board of director position at another organization.

> *So he was an affluent white male. But how did I know him? He actually served on my organizational board. He just knew me from my work at the foundation, obviously sitting on our board. Then when having the conversation of, do we know anybody young who should be in this space, my name came up.* **Millennial, African-American, Female**

To speak of intentional engagement as a barrier is to speak of the lack of intentional engagement. Admittedly, nonprofit leaders have said that in order to address the issue of the lack of diversity on nonprofit boards, leaders must be intentional about how they engage with others from the groups from which they desire representation. This intentionality must be focused so as not to try engaging someone who is over-engaged as far as nonprofit boards are concerned. Actively seeking out opportunities to connect with different individuals takes energy and time; hence, nonprofit leaders who are committed to be the catalyst for change will take the time and effort to secure success.

Mentoring and Support

Mentoring and additional supports were offered as an opportunity to involve millennials and racial minorities in nonprofit governance and prepare them for service. Participants described different ways that these individuals can be guided and nurtured in the nonprofit environment. As mentioned later in the opportunity section, millennials and racial minorities are introduced to different types of service. Through mentorship and additional supports, they can engage with the nonprofit environment and increase their understanding of the inner workings to excel to a position on the board. In considering millennials, one participant shared a tactic from one of the boards that he serves on,

> *So, we've got a couple of millennials in their twenties who are entrepreneurial who are fast movers that we're getting introduced to these people for two reasons. We want them to help develop, we want to help them be successful and want them to think about giving back when they are successful.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

A millennial participant shared how she has seen mentorship within Fortune 500 companies,

> *There's also...if you know that a person has experience being on a board, that there's ways to potentially be a mentor within a board. I've seen those models in larger Fortune 500 companies.*

She continued, stating,

> *who will say this person is about to leave or finish their tenure, so the senior person on the board, they work in tandem and have some type of way that they just kind of explain how things are run to a more junior person* **African-American, Female, Millennial**

Yet another participant stated,

> *So sort of nurturing them through that pipeline and getting them ready for it. It would be important, I think.* **GenX, White Male**

There are many models that nonprofit organizations or nonprofit leaders could build to nurture and expose millennials and racial minorities to nonprofit service authentically. This could be done where there is a win/win for both parties. One participant described an opportunity to share expertise that could open the door for further insight into nonprofits,

> *…And that somebody that has supply chain expertise or financial or whatever, engaging some folks in the community, say we genuinely need some of their insights. Maybe it's coming to a couple of whiteboard sessions or a couple of meetings because we want to pick their brain, to look at us critically, be intentional about really looking at bringing in diverse people into those settings. Because you're not doing it again to check a box, you're doing it because they have the expertise, but you're also I think broadening the universe of understanding of the organization and the organization's understanding of a broader universe of folks in the community.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

This presents the idea of inviting individuals with different skills sets in to help you solve an organizational problem or issue using those skill sets. In the process, they learn more about the organization and the organization learns more about them. These types of supports and exposure could go a long way in building relationships with a focus on intentional engagement. Providing opportunities for training and insider information about the organization also aides in developing future leaders.

And giving them, really, infusing them, a lot of training opportunities and that kind of thing. So they get stronger and stronger, and that brings a lot of vitality to our work. No doubt about it. **White, Male, GenX**

It is important for millennials to understand and become connected to the work of nonprofit organizations, as described by one of the millennial participants,

It's creating some bridges probably between the work itself, which is what we millennials are really excited about. **Male, White, Millennial**

There is also the more traditional way of doing things that is still relevant. Seeing the potential in an individual, sort of a diamond in the rough, and willing to engage in a way that will make them shine.

And I don't think as employers we're thinking that way, not everybody has the same ability to have that shock absorption for that track of employee, who has got raw potential but not the skills and needs to shore up. **Latino, Female, GenX**

It is important for nonprofit leaders to reflect on who assisted them as they grew and developed into leaders and to extend that same level of mentorship and support to millennials and racial minorities. Mentorship and support are not a barrier to millennial and racial minority participation on nonprofit boards; however, they are among the many solutions that can help address this issue.

Mission/Brand

The mission of the organization and how it brands itself is extremely important when trying to increase diversity on boards. Every organization wants board members who care about the mission of and take pride in representing their brand. Considering racial minorities and millennials, the organizational mission is the top priority. Obviously, organizations whose mission is focused on social justice and racism tend to attract more racial minorities than usual.

The more progressive the mission… so if you think advocacy organizations or social justice non-profits, or non-profits that are focused on really mission-driven, progressive work, they have included minorities, women, people of color, Hispanic, Latino, gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexuals. They've done their job in that space. But any non-profit that's developed over the last say 25 or 30 years, have been much more inclusive because they're literally on the fringe and on the frontlines of the challenges that people are facing, and they found a way to be inclusive of bringing minorities. **African-American, Male, GenX**

From a Latino perspective, their culture places a high value on time. Thus, if they are going to spend their time with an organization it will be one where they are deeply committed to their mission.

You're giving this time away, I mean you're not charging for this, so if you're not in love with what you're doing it's not going to happen. **Latino, Female, Baby Boomer**

When approached, Millennials want to be sold to. They expect nonprofit leaders to provide a full, clear picture of what they are trying to accomplish through the nonprofit.

When I say of themselves, the board themselves don't know that. They don't know what their image is. They know what their work is. We want to accomplish this. We want to raise grades, reading levels in this area. We want to provide food in this area. But they don't know the holistic approach of how does that look? How does that feel? How does that taste? How does that sound? **Millennial, Male, African-American**

Millennial participants also expressed a desire for a mission that points directly to a specific need and clarity about how those needs are being addressed. Anything that appears to be mission creep with another organization or looks like self-service will deter millennials. There seems to be a grown perception from millennials of what they are referring to as the nonprofit industrial complex, where nonprofits become machines that, while working to solve societal issues, are not working to eliminate those issues. There is a strong sentiment from millennials that nonprofits should work toward not being needed

anymore. Given any sense of this not happening or if the focus is unclear, millennials

tend to avoid engagement.

> *One thing that I wanted to say, especially in the millennial age group, is that there is a big movement afoot of people who want nothing to do with non-profit organizations, all right, because it's thought of as the non-profit industrial complex, and a lot of... Because we are very triple bottom-lined in our approach to things, a lot of millennials don't want to be a part of a non-profit if they feel that that non-profit is just hoarding resources. And that's something I've heard on numerous occasions, the non-profit industrial complex. I don't want to be a part of that machine because it's still a machine, it's still keeping resources from the people who need it, it just has a much better spin on it.* **African-American, Male, Millennial**

Trust is included in this area focused on organizational mission due to the

skepticism that exists regarding the organizations' true fulfillment of their mission.

Prospective board leaders pay attention to how much money nonprofit organizations

collect and how those funds are disbursed. They examine how much of it actually

supports the mission and how much goes to overhead, which includes fancy offices,

expense accounts, overreaching salaries, and bonuses. Racial minorities and millennials

do not want to be caught in a situation where they are supporting something that is not

making an impact. As such, they pay closer attention to organizations that are not fully

meeting their mission and end up doing more harm than good. As spoken by an African-

American, millennial participant,

> *Yeah. I would say trust in a different way. I don't know. It's not only monetarily budget, but then lack of trust in a sense that I've been in so many conversations where individuals feel, or we feel, that organizations are doing more harm than good. But just because they've been around for a really long time, people have put a lot of support and money behind it, with minimal results.*

This is particularly relevant when individuals are dealing with the very issue the

nonprofit mission is set-up to address. As spoken by a millennial participant,

> *I'm dealing with the systemic issues that your generation caused, so now tell me why I should be on your board when you know I got all this other stuff going on. Millennial, Male, African-American*

Individuals with limited funds are really concerned about what organizations are doing with the funds they receive. Millennials are multi bottom line focused—it is not just about the funds you have, but what you ae doing with those funds, i.e., the impact.

> *I think that we do care about a bottom line that's not money-focused, which makes sense to reach out to millennials because we understand how hard it is to get money, and so a lot of us are no longer impressed with money.* **Millennial, African-American, Male**

Nonprofit organizations bear the burden of proving they are worthy of millennial and racial minority participation by building trust. Trust is built in certain communities through word of mouth validation and relationships. Nonprofits should not underestimate the need for validation within communities.

> *Especially being with more of the African American community it's based on validation. So if someone who is prominent or an influencer says that's what's supposed to happen, then it's oh yeah, we need to support this nonprofit.* **Millennial, African-American, Female**

Trust is at the center of the mission of the nonprofit organization. If mission is unclear and there is no trust this is a barrier to millennial and racial minority participation. It really depends on the mission of the organization and that organizations ability to translate their mission in action that garners the attention, support and trust of individuals in these groups.

Opportunities

How, when, and in what way individuals are exposed to opportunities varies based on who you are. Many of the participants discussed this lack of exposure to opportunity in their responses both for themselves and for their understanding of our

focus communities of millennials and racial minorities. In discussing wealth building

opportunities in relation to race, one participant stated,

> *The people who are boomers and the people who are Gen Xer minorities, who didn't have the opportunities that people have today. They just didn't have the opportunity... some of them got them, but society at large did not afford them the opportunities that were available to whites.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

Speaking openly, particularly about systemic racism and the barriers that it intentionally

placed for racial minorities, another participant stated,

> *With respect to minorities, you've got the boomers and the Gen Xers, there's a much sparser number of minorities who had the opportunity to build those skills and build them that wealth.* **White, Male, Baby Boomer**

In general, many individuals do not know that this is something they could do or even

qualify for. As stated by a white, female GenX and an executive at a Fortune 500

company,

> *And another blocker is, I don't think I knew about the opportunity. I kind of knew that, I guess, not for profits had boards, but I never even thought that they might be looking for something like me or even what the commitment was or that I could manage it all and do it.*

Due to the inundation of making money to pay student loan debt and other expenses, a

millennial describes his experience as an African-American male,

> *When you don't have time to create those experiences, you are not looking for opportunities to be on nobody's board. I'm going to tell you that right now. You're not even thinking about being on nobody's board. So, you don't have the experiences and then you're not putting out in the atmosphere like, "Oh, that's what I want." So then the non-profit people are looking at you and saying, "There's no one to choose from."*

This describes the perception of not being engaged or connected and as a result being

overlooked by nonprofit leaders for service. These individuals were not given the

opportunity to express any interest, much less demonstrate the skills necessary to serve.

Another millennial describes working in a nonprofit organization and being restricted

from gaining the experience of sitting in on a board meeting to know what actually

occurs during a board meeting,

> *So other than that, I was just so thrown. Then a lot of times, organizations that you work for don't allow you to come into the board room, so then you also don't see how that plays out and the difference that an ED gives to the board chair and vice versa.*
> Nonprofit organizations could work towards removing this barrier by exposing

diverse individuals to the work of the nonprofit. One participant provided a good example

of how to do this in a meaningful way,

> *I think the second thing is to maybe build advisory boards. So maybe not bring them right onto the full board immediately at the gate, but a one-year advisory board or some particular project. Help us to put on an annual gala. Serve on our social media advisory committee because again, a lot of non-profit struggle with visibility, branding and marketing, but millennials know a whole lot about that just innately. So if there is some role that you can play to help me to get our mentions up, to help me get our IG followers up. I would say, slowly bring them into the organization.* **African-American, Male, GenX**

Notably, this research was conducted in South Carolina, and there is a unique culture that

exists in the South. Everything is relational—who are your people and how are you

connected are common questions. As you can imagine with a relational culture, lots of

opportunities and exposure is built and based on relationships. If you are not from here, it

is imperative to build relationships immediately when you get here, because relationships

matter. This is point was not an area of consideration in terms of opportunity until one of

the participants mentioned,

> *Then when I think about that other layer of being a minority, being in the south, if someone doesn't know who's your people, you often don't get asked to come in the door. Because it's still a, I have to give you the nod to come in. Oh yeah, you can ask, but if I make a few calls and no one knows who you are, then it's a wrap. You're not getting on this board no matter how much potential you have. That's just the southern way and the whiteness that exists.* **Female, African-American, Millennial**

Another participant tied this discussion of opportunity to recruiting for employment. The connection was made to the lack of opportunities that are shared with the racial minority communities due to lack of connection. Because there are a limited number of racial minorities in positions of power to hire, many racial minorities are not inclined to receive information about opportunities,

> *That means that a lot of Latinas, brothers and sisters, and black brothers and sisters, are not getting these opportunities because we're not the ones making the hiring or recruiting decisions.* **African-American, Male, Millennial**

If racial minorities are not obtaining positions of authority in organizations and businesses at a high rate, that will reflect on the number of individuals who will be available for nonprofit board service and all that it requires. From the Latino perspective, one participant recommends introducing individuals to these opportunities when they are in college, providing internships or inviting them to come and learn about nonprofits and service on the board. While this was mentioned specifically for Latinos, it may be the proper tactic to increase the opportunities with younger generations and African Americans as well.

Orientation/Onboarding

Once an individual is selected and is committed to board service, the organization is obligated to provide that individual with the information they need to properly fulfill their commitment. This is separate from the education we discussed earlier because that happens prior to committing to board service. Orientation and onboarding are focused on the internal items that are necessary for proper governance. This includes items like information about organizational by-laws, an organizational chart, introduction to key

staff members, and details about board processes. For some nonprofit organizations, the

orientation and onboarding of new board members is nonexistent.

> *A lot of non-profits, or say for ones that I've sat on, it's like, okay, come sit on our board. There's the first board meeting and there's no real thing that I can read to learn a little bit more. I just have to kind of look online and kind of go from there. But having something formal would be great.* **Female, African-American, Millennial**

> *Onboarding was nonexistent when I was a board member when I got on board and now there's some loose onboarding for new members.* **Female, White, GenX**

Fortunately, other nonprofit organizations conduct some level of orientation and

onboarding for new board members. There were several participants who described the

orientation and onboarding processes they experienced in their nonprofit board service.

> *We do in-service for incoming board members. And not all boards do that. Not all the ones I'm on do that. But several of them, we do. We sit down as chair and some of the leadership team sit down with new board members and orient them. We have a binder that answers a whole bunch of their questions.* **Male, White, Baby Boomer**

> *I think whenever a board is serious about orienting or training potential board members, there's a variety of places they can get those resources. A lot of times they'll still have a retreat. A retreat could be three hours or it can be a day long retreat.* **Male, African-American, GenX**

> *Then when you get to vet those candidates, orient them, have them maybe sign some agreements that they understand they're supposed to give to the organization and represent the organization and avoid conflicts of interest. That type of prep work and everything makes for a stronger board member.* **Male, African-American, GenX**

This increases hope that the trend will spread to other nonprofit organizations. Whether

the orientation and onboarding process existed for an organization was not dependent

upon whether they were a small or larger organization. Based on the organizations

represented, both expressed having and not having an orientation and onboarding

program.

Orientation and onboarding are barriers for millennials and racial minorities because they have not been instructed on how to function within the organization. This lack of information could reduce the amount of participation received from these individuals when they join the board. This in turn could shift perceptions and cause other members to not deem these new members as valuable to the board. Nonprofit board leaders would be wise to include some level of orientation and onboarding for new board members to assist in increasing the time to acclimation to the organization.

Processes

This research uncovered that there is no one way or right way to recruit new members for nonprofit boards. Some boards get recommendations for board service from current board members, others have a Governance Committee or Nominating Committee that recruits potential new members, and some structures have board members recruited by the Executive Director or Board Chair only. The ensuing barrier to millennial and racial minority participation is due to the varied ways that potential board members can be recruited. There is not a set standard for the nonprofit industry, and as a result varying boards have various requirements. As outlined by the participants,

> *Often times I've seen it where somebody will say "Give me your picture and your resume" And you'll send it out to the board. We'll have a meeting. Looks great, looks like a talented person. Great, let's put it on the board. But has anybody actually talked to and ask some questions and engage and just to get to know the person a little bit? It sounds simple but it's just a step that I think really needs to happen.* **Male, Baby Boomer, White**

> *I think it's a combination of generally sourcing people that other board members know. That's not general. That's a very common practice. But, looking for recommendations from a network of people that board or leadership knows and say, this is what I'm looking for, so when you think about recommending somebody that we talked to, make sure they kind of fit this profile.* **Male, Baby Boomer, White**

If you got a really good governance committee, governance committee works with the executive director or CEO,, let's call it the CEO, which with the CEO and board Chair to identify the skill set requirements. Then the governance committee's job is to try and identify talent that meets up. One of the ways they do this is by talking to each of the board members about who do you know that meets these requirements and what is. **Male, Baby Boomer, White**

I would say some of them are good old boy in nature, which is you get on the board because you know somebody that's already on the board. And other people on the board say, "Oh, well, I know him too," and then they bring them on. That is not the more inclusive way that I've had experience in terms of recruitment in nomination process. **Male, GenX, African-American**

Other processes that nonprofit boards engage in are also not standardized. This can be extremely frustrating particularly for those individuals who are not used to serving on nonprofit boards but have a desire to serve.

I think that's the first thing I would say is that having served on one board is not necessarily a good predictor of what you might experience in serving on another board. **GenX, White, Male**

Within this barrier of processes is the actual process of the board meeting to include knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order. One African-American, female, millennial participant stated,

I also thought about how the way in which boards or formal boards actually operate, whether it's Robert's Rules of Order and making a motion and all of this. These are things that a lot of people don't get introduction to.

There were a few participants who were standardizing their processes beyond asking board members who they know,

So I mean, it's listening, and then its relationship building but listening, vision-setting, relationship building and then everything in between all the time. I don't believe in tokenism.

So I would say that the interview process I think is important. Some references are helpful because some people are glad-handers and can talk a good game and are going to do nothing on your board. I think you do need enough people who are willing to extend their network to you

I think what we eventually tended to see is that the board members who tended to be the best board members were really board members who sought us out, people who often times would come and serve on a committee before they actually serve on the board, so they were interested in some aspect of our organization, and so our bylaws allowed non-board members to serve on committees, and so you have people who would come and they would be interested whether maybe it was one of our loan approval committees.

Evaluating processes also includes thinking about different ways in order to increase donations. We expounded on this in the fundraising section but are also exploring it here to reinforce the need for unique ideas. An African-American, female, millennial participant shared her thoughts about sticking to the traditional way of doing things when better ways are introduced,

Because when that person, whether millennial, whoever think outside the box. That's where things really start coming in. It's people who will be connected with your organization who didn't even know about it. Because they're doing things just not the traditional way. And they have a passion for it. So if there's a lack of passion then it's not going work.

Nonprofit organizations must recognize the barriers that inconsistent processes present. While they may not be able to be consistent across the industry, it is critical that nonprofits explain what the processes are early and often to help break down barriers to millennial and racial minority directors. It is also extremely important to find a balance between the old and the new in order to increase the goal of continued sustainability.

<u>Tokenism</u>

Tokenism is a real issue in nonprofit organization board service. Tokenism occurs when nonprofit organizations do not take a strategic approach toward adding dimensions of diversity to the board. Adding less than critical mass of any diversity dimension, specifically millennials and racial minorities, denies the organization of the full impact that could be achieved when diversity efforts are strategic and intentional. Kanter (1977)

defined tokenism as occurring when only a handful of members from a certain (typically

disadvantaged) group occupy positions of power.

There's usually a reason a nonprofit organization begins to examine their

diversity-related practices, typically because there is outcry from the community, an

internal member desires to achieve greater diversity, or the organization or community

has had some sort of incident that calls for change. According to Wright (2001), there are

three paths decision makers will take to address diversity. First, there is an open system

that creates equal opportunity for all to advance to positions of power. Second, there is a

negative approach or closed system where they operate in discrimination against

disadvantaged individuals. Third, as we are discussing here, is tokenism. In this system

the organization gives the appearance of being open but limits the number of

disadvantaged individuals, in this case millennials and racial minorities, that can pass the

threshold to positions of power (Kanter, 2001). Most of the participants who mentioned

this phenomenon referred to it either by its proper name or made mention of checking the

box. There is the unspoken expression of true intent by the organization and the

understanding as perceived by the individual.

> *In my previous experience, there was an articulated desire for this but it wasn't really a desire. It was an articulated desire to check a box, but unless somebody was a head of an institution, there wasn't ability for them to be on the board. Then the African American folks in particular who were on the board who were there, I think they understood why they were there, which was like, I mean they were less engaged I will say than other folks.* **Latino, Female, GenX**

> *So, what you get is you have people that might be minorities come onto a board where they're in a significant minority and maybe they the only minority on that board. And they get a sense real quickly of why they've been added. They've been added to check a box and not really because the board is interested in completely listening and tuning itself to the experience with that person.* **White, Male, GenX**

Sometimes that person may not be the right fit for the organization or may not have the needed qualifications, but they're Hispanic, they speak Spanish, so that they can say that they have diversity. **Latino, GenX, Female**

"Hey, we just need a black person to get that vantage point or a Latino person to get that vantage point." You just get someone for that reason. No one wants to be on a board just to be in the black voice or the Latino voice. **White, Millennial, Male**

The other thing I'll say just to add onto that is, if you're truly trying to diversify, then you can't stop with just one. Because what will happen in a lot of these groups is once they get a black female or a Latino male or whatever it is that they were looking for, they're like, okay, we're good now, and they stop there. That doesn't change the culture at all. That just means you've got one token person, really. **Male, GenX, African-American**

Beyond tokenism, if nonprofit organizations work at recruiting racial minorities and millennials and take their time to explain to them what the organization is attempting to do, they may achieve buy-in. When that buy-in is achieved and the person understands that they are not there as a token, and they are not treated as such, the diversity of the board can further expand because they will share with others and recommend them for available board seats.

I think once you start searching for critical mask, by definition, you're able to attract more people of diverse backgrounds because they see you're living what you preach and not just checking a box. **African-American, Female, Millennial**

I think once you start searching for critical mask, by definition, you're able to attract more people of diverse backgrounds because they see you're living what you preach and not just checking a box. **African-American, Male, GenX**

And that one person is not going to go out and get other friends and say, "Hey, they really wanted the diverse perspective." They're going to feel, "Hey, I'm a token." So if they're not fully engaged, they're not going to help that organization diversify further. **White, Male, Millennial**

Tokenism masks itself as progress. Nonprofit organizations that participate in this type of behavior limit themselves to the experiences of diverse individuals. Tokenism limits the services nonprofit organizations could be contributing to communities and

stifles their mission, "it is important to understand how we can clarify its ambiguous nature and reveal the discrimination it hides" (Anisman-Razin & Saguy, 2016, p. 730). Tokenism is indeed a barrier to increasing millennial and racial minority participation in nonprofit board service. There are very few who are deemed rock stars and are permitted to serve, and those individuals are then repeated on several organizations within the community. It is important that nonprofit organizations strive to be intentional in their desire to diversify and gain critical mass of these individuals for the betterment of the organizational focus on the mission.

CHAPTER 11

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

The goal of this study was to discover how to disrupt the homogeneity within nonprofit boardrooms by increasing the presence of racial minorities and millennials to the board for innovation and increased sustainability. According to Mangelsdorf (2018), "there is something fundamental about working with similar versus different others that affects individuals' decision making" (p. 45), to the negative. Likewise, people in homogeneous groups (regardless of race) make errors because they assume others in the group know what they are doing. This, even more, supports the need for diverse teams, because as Mangelsdorf discovered, "people end up being more independent and objective in diverse groups" (p. 46). Nonprofit organizations do themselves a disservice when they do not include diverse individuals in their decision making or extend their reach further within the communities to which they provide services. As they exist to support their mission, nonprofits should strive to remain relevant in their services, strong in their connection to the communities they serve, and look for ways to either sustain the work of their mission or solve the problem they are seeking to address so they are no longer needed.

Study one revealed three overarching themes: Recruitment Processes, Intentional Engagement, and Tradition, with issues on the side of the nonprofit organization and the individual. Expanding the participants by number, type of organization, and generation, study two produced additional themes that added more depth to those uncovered in study one. Recruitment Processes and Tradition were strong themes is study one, but they ended up being further defined and absorbed into other themes in study two. Recruitment

Processes was absorbed into Processes, and Tradition evolved into Bias (both implicit and explicit). Notably, Intentional Engagement remained consistent across both studies. Given that we were unsure of what barriers, if any, would be uncovered during the research, we did not want to make any assumptions. Thus, using the grounded theory method of research, we built upon what emerged during the data collection.

The work of diversity, equity and inclusion practitioners is typically underscored with education, advocacy, history and social justice undertones. These were also reflected in the analysis of the data collected. There were several themes that emerged from the data analysis and this section highlights some of those themes uncovered. We also make connections to study one, discuss the highlights of study two in depth, and explain how our findings extends prior research and adds to nonprofit board governance research.

Opportunities & Expectations

One thing that was clear in speaking with several of the subjects who were not white men is that before engaging in board service, none of the subjects had a clear understanding of how to access opportunities for board service. This came up several times as the discussion focused on Millennials. Although some nonprofit organizations bylaws call for an announcement of available board seats, that is not standard. Individuals learn about opportunities for board service either through volunteering for the organization or familiarity with a current board member. Board members seek those who are in their network to fill board seats; therefore, potential board members may be unaware of opportunities until they are contacted (Glenn and Mattei, 2014). If you are not connected to the right people, you will likely not be made aware of the opportunity.

In addition to the opportunity, racial minorities and Millennials are oftentimes unaware of the qualifications necessary to serve and relegate it to something that only certain people do given the current demographic make-up of the board. While racial minorities and Millennials need to reach beyond their own ideas and biases about board service, nonprofit board leaders should also consider innovative ways to alert other populations of available opportunities for service. This was the most surprising themes uncovered during this study. The current board chair for a national nonprofit organization headquartered in South Carolina also works for a multinational firm headquartered in Seattle, WA. Before serving on the board of this nonprofit, she had no real understanding of board service or how to get engaged at the governance level. This brings to bear, if someone at this level did not understand how to get engaged, how would an individual with no prior nonprofit board service at a lesser-known company demonstrate how to engage? Nonprofits must be more transparent about their processes to assist others in understanding how to connect with them at the leadership level.

Along with the lack of knowledge on opportunities for nonprofit board service, we also learned that clear expectations were not present, even for the largest of organizations. It is common for nonprofit boards to require a certain level of financial commitment from board members, but it is uncommon, especially for those who have never served, for new board members to understand that requirement. Data collection revealed that new board members often learned of this requirement while attending their first board meeting. There was even an instance of board shaming for those who did not meet the financial requirement. As explained earlier in the orientation and onboarding

section of this paper, not every organization has this implemented as a standard practice, which is a great disservice to individuals new to board service.

In their outreach, nonprofit board leaders should include the donation level required by board members as a part of the conversation. While the fiduciary responsibility may be clear, the financial responsibility is oft unknown to those unfamiliar with nonprofit board service. Individuals seeking board seats should also be willing to give to the organization and learn about this expectation before committing to board service.

Racial minorities have been in positions of power, but they do not hold those positions at the same rate as whites. Many lack the external opportunities that lead to additional opportunities for increased connection and career advancement. As outlined, intentional engagement is an important factor in learning about these types of opportunities. Likewise, as millennials are the largest population in the workforce, they are primed for leadership roles. If nonprofit organizations do not have the benefit of their perspective, knowledge, expertise, and support, how will they be sustained? The future of the nonprofit organization lies in the hands of millennials. This issue with opportunities and expectations is in direct relation to the processes nonprofit organizations enlist to recruit board members. Likewise, millennials seeking out board seats should create a connection with the organization or those represented on the board. This can be done via professional social media sites or connecting via an introductory email message.

Processes

A clear outcome of this study is that there is not a consistent practice of processes across the nonprofit industry. When it comes to fundraising or capital campaigns, some

processes are constant such as feasibility studies, giving days, annual meetings, etc. However, data gathered from this study showed that the processes for recruiting, orienting, and onboarding board members were inconsistent and often nonexistent.

Nonprofit board leaders should have a clear understanding of an organization's mission, bylaws, business plan, strategic plan, budget, and leadership structure. They should know who the leaders are within the organization and who to contact if they have a question or concern. This knowledge should be communicated during the orientation and onboarding process. Additionally, onboarding should allow board members to familiarize themselves with one another and begin to connect on various levels. There are several efforts to help improve board member cohesion and advance them to the stage where they can make decisions faster, with less misfires in the boardroom. Specifically, Fredette (2016) noted that "mentorship programs, orientation practices and socialization processes such as retreats and relationship [team] building rituals" (p. 355) help with building unity and gaining understanding of personalities and increases the camaraderie among board members. These activities are also promoted to increase "decision making and information sharing" (p. 355) among board members.

Each participant described a different type of experience upon joining a board, none of them remarked that the experience created the experience as likely intended, which says there is more work to be done here. From the point of the first engagement to the time the new board member steps in their first board meeting, nonprofit organizations have a duty to ensure that their board members are equipped with the tools and information necessary in order to conduct the business of the board. Considering this, if the newly appointed board member is a Millennial or a racial minority who is unfamiliar

with board service, the lack of consistent processes puts them at a serious deficit

compared to those who have served longer or have greater knowledge of board service.

While we are not suggesting that all nonprofit organizations should follow

identical processes, it would serve a nonprofit better to develop consistent onboarding

and orientation processes. These processes should be periodically evaluated for

effectiveness to ensure that all incoming and returning board members have the

information they need to lead the organization diligently. When this information is not

provided, new board members should not be timid in requesting the necessary

information required to make informed decisions about the organization.

<u>Power & Privilege</u>

Our discussion continues on requirements necessary for board service and here

we find power and privilege which, in this study, is a consistent theme supported by

resource dependency theory. As previously described in study one, resource dependency

theory's focus is on resources such as money, connections, and relational power brought

into the nonprofit by its leaders. Although often described and discussed by nonprofit

leaders as residual income or connections, it is deeply tied to power and privilege; who is

recognized as *possessing* it, compared with who is recognized as *deserving* it. Power and

privilege can be real or perceived, and no one can really determine who possess it from

who does not, but there certainly are stereotypes around this. Due to the desire of the

nonprofit to been seen as credible and worthy, organizations have depended on the

notoriety of those associated with it to increased donations and support. With this in

mind, nonprofits depend on the power and privilege of their board members to help

illuminate their cause and raise awareness to their need for sustainability.

Some nonprofits fail to acknowledge the power and influence within the communities that they serve. Building a consistent community connection by having individuals from the communities the nonprofit serves elevate to a governance role is often overlooked. Guo (2018) wrote, "Board membership in many nonprofits tends to be limited to upper-income, professional employers and managers, while the community has little to no representation" (p.1). Rather than only focusing on power, nonprofit leaders should also consider influence and how it exists with individuals who reside within the communities they serve. Lucas and Baxter (2012) in their research on power and influence in organizations made a distinction between power and influence stating , "power changes behavior without changing attitudes…influence is a change in attitude that produces a change in behavior" (p. 58). If nonprofit organizations are serious about addressing the goals outlined in their mission, there should be a balance of power and influence among the board leadership. This approach would produce a diversity of individuals to serve to include racial minorities and Millennials. This balance may increase the tangible outcomes that nonprofits organizations seek through their board membership; power in the sense of political ties, connections to wealthy donors and the power of ensuring that the service the nonprofit provides is meeting the needs in which it was intended rings true. Guo (2018) describes a typology of governance for nonprofit boards and its relation to community interests.

Figure 1. Typology of Governance Patterns of Nonprofit Organizations

		Board Composition (Community Representation on Board)	
		Weak Representation	*Strong Representation*
Power Distribution (Board power relative to Chief Executive)	Strong	Strong, Non-Community Board	Strong, Community Board
	Weak	Weak, Non-Community Board	Weak, Community Board

(Guo, 2018)

According to Guo (2018), a *Strong, Non-Community Board* does not provide a good representation of the communities interest, a *Weak, Non-Community Board* is relatively ineffective, a *Weak, Community Board* lacks power, and a *Strong, Community Board* contains a mix of high power individuals along with community members and produce "good descriptive connections between the organization and the community" (Guo, 2018). It is evident that nonprofits that work to have community engagement at the governance level may have higher influence and connection to their mission while also achieving their mission in a meaningful way. Also, it is highly likely, that the populations being served may also meet the Millennial and racial minority categories. This targeted focus could produce the outcome of power and influence which is, getting what you want (Lucas & Baxter, 2012).

Bias is discussed in the next section, in which we note that only certain individuals are deemed worthy of nonprofit board service. Racial minorities and millennials are less likely to be placed into this category. Likewise, with tokenism, if there is one person deemed qualified with power and privilege, they are oftentimes the only individual serving, in isolation.

Bias and tokenism were significant factors throughout both studies and were prominently represented among both racial minorities and Millennials. Implicit, or unconscious, bias, was highlighted during data collection. Implicit bias occurs when automatic triggers lead to mental associations concerning social groups (Banaji, 2013). These biases can be formed against any social group despite most commonly being referred to in discussions on race: "Implicit bias reflects largely transient activation of associations cued by stereotypes and inequalities in social environments" (Payne et al, 2019, p. 11693). In study one, implicit bias emerged as tradition, whereas study two placed greater attention on bias. Tradition, as described in study one, relies on selecting certain individuals or types of individuals who are traditionally represented on nonprofit boards. This results in a skewed view of the typical nonprofit board member and what they should represent, which is white, over 50-years-old, male, that has known, accumulated wealth and is at the top levels of the organization or near retirement.

Bias feeds the belief that only certain individuals, for whatever reason, have the necessary qualities to serve on boards. Primarily implicit, these actions have produced a disparate impact on racial minorities and Millennials. Dubose (2014) wrote, "Lacking substantive input on how nonprofits should serve them, people of color are relegated to being mere recipients of philanthropy rather than…partners in their community success" (para. 7). Repeatedly, the notion of a "rock star" individual surfaced, wherein one particular racial minority or Millennial is proclaimed the only one who is worthy of board service. This leads to that individual being invited to serve on multiple nonprofit boards

and being overextended, as if there are not others who hold the same qualities but have not reached "rock star" status.

Bias exists around wealth accumulation, power, level of abilities, connections, availability and differences. Assumptions are made regarding annual earnings, which is equated to an individual's ability to give, sense of power, educational and career experiences, connections, familial and work responsibilities, and the number of differences that are oftentimes similarities. Homogenous nonprofit boards have some skill building work ahead of them before embarking on diversifying the board. This skill building, as described by Redwood (2013), will cause current nonprofit leaders to flex new muscles to make change due to implicit bias.

History also plays in a significant role in this focus on bias. This research was conducted in South Carolina, where the first shots of the Civil War were fired. A rich history exists throughout the state and in many aspects of the colonial and antebellum period, which includes a romanticized and nostalgic view of slavery. Many here can trace their families back to the early colonies, and many current, well-known institutions and establishments owned slaves. Payne et al. (2019) conducted research on implicit bias to determine its prevalence in states that previously owned slaves and found that the implicit bias among whites was greater in comparison to states that did not own whites. This suggests that the concept of bias is passed from one generation to the next and is kept alive both for white and African American families (Payne et al, 2019). Those within the Latino/Latina community are not free from the increased instance of implicit bias; Weyant (2019) found that individuals who speak in what seems to be a foreign accent might be placed into an outgroup with a negative bias formed against them (p. 546). Data

collected from our subjects show the fear of not speaking strong English is a factor in Latina/Latino participation on nonprofit boards.

Rather than reinforcing intentional engagement, many nonprofit leaders make assumptions about others who are different from them and decide *for* them that they cannot or do not want to serve. If intentional engagement were used, nonprofit leaders, and those in position of authority to make decisions around board placement, would be connecting with many different people. These leaders would discover that there are a number of individuals who may not fit the traditional mold that is built for nonprofit board service and meet the needs of the nonprofit in innovative ways.

Additionally, although intentional engagement is imperative to adding diversity to nonprofit boards, leaders should be careful not to enter into tokenism. For the purpose of this study, we are focused on racial minorities and Millennials, however, this could exist for any group namely, women, persons with different abilities, geographic area, etc. This research supports the need for the addition of racial minorities and Millennials to nonprofit boards, however, tokenism is often exercised within many nonprofits and this practice can be damaging in a number of ways.

Study two describes the outcome of nonprofit engagement in tokenism from the perspective of the token individual and the organizational perspective. For the individual, oftentimes, they are unaware that they were selected as a token until they step into the first board meeting, then it becomes clear why they were selected to serve. This can be very disheartening and damaging if the nonprofit board has not done the work to prepare for a different individual. If there is unsavory language used in board discussions, individuals on the board who are uncomfortable or do not know how to engage with

individuals that are different from them and that token individual is only heard or valued in relation to the group they represent; nonprofit organizations will not get the full value of their potential. Social inclusion is embedded in the fabric of any group or team, to include boards of directors and every individual has a desire to be accepted as an integral member of the board (Fredette et. al, 2016).

In a nonprofit board situation, where tokenism is perpetuated, the token individual may have their basic physiological and (some) safety needs met in that they may not feel anyone is going to physically hurt them. The token individual may also identify with their needs being met from a psychological standpoint to include possible feelings of accomplishment and social esteem for being selected for nonprofit board service. If there is an absence of a sense of belonging or if they are made to feel that they are not an equally valued member of the board, such as being treated as a token, the desired level of self-actualization will sadly not be reached. That individual will not have a positive experience, and the board will miss out on their full potential during their tenure on the board. Additionally, the token individual will experience feelings of marginalization and alienation (Fredette et al., 2016) that will be difficult to overcome.

What this looks like from the perspective of nonprofit board leadership is the person is not qualified, not ready or not engaged in the work of the nonprofit board. When the term ends, they silently vow not to invite another "fill in the blank" serve because they did not find their participation to be a value add. This, unfortunately, reinforces the existing bias for some and creates a new bias for others; ignoring the entire circumstance that caused the behavior of the token individual. Further, when questioned about the lack of participation from racial minorities and Millennials, sometimes the

response is "we tried that" "they were not a good fit" or "we are not doing that again." From the token person perspective, if there are clues that lead to this person being a token representative on a nonprofit board, many would not accept the position. While the recruited individual may be in fear of a missed opportunity, the idea of being a token representative is not the most appealing option and does not support one's professional goals.

This is why critical mass is essential as nonprofit leaders work to increase the diversity of the board. Nonprofit board leaders should work to secure several diverse qualified candidates to join their board; while simultaneously working to create an inclusive organizational climate (Egan & Bendick, 2018). This is the most productive way to ensure nonprofit organizations reap the full benefit of having racial minority and Millennial representation serving on their boards. Further, as we reference critical mass, it is important to define what that means from a nonprofit board standpoint. Critical mass would be a reasonable percentage equivalent to the number of individuals on the board, representative of the population of individuals served or, at minimum, more than one person operating in isolation within a group, or in this case, the nonprofit board. Again, this research is focused on racial minorities and Millennials, but this also applies to other representative groups.

As we explore bias and tokenism the pipeline of available individuals should also be considered. Most individuals invited to serve on nonprofit boards hold professional positions in the area where the nonprofit provides services. An understanding of degree attainment for the population is a valued metric in determining the pipeline of availability for nonprofit board service. Of the nearly 57,000 post-

secondary degrees awarded in South Carolina in 2017 (Data USA, 2018), 14,500 were

awarded to African American and Latinx individuals (Data USA, 2018). Comparatively,

more than 38,000 were awarded to Whites in the same year (Data USA, 2020).

According to recent US Census data, approximately, 200,000 African Americans and

Latinx individuals residing in South Carolina, hold a bachelor's degree or higher,

compared to 1.2M total with the same credentials (2018). The pipeline of availability is a

barrier that could be extenuated via bias and tokenism. While the pipeline may not be as

large as desired, nonprofit organizations can commit to intentional engagement to access

the pipeline that is available to enhance success in this area.

Intentional Engagement

      Lastly, one of the most impactful outcomes of this study is the result regarding

intentional engagement. Intentional engagement emerged as the life breath of increasing

diversity on nonprofit boards. As we consider the internal and external processes of

nonprofit organizations, specifically as it pertains to new board member recruitment,

there is no inclusive standard; practices are insular and consistently reinforce the

inbreeding of homogeneous groups. Although a matrix laying out the skills (and

sometimes demographics) of the current board is a popular part of the recruiting process

for most nonprofit subjects, this process more often than not resorted to the connections

of the existing board members. This is why it is critical to expand our spheres of

influence through networking (Goolsby & Knestrick, 2017).

      Networking and connection with others are a standard, professional quality that

most professionals of all ages and backgrounds understand and commit to. As a society,

we naturally seek "to establish authentic, sincere, synergistic and sustainable

relationships" (Goolsby & Knestrick, 2017, p. 442). Whether at a professional conference, community event, luncheon, or on the golf course, networking and connection is an expected occurrence. According to Goolsby and Knestrick (2017), "the most diverse group of contacts is often present at large meetings or conferences" (p. 442). Therefore, these offerings are prime opportunities to engage and we have a high level of control over who we connect and engage with. Intentional engagement is the idea that opportunities to connect are so valuable that they call for individuals in those situations to connect with others, seeking out individuals that do not look like them for the purpose of further connection.

Foundational to diversity, equity, and inclusion work is learning about others; other races, other cultures, other genders, etc. The more you learn about others, the more you realize that there exist more similarities than differences among you. Regardless of their career level individuals often bring a unique contribution and with time, their experiences are often complimentary (Goolsby & Knestrick, 2017). We then begin to see each other more as human beings and less as people who are different. Intentional engagement also causes individuals in their connection, to learn more about the beliefs, values, and goals of others for future engagement. If done often enough, nonprofit leaders will have a bank of diverse talent to pull from when they are asked to submit nominations for board seats.

This is not to say that the weight of intentional engagement rests solely on the shoulders of white, males over 50 who are nonprofit leaders. Racial minorities and Millennials also have the responsibility of intentional engagement. Individuals in these groups must also be willing to engage with others who do not look like them and initiate

a level of trust to share with them the values, beliefs, and goals. Regardless of who you are, you have a responsibility for intentional engagement and being open to the conversational exchange that occurs.

Intentional engagement removes the mystery of the "other", that many do not understand; it also has its place in eradicating biases that may exist among others. Another positive outcome is building relationships and strong connections (Glenn & Mattei, 2014). The other theme that intentional engagement will help shift is tokenism. Done correctly, intentional engagement causes meaningful connection and quells the concept of the rock star because of the inclusion of many other similar individuals.

Limitations

While this study has outlined multiple barriers to nonprofit board service for millennials and racial minorities, it does have limitations. This study was conducted with nonprofit board leaders within the state of South Carolina. As previously stated, South Carolina is a unique place and some of the findings may be applicable to other states, there is no surety in that, particularly due to only one national nonprofit organization being included in the study. Further research would expand the number of participants by conducting a mixed method study with a large sample survey combined with interview to gain further perspectives. The focus of this study was on age, and two races which lead to in-depth conversations; however, future studies might be better focused on one demographic rather than many. Focusing on African-Americans, Latino/Latina and Millennials (who could also fall into either of these race categories) created an obstacle of compartmentalizing that might have been avoided. Dismantling these would add richness to the study by concentrating on one population of individuals rather than three.

Additionally, while many of these concepts could translate to for-profit firms, it would be useful to conduct a similar study within for-profit firm boards to determine whether the same themes emerge. For-profit firm board of directors serve a very different purpose than nonprofit boards. They are similar as it relates to fiduciary responsibility; however for-profit board seats are often paid positions. Nonprofit board directors have a responsibility to give money, for-profit board directors are paid for their service. A study run with Fortune 50, 100, or 500 firms would be an interesting parallel to determine if those differing factors impact the desire to serve, who is serving and if these themes exist in the same way. Future research considering organizational performance or effectiveness along with the scope of this research may produce more in depth findings.

Lastly, it might be helpful to collect data on the number of individuals who meet the diversity criteria in a given area who work in professional roles or whose earnings are about a certain amount that leads to increased philanthropy. There is plenty more to be uncovered in the literature on nonprofit board governance and its relation to diversity and inclusion.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

This research was conducted during a time where internationally a confluence of events occurred. Three African American individuals were murdered, one by a father and son vigilante team for jogging through a neighborhood, and two others by the police; one while resting in bed from a double shift, and the other over a counterfeit $20 bill. This has caused outrage world-wide and has led to protests and rebellion, by people of all races, against systemic racism and a cry for equity and change. Being led by Millennials and Generation Z, these demonstrations are strategic, targeted, and results driven. The term "Black Lives Matter" is now common in every household, and the thoughts and opinions around it are polarized leading to the term that "All Lives Matter." Additionally, renewed calls for the removal of Confederate monuments further leans into the current polarizing debate. Many companies, nonprofit organizations, and institutions are making statements of support of, and standing in solidarity with, Black Lives Matter.

The world is also experiencing a pandemic and quarantining due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. The quarantine has caused the U.S. economy to drop to all-time lows. Although most companies had workers that they could allow to work from home, there are many workers who were deemed essential and required to work in public. Millions of Americans lost jobs or worked reduced hours during the quarantine, driving unemployment numbers to an all-time high. While the government has provided stimulus funds to families and businesses, many businesses are closing their doors. Nonprofit organizations are not immune from this.

While philanthropy from corporations in support of minority small businesses, the Black Lives Matter movement and nonprofit organizations in place to end systemic racism has increased. It will be interesting to see which nonprofits survive this pandemic with less money being generated overall due to low residual income for giving. As part of the protests to end systemic racism, organizations, businesses and individuals are being called out for racist statements made by employees or executives, the lack of diversity among their leadership and the lack of diversity among their suppliers and where they spend their money. The organizations whose mission is focused or aligns with ending systemic racism, those that already had diverse boards and leadership, and those have solid supplier diversity may be in a good place.

The lack of diversity in nonprofit boards is both a supply and a demand issue. There are many organizations who want to be more inclusive and diverse and as such they are demanding better results in their recruitment process. However, the data also uncovered that there are supply challenges in addressing the issue of diversity as well. As an extension of their mission, nonprofit organizations can work to address the pipeline of diverse candidates through their own volunteer or community engagement work. Whether within k-12 public/private education, higher education, other groups and organizations where they can provide support and encouragement on the idea of service and the requirements necessary to serve.

Intentional engagement is a primary driver for nonprofit organizations to excel in their efforts to increase diversity. While organizations build out their processes and develop equitable practices, relationships will continue to be foundational to the board member recruitment process. That being the case, nonprofit leaders must embrace the

value of differences and be intentional about connecting with others. While this research focused on age and race diversity, there are many layers of diversity to include cognitive, experiential, educational, gender, level of ability, etc. that should be considered. Done correctly, the age and racial diversity will organically be an outcome of these efforts.

The barriers to greater board diversity outlined here such as implicit bias, power and privilege, education and expectations can be eradicated with intentional engagement. As individuals begin building relationship, making discoveries beyond the visible diverse aspects; biases are challenged, a balance of power and privilege is created people learn and they come to understand expectations. Intentional engagement goes far beyond adding an individual to your contact list, it really is focused on connecting with someone on a deeper level. Again, these types of connections prevail when we meet individuals who are similar to us in a variety of characteristics, however, intentional engagement is in action when individuals are noticeably different, and similarities are discovered by further engagement.

With intentional focus, nonprofit organizations will realize that the creativity and fortitude of the Millennial is critical to their survival and racial minorities bring much more to the boardroom than the color of their skin. Additionally, the Millennial and the racial minority will realize that they are in control of the knowledge they obtain. Perhaps at some point these entities will meet in the middle for the betterment of the communities they serve. As mentioned at the onset, literature on the topic of nonprofit board governance in relation to diversity, racial minorities and millennials and lacking. However, there is a wealth of literature on homogenous groups, recruiting diverse talent and the effects of diversity on organizational performance. This research seeks to

discover why homogenous nonprofit boards continue to exist and what can be done to remove the barriers that exclude younger (millennials) and more racially diverse (racial minorities) board members from taking the reins.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE – STUDY ONE

1. Tell me about your experience in nonprofit governance.

2. What board recruitment process have you found most interesting or impactful?

3. What do you think makes a nonprofit board member a valuable member of the board?

4. How can nonprofit board leaders identify these characteristics in potential board members?

5. Have you noticed any recent trends in nonprofit board membership? If yes, how do these trends differ from nonprofit board membership in the past?

6. From your perspective, have nonprofit boards been successful in securing millennial directors? Why or why not?

7. From your perspective, have nonprofit boards been successful in securing racial minority directors? Why or why not?

8. What role, if any, do you believe age plays in nonprofit board service?

9. What role, if any, do you believe race plays in nonprofit board service?

10. How does the community that the nonprofit is serving affect the governance of the nonprofit board?

11. What do you believe are the barriers to more millennials being invited to serve on nonprofit boards?

12. What do you believe are the barriers to more racial minorities being invited to serve on nonprofit boards?

13. What do you think nonprofit leaders can do to increase the engagement of millennials?

14. Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share regarding nonprofit boards?

APENNDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE – STUDY TWO

Non-Profit Board Service, Knowledge and Experience

1. Tell me about your experience in nonprofit governance.

2. What board recruitment process have you found most interesting or impactful?

3. Share your thoughts on how board practices have evolved in recent years.

4. What do you think makes a nonprofit board member a valuable member of the board?

5. How can nonprofit board leaders identify these characteristics in potential board members?

6. Have you noticed any recent trends in nonprofit board membership? If yes, how do these trends differ from nonprofit board membership in the past?

7. How does the community that the nonprofit is serving affect the governance of the nonprofit board?

8. How can nonprofit boards better educate potential board members on the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to be a successful director for this particular organization?

Millennials and Non-Profit Board Service

9. From your perspective, have nonprofit boards been successful in securing millennial directors? Why or why not?

10. What role, if any, do you believe age plays in nonprofit board service?

11. What do you believe are the barriers to more millennials being invited to serve on nonprofit boards?

12. How can nonprofit boards be more inclusive of millennial directors?

Minorities and Non-Profit Board Service

13. From your perspective, have nonprofit boards been successful in securing racial minority directors? Why or why not?

14. What role, if any, do you believe race plays in nonprofit board service?

15. What do you believe are the barriers to more racial minorities being invited to serve on nonprofit boards?

16. How can nonprofit boards be more inclusive of racial minority directors?

17. Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share regarding nonprofit boards?

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC DATE OF PARTICIPANTS

Gender	Race	Generation	Role	Board Type	Organization Type	Organization Size	Exemplar Organization
Female	African-American	X	Board Chair / Member/ED	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	State	Yes
Male	African-American	X	Board Chair/Member	Governance	Human Services	Local	No
Female	Hispanic	B	Board Chair / Member	Governance	Human Services	Regional	Yes
Male	White	M	Member	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	No
Male	African-American	X	Member/ED	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	State	No
Male	White	B	Board Chair / Member	Governance	Education	Regional	Yes
Male	African-American	X	Board Chair/Member	Governance	Education	State	Yes
Male	White	B	Board Chair / Member	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	Yes
Female	Hispanic	X	Member/ED	Working	Human Services	Local	Yes
Male	African-American	M	Member	Working	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	No
Male	African-American	M	Member	Governance	Human Services	Regional	No
Female	African-American	M	Member	Working	Human Services	State	Yes
Male	White	X	Executive Director	Governance	Human Services	Local	Yes

Female	African-American	X	Executive Director	Governance	Education	Local	No
Female	White	M	Board Chair / Member	Working	Public & Societal Benefit	Local	No
Female	White	X	Executive Director	Working	Public & Societal Benefit	Local	Yes
Male	African-American	B	Member	Governance	Education	Local	No
Female	African-American	X	Board Chair/Member	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	Yes
Female	White	X	Executive Director	Working	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	No
Male	White	X	Board Chair / Member/ED	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	No
Male	African-American	X	Member	Working	Human Services	State	No
Female	African-American	X	Executive Director	Working	Education	Local	Yes
Female	Hispanic	X	Board Chair/Member	Working	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	Yes
Female	White	X	Board Chair/Member	Governance	Human Services	National	No
Female	African-American	M	Member	Governance	Public & Societal Benefit	Regional	Yes
Female	Hispanic	M	Member	Working	Human Services	Local	No
Male	African-American	B	Board Chair / Member	Working	Education	State	Yes