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Making Stewardship Meaningful For Nonprofits: Stakeholder Motivations, Attitudes, Loyalty and Behaviors

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MAKING STEWARDSHIP MEANINGFUL FOR NONPROFITS: STAKEHOLDER MOTIVATIONS, ATTITUDES, LOYALTY AND BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the ways in which stewardship motivates nonprofit stakeholder attitudes, behaviors and loyalty. Using an online survey of stakeholders from eight local United Ways in one southern state (N=660), this research has three major focuses. First, it seeks to validate a scale to measure perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship. Second, it investigates group differences between nonprofit stakeholder types (donor only versus both donor and volunteer). Third, the study explores opportunities to extend existing relationship management models beyond assessments of perceived relationship quality to include desirable behavioral outcomes.

Findings offer a new conceptualization of stewardship comprised of five factors: relationship nurturing, responsibility, reporting, reciprocity appreciation and reciprocity recognition. Multiple analyses show how these factors differently influence relationship evaluations of trust commitment and satisfaction. Further, analyses of group differences by stakeholder type indicate that the effectiveness of stewardship strategies varies by audience. A new theoretical model was advanced to extend the organization-public relationship model beyond measures of trust, commitment and satisfaction, to measures of loyalty and behavioral intentions. Implications for nonprofit public relations theory and practice are discussed and avenues for future research are proposed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For decades, 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations have collectively represented one of the fastest-growing segments of our society. These organizations rely on relationship management to cultivate partnerships with donors, volunteers, advocates and other important publics to achieve their goals of leveraging improvements in their communities and making positive contributions to solving pressing social issues at home and abroad. Central to the success of these relationship management endeavors is public relations, which has been defined by the Public Relations Society of America (2012) as ‘‘a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.’’

In the nonprofit sector, loyalty is one of the most important attitudinal variables in relationship maintenance (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). Further, despite Ledingham and Bruning’s (1998) assertion that, “organizational involvement in, and support of the community in which it operates, can engender loyalty toward an organization among key publics when that involvement/support is known by key publics,” (p. 63) public relations scholars have yet to embrace this important variable as a relational outcome. For charitable organizations, increasing donor loyalty by as little as ten percent has been shown to improve return on investment by between 100 and 150 percent, depending on the nature of the development strategies employed (Sargeant & Jay, 2010). Further, consumer literature tells us that it is six times more costly to obtain a new customer than to retain a relationship with an existing stakeholder (Barlow & Moller, 1996); and the benefits of reducing attrition can dramatically improve efficiency, service delivery and financial gain (Reichheld & Sasser Jr, 1990). In the nonprofit sector, loyal donors and volunteers, in particular, contribute to the sustainability, efficient operating and viability of an organization.

Despite the significance of loyalty to the nonprofit sector, research in recent years has shown that there is decreasing confidence in the charitable sector because of highly publicized scandals, ineffective governance and increased media attention to social issues (Light, 2008; Salmon, 2002). Concurrent with this decrease in confidence has been an increase in the number of nonprofit organizations in the sector. From 2000 to 2010 alone, the nonprofit sector in the United States experienced a tremendous 24% growth, and as of 2012, there were more than 2.3 million nonprofit organizations operating in the United States (Blackwood, Roeger, & Pettijohn, 2012). This increased competition and decreased trust can lead to stakeholder switching behaviors and increases the instrumentality of loyalty as an essential measure of relational outcomes in nonprofit public relations research.

One way to enhance stakeholder loyalty to a nonprofit may be through improving perceptions of stewardship. For more than two decades, nonprofit public relations scholarship has asserted that demonstration of the responsible management of resources – stewardship - is a key factor in effective relationship management (e.g., Greenfield, 1991; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Jeavons, 1994; Kelly, 2001). In practice, a vast array of how-to books, blogs, conference themes, webinars, guiding-practices documents and stewardship awards provide evidence that the concept of stewardship is a valued aspect of nonprofit effectiveness (e.g., Brinckerhoff, 2004, 2012; Council on Foundations, 2004; N. C. Center for Nonprofits, 2012). Despite this ubiquitous support for effective demonstration of stewardship, few scholars have yet to systematically investigate the effect of stewardship.

In their oft-cited "Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations," Hon and Grunig (1999) proposed that stewardship strategies offered a way to maintain relationships with stakeholder publics. In their articulation of measurement for the organization-public relationship, the authors posit that effectiveness of this relationship maintenance strategy is best estimated by positive assessment of outcome variables including trust, commitment and satisfaction. While they did validate a scale for the relationship outcome measures, no such scale was put forward for stewardship. In recent years, a handful of scholars have worked to advance our understanding of the relationship between stewardship and positive relationship outcome evaluations. One study found evidence that positive perceptions of stewardship does, in fact, lead to positive relationship evaluation in a donor-public relationship model (Waters, 2011a). Building on this work, this study will not only consider other organizational stakeholders (e.g. volunteers), but also validate a measurement model for the construct of stewardship. This new latent construct will be included as the first stage in a model of organization-public relationships that extends from trust, commitment and satisfaction, to loyalty to the organization and behavioral intentions to support the organization.

Using a survey, the purpose of this study is to test hypotheses associated with the theoretical proposition that stakeholder perceptions of communication strategies (stewardship) intended to cultivate relationships lead to improved organization-public relationship evaluations (trust, commitment, satisfaction), which in turn lead to loyalty to the organization (cognitive, affective, behavioral) and behavioral intentions to support the organization. Survey respondents will be drawn from a population of stakeholders of a nonprofit organization (e.g. volunteers and donors). While drawing respondents from a single organization limits the generalizability of findings, it is anticipated that this research will lay the groundwork for future testing of the proposed model in other organizational contexts.

1.1 THE STATE OF NONPROFIT AMERICA

In recent years, nonprofits accounted for nearly ten percent of all wages and salaries paid in the United States and represented 5.5% of the gross domestic product (Blackwood et al., 2012), demonstrating the sector's importance to the national economy. Defined as the association of a group of individuals voluntarily bound together in pursuit of a shared objective (Lohmann, 1992), the mission-oriented work of nonprofit organizations generates social capital, or the attitude and willingness of people to engage in collective action to address issues on the basis of shared values and beliefs (Hall, 2005). These organizations work to positively impact the gamut of social issues ranging from health, human services, arts and culture, education, research and advocacy (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2012). In fact, since the late 1980s and early 1990s, many services previously provided by government entities have been provided by nonprofit organizations (Boris & Steuerle, 2006; Clemens, 2006).

To fulfill their vital role in society, nonprofits rely on contributions from the private sector. According to Giving USA Foundation (2012), recent estimates of individual contributions to nonprofit organizations total $217.79 billion, which comprised 73 percent of all financial gifts given to the sector in 2011(Foundation, 2012). Therefore, it is no wonder that recent scholarly research has primarily focused on the donor-organization relationship. However, it is not only money that Americans contribute to the sustainability of the sector. The Federal Agency for Service and Volunteering (2012) reports that Americans volunteered a total of almost 8 billion hours, at an estimated economic value of roughly $171 billion in 2011. Despite these impressive figures, according to the United States Department of Labor (2013), volunteer rates are on the decline, with barely more than a quarter of Americans volunteering through or for an organization during 2012.

1.2 NONPROFITS AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

In the nonprofit sector, public relations plays a critical role in raising money, attracting new members, energizing supporters, cultivating relationships with stakeholders and fulfilling an organization's mission. In fact, the viability of these organizations often hinges on successfully using public relations strategies to engage a wide array of constituencies (Feinglass, 2005). It is, therefore, not surprising that Communications Consortium Media Center (2004) reported that nonprofits have exponentially increased their investments in communication strategies in an attempt to create awareness, influence behavioral change and increase active engagement in social issues.

One of the most important components of the relationship management process for nonprofit public relations communicators is stewardship (Kelly, 1998). In an organizational context, stewardship relates to the nonprofit's attentiveness to its actions, and how these actions affect supportive publics and other organization stakeholders (Jeavons, 1994). In 2001, Kelly first proposed stewardship as a function of public relations models comprised of four strategies: reciprocity, or the demonstration of its gratitude for support; responsibility, defined by actions of a socially responsible manner to those who have supported the organization; reporting, in terms of meeting legal and ethical requirements of accountability; and relationship nurturing, where the organization accepts the importance of supportive publics and keeps them central to the organization's consciousness (Kelly, 2001). For each of these strategies, providing information and involving publics are imperative to the organization's work (Hon & Grunig, 1999).

While it is has been posited that the purpose of stewardship is to "establish the means for continued communication that will help to preserve their [stakeholders] interest and attention to the organization" (Greenfield, 1991, p. 148), recent studies investigating nonprofit's communication of stewardship strategies have focused narrowly on donor publics and the fundraising function (see e.g., Waters, 2008; Waters, 2009b; Worley & Little, 2002) rather than the myriad stakeholders integral to a nonprofit's success. In an era when nonprofit organizations have come under attack for mismanagement of funds, ineffective governance, unethical acts, and failing to comply with reporting responsibilities, the strategies of stewardship are becoming increasingly important to assure public trust and support.

To summarize, this research seeks to understand in what ways stewardship motivates nonprofit stakeholder attitudes and behavior. Building on previous work, this study uses survey methods to investigate how stewardship strategies might lead to positive relationship evaluations associated with the organization-public relationship

(OPR). The specific relationship evaluations that will be measured are trust, commitment and satisfaction. These measures were selected based on their prominence as relational outcome measures in public relations (see e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Huang, 2001a; Ledingham & Bruning, 2001; Waters, 2011a), as well as the work of marketing and nonprofit scholars who have shown these factors are likely antecedents to loyalty (see e.g., Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Sargeant & Lee, 2004; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). OPR variables will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

1.3 THE UNITED WAY

The sample population for the survey is drawn from representative community-based local United Way organizations from one southern state. The United Way was selected because of the diversity of stakeholder audiences, as well as the scope of their mission.

The first United Way organization was founded in 1887 by a group of religious leaders in Denver. Over the 125 year span since its inception, strategic planning; partnerships with groups such as the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, National Football League and CNN; as well as national recognition for not-for-profit ethics and accountability, has resulted in the United Way Worldwide achieving the status of the world's largest privately-funded nonprofit. Today, the United Way Worldwide serves as the leadership and support organization for a network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Ways in 40 countries and territories (United Way Worldwide, 2013).

Community-based United Way agencies are formed as coalitions of charitable organizations with the aim of pooling efforts in fundraising and support. In each community, strengths and assets are assessed to help individuals and groups with specific community interests find ways to contribute their time and talents, support direct service programs and community-change efforts, and advocate public policy changes. While specific programs and advocacy initiatives are determined at the community level, the overarching mission of the organization is to create long-lasting changes in communities by addressing key quality of life indicators including education, income and health. Success in this mission is measured by leveraging resources for community programs, galvanizing all sectors of society and mobilizing individuals to give, advocate and volunteer to improve their community (United Way Worldwide, 2013).

1.4 STUDY SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Through a survey of stakeholders, this study will explore perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship, how those perceptions might lead to positive relationship evaluations associated with the OPR model (trust, commitment, satisfaction), and more importantly, how these factors might result in stakeholder loyalty and behavioral intentions to support the organization. This work is intended to provide a foundation and guidance for improving communication and relationship cultivation with nonprofit stakeholders through the use of the specific strategies associated with stewardship. Further, it is the aim of this research to explore and test a new model of communications that integrates the OPR model and extends it to include dimensions of loyalty.

The following chapter will address the theoretical foundation for the study by drawing on literature from public relations, marketing and nonprofit research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nonprofits with limited resources often rely on public relations strategies for relationship cultivation, development and maintenance because these strategies tend to be less costly than traditional advertising campaigns. While many public relations efforts on the part of nonprofit organizations may be focused on gaining new stakeholders, a shared focus on relationship maintenance and cultivation seems an equally important aim and, therefore, is the focus of this study. Maintenance strategies include attempts to manage the relationship through strategic communication efforts. Ki and Hon (2008) referred to these strategies as cultivation strategies and defined them as ''any organizational behavioral efforts that attempt to establish, cultivate, and sustain relationships with strategic publics'' (p. 5).

2.1 RELATIONSHIP CULTIVATION PERCEPTIONS

Since Ferguson (1984) proposed that the relationship should be a key focal area for theory development in public relations, researchers have evolved from testing specific processes and effects to focusing on relationship-based outcome measures. Recent research has touted relationship management as an imperative standard for public relations scholarship and practice (Heath, 2001; Huang, 2001b; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000). Ledingham (2003a) explicated relationship management as a general theory of public relations focused on initiatives and strategies that are mutually beneficial for organizations and their many publics (Bruning, 2001; Grunig, 1993; Ledingham &

Bruning, 1998). This theoretical definition of relationship management formed the basis for the concept of stewardship.

Stewardship and Nonprofits

Scholars have long recognized stewardship as a key component to relationship management for nonprofit organizations. Jeavons (1994) described the concept of stewardship as having ancient (even biblical) roots, and noted that nonprofit organizations, in particular, have an obligation to be good stewards of their resources because they are entrusted with those resources to benefit the public good. Highlighting the religious roots of the stewardship concept, Robert Payton noted, “The church’s role as the mediating structure between almsgiver and the poor provides a model for the organization of charity as an institution” (1987).

Perhaps as important as practicing good stewardship is demonstrating that practice to an organization’s stakeholders. In fact, as public relations theory, research and practice continue to embrace organization-public relationship models, nonprofit public relations practitioners and scholars can only benefit from including stewardship as part of practical and ethical approaches to building relationships and quantifying their effectiveness.

As Kelly (2001) proposed, stewardship is one of the most important steps in the relationship management process employed by nonprofit organizations. In Kelly’s conceptualization, the addition of stewardship as a fifth step in traditional public relations models, comprised of research, objectives, programming and evaluation (ROPES), moves communication away from episodic campaign-centric processes and into continual on-going relationship cultivation. As outlined above, the importance of relationship cultivation and maintenance is even more important in the current competitive landscape. Further, Ledingham (2003b) expanded his popular process model of relationship management, with steps of scan, map, action, roll-out, track (SMART PR), to include stewardship as a means for assuring continuity and ethicality in public relations processes. This vital addition of stewardship is comprised of four distinct strategies or dimensions intended to promote ethical behavior by practitioners and their organizations. The strategies associated with the concept of stewardship are responsibility, reporting, reciprocity and relationship-nurturing (Kelly, 1998, 2001).

Building on Kelly's work, subsequent studies have focused primarily on stewardship in terms of the management of relationships between nonprofit organizations and their donor publics. Findings from these studies offer further evidence supporting the utility of all four stewardship strategies as part of nonprofit practitioners' efforts to develop successful donor relationships and fundraising campaigns (e.g., Worley & Little, 2002). For example, studies investigating the role of specific stewardship strategies have found that reciprocity is imperative for sustaining relationships with major donors (Waters, 2009b); that donor expectations and practitioner perspectives vary with respect to the magnitude and importance of stewardship strategies (Waters, 2009ab); and that the four strategies of stewardship can work with other popular concepts in the public relations literature such as the organization-public relationship (OPR) framework to predict major donations versus annual gifts (Waters, 2011a).

Parallel with the rise in online communications as an imperative portal for sustaining and enhancing relationships with organizational publics, stewardship-focused research has also begun to investigate the role of this construct in an online context.

However, these studies primarily focus on a single type of nonprofit organization. One such study found reciprocity and relationship-nurturing to be more prevalent than dimensions of responsibility and reporting on nonprofit health organization websites (Patel & Weberling, 2011). Another qualitative content analysis of email messages from the nonprofit organizations, Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the Komen Advocacy Alliance, reported evidence of all four strategies of stewardship, although the use of the strategies varied, depending on whether the messages took an emotional, informational or political/economic approach (Weberling, 2011). This research stressed the need to continue exploring the concept of stewardship.

More recently, Waters (2011b) has taken stewardship outside the nonprofit realm and applied the concept to a content analysis of Fortune 100 companies' websites. He found that, generally, for-profit corporations were most likely to display elements of reporting, followed by reciprocity and responsibility. Evidence of relationship-nurturing, in particular, seemed to be lacking on the Fortune 100 websites.

Defining Stewardship

Importantly, these studies aid in clarifying the definitions of each of the stewardship strategies and offer indicators to measure the dimensions of the construct. As Chaffee (1991) reminds us, explication links theory, observations and research. Therefore, an important step in understanding how stewardship can be employed in theory testing and development is defining the four dimensions of stewardship.

The literature focused on nonprofit stewardship has defined *responsibility* as acting in a socially responsible way, keeping promises to important publics and statements related to using funding to support the organization's mission (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 2001; Waters, 2009b). The *reporting* strategy has been defined as conveying information that demonstrates accountability, meeting legal and ethical requirements, providing updates on goal achievement and informing publics about fundraising success (e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 2001, Waters, 2009b). An annual report and other financial information are common examples of evidence of this definition of reporting. *Reciprocity* includes visible signs of listening to different publics demonstrated by acknowledgements and appreciation of supportive beliefs and behaviors, such as personalized thank you messages and highlighting donor gifts in mass distributed correspondence(e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 2001, Waters, 2009b). Finally, *relationship-nurturing* has been defined as initiating and/or participating in dialogues with various publics (including the use of social media) and expanding current involvement of individuals or publics into long-term relationships with the organization through solicitations for donations, volunteer recruitment and/or other opportunities to take action to support the organization's efforts (e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 2001, Waters, 2009b). .

Stewardship Beyond the Donor Relationship

Despite the broad initial conceptualization, a common thread throughout the existing body of nonprofit-related stewardship literature has been a focus on donor communications. However, as Feinglass (2005) points out, in the nonprofit sector, organizational credibility and engagement with multiple publics are cornerstones for success, dependent on a foundation of a wide array of effective public relations strategies. Further, as Tapscott (2010) has noted, the future viability of an organization will, in part, be determined by its transparency, interactivity and collaborative communication. As it relates to stewardship, Leddingham (2003) has asserted that while stewardship is an essential element of relationship management, the industry must disassociate stewardship from being exclusively a fundraising concept. As demonstrated by Waters (2011a), stewardship has the potential to be an important predictor in models investigating the organization-donor relationship. Extending his initial findings in the donor context, this study will also consider group differences between both donors and volunteers. These stakeholder types are central to a nonprofit's viability and, thus, should be considered equally in research examining the nonprofit organization-public relationship.

2.2 RELATIONSHIP EVALUATIONS

Increasingly, public relations practitioners are called on to demonstrate the relative effectiveness and the value of their programs. Effective relational evaluations help to provide accountability for public relations programs and provide a means for measuring return on investment. Further, relational evaluations provide a more sophisticated and long-term answer to questions of public relations effectiveness than short-term outcome measures such as coverage, exposure, recall or comprehension. The penultimate objective of public relations strategies, tactics and activities is the enhancement of the organization-public relationship (OPR).

Defining the Organization-Public Relationship

The OPR has been explicated and studied by many of the leading scholars in the field of public relations. One popular definition describes the relationship as the pattern of interactions, exchanges and transactions that lead to desirable relational outcomes (Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997). Other scholars describe the OPR as actions of the organization or individual that affects one another socially, politically, economically or culturally (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Yet another often-cited definition focuses on mutual trust, commitment, satisfaction and balance of power between the organization and its publics (Huang, 2001a).

Hon and Grunig (1999) first proposed a set of indices that measured dimensions of relational evaluations an individual may experience within an OPR. Grounded in a 1991 (Stafford & Canary) interpersonal communication study that analyzed antecedents and outcomes of intimate relationships, they proposed relational outcomes focused on trust, commitment, satisfaction and balance of power. To determine the level of trust between an organization and its stakeholders, indicators measure confidence in, and willingness to be open to, the other party and include concepts such as integrity, dependability, and competence. The relational satisfaction dimension refers to the degree to which both the organization and its publics are mutually satisfied with their relationship, and it is measured as the degree to which each party perceives that the expected benefits of being in the relationship exceed the costs. The commitment dimension focuses on lasting compliance and includes measures related to the belief that the relationship is worth maintaining. The control mutuality dimension represents the extent to which parties in the relationship agree as to who is authorized to exercise power and control and how well power is distributed in the relationship.

Over the last 14 years, these measures have been used reliably in many studies (Hon & Brunner, 2002; Huang, 2001a; Jo, Hon, & Brunner, 2005; Ki & Hon, 2007a), and additional efforts have been undertaken to refine and identify the further dimensions that comprise OPRs and to develop scales for measuring these dimensions (see e.g., Bruning & Galloway, 2003; Bruning & Ledingham, 1999; Ledingham & Bruning, 2001).

However, to this researcher's knowledge, while numerous antecedents have been tested, to date, no other researchers have empirically tested stewardship dimensions in the OPR model at the level of Waters (2011a). Despite the inclusion of stewardship as a relationship cultivation strategy in the original Hon and Grunig (1999) white paper, most research investigating OPRs has relied on the strategies adapted from interpersonal communication (access, positivity, openness, assurances, networking, sharing of tasks, keeping promises). Perhaps this is due to a lack of a clearly defined measurement model for stewardship or the construct's particular relevance to the nonprofit sector. This study seeks to fill that gap.

2.3 EXTENSION OF OPR TO BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES

While numerous studies outlined above have vastly increased our understanding of public and stakeholder perceptions, attention is needed to better understand the behavioral consequences of the OPR. For this reason, this study seeks to further examine how the variables of trust, commitment and satisfaction might lead to loyalty to an organization, as well as behavioral intentions to continue to be involved with the organization.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a complex multidimensional variable with little consensus concerning the specific dimensions and how they interact to determine a behavioral outcome. However, as Worth (2011) suggests, focusing on stewardship may be a way to improve the loyalty of donors. Research is needed to understand the path from this relationship cultivation strategy to the important outcome of loyalty. Conceptually, our understanding of the relationships between these variables is increasingly crucial in a nonprofit public relations context due to the increasing competition and highly publicized scandals within the sector that lead to stakeholder switching behaviors. Thus, one aim of this study is to ascertain which components of loyalty are theoretically relevant, and to empirically test how relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship engender trust, commitment and satisfaction, and might be related to the different dimensions of loyalty.

In the business literature, loyalty has been described as “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same-brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior” (Oliver, 1999, p. 34). In this context, as well as in the nonprofit sector, trust and commitment have been recognized as key factors in loyalty’s formation (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). For the past 40 years, researchers in advertising and marketing have construed, analyzed and defined loyalty in varying ways. The key themes in the loyalty literature fall primarily into three camps. The first relates to attitudinal loyalty, or the underlying evaluative and cognitive processes used when interpreting purchase decisions (e.g., Fournier & Yao, 1997; Patterson, Johnson, & Spreng, 1997). The second is the behavioral approach, which focuses on repeat purchase intentions and observed purchase behavior (e.g., Colombo & Morrison, 1989; Dekimpe, Steenkamp, Mellens, & Vanden Abeele, 1997; M. Wright, Sharp, & Sharp, 1998). The final iteration of loyalty is a composite of both behavioral loyalty in terms of of consistent purchase behaviors of consumers, which is rooted in positive attitudes toward the brand or attitudinal loyalty (e.g., Day, 1969; Dick & Basu, 1994; Jacoby, 1971; Petrick, 2004).

To contrast these approaches, Fournier and Yao (1997) investigated attitudinal loyalty by conducting in-depth interviews among coffee-consuming adults and found that the bond between consumer and product is determined by an array of emotion-based relationship factors and attitude strengths. On the other hand, Dekimpe, et al. (1997) studied the behavioral brand loyalty for 21 consumer packaged goods and found that repeat purchase is more stable for market-share leaders than for other brands. Finally, in an experiment with 80 children aged six to nine, Jacoby and Kyner (1973) found that there is more to brand loyalty than simple repeat purchase intentions of a candy bar, and that numerous emotional and attitudinal dynamics factor into the decision making process.

Further, many scholars exploring loyalty have used a continuum approach to loyalty, influenced by the early work of Oliver (1997, 1999). In his conceptualization, loyalty's formation is a temporal sequence that begins with a cognitive belief, followed by affective loyalty ("I buy because I like it"), leading to conative loyalty ("I'm committed to buying it") and finally action loyalty. A number of researchers have adopted this approach (e.g., Harris & Goode, 2004; McMullan & Gilmore, 2003).

The temporal sequence of loyalty has been challenged by more recent research that further modified our understanding of loyalty's formation. For example, in a consumer-based study, Jones and Taylor (2007) found that loyalty was a function of two-dimensions, a behavioral element (repurchase intentions), and a combined attitudinal/cognitive element (strength of preference, advocacy, altruism, willingness to pay more and identification with the service provider). In an analysis of loyalty in the cruise industry, Li and Petrick (2008) examined multiple models and posed a second order structure with behavioral loyalty as the output, determined directly by attitudinal loyalty and indirectly by cognitive, affective and conative loyalty. In social psychology, Fiske (2009) proposed that loyalty can be defined generally as an attitude (positive or negative evaluation of an object) and identified three different components in the structure: affective, cognitive and behavioral.

Informed by the evolution of the study of loyalty, this research will measure the construct with three factors of cognitive, affective and behavioral loyalty. Marketing literature supports commitment as an antecedent to loyalty and popular definitions of the constructs of commitment and conative loyalty are highly interrelated; therefore this dimension (conative loyalty) has not been included in this particular study. Additionally, given that loyalty studies from other fields have shown behavioral loyalty as an output, with antecedents of cognitive and affective loyalty (Back & Parks, 2003; Harris & Goode, 2004; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010), it is posited here that cognitive and affective loyalty dimensions are correlated antecedents preceded by trust, commitment and satisfaction.

Behavioral Intentions

According to the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991, 2005), behavioral intentions are an intermediate variable between attitudes and behaviors. Perloff describes behavioral intentions as, "the intentions to perform a particular behavior, a plan to put behavior into effect" (Perloff, 2003, p. 92). Measures of behavioral intentions are frequently used in the social sciences as predictors of behaviors given that intentions and behavior tend to be identical because most social behavior is under the individual's control (Perloff, 2003). Meta-analysis has shown that the theory of planned behavior variables accounted for 39% of variance in intentions, and 27% of the variance in behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

In a study of the relationships students have with a large university, Ki and Hon (2007b) attempted to add to our understanding of how positive relationship evaluations from the OPR model might lead to attitudes and behavioral intentions. Their findings indicate that positive perceptions of OPR measures did, in fact, predict favorable attitudes and, in turn, an intentions to engage in behavior to support the organization. Drawing from this framework, intentions measures have been included in the instrument as a correlate to behavioral loyalty.

2.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Using the literature as a guide, this study seeks to test hypotheses and answer research questions related to the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship, and the utility of stewardship in predicting relationship evaluations from the OPR framework. It also proposes a new working model that extends OPR to include behavioral consequences of loyalty over time. The overarching objective is to better understand and explain how perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies may ultimately result in increased loyalty to a nonprofit organization and intentions to support the organization. The research questions and hypotheses are outlined below; an illustration of the proposed model can be found as Figure 2.1 at the end of this chapter.

First, based on the need to better understand the role of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship among different organizational stakeholder types and begin to move stewardship away from the exclusive domain of fundraising, this study proposes the following two research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do nonprofit stakeholders give the nonprofit organization a favorable rating on the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship?

RQ2: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to their perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship?

Previous research on donors has demonstrated a positive relationship between relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship and relationship evaluations in the OPR framework (Waters, 2011b). It is not clear, however, what the relationship is between trust, commitment and satisfaction. This is, in part, due to the fact that these relationship evaluations were considered outcome variables previously. Additionally, marketing literature considers trust and commitment as the exogenous variable in models leading to loyalty (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). This study seeks to add clarity to our understanding of relationship evaluations, as well as replicate and extend findings from previous work in a new nonprofit context through the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ3: To what extent do nonprofit stakeholders give the organization favorable ratings on relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction?

RQ4: How are the relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction related?

H1a. The relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship will have a positive relationship to trust among nonprofit stakeholders.

H1b. The relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship will have a positive relationship to commitment among nonprofit stakeholders.

H1c. The relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship will have a positive relationship to satisfaction among nonprofit stakeholders.

RQ5: Of the perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship, which are most influential in predicting relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction?

Given the donor-centric nature of most nonprofit and public relations research, this study will also build on our understanding of perceptions of communication effectiveness by including volunteers as an important stakeholder type, and thus the following research question is proposed:

RQ6: How are volunteers and donors different in their perceptions of the strategies of stewardship as it relates to influencing their evaluation of trust, commitment and satisfaction with the nonprofit organization?

In order to extend our understanding of the OPR to include behavioral consequences of loyalty and intentions, literature from other fields has been reviewed and thus a multi-dimension construct for loyalty included. The new model predicts that relationship evaluation measures from the OPR model will lead to a correlated attitudinal loyalty factor comprised of affective and cognitive loyalty. Further, it is predicted that positive relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction will predict attitudinal loyalty, although it is not known what the group difference by organizational stakeholder type might be. Thus, the following hypotheses and research question are proposed:

H2: Affective and cognitive loyalty will be positively correlated.

H3a: Positive relationship evaluations of trust will predict attitudinal loyalty.

H3b: Positive relationship evaluations of commitment will predict attitudinal loyalty.

H3c: Positive relationship evaluations of satisfaction will predict attitudinal loyalty.

RQ7: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to attitudinal loyalty to the nonprofit organization?

Next, considering the literature from marketing, consumer relations and social psychology, it is anticipated that these variables will predict behavioral loyalty and intentions. It is unclear, however, whether different stakeholder types will indicate varying levels of intentions or loyalty, or if the different measures of attitudinal loyalty will have better predictive power for the outcome variables of behavioral loyalty and intentions to support the organization. Provided the similarities in construct domain and definition for behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions, it is anticipated these variables will be positively correlated. For these reasons, the following hypotheses and research questions are posed:

RQ8: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to behavioral loyalty to the nonprofit organization?

RQ9: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to intentions to support the nonprofit organization?

H4: Attitudinal loyalty will predict behavioral loyalty and intentions to support the organization.

H5: Loyalty and behavioral intentions will be positively correlated.

In order to explore these questions and hypotheses, a new working model is proposed (see Figure 1). This model tests previously explored relationships between stewardship variables (using a newly validated scale), and relationship evaluations associated with OPR. Further, it extends OPR by examining, which variables might be most relevant in predicting loyalty and behavioral intentions. As a primary aim, this working model is intended to explore and help us better understand in what ways stewardship motivates nonprofit stakeholder attitudes and behavior, and thus a final research question is posed:

RQ10: To what extent do positive perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies impact relationship evaluations, loyalty and behavioral intention?

The next chapter describes the survey instrument, methods and data analysis procedures in detail.

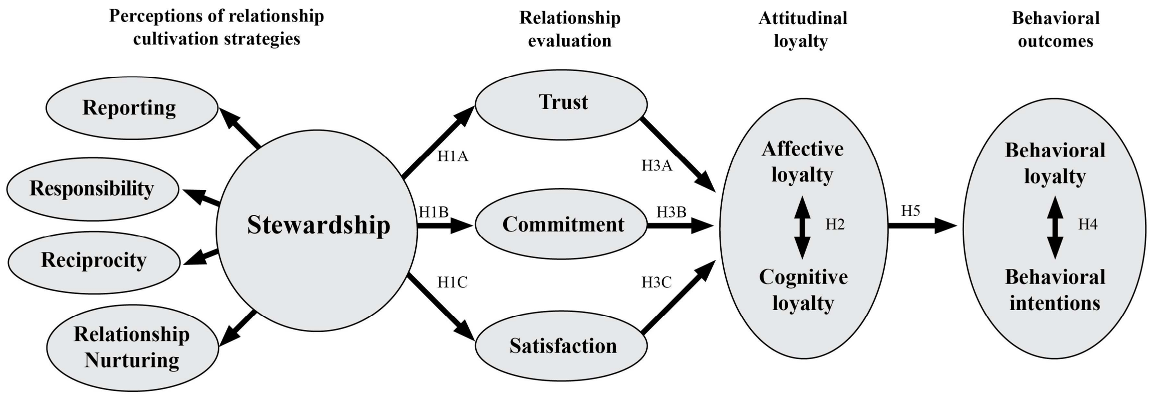

Figure 2.1. Proposed structural model with research hypotheses.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter provides details related to the survey research instrument, data collection and data analysis procedures, as well as the study sample. In brief, the aim of this study is first to advance a measurement model for the construct of stewardship, and second to provide a deeper understanding of how this relationship cultivation strategy may lead to positive relationship evaluations, loyalty and behavioral intentions to support a nonprofit organization.

Though a growing recent body of scholarship has begun to investigate the role of stewardship strategies in relationship management, these studies primarily focus on a single organization or narrowly consider the fundraising function within the nonprofit sector. Thus, the population for this study is drawn from an intermediary nonprofit organization, the United Way, which provides support for myriad nonprofit types. Additionally, respondents represent the range of nonprofit stakeholder types to include volunteers and donors. Further, while stewardship has been theoretically defined and tested in a limited number of empirical studies, validated scales of this relationship cultivation strategy have not yet been developed. Building on this previous literature, the current study follows the steps associated with latent scale development in an attempt to advance a validated measurement model.

Relating to the second goal of this study, the author tests a structural model that extends beyond relationship evaluations to loyalty, while concurrently considering how these evaluations might predict behavioral intentions. Given the tumultuous landscape that nonprofits are currently working within, it is important not only to assess how stakeholders might evaluate a nonprofit's strategic communications, but also to consider how these evaluations may lead to intentions to support and demonstrate loyalty to the organization.

This study is strongly guided by theories from public relations, nonprofit and marketing literature. With the exception of stewardship, for which a measurement model will be validated, all other measures are drawn from previously validated scales. The questions and hypotheses posed in the study will address each area of the model in turn, while determining if there are group differences by stakeholder type, new media use and connection to the organization. Research questions related to the ways in which stakeholders are motivated by stewardship with respect to attitude and behavior will be addressed by testing the proposed model.

3.1 ONLINE SURVEYS

Because this study seeks to explain attitudes and behaviors, as well as predict the strength of relationships among variables, a deductive quantitative approach is taken. This methodology is appropriate for assessing and examining the relationships among variables as a means for testing a predicated model that identifies expected relationships (Fink, 1995). Advantages to survey research include cost-effective ease of administration to a large geographically dispersed population. Further, the researcher can distribute an instrument that asks many standardized questions, targeting groups that are relevant to the study aims. Under ideal circumstances, the researcher draws a random sample of the population of interest and, therefore, can generalize findings to the larger population. In the case of this study, neither a random sample of the total population of interest, nor of United Way stakeholders, was feasible. This limitation will be addressed in greater detail in the following sections of this chapter.

Survey research is not without disadvantages. Standardization of questions forces measurement indicators to be constructed in such a way that all respondents might be able to answer them. Such standardization may prevent some distinction between variables or segments of the population to emerge. Other sources of error may include survey non-response bias, respondent fatigue and overrepresentation from select segments of the population. Additionally, respondents may have difficulty recalling their own behavior or assessing their motivations and attitudes. Later sections of this chapter address steps taken to minimize these concerns.

This study employed an online questionnaire to collect responses from stakeholders of select local United Ways in one southern state. A web-based email distribution plan is supported by research in the past decade that indicates this type of distribution is appropriate for tech-savvy populations (Beck, Yan, & Wang, 2009); is less expensive, faster, has a response rate nearly twice that of mail (Cobanoglu, Warde, & Moreo, 2001); and the quality of responses is just as good as other means of dissemination (Chang & Krosnick, 2009; Denscombe, 2006; Sills & Song, 2002). It is important to note, however, that online surveys do have disadvantages including limited access to some populations, inability to generalize results and potential problems with software (K. B. Wright, 2005). Despite these disadvantages, it was determined that this mode of data collection was preferable to reach the population of interest, with relative ease on the part of the partnering organizations, at little to no cost (particularly compared to other data collection options) and the need for statewide reach (K. B. Wright, 2005).

3.2 DESIGN AND ADMINISTRATION

The design of the study is informed by *Quantitative Research Methods in Communication* (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2008) and further guided by The Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000). The study uses a cross-sectional design with fixed responses. Because the model proposed in this study has never been tested, it was deemed appropriate to choose a cross-sectional design over longitudinal study. Once the model has been tested, future theory development work could include longitudinal studies.

The visual presentation and layout format was carefully considered to assure respondents were able to easily read, review and react to items in the study. Because of the survey length, a decision was made to cluster conceptually similar items in order to decrease the potential for respondent confusion. Interval-level data was collected using a Likert-type response format with five levels. This format was chosen following research that indicates the response format allows for maximum variation without overtaxing the respondent (Toepoel, Das, & van Soest, 2009). To further increase the ease for respondents, all items were presented in linear horizontal format with fully labeled points and a limited number of items per screen. When possible, matrices were used to improve the scannability of the instrument for respondents.

The online questionnaire was designed using Qualtrics survey software. When questionnaires are developed in the secure Qualtrics system, respondents are able to participate via a hyperlink to an online platform where they might respond. Responses are not associated with the respondent's email address, nor other identifying information, assuring respondent anonymity. Responses are stored in the system and can be downloaded by the researcher for analysis. In the case of this study, the link to the online questionnaire was provided to partnering local United Ways, which then distributed it with a short message outlining the purpose of the study, incentive for participation and a plea for participation (see Appendix A). Respondents who clicked on the link were taken to a screen providing an introduction to the study and information related to their rights as research subjects (see Appendix B). Respondents were advised that their participation was voluntary, and that if at any point they determined they did not want to continue, their responses to that point would be deleted. After reading this statement, respondents were asked to consent to participation prior to proceeding to the first page of questions.

The questionnaire was distributed by participating local United Ways in three waves as a means to increase response rates. Each wave carried a similar introductory email message and directed respondents to the same online questionnaire. To encourage participation, $1 was donated to each respondent's local United Way for completing the questionnaire. Funding for this small incentive was provided by members of a membership-based trade association for foundations and philanthropists working in the state where the study was conducted. This incentive fulfilled the dual aims of rewarding local United Ways that participated, as well as a way to encourage their stakeholder participants to complete the entire questionnaire. Small incentives such as these are becoming increasingly popular in web-based data collection due to the prominence of Web-based crowdsourcing tools, such as Amazon's MTurk, that recruit and pay subjects to perform tasks and participate in studies. Research in this context related to small incentives (between $0.50 and $2.00) in web-based data collection found there was, indeed, an increase in responses compared to no incentive (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Mason & Suri, 2012)

3.3 SURVEY MEASURES

The questionnaire used in this study combines previously validated scales from public relations, marketing and nonprofit literature with the creation of a new measurement model for assessing perceptions of stewardship strategies. The indicators adopted from previous studies, in some cases, included slight modifications to more closely represent the nonprofit-stakeholder relationship. As noted above, all scale options were measured on five-point Likert-type scales. As is typical with most surveys, the instrument also collected demographic information including gender, race, age, highest level of education completed, employment status, expected household income for the current year and connection to the United Way. Given the technology-based context of the study, and the United Way's significant reliance on online communication channels for connecting with stakeholders, questions related to respondents' preferences for online communication channel and personal online habits were also included. Prior to launching the study, approval was received from the university's Internal Review Board (see Appendix C).

Perceptions of Relationship Cultivation Strategies

While stewardship has been theoretically defined and tested in a limited number of empirical studies, a measurement model of this relationship cultivation strategy has not yet been formally validated. Developing a theoretically and practically sound scale for the latent construct of stewardship is necessary to advance our understanding of how it functions in the relationship management process. Latent constructs are not directly observable and require reflective indicators for meaningfully measurement. Stakeholder perceptions associated with relationship cultivation strategies are no more comprised of single "doubly concrete" measures than the evaluations of these strategies. Therefore, just as the other constructs used in this study require multiple reflective indicators to assess, so do the four stewardship strategies require multiple indicators (Churchill Jr, 1979; Peter, 1979).

Using the procedure first outlined by Churchill (1979) and later refined by Netemeyer et al. (2003), scales were developed to measure latent construct of stewardship. These steps are outlined in greater detail below. The scale refinement process led to the inclusion of 30 items in the final instrument that measure perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies (reciprocity and responsibility measured with eight indicators each; reporting and relationship nurturing measured with seven items each). Stewardship perceptions were measured on five-point Likert-type scales ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Scales included reverse worded items to decrease extreme response and acquiescence bias (Chronbach, 1950). The process for finalizing the measurement model is discussed in greater detail below.

Relationship Evaluation

This study assesses the organization-stakeholder relationship evaluation using measures of trust, commitment and satisfaction. The selection of these relationship evaluation measures is based on their prominence, not only in public relations literature, but also in key related fields. For example, for nearly two decades, business literature has explored the role of these latent variables in relationship marketing (see e.g., Doney & Cannon, 1997; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; N. Sharma & Patterson, 1999) and e-commerce (see e.g., Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2007; Koufaris & Hampton-Sosa, 2004; Martín & Camarero, 2008; Wu, Chen, & Chung, 2010). Additionally, nonprofit research focused on donor relations has investigated how these constructs might lead to behavior and loyalty (see e.g., Sargeant & Lee, 2004; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). These areas of scholarship support the assertion that relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction are appropriate, and the most important selections in the context of this study.

Two previously validated scales are included. These scales are draw from published research on trust, commitment and satisfaction in public relations and nonprofit scholarly journals. Each of the following indices was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Each scale included negatively worded items.

First, Hon and Grunig's (1999) validated measures of trust, commitment and satisfaction were included. Because the current study seeks to test a new structural model, it seemed fitting to use the full set of measurements with 35 indicators (three dimensions of trust measured with 11 indicators; satisfaction and commitment measured with eight indicators each), rather than the shortened version with 21 items. Each of these measures consistently reproduce alpha levels at .85 or higher, exceeding the generally accepted .70 standard for internal consistency for survey measures. Note that while other nonprofit public relations studies examining predictors in the OPR model have included "balance of power" (e.g., Waters, 2011a), this construct has been eliminated from this study as it does not fit the diversity of population of interest. Previous studies only considered donor publics. The inclusion of volunteers as stakeholder types in this study limits the usefulness of the construct, because this stakeholder type is unlikely to be motivated by gaining or sharing control in the organization.

As an additional measure of trust and commitment, the author included a more contemporary scale, validated by Sargeant and Lee in 2004 with research related to donor relations in the U.K. charity sector. The variables include a multidimensional measurement of trust comprised of relationship investment, mutual influence, forbearance from opportunism and communication acceptance, as well as measures for relational commitment. It was thought that the inclusion of a scale developed solely for evaluation of relationships in the nonprofit sector might offer additional insight and enhance our understanding of the nomological network for stewardship, or where perceptions of stewardship might lawfully fit in the relationship management paradigm. This measurement model includes 17 indicators to measure the two constructs (three dimensions of trust measured with 14 indicators; relationship commitment measured with three indicators). As an additional measure of satisfaction, the author also included a single question asking respondents to rate their satisfaction with the organization.

Loyalty

Whereas previous research has measured the organizational-public relationship in terms of relationship evaluations outlined above, this study seeks to advance the model to assess loyalty to a nonprofit organization. Much of the literature and scholarly inquiry in related fields has drawn on the early work of Oliver (1997), who posited that loyalty was a four-part temporal sequence. In the last decade, however, an increasing number of scholars have refined our understanding of loyalty. The work of these scholars influence the conceptualization put forward here, with behavioral loyalty measured as an output, preceded by cognitive and affective loyalty (Harris & Goode, 2004; Jones & Taylor, 2007; Li & Petrick, 2008).

Indicators to measure the loyalty dimensions were drawn from recent literature incorporating these dimensions into the evaluation of loyalty (Harris & Goode, 2004; Jones & Taylor, 2007; Li & Petrick, 2008). For the purpose of this study, cognitive loyalty is defined as "the existence of beliefs that (typically) a brand (company/organization) is preferable to others;" affective loyalty is related to "the customers (stakeholders) favorable attitude or liking toward the service/provider based on satisfied usage;" and finally, behavioral loyalty is related to "the frequency of repeat or relative volume of same brand-purchase (organizational support)," including the willingness to maintain the same preference over time (Li & Petrick, 2008, p. 72). Measurement of loyalty includes 12 indicators (cognitive, affective and behavioral loyalty dimensions measured with four indicators each).

Behavioral Intentions

Intentions to participate in United Way activities were measured with a series of questions that asked about respondents' plans to participate in United Way activities. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from, "Very Unlikely" (1) to "Very Likely" (5). In this series of questions, respondents were initially asked two questions inquiring generally if they intended to participate in any United Way activities. Next, respondents were asked to indicate their likelihood of participating in ten specific United Way activities in the next six months. This list of possible participation options was developed in conjunction with the state headquarters of the United Way, and reviewed by a small group of local United Way leaders to assure items were representative of participation opportunities. The final list included nine items associated with common ways to donate, volunteer and advocate for the organization.

A copy of the full research instrument can be found in Appendix D.

3.4 SCALE DEVELOPMENT

Before the perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies were measured, careful consideration was taken to advance a measurement model for assessing stewardship strategies. The steps taken reflect the latent variable estimate procedures outlined by Netemeyer, et al. (2003). In this process, step one was to define the construct and its content domain. Theoretically and practically sound definitions assure the psychometric properties of the construct are appropriately representative. At this point in the process, it is also important to identify the nomological network for the construct, or what is predicted by the construct and what predicts it (Chronbach & Meehl, 1955; Loevinger, 1957). Careful attention at this step decreases the possibility of construct over-identification and construct invariance.

To this end, the first step in defining the construct of stewardship and its content domain was a careful review of extant literature. As discussed in the literature review, the factors associated with the construct are responsibility, reporting, reciprocity and relationship nurturing. The public relations literature defines these dimensions as strategies, or behaviors of a nonprofit that lead to improved relationships between the nonprofit organization and its stakeholders (e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 1998, 2001). In the last decade, scholars working in the area of nonprofit public relations have attempted to define and measure each of these strategies using both quantitative and qualitative methods (e.g., Patel & Weberling, 2011; Waters, 2009b; Waters, 2011a, 2011b; Worley & Little, 2002). The definitions and indicators used in these studies inform the definitions of each of the dimensions of stewardship included herein.

Further, given the nuanced and circumstance-dependent definitions of each of the dimensions in the literature, steps were taken to assure clarity of the construct and its dimensions both for lay stakeholder audiences, as well as for the practice of nonprofit public relations. To accomplish these ends, practitioner resources such as handbooks, blogs, conference themes, awards and organizational websites were consulted to assure the organizational understanding of the concepts was consistent with the construct and dimension definitions.

Based on these professional resources and existing definitions from extant literature (e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 2001, Waters, 2009b), the dimensions of the construct are defined as follows.

Responsibility: acting in a socially responsible way; keeping promises to important publics; conveying how resources are used to support the organization's mission; meeting legal and ethical requirements; something organizations do to fulfill their mission and then demonstrate to the public to prove they are good stewards.

Reporting: an organization explaining how organizational assets are used; precise descriptions or quantifiable statements concerning mission fulfillment and demonstrating accountability; providing updates on goal achievement.

Reciprocity: demonstrating evidence of gratitude; acts of appreciation;

acknowledgement of public support or displays of sincerity and friendship between an organization and its publics.

Relationship nurturing: maintaining regular contact between an organization and its publics by providing personalized attention; initiating and/or participating in dialogues with various publics; providing stakeholders an opportunity to engage in mission fulfillment; expanding current involvement of individuals or publics into long-term relationships.

In relationship management and development, factors of trust, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty are among the most important evaluations of relationship cultivation strategies. For this reason, these factors provide the nomological network that stewardship fits into. More specifically, it is proposed that the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship lead to enhanced levels of trust, commitment and satisfaction, which then lead to increased organizational loyalty and behavioral intentions to support the organization.

Step two in the scale development procedure is the generation of items that tap the domain of the construct and judging the indicators for translational validity. Nearly four decades ago, Selltiz et al. (1976) proposed that one can productively generate items through searches of the literature, experience surveys and examples that stimulate insight. To this end, the author included indicators used in previous stewardship studies, queried nonprofit professionals and consulted scholars who have experience working with the construct.

More specifically, in order to compile the initial item pool for scale development, the author consulted experts working in the nonprofit sector. A list of 17 nonprofit practitioners, working in various job positions, served as the initial pool of experts. Eleven experts agreed to participate. These experts varied in job title (e.g. executive director, program officer, communications director, volunteer liaison, trustee, donor specialist), as well as type of nonprofit organization they represent (e.g. public benefit, community development, foundation/grantmaking organization, historic preservation, environmental activism).

Data collection from these eleven professionals occurred in two waves. First, each was asked to review the refined definitions of each of the dimensions of stewardship and provide three general examples of how this dimension might manifest itself in their work. Next, item judging took place in order to determine each indicator's content validity and, thus, viability to be retained as an indicator of the factor. Responses from item generation were then reworded to reduce situational specificity, and indicators used in previous studies published in the extant literature were added. The full list of indicators and the factor definitions were then distributed to the same group of professionals. At this stage, they were asked to review each of the items and identify to which relationship cultivation dimension they are most closely aligned. In order to be over-inclusive at this stage, an a priori decision rule was set to retain items that at least eight experts (73%) properly assigned (Haynes, Richard, & Kubany, 1995). Because responses primarily focused on key tactics for fulfilling each strategy, the researcher drew on insights from relevant literature to collapse, reword and delete redundant statements to assure indicators' generalizability.

Prior to pilot testing, the face validity of the measures was then assessed again. For this portion of item judging, face validity was determined by a post hoc analysis of the indicators associated with each dimension. The judges for this stage included five researchers who have published studies using the construct of stewardship. These scholars provided feedback on item clarity, reading level and response formats. This step assured that nothing happened in the translation of indicators from item pool generation to judging and refinement. See Appendix E for questionnaires used in item generation and judging.

Step three requires that once a list of indicators representative of the domain of the construct is compiled, studies to purify the measures must be developed and conducted. At this stage, the list included eight indicators each for reciprocity and responsibility, and seven indicators each for relationship nurturing and reporting. Next, a sample for pilot testing the instrument was identified. The sample used for pilot testing was comprised of stakeholders associated with one local United Way (n=1,150) in the state where the study was being conducted. The large pilot sample was selected following literature that recommends judging by a relevant population should include 100-200 respondents (Clark & Watson, 1995; Haynes, Nelson, & Blaine, 1999). Once the collected data was cleaned, statistical tests were performed to test psychometric properties of the scales. These statistical tests as well as the analysis related to step four, finalizing the scale, are discussed in greater detail in later sections of this chapter.

3.5 SURVEY SAMPLE

In order to address the research questions and hypotheses associated with this study, it was important to identify a population that was able to provide meaningful responses associated with the effectiveness of relationship cultivation strategies, and how these strategies influence relationship evaluations, loyalty and behavioral intentions.

Therefore, the population of interest in this study was identified as nonprofit stakeholders. Further, in order to expand our understanding of how these relationship cultivation strategies might function across stakeholder and nonprofit type, the selection of the respondent pool was given great consideration.

Whereas many nonprofits work within a single mission focus (e.g., healthcare, education, arts), the United Way serves as an intermediary organization, supporting myriad nonprofit types. The organization functions as a charitable coalition builder within communities to address the most pressing quality of life issues facing a given area. For this reason, their work leads them to partner with groups as disparate as neighborhood associations, the faith community, schools, community development corporations and health focused nonprofits, to name a few. In their work, these local United Ways connect individuals with varying community interests to ways to contribute funds, time and talent in support of community-change efforts. For these reasons, the United Way was thought an ideal population for the study of stakeholder attitudes and motivations as it relates to relationship management.

While local agencies operate under the banner of United Way World Wide, each organization stands as its own nonprofit entity. Within any given state, United Way headquarters of varying levels of sophistication exist; however, they do not per se manage the local agencies operating within their state. Local United Ways also vary greatly by staff size, assets and structure. Given this diversity, it was the aim of the researcher to identify a representative group of local United Way organizations within one state for participation in the study. This aim was accomplished by working with the state headquarters to identify potential partners. The statewide president then organized a teleconference to explain the project and followed up with local United Ways that were unable to participate. The researcher then contacted each group individually to determine their interest in participating.

Nine organizations were identified as the initial group of potential partners. If an organization indicated it would not be able to participate, the organization was replaced in the list with a similar organization to assure representativeness. In the end, three organizations declined participation because they already had research instruments in the field or scheduled for release concurrent with the timing of this study. Ultimately, eight organizations with a total of 12,952 stakeholder contacts were confirmed to participate in the full study. One additional organization, with 1,150 stakeholder contacts, was identified for the pilot. While it would have been ideal to random sample from this population, the leadership of the organizations advised that it would not be feasible for their staff to accommodate such a request. Given the robust population size and careful selection of partner organizations, however, it was believed that limited generalizations are tenable.

3.6 PRE-TEST AND PILOT TEST

Prior to pilot testing the instrument, the full questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of United Way staff members and stakeholders, as well as graduate students working in the area of communications. More specifically, the survey link was sent to a list of 35 local United Way executives and communication staff, as well as five doctoral students, on April 30, 2013. Twenty-four individuals responded, completed the full questionnaire and offered input. Feedback from the pre-test led to minor modifications of the instrument in terms of response options, item wording associated with demographic questions and ordering of questions. At this point, it was determined the instrument was ready for pilot testing.

In light of the researcher's desire to develop scales for the measurement of stewardship perceptions, a sufficiently large sample size was needed. On May 3, 2013, the initial pilot test was distributed to the members of one local United Way. Correspondence asking stakeholders to participate was sent in three waves over a period of 14 days. After a sufficient sample size had accumulated (n=250), the researcher downloaded the data and began the cleaning process. At this point, the researcher realized there was an inadvertent omission of one block of measurement items. Given the significance of each block of indicators to scale development and structural model testing, it was deemed necessary to repeat the pilot test with the inclusion of the missing block of indicators.

At this point the researcher identified an additional local United Way for participation and launched the second pilot test on May 21, 2013. Again, correspondence was sent to a list of stakeholder contacts in three waves over a span of 10 days. After achieving an acceptable number of responses (n=209), the researcher downloaded the new data set for cleaning and analysis. The primary concern of the pilot test data analysis was related to how the indicators associated with the construct of stewardship performed. Principal component exploratory factor analysis revealed that indicators associated with each of the dimensions of the construct were not cleanly clustering into the a priori theoretical dimensions. In particular, significant cross-loading concerns were noted with the dimensions of relationship nurturing and reporting. Reliability analysis revealed that each of the theoretically predetermined factors achieved alpha levels exceeding .85.

Further, inter-item correlations were consistently above .35 for each of the indicators within a factor, with the exception of negatively worded items. Additionally, item-to-total statistics demonstrated that the deletion of items did not result in improved reliability. In light of these results, the researcher determined that retaining all indicators for further analysis was the prudent course of action provided the nascent nature of the measurement model development.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As mentioned above, data were collected using Qualtrics survey software via an online platform that allowed the researcher to download the data for analysis in SPSS. The first wave of the survey was distributed to partner United Way stakeholder contacts on June 4, 2013. Data collection was completed on June 24. In light of scheduling conflicts, three local United Ways were able to schedule only two waves of stakeholder correspondence within the pre-determined data collection window. Response rates are discussed in the following chapter.

The final sample of participants for the study included 918 respondents. However, 258 respondents did not complete all items in the questionnaire and were thus deleted. This is likely related to the questionnaire length, which took an average of 18 minutes for respondents to complete. Data for the remaining 660 respondents were downloaded and used as the final study sample.

To test hypotheses and answer research questions, numerous statistical procedures were employed. The plan for data analysis is multi-stepped, but as with all quantitative empirical work, the first steps were to clean the data, then to run descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, mean, standard deviation) and review data for skewness, kurtosis, outliers and assure the data are approximately normally distributed.

The first step in the substantive data analysis process related to development of the stewardship measurement model. Extensive analysis was performed to determine item retention, dimensionality, reliability, criterion validity and acceptability of the model. Substantive tests included rerunning principal component exploratory factor analysis to examine item clustering. Inter-item correlations were again evaluated to assess reliability and internal consistency of the factors. To examine dimensionality, item-to-total correlations were reviewed. Confirmatory factor analysis was then conducted using the covariance matrix to assess criterion validity and model fit.

At this point, it was necessary to develop indices for relationship evaluation measures, loyalty and behavioral intentions. Reliability for each was assessed prior to moving forward. Correlations between latent constructs were run to determine the relationships between variables in the model. ANOVA was used to determine group differences between volunteers and donors. Predictors in the model were tested using multiple regression. Finally, SEM was performed to test the overall model. A list of research questions, hypotheses and the associated statistical tests can be found in Table 3.1. The following chapter describes the findings in detail.

Table 3.1

Research Questions, Hypotheses and Associated Statistical Tests

Hypotheses and Research Questions	**Statistical Test**
RQ1: To what extent do nonprofit stakeholders give the nonprofit organization a favorable rating on the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship?	Descriptive Statistics
RQ2: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to the perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship?	*t*-test
RQ3: To what extent do organizational stakeholders give the nonprofit organization favorable ratings on relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction?	Descriptive Statistics
RQ4: How are the relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction related?	Pearson's *r*
H1a-c. The relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship will have a positive relationship to trust, commitment and satisfaction in the nonprofit organization.	Multiple regression
RQ5: Of the perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship, which are most influential in predicting relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction?	Multiple regression
RQ6: Do volunteers and donors perceive the strategies of stewardship differently in terms of influencing their evaluation of trust, commitment and satisfaction with the nonprofit organization?	Multiple regression
H2: Affective and cognitive loyalty will be positively correlated.	Pearson's *r*
H3a-c: Positive relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction will predict attitudinal loyalty.	Multiple regression
RQ7: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to attitudinal loyalty to the nonprofit organization?	*t*-test
RQ8: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to behavioral loyalty to the nonprofit organization?	*t*-test
RQ9: What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to intentions to support the nonprofit organization?	*t*-test
H4: Loyalty and behavioral intentions are positively correlated.	Pearson's *r*
H5: Attitudinal loyalty will predict behavioral loyalty and intentions to support the organization.	Multiple regression
RQ10: To what extent do positive perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies impact relationship evaluations, loyalty and behavioral intention?	SEM

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter focuses on findings related to the aforementioned hypotheses and research questions focusing on how perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship might lead to positive evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction. Extending previous relationship cultivation research, this study also assesses the predictive power of relationship evaluations in terms of loyalty and behavioral intentions to support a nonprofit organization.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there were a total of 660 study respondents, of which 70% were female and 30% were male. Approximately one-third of respondents were between the ages of 55 and 64 (33%), followed by respondents aged 45-54 (26%). In terms of race/ethnicity, 85% of respondents self-identified as White or Caucasian, while Black or African American respondents accounted for 10% of respondents. A complete report of respondents' gender, race/ethnicity and age can be found in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics for Respondent Key Demographic Variables

Key Categorical Variable	%	*N*[a]
Gender: Male	30	199
Female	60	461
Race/Ethnicity: American Indian/Native American	.3	2
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.2	8
Black/African American	10.3	68
Hispanic/Latino	.6	4
Middle Eastern	.2	1
White/Caucasian	85.3	563
Other	2.1	14
Age [a]: Under 24	1.4	9
25-34	10.8	71
35-44	15.5	102
45-54	26.8	177
55-64	32.6	215
65 and up	11.4	75

Note. [a] *Total N = 660, but not all respondents reported age.*

The majority of respondents, 83% maintained full-time employment, while 9% indicated they were retired. Of the 616 respondents who provided information on their estimated household income for the current year, nearly a quarter reported household income of $150,000 or more (24%). Other frequently identified ranges included 16% at $50,000 to $74,999, 16% at $75,000 to $99,999, and 16% at $100,000 to $124,999. Of the 660 respondents, 81% reported having completed a four-year college degree or more. Table 4.2 provides a full report for these variables.

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics for Employment, Income and Education

Key Categorical Variable	%	N[a]
Employment: Full-Time	83.2	549
Part-Time	4.4	29
Independent Contractor	1.4	9
Unemployed	.6	4
Looking for Work	.3	2
Stay at Home Parent	.6	4
Retired	8.9	59
Other	.6	4
Household Income [a]: Under $25,000	1.5	10
$25,000 - $39,999	4.5	30
$40,000 - $49,999	5.9	39
$50,000 - $74,999	15.5	102
$75,000 - $99,999	16.7	110
$100,000 - $124,999	16.2	107
$125,000 - $149,999	9.7	64
$150,000 and up	23.5	155
Highest Level of Education Completed: Elementary Only	.2	1
High School	1.7	11
Some College	8.5	56
Two Year College Degree	6.4	42
Vocational or Technical School	2.3	15
Four Year College Degree	30.8	203
Some Graduate Work	7.7	51
Masters or Professional Degree	33.8	223
Doctorate or Advanced Graduate Work	8.8	58

Note. [a] *Total N = 660, but not all respondents reported income.*

In order to address questions associated with group differences between volunteers and donors, respondents were also asked to indicate their connection to the United Way. As reported in Table 4.3, respondents primarily self-reported as “donors” (47%) or “both donor and volunteer,” (40%). Given the limited number of respondents who indicated they were volunteer only (4%), research questions and hypotheses addressing group differences will compare donor only respondents, verses individuals who are both donor and volunteer.

Table 4.3

Connection to the United Way

Connection to the United Way	%	N[a]
Donor Only	47.1	311
Volunteer Only	3.5	23
Both Donor and Volunteer	40.2	265
Other [b]	9.2	61

Note. [a] *Total N = 660.* [b] *"Other" category primarily included staff of partner or funded community organizations, and individuals who are no longer associated.*

4.2 FINALIZING THE STEWARDSHIP SCALE

Psychometric data analysis was performed to determine the appropriate indicators to include reliability of these indicators as a measure of the factors, as well as convergent and discriminant validity. The first step in this process was to run principal component exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation. Given the inconclusive findings of the pilot test, it was necessary to first identify how the 35 stewardship items clustered and assess loadings. Based on the eigenvalue over one criteria and the scree plot, the items clustered into a five-factor solution. At this stage, four items with high cross-loadings were deleted and the procedure was completed again. During the second round, five additional indicators with cross-loadings greater than .45, as well as those items that were incorrectly clustering, were removed.

Initial exploratory analysis led to retaining 26 items for further analysis. Prior to moving on to confirmatory analysis, principal component factor analysis with five forced factors was run. Results are found in Table 4.4 below. The five-factor solution accounts for 70% of variance. Clustering of items included seven indicators for relationship nurturing accounting for half (50%) of the variance; five indicators for reporting accounting for 6% of variance; five indicators for responsibility accounting for 6% of variance; as well as a two-factor solution for reciprocity, with four items measuring recognition accounting for 4% of variance, and five items measuring appreciation accounting for 4% of variance. While unexpected, the two separate factors measuring reciprocity are theoretically sound. Kelly's (1998, 2001) conceptualization of reciprocity defined the construct as having both dimensions of appreciation and recognition. In the context of this study, however, it seems these dimensions are actually conceptually distinct separate factors. It is noted that the eigenvalue cut-off for responsibility is .99, which was deemed acceptable given the nascent nature of this research.

Based on the results of EFA, coefficient alpha and inter-item correlations were estimated to determine reliability. Coefficient alpha for all factors is above .80 (see Table 4.4) and inter-item correlations are high, indicating that the items are appropriate representations of the domain for each factor and have internal consistency. Next, dimensionality was assessed by reviewing corrected item-to-total correlations. As reported in Table 4.4, all such correlations are moderate and cluster around the mean, indicating dimensionality requirements are met. At this point in the scale development process, it is prudent to retain as many items as possible, therefore all items were retained for confirmatory factor analysis. This over-inclusive approach decreases the likelihood of a situation-specific scale.

Table 4.4

Stewardship Item Means with Factor Loadings for Five- Factor Solution

Indicator	*M*	*SD*	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Relationship Nurturing (α=.92)	Reporting (α=.89)	Reciprocity/ Appreciation (α=.87)	Reciprocity/ Recognition (α=.82)	Responsibility (α=.87)
REL NURT 4: The organization invites people like me to participate in special events that it holds.	3.99	.93	.74	.73				
REL NURT 5: The organization regularly communicates with people like me.	3.74	.99	.83	.71				
REL NURT 3: People like me receive personalized attention from the organization.	3.46	.97	.69	.71				
REL NURT 1: Supporters only hear from the organization when it needs something. (Reversed)	3.67	1.03	.73	.62				
REL NURT 8: The organization cultivates relationships by letting people like me know what they can do to support its mission.	3.83	.87	.77	.60				
REL NURT 2: The organization is more concerned with its fiscal health than with its relationships with people like me. (Reversed)	3.89	.90	.70	.56				
REL NURT 7: It is easy for people like me to find information related to opportunities to support the organization.	3.75	.86	.74	.53				

Indicator	*M*	*SD*	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Relationship Nurturing (α=.92)	Reporting (α=.89)	Reciprocity/ Appreciation (α=.87)	Reciprocity/ Recognition (α=.82)	Responsibility (α=.87)
REP 6: The organization provides people like me access to its IRS Form 990.	3.23	.84	.63		.77			
REP 8: The organization reports precise accounts of how money is spent.	3.43	.97	.75		.72			
REP 3: The organization provides information about institutional policies.	3.25	.93	.72		.71			
REP 2: The organization discloses to people like me its organizational decisions.	3.25	1.00	.73		.64			
REP 5: It is easy to find financial disclosures, such as annual reports, outlining how the organization is using its resources	3.52	.93	.69		.62			
REC A. 2: The organization consistently thanks me for my involvement.	.30	.81	.79			.78		
REC A. 1: The organization acknowledges my contributions in a timely manner.	4.22	.81	.73			.77		
REC A. 9: The organization demonstrates that it appreciates its supporters.	4.25	.78	.75			.67		
REC A. 3: Because of my involvement, the organization recognizes me as a friend.	4.08	.87	.70			.64		
REC A. 4: The organization is not sincere in its communication with people like me. (Reversed)	4.33	.89	.54			.61		

Indicator	*M*	*SD*	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Relationship Nurturing (α=.92)	Reporting (α=.89)	Reciprocity/ Appreciation (α=.87)	Reciprocity/ Recognition (α=.82)	Responsibility (α=.87)
REC R. 6: The organization effectively acknowledges its supporters.	3.56	.91	.74				.84	
REC R. 5: The organization effectively uses online communication to shine a spotlight on its supporters.	3.56	.93	.75				.82	
REC R. 7: It is easy for someone like me to find out who supports the organization.	3.43	1.00	.67				.61	
REC R. 8: The organization recognizes supporters by highlighting their contributions.	3.72	.88	.64				.59	
RESP 9: The organization is a responsible organization that shares stories of how it fulfills its mission.	4.12	.82	.80					.72
RESP 8: The organization effectively uses video and photography in its communication to tell the story of its work in the community.	3.84	.89	.64					.68
RESP 4: The organization tells people like me what projects it uses its resources for.	3.92	.5	.73					.62
RESP 3: People like me have confidence that the organization will use its resources wisely.	4.21	.82	.64					.59
RESP 7: It is easy for people like me to find information online related to the effectiveness of the organization's work in the community.	3.67	.89	.67					.52

Note. *Measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Cross loadings and factor loadings below .45 suppressed.*

Next, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine if the proposed theoretical structure of items fit the data. There are numerous goodness of fit indices to choose from when determining model fit. The primary indices, however, are RMSEA with values less than .08 indicating reasonable fit; and CFI and TLI above .90 and approaching 1.0 indicating good fit (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; S. Sharma, Mukherjee, Kumar, & Dillon, 2005). Each of these indices is based on a calculation involving chi-square, which should not be significant. However, given that chi-square is sensitive to sample size, this index is not used in contemporary scale development literature as a measure of model fit. Per convention, however, chi-square is reported below.

In order to assess model fit, the author first ran a fully correlated model of all five factors with associated indicators. The model fit chi-square value for the fully correlated model was 1,755.24 (*df*=289), and was significant. As mentioned, however, with a sample size of 660, achieving an acceptable chi-square is unlikely. Instead, to determine model fit, goodness of fit indices were reviewed. The main goodness of fit indices for the model are RMSEA of .09, CFI of .88 and TLI of .87. Given the aforementioned cut-off values, it would seem the model does not fit the data.

In an effort to evaluate possible model fit improvements, the author first tried eliminating indicators with low loadings to improve model parsimony. The indicators deleted reduced each factor to four indicators. The resulting chi-square was 1105.61 (*df*=160). The key goodness of fit indices at this point were RMSEA of .95, CFI of .90 and TLI of .88. For this reason, it was determined that improved model parsimony did not improve model fit, and instead potentially threatened the future utility of the scale for other populations. Thus, the indicators were returned to the model.

Next, the modification index was reviewed to determine if the 26-indicator solution could be improved. Modification indices indicated that correlation of select error terms could dramatically improve model fit. In fact, the addition of five strategic correlations improved model fit to an acceptable level. These correlated error terms resulted in a model chi-square of 1478.99 (*df*=284), with model fit indices of RMSEA at .08, CFI at .90 and TLI of .89. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the model with factor loadings and correlated error terms. This figure also provides evidence of convergent validity, as all standardized loadings were significant and greater than .5 (Bagozzi & Youjae, 1988; Steenkamp & van Trijp, 1991).

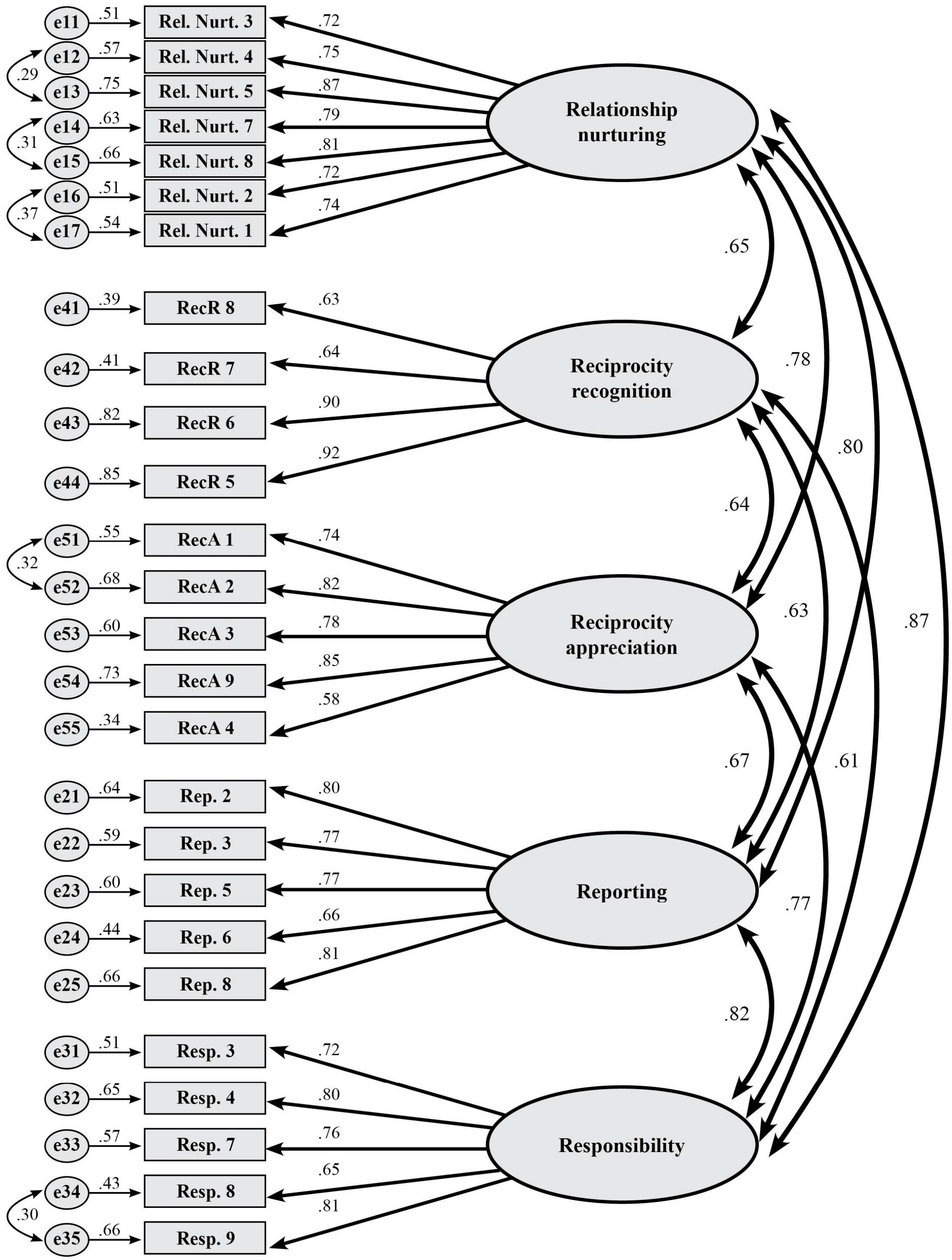

Figure 4.1. Model of stewardship construct with five-factor 26 indicator solution.

Next, discriminant validity was assessed using two methods. First, as seen in Figure 4.1, correlations between constructs do not exceed .86. Further, discriminate validity was assessed by running the model alternating fixing parameters to one, and comparing the fixed model to the unconstrained model. As seen in Table 4.5, the chi-square difference for each is greater than 3.84 and thus significant at the .05 level, providing further evidence of discriminate validity (Bagozzi & Youjae, 1988).

Table 4.5

Discriminate Validity for Stewardship Factors

Construct Pairs	χ^2 difference (*df*)	Correlations
Relationship Nurturing - Reporting	87.51(1)*	.80
Relationship Nurturing - Responsibility	111.71(1)*	.87
Relationship Nurturing - Reciprocity/Appreciation	153.31(1)*	.78
Relationship Nurturing - Reciprocity/Recognition	193.31(1)*	.65
Reporting - Responsibility	123.61(1)*	.82
Reporting - Reciprocity/Appreciation	181.51(1)*	.67
Reporting - Reciprocity/Recognition	198.71(1)*	.63
Responsibility - Reciprocity/Appreciation	205.91(1)*	.77
Responsibility - Reciprocity/Recognition	259.71(1)*	.61
Reciprocity/Appreciation - Reciprocity/Recognition	272.71(1)*	.64

Note. *p<.05.

In an attempt to improve the model fit and parsimony for structural model testing, the author revised the model to a second order factor using the summated scales for each of the five factors and re-ran confirmatory factor analysis. The second order model chi-square is 22.31 (*df*=5). The main goodness of fit indices are RMSEA of .07, CFI of .99 and TLI of .98. Per the above-mentioned thresholds, the second order model does, in fact, fit the data, and thus will be used for model testing.

Once the stewardship scale was fully evaluated for construct validity, it was possible to answer research questions and hypotheses.

4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES RESULTS

***RQ1**: To what extent do nonprofit stakeholders give the nonprofit organization a favorable rating on the four strategies of stewardship?*

The first research question asked how nonprofit stakeholders perceive the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship. As shown in Table 4.6, the data indicate that stakeholders tend to perceive the relationship positively along all five of the relationship cultivation dimensions. Of the five strategies, reciprocity appreciation was the factor that was evaluated most strongly by respondents (*M*=4.23, *SD*=.67), and reporting received the lowest evaluation (*M*=3.34, *SD*=.76). All perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies, however, are above the scale's neutral point. It is also noted that skewness for the reciprocity appreciation variable is slightly above approved limits, indicating a slight right skew. This is likely in light of the overall exceptionally high evaluation of this strategy (*M*=4.23, *SD*=.67).

Table 4.6

Perceptions of Relationship Cultivation Strategies

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Skewness
Relationship Nurturing	3.76	.76	-.612
Reporting	3.34	.76	-.059
Reciprocity Appreciation	4.23	.67	-1.27
Reciprocity Recognition	3.57	.78	-.326
Responsibility	3.95	.69	-.647

Note. Variables measured on 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

RQ2: *What are the group differences between organizational donors and volunteers with relation to their perceptions of the four strategies of stewardship?*

Given that previous literature related to stewardship in the nonprofit context has primarily focused on donor publics, the author also sought to determine group differences between donors and other common organization stakeholders. While the originally proposed research question focused on organizational donors versus volunteers, as reported above, study respondents fell primarily into the categories of donor only, and both donor and volunteer. Therefore, the analysis of group differences proceeds along this delineation of stakeholder types. As seen in Table 4.7, there are significant group differences for all relationship cultivation strategies. In all instances, respondents who self-identified as both donor and volunteer evaluated relationship cultivation strategies higher than respondents identifying as donor only.

Table 4.7

T-test for Group Differences in Perceptions of Relationship Cultivation Strategies

Variable	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*DF*	p
Relationship Nurturing [a]				-8.07	572.84	.000
Donor Only	311	3.53	.75			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.00	.66			
Reporting				-3.49	574	.001
Donor Only	311	3.23	.73			
Donor and Volunteer	265	3.44	.75			
Reciprocity Appreciation				-4.15	574	.000
Donor Only	311	4.14	.69			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.36	.60			
Reciprocity Recognition				-3.95	574	.000
Donor Only	311	3.43	.76			
Donor and Volunteer	265	3.68	.77			
Responsibility				-5.62	574	.000
Donor Only	311	3.81	.68			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.12	.64			

Note: [a]t and df adjusted because variances were not equal.

RQ3: *To what extent do organizational stakeholders give the nonprofit organization favorable ratings on relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction?*

The next research question sought to identify respondents' views on the relationship evaluation strategies. As indicated in previous chapters, two measures of relationship evaluations were included in the instrument. The first scale is taken from public relations literature (Hon & Grunig, 1999) and is comprised of trust, commitment and satisfaction. The second measure was drawn from nonprofit literature (Sargeant & Lee, 2004) and includes dimensions of trust and commitment. As reported in Table 4.8, all scales resulted in sufficiently high reliability, and were not skewed. However, respondents' assessment of relationship evaluation measures in the public relations scales were higher than scales from nonprofit literature. Additionally, when included in predictive models, the Sargeant and Lee scales did not function as well as the Hon and Grunig scales. For this reason, the Sargeant and Lee scales are not used in the remainder of the analysis.

Table 4.8

Relationship Evaluation Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	*SD*	Skewness
Hon & Grunig Scales			
Trust (α=.94)	4.00	.68	-.87
Commitment (α=.93)	4.04	.69	-.81
Satisfaction (α=.94)	4.06	.67	-.72
Sargeant & Lee Scales			
Trust (α=.90)	3.78	.65	-.40
Commitment (α=.83)	3.73	.77	-.31

Note: Variables measured on a 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

RQ4: *How are the relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction related?*

In public relations literature, trust, commitment and satisfaction have typically been included as the outcome variables in models testing the organization-public relationship. In this study, however, they are put forward as antecedents to loyalty and intentions-related outcome variables. For this reason, it is necessary to assess their relationships. As seen in Table 4.9, the factors are highly significantly correlated. Further, principal component factor analysis revealed that the indicators load on a single factor. Given, however, that extant literature theoretically supports these variables as their own factors (e.g., Hon & Grunig, 1999; Waters, 2011), research questions and hypotheses associated with relationship evaluations will deal with each in turn for the following research questions and hypotheses. In the structural model, however, these variables will be incorporated as a single measure of relationship evaluation associated with affect as it influences behavior.

Table 4.9

Correlation Matrix for Relationship Evaluation Variables

Variable	Trust	Commitment	Satisfaction
Trust	1.00		
Commitment	.87*	1.00	
Satisfaction	.89*	.89*	1.00

Note: *p<.001.

H1 a-c: *The relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship will have a positive relationship to trust (H1a), commitment (H1b) and satisfaction (H1c) in the nonprofit organization.*

Based on the public relations literature, the first three hypotheses posited that positive perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies would predict positive relationship evaluations. As seen in Table 4.10, these hypotheses are partially supported. Standardized beta weights suggest that reporting is not a significant predictor of any of the relationship evaluations. Further, reciprocity recognition seems to be a significant negative predictor of relationship evaluations. These finding will be reviewed in greater detail in the following chapter.

RQ5: *Of the perceptions of strategies of stewardship, which are most influential in predicting relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction with the organization?*

The fifth research question sought to identify the best predictors for each of the relationship evaluations. Relationship cultivation strategies account for approximately 70% of the variance in each model as it relates to relationship evaluations. Specifically considering the relationship evaluation of trust, standardized beta weights suggest that relationship nurturing β = .37 (p<.001) and responsibility strategies β=*.36* (p<.001) were the strongest predictors. For commitment, however, the best predictor was relationship nurturing β = .50 (p<.001), followed by reciprocity appreciation β = .29 (p<.001). In terms of satisfaction, relationship nurturing β = .44 (p<.001) was the strongest predictor, and reciprocity appreciation and responsibility showed equal predictive power, β = .29 (p<.001). Table 4.10 provides unstandardized and standardized beta weights for all predictors in each of the models.

Table 4.10

Multiple Regression of Perceptions of Relationship Cultivation as Predictors of Relationship Evaluations

	Trust			Commitment			Satisfaction		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Constant	.54	.10		.60	.10		.66	.10	
Relationship Nurturing	.34	.03	.37*	.46	.04	.50*	.39	.03	.44*
Reporting	.02	.03	.02	-.03	.03	-.03	-.03	.03	-.03
Reciprocity Appreciation	.28	.03	.28*	.31	.03	.30*	.28	.03	.29*
Reciprocity Recognition	-.12	.03	-.14*	-.11	.03	-.13*	-.07	.03	-.09*
Responsibility	.36	.04	.36*	.24	.04	.24*	.28	.04	.29*
Adjusted R^2	.70			.69			.70		
F	309.18*			294.95*			304.23*		

Note: *p<001.

RQ6: *How are volunteers and donors different in their perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies as it relates to influencing their evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction with the nonprofit organization?*

Recognizing that group differences in relationship cultivation strategies exist between stakeholders who are donors only, compared to those who are both donors and volunteers, it is necessary to determine how those perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies may also differently predict positive relationship evaluations. RQ6 seeks to explore these differences. Each of the models for predictors of relationship evaluations is addressed in turn.

The first model looks at group differences for predictors related to relationship evaluations of trust. As seen in Table 4.11, the predictors in the model account for 62% of variance in trust for donors $F(5, 305) = 104.94$, $p < .001$, and 68% of variance in trust of respondents identified as both donor and volunteer $F(5, 259) = 1117.53$, $p < .001$. Reporting is not a significant predictor of trust for either stakeholder type. For both groups, relationship nurturing was the strongest predictor, followed by responsibility and reciprocity appreciation. Note, however, that the standardized beta weights vary by stakeholder type.

Table 4.11

Multiple Regression of Relationship Cultivation Perceptions Predicting Trust by Stakeholder Type

Variable	Trust – Donor Only			Trust – Donor & Volunteer		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	.72	.15		.59	.16	
Relationship Nurturing	.27	.06	.31*	.36	.05	.40*
Reporting	-.02	.05	-.02	.06	.04	.07
Reciprocity Appreciation	.26	.05	.27*	.27	.05	.27*
Reciprocity Recognition	-.11	.04	-.13**	-.12	.04	-.16*
Responsibility	.41	.06	.42*	.30	.05	.33*
Adjusted R^2	.62			.68		
F	104.94*			117.53*		

*Note: *p<.001; **p<.05.*

The next model tests the predictive power of relationship cultivation strategies in terms of respondents' satisfaction with the organization. As reported in Table 4.12, predictors in the model account for 66% of variance for donor only $F(5, 305)= 120.49$, $p<.001$, and 65% of variance for respondents who self-identified as both donors and volunteers $F(5, 259)= 97.35$, $p<.001$. Once again, reporting is not a significant predictor. For donors, the relationship cultivation strategies with the greatest predictive power are, in order, responsibility $\beta = .39$ ($p<.001$), relationship nurturing $\beta = .36$ ($p<.001$) and reciprocity appreciation $\beta = .27$ ($p<.001$). Reciprocity recognition is not a significant predictor. In terms of respondents who identified as both donors and volunteers, however, the predictive power of relationship cultivation strategies are differently prioritized. For these stakeholders, relationship nurturing strategies $\beta = .48$ ($p<.001$) accounts for nearly half the predictive power, followed by reciprocity appreciation $\beta = .26$ ($p<.001$) and responsibility $\beta = .21$ ($p<.001$). Reciprocity recognition is a significant negative predictor $\beta = -.09$ ($p<.05$) of satisfaction for individuals who are both donors and volunteers.

Table 4.12

Multiple Regression of Relationship Cultivation Perceptions Predicting Satisfaction by Stakeholder Type

Variable	Satisfaction – Donor Only			Satisfaction – Donor & Volunteer		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	.82	.14		.95	.17	
Relationship Nurturing	.31	.05	.36*	.41	.05	.48*
Reporting	-.08	.05	-.09	.02	.04	.03
Reciprocity Appreciation	.25	.05	.27*	.25	.05	.26*
Reciprocity Recognition	-.05	.04	-.06	-.07	.04	-.09**
Responsibility	.36	.06	.39*	.19	.05	.21*
Adjusted R^2	.66			.65		
F	120.49*			97.36*		

*Note: *p=.000; **p<.05.*

The final model considers group differences in terms of the predictive power of relationship cultivation strategies for respondents' commitment to the organization. Predictors in the model account for 65% of variance in relationship evaluations of commitment for donor only $F(5, 305)= 114.54$, $p<.001$, compared to 60% of the variance for donors and volunteers $F(5, 259)= 81.48$, $p<.001$. Standardized beta weights suggest the predictive power of perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies for donors is the strongest for relationship nurturing $\beta = .43$ ($p<.001$), followed by responsibility $\beta = .33$ ($p<.001$) and reciprocity appreciation $\beta = .28$ ($p<.001$). Reporting is a significant negative predictor $\beta = .11$ ($p<.05$) and reciprocity recognition is not a significant predictor. Conversely, predictive power of variables for stakeholders who are both donors and volunteers is the strongest for relationship nurturing $\beta = .51$ ($p<.001$), followed by reciprocity appreciation $\beta = .26$ ($p<.001$) and responsibility $\beta = .14$ ($p<.05$). Reciprocity recognition is a significant negative predictor $\beta = -.13$ ($p<.05$) and reporting is not a significant predictor. A complete list of unstandardized and standardized beta weights for this model can be found in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Multiple Regression of Relationship Cultivation Perceptions Predicting Commitment by Stakeholder Type

Variable	Commitment – Donor Only			Commitment – Donor & Volunteer		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	.68	.15		1.12	.18	
Relationship Nurturing	.3	.06	.43*	.44	.06	.51*
Reporting	-.10	.05	-.11**	.05	.04	.06
Reciprocity Appreciation	.27	.05	.28*	.25	.05	.26*
Reciprocity Recognition	-.06	.04	-.07	-.10	.04	-.13**
Responsibility	.33	.06	.33*	.12	.06	.14**
Adjusted R^2	.65			.60		
F	114.54*			81.47*		

*Note: *p=.000; **p<.05.*

H2: Affective and cognitive loyalty will be positively related.

Next, based on research from marketing and advertising (e.g., Fournier& Yao, 1997; Colombo & Morrison, 1989; Petrick, 2004), H2 posited that affective and cognitive loyalty are positively correlated constructs that measure attitudinal loyalty. In fact, the correlation between these factors in the context of this study is .87 ($p<.001$); therefore, H2 is supported. As seen in Table 4.14, respondents evaluated cognitive loyalty (*M*=4.01, *SD*=.76) only slightly higher than affective loyalty (*M*=3.91, *SD*=.75), with both being well above the midpoint of the scale. Given the theoretical support grounded in the literature, as well as high correlations and similar respondent evaluations in the context of this study, these factors have been combined into a single measure of attitudinal loyalty for the remainder of hypotheses testing and research question analyses (α=.93). Table

4.14 shows means and standard deviations for both affective and cognitive loyalty, as well as the combined single measure of attitudinal loyalty.

Table 4.14

Descriptive Statistics for Attitudinal Loyalty

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Skewness
Affective Loyalty	3.92	.75	-.69
Cognitive Loyalty	4.01	.76	-.85
Attitudinal Loyalty	3.83	.79	-.55

***H3a-c**: Positive relationship evaluations of trust (H3a), commitment (H3b) and satisfaction (H3c) will predict attitudinal loyalty.*

Marketing literature has shown that the variables of trust, commitment and satisfaction (e.g., Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007) predict loyalty; however, public relations literature has not yet tested such models using scales developed for the field. Therefore, it is proposed that in the nonprofit context, this will hold true (thus, H3 a-c). As seen in Table 4.15, these hypotheses are supported. The variance explained by predictors in the model is 77% $F(3, 656)=766.22$, $p<.001$. The strongest predictor of attitudinal loyalty is satisfaction, followed by commitment and finally, trust.

Table 4.15

Multiple Regression of Relationship Evaluations Predicting Attitudinal Loyalty

Variable	Attitudinal Loyalty		
	B	*SE B*	β
Constant	-.13	.09	
Trust	.21	.05	.19*
Commitment	.31	.05	.28*
Satisfaction	.48	.05	.45*
Adjusted R^2	.77		
F	766.22*		

*Note: *p=.000.*

RQ 7-9: *What are the group differences between organizational stakeholders with relation to attitudinal loyalty (RQ7), behavioral loyalty (RQ8) and intentions (RQ9) to support the nonprofit organization?*

Noting that previous literature has yet to explore these loyalty and intentions variables as part of assessments of the nonprofit organization-public relationship, the author thought it imperative to evaluate group differences for attitudinal loyalty, behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions to support the organization, thus RQ 7-9. While other scales were drawn from the literature, the behavioral intentions measure was developed for the current research context. This intentions measure is comprised of ten indicators (α = .93). Two indicators generally inquire about the respondents' likelihood to participate in any organizational activity and intent to participate in any organizational activity within the next six months. The remaining eight indicators asked respondents likelihood to participate in specific activities including volunteering, donating, signing a petition, participating in fundraising activities and encouraging friends to participate in organizational activities.

As seen in Table 4.16, there were significant differences between stakeholder audiences for all variables. Although respondents who were both donors and volunteers evaluated all three variables higher than their donor-only counterparts, both stakeholder types evaluated these constructs highly, with means above the midpoint of the scale. Note, however, that behavioral intentions for donors (*M*=3.18, *SD*=.71) is very close to the midpoint.

Table 4.16

T-test for Group Differences of Loyalty and Intentions by Stakeholder Type

Variable	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*DF*	*p*
Attitudinal Loyalty				-9.24	574	.000
Donor	311	3.69	.68			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.20	.63			
Behavioral Loyalty				-8.46	574	.000
Donor	311	3.78	.72			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.27	.65			
Behavioral Intentions[a]				-15.59	573.25	.000
Donor	311	3.18	.71			
Donor and Volunteer	265	4.02	.58			

Note: [a]t and df adjusted because variances were not equal.

***H4:** Behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions are positively correlated.*

Based on similarities in measurement items, H4 proposed that behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions would be highly correlated. The correlation between constructs is .69 ($p<.05$) and, thus, H4 is supported. While this is a high correlation, it does not exceed the .70 threshold and therefore analysis will proceed with caution as it relates to combining these variables as a composite scale.

***H5:** Attitudinal loyalty will predict behavioral loyalty and intentions to support the organization.*

Given the moderately high correlation between behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions, the author thought it prudent to analyze the predictive power of attitudinal loyalty for the variables separately, as well as for a composite measure. As seen in Table 4.17, standardized beta weights for all models indicate that attitudinal loyalty is a predictor of behavioral loyalty β=.89 (p<.001) and behavioral intentions β=.70 (p<.001), as well as for a composite behavioral outcome variable β=.86 (p<.001). Variance explained by the model indicates that attitudinal loyalty accounts for 79% of variance in behavioral loyalty *F*(1, 658)=2455.08, *p*<.001, 49% in behavioral intentions *F*(1, 658)=636.96, *p*<.001, and 74% of variance in a composite behavioral outcome variable *F*(1, 658)=1911.91, *p*<.001.

Table 4.17

Multiple Regression for Attitudinal Loyalty as a Predictor of Behavioral Outcomes

	Behavioral Loyalty (α = .92)			Behavioral Intentions (α = .91)			Behavioral Outcome (α = .93)		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Constant	.31	.08		.54	.12		.43	.08	
Attitudinal Loyalty	.94	.02	.89*	.77	.03	.70*	.86	.02	.86*
Adjusted R^2	.79			.49			.74		
F	2455.08*			636.96*			1911.91*		

Note: **p*<.001.

RQ10: *How does stewardship relate to loyalty and behavioral intentions as predicted by stakeholder relationship evaluations?*

To better understand the relationship management process in the nonprofit context, the author specified a structural model that begins with the exogenous latent construct of stewardship, leading to endogenous variables of affect/relationship evaluations (trust, commitment, satisfaction), followed by attitudinal loyalty (cognitive and affective loyalty) and behavioral intentions (behavioral loyalty and behavioral intentions). RQ10 explores this model in greater detail. Stewardship is presented in the structural model as a five factor latent variable per scale development findings reported at the beginning of this chapter. Based on the high correlations and clustering of relationship evaluation scales (reported in RQ4), the author included these relationship evaluations as a measure of affect with three factors. The remainder of the structural model is tested as proposed in Figure 1 at the end of the Literature Review chapter.

Structural equation modeling was used to estimate relationships in the theoretical model. Before moving forward, data were checked for outliers, skewness and kurtosis. All multivariate normality assumptions were met. There were no missing data. A total of 27 parameters are to be estimated. Research indicates that approximately 10 respondents per parameter estimated is need, thus the sample size of 660 is more than sufficient. At this point, it was deemed appropriate to move forward with maximum likelihood parameter estimation using the AMOS statistical package. Chi-square for the hypothesized model was 370.01 (*df*=51). Although significant, it is presumed with a sample size of 660, it is unlikely that the author would ever find a model that results in a chi-square that is not significant. However, findings also indicate an initial RMSEA of .10, CFI of .96 and TLI of .95. In this case, a large value of RMSEA indicates that the model does not fit the data.

Reviewing modification indices demonstrated that correlating residuals on stewardship variables of reporting and reciprocity recognition would improve model fit. Chi-square for the model with correlated error terms is 336.35 (*df*=50). Further, this model adjustment improves the RMSEA to .09, CFI to .97 and TLI to .96. Even with these modifications, the goodness of fit indices are just shy of approved cut-off values (RMSEA<.08) for the hypothesized model, and therefore it would seem the model does not fit the data. See Figure 4.2 below for parameter estimates. Disturbance and residuals have been removed for reporting purposes, but were included in the analysis.

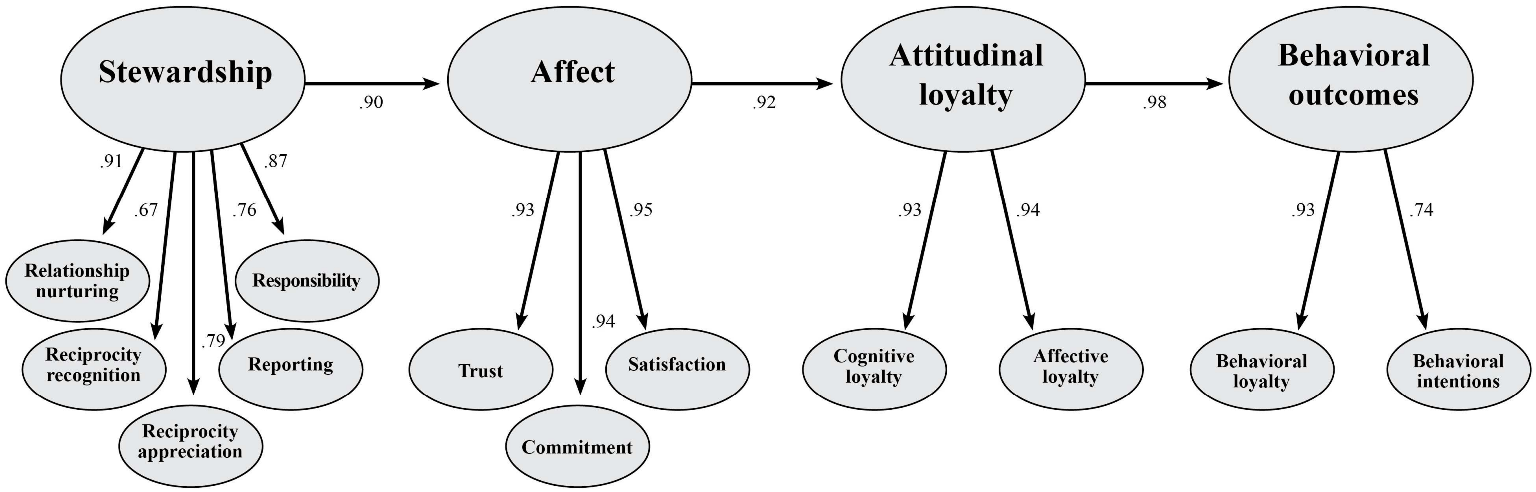

Figure 4.2. Structural model testing proposed hypotheses.

Given the lack of model fit, the author next conducted a post-hoc modification. To evaluate the direct and indirect effect of stewardship on the endogenous variables, the author re-estimated the model with regression paths running directly from stewardship to each of the other latent constructs in the model. Goodness of fit indices indicated that the mediated model is a better fit for the data (x^2 = 988.8, *df* = 51; RMSEA = .17; CFI=.89; TLI=.86).

Therefore, a potentially stronger model was investigated. The first step was to evaluate the composition of loyalty. As indicated in the literature review, the evolution of the measurement for loyalty is ongoing and there are three primary ways the variable is construed. Some scholars view the construct as attitudinal loyalty only (cognitive and affective loyalty), others as behavioral loyalty only, while still others believe it to be a composite of both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. To make some initial assessments of how the loyalty variable may be best represented in this context, principal component factor analysis was completed. Findings revealed that indicators associated with the dimensions of loyalty load onto a single factor. Given that research has identified three theoretically distinct dimensions, the author created a new factor named loyalty, and included the three dimensions as separate factors in the model.

Next, the author evaluated the behavioral intentions measure to assess the most appropriate way to measure the variable in the context of this study while retaining items with utility to researchers in other areas of communication, marketing and nonprofit research. With these concerns in mind, it was thought the best approach was to include only the two indicators of behavioral intentions that were generalizable to any situation.

These measures are commonly used behavioral intentions measures in the theory of planned behavior literature.

Employing structural equation modeling to test the fit of the revised model (with covariance of two stewardship residuals) found a significant improvement in model fit. The chi-square for the model is 347.67 (*df*=61). The goodness of fit indices for the revised structural model are RMSEA of .08, CFI of .97 and TLI of .96. All indices meet or exceed the cut-off values indicating the model is a plausible fit for the data. The revised model with standardized parameter estimates can be found as Figure 4.3 below. Standardized and unstandardized regression coefficients are provided in Table 4.18. Error terms have been removed from the graphical model, but are reported in Table 4.19.

Table 4.18

Regression Coefficients for Revised Structural Model

Model Parameters	*B*	*SE B*	β
Stewardship – Affect	.85*	.03	.90
Affect – Loyalty	.99*	.03	.92
Loyalty – Behavioral Intentions	.78*	.04	.72
Stewardship – Relationship Nurturing	1.00 [a]		.91
Stewardship –Reporting	.84*	.03	.76
Stewardship –Reciprocity Appreciation	.77*	.02	.79
Stewardship –Reciprocity Recognition	.76*	.04	.67
Stewardship –Responsibility	.87*	.03	.87
Affect – Commitment	1.00[a]		.94
Affect – Satisfaction	.97*	.02	.95
Affect – Trust	.97*	.02	.93
Loyalty –Cognitive	1.00 [a]		.93
Loyalty – Affective	1.057*	.02	.94
Loyalty – Behavioral	1.02*	.03	.91
Behavioral Intentions – BI1	1.00 [a]		.93
Behavioral Intentions – BI2	1.10*	.04	.87

Note: *p<.05; [a] fixed parameter to set the scale of the latent variable.

Table 4.19

Residual Variance for Revised Structural Model

Parameter	Estimate	*SE*
Stewardship	.48	.03
Affect	.08	.01
Loyalty	.08	.01
Behavioral Intentions	.28	.02
Relationship Nurturing	.10	.01
Reporting	.25	.02
Reciprocity Appreciation	.17	.01
Reciprocity Recognition	.33	.02
Responsibility	.12	.01
Trust	.05	.004
Satisfaction	.05	.004
Commitment	.06	.004
Cognitive	.08	.01
Affective	.07	.01
Behavioral	.11	.01
BI1	.09	.02
BI2	.23	.02

While the model fit is acceptable, it is important to note the high standardized loadings for factors associated with affect and loyalty (exceeding .95). This provides some evidence of a need for further research to identify the best measurement models, or perhaps scales, to measure these constructs. Further, the high coefficients between latent variables, provides some evidence that multicollinearity is a problem. This is likely due to the similarity in construct measurements drawn from the literature. However, given the lack of model fit when the model was estimated with paths leading directly from stewardship to each of the variables (which estimated a negative path coefficient from stewardship to behavioral outcomes), it is reasonable to assess that the paths from relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship to behavioral intentions are affected by affect and loyalty. More research is needed to understand this relationship in depth.

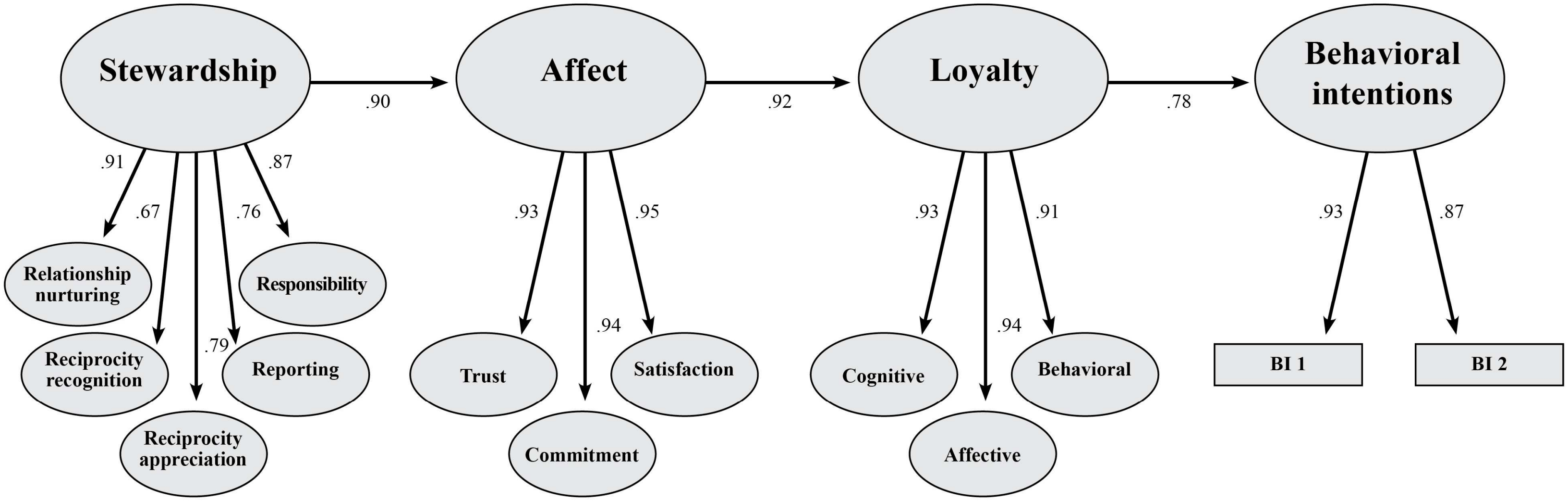

Figure 4.3. Revised structural model.

Findings from this study offer numerous insights for the study of relationship management and cultivation in the context of nonprofit stakeholders and public relations communication strategies. The first aim of the study was to validate a scale for evaluating perceptions of stewardship strategies. Results provide early evidence of a five-factor model comprised of relationship nurturing, reporting, responsibility, reciprocity appreciation and reciprocity recognition. While previous studies have construed reciprocity as a single factor, rigorous item pool generation and judging, followed by the use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, supports the separation of this construct into two distinct latent variables.

A second aim of this study was to expand stewardship-related research beyond the donor-centric focus of previous nonprofit public relations research. Findings indicate that donor-only respondents evaluated each of these relationship cultivation strategies differently than respondents who self-identified as both donor and volunteer. Further, while all of the stewardship variables, except for reporting, were significant predictors of relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction, their significance and predictive power varied by stakeholder type.

This dissertation also adds to our understanding of the organization public relationship by extending existing organization public relations models incorporating relationship cultivation strategies and relationship evaluations, to include variables of loyalty and behavioral intentions. Findings provide early evidence that positive relationship evaluations do, in fact, lead to loyalty to the organization and intentions to support the organization. A structural model was advanced to test the theoretical relationships among variables. Post-hoc modification and analysis led to a model that fit the data, laying the groundwork for future investigations of the relationships among variables. The next chapter will discuss these findings in greater detail, including their implications for both theory and practice. This final chapter will also discuss limitations and suggest avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to advance our understanding of relationship management in the nonprofit public relations context and address gaps in the literature related to the ways in which stewardship affects nonprofit stakeholder attitudes, and motivates loyalty and behavior. To accomplish these ends, the study first validated a scale to measure perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship. Next, differences in nonprofit stakeholder types were explored related to perceptions of stewardship strategies, relationship evaluations and the predictive power of positive evaluations of stewardship strategies for trust, commitment and satisfaction. Finally, the author sought to extend existing public relations models of the organization-public relationship to include assessments of loyalty and behavioral intentions based on research from the fields of marketing, advertising and nonprofit communications.

Results from the study's online survey revealed numerous findings that warrant discussion, elaboration and further exploration through future research. This chapter first discusses key findings and conclusions in terms of implications that impact both the academy and the profession. The author then reviews limitations of the study and concludes with recommendations for building on these findings and suggests avenues for further exploration of relationship management for nonprofit public relations.

5.1 STEWARDSHIP

For over two decades, scholars have asserted that demonstrating good stewardship, or responsible management of organizational resources, is key to relationship cultivation with organizational stakeholders (e.g., Greenfield, 1991; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kelly, 1998, 2001). While a handful of scholars have begun to investigate the role of stewardship as a relationship cultivation strategy that predicts positive relationship evaluations (e.g., Waters, 2011a; Patel & Weberling, 2011; Worley & Little, 2001) two key gaps in the literature exist. First, scales to measure the construct of stewardship have yet to be rigorously developed and validated. Second, this limited body of literature primarily focuses on fundraising and the donor-organization relationship. An important aim of this dissertation was to address these gaps.

To address the first concern related to a need for a validated scale for measuring perceptions of relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship, the author followed the latent variable scale development steps proposed by Churchill (1979) and updated by Netemeyer, et al. (2003). This process is commonly used in other communications-related fields such as marketing, but has yet to be employed in the development and validation of scales to measure perceptions of stewardship strategies. This process resulted in a revision to the conceptualization of the dimensions of stewardship strategies.

In 1998, Kelly proposed that stewardship was an essential fifth step in public relations process models. In her conceptualization, stewardship was comprised of four factors: relationship nurturing, reporting, responsibility and reciprocity. Although the frequently cited definition of reciprocity (e.g., Kelly, 2001; Waters, 2011a) includes dimensions of appreciation and recognition, this study found that personalized demonstrations of appreciation, and public recognition for organizational support, are actually conceptually distinct factors. The demarcation of these factors is important for several reasons. First, as will be discussed in greater detail below, appreciation is an important predictor for positive relationship evaluations, whereas recognition is often a negative predictor for relationship evaluations. In other words, in the context of this study, respondents' relationship evaluations decreased when perceptions of organizational recognition were high.

Another reason why it may be important to measure appreciation and recognition as separate variables is related to the use of reciprocity in scholarly inquiry. A review of the ways in which reciprocity is measured in existing research provides an interesting dichotomy. On the one hand are studies that content analyze web-based organizational communication (e.g., Patel & Weberling, 2011; Waters, 2011b), which use measures for reciprocity focused on public recognition of supporters, such as lists of donors and stories highlighting contributors support. Alternately, investigations employing survey methods typically ask respondents to assess the reciprocity strategy in terms more akin to appreciation. Items used to measure reciprocity in these surveys typically focus on feeling the organization is sincere, that it regards supporters as friends and that supporters are consistently personally thanked (e.g., Waters, 2008, 2009b), rather than supporters' reaction to public recognition (e.g. naming rights). Based on findings from this study, organizational stakeholders may perceive and evaluate these strategies differently. More specifically, evaluations of public acknowledgement strategies (recognition) are markedly different from assessments associated with being thanked (appreciation). This distinction will be important in the ongoing development of our understanding of the role of stewardship strategies in terms of relationship evaluations.

Additional insights related to other strategies of stewardship were also gained in the scale development validation process. For example, while measurement indicators from multiple previous survey-based studies were included, many did not survive scrutiny and were deleted from the final scale. Common problems with these variables were cross loadings of indicators among responsibility, reporting and relationship nurturing. This finding provides evidence that previously used scales may not be the best representation of the domain and dimensions of the construct. Additionally, item generation led to the inclusion of variables related to access to information (e.g. REP 5 "It is easy to find financial disclosures, such as annual reports, outlining how the organization is using its resources"), as well as those that addressed online communication and alternate story forms (e.g., "The organization effectively uses video and photography in its communication to tell the story of its work in the community"). The retention of these indicators after analysis highlights the importance of organizations providing such information and incorporating web-based channels of communication in developing their strategies, as well as the importance of perceptions of these strategies among stakeholders.

After the scale validation process was complete, the author turned to analyzing stakeholder evaluations of the five stewardship strategies (RQ1) and investigating group differences by stakeholder type (RQ2). Respondents evaluated all of the strategies positively, indicating that the organization is effectively demonstrating stewardship to its stakeholders. Respondent evaluations by stakeholder type, however, revealed that there were significant differences between donor only respondents and those who self-identified as both donor and volunteer. This finding indicates that the donor-centric focus of stewardship-related research is insufficient to fully understand the nonprofit public relations landscape.

Overall, respondents who were both donor and volunteer evaluated each of the stewardship strategies higher than their donor-only counterparts. One reason for this may be that the higher positive evaluations for those stakeholders who donate both time and money correlates with greater engagement and, perhaps, awareness. Alternately, it could be that these stakeholders decided to commit to a higher level of engagement (e.g. donate time, as well as money) because the organization effectively demonstrated good stewardship of its resources in the past. It is difficult to postulate the reason and temporal order for this finding without further research.

5.2 ORGANIZATION-PUBLIC RELATIONSHIP

This dissertation also sought to build on our understanding of the role of stewardship in the relationship management process, and replicate existing stewardship-related OPR research in a new context (Waters, 2011a). To this end, the newly validated stewardship scales were tested in terms of their ability to predict positive relationship evaluations. Since Hon & Grunig (1999) advanced scales to measure trust, commitment and satisfaction, they have become popular relationship quality measures in the public relations literature (e.g., Bruning & Galloway, 2003; Ki & Hon, 2007) and, thus, were included in this research.

Before examining the effectiveness of stewardship strategies in predicting positive relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction, the author first analyzed respondents' ratings of each of the evaluation measures (RQ3) and explored the relationships among measures (RQ4). Respondents in this study reported high levels of trust in the organization as measured with dimensions of competency, dependability and integrity. Commitment to the organization was also high, as was satisfaction. Next the author examined the relationships among these variables and found an extremely high correlation. Further analysis indicated that scale items that were expected to measure distinct factors were, in fact, conceptually similar. It is possible that these scales provide an overall measure of affect, or generally positive feelings about the organization, in the context of this study. Given, however, that the literature identifies these factors as distinct variables, the author proceeded with an examination of the relationships among stewardship strategies and each of the relationship evaluation scales separately.

To better understand the relationships among stewardship strategies and positive relationship evaluations, three hypotheses and a research question were proposed. H1 (a-c) posited that positive evaluations of stewardship would predict positive relationship evaluations, while the research question inquired as to which strategies were most influential (RQ5). These hypotheses were partially supported. Overall, relationship nurturing was the best predictor for trust, commitment and satisfaction. Appreciation and responsibility strategies also influenced positive relationship evaluations. These results indicate that nonprofit organization should be diligent in their efforts to keep stakeholders actively engaged with the organization, personally thank stakeholders for their support, and share stories of how the organizational mission is being met. Recognition negatively predicted positive relationship evaluations, which may mean the organization could improve their public acknowledgements of supporters, or that stakeholders are less inclined to be influenced by recognition strategies. Reporting, however, was not a significant predictor. The lack of significance for reporting strategies may mean that communications related to financial accountability and institutional policies is less important to stakeholders. Alternately, it may mean that, in the context of this study, reporting strategies were insufficiently executed by the organization to assess their importance as a predictor of relationship evaluations. More research is needed in other organizational contexts to assess the ramifications of this finding for research and practice.

It is also interesting to note the group differences in effectiveness of the stewardship strategies for influencing positive relationship evaluations (RQ6). Relationship evaluations of trust, commitment and satisfaction of respondents who indicated they were both donor and volunteer were most influenced by relationship nurturing strategies, and to a lesser degree by appreciation for their support and demonstrations of responsibility. Respondents who self-identified as donor only, however, were influenced in different ways by the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship. These donor-only respondents' levels of trust and satisfaction were most influenced by responsibility strategies, or demonstrations that the organization effectively and wisely uses its resources to fulfill its mission. In the organizational context, this indicates that communicating with donors how their fiscal gifts have been used to fulfill the organizational mission are valued and important. Positive evaluations of trust and satisfaction were also influenced by relationship nurturing strategies and appreciation, but not recognition or reporting.

Perhaps the most surprising finding related to group differences with relationship to the influence of stewardship strategies on relationship evaluations, however, is that donor-only respondents' levels of commitment were most influenced by relationship nurturing strategies, followed by responsibility and appreciation. When compared to the responses of their counterparts who identified as both donor and volunteer, similarities are noted. This finding and comparison provides evidence that to move donors to higher levels of engagement with the organization, it may be important to communicate more opportunities to actively support the organization's mission. Future research should explore this in greater detail to determine if higher levels of communication concerning ways to support the organization convert donor-only stakeholders to those who donate both time and money.

Findings from this series of hypotheses and research questions provide several key insights for academics studying the organization public relationship in a nonprofit context, as well as practitioners working in nonprofit public relations. First, reinforcing earlier claims that previous measures of reciprocity as a single construct are insufficient, strategies of appreciation and recognition show dramatically different influence. Therefore, scholars seeking to further explore stewardship as part of a relationship management paradigm would be well advised to split these variables into separate factors. Further, practitioners seeking to improve relationship evaluations by stakeholders should work to better understand how stakeholders wish to be thanked, be it publicly (recognition) or more personally and privately (appreciation).

These results also indicate that the focus on the donor-organization relationship is insufficient. The viability and longevity of a nonprofit is often dependent not only on fiscal gifts, but also on the support of volunteers who contribute their time and talents. While both stakeholder groups positively evaluate this relationship, the findings tell us that communication strategies should vary more than has previously been explored based on the audience. Overall, however, engaging stakeholders in more conversation and providing additional opportunities to participate in fulfilling the organizational mission (relationship nurturing) is important for maintaining positive relationship outcomes and may be a way to move donors to higher levels of engagement. This may reflect a stakeholder need to *feel involved,* not just be aware of mission fulfillment and feel appreciated. However, more research is needed to understand the underlying reasons for this phenomenon.

5.3 EXTENDING THE OPR MODEL

Armed with this knowledge, practitioners and scholars are better informed about the influence of stewardship strategies on relationship quality measurements. However, this study sought to push the envelope by extending the organization-public relationship model to include measures of loyalty and behavioral intentions. After all, what does a positive relationship evaluation mean if it is not also possible to link these evaluations to loyalty to the organization and intentions to participate in opportunities to support the organization in the future? Thus, a new working model was proposed to explore these relationships.

Drawing on nonprofit, marketing and advertising literature, the author included measurement scales for loyalty intended to assess dimensions of affective, cognitive and behavioral loyalty. Additionally, indicators to measure intentions to participate in future opportunities to support the organization were developed and included with standard behavioral intentions measures drawn from the theory of planned behavior. Based on previous research, it was hypothesized that affective and cognitive loyalty would be positively correlated as a measure of attitudinal loyalty (H2). This hypothesis was supported and the measures were combined to form a single variable for analysis.

Further, given marketing literature that has explored the connection between trust, commitment and satisfaction and loyalty dimensions, it was hypothesized that positive relationship evaluations would influence attitudinal loyalty (H3a-c). Findings indicated that, in the context of this study, satisfaction was the best predictor for attitudinal loyalty. To a lesser (although still statistically significant) degree, trust and commitment also predicted attitudinal loyalty. In other words, findings indicated that when organizational stakeholders enjoy dealing with the organization, they are happy in their interactions and feel as though they benefit from the relationship (satisfaction), they are more likely to feel an emotional connection to the organization (affective loyalty dimension) and believe that supporting the organization provides value to the community and is preferable to other similar organizations (cognitive loyalty dimension).

Recognizing that positive stakeholder attitudes and beliefs alone are not enough to sustain a nonprofit, the author explored how these variables might lead to desirable outcomes of behavioral loyalty and intentions to support the organization. Before looking at the relationship between these variables it was important to understand how stakeholders evaluated each of these variables and understand if there were group differences by stakeholder type (RQ7-9). Findings indicate that on average, respondents felt a sense of behavioral loyalty to the organization and reported intentions to support the organization in the future. However, once again demonstrating the need to include volunteers as an important stakeholder type, significant group differences emerged between donors (only) and stakeholders who were both donor and volunteer. The greatest divide in these groups is found in the specific measures related to intentions to support the organization. Results indicated that donor-only respondents were significantly less likely to have plans of supporting the organization in the near future than their counterparts who were both donor and volunteer. In fact, intentions measures for donor-only respondents are disconcertingly close to the scale's neutral point, whereas measures of intentions for both donor and volunteer respondents are nearly a full point higher. Future research in this area is needed to understand why this might be the case.

The measures included in this study to assess intentions to support the organization and behavioral loyalty to the organization seemed to be similar at face value. For this reason, the author predicted that they would be highly correlated, forming a measure of desired behavioral outcomes (H4). While this hypothesis was supported, the aforementioned findings related to variations in behavioral intentions and behavioral loyalty led the author to consider them both as a composite measure and as separate variables related to attitudinal loyalty's influence (H5). While attitudinal loyalty was a significant predictor in all instances, findings revealed an interesting difference in the predictive power. It was discovered that attitudinal loyalty had more influence on behavioral loyalty than either the behavioral intentions measures, or the composite behavioral outcome measure. One reason for this may be the specificity of measures included in the behavioral intentions scale (e.g. intentions to volunteer, donate, participate), compared to more general behavioral loyalty measures (e.g. planning to continue to support). Again, additional research would help practitioners and scholars better understand this phenomenon.

5.4 TESTING A NEW THEORETICAL MODEL

While investigating the relationship between variables in increments highlighted many interesting nuances of the effectiveness of stewardship strategies and how these strategies might influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, it was important to test the overall theoretical model of relationships among variables (RQ10). Drawing on research from the fields of public relations, marketing and nonprofit communications, a theoretical model was specified and tested using structural equation modeling. Findings indicated an imperfect fit between the initial model and the data.

Returning to the literature, the author made modifications to the theoretical conceptualization of the model. Specifically, the literature on loyalty is inconclusive as to the order and structure of affective, cognitive and behavioral loyalty. Some scholars propose loyalty as a single construct with three factors; thus, the loyalty construct was re-specified in this manner. Additionally, significance of findings from this study related to intentions to support the organization led the author to seek a way to measure this outcome variable that offered opportunities for future exploration in different communication and organizational contexts. For this reason, intentions measures were revised to generally assess intentions to support the organization in the near future using the two indicators drawn from the theory of planned behavior. The revised model fit the data. Interpretation of the model and areas for further inquiry are discussed below.

Attitudes are complex phenomena that have been measured, theorized and analyzed in myriad ways throughout the history of communication studies. In the model put forward in this dissertation, attitude was measured as affect or emotion-based assessments associated with relationship evaluations (trust, commitment, satisfaction), and in terms of feelings of loyalty (affective, cognitive, behavioral loyalty) to the organization. While regression analysis provided evidence that relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship influenced these attitudinal variables, mulicollinearity issues from structural equation modeling may indicate that the scales used for relationship evaluations and loyalty may not the best scales for assessing the relationships among variables. This is important for three reasons. First, simple regression analysis is beneficial for understanding nuances among theoretically-related variables; however, more sophisticated analysis (e.g. structural equation modeling) is needed to understand overall conceptual models. Next, the influence of the communication strategies of stewardship have a direct and influential impact on stakeholder attitudes toward an organization. More research is needed, however, to determine how these variables are related to one another and function in the context of an extended organization-public relations model. Based on the results of the current study, Hon and Grunig's (1999) extensively cited scales for measuring relationship quality may be effective as outcome measures, however inappropriate measures if they are to be included in models predicting behavioral outcomes such as loyalty and intentions. Finally, while it is asserted here that loyalty to the organization is an important factor in relationship management research, the measures included in this study need additional exploration in the nonprofit public relations context. Future research could help to identify the best measurement scales for assessing the nonprofit stakeholder reaction to relationship cultivation strategies as it relates to loyalty outcomes.

The proposed theoretical model lays the groundwork for future studies that extend our understanding of what relationship quality may mean in terms of behavioral outcomes for nonprofit organizations. Regression analysis clearly demonstrated that stewardship strategies are effective predictors of positive attitudes. Additionally, findings clearly indicated that these positive attitudes lead to behavioral outcomes. The fact that the revised structural model (Figure 4) fit the data is also potentially groundbreaking. More research is needed, however, to better understand the best path and measurement between stewardship strategies and active engagement in terms of both theory and practice.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

As with all research, this study has limitations. First, the respondents in the study were purposively selected and stakeholders of a single organization in one southern state. Additionally, the lack of variance in respondent demographics was not anticipated. The majority of respondents were Caucasian, reported household incomes above $100,000, had full-time jobs and had attained a minimum of a four-year degree. While these results are not uncommon in nonprofit stakeholder research, the composition of the sample may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Another limitation of the study is based on the data collection procedure. First, the length of the survey and large number of respondents who started but did not complete the questionnaire leads to concerns of respondent fatigue. Findings from this study, however, offer ways to decrease the number of indicators necessary in studies of stewardship, and point to key areas to focus on for future research, which will be described in greater detail below.

Survey items associated with relationship evaluations, loyalty and intentions were drawn from existing research. Certainly there are many ways these questions could be asked. In fact, multicollinearity issues between relationship evaluations and loyalty indicate that this is an area for further research and possible scale development.

Additionally, questions were entered in blocks by variable rather than randomly ordered. It is possible that this lack of randomization led to response bias.

Although structural equation modeling offers a statistical means to test theoretical models, experimental research is needed to establish temporal order of perceptions of stewardship strategies and relational, attitudinal and behavioral outcome measures. Further, survey research offers a snapshot of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors at a given time; longitudinal research is needed to assess how these factors might change over time, particularly as it relates to loyalty to the organization.

Despite this study's limitations, it is important to acknowledge that this is the first organization-public relationship study that looks at the differences between stakeholder types (donor only, donor and volunteer), as well as extends previous models to include behavioral loyalty and intentions. Findings advance our understanding of relationship management in nonprofit public relations and provide a framework for future exploration.

5.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

Findings from this study offer numerous new research streams that can benefit both nonprofit public relations practitioners and scholars working in the area of relationship management. First, the study offers a new working scale for assessing perceptions of stewardship strategies. Further testing of this scale through replication studies with other populations could help to assure non-situation specific construct validity. Additionally, altering the trait and method of indicators in the scale would allow for multi-trait, multi-method (MTMM) evaluation of convergent and discriminate validity. A better understanding of the nomological network for stewardship should also be explored. One way to accomplish these ends would be to test the new stewardship scale with different relational outcome measures, such as fairness. Alternately other attitude measures, such as those included in the theory of planned behavior, could be tested as moderators between perceptions of stewardship strategies and behavioral intentions.

Other methods of inquiry will also help add depth to our understanding of the path from relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship to loyalty and intentions to support the organization. For instance, qualitative interviews with stakeholders could shed light on behavioral motivators. Experiments to test the causal relationship between specific stewardship messages and behavioral outcomes is also worth exploration. Further, additional surveys of stakeholders for varying organization types and with greater respondent demographic profiles could help add depth to our understanding of the relationship management process. Additionally, research investigating the donor commitment (e.g. one-time donor, annual donor, major gift donor) and volunteerism level (e.g. hours committed, types of volunteer support) would help to shed light on the differences between these important stakeholder types.

The communication context of stewardship strategies and the role varying channels play in influencing behaviors provides other interesting avenues for exploration. Considering differences between mailed and electronic communication, and paid advertising versus earned media (e.g. news coverage), for example, could help organizations better determine how organizational resources should be focused. Further, experiments to test the effectiveness of specific stewardship messages appearing on different web-based platforms (e.g. email, website, blog, social network) would provide much needed insight for practitioners. Additionally, comparing asymmetrical persuasion-focused stewardship strategies (e.g. reporting and responsibility) versus symmetrical dialogue-stimulating strategies (e.g. relationship nurturing) with different populations would provide interesting insights into relationship development and management for communication scholars and practitioners.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This study contributes to our understanding of the relationship management paradigm as it relates to nonprofit public relations in three key areas. First, a new five-factor scale to measure perceptions of the relationship cultivation strategies of stewardship was validated. Second, significant group differences between organization stakeholder types provide evidence that different communication strategies may prove more effective for donors, compared to stakeholders that are both donors and volunteers. And, third, a new working model that extends previous organization-public relations models to include variables of loyalty and intentions was advanced. These findings expose theoretical, measurement and practical applications that warrant further research.

The nonprofit sector is an important part of the national economy and contributes in meaningful ways to the quality of life for residents of the communities where the organizations work. Thus, assessing not only how stakeholders perceive their relationship quality with a nonprofit, but also the paths that lead to loyalty and behavioral support is invaluable. More specifically, understanding the effectiveness of communication strategies; how these strategies shape opinions, beliefs and attitudes; and in turn, how these relational evaluations lead to increased loyalty and intentions to support the organization, are vital for sustaining viability of nonprofits. Further, understanding these processes in the nonprofit context opens opportunities for scholars working in other areas of public relations research.

Of utmost importance to nonprofit organizations is the inclusion and focus on volunteers as a key organizational stakeholder. As evidenced in this study, group differences exist in terms of donor-only and both donor and volunteer stakeholders. The findings show that while it is important to share stories related to the organization's successes (responsibility) and demonstrate appreciation for support (reciprocity appreciation), it is perhaps more important to open dialogue with stakeholders and provide opportunities for the public to help in fulfilling the organization's mission (relationship nurturing), beyond simple funds solicitations. While these findings are limited to the specific population queried in this study, they are important and warrant additional research. This is particularly important in light of findings that demonstrate intentions to participate in future support of the organization is increased when stakeholders have higher relationship evaluations, which are best predicted by positive perceptions of relationship nurturing stewardship strategies.

Building on previous research, findings from this study provide support for the idea that public relations strategies focused on demonstrating stewardship are key ingredients in developing positive relationship evaluations (attitudes), creating cyclical relationships (loyalty) and stimulating mobilized engagement (intentions). While the different combinations of attitude scales and loyalty measures may need parsing or further refinement, the contribution of a validated scale for measuring stewardship advances our ability to approach this work. By continuing to explore various communication strategies' effectiveness in motivating participation behaviors, researchers can help bridge the gap between the often-disparate areas of research and practice.

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APPENDIX A – INTRODUCTION LETTER

Proposed Subject Line: Request for Assistance

Proposed Copy for Correspondence:

Dear Friends,

Your local United Way has partnered with a researcher at the University of South Carolina to assess and improve our communications with you. It is our goal to develop a long-term relationship with you and hope that you will take a few moments to participate in this important study.

Participation should take approximately 15-20 minutes. In addition to your valuable insights, a generous donor has agreed to contribute to your local United Way, $1 for each completed questionnaire.

To complete the questionnaire, simply click on the link below, or copy and paste it into your browser.

https://usccmcis.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3C4SXc6wrFM8bHv

As always, we thank you for your time and are grateful for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

(PLEASE INSERT YOUR SIGNATURE HERE)

APPENDIX B – INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. For your planning purposes, participation should take approximately 15 - 20 minutes of your time. It is important that once you begin you have allocated sufficient time to answer all questions because partially completed questionnaires cannot be used.

The study is being conducted by a researcher at the University of South Carolina in conjunction with your local United Way. The purpose of this research is to better understand your awareness and involvement with the United Way. Our goal is to improve our communications with people like you, with a particular focus on online channels of communication.

Before you begin, please read the information below and indicate whether you agree to participate in this study. As a reminder, to thank you for your time, $1 will be donated to your local United Way for completion of the questionnaire.

The research should not put you in any unusual physical or psychological risk. Your participation in this study is voluntary, but we hope you will take part. All of your responses within the context of this study are completely confidential. In fact, we are required by federal government and university rules to protect participants' confidentiality (see: http://orc.research.sc.edu/irb.shtml).

If you have questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you should direct them to Thomas Coggins, Director of the USC Office of Research Compliance (803-777-7095, tcoggins@mailbox.sc.edu).

By proceeding you are indicating that you have read this statement and agree to participate in this study. If at any point during the study you determine you do not want to continue, you may stop and your responses will be not be used.

APPENDIX C – INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

April 30, 2013

Ms. Geah Pressgrove
Mass Communications &
Information Science School of
Journalism & Mass Communications
Coliseum Room 3032
Columbia, SC 29208

Re: **Pro00025621**
Study Title: *Making Stewardship Meaningful for Nonprofits: Stakeholder Motivations in the Context of Emergent Technologies*

FYI: University of South Carolina Assurance number: FWA 00000404 / IRB Registration number: 00000240

Dear Ms. Pressgrove:

In accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(**2**), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on **4/29/2013.** No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, you must inform this office of any changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the study.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the USC Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, please contact Arlene McWhorter at arlenem@sc.edu or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Johnson
IRB Manager

cc: Brooke Weberling

APPENDIX D – SURVEY INSTRUMENT

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The organization acknowledges my contributions in a timely manner.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization consistently thanks me for my involvement.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Because of my involvement, the organization recognizes me as a friend.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization is not sincere in its communication with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The organization effectively uses online communication to shine a spotlight on its supporters.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization effectively uses online channels to acknowledge its supporters	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It is easy for someone like me to find out who supports the organization.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization recognizes supporters by highlighting their contributions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization demonstrates that it appreciates its supporters.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The organization informs people like me about its successes.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization discloses to people like me its organizational decisions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization provides information about institutional policies.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization provides information about how its resources were used.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It is easy to find financial disclosures, such as annual reports, outlining how the organization is using its resources.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The organization provides people like me access to its IRS Form 990.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization effectively uses online communication to report how contributions are used to support its mission	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization reports precise accounts of how money is spent.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization reports specific examples of how people are helping to fulfill its mission.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The organization considers people like me when deciding how to use its resources.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization uses its resources for projects that are against the will of its supporters.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
People like me have confidence that the organization will use its resources wisely.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization tells people like me what projects it uses its resources for.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization effectively uses online channels to keep me informed about its impact in the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The organization acts ethically in its dealings with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It is easy for people like me to find information online related to the effectiveness of the organization’s work in the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization effectively uses video and photography in its communication to tell the story of its work in the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization is a responsible organization that shares stories of how it fulfills its mission.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Supporters only hear from the organization when it needs something.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization is more concerned with its fiscal health than with its relationships with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
People like me receive personalized attention from the organization.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization invites people like me to participate in special events that it holds.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization regularly communicates with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The organization effectively uses online communication channels to let people like me know about upcoming events.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
It is easy for people like me to find information related to opportunities to support the organization.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The organization cultivates relationships by letting people like me know what they can do to support its mission.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This organization treats people like me fairly and justly.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Whenever United Way makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way can be relied on to keep its promises.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe that United Way takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel very confident about United Way's ability to fulfill their mission.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Sound principles seem to guide United Way's behavior.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way does not mislead people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am very willing to let United Way make decisions for people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think it is important to watch United Way closely so that it does not take advantage of people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that United Way is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I can see that United Way wants to maintain a relationship with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is a long-lasting bond between United Way and people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Compared to other organizations, I value my relationship with United Way more.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would rather work together with United Way than not.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have no desire to have a relationship with United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

I feel a sense of loyalty to United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I could not care less about United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am happy with United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Both United Way and people like me benefit from the relationship.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most people like me are happy in their interactions with United Way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship United Way has established with people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most people enjoy dealing with United Way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way fails to satisfy the needs of people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel people like me are important to United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

In general, I believe that nothing of value has been accomplished between United Way and people like me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I read all the materials United Way sends me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Supporting United Way is very important to me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would not encourage others to support United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I share the views espoused by United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way does not reflect my views.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel I can influence policy with United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find myself influenced by United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am very loyal to United Way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
United Way is one of my favorite organizations to support.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
My supporting United Way is not very important to me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Supporting the United Way is high on my list of priorities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I look forward to receiving communications from United Way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I do not enjoy the content of communication from United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Communications from United Way are always informative.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The relationship I have with United way is something I am very committed to.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The relationship I have with United Way is something I intend to maintain.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The relationship I have with United Way deserves maximum effort to maintain.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. I intend to participate in United Way activities in the near future.

- ❍ Strongly Disagree
- ❍ Disagree
- ❍ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ❍ Agree
- ❍ Strongly Agree

How likely is it that you will participate in United Way activities in the next six months?

- ❍ Very Unlikely
- ❍ Unlikely
- ❍ Undecided
- ❍ Likely
- ❍ Very Likely

How likely are you to participate in the following United Way online communication channels?

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Undecided	Likely	Very Likely	Already Participate
"Like" on Facebook	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
"Follow" on Twitter	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Join the email listerv	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

If you are considering participating in United Way activities, how likely would you be to do each of the following in the next six months?

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Undecided	Likely	Very Likely
Sign-up to volunteer with the United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Make a financial contribution or sign-up for a payroll deduction through the United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Sign a petition or participate in advocacy efforts for United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Participate in an event.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Raise additional money by asking family or friends to donate.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Participate in organized fundraising events.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Recruit friends or others to participate in United Way activities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Share information about United Way activities on my own social media channels.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Donate physical goods to support United Way activities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

For the following items, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I support United Way because I am sure I am giving to a good organization.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe that supporting United Way is preferable to other similar organizations.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe that United Way provides the best value for its supporters' contributions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The loyalty of supporters to United Way is based on very good reasons.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel a strong loyalty to United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel an emotional connection to United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like the performance of United Way in my community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

I feel calm with the existence of United Way over time.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am planning to continue to support United Way long-term.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I make positive comments about United Way to my friends.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Even though I know there are many other charities, I always support United Way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am planning to continue supporting United Way over other charities in my community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Please indicate your connection to the United Way? (Please check one.)

❍ Donor
❍ Volunteer
❍ Both Volunteer and Donor
❍ Other, please specify: ____________________

Do you personally know anyone who has received support through a United Way program? (Please check all that apply.)

- ❑ I do not know anyone who has received support through United Way programs.
- ❑ Me
- ❑ My immediate family (mother, father, siblings)
- ❑ My extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)
- ❑ Friends
- ❑ Classmates or co-workers
- ❑ Acquaintances
- ❑ Other; Please specify: ____________________

How frequently do you read information from the United Way online?

- ❍ Every day
- ❍ Every few days
- ❍ Every week
- ❍ Every few weeks
- ❍ Monthly
- ❍ Less often than monthly
- ❍ Never

If Never Is Selected, Then Skip To How would you rate your overall sat...

On what channels are you likely to read or view this information? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Website
- ❑ Emailed newsletter
- ❑ Facebook
- ❑ Twitter
- ❑ YouTube
- ❑ Other, please specify: ____________________

Do you recommend these sources to colleagues or friends?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Why or why not?

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with communication from your local United Way?

- ❍ Very Dissatisfied
- ❍ Dissatisfied
- ❍ Neutral
- ❍ Satisfied
- ❍ Very Satisfied

Just a few more questions now. For the next few questions, please tell us a little about your general online habits.

Generally speaking, which online tool do you use most frequently to find information you are seeking? (Please select one.)

- ❍ News Websites
- ❍ Organizational Websites
- ❍ Facebook
- ❍ Twitter
- ❍ Photo Sharing Sites (e.g. Flicker)
- ❍ Video Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube)
- ❍ Linked-In
- ❍ Email Newsletters
- ❍ Blogs
- ❍ Place Based Applications (Foursquare/Yelp)
- ❍ Wikis
- ❍ Social Bookmarking (del.icio.us)
- ❍ Other, please specify ____________________

Approximately how much time do you spend leisurely reading or viewing content on online platforms such as these in an average day? (Please enter hours and minutes with a decimal separating. For example, two hours and 15 minutes, should be entered as 2.15)

Hours.Minutes

What is your primary social network?

- ❍ Facebook
- ❍ Twitter
- ❍ Other, please specify: ____________________

Approximately how many "friends" or followers do you have in your primary social network?

For the final questions, would you please tell us a bit about yourself.

How many civic or community organizations—like the Kiwanis Club, PTA or League of Women Voters—do you support as a volunteer and/or donor? (Please enter a number below.)

Please indicate your gender:

- ❍ Male
- ❍ Female

How would you classify yourself? (Please check one.)

- ❍ American Indian / Native American
- ❍ Asian/ Pacific Islander
- ❍ Black / African American
- ❍ Hispanic / Latino
- ❍ Middle Eastern
- ❍ White / Caucasian
- ❍ Other, please specify: ____________________

What is your age?

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ Elementary school only
- ❍ Some high school, but did not finish
- ❍ Completed high school
- ❍ Some college, but did not finish
- ❍ Vocational or Technical School
- ❍ Two-year college degree / A.A / A.S.
- ❍ Four-year college degree / B.A. / B.S.
- ❍ Some graduate work
- ❍ Completed Masters or professional degree
- ❍ Completed doctoral degree or advanced graduate work

How would you describe your current employment status?

- ❍ Employed full-time
- ❍ Employed part-time
- ❍ Independent contractor
- ❍ Unemployed
- ❍ Looking for work
- ❍ Student
- ❍ Stay-at-home parent
- ❍ Retired
- ❍ Other, please specify: ______________________

What do you expect your 2013 household income from all sources before taxes will be?

- ❍ Under $25,000
- ❍ $25,000 - $39,999
- ❍ $40,000 - $49,999
- ❍ $50,000 - $74,999
- ❍ $75,000 - $99,999
- ❍ $100,000 - $124,999
- ❍ $125,000 - $149,999
- ❍ More than $150,000

Please indicate your local United Way.

- ❍ United Way of Clarendon County
- ❍ United Way of Kershaw County
- ❍ United Way of Lancaster
- ❍ United Way of the Midlands
- ❍ United Way of the Piedmont
- ❍ United Way of Sumter, Clarendon & Lee Counties
- ❍ United Way of York County
- ❍ Other, please specify: ____________________
- ❍ United Way of Greenville County
- ❍ United Way of Pickens
- ❍ United Way of Georgetown
- ❍ United Way of Horry
- ❍ Trident United Way

Do you have any thoughts, questions, suggestions or comments related to this study?

Thank you for taking part in this study. A contribution will be made to your local United Way.

Be sure to advance to the next screen so that your responses will be entered.

APPENDIX E – INSTRUMENTS FOR ITEM POOL GENERATION AND JUDGING

Wave One: Item Generation

PAGE ONE:

Stewardship has emerged in recent years as a buzzword in nonprofit communications. Scholars researching this concept have taken initial steps to define stewardship with the hope of making it more accessible for measurement, application and education purposes. In these initial conceptualizations **stewardship is comprised of four parts: reciprocity/recognition, responsibility, reporting and relationship nurturing**.

While basic definitions of these four component parts of stewardship have been developed, to date no validated measurements have been created to thoroughly investigate this concept. **This preliminary exploration is a first step in identifying what items might be associated with each of these dimensions of stewardship.**

We are asking you, as a nonprofit leader, to provide us additional insight to assure that future measurement tools accurately reflect stewardship in the sector. On the following page, you will be asked to carefully read and consider each of the definitions of the four dimensions of stewardship as defined by leading researchers in the field. Then **you will be asked to list three ways a nonprofit organization might demonstrate this dimension of stewardship.**

Remember, there are no wrong answers. We are simply seeking your expert insights on how these dimensions of stewardship might operate in relation to the work you do to fulfill your mission.

Participation is voluntary, but I would really appreciate your help. At no point will you be asked for your name assuring your complete anonymity in responses.

Participation should take no more than 15 minutes. Also, please remember that I will follow-up with you in two days for the second wave of the study where you will be asked to react to a list of items that have been generated by your nonprofit peers.

PAGE TWO
Please read the following definitions carefully and provide three ways a nonprofit might demonstrate this dimension of stewardship.

Responsibility: acting in a socially responsible way; keeping promises to important publics; conveying how resources are used to support the organization's mission; meeting legal and ethical requirements; something organizations do to fulfill their mission and then demonstrate to the public to prove they are good stewards.

Reporting: an organization explaining how organizational assets are used; precise descriptions or quantifiable statements concerning mission fulfillment and demonstrating accountability; meeting legal and ethical requirements; providing updates on goal achievement.

Reciprocity: demonstrating evidence of gratitude; acts of appreciation; acknowledgement of public support or displays of sincerity and friendship between an organization and its publics.

Relationship nurturing: maintaining regular contact between an organization and its publics by providing personalized attention; initiating and/or participating in dialogues with various publics; providing stakeholders an opportunity to engage in mission fulfillments; expanding current involvement of individuals or publics into long-term relationships.

PAGE THREE

Thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this exploratory study of nonprofit stewardship.

Please remember that I will follow-up with you in two days for the second wave of the study where you will be asked to react to a list of items that have been generated by your nonprofit peers.

Wave 2: Item Pool Pruning

PAGE ONE:
Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this study intended as a first step in developing measurement scales to increase our understanding of the concept of stewardship.

As you may remember, **stewardship is comprised of four parts: reciprocity/recognition, responsibility, reporting and relationship nurturing**.

On the following page you will be asked to review a list of items generated from your response to the previous wave and those of your peers working in the nonprofit sector. In many instances, the responses have been reworded to make them more generalizable for varying nonprofit types. **Please re-read the definitions of each dimension of stewardship and let us know how each of the items should be classified in terms of these dimensions.**

Remember, there are no wrong answers. We are simply seeking your expert insights on how these dimensions of stewardship might operate in relation to the work you do to fulfill your mission.

Participation is voluntary, but I would really appreciate your help. At no point will you be asked for your name assuring your complete anonymity in responses.

Participation should take no more than 15 minutes.

PAGE TWO (Note: Response options were randomized in the final instrument)
Please read the definitions again, and use them to determine which dimension of stewardship each of the items listed below fall into.

Responsibility: acting in a socially responsible way; keeping promises to important publics; conveying how resources are used to support the organization's mission; meeting legal and ethical requirements; something organizations do to fulfill their mission and then demonstrate to the public to prove they are good stewards.

Reporting: an organization explaining how organizational assets are used; precise descriptions or quantifiable statements concerning mission fulfillment and demonstrating accountability; meeting legal and ethical requirements; providing updates on goal achievement.

Reciprocity: demonstrating evidence of gratitude; acts of appreciation; acknowledgement of public support or displays of sincerity and friendship between an organization and its publics.

Relationship nurturing: maintaining regular contact between an organization and its publics by providing personalized attention; initiating and/or participating in dialogues with various publics; providing stakeholders an opportunity to engage in mission fulfillments; expanding current involvement of individuals or publics into long-term relationships.

Responsibility

- Newsletters with success stories featuring recent programmatic success
- Videos chronicling the history of the organization
- Blogs from the director telling how the mission is being fulfilled
- Endorsements from third party sources such as Charity Navigator
- Easy to find statements of organizational mission and vision on their website
- Pictures of service recipients receiving a gift from the organization posted on social media
- Information about policy or legislative issues that might affect the nonprofit sector or a particular organization
- Website links to news coverage appearing in local or national news related to a recent activity of the organization
- Testimonials from beneficiaries identifying how the support of the organization impacted their life or community
- Images posted online of the staff and board of directors volunteering at a community event
- A press release recounting how funds from a recent fundraising campaign were used
- Using social media to show the inner-workings of the organization and highlight how staff spends their time working to fulfill the organizational mission each day.
- Using Geotracking (e.g. Foursquare) to post online when staff are working in the community highlighting the service area of the organization

Recognition

- Feature stories posted online highlighting the contributions of volunteer(s)
- Stories spotlighting donors for their contributions to an organization
- Listings of community partners or event sponsors on an organizational website.
- Correspondence thanking volunteers and donors for their contributions
- Videos of donors telling why they contributed to an organization
- Images from luncheons to thank major sponsors and/or model volunteers posted on social media
- Regular email updates sent to key stakeholders thanking them for making particular programs possible with images of beneficiaries
- Naming of events or facilities in honor of major donors, advocates and/or volunteers
- Awards honoring exemplary volunteer service
- Highlighting honorariums for staff training made in the name of distinguished donors
- Dedicating a portion of online social media communications each month to thank-a-thons highlighting the contributions of community partners

Reporting

- Presence of an annual report and pertinent financial disclosures on an organizational website

- Reports about how much money from each donation is used for programs related to the organizations mission
- Social media posts associated with allocation of funds to community programs
- Pie charts and graphs showing how organizational gifts were used
- Specifics on the number of volunteer hours donated and how they helped the organization reach its goals
- Audited financial reports emailed out to donors annually
- Online access to IRS 990 filings
- News releases and news stories with transparent and clearly written account of how funds were spent/distributed
- Easily accessible information related to executive and staff salaries
- Inclusion of financial information in email newsletters

Relationship Nurturing

- Regular updates about upcoming events on Facebook, Twitter or Linked-In
- Website links to connect with an organization's social media channels
- Feedback forms and email queries to gain stakeholders views on how the organization is performing
- Email invitations to participate in upcoming events
- Downloadable mobile apps, online contests or games for the public to participate in
- Emails soliciting volunteer or advocacy support, or donations
- Lists or recommendations of how someone can take steps to support the organization's mission
- Solicitations to join the organization's mailing list or become a member
- Contact information to connect with specific staff members at the organization
- Personalized donation requests to aid in supporting a program of the organization

PAGE THREE

Thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this exploratory study of nonprofit stewardship.

If you would like a copy of the results, please email geahpressgrove@gmail.com.