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UNDERSTANDING FEDERAL FUNDING OF APPALACHIAN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
THROUGH CHARACTERISTIC ANALYSIS

BY

JORDAN C. STEWART

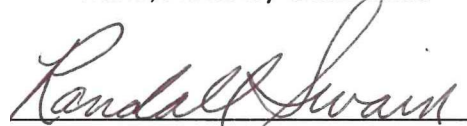
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THROUGH CHARACTERISTIC ANALYSIS

BY

JORDAN C. STEWART

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

2023

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ABSTRACT

How nonprofit organizations function and their relationship with federal funding is a topic that has been scrutinized in analytical literature. Appalachian nonprofit organizations and their unique attributes has also been a topic of interest. However, there is little in the current literature on the intersection between Appalachian nonprofit organizations and federal funding. This study expands on the topic by examining characteristics present in Appalachian nonprofit organizations and how they relate to the likelihood of receiving federal funding. Forty-nine Appalachian nonprofit organizations that were recipients of federal funding in the fiscal year of 2021 were chosen, and using information found on their publicly available websites, the following characteristics were analyzed for: racial diversity in staff and board, gender diversity in staff and board, board size, staff management, and online presence. The results of this study suggest that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's online presence, management of staff, and size of board may have an influence on its likelihood of receiving federal funding. The gender diversity of an Appalachian nonprofit organization's staff and board may not have an influence on its likelihood of receiving federal funding, and its racial diversity seems to have an inconclusive impact.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the literature on the relationship between nonprofit organizations and federal funding by focusing on Appalachian nonprofit organizations, a topic that has received limited discussion. It focuses on the characteristics of nonprofit organizations and how they impact the likelihood of receiving federal funding, another topic that has received limited discussion in the literature. By combining these two topics, the ideal end goal of this analysis is to be able to provide Appalachian nonprofit organizations suggestions for actions they may be able to take to increase their likelihood of receiving federal funding.

This focus on Appalachian organizations is necessary because these organizations tend to be smaller and do not have the same access to resources that nonprofit organizations in other parts of the United States do. Receiving federal funding can be integral in allowing Appalachian nonprofit organizations to continue to provide or expand their services. However, getting this federal funding can be difficult to do as Appalachian organizations must both know what the federal government looks for in terms giving funding and compete with other nonprofit organizations that have more resources to put towards applying. This study therefore hopes to serve as a source of information for Appalachian nonprofit organizations wanting to be competitive in the federal funding process but may not have excess resources available to do so.

This study first reviews literature on nonprofit organization characteristics, Appalachian nonprofit organizations, and the relationship between those topics and

federal funding. The study then analyzes forty-nine Appalachian nonprofit organizations to see if certain characteristics might influence their likelihood of receiving federal funding. For this study, five characteristics were selected to examine their possible influence on receiving federal funding: racial diversity of staff and board, gender diversity of staff and board, board size, staff management, and online presence. This study hypothesizes that those five characteristics are positive indicators of receiving federal funding for Appalachian nonprofit organizations.

CHAPTER 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Nonprofit Organizations and Federal Funding

Previous literature has focused on the public policy advocacy and media publicity of nonprofit organizations to examine their characteristics. Child and Gronbjerg (2007) analyzed nonprofit organizations that participate in public policy advocacy and the characteristics they share between them. The authors determined that there were six possible characteristics that would impact a nonprofit organization's likelihood of public policy advocacy - field of activity, size, funding sources, age, IRS status, and usage of technology - finding that field of activity, size, IRS status, and usage of technology has a significant impact on a nonprofit organization's likelihood of participating in public policy advocacy, while funding sources and age do not (Child & Gronbjerg, 2007).

Jacobs and Glass (2002) researched what characteristics make it more likely for a nonprofit organization to gain media publicity. The authors measured for the following characteristics: annual income, organization age, full-time paid staff size, membership size, number of yearly meetings, number of chapters affiliated with the organization, and "number of libraries" (Jacobs & Glass, 2002, p. 240). They found that income, paid staff, membership size, and number of libraries have a significant positive impact on the likelihood of nonprofit organizations receiving media publicity while number of chapters has a significant negative impact on it; organization age and number of yearly meetings have a nonsignificant negative impact on receiving media publicity (Jacobs & Glass, 2002).

Previous literature has also examined the relationship between characteristics of nonprofit organizations and federal funding. Lu (2015) analyzed six characteristics of nonprofit organizations that could impact receiving federal funding: bureaucratic orientation, sources of revenue, funding history, domain consensus, professionalism, and co-optation behaviors. The author found that bureaucratic orientation, funding history, and domain consensus had significant impact on receiving federal funding while sources of revenue, professionalism, and co-optation behaviors were more limited (Lu, 2015).

Stone, Hager, and Griffin (2001) also analyzed a wide array of characteristics of nonprofit organizations that could impact receiving federal funding. The authors examined five characteristics – organization size, governance, the use of volunteers, use of commercial income, and the racial demographics of organization members – and found that organization size, governance, and racial demographics in organization membership are positive indicators of receiving federal funding, while that usage of volunteers and usage of commercial income are negative indicators (Stone et al., 2001).

Other literature opted to focus research on one characteristic. Garrow (2014) analyzed how the racial demographics of a nonprofit organization's service area impacts the federal funding it receives. The author found that nonprofit organizations serving areas with a higher African American population had a decreased likelihood of receiving federal funding, but that nonprofit organizations serving areas with a higher Latino population did not have a significant change in their likelihood (Garrow, 2014).

Previous literature on nonprofit organizations and federal funding has also focused on the impact federal funding can have on nonprofit organizations' political engagement, cash holding management, and board development. Chaves, Stephens, and Galaskiewicz (2004) explored the connection between federal funding and nonprofit organizations' political activity, finding that federal funding did not hinder nonprofit organizations' political activity and instead either enhanced it or had no significant impact. Lee and Woronkowicz (2019) examined the relationship between federal funding and nonprofit organization cash holding management, finding that receiving federal funding does positively moderate spending for nonprofit organizations with low levels of cash holdings but negatively moderates spending for nonprofit organizations with high levels of cash holdings. O'Regan and Oster (2002) examined the relationship between federal funding and board practices by nonprofit organizations, finding that federal funding impacts board members' advocacy, fundraising, and personal donation rates, but not board members' attendance rates. Guo (2007) similarly analyzed the relationship between federal funding and nonprofit board strength, finding that increased federal funding increases the likelihood of nonprofit board developing into a weak one.

When looking at the previous literature together, there is a discussion around what characteristics of a nonprofit organization has the greatest impact, and around the relationship between nonprofit organizations and federal funding more specifically, to be found, but it has been limited. There seems to be little consistency between studies on what characteristics are the most impactful for a nonprofit organization to have.

Both Child and Gronbjerg (2007) and Jacobs and Glass (2002) do have similar approaches to their analysis, both discussing the importance of the age of a nonprofit organization, and of financial and operational characteristics, but they differ on which characteristics they choose to focus on. Child and Gronbjerg discussed broader characteristics such as IRS status and field of activity (2007) while Jacobs and Glass discussed more specific characteristics such as annual income and number of yearly meetings (2002).

There also seems to be little consistency between studies on what characteristics are most beneficial in terms of receiving federal funding. Both Lu (2015) and Stone et al. (2001) analyzed the importance of financial characteristics, but they differ when discussing characteristics relating to operation, as Stone et al. studied the importance of internal operational characteristics like usage of volunteers while Lu emphasizes the importance of historical and external operational characteristics like co-optation behaviors. Garrow's study analyzing the impact of the racial demographics of a nonprofit organization's service area (2014) does share commonalities with Stone et al's discussion on the importance of the racial demographics of organization members (2001) and therefore social characteristics more broadly, but it still differs as it focuses purely on external forces outside of the organizations' control. Outside of these studies, the previous literature on the relationship between nonprofit organizations and federal funding does not analyze organizational characteristics and instead choose to focus on other aspects of it (Chaves et al., 2004; Guo, 2007; Lee and Woronkowicz, 2019; O'Regan and Oster, 2002).

2. Appalachian Nonprofit Organizations

Previous literature has studied Appalachian nonprofit organizations more specifically. Some of this literature focused on the success nonprofit organizations have had in the Appalachia region through volunteerism and developing community relationships. Snyder and Thatcher (2014) explored the creation of the Health Wagon by Sister Bernadette Kenny and the nonprofit hospital St. Mary, a mobile health clinic that brought necessary medical care to residents of rural southwestern Virginia. Lukacs, Ardoin, and Grubert (2016) explored two Appalachian watershed nonprofits, the Green River Watershed Association and the Harmon Creek Watershed Association, and how they successfully work with residents in environmental advocacy. Shinn and Caretta (2020) explored how faith-based nonprofit organizations successfully worked with residents of Greenbrier County, West Virginia to help rebuild their community after flooding.

Other literature on Appalachian nonprofit organizations examined the characteristics they have. Liegal, Southerland, and Baker (2019) analyzed which communication-based characteristics are most often used and considered successful in rural Appalachian nonprofit organizations. The authors determined seven methods of communication used by rural Appalachian nonprofit organizations - direct communication, newspaper, mailings, radio, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – finding that both direct communication and Facebook were considered highly effective (Liegal, 2019). However, they also found that these organizations still viewed social media-based communication as a secondary, more difficult to use source of communication (Liegal, 2019).

Compion, Ofem, Ferrier, Borgatti, Cook-Craig, Jensen, and Nah (2015) analyzed Appalachian nonprofit economic development organizations. The authors analyzed nonprofit economic development organizations in eastern Kentucky, finding five characteristics that define nonprofit economic development organizations in this region: size, age, IRS status, geographic reach, and network-based collaboration with other organizations (Compion et al., 2015).

Ruseva, Farmer, and Chancellor (2016) examined characteristics of nonprofit land trust organizations in south-central Appalachia that affect their successfulness. The authors researched characteristics of these land trusts in two categories, creating social capital for networking and overall success. They found that there were four main characteristics used in creating social capital – common norms, shared values, cooperation, and communication effectiveness – and four main characteristics used in gaining overall success – organizational capacity, an organization’s mission and values, member contributions, and community connections. (Ruseva et al., 2016).

Finally, previous literature has examined the relationship between Appalachian nonprofit organizations and federal funding. Millesen (2015) explored how the grantmaking group the Appalachian Ohio Funders Group works with nonprofit organizations to improve local connections, organization visibility, and problem solving. Farley and Bush (2016) examined food-based nonprofit organizations in Appalachia and how they use funding they receive from federal grants to establish martial capital, administrative support, and economic sustainability in their projects (Farley and Bush, 2016).

When looking at this previous literature together, the discussion around the characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations has been quite limited, with the literature more often focusing on different aspects of Appalachian nonprofit organizations instead. The literature discussing the successes of Appalachian nonprofit organizations do not analyze the specific characteristics of these organizations (Lukacs et al., 2016; Shinn and Caretta, 2020; Snyder and Thatcher, 2014), but the commonalities of the importance of volunteerism and developing community relationships can be found. The literature discussing the relationship between Appalachian nonprofit organizations and federal funding also do not analyze the characteristics of these organizations that influence their likelihood of receiving funding, instead focusing on other aspects of it (Farley and Bush, 2016; Milesen, 2015).

The previous literature that did analyze the characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations seem to have limited commonalities between studies about which characteristics were considered as important traits, though Ruseva et al.'s (2016) research did have some. Both it and Liegal et al.'s (2019) study discuss the importance of the communication skills of Appalachian nonprofit organizations. Similarly, both it and Compion et al.'s (2015) study discuss the importance of Appalachian nonprofit organizations developing community connections. However, these three studies still differ in the overall focus of their research, as Liegal et al. focuses entirely on the characteristic of communication (2019), Compion et al. focuses on operational characteristics such as size (2015), and Ruseva et al. focuses on open-ended characteristics such as organizational values (2016).

CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL BASIS AND HYPOTHESES

The previous literature shows the limited discussion that exists on the relationship between the characteristics of nonprofit organizations and federal funding, and the varying viewpoints on which of these characteristics are the most impactful. It also shows a difference in how the characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations are analyzed compared to the characteristics of non-Appalachian nonprofit organizations. The research on Appalachian nonprofit organizations tend to place more of an emphasis on personal and external factors such as the relationship with the community the organization serves, which is something only somewhat touched upon in research on non-Appalachian nonprofit organizations, as those studies tend to focus on internal and operational characteristics such as organization size and finances.

This study aims to serve as a connection point between the literature on nonprofit organization characteristics that influence the likelihood of receiving federal funding and the unique attributes of Appalachian nonprofit organizations. This study seeks to achieve this by focusing on characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations that are personal in nature, both social and operational.

Personal characteristics are ones that relate directly to the human population affected by the service of the nonprofit organization, in both the people being served and the membership of the organization itself. Social-based personal characteristics are ones that relate to the individual traits of the human population that may impact how they receive service from nonprofit organizations, such as race. Operational-based

personal characteristics are ones that relate to how the nonprofit organization is providing services, such as usage of technology.

The choice to analyze these specific characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations was made because this study tests the theory that Appalachian nonprofit organizations will have a greater likelihood of receiving federal funding if they have strong personal characteristics. Appalachian nonprofit organizations are rooted in personal connection between themselves and the communities they provide services to, so these personal connections have already shown to be beneficial to their success in a more general sense. By focusing on personal characteristics for this analysis, this study hopes to test how likely Appalachian nonprofit organizations would be in receiving federal funding while operating in a typical manner, to see if Appalachian nonprofit organizations would need to make changes to receive federal funding, and to contribute to the literature on the influence of a nonprofit organization's characteristics on the likelihood of receiving federal funding.

This following personal characteristics were chosen to be analyzed: online presence, racial diversity in staff and board, gender diversity in staff and board, staff management, and board size. Online presence as a characteristic refers to an organization's website usage and how it connects with its service population through technological means. Child and Gronbjreg (2007) found that the usage of technology by nonprofit organizations has a positive impact on their service output. Similarly, Liegal et al. (2019) found that nonprofit organizations in Appalachia are starting to use online methods of communication more often and finding some success in doing so. Based on this, this

study is testing the prediction that an Appalachian nonprofit organization that can translate its connection with its community to an online source will have a higher likelihood of receiving federal funding.

Hypothesis 1: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have their own easily accessible website.

Racial diversity in staff and board as a characteristic refers to an organization's personnel and the racial demographics of its members. Garrow (2014) found that the racial demographics of a nonprofit organization's service area impacts the organization's likelihood of receiving federal funding. Similarly, Stone et al. (2001) found that the racial demographics of an organization's membership is a positive indicator of receiving federal funding. Based on this, this study is testing the prediction that an Appalachian nonprofit organization that has racial diversity in its membership that is proportional to the racial demographics of its community will have a higher likelihood of receiving federal funding.

Hypothesis 2a: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have racial diversity in their staff proportional to the racial diversity of the service area's population.

Hypothesis 2b: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have racial diversity in their board proportional to the racial diversity of the service area's population.

Gender diversity in staff and board as a characteristic refers to an organization's personnel and the gender demographics of its members. The literature presented in this

study did not directly address the relationship between gender diversity in a nonprofit organization and its likelihood of receiving federal funding. Instead, study is testing the prediction that gender diversity will have a similar influence as racial diversity, and that an Appalachian nonprofit organization that has gender diversity in its membership that is proportional to the gender demographics of its community will have a higher likelihood of receiving federal funding.

Hypothesis 3a: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have gender diversity in their staff proportional to the gender diversity of the service area's population.

Hypothesis 3b: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have gender diversity in their board proportional to the gender diversity of the service area's population.

Staff management as a characteristic refers to an organization's staff and its usage of volunteers and paid personnel. Stone et al. (2001) found that the use of volunteers is a negative indicator of nonprofit organizations receiving federal funding. Relatedly, Jacobs and Glass (2002) found that the use of paid staff has a positive impact on nonprofit organizations receiving media attention. Based on this, this study is testing the prediction that an Appalachian nonprofit organization that can use its community connections to get both volunteer and paid staff, and not rely only on volunteer staff, will have a higher likelihood of receiving federal funding.

Hypothesis 4: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will use both paid staff and volunteers.

Board size as a characteristic refers to the size of an organization's board. Stone et al. (2001) found that nonprofit organization size is a positive indicator of receiving federal funding. Similarly, both Jacobs and Glass (2002) and Child and Gronbjreg (2007) found that nonprofit organization size had a positive impact on other facets of nonprofit organizations. Based on this, this study is testing the prediction that an Appalachian nonprofit organization that can use its community connections to get an average size board will have a higher likelihood of receiving federal funding.

Hypothesis 5: Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have an average size board of directors.

For this hypothesis, an average size board of directors is fifteen board members. This number comes from the 2017 National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices, created by nonprofit research group BoardSource. However, to take into consideration the high unlikelihood of a nonprofit organization having exactly fifteen board members and the changing nature of board sizes over the past two decades (BoardSource, 2017), board sizes within the eleven to twenty range were coded as average.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

1. Data

To research if having certain personal characteristics makes it more likely for Appalachian nonprofit organizations to receive federal funding, forty-nine nonprofit organizations in Appalachia were chosen and coded for thirteen characteristics. These chosen organizations were selected from the Health and Human Services Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System website. The following five criteria were used to select the nonprofit organizations: operating predominately or completely in counties federally recognized as a part of the Appalachian region (Appalachian Regional Commission, n.d.), being non-government organizations, fitting into the “Other Social Services Organization” recipient type (Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System, n.d.), and received federal funding in the 2021 Fiscal Year. Both public and private nonprofit organizations were analyzed for this study; public nonprofit organizations are 501(c)(3) organizations classified by the Internal Revenue Service as public charities and receive a significant amount of financial support from the government or public citizens, while private nonprofit organizations are 501(c)(3) organizations classified as private foundations and receive a significant amount of financial support from personal investments and a small number of donors (Internal Revenue Service, 2022).

Information about these nonprofit organizations were found on their publicly available websites (see Appendix A). In instances of an organization’s website not listing

its board of directors, that information was instead found from their most recent publicly available tax return (Suozzo et al., 2022). Information about the population of the nonprofit organizations' service areas were found on the U.S. Census Bureau website (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

Once the thirteen characteristics were coded for, the data was compiled into tables organizing the nonprofit organizations based on what characteristics they had. This data was then compiled further into tables focusing on each individual characteristic to compare organizations together and to see how often each characteristic appeared. It was using these tables that the hypotheses were tested for. It was noted how often a characteristic that supported each hypothesis appeared and how often a characteristic did not support each hypothesis appeared. These were then tallied together to determine if a hypothesis was overall supported or not.

2. Variables

Multiple of the variables coded for during this research were inspired by previous literature. The decision to code for an organization's online presence was influenced by the work of Child and Gronbjreg (2007). The decision to code for service area demographics was influenced by the work of Garrow (2014). The decision to code for the racial demographics of an organization's board and staff, and the decision to code for the use of volunteers within an organization's staff, was influenced by the work of Stone et al. (2001). Finally, the overall inspiration to research the connection between nonprofit characteristics and federal funding came from the work of Lu (2015).

The following variables were coded for to examine Appalachian nonprofit organization characteristics. First is the gender demographics of an organization's service area, categorized as predominantly male, predominantly female, or evenly split between male and female. Second is the racial demographics of an organization's service area, categorized as predominantly white, predominantly African American, predominantly Asian American, predominantly Latino American, or mixed.

Third is the gender demographics of an organization's staff, categorized as predominantly male, predominantly female, evenly split between male and female, or information not found. Fourth is the racial demographics of an organization's staff, categorized as predominantly white, predominantly African American, predominantly Asian American, predominantly Latino American, mixed, information not found, or unknown, the latter used when some information was present but not enough for a definitive category.

Fifth is the gender demographics of an organization's board, categorized as predominantly male, predominantly female, evenly split between male and female, or information not found. Sixth is the racial demographics of an organization's board, categorized as predominantly white, predominantly African American, predominantly Asian American, predominantly Latino American, mixed, information not found, or unknown, the latter used when some information was present but not enough for a definitive category.

Seventh is the size of an organization's board, categorized as very small, smaller-than-average, average, and larger-than-average. Eighth is an organization's staff

management, categorized as using only paid staff, using only volunteer staff, using both paid and volunteer staff, and information not found.

Last is an organization's online presence, which is divided into website existence and website ease of use. Website existence is categorized as either yes or no. Website ease of use is ranked on a scale from zero to four, based on the categories of webpage labeling, the physical layout of the website, presented information on organization goals and programs, the ease of finding where the organization's mission and provided services are listed on its website, presented board and staff information, if the website publicly provided the organization's staff and board members, and if the website provided contact information an easy-to-find manner. These categories were worth up to a point each, though it was possible to get a half a point if some but not all information is available. These variables and the codes used for them are found in Appendix B.

There were also a handful of variables that were noted while researching but were not considered as part of the results. These variables were the organization's stated goal, the organization's stated demographic, the size of the organization's staff, and if the organization's board consisted of paid employees or volunteers.

CHAPTER 4 - FINDINGS

1. Board Size and Diversity

Of the forty-nine organizations, twenty-four organizations had board sizes that fit into the average range (see Table 3). Fourteen organizations, the second greatest amount found, had a smaller-than-average board size of between six and ten members (see Table 3). Only one organization had a very small board size of five or less members, five organizations had larger-than-average board sizes of twenty-one or more members, and five organizations had board sizes that could not be found (see Table 3).

The results of the board racial demographics were largely inconclusive. Of the forty-nine organizations, twenty-seven of them did not have board racial demographic information that could be found and seven of them information could only partially be found (see Table 4). Of the fifteen organizations where racial board demographics could be found, all fifteen boards were predominately white (see Table 4).

Of the board gender demographic possibilities, there was not one option that appeared notably more often than the others. Of the forty-nine organizations, thirteen organizations had boards that were predominantly female, seventeen organizations had boards that were predominantly male, and fourteen organizations had boards that were evenly split between male and female (see Table 5). There were five organizations where board gender demographic information could not be found (see Table 5).

2. Staff Management and Diversity

Of the forty-nine organizations, a notable amount of them used paid staff in some capacity; twenty-three organizations used paid staff only, while seventeen organizations used a mixture of paid staff and volunteer staff (see Table 6). Only three organizations relied entirely on a volunteer staff, and for six organizations staff management information could not be found (see Table 6).

The results of the staff racial demographics were largely inconclusive. Of the forty-nine organizations, twenty-five of them did not have staff racial demographic information that could be found, and three of them information that could only partially be found (see Table 7). Of the twenty-one organizations where staff board demographics could be found, eighteen organizations had staff that were predominately white, one organization had staff that was predominately African American, and two organizations had staff that were mixed in race (see Table 7).

Of the forty-nine organizations, a notable portion of them had predominately female staff with twenty-six organizations (see Table 8). However, there were also nineteen organizations where staff gender demographics could not be found, the second greatest amount (see Table 8). Two organizations had predominately male staff and two organizations had a staff evenly split between female and male (see Table 8).

3. Service Areas Demographics

Of the forty-nine organizations, a notable amount of them did not have boards or staff that matched the racial demographics of their service areas. Thirty-eight

organizations did not have boards that matched their service area racial demographics while only eleven did (see Table 9). Similarly, thirty-three organizations did not have staff that matched their service area racial demographics while only sixteen did (see Table 10). However, it is important to note that a notable amount of the nonprofit organizations analyzed in this study could not have racial demographic information found for their staff and/or boards, so it is possible that these results are more inconclusive than they seem.

Of the forty-nine organizations, a notable amount of them did not have boards or staff that matched the gender demographics of their service areas. Thirty-five organizations did not have boards that matched their service area gender demographics while only fourteen did (see Table 11). Likewise, forty-seven organizations did not have staff that matched their service area gender demographics while only two did (see Table 12).

4. Online Presence

Of the forty-nine organizations, forty-six of them had individual websites (see Table 13). Only three organizations did not have a website (see Table 13), but even those organizations did have some level of online presence through a webpage on another organization's website.

Of the forty-nine organizations, a notable portion of their websites scored high on the "Ease of Use" rankings. Twenty-one organizations received a ranking of four points, fourteen organizations received a ranking of three and a half points, and nine

organizations received a ranking of three points, for a total of forty-four organizations (see Table 14). Of the organizations that received three and a half or three points, the most common reason was due to their websites missing publicly available staff and/or board information. There were two organizations that received two and a half points, one organization that received one and a half points, one organization that received one point, and one organization that received zero points (see Table 14).

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

1. The Effect of an Accessible Website

Hypothesis 1, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have their own easily accessible website, was supported. The number of organizations with their own websites notably outnumbered the organizations that did not have one, and the number of organizations that had high rankings on the “Ease of Use” scale outnumbered those with lower rankings. This suggests that having an online presence may be favored by the federal government in terms of funding.

This supports Child and Gronbjerg’s (2007) findings that the use of technology has a significant impact on nonprofit organizations. These results also support Liegal et al.’s (2019) findings that Appalachian nonprofit organizations, including in more rural parts of the region, are actively using online methods of communication to grow their organizations. Combining the results of this study with this previous literature suggests that Appalachian nonprofit organizations may want to consider establishing a website or other online presence if not done already so to increase the likelihood of getting federal funding. However, it should also be noted that if an Appalachian nonprofit organization chooses to establish a website, doing so will require financial resources. Purchasing a website domain and maintaining it will need to be budgeted for, especially for websites on the level of quality analyzed in this study that contain multiple individual webpages and are updated regularly. Therefore, it is possible that Appalachian nonprofit

organizations considering establishing a website may have to reprioritize their spending, especially smaller ones with limited financial resources.

2. The Effect of Organizational Racial Diversity

Hypothesis 2a, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have racial diversity in their staff proportional to the racial diversity of the service area's population, was not supported. The number of organizations with staff racial diversity that is proportional to the racial demographics of their service area is notably less than the number of organizations with staff racial diversity that is not proportional. This suggests that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's staff reflecting the racial demographics of their service area is not necessarily something the federal government is looking for when considering funding.

However, the conclusiveness of these results come into question when considering the staff racial demographics alone. The number of organizations with staff whose racial demographics were either predominantly unknown or could not be found is more than the number of organizations whose staff demographics were known, albeit not by a notable amount. These organizations with unknown staff racial demographics were categorized under not having proportional staff; it is possible then that these organizations have inflated the results and that the difference between the two categories may not be as it initially seems. If the number of organizations with unknown staff racial demographics is removed from the total number of organizations that did not have staff proportional to their service areas, then that number would instead be

notably less than the number of organizations that did have staff proportional to their service areas. The outcome of this analysis without the organizations with unknown staff racial demographics suggests a different takeaway than the initial results show; with this consideration in mind, the analysis would instead suggest support for Hypothesis 2a, that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's staff reflecting the racial demographics of their services area is something the federal government may be looking for. The differing conclusions that can be drawn makes the results of this analysis inconclusive. Because of this, Hypothesis 2a can still be considered not supported, but because of the inability to draw a strong conclusion and not because of the results itself.

Hypothesis 2b, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have racial diversity in their board proportional to the racial diversity of the service area's population, was also not supported. The number of organizations that had boards with racial diversity proportional to the racial diversity of their service area was notably less than the number of organizations with boards that did not have a proportional amount of racial diversity. This suggests that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's board reflecting the racial demographics of their service area may not be something the federal government is looking for when considering funding.

However, the conclusiveness of these results come into question when considering the board racial demographics alone. The number of organizations with boards whose racial demographics were either predominantly unknown or could not be found is notably more than the number of organizations whose board racial

demographics were known. These organizations with unknown board racial demographics were categorized under not having a proportional board; it is possible, then, that these organizations have inflated the results and the difference between the two categories may not be as it initially seems. If the number of organizations with unknown board racial demographics is removed from the total number of organizations that did not have boards proportional to their service areas, then that number would instead be notably less than the number of organizations that did have boards proportional to their service areas. The outcome of this analysis without the organizations with unknown board racial demographics suggests a different takeaway than the initial results show; with this consideration in mind, the analysis would instead suggest support for Hypothesis 2b, that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's board reflecting the racial demographics of their services area is something may be something the federal government would be looking for when considering funding.

The limitations of the data created by the amount of unknown racial board demographics means that the results of this analysis are inconclusive. Because of this, like with Hypothesis 2a, Hypothesis 2b can still be considered not supported, but because of the inability to draw a strong conclusion and not because of the results itself.

It is difficult to determine where these results fit into the previous literature. At face value, these results disagree with the research done by Stone et al. (2001) that the racial demographics of a nonprofit organization's member is a positive indicator of federal funding. But, when considering the results without the organizations with unknown board demographics, then it agrees with Stone et al.'s assertions. Like with

how the results of the analysis are too inconclusive to make a statement about the hypotheses, the results are also too inconclusive to properly fit into the previous literature.

3. The Effect of Organizational Gender Diversity

Hypothesis 3a, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have gender diversity in their staff proportional to the gender diversity of the service area's population, was not supported. The number of organizations that had staff with gender diversity proportional to the gender diversity in their service area was notably less than organizations that did not have staff with gender diversity proportional to their service area. This suggests that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's staff reflecting the gender demographics of their service area may not be something the federal government is looking for when considering funding.

However, a somewhat different conclusion can be drawn when looking at the results of the staff gender demographics alone. The number of organizations with a predominantly female staff notably outnumbered the number of organizations with predominantly male staff or staff evenly split between female and male staff. With this in mind, the analysis suggests that while the gender demographics of the service area is not necessarily a consideration, the federal government may still factor in the gender diversity of staff when considering what organizations to fund, and that having more women on the staff may be the preferable option.

Further, it also should be considered that the number of organizations where the staff gender demographics could not be found was also notably higher than the number of organizations with predominantly male staff or staff split between men and women. It is true that if all the unknown organizations' staff fell into one of the other two categories it would still be a smaller amount than the number of organizations with predominantly female staff, but the possibility still exists that this preference for predominantly female staff may not be as important as it initially appears. Therefore, while it may be wise for an Appalachian nonprofit organization to consider the gender demographics of its staff to get an increased likelihood at federal funding, it is not guaranteed to work.

Hypothesis 3b, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have gender diversity in their board proportional to the gender diversity of the service area's population, was also not supported. The number of organizations that had boards with gender diversity proportional to the gender diversity in their service area was notably less than organizations that did not have boards with gender diversity proportional to their service area. This suggests that an Appalachian nonprofit organization's board reflecting the gender demographics of their service area may not be something the federal government is looking for when considering funding.

A similar conclusion can be drawn when looking at the results of the board gender demographics alone. There was no notable difference between the number of boards with predominantly female members, boards with predominantly male members, and boards with an even split between female and male members. This also

suggests that the federal government is may not be considering the gender diversity of an organization's board when making funding decisions, as any variation of gender demographics on a board seemed to be as likely to get funded as another. This seems to suggest that Appalachian nonprofit organizations hoping to receive federal funding do not necessarily need to put resources towards changing the gender demographics of their boards if they do not desire to.

4. The Effect of Staff Management

Hypothesis 4, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will use both paid staff and volunteers, was partially supported. The number of organizations that used both paid staff and volunteers was notably greater than organizations who only used volunteer staff. This suggests that nonprofit organizations that fit into the traditional, purely volunteer-run view may not be inherently favored in terms of funding.

It is also important to consider, however, that the number of organizations that used paid staff only was also notably greater than organizations that used both paid staff and volunteers. This partially does not support Hypothesis 4 then, because it suggests that volunteer staff may be a possible hinderance to receiving funding and that volunteerism is may not be an important factor for the federal government when deciding on what organizations to support.

These results agree with Stone et al.'s (2001) findings that usage of volunteers is a negative indicator of federal funding. They also similarly support Jacobs and Glass's

(2002) findings that paid staff is a positive factor for nonprofit organizations, and Ruseva et al.'s (2016) findings that the organizational capacity of staff is important to the success of Appalachian nonprofit organizations.

This does raise concerns for Appalachian nonprofit organizations, however. Research has found that the core of Appalachian nonprofit organizations is deeply entrenched in community connection and volunteerism (Compion et al., 2015; Ruseva et al., 2016) and that successful Appalachian nonprofit organizations use these relationships heavily (Lukacs et al., 2016; Shinn & Caretta, 2020). The results of this study, meanwhile, suggest that Appalachian nonprofit organizations may have to move away from their traditional methods of service if they want to receive federal funding, to shift from pure volunteerism to paid staff. It is important to note that there are studies showing that Appalachian nonprofit organizations can operate in a traditional manner and still receive federal funding (Farley & Bush, 2016; Millesen, 2015), but this possibility should still not be ignored.

5. The Effect of Organizational Board Size

Hypothesis 5, that Appalachian nonprofit organizations successful in getting federal funding will have an average size board of directors, was partially supported. The number of organizations with an average size board did notably outnumber both the organizations that had a smaller-than-average board size and the organizations that had a larger-than-average board size. This suggests that having a board size that aligns with

what is expected for a nonprofit organization may be favored by the federal government in terms of funding.

However, the number of organizations with a smaller-than-average board size is important to consider too. These organizations also notably outnumbered the organizations with a very small or larger-than-average board size. This partially does not support Hypothesis 5 then, as these organizations were similarly as likely to receive federal funding as organizations with average size boards did. This suggests that some variation of board size can still allow for federal funding if it does not get too close to either extreme. This possibility for board size flexibility and the need to avoid extremes reinforces results found by other research on board size (BoardSource, 2017).

This information about board size is interesting to note when considering other research done into the importance of size in a nonprofit organization. It echoes what other studies have found, that organization size impacts nonprofit organizations both in general operation (Child & Gronbjerg, 2007; Jacobs & Glass, 2002) and in receiving federal funding (Stone et al., 2001). However, this brings up a concern for Appalachian nonprofit organizations. Other research has found that Appalachian nonprofit organizations, especially in rural parts of the region, tend to be small (Compion et al., 2015) and can have issues expanding because of it (Liegel et al., 2019). With organizations with very small board sizes being less likely to receive federal funding than bigger ones, Appalachian nonprofit organizations may be less likely overall to receive funding due to these factors. This would suggest that Appalachian nonprofit organizations may want to consider focusing on growth as a means of increasing the

likelihood of receiving federal funding. It may also necessitate a change in priorities for Appalachian nonprofit organizations if current growth strategies are not working as intended.

The results of this data and the previous data on staff management show why focusing on Appalachian nonprofit organizations is important. Appalachian nonprofit organizations often have a disadvantage compared to other nonprofit organizations due to being smaller and having a lack of access to resources. The results of this study seem to reinforce this idea as it suggests that smaller organizations and organizations that rely purely on volunteer staff may be less likely to receive funding than other organizations. With these results suggesting that receiving federal funding can be difficult for Appalachian nonprofit organizations to achieve, it is important that these organizations consider this information to help them better prepare for application; using this information, Appalachian nonprofit organizations may be able to address these factors by allocating their resources differently and focusing their growth in different areas to possibly improve their chances of receiving federal funding. While these actions are not a guarantee of getting funding, they still give Appalachian nonprofit organizations a chance that they may not have had otherwise.

6. Limitations of Study

The biggest limitation of this study was the method of research chosen for it. The research for this study was gathered from the nonprofit organizations' publicly available websites, restricting the information that could be gained to what was willing to be

shared by these nonprofit organizations on a mass scale. This limitation was expected for this study, as there were not resources available for other methods of research that could get more in-depth results such as surveys or interviews, but it should still be acknowledged.

Further, this method of research also likely influenced the results of the analysis on the effect of an accessible website. The research for this study had to be gathered from websites, therefore, nonprofit organizations who had websites or another form of online presence were the only organizations that could be analyzed for this study. This means that the research was done without taking into consideration that by using said websites as the method of research, it influences the results and possibly negates any information taken away from the analysis. This was an unintentional consequence of the research design but one that does need to be acknowledged.

Another limitation of this study was the lack of publicly available information about the racial demographics of the nonprofit organizations' staff and board. This limitation appeared with the gender demographics of the nonprofit organizations' staff and board as well, but to a lesser extent. As discussed earlier, it should not be denied that the number of nonprofit organizations that did not have racial demographic information known likely influenced the results in those categories. A solid conclusion from those results was not able to be determined because of this. There was always a risk of this occurring during the research process, as it was possible not every organization would be willing to share their staff and board members in such a public manner, so the only true way this limitation could have been avoided was if there was

another way to know for certain the makeup of the nonprofit organizations' boards and staff.

A third limitation of this study was the choice to analyze staff and board gender diversity based on population gender demographics. The hypotheses being tested for this section of the analysis were based on the staff and board of the Appalachian nonprofit organizations matching the gender demographics of the service population. However, during the research process it was found that every single service area had a population that was evenly split between female and male members, and that there were none with predominately female or predominantly male residents (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). This meant that only one kind board and staff gender breakdown would support the hypotheses being tested, limiting what information can be taken from the results; this choice in hypotheses unintentionally shifted the focus of the research away from what variation of staff and board gender makeup is most successful in getting federal funding to simply discovering the number of Appalachian nonprofit organizations that happened to have an even gender split in their membership. The gender analysis portion of the study might have been more fruitful if different hypotheses were chosen instead.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSION

This study explored five personal characteristics of Appalachian nonprofit organizations that could possibly influence their likelihood of receiving federal funding: racial diversity of staff and board, gender diversity of staff and board, board size, staff management, and online presence. The results suggested that online presence may be the strongest positive indicator of funding likelihood. Board size and staff management were also suggested to be positive indicators of funding likelihood but to a lesser extent. Gender diversity of staff and board was suggested to be neither a positive nor negative indicator of funding likelihood. The results of the analysis on racial diversity of staff and board were too inconclusive to formulate a firm conclusion.

The results of the online presence analysis support previous research done on the topic (Child & Gronbjerg, 2007; Liegal et al., 2019). The results of the board size analysis also support previous research done on the topic (Stone et al., 2001) and serves as an expansion of work done by authors such as Compion et al. (2015) and Liegal et al. (2019) as it establishes a possible consequence of Appalachian nonprofit organizations being small. Similarly, the results of the staff management analysis support previous research on the topic (Stone et al., 2001; Jacobs and Glass, 2002; Ruseva et al., 2016) and serves as an expansion of work done by other authors on Appalachian nonprofit organizations (Compion et al., 2015; Lukacs et al., 2016; Ruseva et al., 2016; Shinn & Caretta, 2020) by raising the question of if the traditional method of relying on pure volunteerism is a potential hinderance to receiving federal funding.

The inconclusiveness of the racial diversity analysis makes it difficult to place this study within the context of previous literature. This lack of a firm conclusion on the influence of race seems to contradict the work of authors such as Stone et al. (2001) and Garrow (2014), but for the same reason this study cannot serve as a counterpoint to that research either. This is a major limitation of this study, and one that would need to be addressed with future research on this subject.

A recommendation for future research is to focus more on service population, the population that is being served directly by the nonprofit organizations, then on the population of the service area more broadly, especially in relation to gender demographics. This would likely make two improvements on the analysis: it would hopefully avoid the limitation of all gender demographic data being a split between female and male, and it would help tailor the results of the analysis to be more useful for the nonprofit organizations' individual needs. For instance, if the population a nonprofit organization serves is predominantly female, it may be more important for its staff and board to mirror that as opposed to the gender demographics of the county it serves more broadly.

In a similar manner, more research into the literature on the impact of gender diversity on nonprofit organizations and on federal funding may be useful as well. This research would serve as an important basis for future analysis of gender diversity, as that was not presented in this study and therefore would need to be established.

Another recommendation for future testing on this subject would be to do more analysis into the size of the nonprofit organizations and how that could possibly affect

their future funding opportunities. While this was addressed somewhat in this study with the discussion of board size, it was not speculated on how organization size could have impacted the other analyzed characteristics - for instance, it could be useful to understand if there is a correlation between organization size and the use of volunteers versus paid staff. Knowing this information could help determine if it is the use of volunteers that is preventing these Appalachian nonprofit organizations from getting more federal funding or if it is instead a lack of resources more broadly, as those are two different issues an Appalachian nonprofit organization would have to address.

If any of these decisions are made for future analysis, then researchers will need to change the data collection method of the study as well. A recommendation in this regard is to work directly with the nonprofit organizations being studied to get the needed data through surveys or interviews. This would likely be the most efficient way to know who is directly being served by these organizations and their demographics. It could also be a method of discovering the resource level these organizations have and if that ties into other characteristics like size and volunteer usage. Directly getting data from these Appalachian nonprofit organizations would also help eliminate some of the other limitations of this study, as it would likely be the most efficient way to learn the racial demographics of the organizations' boards and staff.

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Appendix A- List of Organization Websites

The following table lists the websites of the nonprofit organizations analyzed for this study. The organization names listed in this table are the names that were presented on the Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System website. All weblinks in this table were retrieved on January 24, 2023.

Table 1 - Organization Names and Websites

Organization Name	Websites
Johnson County Safe Haven	http://jcsafehaven.org
Chautauqua Alcoholism Substance Abuse Council	https://preventionworks.us
Sally Kate Winters Family Services	https://sallykatewinters.org
Family Services Incorporated	https://www.familyservicesinc.net
The Children's Home Society of West Virginia	https://www.childhswv.org
Pregnancy Resource Center of Gwinnett, Inc.	https://supportomcg.org
Naima Health LLC	https://www.naimahealth.com

Table 1 (continued)

Organization Name	Websites
Piedmont Regional Community Services Board	https://piedmontcsb.wixsite.com/piedmontcommunityservices vc
The Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Foundation	https://www.regionalfoundation.com
Mountain Comprehensive Care Center, Inc.	https://www.mtcomp.org
Freeman Family Practice LLC	https://freemanfamilypractice.com
Open Door Home Inc.	http://www.opendoorhome.org
Community Connections Inc.	http://strongcommunities.org
Familylinks, Inc.	https://familylinks.org
Advocates for Bartow's Children	https://advochild.org
Tri State Resource and Advocacy Corporation	https://1trac.net
Resources for Independence	https://rficil.org

Table 1 (continued)

Organization Name	Websites
NWGA Center for Independent Living, Inc.	https://nwgacil.org
Disability Resource Center, Inc.	https://disabilityresourcecenter.org
Safe Harbor Youth Inc.	https://www.facebook.com/SafeHarborYouthHSV/
Safenet Inc	https://www.safeneterie.org
Compass Family and Community Services	https://compassfamily.org
Society for Equal Access ILC	https://www.accesstusc.org/providers/society-for-equal-access
Appalachian Center for Independent Living Inc.	http://www.acilwv.org
Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living Inc	http://nwvcil.org
Center for Independent Living of South Central Pennsylvania	https://cilscpa.org
Family Recovery Center Inc.	https://familyrecovery.org
Community Resources for Independent Living	https://www.crinet.org

Table 1 (continued)

Organization Name	Websites
Sojourners Care Network	http://www.sojournerscare.net
Center for Independent Living of North Central PA	https://www.cilncp.org
Family Connection Inc.	http://www.familyconnection-inc.org
The Adaptables, Inc.	https://sicilnc.org
Voices for Independence	https://www.vficil.org
Sparc Foundation, Inc.	https://thesparcfoundation.org
Youth Services System, Inc.	https://www.youthservicessystem.org
Centre County Youth Service Bureau	https://ccysb.com
Transitional Paths to Independent Living	https://www.trpil.com
Disability Resource Center, Incorporated	https://drctn.org
Disability Options Network	https://www.doninc.org/don/
Mountain State Centers for Independent Living, Inc.	http://mtstcil.org
Prisma Health - Upstate	https://www.prismahealth.org

Table 1 (continued)

Organization Name	Websites
WV Coalition Against Domestic Violence	http://wvcadv.org
Senior Services Inc.	https://www.seniorservicesinc.org
Servolution Health Service Inc.	https://www.shsrhc.com/home
Mission West Virginia	https://www.missionwv.org
First Choice Services, Inc.	https://firstchoiceservices.org
The Guidance Center	http://www.guidancecenter.net
Kentucky River Foothills Development Council	https://foothillscap.org
Holy Family Institute	https://www.hfi-pgh.org

Appendix B – Variable Table

The following table lists the variables that were coded for this study.

Table 2 - Variable Table

Variable	Variable Code
Predominantly Male Gender Demographics	M
Predominantly Female Gender Demographics	F
Evenly Split between Male and Female Gender Demographics	S
Predominantly White Racial Demographics	W
Predominantly African American Racial Demographics	AA
Predominantly Asian American Racial Demographics	AsAm
Predominantly Latino American Racial Demographics	LA
Mixed Racial Demographics	Mix
Demographics Not Found (No Information Presented)	INF
Demographics Unknown (Information Presented but Inconclusive)	U
Board Size (0-5 Members)	Very Small
Board Size (6-10 Members)	Smaller-than-Average
Board Size (11-20 Members)	Average
Board Size (21+ Members)	Larger-than-Average

Table 2 (Continued)

Variable	Variable Code
Staff Management (Paid Staff Only)	Paid
Staff Management (Volunteer Staff Only)	Volunteer
Staff Management (Paid and Volunteer Staff)	Paid and Volunteer
Organizational Website Exists	Yes
Organizational Website Does Not Exist	No
Organizational Website Labels Webpages	1
Organizational Website Does Not Label Webpages	0
Organizational Website Presented Information on Organizational Goals and Programs	1
Organizational Website Did Not Present Information on Organizational Goals and Programs	0
Organizational Website Presented Board and Staff Information	1
Organizational Website Presented Board or Staff Information	0.5
Organizational Website Did Not Present Board and Staff Information	0
Organizational Website Had Accessible Contact Information	1
Organizational Website Did Not Have Accessible Contact Information	0

Appendix C – Data Tables

Table 3 - Board Size

Board Size	Total Number of Nonprofits
0 to 5	1
6 to 10	14
11 to 20	24
21+	5
Information Not Found	5

Table 4 - Racial Demographics on Board

Racial Demographics on Board	Total Number of Nonprofits
Predominantly White	15
Predominantly Unknown	7
Information Not Found	27

Table 5 - Gender Demographics on Board

Gender Demographics on Board	Total Number of Nonprofits
Predominantly Female	13
Predominantly Male	17
Split	14
Information Not Found	5

Table 6 - Staff Service Management Type

Service Management Type	Total Number of Nonprofits
Paid Staff Only	23
Volunteer Staff Only	3
Paid and Volunteer Staff	17
Information Not Found	6

Table 7 - Racial Demographics on Staff

Racial Demographics in Staff	Total Number of Nonprofits
Predominantly White	18
Predominantly African American	1
Mixed	2
Predominantly Unknown	3
Information Not Found	25

Table 8 - Gender Demographics on Staff

Gender Demographics in Staff	Total Number of Nonprofits
Predominantly Female	26
Predominantly Male	2
Split	2
Information Not Found	19

Table 9 - Board-Service Area Racial Demographics Comparison

Board-Service Area Racial Demographics	Total Number of Nonprofits
Does Match Service Area Demographics	11
Does Not Match Service Area Demographics	38

Table 10 - Staff-Service Area Racial Demographics Comparison

Staff-Service Area Racial Demographics	Total Number of Nonprofits
Does Match Service Area Demographics	16
Does Not Match Service Area Demographics	33

Table 11 - Board-Service Area Gender Demographics Comparison

Board-Service Area Gender Demographics	Total Number of Nonprofits
Does Match Service Area Demographics	14
Does Not Match Service Area Demographics	35

Table 12 - Staff-Service Area Gender Demographics Comparison

Staff-Service Area Gender Demographics	Total Number of Nonprofits
Does Match Service Area Demographics	2
Does Not Match Service Area Demographics	47

Table 13 - Website Existence

Website Existence	Total Number of Nonprofits
Yes	46
No	3

Table 14 - Website "Ease of Use" Rankings

Website "Ease of Use" Rankings	Total Number of Nonprofits
0	1
0.5	0
1	1
1.5	1
2	0
2.5	2
3	9
3.5	14
4	21