

"Flower Beds in Holland"
Vincent Van Gogh, 1883

JPNA

JOURNAL OF PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT AFFAIRS

Spring 2017
Volume 3 Issue 1

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- Diversity and Philanthropy: Expanding the Circle of Giving by Lilya Wagner
- Bring Back the Bureaucrats by John J. Dilulio, Jr.

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Research Article

A Comparative Analysis of Two Streams of Implementation Research

Stephen Roll – Washington University in St. Louis

Stephanie Moulton – Ohio State University

Jodi Sandfort – University of Minnesota

Increased pressure for evidence-based practices in policymaking and administration has led to the growth of a new research stream of implementation science. Little is known about how this new stream of research compares with scholarship on policy implementation within public administration. This paper provides a comparative review of more than 1,500 journal articles on policy and program implementation published between 2004-2013. Using bibliometric analysis and a content analysis of abstracts, implementation articles within public affairs journals and in the emerging implementation science stream are analyzed in terms of their content, methods, and focus. Following a multi-level implementation framework, this analysis considers the level at which research is taking place within the different venues of implementation research. Through this systematic review, this paper provides new insights about the current state of research, opening up new avenues for scholars to substantively engage with and contribute to this important area of study.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Implementation Science, Policy Implementation

Within public administration, the topic of policy implementation has a complex and controversial intellectual history (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002; Goggin, Bowman, Lester, & O'Toole, 1990; O'Toole, 2000). On the one hand, the implementation of public policies can be viewed as a component of mainstream public management and administration research. The exploration of topics such as human resources, budgeting practices, performance measurement, networks and alternative governance structures, and privatization strategies provide insights about how agencies contribute to, or deviate from, successful policy outcomes (Moynihan, 2008; Rainey, 2014). Yet, the advent of a new generation of public policy schools in the 1970s proclaimed implementation as a "new" topic of scholarly exploration (Allison, 1972; Easton, 1979; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). Rather than starting from the organization as the unit of analysis, this stream of scholarship started with a specific policy, isolating the implementation dimensions of policy outcomes in relation to other causal factors (Bardach, 1977; Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). During the 1980s and 1990s, significant attention was paid towards developing a generalizable model of policy implementation (DeLeon, 1999; Goggin et al., 1990; O'Toole, 1993). However, this scholarly attention has faded in the last ten to fifteen years within the core disciplines of public administration and political science.

At the same time, growing demand by public officials for the adoption of evidence-based practices in areas such as education, health care, and social services has led to an increasing focus on the implementation dynamics of these research-based programmatic interventions in other fields. Saetren (2005) offered some evidence of this growing trend: During the period of 1985 to 2003, 72 percent of the nearly 2,500 scholarly publications mentioning "implementation" in the manuscript title or abstract were published in journals outside of public administration, public policy, or political science--a proportion much higher than in earlier periods. The growth in interest around implementation has been accompanied by a new stream of research known as "implementation science," which has blossomed in recent years and seeks to unpack the factors that lead to the successful implementation of evidence-based programs

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and practices, particularly for healthcare interventions (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005; Greenhalgh, Macfarlane, Bate, & Kyriakidou, 2004; Meyers, Durlak, & Wandersman, 2012). While many of the programs being studied take place in public settings or are enabled by public policy, this program implementation literature is for the most part divorced from prior studies of policy implementation (Nilsen, Stahl, Roback, & Cairney, 2013).

The purpose of this manuscript is to systematically compare implementation research taking place within the new scholarly stream of implementation science to the body of implementation literature within public affairs. We build from prior comparative studies of implementation scholarship that trace trends in the intellectual scope, focus, and/or methods of published implementation literature (Saetren, 2005; 2014; O'Toole, 1986, 2000), and assess the extent to which research taking place in both streams is situated across multiple levels of the implementation system. The study of implementation within public affairs has theoretically embraced a multi-level framework of governance, where the outcomes of public policies and programs are best understood as resulting from multiple levels within a larger system (Berman, 1981; Hill & Hupe, 2014; Lynn, Heinrich, & Hill, 2001; Robichau & Lynn, 2009; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975; Winter, 2003). Similar multi-level frameworks have been proposed for the new study of implementation science, but there are worries about whether or not the predominant theories or methods support this more holistic approach (Nilsen et al., 2013). Little is known empirically about the extent to which research studies on implementation are situated across multiple levels of the governance system. Our study addresses this gap by examining the degree to which current policy and program implementation literature is situated at multiple levels of these systems and identifying the relationships between the level of analysis with the content, focus, and methods of published research.

To achieve these aims, we conduct a systematic review of research published in scholarly journals indexed by the Social Science Citation Index (SSI) from 2004 to 2013. From the pool of more than 15 million articles, 1,507 articles are extracted that include the terms “policy implementation” or “program implementation” in the title, abstract, or key words. We code the articles based on whether they are published in a public affairs journal, a core implementation science journal, or a journal outside of those research streams. We then conduct a content analysis of the abstracts to assess patterns in the policy areas, methods, and levels of analysis used in implementation research. To help validate our abstract coding and to contextualize differences in findings within and across multiple levels, we conduct a more in-depth review of a randomly selected subsample of 100 full articles.

The findings demonstrate interesting differences and similarities between the two streams of research. The amount of implementation research conducted in both streams appears to be accelerating over the decade under study, which is reflective of more general trends in implementation research outside these streams. In implementation science, the content areas examined are predominantly health and education, while there is more heterogeneity of topic areas in public affairs. Interestingly, neither stream consistently mentions particular policies as their analytical focus and, while there is diversity in research methods, the use of mixed methods, which is arguably the most important way of studying the complex dynamics of policy and program implementation, is not common in either stream. Further, over a third of the articles published in the last decade contribute findings relevant only to specific programs, the least generalizable level of analysis for those interested in understanding implementation occurring in a broader system. In contrast, only 15 percent of articles published in the last decade produce findings that cross multiple levels of the implementation system. Multi-level analyses are more common in implementation science articles than in public affairs articles,

however they still comprise less than one-fifth of the total. These findings can help inform avenues for future research across both streams.

A “New” Study of Implementation Science

The history of implementation scholarship within the field of public affairs has been well-documented in prior literature (Hill & Hupe, 2014; Saetren, 2005; 2014; Sandfort & Moulton, 2015; Winter, 2003). One of the recurring themes of these reviews is the dissipation of research on implementation within the core discipline of public affairs, beginning in the 1990s with an increase in implementation literature published outside of the field (Meier, 1999; Saetren, 2005). In a review, Saetren documented 3,523 research articles published in the field over the 70-year period he studies and finds 70 percent of the research was published between 1985 and 2003. Yet much of this growth was happening outside of venues where public affairs research was published.

Nilsen et al. (2013) provides a frame for understanding this development. In areas such as medicine, community psychology, early childhood development, and education, researchers have made considerable inroads in developing models and methods for studying program implementation. These investigations are mainly interested in the diffusion and replication of effective research-based interventions or programs and thus have a more modest scope than public affairs studies. A new section of the American Psychological Association, the new journal *Implementation Science*, and a biennial conference sponsored by the Global Implementation Initiative bespeak the growth of this research stream.

Like the study of policy implementation in the 1970s and 1980s, many models and theories have recently been developed to achieve this aim in the field of implementation science research (Tabak, Khoong, Chambers, & Brownson, 2012). Recent reviews are seeking to develop integrative frameworks or conceptual models (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Fixsen et al., 2005; Greenhalgh et al., 2004; Meyers et al., 2012). Yet, in these efforts, it is recognized that scant attention is paid to the organizational or policy environment. In a recent review of implementation science research, only 13 percent of the models incorporated policy activities even though they are widely understood as important (Tabak et al., 2012). In the widely used ‘Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research,’ organizational and policy factors are merely referred to as the “outer setting” (Damschroder, Aron, Keith, Kirsch, Alexander, & Lowery, 2009).

In spite of this fairly limited conception, a number of federal agencies, including the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs, are investing in the implementation science approach. Similarly, governments and foundations in Western Europe are developing institutes of implementation science or contracting with research firms providing this type of implementation analysis. For policy makers interested in affecting outcomes, knowledge relevant to diffusing evidence-based interventions is essential. However, many of these policymakers seem unaware of prior literature on implementation within the field of public affairs. While the implementation science approach has a different starting point, health sciences rather than social sciences, there are similarities in the frameworks being employed to make sense of implementation dynamics. Perhaps most fundamentally, both streams of research acknowledge the complexity of implementation that occurs in multi-level, multi-actor systems.

Multi-Level Frameworks For Implementation Analysis

One of the predominant themes in public affairs research today is the multi-actor, multi-level nature of the system in which policy and management takes place. For example, the study of governance, which has been defined as the study of how government, nonprofit, and private actors systematically shape “policy-relevant” outcomes (O’Toole, 2000), implies a more comprehensive approach which includes both non-governmental actors and multiple factors that interact in a decentralized and oftentimes networked structure (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Feldman & Khademian, 2002; Frederickson, 2005; Lynn et al., 2001; Provan & Milward, 2001). This work, such as the multi-level logic of governance framework put forth by Lynn, Heinrich, and Hill (2000), provides a way to think about how policy decisions made in the federal government resonate down to lower levels of state agencies, service providers, and eventually target populations.

While governance includes much more than implementation, recent implementation scholars stress that the concepts of multi-level and multi-actor systems of action are foundational to understanding implementation processes and results (Goggin et al., 1990; Hill & Hupe, 2014; Robichau and Lynn, 2009; May & Winter, 2009; Shea, 2011). Though most implementation science articles do not address specific policies or larger governance issues, the research often introduces a multi-level approach by positioning frontline service delivery within organizational contexts (Damschroder et al., 2009; Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Fixsen et al., 2005; Greenhalgh et al., 2004; Tabak et al., 2012).

Despite the variety in research approaches and differences in terminology, implementation findings from prior scholarship can generally be parsed into three levels: frontlines, organization, and the policy field. First, following the lead of Lipsky (1980), some studies document the significance of implementation at the frontlines, where the policy system interacts with the target population, such as children, tax payers, or business owners. Many factors may be significant, such as a target group’s composition and attitudes, staff background and experiences, operational tasks, or institutional values (Garrow & Grusky, 2013; Lipsky, 1980; May & Winter, 2009; Meyers & Nielsen, 2012; Sandfort, 2010; Watkins-Hayes, 2009).

Second, frontline conditions are directly shaped by other factors at the organizational level. Service organizations’ resources, structures, cultures, and competing programmatic responsibilities often determine the most prudent way the agency responds to implementation pressures (Lin, 2000; Sandfort, Selden, & Sowa, 2008; Spillane, 1998). Empirical evidence is clear about the significance of organizational structure and climate in supporting the dissemination of evidence-based interventions (Aarons, Glisson, Green, Hoagwood, Kelleher, Landsverk, & Research Network on Youth Mental Health, 2012; Fixsen, 2005; Glisson, Hemmelgarn, Green, & Williams, 2013).

Finally, at the policy field level, other macro-level factors come into focus (Milward & Wamsley, 1985; Sandfort, 2010; Stone & Sandfort, 2009; Weible, Sabatier, & McQueen, 2009).¹ Policy fields are bounded networks among organizations carrying out a substantive policy and program area, such as homeland security or healthcare, and include organizations responsible for delivering services as well as intermediary organizations providing support to the network (Shea, 2011). These networks are, in large part, structured by the rules developed at the agency and legislative levels (Hall & O’Toole, 2004) and, in practice, reflect the core elements of policy environments in a geographic area.

¹ Other public administration and political scholars sometimes have referred to this level as the “policy subsystem.”

While the dynamics within each level of an implementation system are unique, the levels themselves are nested within each other, much like Russian dolls. In that the processes of one level are influenced by the terminology, decisions, and structures adopted by the other (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Hill & Hupe, 2014). While it is easy to conceptualize this theoretically, the degree to which this orientation is reflected in empirical investigations is much less clear. By differentiating among these levels and probing in more detail the unique aspects of implementation operating at each level, this study documents what published studies reflect about multi-level implementation systems and highlights new areas for research in this vein.

Data and Methods

For this analysis, a systematic review of literature (Boruch & Petrosino, 2004) is conducted, including implementation research published in scholarly journals in the ten-year period spanning 2004 to 2013. The sample is drawn from the more than 8,500 journals listed in the Expanded Social Science Citation Index. From a potential population of over 15 million articles published over these years, any articles which include the terms “policy implementation” or “program implementation” in the title, abstract, or key words are retained. The sample is further refined to exclude articles that employ the key terms but do not fit within either research stream, such as research on the implementation of a computer program, resulting in a final sample of 1,507 articles.²

To undertake this systematic review both bibliometric analysis and content analysis are employed. First, a bibliometric analysis is conducted of the journals in which the sample articles are published, identifying those that are published in the core journals within the two streams. It is expected that those articles employing the term “policy implementation” will be represented more strongly in public affairs journals, while those employing the term “program implementation” will be represented more strongly in core implementation science journals. Public affairs journals are coded using the Web of Knowledge (ISI), including the over 190 journals indexed as “public administration” or “political science”. ISI does not have an implementation science category however, ten core implementation journals are identified that are most frequently cited as significant outlets for implementation science in literature reviews (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Fixsen et al., 2005; Meyers et al., 2012).³

Second, the two streams of implementation literature are compared through a content analysis of abstracts.⁴ Using Nvivo software, the content area, focus, and research methods of the articles are coded. The level of analysis within which the research is situated is also examined. While abstracts are often imperfect proxies for the full content of articles, the assumption is that an abstract will indicate the central focus of an article, including the central question(s), unit(s) of analysis and research methods. While we rely on abstracts for the primary analysis, we validate

² In total there were 473 articles excluded from the analysis. Of these, 467 were excluded for being unrelated to policy or program implementation, i.e. the article was focused on the implementation of a computer program, and six were excluded because they did not have an abstract.

³ They are: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *Health Education and Behavior*, *American Journal of Evaluation*, *Health Education Research*, *Journal of Primary Prevention*, *Prevention Science*, *Implementation Science*, *Journal of Community Psychology*, *Children and Youth Services Review*, and *American Journal of Public Health*.

⁴ This approach of assessing the state of research through reviews of abstracts is similar to other studies conducted in such fields as public health (Boehmer, 2002), education (Derossis, DaRosa, Dutta, & Dunnington, 2000), and demography (Entwisle, 2007).

our abstract coding through a detailed review of a random subsample of 100 full articles. The reliability of the coding scheme was tested with an independent coder who coded the level of findings (e.g. frontlines, organizational, etc.) for this sub-sample of full articles; the inter-rater reliability was 96 percent. Generally speaking, the overall patterns found in the abstract coding were also found in the full article review. Though the validity of the abstract-coding approach is reinforced through this subsample analysis, it is plausible that some studies may not reference all relevant elements of their study in the abstract. This is a limitation of this approach.

To understand the specific types of policies and program examined by implementation scholars, abstracts are first coded based on content areas. Content areas are not mutually exclusive and include health, education, environment, social welfare, crime, agriculture, city and regional planning, energy, transportation, science and technology, food, international development, monetary policy, international relations, business-specific implementation, general implementation, and miscellaneous. While most of these areas are relatively clear, articles coded as “general implementation” are those that did not focus on a specific content area, but rather the topic of implementation itself. For example, a study focusing on how American federalism inhibits efficient policy implementation would be coded as “general implementation.”

In addition to content areas, abstracts are also coded for particular foci of the research that may vary across the two implementation streams. Specifically, we considered the extent to which articles reference a specific policy or piece of legislation and the extent to which articles reference specific target populations. As noted above, prior implementation scholarship viewed policies themselves as the central feature of implementation research and coding for policy references allows us to examine the degree to which policies remain a focus in implementation research. For specific policy references, abstracts are coded based on whether they make explicit reference to a particular public policy as being central to their analysis, and are also coded based on the scope of the policy in question (e.g. international, federal/national, or state/local).

The impact that target population conditions have on the policy system has also been of interest for policy researchers (e.g. Schneider & Ingram, 1993; Watkins-Hayes, 2009), and coding for target population references provides insight on the degree to which key populations are a focus in implementation research specifically. For target populations, abstracts are coded based on whether they focus on the following populations: children, the disabled, the elderly, the medically vulnerable, parents and families, and racial/ethnic groups. These categories were chosen as they roughly track with populations typically understood to be beneficiaries of public interventions. Not all articles in the sample are coded to a specific target population and some are coded in more than one of these categories.

The research methods in the articles are first coded as “conceptual” or “empirical.” Conceptual studies are defined as those without any data or a specific case under study and empirical studies as those with a source of data or specific instance of policy or program implementation. Empirical studies are further subdivided as “quantitative,” “qualitative,” or “mixed.” Qualitative studies reference the collection of generally unstructured data, including small-n surveys, interviews, and content analyses, where these data sources are analyzed through qualitative methods (e.g., comparative case studies, narrative analysis). Quantitative research refers to large-n analyses of structured data, traditionally positivist research designs including experiments and quasi-experiments, or statistical analyses (including meta-analyses summarizing quantitative outcomes). Mixed research strategies are those that employ both qualitative and quantitative methods. Abstracts that do not include any explicit reference to methods are coded as “ambiguous.” Finally, articles are identified that do not employ any rigorous empirical or conceptual frame in their analysis and are generally only focused on

Table 1. Implementation Articles by Journal Type, 2004-2013

	% of Total	Public Affairs Core	Implementation Science Core	Other Journals
Policy Implementation [†]	60%	96%	19%	58%
Program Implementation [‡]	40%	10%	81%	43%
Total Articles	1,507	169	80	1,258

Note: Percentages exceed 100 percent due to a small number of articles referencing both “policy implementation” and “program implementation”.

[†]Contains only abstracts, keywords, or titles that explicitly mention “policy implementation.”

[‡]Contains only abstracts, keywords, or titles that explicitly mention “program implementation.”

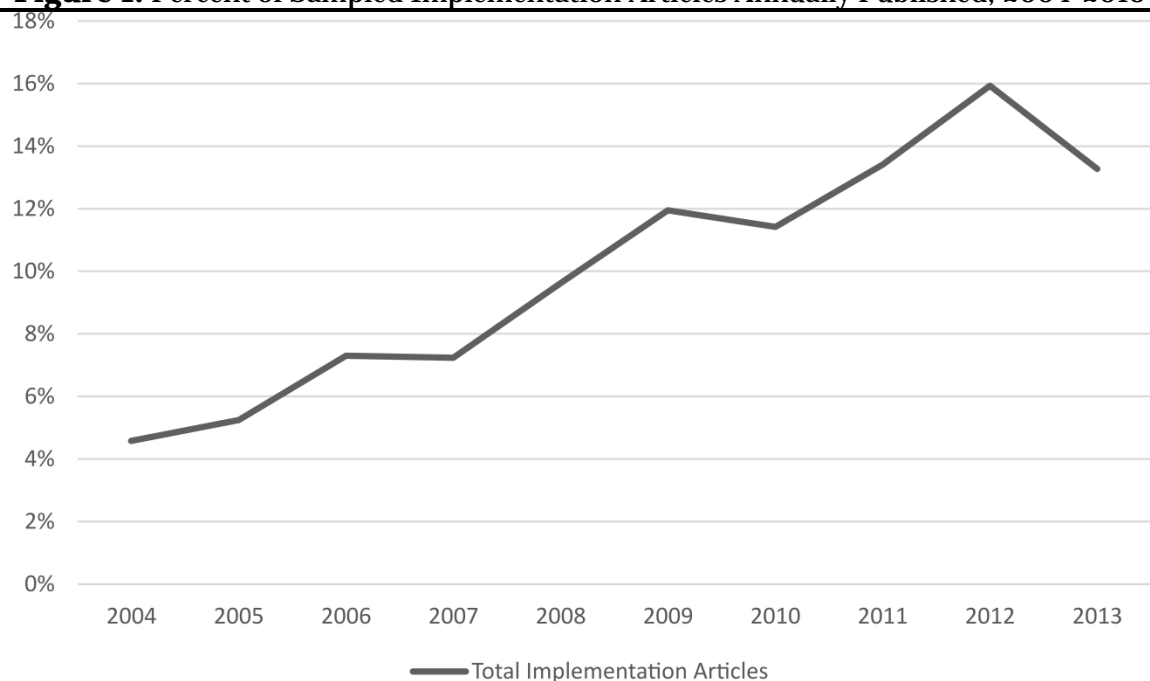
describing a single case of implementation; these articles are coded as “descriptive case studies.” Further analysis is conducted on a subsample of articles with an empirical orientation (n=1,128), which excludes these descriptive case studies. Specifying the subsample in this way allows for an enhanced focus on research employing an explicit research design, one of the hallmarks of the third generation implementation research paradigm in public affairs (Goggin et al, 1990). This specification also allows the research to build from earlier work by Saetren (2014), which explored how the use of research designs in implementation studies evolved over time. Within this subsample, abstracts are further coded based on the levels of analysis described in the preceding section, here designated as “frontline,” “organizational,” and “policy field.”⁵ Those studies contributing findings only at the program level are also identified. “Program-specific” findings include findings that are directly related to the evaluation of a specific program or policy in terms of its outcomes or impacts, but not other levels of analysis.

Results

The comparative review begins with a bibliometric analysis of the 1,507 articles citing “policy implementation” or “program implementation” in their title, keywords, or abstracts. Overall, the analysis finds that the majority of recent policy or program implementation articles are being published in journals outside of the core public affairs journals (see table 1). While this approach to classifying journals as “core” differs from Saetren (2005), the finding that the majority of published implementation research takes place outside of public affairs venues is similar. This analysis further finds that five percent of implementation articles in the sample (80 articles in total) are being published in one of the top ten “core” implementation science journals, while eleven percent (169 articles) are being published in core public affairs journals. This result is of particular interest because, while public affairs journals publish twice as many implementation articles as the core implementation science journals, there are over 190 public affairs journals and only ten core implementation science journals. The implementation science core journals are, proportionally speaking, contributing to the overall implementation literature at a much higher rate than public affairs journals. Of the 1,507 total implementation articles, 905 articles (60 percent) use the term “policy implementation,” while 610 articles (40 percent) employ the term “program implementation” (and a small number of articles employ both terms). “Policy implementation” is referred to in almost every public affairs article (96 percent) and only about a fifth of implementation science articles, while “program implementation” is largely the purview of implementation science articles, 81 percent of which focus on program

⁵ Practically speaking, the level of analysis is coded based on the results of a given study. For example, if a study finds that organizational culture or capacity impacted implementation, then the level of analysis would be coded as focusing on “organizational factors.”

Figure 1. Percent of Sampled Implementation Articles Annually Published, 2004-2013



implementation. By contrast, journals outside these streams are much more evenly focused on both policy and program implementation (58 percent of other journals referenced “policy implementation” while 43 percent referenced “program implementation”). This finding is not particularly surprising but adds evidence to the claim that there are distinct streams of scholarship focused on distinct topics within the banner of “implementation.”

It is notable that implementation research appears to be expanding markedly over the relatively short timeframe examined here. Saetren (2005) found that implementation research expanded over the period from 1970 to 2000; for our sample, spanning 2004-2013, we find that two-thirds of the articles in the sample were published in the last half of the timeframe, and a third were published in the first half. This indicates that interest in implementation research is continuing to grow. To illustrate this, figure 1 traces the percent of sampled implementation articles published in each year of the analysis. Though not shown in the graph, articles from both the public affairs and implementation science research streams follow similar growth trajectories to the full sample of articles.

Next, the content areas of policy and program implementation research are compared. Table 2 illustrates the distribution of articles across 10 distinct content categories.⁶ Health is the most common content area for the sampled implementation articles, with nearly half of the total sample coming from this arena. Education, the environment, and social welfare are the next most common focus areas, and a handful of papers concentrate on the other areas. A comparison to Saetren’s (2005) assessment of 1933-2003 publications suggests the growth of implementation studies is focused in health care, which is consistent with the historical

⁶ While abstracts could be coded as focusing on more than one content area, such articles were a distinct minority in the total sample, i.e. only around ten percent of articles crossed content areas. Implementation science articles did demonstrate a higher tendency to take more than one content area as their focus, as over a fifth of Implementation science articles crossed categories. The same pattern holds for the target population focus of abstracts outlined in table 3.

Table 2. Implementation Articles by Content Area, and Research Strategy

	% of Total	Public Affairs Core	Implementation Science Core	Other Journals
Content Areas[†]				
Agriculture	2%	--	--	2%
City & Regional Planning	2%	2%	--	2%
Crime	2%	2%	1%	2%
Education	18%	4%	28%	20%
Energy	2%	2%	--	2%
Environment	11%	14%	--	12%
General Implementation	6%	30%	3%	3%
Health	49%	15%	70%	52%
Social Welfare	8%	15%	23%	7%
Transportation	1%	2%	--	1%
Other Content Areas	9%	22%	--	8%
Research Strategy				
Conceptual	7%	14%	6%	6%
Qualitative	20%	13%	16%	21%
Quantitative	34%	22%	38%	35%
Mixed	7%	1%	10%	7%
Ambiguous Method	8%	11%	18%	6%
Descriptive Case Study	25%	38%	13%	24%
Total Articles	1,507	169	80	1258

[†] Subcategories are not mutually exclusive as articles could focus on more than one content area.

development of the implementation science research stream being fueled by interest in this policy domain.⁷

Table 2 compares research published in public affairs journals (per the ISI classification), core implementation science journals (see footnote 3), and any other journals outside those classifications. The difference in content areas between the implementation science articles and the public affairs articles is stark. Almost all implementation science articles focus on health, education, or social welfare issues, with very little content outside of those topics. While it would be tempting to ascribe this result to the makeup of the journals in the implementation science core, the fact that this focus is largely replicated for journals outside of this category reinforces the idea that most of the work in implementation science is happening in a few discrete areas. The public affairs articles are by contrast relatively more diverse, with around 15 percent of articles falling under environmental, health, and social welfare content areas, and over a fifth of

⁷ Also like Saetren (2005), supplemental analyses on this sample found that implementation research remains a predominantly Western affair, with 45 percent of implementation studies taking place in North America (38 percent were U.S.-focused) and 20 percent taking place in Europe (16 percent were in Western Europe). The percent of Asian studies represented in this sample is slightly higher than in Saetren (2005); twelve percent of implementation articles here are Asia-focused (half of which are China-focused). An additional eight percent of studies are set in Africa, and eight percent of studies have an international focus. The geographical focus does differ between the public affairs articles and implementation science core articles, as over three-fourths of implementation science articles have a North American focus, while only a third of public affairs articles focus on North America (40 percent focus on Europe).

Table 3. Implementation Articles by Policy Mention and Target Population Focus

	% of Total	Public Affairs Core	Implementation Science Core	Other Journals
Policy Mention[†]				
International Level	2%	3%	--	2%
Federal or National Level	11%	14%	3%	11%
State or Local Level	6%	3%	10%	6%
Unclear Level	2%	1%	--	2%
No Policy Mention	80%	80%	88%	79%
Target Population References[†]				
Child	13%	2%	34%	13%
Disabled	1%	1%	1%	1%
Elderly	2%	--	--	2%
Medically Vulnerable	15%	1%	25%	16%
Parents and Family	7%	2%	18%	7%
Poverty	4%	3%	3%	5%
Race and Ethnicity	3%	1%	6%	3%
No Target Population Mention	66%	93%	35%	65%
Total Articles	1,507	169	80	1258

[†] Subcategories are not mutually exclusive as articles could focus on more than one target population.

articles falling into the “other” content area category.⁸ Additionally, 30 percent of public affairs articles focus on implementation issues generally, rather than implementation within the context of any specific content area.

Next, the research methods employed within the two different research streams are compared. These results are also in table 2. The most prevalent research methods are quantitative. As expected, preference for quantitative methods is stronger within implementation science articles than public affairs implementation articles. Compared to implementation science articles, public affairs implementation articles are over twice as likely to include conceptual articles and almost three times as likely to employ descriptive case studies. The use of qualitative methods is roughly similar between the two streams, and implementation science articles are much more likely to use mixed methods than public affairs implementation articles.

Less reliance on quantitative methods and heavier use of conceptual articles and case studies is not necessarily endemic to public affairs research, but rather the study of implementation within that tradition (Goggin et al., 1990; Saetren, 2005, 2014); prior implementation scholars have noted that the context-rich nature of implementation tends to drive researchers towards case studies (Goggin et al., 1990; Saetren, 2005). However, it is noteworthy that implementation science articles do not appear to have this same tendency, perhaps given the heavy reliance on randomized control trial designs and quantitative methods in the health sciences.

⁸ Given the low prevalence of articles falling in either the public affairs core or implementation science core journal categories, we conducted an alternative analytical approach where the content area, research strategy, target population, policy mention, and level of analysis were explored based on whether the articles referenced “policy implementation” or “program implementation” rather than by journal type, a robustness check for the analysis in this article. This analysis found similar results in terms of the research strategy employed, the level of analysis, and the target population references, though it did find that educational studies were less emphasized in the public affairs core than in “policy implementation” articles generally, while implementation science core articles were less focused on social welfare studies than “program implementation” articles generally.

Table 4. Multi-Level Focus: Findings by Policy or Program Focus

	% of Total	Public Affairs Core [†]	Implementation Science Core	Other Journals
Level of Analysis[‡]				
Program Factors	35%	8%	36%	38%
Front-Level Factors	19%	13%	27%	19%
Organizational Factors	16%	10%	19%	16%
Policy Field Factors	36%	46%	24%	36%
Multi-Level Findings	13%	11%	19%	13%
Total Articles	<i>1,128</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>954</i>

[‡] Sub-categories are not mutually exclusive.

[†] This column adds up to less than 100 percent due to a number of articles that did not explicitly focus on any one level of analysis, but rather discussed implementation issues generally.

Aside from the general content area and research strategy, the policy focus of implementation research is also compared. Abstracts are coded based on whether or not they include mention of a specific public policy including legislation, executive orders, or agency mandates. The results are in table 3. Those abstracts mentioning specific policies are further identified by the level of government at which the policy operates. Of the articles in the sample, only a fifth of the abstracts mention a particular policy, and over half of these abstracts focus on policies enacted at the federal or national level. While it is not surprising that almost 90 percent of articles from the implementation science core journals lack focus on specific public policies, it is striking that only one-fifth of implementation articles in public affairs journals are focused on specific policies. This may be driven by the focus on general implementation theory-building or by the move toward more interest in implementation dynamics across specific policy initiatives. In terms of the level of the policy in question, articles from public affairs journals tend to place more emphasis on the federal or national level, while those from the implementation science journals tend to focus more on the state and local levels.

Because implementation is often about making a change in behaviors or conditions in specific populations, the extent to which articles reference particular target groups is also considered. While the possible target groups are diverse and numerous, this analysis limits its attention to children, the disabled, the elderly, the medically vulnerable, parents and families, the poor, and racial or ethnic minority groups. The results are also found in table 3. Only 34 percent of the full sample of articles references one or more of these groups, with the most common being the medically vulnerable, followed by children and parents/family. The target population focus differs substantially between the research streams: Almost two-thirds of articles emerging from the implementation science core journals have an explicit target population focus, while almost none of those from the public affairs journals are oriented towards a specific population.

In addition to a comparative analysis of the policy and program implementation research streams, a second contribution of this study is to consider where current research is situated within a multi-level framework. As this research is specifically interested in the level of analysis employed in rigorous implementation research, the sample is limited to empirical articles that employ conventional social science methodology (n=1,128).

The results can be seen in table 4. Interestingly, the findings demonstrate that implementation science articles are about twice as likely as implementation articles from public affairs journals to focus on the frontlines or the organizational level and, unsurprisingly, are about four times as likely to focus on straightforward program evaluations. Public affairs implementation articles,

Table 5. Content Areas and Research Strategy by Level of Findings

	<i>% of Total</i>	Program Specific	Frontline	Org.	Policy Fields	Multi- Level
Content Areas[†]						
Education	18%	17%	23%	26%	16%	21%
Environment	9%	3%	7%	4%	19%	8%
Health	56%	78%	60%	63%	39%	60%
Social Welfare	8%	5%	13%	8%	11%	13%
Other Content Areas	19%	8%	9%	8%	25%	9%
Research Strategy						
Conceptual	9%	--	5%	6%	15%	8%
Qualitative	27%	7%	44%	48%	37%	49%
Quantitative	45%	76%	30%	23%	28%	20%
Mixed	8%	8%	15%	16%	8%	17%
Ambiguous Method	10%	9%	7%	6%	11%	5%
Total Articles	1,128	397	215	179	411	149

[†]Subcategories are not mutually exclusive.

by contrast, are almost twice as likely to focus on field level issues. Given that scholars in both streams have emphasized that implementation occurs at multiple levels, one might expect to see this represented empirically with studies taking place at multiple levels of analysis. Yet only 13 percent of the empirical studies present findings relevant to more than one level of the implementation system, with implementation science articles being almost twice as likely to focus on multiple levels as public affairs articles.

To further unpack the nature of research taking place at different levels of analysis, table 5 breaks down the content areas and research methods observed within each level.⁹ In terms of how content areas differ by the level of analysis explored, results are restricted to only focus on the four most prominent areas: education, environment, health, and social welfare. Within each level of analysis health studies are the most highly represented, which is a function of the general predominance of healthcare-related studies in the total sample, and are most concentrated in the program-specific level and least concentrated in the policy field level. Education, the second most prominent research area, has a comparatively high focus at the frontline and organizational levels. Environmental studies are less concentrated at the program, frontline, and organizational levels, but make up almost a fifth of the findings at the policy field level, showing that studies in this area generally focus on the broadest level of analysis. Social welfare studies, on the other hand, do not really have a strong emphasis on any one level of analysis. In terms of studies that cross multiple levels of analysis, the education, environmental, and health research areas all contribute to this category roughly in proportion to their prevalence in the sample as a whole, while social welfare articles contribute a disproportionately higher share to multi-level studies.

Among empirical articles, research strategies differ substantially depending on the level of analysis, as shown at the bottom of table 5. At the program-specific level, over three-fourths of studies are quantitative, with an additional eight percent being mixed quantitative/qualitative. There is much more emphasis on qualitative studies at the frontline, organizational, and policy field levels, and purely qualitative studies comprise almost half of studies operating at multiple levels of analysis, compared to just a fifth for quantitative studies.

⁹ To reduce bias in external generalizability, we report only those content areas with more than 100 publications.

With regard to the focus of the studies in this sample, those with an explicit policy mention in their abstracts are, unsurprisingly, the least prevalent at the program level and the most prevalent at the policy field level. At the program level there is relatively more emphasis on state and local policy implementation than there is at any other level, while at the frontline, organizational, and policy field levels the majority of policy-focused studies concentrate on the federal or national level.

Over half (53 percent) of studies at the program-specific level have a target population focus, a proportion that declines as the level of analysis broadens. Additionally, 40 percent of studies that focus on multiple levels of analysis have a target population focus. With respect to the specific populations, studies that focus on children comprise a larger proportion of the studies at the program, frontline, and organizational level (likely due to the prevalence of education-focused studies at these levels), while studies about impoverished populations comprise a relatively high percentage of studies at the policy field level. Studies focusing on specific races or ethnicities are, by contrast, disproportionately focused on the frontlines.

Supplemental Analysis

One of the central limitations of this analysis is the reliance on abstracts as its primary data source. As a supplemental analysis, we conduct an in-depth analysis of a random sample of 100 full articles. We purposively sample articles across analytical levels, with 20 studies selected within each of the following categories: frontline, organizational, policy field, studies that report findings relevant to multiple levels, and studies that contribute findings that are only program-specific. This supplemental analysis is aimed at validating the abstract coding and adding context to the differences in the topics and types of findings reported at each level of analysis.

In terms of validation, the general characteristics of the articles in the subsample are similar to the characteristics of the articles in the full sample. For example, the majority of articles focus in the health (48 percent) or education (14 percent) content areas, particularly those regarding the implementation of particular program interventions. Within specific content areas, our in-depth analysis reveals that implementation studies focus on diverse topics. Topics such as Chinese monetary policy, charter schools, hospital quality improvement, sustainable energy development in Europe, and cardiac care are all substantive topics found in this sub-sample. In line with the findings reported in table 2, the in-depth coding reveals a similar pattern of diverse research strategies; these research strategies do not clearly sort by the level of analysis.

A second purpose of the full article analysis is to add context to differences in findings by level of analysis. Frontline studies typically provide more contextual information than studies focused on other levels. In reporting their findings, authors rely upon descriptive accounts and refer to “ground realities” and “ineffective policies” that are disconnected. There is more attention to both the particular occupational groups found at the frontlines, i.e. doctors, teachers, social workers, etc., and the characteristics of the target groups. As a result, the significance of relationships, perceptions, and negotiation between these actors, as well as their competing worldviews or perspectives, is often stressed in research findings. Rather than being focused on predicting program replications, these studies are more concerned with uncovering the mechanisms whereby staff and target groups shape these processes.

Articles contributing findings at the organizational level are the most theoretically-oriented of this sub-sample. Drawing upon organizational studies, investigators pivot from existing theories about resource dependency, human resources, and strategic management to consider how these concepts are significant in implementation processes. A few articles, particularly those in health

care agencies, explore how specific management characteristics, structures, or processes influence desired behaviors in either frontline staff or patients. Yet more broadly, these articles frequently noted resources, culture, leadership, and coordinating structure for their roles in shaping both the process and results of implementation.

The policy field studies were the most heterogeneous. Some focus at the national or transnational level, others at the state or local level. Some attempt to understand network or governance arrangements, while others investigate ideology's role in shaping coalitions. Throughout most, the roles of both public and private institutions, as well as their relationships and power, are recognized as significant in implementation. Yet, there is clearly no unifying conception of the significant questions or research approaches to be pursued in this type of analysis.

We also reviewed studies that only contribute findings relevant to a particular program. These program-specific studies focus on a policy or intervention, examining implementation processes and results in relation to time, control groups, or comparison settings. For example, one study looks at the adoption of a physical activity program, Animal Trackers, developed in primary schools to early childhood programs. Another looks at the replication of the Toward No Drug Abuse curriculum in high schools and documents the continued efficacy of the intervention. In each, investigators test various training and coaching combinations in order for facilitators or teachers to see which approach produces stronger fidelity to the initial model. As suggested by these examples, the key analytical question of program-specific implementation studies focuses on predicting successful replication in other settings and with other target groups. As such, this type of implementation study is closely related to the larger field of program evaluation.

Our motivation to analyze these studies in relation to larger system roles comes from our interest in generating an empirical foundation to bolster the conception of multi-level implementation analysis. The content analysis of abstracts revealed some scholars are implicitly pursuing analysis that crosses levels. As a result, we included another stratum to reflect this in our sampling frame of in-depth articles. For example, a study of relationships between national HIV/AIDS organizations in China that affected frontline health educators' practice simultaneously explores the policy-field networks' influence on those same frontline practices. Interestingly, the articles in this category resembled those focused on the policy-field and organizational levels. Like the policy-field studies, the substantive significance of relationships and networks among diverse stakeholders is stressed as a theme in this subsample of articles. Like the organizational-level studies, the essential role of capacity building and resources in guaranteeing success is emphasized. However, the analytical focus of these studies was inconsistent, making it difficult to draw any additional conclusions from our investigations of implementation studies reporting findings that cross levels.

Discussion

There are notable differences between the new stream of research in implementation science and implementation research within public affairs. In terms of focus area, implementation science is heavily dominated by health care, comprising over two-thirds of studies reviewed. By contrast, the public affairs implementation literature is more likely to engage regulatory topics like environmental policy or issues related to general implementation theory building, and generally deal with a more heterogeneous array of policy topic areas. This differentiation in focus is likely driven in part by the origins of implementation science in concerns about replication of randomized control trial results in health care and fidelity to the treatment in

other settings. In contrast, public affairs scholars bring broader content area interests and more diverse questions about implementation processes and systems to the field.

Methods also vary between the two streams, with quantitative and experimental methods more prevalent in the implementation science research, and case studies and conceptual literature more common in public affairs journals. While this may change in the near future as public affairs pushes for increased use of quantitative and experimental methods (Margetts, 2011; Perry, 2012), the reality is that the narrower concerns of program evaluation and replication can be more tightly controlled than the concerns of the broad field-level implementation studies like those often found in public affairs research.

Perhaps one of the most vexing challenges is that across both of these streams of investigation there appears to be minimal focus on specific target populations or the ultimate results of the policy or program being implemented. Though the research emerging from the core implementation science journals has a relatively strong orientation towards target populations (around two-thirds have a target population focus), only a third of total articles and fewer than ten percent of public affairs implementation articles have target populations identified in their abstracts. Yet, this concern for target groups is one of the primary intents of the multi-level framework: to link ultimate outcomes to the different levels within the governance system (Lynn et al., 2001; Heinrich, Hill, & Lynn, 2004; Heinrich & Lynn, 2001). While this lack of focus could be due in part to the limited list of target populations, the content analysis of full articles revealed a similar trend. The risk, of course, is that management or systems changes not aligned with the ultimate change desired in the target population may be misdirected (Moynihan & Soss, 2014; Sandfort & Moulton, 2015).

Further, despite the potential of multi-level frameworks in theory, a very small proportion of empirical studies are conducting implementation research that crosses multiple levels of analysis (13 percent). This result provides empirical backing to the concern raised by Hupe (2014) that mainstream implementation studies typically do not focus on the multiple layers of the implementation system. Interestingly though, this analysis suggests that implementation scientists are incorporating multiple levels of analysis at relatively higher rates than public affairs investigators (19 percent in the implementation science core journals versus 11 percent in the public affairs journals).

In addition to observing differences between streams, our analysis reveals differences based on the level of analysis of the findings. Program-level findings are more likely to result from quantitative analyses, whereas organizational, frontline, and policy findings are more likely to employ qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis may be more feasible, and desirable, for program evaluations, while an understanding of organizational and front-line factors may require a qualitative approach. Mixed methods research designs are likely needed to inform more generalizable findings across policy levels.

Of course, there are some limitations of this study. The first limitation noted earlier is the limited ability to systematically explore full articles except with the purposively-selected sub-sample of 100 articles, though this review of the full articles revealed substantial concurrence between the abstracts and the full articles. Second is the use of relatively narrow search criteria in building the article database: only articles using the exact terms “policy implementation” and “program implementation” in the abstract, key words, or title were used, and our findings could reflect a bias stemming from the use of those terms. However, the purpose of this analysis is not to identify all possible relevant implementation articles, but rather to compare two streams of implementation research and identify general research trends. Additionally, limiting the scope

of this analysis to only those articles published in peer-reviewed journals means research taking place elsewhere, specifically in scholarly books, dissertations, and policy reports, is necessarily excluded. While these research venues are valuable sources of information on implementation studies, the focus of this work is on research subject to peer-review, warranting their exclusion.

Conclusions

This analysis probes the paradox which Saetren (2005; 2014) articulates: public administration scholars believe interest in policy implementation research has faded, and yet there is a thriving research stream that explores implementation questions relevant to, and being funded by, public managers and policy makers. Rather than a discrete body of literature within public administration or political science, research on implementation today is more heterogeneous and spread across a variety of fields. This new stream of implementation science literature has emerged relatively independently of traditional implementation research in public administration, and the evidence presented in this article demonstrates that interest in implementation issues continues to expand over time.

Both streams make important contributions to an understanding of implementation dynamics in the pursuit of addressing messy public problems. However, each exhibits certain tendencies that, taken in isolation, may make the research less relevant in practice. With an emphasis on formal policies and reliance on case study methodologies, literature in the public affairs research stream may be criticized for being too broad and without applicability for improving specific practices. On the other hand, literature in the implementation science stream often emphasizes programmatic elements without regard for the broader implementation system, with a preference for quantitative and experimental methods. The result of this is rather narrow contributions, focused so singularly on a particular program and specific elements subjected to randomization that the research is not generalizable outside of a particular context. Mixed methods that employ a multi-level research design may offer a strategy to bridge the artificial intellectual divide.

Disclosure Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest that relate to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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Research Article

Exploring the Relationship Between Public Service Motivation and Formal and Informal Volunteering

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In this paper, we apply public service motivation to the ongoing discussion of formal and informal volunteering and whether these are two distinct constructs or variations on the same theme. This exploratory research uses survey data of undergraduate students reporting their participation in both types of volunteering activities. Using structural equation modeling, these formal and informal volunteering activities show different influences on three dimensions of PSM. In addition to PSM, high school volunteering and religiosity have direct effects on rates of formal volunteering, which in turn positively influence the PSM dimensions of civic duty and self-sacrifice. Being an Evangelical Christian is associated with increased informal volunteering, which is positively related to the PSM compassion dimension. These results indicate that the different dimensions of PSM, and how formal and informal volunteering influences them, should be useful tools for scholars and practitioners seeking to understand these distinct types of pro-social behaviors.

Keywords: Volunteering, Public Service Motivation, Nonprofits

Recent research has begun to explore differences between formal and informal volunteering, attempting to parse the conceptual, empirical, and motivational differences between the two types of pro-social behaviors (Benenson & Stagg, 2015; Lee & Brudney, 2012; Piatak, 2014; Tang, 2015). In the public administration literature, the concept of public service motivation (PSM) has been developed to help explain what motivates people to work (and continue to work) in public service. This theory also has been used to understand giving and formal volunteering among elite volunteers as well as college students.

At its essence, PSM is based on the notion that, as Perry and Wise's (1990) seminal article defined PSM, "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organizations" (p. 368). These motives include a mixture of rational (maximizing individual self-interest), normative (beliefs and values about what is proper), and affective (human emotion) motives that fluctuate in salience over an individual's lifetime (Perry & Wise, 1990; Taylor, 2007). As such, PSM is a possible tool to use in this conversation about the extent to which formal and informal volunteering are fundamentally different types of pro-social behavior.

Because PSM is grounded in public institutions and organizations, it is assumed that it would be positively associated with formal volunteering and unrelated to informal volunteering because such activities are, by definition, excluded from this formal public institutional setting. This paper explores data from a survey of undergraduate college students to test whether PSM is positively related to both formal and informal volunteering. If both types of volunteering state the need to contribute to something bigger than one's self, we may be able to extend the insights of the vast literature on formal volunteering to informal volunteering. Definitions of formal and informal volunteering may simply be artifacts of researchers' needs to create barriers between public/private spheres of life rather than a distinction rooted in an individual's need to contribute to society.

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Formal and Informal Volunteering

The concept of volunteering has varied meanings depending on the context of the research and operational definition employed, with research on the subject expanding beyond traditional definitions of providing service without remuneration. Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) suggest that the scope and variability of volunteering could contribute to confusion and differences among practitioners and scholars when it comes to defining volunteerism. One of the attempts to define and clarify terms to more accurately quantify volunteer activities has been to differentiate between formal and informal volunteering (Choi et al., 2007; Wilson, 2000).

Formal volunteering is largely considered to be volunteering activities conducted by individuals with legally organized entities, such as hospitals, nonprofit organizations, or churches (Choi et al., 2007; Clary et al., 1998). Formal volunteering among youth, university students, working adults, and retired adults has been studied in order to understand the motivations of volunteers in different settings (for example, see MacNeela, 2008). Coursey et al. (2011) suggest in their analysis that the commitment of volunteers and the intensity of their motivation vary across the types of formal volunteering in which they are engaged. Musick and Wilson (2008) offer multiple definitions of volunteering in their exhaustive discussion of volunteerism, including formal volunteering as a form of “bureaucratized help.” Despite various efforts in the literature to develop a definition of informal volunteering, Musick and Wilson (2008) argue that informal “helping” should not be conflated with formal volunteering when it is generally part of a “generalized exchange network or cycle of reciprocity” and thus leave the discussion of informal volunteering out of their book.

There have been numerous efforts in the volunteer literature to incorporate concepts of informal volunteering into the growing cannon of research on volunteer activities and behavior. Choi et al. (2007) conceptualize informal volunteering in their study to include spousal caregiving within the home. Johnson and Schaner (2005) argue that older volunteers tend to volunteer in areas that benefit themselves (both formally and informally) and one of the most common informal activities being that of caring for an ailing spouse, family member, or neighbor. Choi et al. (2007) and Burr et al. (2005) emphasize that their data indicate informal volunteering, even when performing caregiving duties for family members, often leads to other informal or formal volunteering activities. In a national survey conducted for the independent sector, Toppe, Kirsch, and Michel (2002) define informal volunteering as “unpaid work done for people outside the household and not within the context of a formal service organization.” Activities highlighted by respondents included helping a neighbor, shopping for an elderly person, or babysitting for a family friend (Toppe, Kirsch, & Michel, 2002). Even though the previously mentioned survey from the independent sector serves as a heavily relied-upon source for numerous academic discussions on volunteerism, the informal nature of “helping” or “caring” is frequently ignored or intentionally left out of discussions of volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008).

Volunteer Motivation and Public Service Motivation

Identifying volunteer motivations and the influence of motivations on rates of volunteerism is the foundation of functional approaches to volunteer studies (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996; Musick & Wilson, 2008). This research finds positive correlations between volunteer activities and increased civic engagement, ongoing volunteerism as an adult, and careers in public service (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999; Hart et al., 2007; Perry et al., 2008). Clary, Snyder, and collaborators (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Clary et al., 1998; Clary et al., 1994;

Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999) suggest volunteer motivations are purposeful and that “people can and do perform the same actions in the service of different psychological functions” (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Clary and Snyder (1999) identify six “functions” potentially served by volunteering (values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, protective) and argue that there are “specific motivational functions underlying behavior and attitudes” (Clary & Snyder, 1999) and the choice of volunteer activities and host organizations (Coursey, et al, 2011). This is a popular explanation of volunteer motivation in the literature and influences the discussions of formal and informal volunteering.

A concept introduced to explore why individuals choose to serve in the public sector, public service motivation (PSM) also has been applied to the study of volunteer motivation. PSM is defined as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions or organizations” (Perry & Wise, 1990, p. 368). These motives may be rational, normative, or affective and their influence varies throughout an individual’s lifetime (Perry & Wise, 1990; Taylor, 2007). PSM has largely been applied in studies seeking to understand the “direction, intensity, and persistence of work-related behaviors” on the job and in the choice of a career in public service (Wright, 2001).

PSM was developed as an explanatory variable useful in understanding why individuals would choose careers in the public sector when other opportunities may be available. Empirical evidence and theoretical developments led Perry (1996) to develop a measurement of PSM. Four dimensions were identified that tend to lead individuals to search for opportunities in public service: attraction to public policymaking, commitment to the public interest and civic duty, compassion, and self-sacrifice (Perry, 1996). In a variety of studies, PSM has been shown to explain statistically significant differences between public and private sector employees with respect to variances in compensation, attitudes toward helping others, and job status (Perry, 1997; Wittmer, 1991).

These four dimensions of PSM (attraction to public policy making, commitment to the public interest and civic duty, compassion, and self-sacrifice) are the theory’s core elements. Perry and Wise (1990) argue that attraction to public policymaking is a rational, utility-maximizing dimension of PSM that appeals to workers searching for dramatic and exciting professional opportunities, reinforcing the individual’s image of self-importance. Related rational motivations contributing to this dimension of PSM include a personal identification with the particular public program or because there is a desire to advocate for a particular special interest that can only be addressed in the public policy arena. Despite scholars finding attraction to public policy as an indicator of PSM, the face validity of this dimension recently has been called into question in the literature (Kim, 2011).

The second PSM dimension introduced is commitment to the public interest and civic duty. This normative approach to employment argues that a desire to serve the public interest is altruistic and patriotic (Downs, 1967). Even though the definition of “public interest” may vary among individuals, displaying a commitment to the ideal of civic duty differentiates other rational approaches to motivation focused on the maximizing of self-interest. Perry and Wise (1990) argue that working in the public sector, due to a sense of civic duty or a commitment to a particular issue relevant to the public interest, draws on the normative ideals common in American culture that public service can be a “noble” pursuit. Going forward in this discussion and application to the data used in the present analysis, this dimension will be referred to simply as “civic duty.”

Perry and Wise (1990) argue that the third dimension, compassion, is an affective motivation for employment that may represent a particular moral position. While this element of PSM may be seen as an emotional state that drives individuals to engage in specific work activities that may not be as financially significant as private sector employment, it is a key element of the PSM model. This dimension helps to explain not only the choice of public sector employment but also the specific career field within the public sector.

The fourth dimension of PSM is self-sacrifice. Perry (1996) describes this dimension as “the willingness to substitute service to others for tangible personal rewards” (p. 7). While this definition may seem closely related to the compassion dimension discussed previously, this element combines rational and affective motivations when examining career choices. The rewards of public service that come through sacrificing potentially lucrative careers still provide psychological rewards that may be equally as important to the individual. The more salient argument for this dimension, however, is that the worker openly acknowledges the fewer personal rewards in order to provide some form of public service.

Perry (1997) and others (see Whittmer, 1991; Perry et al., 2008) argue that PSM is a needs-based (rational, affective, and normative) approach to understanding work motivation and sector choice. In discussing factors that contribute to PSM, Perry (1997) argues that PSM can be fostered by parental socialization, religious socialization, professional identification, political ideology, and demographic characteristics (socioeconomic status). These “antecedents” to PSM are defined as experiences prior to service in the public sector that encourage individuals to pursue careers in public policymaking and satisfy feelings of civic duty, compassion, and self-sacrifice (Perry, 1996). In their discussion of PSM antecedents, Perry and colleagues (2008) find that volunteering, along with parental socialization, religious socialization, and specific socioeconomic variables (gender, level of education, and income), directly and indirectly influences the levels of PSM in individuals.

While PSM was initially developed and utilized in the literature to understand the use of pay-for-performance compensation structures in the public sector, it has been expanded to understand nonprofit workers (Perry, 2000), volunteers (Coursey et al., 2008; Houston, 2005; Perry, et al., 2008), and donating behavior (Clerkin, Paynter, & Taylor, 2009; Houston, 2005). As argued above, volunteering has been found to be an antecedent to PSM¹ (Perry et al., 2008).

Critics of PSM, such as Bozeman and Su (2015), are rightly concerned that the concept as theorized and studied is not always clearly delineated from similar other-regarding concepts such as altruism. However, they do suggest that the “public-focused concept seems to us to have the most promise to provide a concept that is distinctive” (p. 704). While we are not able to “cage-match” PSM versus other pro-social motivations in this study, we are able to examine a pro-social activity, volunteering, in a public context (the public sphere of formal volunteering) and in a private context (the private sphere of informal volunteering). If the public context is important to PSM, then we should expect a different relationship between PSM and formal volunteering than between PSM and informal volunteering.

¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out that the relationship between PSM and volunteering is not quite this simple. PSM might actually motivate someone to volunteer, thus volunteering should be considered as a consequence of rather than an antecedent to PSM. Indeed, we would expect to see a normatively virtuous cycle between volunteering and PSM. However, given the causal ordering of the variables in our data, volunteering in the past 12 months and a current measure of PSM, we choose to position our research in the volunteering as antecedent to PSM literature so as to be consistent in our argument and analysis.

Harkening back to Perry and Wise's (1990) seminal definition of PSM and the insights from VFI research (e.g., Coursey et al., 2011) that there is a relationship between the organization where someone volunteers and their motivations, we should expect there to be differences in formal and informal volunteering on PSM. If PSM is grounded in an individual's need to contribute to the public good through public institutions or organizations, we suspect that formal volunteering, because it takes place in legal, formalized public-benefiting organizations, plays a more prominent role in developing an individual's PSM than informal volunteering. Participating in these sorts of formal formative experiences should increase an individual's PSM. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H₁: Formal volunteering increases each dimension of an individual's PSM.

Conversely, because informal volunteering takes place in the private sphere of familial and neighborhood relationships, engaging in these activities should not have an impact on an individual's need to contribute to the public good. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H₂: Informal volunteering is not related to each dimension of an individual's PSM.

Data and Methods

To test these hypotheses, we conducted a survey of 329 (70% response rate) undergraduate students taking introductory American politics courses at a large southeastern university. We collected 290 usable responses (effectively a 62% response rate) with complete information for each of the variables used in this study. Even though this is not a random sample, because the participants are fulfilling university general education requirements, the sample is fairly representative of the university's undergraduate population. Given this university's demographics, our sample of convenience has a greater proportion of males and most likely a smaller proportion of African Americans, than a random sample drawn from all American colleges and universities. Nonetheless, this study provides valuable information and insight into using the PSM construct as a way to strengthen our understanding of formal and informal volunteering.

We use structural equation modeling (SEM) to test our hypotheses about the impact of formal and informal volunteering on the dimensions of PSM. This technique allows us to explore the direct and indirect effects of demographic characteristics that are antecedents to both volunteering and PSM. Our structural model consists of six latent variables (three PSM dimensions [civic duty, compassion and self-sacrifice]; formal volunteering; informal volunteering; family socialization) and seven observed control variables (gender; religiosity; evangelical religious tradition; income; work; high school volunteering; and mandated high school volunteering). Because all of our data are captured as either Likert-scale or dichotomous variables, we estimate the model using WLSMV (weight least-squares with mean and variance adjustment, using the diagonal of the weight matrix) estimator in MPlus6 to create our latent variables and to regress the observed variables on our latent constructs. We describe the elements of our measurement and structural models below. Because our structural equation model produces a large amount of statistical output, we have broken the output into a number of different tables to make the detailed results more readable. The tables that contain the measurement portion of our model (the factor analysis that generates the latent PSM, volunteering, and family socialization variables used in the structural part of our analysis) can be found in the appendix. The table containing the structural portion of the model (our

Table 1. Dichotomous Description of Volunteer Variables Used in Measurement Model

	<i>n</i>	Proportion Doing any Volunteering (%)
Formal Volunteering: Overall	274	87
Formal Volunteering: Religion	164	52
Formal Volunteering: School	212	68
Formal Volunteering: Advocacy	68	22
Formal Volunteering: Human Service	174	56
Formal Volunteering: Other	117	38
Informal Volunteering: Overall	296	95
Informal Volunteering: Transportation	254	81
Informal Volunteering: Housework	241	77
Informal Volunteering: Childcare	158	50
Informal Volunteering: Other	267	85

regression analysis) and the related path diagram figure are shown in text below.

Measurement of Model Variables

Our measurement model consists of six latent constructs. Three dimensions of PSM (civic duty, compassion, and self-sacrifice) are our ultimate dependent variables. The two forms of volunteering, formal and informal, are our penultimate dependent variables; they are both regressed on our independent variables and are used as independent variables in the regressions of the PSM dimensions. Also, based on the literature reviewed above, indicating that there is a relationship between formal and informal volunteering, we allow formal and informal volunteering to co-vary. Finally, family socialization to engage in public service is an independent variable used in the regressions of both types of volunteering and all three PSM dimensions.

PSM. Given recent discussions in the literature (e.g., Kim, 2011) raising concerns over the face validity for the indicators of attraction to public policy dimension, we do not include that dimension or its indicators in our analysis. Each of the remaining 21-indicator variables from Perry's (1996) PSM construct were restricted to loading on only the latent PSM dimensions indicated by Perry's research: civic duty, self-sacrifice, and compassion. See Appendix table A1 for the questions and standardized factor loadings and regression weights for our model.

Family Socialization. Perry (1996) argues that one way individuals develop PSM is through being socialized into these values in their families. He captures six types of activities that can lead to increasing levels of PSM in individuals; the extent to which 1) parents actively participated in volunteer organizations; 2) the family always helped each other; 3) concerning others in distress, my family showed no interest; 4) my parents told me I should be willing to lend a helping hand; 5) my parents often urged me to get involved with volunteer organizations; and 6) my parents frequently discussed moral values with me. See Appendix table A2 for the questions and standardized factor loadings and regression weights for our model.

Formal and Informal Volunteering. As reported in table 1, the respondents were asked about the number of hours they were involved in six types of formal volunteering (volunteering for religious, school, advocacy, human services, political party, and other formal nonprofits) and four types of informal volunteering (helping an unrelated person with transportation,

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Categorical Independent Variables

	<i>n</i>	Proportion (%)
Male	175	57
Evangelical Protestant	151	51
Family Income > 75K	146	66
Frequent Church Attendance	100	32
Volunteered in High School	274	88
Mandatory High School Volunteering	111	36
Work During School Year	177	58

housework, child care, and other types of service). We use these observed measures to capture an individual's depth of formal and informal volunteering. See appendix table A3 for the questions and standardized factor loadings and regression weights for our model.

Control Variables for Structural Model

To account for demographic and experiential antecedents to volunteering and PSM, we include a number of control variables. In particular, we control for whether a respondent is working, his family income is greater than \$75,000, male, religiously active, an Evangelical Protestant, and he volunteered in high school and if that experience was mandated to meet a graduation requirement. Descriptive statistics for these variables are reported in table 2. Working and family income are included because they represent potential barriers/facilitators for those engaging in volunteer activities. Sex is controlled because women are more likely to volunteer than men (Einolf, 2011). We included two measures of religion that are related to volunteering: religiosity and faith tradition. Previous research indicates that religiosity is positively associated with volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Other research indicates that individuals from an Evangelical Protestant faith tradition volunteer differently (more often and typically within their own faith community rather than the broader society) than people of other religious traditions (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Finally, we include a student's experience with volunteering in high school to examine the impact of this past behavior and socialization on current choices. Youth service has a strong and significant impact on the likelihood that young adults will continue charitable behaviors after high school by giving at higher levels and volunteering more frequently (Perry et al., 2008; Toppe et al., 2002).

Results

Using structural equation modeling (SEM) allows the testing of direct and indirect effects of various variables on volunteering and PSM. We report the results of structural model in table 3. This table contains the results of two models: the full model and the final model. While the RMSEA (0.05) of the initial model indicates a good fit between the model and our data, the CFI (0.89) and TLI (0.88) indicate a less than good fit. Therefore, we dropped indicator variables for the latent constructs in the measurement model that had a standardized factor loading of less than or equal to 0.55. This improved the overall fit measures for the model. The results for the final model are used to generate the results of the structural model depicted in figure 1. The model goodness of fit measures commonly reported in SEM (RMSEA, CFI, TLI) all indicate that this is model is a good fit for the data. The RMSEA (0.05) of the final model indicates a good fit and the CFI and TLI goodness of fit measures (0.92 and 0.90, respectively) are improved, and, with exploratory research, these measures are acceptable (Garson, 2012). What SEM presents with these data is the formation of two distinct constructs that influence PSM differently: formal

Table 3. Structural Models

	Initial Model		Final Model	
	StdYX	P-value	StdYX	P-value
Formal Volunteering	ON		ON	
Family Socialization	0.310	0.000	0.373	0.000
Male	-0.112	0.114	-0.123	0.109
Working	0.034	0.680	0.066	0.456
Family Income > 75K	-0.071	0.373	-0.091	0.281
Religiously Active	0.379	0.000	0.362	0.000
Volunteered in High School	0.263	0.004	0.261	0.010
HS Volunteering was Mandatory	-0.234	0.003	-0.238	0.004
Evangelical Protestant	-0.031	0.716	-0.027	0.769
Informal Volunteering	ON		ON	
Family Socialization	0.033	0.627	0.046	0.510
Male	-0.020	0.764	0.005	0.934
Working	-0.031	0.646	-0.027	0.689
Family Income > 75K	-0.018	0.797	-0.006	0.932
Religiously Active	0.070	0.318	0.062	0.376
Volunteered in High School	0.072	0.281	0.068	0.320
HS Volunteering was Mandatory	-0.068	0.327	-0.049	0.487
Evangelical Protestant	0.177	0.010	0.171	0.015
Civic Duty	ON		ON	
Formal Volunteering	0.443	0.000	0.485	0.000
Informal Volunteering	-0.002	0.972	-0.014	0.811
Family Socialization	0.224	0.02	0.188	0.017
Male	-0.037	0.547	-0.026	0.680
Religiously Active	0.122	0.071	0.115	0.093
Volunteered in High School	0.187	0.005	0.177	0.014
HS Volunteering was Mandatory	-0.163	0.023	-0.152	0.035
Compassion	ON		ON	
Formal Volunteering	0.133	0.261	0.232	0.136
Informal Volunteering	0.178	0.007	0.162	0.034
Family Socialization	0.215	0.009	0.228	0.023
Male	-0.222	0.002	-0.082	0.316
Religiously Active	-0.091	0.222	-0.138	0.102
Volunteered in High School	0.091	0.247	0.085	0.3789
HS Volunteering was Mandatory	-0.122	0.101	-0.182	0.039
Self-Sacrifice	ON		ON	
Formal Volunteering	0.279	0.015	0.310	0.021
Informal Volunteering	0.069	0.287	0.057	0.367
Family Socialization	0.210	0.004	0.184	0.027
Male	0.085	0.189	0.105	0.110

Religiously Active	0.137	0.074	0.124	0.113
Volunteered in High School	0.116	0.113	0.116	0.126
HS Volunteering was Mandatory	-0.089	0.210	-0.082	0.262

and informal volunteering. These two forms of volunteering intermediate the relationship between PSM and the antecedents of PSM. The significant relationships are displayed in figure 1.

PSM and formal volunteering

Much of the discussion surrounding PSM and volunteering focuses on the influence of formal volunteering on the primary latent constructs of PSM: civic duty, self-sacrifice, and compassion. Our data indicate that formal volunteering indeed does influence PSM, but only in the civic duty and self-sacrifice dimensions. As shown in figure 1, formal volunteering is influenced by family socialization, volunteering in high school, and the religiosity of the survey participants. The latent variable formal volunteering then influences the civic duty and self-sacrifice PSM latent variables. In this model, formal volunteering has no direct effects on the third PSM variable, compassion.

Taken together, these results provide moderate support for hypothesis 1, that formal volunteering increases each dimension of an individual's PSM. Formal volunteering leads to increased levels of civic duty and self-sacrifice dimensions of PSM.

PSM and informal volunteering

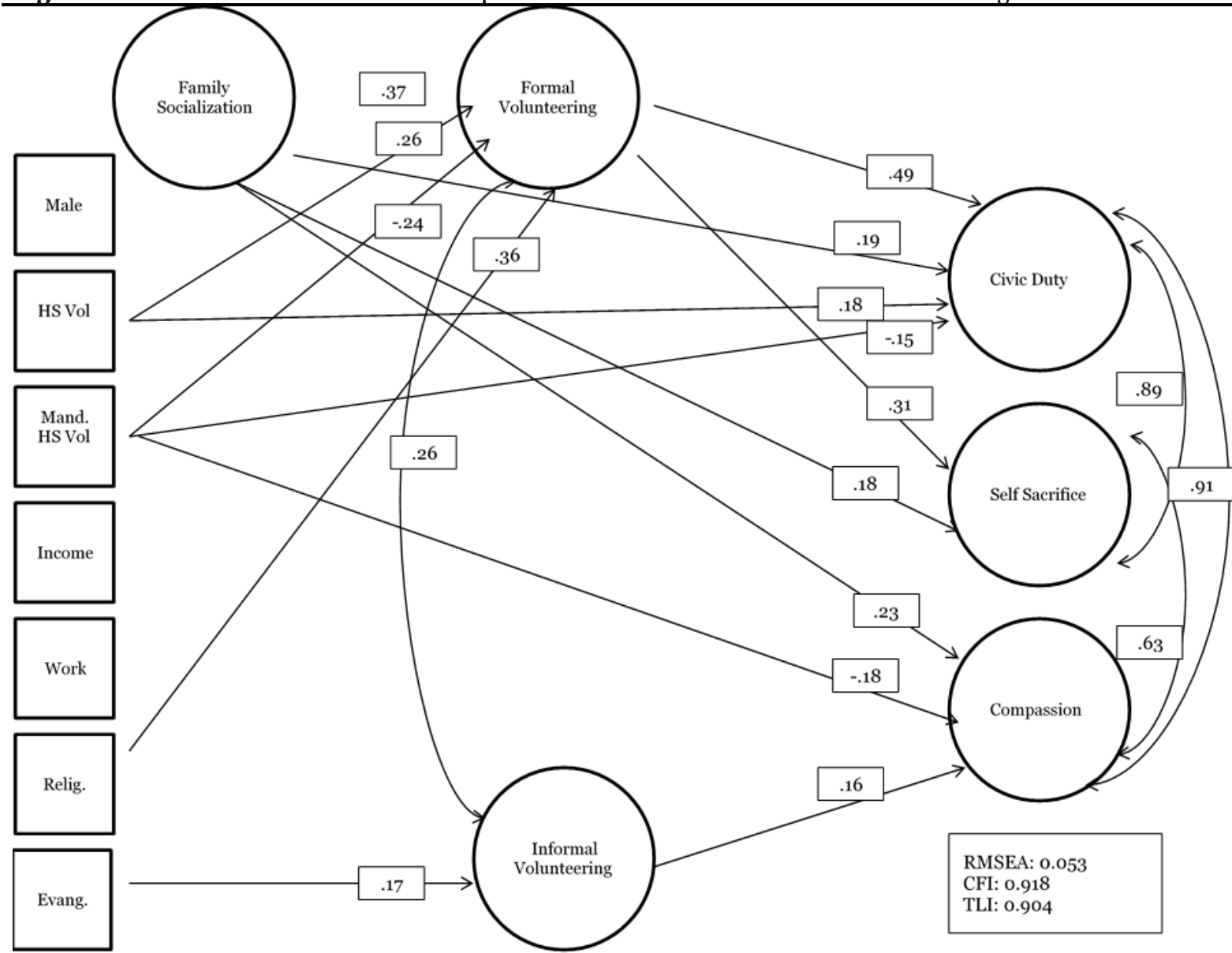
In this model, informal volunteering does operate as a separate construct, influencing one of the PSM latent variables. The only antecedent that influenced informal volunteering was whether the respondent belonged to an Evangelical Protestant faith group, which was not related to formal volunteering. Being an Evangelical Protestant increases the amount of informal volunteering. The construct of informal volunteering had a relatively weak influence on PSM's compassion variable, but formal volunteering was not related at all to compassion.

In regard to hypothesis 2, that informal volunteering is not related to the dimensions of an individual's PSM, our data indicate we need to reject this null hypothesis; informal volunteering is indeed related to one of the dimensions of PSM, Compassion. While this relationship is unexpected, the effect was weak, and, given that formal volunteering does not impact this PSM dimension, these data indicate that we should keep discussions of formal and informal volunteering operating as different constructs. They seem to satiate different psychological needs.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this article, we review the application of public service motivation and its applicability to the ongoing discussion of formal and informal volunteering. Much of the discussion surrounding the two types of volunteering focuses on whether these are two distinct constructs or variations on the same theme. The exploratory research presented in this discussion uses survey data of university undergraduate students and reporting their participation in volunteering activities. As noted previously, surveying a sample of undergraduate students limits the generalizability of our study to the general U.S. adult population. While the sample is relatively representative of its university population, it precludes us from examining the impact of workplace on

Figure 1. Standardized Results: Structural Equation Model of Formal and Informal Volunteering on PSM



volunteering and PSM. Research (e.g., Ertas, 2014; Lee, 2012; Rotolo & Wilson, 2006) shows that the sector people work in impact their level of volunteering and/or their level of PSM. Further studies examining the relationship between formal volunteering, informal volunteering, and PSM in the broader adult population is needed before drawing firm conclusions based only on this one study of undergraduates.

Our exploratory research, using structural equation modeling, indicates that formal and informal volunteering activities show different influences on the three dimensions of PSM. High school volunteering and religiosity have direct effects on rates of formal volunteering; those, in turn, influence the PSM attitudes of civic duty and self-sacrifice. The faith community of the respondents, belonging to an Evangelical Christian faith tradition, influences the construct of informal volunteering, which is related to the PSM compassion dimension.

Our data also provide some interesting findings regarding two of our control variables. If the respondent volunteered in high school and whether this was a mandated activity have different and significant effects not only on their current formal volunteering but also on their level of PSM. One of the goals of high school volunteering programs is to develop a norm of community engagement in young adults. In our data, having volunteered in high school increases current volunteering and the civic duty PSM dimension. Because this activity is not related to the other PSM dimensions, these volunteering experiences seem to be meeting their intended purpose. However, if students were mandated to volunteer in high school, the impact on current levels of formal volunteering and the civic duty and compassion PSM dimensions is negative. Further, the negative influence of being mandated to volunteer is almost as large as the positive effect of having volunteered on current formal volunteering and the civic duty PSM dimension. This finding suggests that, while providing high school students with opportunities to volunteer can lead to future civic engagement, mandating these experiences have the potential to wipe out any positive impacts the volunteering experiences may engender.

In sum, the findings from the survey indicate that formal and informal volunteering seem to satiate different needs. The influence of formal volunteering on civic duty and self-sacrifice, referred to as normative and affective motivations for public service (Perry & Wise, 1990), suggests that these types of formal activities might perform different psychological roles in the lives of volunteers. Conducting further research on the role of formal volunteering in the choice of public service careers will strengthen the empirical discussion of formal volunteering as well as PSM. Similarly, informal volunteering was only associated with the compassion dimension of PSM. Going forward, it will be useful to overcome some of the limitations on the generalizability of this study by expanding the research population beyond undergraduate students. While formal and informal volunteering are related to different motivational needs in our sample of undergraduates, more work on a diverse array of subject pools is needed to more fully understand the potential for PSM to help us understand formal and informal volunteering.

Implications for Practice and Theory

These initial findings indicate that further exploration of formal and informal volunteering should continue to distinguish between these two types of volunteering, exploring them as distinct constructs. These two types of volunteering may serve different functions in the lives of volunteers and deserve to be studied separately. For scholars, this linkage between PSM and volunteering may provide the motivational pathway for the positive interrelationship between formal and informal volunteering (Lee & Brudney, 2012). The different dimensions of PSM, and how they are influenced by formal and informal volunteering, should continue to be an area of

research for scholars and practitioners seeking to understand pro-social behaviors. It also highlights the need for continued measurement development of PSM. If the unique contribution of PSM to the many ways that scholars think about pro-social motivations is that it is grounded in the public realm, work on refining how we measure PSM dimensions needs to continue to ensure we are capturing motivations grounded in our public institutions and organizations and not in the public and private spheres of our lives.

The positive relationship between formal volunteering and the civic duty and self-sacrifice dimensions of PSM in our sample of undergraduate students has interesting implications for public service managers in the hiring process. The formal volunteering activities on a job applicant's résumé may be a useful signal of the applicant's level of civic duty and self-sacrifice PSM. All else being equal between two candidates, more and deeper formal volunteering experiences of one candidate may be indicative of his or her commitment to be a highly engaged and motivated public servant.

While the positive relationship between informal volunteering and the compassion dimension of PSM was not hypothesized, and potentially presents us with theoretical challenges, this finding may be of practical use to local government and nonprofit leaders interested in increasing the social capital and sense of community in their neighborhoods. Developing public service messages and programs that trigger an individual's PSM need for compassion may lead to an increase in the informal helping behaviors that strengthen communities.

Disclosure Statement

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Appendix

Table A1. Public Service Motivation Measurement Model

		Initial Model		Final Model	
		StdYX	P-value	StdYX	P-value
Civic Duty	I unselfishly contribute to my community	BY 0.687	-	BY 0.706	-
	Meaningful public service is very important to me	0.816	0.000	0.812	0.000
	I consider public service my civic duty	0.754	0.000	0.756	0.000
	I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the community, even if it harmed my interests	0.572	0.000	0.550	0.000
Compassion	I seldom think about the welfare of people I don't know personally. (REVERSED)	BY 0.586	-	BY 0.507	-
	Most social programs are too vital to do without	0.498	0.000		
	It is difficult for me to contain my feelings when I see people in distress	0.502	0.000		
	I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another	0.703	0.000	0.629	0.000
	I am rarely moved by the plight of the underprivileged. (Reversed)	0.529	0.000		
	To me, patriotism includes seeing to the welfare of others	0.699	0.000	0.658	0.000
Self-Sacrifice	Much of what I do is for a cause bigger than myself	BY 0.701	-	BY 0.718	-
	I am one of those rare people who would risk personal loss to help someone else	0.586	0.000	0.6	0.000
	Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements	0.685	0.000	0.689	0.000
	I think people should give back to society more than they get from it	0.599	0.000	0.592	0.000
	I believe in putting duty before self	0.671	0.000	0.671	0.000
	Doing well financially is definitely more important to me than doing good deeds. (Reversed)	0.434	0.000		
	Serving citizens would give me a good feeling even if no one paid me to for it	0.637	0.000	0.636	0.000
	I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society	0.726	0.000	0.736	0.000

N = 290; Data captured using a 5-point Likert scale from agree to disagree for each statement

Table A2. Family Socialization Measurement Model

	Initial Model		Final Model	
	StdYX	P-value	StdYX	P-value
	BY		BY	
My parents actively participated in volunteer orgs	0.682	-	0.693	-
In my family, we always helped one another	0.616	0.000	0.570	0.000
Concerning strangers experiencing distress, my parents generally thought that it was more important to not get involved (REVERSED)	0.151	0.046		
My parents frequently discussed moral values with me	0.557	0.000		
When I was growing up, my parents told me I should be willing to lend a helping hand	0.820	0.000	0.800	0.000
When I was younger, my parents very often urged me to get involved with volunteer projects for children	0.724	0.000	0.739	0.000

Notes: N = 290; Data captured using a 5-point Likert scale from agree to disagree for each statement

Table A3. Volunteering Measurement Model

		Initial Model		Final Model	
		StdYX	P-value	StdYX	P-value
		BY		BY	
Formal Volunteering	Religion	0.576	-	0.528	-
	School	0.522	0.000		
	Advocacy	0.561	0.000	0.581	0.000
	Human service	0.647	0.000	0.678	0.000
	Other	0.668	0.000	0.674	0.000
		BY		BY	
Informal Volunteering	Transportation	0.830	-	0.869	-
	Housework	0.875	0.000	0.887	0.000
	Childcare	0.506	0.000		
	Other	0.721	0.000	0.722	0.000

Notes: N = 290; Data captured categorically -- 0 hours, 1 - 19 hours, 20-39 hours, 40-79 hours, 80 - 159 hours, 160+ hours.

Research Article

Merging Ahead, Increase Speed: A Pilot of Funder-Driven Nonprofit Restructuring

Robert L. Fischer – Case Western Reserve University
Diwakar Vadapalli – University of Alaska Anchorage
Claudia Coulton – Case Western University

Nonprofit agencies face increasing competition for scarce funding resources. Many agencies are considering ways to restructure themselves, often via mergers and acquisitions, as a way to become more effective and competitive. This case study examines a pilot initiative in Cleveland, Ohio, in which philanthropic funders invited and supported nonprofits in the pursuit of significant restructuring efforts. Health and human service nonprofits were recruited into a three-phase facilitated pilot that assisted the agency executive directors and boards in determining what type of restructuring was feasible and desirable. Overall, 75 nonprofits participated in some part of the pilot, 17 of which formally explored a restructuring opportunity within the pilot year, and eight of which ultimately consolidated. The study highlights key learnings from the initiative and the implications for the nonprofit sector in the promotion of restructuring discussions.

Keywords: Merger, Nonprofit Restructuring

Across the nonprofit sector, agencies are faced with increased competition for finite resources, along with increased scrutiny from funders and other stakeholders regarding their efficiency and effectiveness. One avenue that has been pursued to deal with this changing environment is the examination of a range of restructuring options, from collaboration to corporate merger (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Done well, these restructuring efforts result in agencies being better able to deliver on their core mission and often with enhanced sustainability. Though collaboration and consolidation have long been seen as effective methods for enhancing nonprofit performance, too often their use by nonprofits has been confined to times of financial hardship and organizational difficulty. A focus of this study was to examine an initiative to help nonprofits explore restructuring from a position of strength, rather than when organizational pressures lead to it as required option.

Review of the Literature

The study of organizational restructuring within the nonprofit sector has undergone dramatic growth since the 1990s. Though the broader literature on consolidation, merger, and integration is dominated by for-profit examples, there has been an emergence of research and studies specific to the nonprofit sector. In fact, the overall merger rate among nonprofits (1.5%) has been found to be comparable with the merger rate shown in the for-profit sector, reaching a high of 7% among some nonprofit subsectors such as child and family services (Cortez, Foster, & Milway, 2009). The concept of strategic restructuring has come to be inclusive of a set of approaches available to nonprofits to increase organizational effectiveness and sustainability. They include mergers, alliances, joint ventures, and other forms of strategic partnerships (The Forbes Fund, 2003). In the nonprofit sector, where individual organizations are incorporated based on a founder-defined mission, restructuring can be viewed as risking identity and independence. However, the potential benefits to better serving the underlying mission are a major opportunity present in successful restructuring (La Piana, 2010).

Fischer, R. L., Vadapalli, D., & Coulton, C. (2017). Merging ahead, increase speed: A pilot of funder-driven nonprofit restructuring. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 3(1), 40-54. doi:10.20899/jpna.3.1.40-54

Attention to the particular dimensions of nonprofit consolidations has been guided by research specifically built on the examination of real-world nonprofit case examples (e.g., Gillock, Smith, & Pilan, 1986; Golensky & DeRuiter, 2002; Kleinman, 2012; Kohm, La Piana, & Gowdy, 2000; Pietroburgo & Wernet, 2004; Ricke-Kiely, Parker, & Barnett, 2013; Singer & Yankey, 1991; Snavely & Tracy, 2000; Toepler, Seitchek, & Cameron, 2004; Wernett & Jones, 1992). As more nonprofits have undertaken restructuring efforts and the experience base has widened, research has been synthesized, and more detailed guidance has become available for nonprofits exploring the concept (Bailey & Koney, 2000; Davis, 2002; La Piana, 1998; Pietroburgo & Wernet, 2008; Yankey, Jacobus, & Koney, 2001). Recent estimates suggest that more than one in five nonprofits is actively examining opportunities to merge (Foster, Perreault, & Sable, 2009).

On the specific topic of nonprofit collaboration there has been focused work on the correlates of organizations undertaking collaboration (Guo & Acar, 2005) and specifically the benefits of collaboration as perceived by nonprofit managers (Sowa, 2009). Other research has focused specifically on the motivations for nonprofits to pursue mergers and the process of undertaking restructuring for organizational change (Campbell, 2008; Ferris & Graddy, 2007). In the current environment, there is emphasis on the use of restructuring as a mechanism to strengthen and better fulfill organizational missions in the nonprofit sector (Cortez et al., 2009; La Piana, 2010; Reed & Dowd, 2009). There are also good practice-based recommendations available on how nonprofits can best manage the merger process (Benton & Austin, 2010).

Throughout the research on nonprofit consolidation, funders are often noted as an external influence or a stakeholder to the nonprofits involved (Bunger, 2013; Campbell, 2009; Chen & Krauskopf, 2012). This characterization may understate the influence that funders can and do have on the decisions of nonprofits to both consider and undertake restructuring plans of some type. There is an established theoretical framework for understanding consolidations as being driven by six related constructs: necessity, asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability, and legitimacy (Oliver, 1990). The degree to which funding partners place emphasis on these features in the funding approach may indicate to current and potential grantees whether and how to pursue interorganizational relationships that enhance their mission and sustainability. Some funders have begun to take a greater role in the promotion of strategic restructuring, giving rise to interest in the challenges and prospects of this approach (Eschenfelder, 2011).

Funders can play multiple roles in the pursuit of restructuring by nonprofits, including facilitator, organizational matchmaker, and financial supporter of the process. Not all funders see this as a role they should play, as it may be seen as them impinging on the leadership role reserved to nonprofit boards of directors. There is evidence, however, that direct funder involvement in mergers is associated with positive outcomes such as continuation of services following a merger and improved financial stability (Owen, Pittman, Kelly, & Reed, 2012). However, there are examples of funder involvement leading to negative consequences when nonprofits are compelled to pursue a merger (Gammal, 2007). The literature offers few concrete examples of funders actively pursuing a specific initiative to promote nonprofit consolidation, and that is the void that this study seeks to address. Eschenfelder (2011) illustrated the value of this type of work by reporting on a case study of a single funder's efforts to encourage a single nonprofit grantee to pursue a merger. The present study expands on this prior work by examining an initiative undertaken by multiple funders working with nonprofit organizations in a specific geographic region.

Figure 1. Nonprofit Restructuring Pilot Phases

Phase I Educational Workshop		Phase II Readiness Assessment		Phase III Negotiation
Month 1		Months 2-6		Months 7-12
Attend educational workshop (4 hr)		Complete nonprofit readiness assessment with consultant		Develop restructuring plan through facilitated negotiation
N= 75 agencies	→	N=17 agencies	→	N=8 agencies

Description of the Restructuring Pilot

As part of a pilot initiative, a group of 18 philanthropic funders created a program to invite health and human services nonprofits in an urban county to systematically examine options in regard to inter-organizational restructuring. These funders pooled resources to develop a pilot project focused singularly on nonprofit human services organizations in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Motivated in part by the effects of the 2008 economic crisis, funders sought to leverage what they saw as an “unprecedented opportunity for the nonprofit community and its leaders to demonstrate extraordinary vision and ingenuity” (Zeman & Vesey, 2009, p. 1). The funders’ aims for the initiative were described as seeking to

...achieve significant reductions or eliminations of duplication of services; increased sustainability of critical community services via programmatic and/or operational realignments; and integration of services that have the potential to increase effectiveness and produce substantial cost savings (Zeman & Vesey, 2009, p. 1).

The pilot was a three-phase initiative designed to assist nonprofits in considering and exploring restructuring options. The phases included (i) an educational workshop on restructuring, (ii) completion of an organizational readiness assessment working with an external consultant, and (iii) facilitation of a cross-organization negotiating team to discuss a specific restructuring opportunity. Of approximately 100 nonprofits invited to participate in the initiative, 76 participated in the educational workshop, 17 advanced to the readiness assessment phase, and eight advanced to the joint negotiation phase (Coquillette, Eagan, Willen, & Yankey, 2011).

The invited nonprofits were dominantly operating in the arena of youth and family services, targeting outcomes such as school readiness, effective parenting, child welfare, mental health, stable housing, employment, and positive well-being. Nonprofits included school and community-based agencies as well as residential programs. Though the pilot was framed as a three-phase enterprise, nonprofits were required to formally apply to advance to the second and third phases. The three phases of the programming were framed to progressively help organizations advance on a specific restructuring opportunity (see figure 1). Phase 1 involved nonprofits’ key leaders attending an educational workshop that presented the potential benefits of restructuring to the nonprofit, shared case examples of local nonprofits that had successfully

restructured, and explained the various strategic restructuring models (e.g., joint venture, merger). The invitation stipulated that each attending nonprofit be represented by its CEO and board chair at the educational workshop. In Phase 2 agencies worked with a consultant to complete an organizational readiness assessment in which they evaluated the agency's status in regard to pursuing restructuring. For the purposes of the readiness assessment, each organization had to identify one or more potential partner nonprofits, which need not have attended the educational workshop. Phase 3 of the pilot involved organizations creating a joint negotiating team that was empowered by each nonprofit's board to pursue a restructuring opportunity and make recommendations back to the boards.

In total, the funders committed \$400,000 to the pilot project primarily to support the use of consultants across the three phases. A trio of independent consultants with experience in restructuring were used to deliver the educational workshop and work with nonprofits in latter phases. The funding dictated the potential scope of the pilot in the second and third phases, which required more intensive consultation. As such, the number of organizations that could be accommodated in these phases was restricted, resulting in the funders using an application and selection process for nonprofits to advance in the pilot.

Study Methods

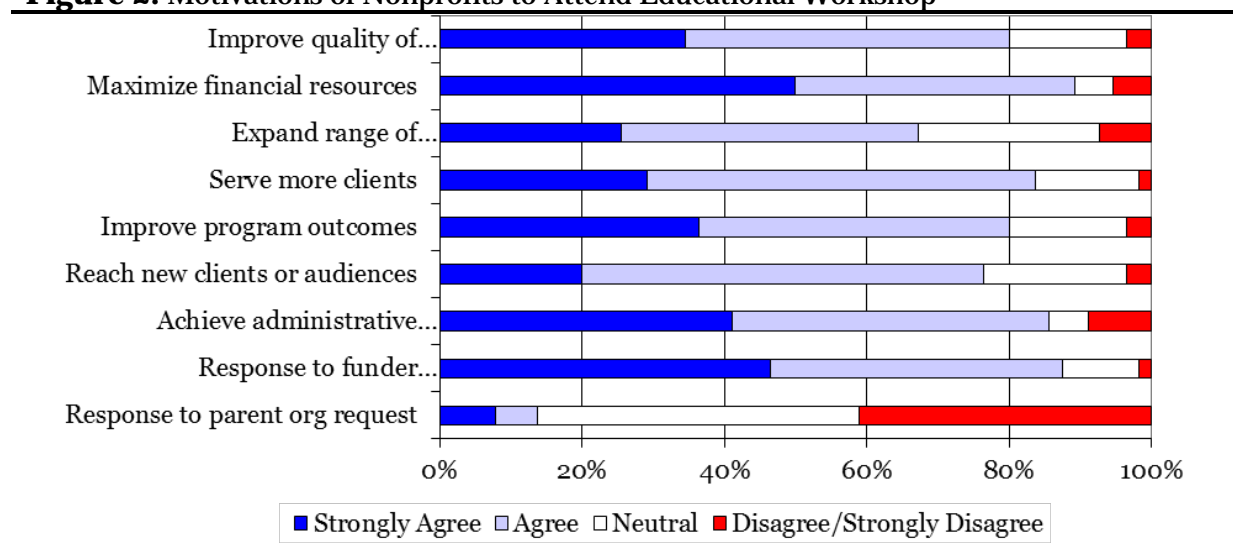
The study of the pilot program involved collecting information during the three phases of the initiative drawing on data from nonprofit participants and the products of the program phases (i.e., assessments, plans). A program logic model for the pilot was developed to identify the core outcomes of the approach and this guided data collection. A case study method was adopted as a way to integrate data from this mixed-method approach (Yin, 2009).

Participant feedback was collected via web-based and written surveys and in-person group interviews. In addition, summaries of the assessments and plans developed as part of the initiative also were reviewed. Study instruments (i.e., survey forms, structured interview outlines) were developed in consultation with the funders and consultants, and the study was approved by the university Institutional Review Board as exempt research. Nonprofit representatives were informed that their response to the data-collection requests was voluntary and would not have an impact on their continuation in the pilot or their relationship with the funders. Responses were confidential, and only aggregate results or unidentifiable quotations were presented in reports.

Anonymous web-based surveys were conducted with participants following the educational workshop and the readiness assessment phase. Anonymity was deemed crucial by the funders due to the delicate nature of the discussion of consolidation and the funders' desire to encourage candid responses. In the first phase, 57 of 151 (38%) workshop attendees responded via the on-line survey. In the second phase, a total of 93 readiness assessment team members from the 17 participating nonprofits were asked to complete a survey about their experience. Of these participants, 54 (58%) responded to the survey. Due to the anonymity of responses in the web-based survey, a calculation of response rates by nonprofit is not possible. In the third phase, focus groups involving the members of the joint negotiating teams (involving 23 individuals) were held, and participants also completed a written survey (60.9% response rate).

The core research questions that guided the case study were: (1) to what extent did a structured educational opportunity and consultation process lead to increases in understanding of restructuring approaches among nonprofit leaders; (2) what are the primary challenges that

Figure 2. Motivations of Nonprofits to Attend Educational Workshop



emerge for nonprofits in engaging in discussions of restructuring; and, (3) what role can and should funders play in actively promoting restructuring discussions among nonprofit organizations?

Findings

The findings from the study are organized according to each of the three phases of the initiative. Participants in each phase were asked for feedback about the pilot experience and its impact on them and their nonprofit. Findings relevant to each phase are now discussed.

Phase I – Educational Workshop

The initial phase of the pilot was launched with two iterations of an educational workshop. The characteristics of the attendees (151 individuals representing 75 nonprofits) reflected a fairly diverse set of nonprofit entities. The organizations varied in budget size and length of operation. One-third of respondents represented nonprofits with an annual budget under \$1 million, one-third had a budget between \$1 and \$3 million, and one-third had a budget over \$3 million. In regard to nonprofits' length of operational life, only 7% had been incorporated for under 10 years, 60% had been in operation for 10–50 years, and 30% for over 50 years. Fully 26% of the nonprofits represented were themselves the product of a prior restructuring, and only 5% were not partnering with other organizations in some way (Kantor Consulting Group, 2009). The most prevalent motivations to participate in the educational workshop related to maximizing financial resources, being responsive to the funders' interest, and achieving administrative efficiencies (see figure 2). It is evident that many nonprofits considered the funders' aims important in their decision to participate and to a lesser extent the potential benefits in regard to improving their programmatic offerings.

Based on the educational workshop, respondents reported increased knowledge about the topic of restructuring. Most attendees (75%) reported at least a moderate increase in knowledge about strategic restructuring overall, while 50% reported more knowledge about specific restructuring models. Respondents also reported a better understanding of the range of strategic restructuring options (80%) and more understanding of the issues leadership needs to consider (74%). When

Table 1. Nonprofit Organization Clusters in Readiness Assessment Phase

Cluster	Agency 1		Agency 2		Agency 3		Agency 4	
	Year	Budget	Year	Budget	Year	Budget	Year	Budget
Senior Services	1908	\$14m	1954	\$3.3m	1971	\$0.6m	1981	\$1.1m
Child & Family Services	1970	\$19m	1966	\$7.2m	-	-	-	-
Domestic Violence	1977	\$1.1m	2001	\$2.1m	-	-	-	-
Mentoring	1956	\$1m	1996	\$0.3m	-	-	-	-
Youth Behavioral Health	1970	\$6.2m	1980	\$4.5m	-	-	-	-
Youth Workforce	1982	\$1.1m	2002	\$0.5m	-	-	-	-
Jewish Services	1880	\$22m	1880	\$30m	-	-	-	-

Note: Year of founding; annual budget in 2010.

asked about the most important things learned in the workshop, respondents most frequently identified the range of restructuring options available, an awareness that funders see restructuring as a priority, and the dialogue initiated between nonprofit's CEO and board chair.

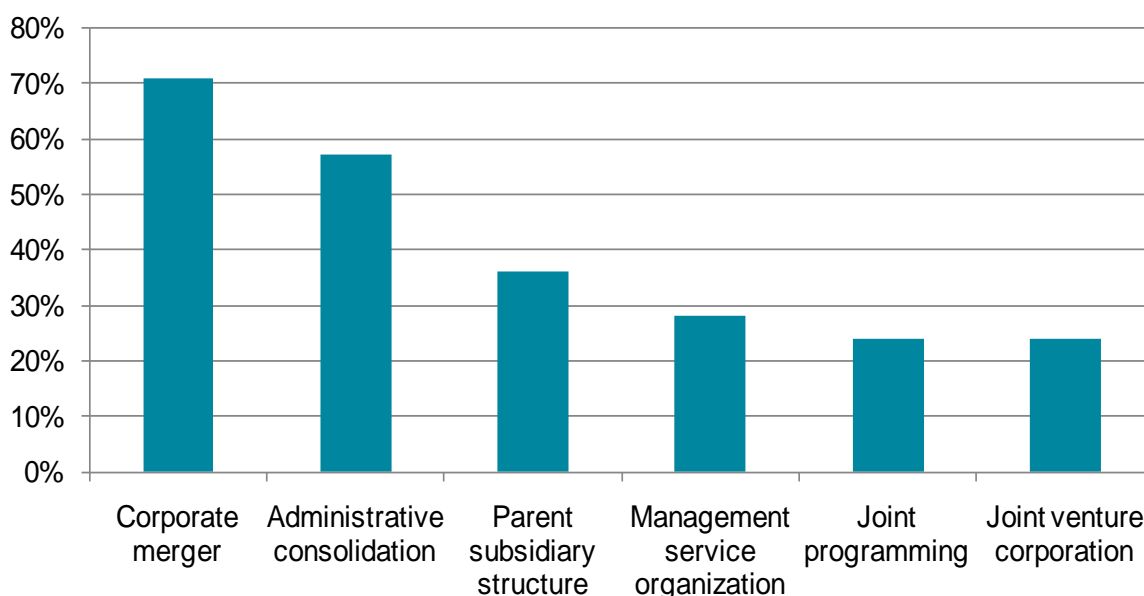
Phase II – Readiness Assessment

Following the educational workshop, leaders of 43 of the 75 nonprofits expressed interest in proceeding to the readiness assessment phase. Due to the pilot nature of the project and resource limitations, a screening procedure was conducted by the funders and the consultants to select entities that would be invited to advance to the second phase. The decision favored organizations, which had already identified a potential partner and appeared poised to undertake a meaningful restructuring outcome. In the second phase 17 organizations, configured in seven clusters of organizations, participated. Five clusters involved two nonprofits, one involved three nonprofits (one of these dropped out during this phase), and one involved four nonprofits. See table 1 for a description of these clusters in regard to the age and size of the nonprofits.

The focus of the work was on each agency completing a self-assessment and a financial position assessment; provision of a set of financial, corporate, program, board, and staffing information for review by the consultant; completion of an in-person assessment interview; and review of the assessment compiled by the consultants.

In this phase each nonprofit established a readiness assessment work team of key leaders (range: three to 13 members). Across agency teams, 55% of participants were board members, 34% were agency staff (including CEOs), and 11% were other stakeholders (e.g., volunteers, consultants). In regard to the types of learning reported during the assessment process, organizational learning was frequently noted—"We learned more about our strengths and weaknesses than we would have been able to do on our own," while others emphasized learning about options—"There is not one single 'process' to achieve restructuring and it requires a lot of time to sort out the best approach for the organizations involved. It requires flexibility from all parties." Nonprofits considered six different models for restructuring that were outlined in the educational workshop. The models most often considered as leading options in the assessment phase were merger or administrative consolidation (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Restructuring Models Considered by Nonprofits



As to the respondents' motivations and desires related to the readiness assessment process, they often focused on the core belief that the goals of restructuring were inherently important. One participant emphasized, "I wanted us to explore steps that would lead to improved efficiencies because I do believe there are functions that could be shared among organizations like ours." Another participant noted, "In this economy and competitive process, it makes sense to join forces and maximize resources the best we can to strengthen the agencies, expand our reach, and increase PR, which helps with increasing funding."

More than 80% of the respondents reported that they personally agreed with the conclusions of the readiness assessment, and three-quarters agreed that the report accurately reflected desired outcomes, the organization's strengths and weaknesses, and the current reality facing the organization. Comments on the readiness assessment report highlight the ways in which the process and report distilled key aspects of the discussion. Some saw it as an objective view of the potential partners, "Provided a clearer understanding of the relative positions of the merging organizations and how this would affect the structure and operations of the new entity."

The majority of respondents (70%) indicated that their organization's thinking about the best restructuring model did not change during the readiness assessment. Those that did report a change noted that the process supported consideration of a range of options:

The more the leadership talked about the synergies of combining organizations, [the more it] seemed quite feasible to move toward a combined organization, as opposed to a collaboration or joint venture. The financial, programmatic and board strength demonstrated more reason for the organizations to combine.

Phase III – Restructuring Plan Negotiation

At the conclusion of the readiness assessment phase, all participating nonprofits expressed interest in proceeding to the negotiation phase. Here again, the funders exerted some control of

Table 2. Nonprofit Organization Clusters in Successful Restructuring Efforts

Cluster	Area of Service	Agency 1	Agency 2	Type of restructuring
A	Child & Family Services	\$19m	\$7.2m	Parent Subsidiary
B	Domestic Violence	\$2.1m	\$1.1m	Parent Subsidiary
C	Youth Behavioral Health	\$6.2m	\$4.5m	Consolidation/Affiliation
D	Youth Workforce Development	\$1.1m	\$0.5m	Merger

which organizations advanced, based primarily on which opportunities held the most possibility of producing a significant restructuring outcome. Of the 17 organizations involved in the readiness assessment phase, four clusters involving eight paired nonprofits continued to the negotiation phase (see table 2).

Each organization's board voted to empower a joint negotiating team (JNT) to represent the organization in the negotiations. Over the course of two to three months, a series of meetings facilitated by a consultant were held to review issues and challenges. These negotiations were tailored to the particular issues of concern for each pair of organizations.

Discussion

Though the study collected data on all phases of the pilot project, some of the most important information emerged in the work associated with the third phase. The eight organizations that have participated in all aspects of the pilot were able to provide insights about the entire process, in regard to challenges and opportunities.

Challenges to Nonprofit Restructuring

Several key themes emerged across the four pairs of organizations in regard to the negotiation process and potential barriers to success. These three themes are now highlighted.

Time kills all deals. Participants emphasized the critical nature of the time that elapses in the restructuring discussion process. The participants expressed respect for how systematic the pilot was in ensuring that the team addressed matters in a structured manner but also noted a sense of urgency in maintaining momentum in the process. Each team had to negotiate a balance based on board perceptions of the process and decision issues that the team had to work through in order to produce a plan supported by consensus. Participants agreed that teams need to be held to key process deadlines but also expressed a desire for more flexibility in the overall approach.

Leaders' egos can be a barrier. Though the structure and process of the pilot was praised, team members also highlighted the key role of executive directors and board leadership in bringing about progress in the pursuit of restructuring. The agencies involved in the negotiation phase are somewhat biased in this regard because their leadership had been successful in bringing the agency to that point. Participants noted that, to the extent that leaders have a mission focus rather than a career focus, the restructuring work will be much more productive. For example, one respondent noted, "I think the thing that made this go so well for us was these two individuals (EDs) and their seeing the vision and sharing it." In addition, a significant differential in the size of the negotiating organizations can have an impact on the dynamics of the process and should be discussed explicitly. If one of the organizations is substantially larger than the other, negotiations can have an air of "takeover" rather than a mutual balance of power.

Facilitation is key. The content and structure of the pilot was well regarded by the participants, but the role of the consultants was seen as pivotal in bringing about success. Overall, the consultants involved in the pilot were highly rated, based largely on their ability to effectively facilitate the joint negotiating teams during the negotiation phase. Consultants had to strike a balance between maintaining progress in the negotiations while also taking time necessary to address concerns raised by the nonprofit partners. One participant noted, “It would not have been successful without the skilled and involved consultants we had.”

Opportunities for Funders to Support Restructuring

The pilot project surfaced a number of key learnings that can inform the actions of funders and intermediaries seeking to promote nonprofit restructuring.

Support the due diligence process. Nonprofit representatives voiced a strong view that specific support should be provided in the due diligence process, specifically in the areas of legal, financial, human resources, and communications. Both organizations in the negotiation need to be able to demonstrate to their board and other stakeholders that the opportunity has been thoroughly evaluated. Issues of significance that emerged in these instances involved transferability of organizational accreditations, maintaining receipt of governmental contracting/funding, and dealing with employee unions and employee compensation/benefits. The ability of organizations to identify appropriate resources for due diligence was frequently cited as a concern. A strongly expressed need related to having available consultation with a legal expert early in negotiation phase to review each organization’s legal structure and issues relating to a restructuring. The due diligence process could be aided by providing a listing of screened firms/consultants with expertise in nonprofit mergers and advice on how to efficiently complete the process. Some team members simply did not anticipate the work that would be required. For example, one commented,

I will be the first one to say that when someone, at one of our meetings said how much it was going to cost to do the legal and financial due diligence and I went ‘Whoa!’ I mean it really took me by surprise that this was so expensive and I thought, you know, really, how hard could this be? You know, get some new stationery and we’ll be done.

Beyond financial, legal, and structural issues, the importance of negotiating differences between organizational cultures has been raised in the literature, including the notion of conducting “cultural due diligence” as part of this process (Benton & Austin, 2010).

Raise awareness and profile of restructuring. The teams consistently voiced a belief that the idea of restructuring should be championed as not a result of a nonprofit’s weaknesses, but about collectively serving its mission more effectively. One respondent described it as “Communicating to the public and supporters of each entity the advantages of ‘1 + 1 = more than 2.’” The negotiating teams expressed the view that there is a need for such a strategy in the nonprofit sector, and that funders could provide key leadership in such an effort. One respondent suggested,

So maybe the funders ought to do a little PR campaign about how mergers are really good and that good organizations go through them. There’s so much that funders could do to help things for nonprofits, if they wanted to.

Respondents felt that examples of successful mergers in the region should be showcased to dispel notions that restructuring is rare. Negotiation team members expressed a willingness to serve as advocates for this type of campaign. The opportunity to serve as an example of restructuring in this new era is seen as a distinguishing factor for these nonprofits. One participant described how nonprofit CEOs not involved in the pilot have interacted with them,

...what I'm getting from them is that they're kind of afraid, afraid that we are going to be bigger and better and they're going to be left behind, or afraid that we're doing something that is creative, innovative, saves money, strength, all these great things that funders like and they didn't.

Promote restructuring in specific programming domains. Members of the negotiating teams voiced the feeling that funders should be activists in compelling nonprofits to explore mergers and in helping them identify viable partners in their programming area. They described the barriers to progress as being so many, that funders should take special efforts to move current and potential grantees down the path to restructuring. Some comments were quite blunt about the need for funder involvement: "It's like that's how you actually force merger to happen in this community, but don't kid yourself. Until you force it, it ain't gonna happen." Others saw the role as more nuanced: "It's a combination of carrots and sticks saying, 'You can make the choice, but here's what happens if you do and here's what happens if you don't.'" The funder role in convening the pilot project was acknowledged directly:

I think the funders understand that they have that kind of power, but what was fascinating about this process is that on the one hand they used the power, and on the other hand they said 'Oh well this is entirely up to you. You can do it or not do it,' you know, so it was a very interesting reel us in and then let go kind of thing.

Overall, team members encouraged funders to seize upon this opportunity, "I don't think they should be squeamish ... If they came to me and said 'Hey, here's a partner you ought to consider,' ... I'd want to take a second look. So I don't think that it's something they should be shy about."

One mechanism that was identified to facilitate nonprofits moving in this direction was to incentivize nonprofits, especially CEOs and boards to pursue mergers. Teams felt that many organizations will not come to the table willingly unless there are financial pressures or opportunities. Comments included:

It's very compelling and it's really about that to be sustainable you need strong operational performance day-to-day, but you also need growth. And I think for us it really resonated because we are a very strong operational performer and you know quality, finance, all those kinds of things ... but this agency has not grown in the last ten years.

That need for a shift in thinking is unlikely to be arrived at solely from an internal process as evidenced in the following comment: "Personally I think that psychologically probably most boards would never be ready. They're never going to go through a process where at the end they go, 'Okay, we're ready to merge.'"

Establish flexible mechanisms for nonprofits to access support for restructuring. Team members had many observations about how best to expand the content of the pilot so that more nonprofits could explore and pursue restructuring. A leading notion was the creation of a merger fund that nonprofits could apply to for support and commit to a specific timeline for completing the work as was done in the pilot. Teams felt that a 12-month timeline for the process should be maintained but allot more time for the negotiation phase and avoid gaps in activity, in order to maintain momentum. A sustained presence in support of mergers is seen as a way to invite more organizations into the process:

And I guess what I'd like to see is almost a permanent thing where you say "We want to encourage mergers. Here's what we're going to do to encourage you to seriously think about it, and when you get to that point, there is money for you, but it's only if you merge."

Increase communication about restructuring while maintaining confidentiality. The nature of the restructuring pilot resulted in high levels of confidentiality about what nonprofits were involved, especially in the later phases. The team members understood the importance of a degree of confidentiality but also see the value of greater communication about the process as a participant and about what is happening overall (e.g., numbers of nonprofits involved, etc). Such increased transparency would elevate the awareness of the importance of restructuring and that it is a normal, ongoing process. One comment embodied this concern: "The funders should be much more open in sharing information about what is going on throughout the collaborative. Our group felt we were operating in a vacuum. We did not desire confidential information, only some context." Without some level of information sharing, potential synergies from having a cohort of organizations working on mergers could be lost: "They were so secretive about who's doing what, where and who's involved, there was no benefit to us in doing it at the same time because it's not like we were learning anything from what the others were doing."

Teams also felt that funders should be clear with current grantees about the potential funding implications of pursuing a merger, preferably holding harmless the nonprofits for some period following merger (i.e., if two nonprofits each received an amount from a funder, these funds should not be immediately reduced during and following a merger of the organizations). An illustrative comment follows: "If the motivation is 'Now we don't have to give you as much money,' why would you merge? ... if we understand the motivation is 'We think it will be most effective with the dollars we give you by doing x,' we're willing to do it ..."

Support "Phase IV" work. Members of the negotiating teams frequently noted the remaining work to be done following the conclusion of the negotiations. These activities related to implementing the new administrative structures that emerged from the restructuring plans and were dubbed "Phase IV" by one of the teams. Team members believed that funders should assist organizations with completing the work required, such as addressing supervisory issues, integrating human resource policies, and the consolidation of staff. Comments included the following: "Our infrastructure and integration costs ... if you really are invested in this and really want to see these organizations really be positioned to thrive in the future, then assist in going to the next phase." A core role was seen as facilitating the integration of organizational cultures, including integration of programs, staff, and boards, especially in instances where multiple work sites are involved.

Respondents offered a consistent plea to funders to expand their role in supporting nonprofits in the exploration of restructuring. The ongoing value of such support to agencies was uniformly

highlighted among respondents. One stated, “The leadership of the foundation community was vital to make this a success. You are the only group that can provide the momentum for this effort.” Whatever the form, the sense was that more of this type of initiative is needed, “Do it again. Others will jump on. Keep up the momentum. Once is not enough.”

Conclusion

The imperative for nonprofit organizations is greater than ever in which to examine methods for best pursuing their missions and ensuring the sustainability of their efforts. Periods of reduced availability of funding from philanthropy and government sources can serve to force nonprofits to consider of a full range of organizational options. Strategic restructuring is but one set of approaches for nonprofits to consider in achieving these aims and one that frequently is ignored until no other options exist. The present study examined an effort by philanthropic funders to initiate discussions of restructuring among nonprofits in a specific region.

Though initiated with goals of promoting the efficient and effective pursuit of mission, most nonprofits initially perceived the primary benefit of restructuring as having mostly to do with securing funding. However, many nonprofit executives and board members have an authentic desire to use restructuring as a means to better serve their target audiences. These key leaders must not only first accept the potential implications of a restructured organization but also convey this message to the other organizational leadership, staff, and volunteers. Molding the internal culture of the nonprofit to accept restructuring also must be coupled with the simultaneous identification and pursuit of potential partner organizations.

What has been described as “courtship” between nonprofits, the negotiation of inter-organizational restructuring is a process fraught with potential pitfalls, delays, and politics. From the perspective of nonprofit leaders, the risks of undertaking restructuring are clear and substantial, while the potential benefits are more often diffuse and unknown. Given this awareness, it is not surprising that nonprofit representatives in the pilot expressed a distinct desire for funders to take an activist role in the pursuit of restructuring. This includes advocating for restructuring, motivating and incentivizing nonprofits to pursue these discussions, and also aiding in the “matchmaking” process by helping potential partner organizations come together.

Clearly, the involvement of funders in nonprofits’ exploration of these options is anxiety-producing for both the nonprofits and the funder. However, nonprofit leaders express the concerted view that this anxiety is preferable to the alternative: a lack of financial and mission sustainability and the prospect of funders decreasing funding to these organizations. As such, the leadership at funder and nonprofit organizations have essential roles to play in advancing the consideration of strategic restructuring. The potential benefits to the nonprofit sector are substantial, if organizations better achieve their missions through the use of restructuring.

Disclosure Statement

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Research Article

Intelligence and Information Gathering Through Deliberative Crowdsourcing

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The hollowing of the state has added new challenges for administrators attending to the competing values of the administration. This article examines how the wisdom of the crowds can be used in a deliberative manner to extract new knowledge through crowdsourcing. We will specifically examine cases of intelligence and information gathering through the analysis of a suspected nuclear reactor in Syria and the use of the crowd in mapping unknown or rapidly changing environments. Through case analysis, this article seeks to understand if crowdsourcing can offer a potential opportunity for public managers to reduce transactions costs while engaging the crowd in a form of deliberative governance to understand and potentially solve public problems. Our approach involves applying the seven lessons of deliberative governance (Scott, Adams, & Wechsler, 2004) to our cases in order to produce five administrative concepts for creating mini-publics for deliberative crowdsourcing.

Keywords: Crowdsourcing, Deliberative Governance, Intelligence and Information Gathering

“A thousand pairs of eyes will spot potential problems easier and a thousand heads will come up with more new ideas than just a few.”

— Oras Tynkkynen, Member of the Finish Parliament (cited in Aitamurto 2012, p.5)

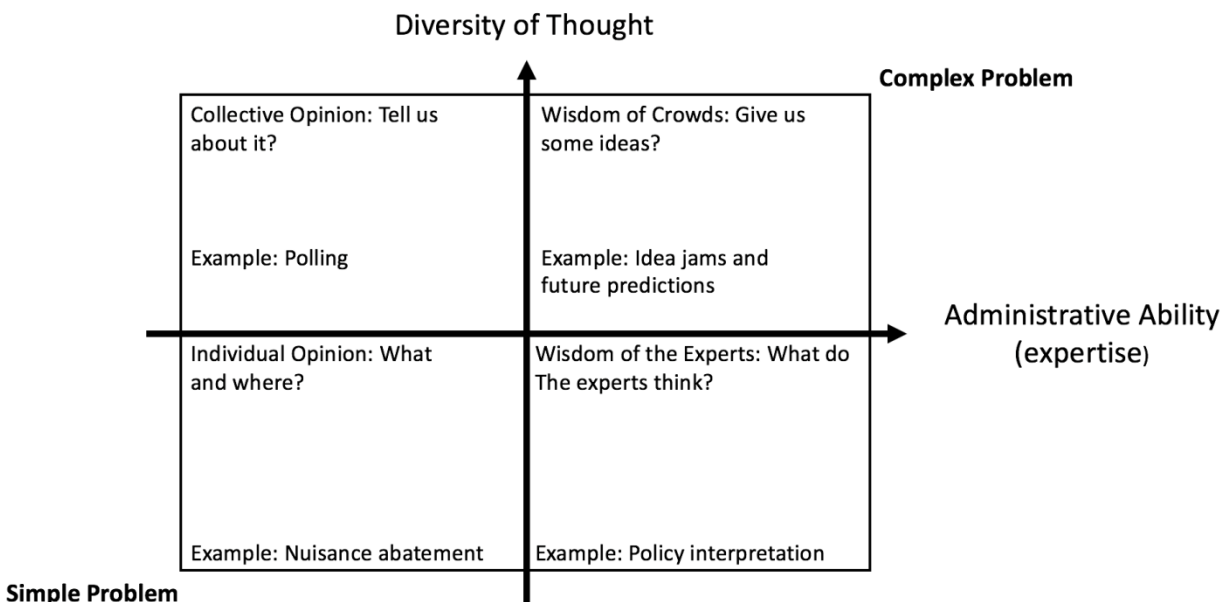
Tynkkynen’s quote is the essence of why crowdsourcing for intelligence and information gathering offers such great potential. Crowdsourced intelligence is producing one of the most counterintuitive developments in the recent history of foreign intelligence. As hard intelligence is increasingly cloaked in secretive regimes, impenetrable cultures, and information overload, amateurs in plain sight are conducting intelligence collection and analysis. Embracing this free source of surprisingly high-quality analysis is quietly becoming a useful complement to the craft of intelligence, as connecting the dots exceeds the capabilities of traditional institutions. The capability to gather intelligence via the crowd has implications across the public sector, not just in the intelligence community.

While crowdsourcing in government is not necessarily new, it is still somewhat novel and misunderstood. In the United States, government crowdsourcing has been enshrined through the National Open Source Enterprise (NOSE) and the position of the assistant deputy director of National Intelligence for Open Source (ADDNI/OS). Externally, NATO, Interpol, and national military and security agencies have employed similar open-source programs, and a cluster of universities and private organizations have grown to address the push toward open-source intelligence. These approaches increasingly involve administrators working in conjunction with the public and, in some ways, “employing” the public as an extension of their organization.

When Milward and Provan (2000) talked about the hollowing of the state, they were focusing on the replacement of the public sector with a network of third-party providers of service. They spoke of how bureaucracy and its “command and control mechanisms” was “being replaced by a much more complicated” set of relationships for service delivery (Milward & Provan, 2000, p. 359). They also spoke about how “no one organization is able to produce all the services that

Clark, B. Y., Zingale, N., & Logan, J. (2017). Intelligence and information gathering through deliberative crowdsourcing. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 3(1), 55-78.
doi:10.20899/jpna.3.1.55-78

Figure 1. Crowdsourcing in Government Analytic Framework



Source: Clark et al. (2016)

individual clients need” (Milward & Provan, 2000, p. 359), a similar phenomenon is seen occurring in the area of public sector crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is the process by which the crowd, or public generally, is used as a source of labor, energies, resources, and ideas.

We are not proposing that crowdsourcing in its current incarnation is in anyway approaching the hollowing out of government described by Milward and Provan, but rather that a small set of activities are being supplemented by this new form of intelligence/information generation. The focus of this article is to evaluate several cases in which crowdsourcing can be harnessed to gather information and intelligence in an ever-evolving and technologically advanced world, while concurrently flushing out administrative challenges and benefits of this approach. And while we know that networks of providers that deliver traditional services to government are “less stable than firms or governments” (Milward & Provan, 2000, p. 359), they offer a flexibility that the rigid bureaucracies may not—and this becomes particularly evident when we expand the notion of networks to that of the crowd and crowdsourcing.

This article builds upon the framework of crowdsourcing in government (see figure 1) proposed by Clark, Zingale, Logan, and Brudney (2016). In figure 1, crowdsourced problems are arranged along two axes and range from simple to complex. We seek to better understand the more complex challenges posed and how crowdsourcing can “allow the best ideas to rise to the level of discourse while crowding out less helpful ones” (Clark et al., 2016, p. 63). This article focuses on only one type of crowdsourcing—the wisdom of the crowds (top right quadrant in the figure). The terminology of the wisdom of crowds is derived from a similarly named book by Surowiecki (2004), in which the author explores the wisdom of the crowds and finds that the crowd can generate high-quality products through collective intelligence in the absence of topical experts. This notion is reinforced by recent empirical studies of crowdsourcing information accuracy by Kittur and colleagues (Kittur, Chi, & Suh, 2008; Kittur, Smus, Khamkar, & Kraut, 2011).

Noveck (2009) finds that, in crowdsourcing, “the greatest challenge is one of design” (p.41). By organizing or designing the way in which government interacts with the public via

crowdsourcing, we can create an “organizing processes that allow for not just sharing opinion but a broader participation has the potential to look more like the community, thus be more representative” (Clark et al., 2016, p. 61-62) and deliberative—though representation may not always be a goal.

In this article we are analyzing two cases of crowdsourced intelligence using the deliberative governance lessons from Scott, Adams, and Wechsler (2004) and Brabham’s (2013a) best practices in crowdsourcing. Through this process we extract five administrative concepts helpful to engaging in crowdsourcing deliberatively to gather information. The article provides cases to demonstrate applications of crowdsourcing for the intelligence community that have applications in many non-intelligence settings. The first case is described as the “Box on the Euphrates.” The Box, it is discovered by the crowd, is home to a Syrian nuclear reactor. The second case is what we will call “crowdmapping”. In this example, we explore a number of instances in which crowdsourcing has developed highly detailed maps of a number of unknown or quickly changing places or environments.

With these cases of crowdsourcing, we will demonstrate how public organizations broadly, and not just the intelligence community, may be better able to engage in deliberative processes to gathering complex information (often under conditions of uncertainty) by utilizing technologies powered by the crowd in order to reach a decision. Crowdsourcing in the public context does not have the intention of getting rid of traditional citizen participation, “but rather augmenting more traditional participation routes such as elections and referendums” (Lehdonvirta & Bright, 2015, p. 263). We, like Dryzek (2010), view deliberation as a process of social inquiry in which gaining understanding, rather than winning the argument of the day, is sought. Deliberation is what occurs when varying discourses intersect (Dryzek, 2010). Deliberative processes involve mechanisms for driving and supporting interactions within and between governance networks consisting of, but not limited to, public agencies, non-governmental organizations, interest groups, corporations, research institutes, and universities (Dryzek, 2010). According to Dryzek (2010), these networks are often populated by society’s elites; thus, there exists the potential for anti-democratic representation, which could narrow the context for deliberation. Consequently, one of the goals of deliberative governance should be to encourage the formation of mini-publics (a small group composed of the non-elite), which involve citizens discussing contentious and/or complex public issues that have the potential to enhance the quality and number of public deliberative spaces (Dryzek, 2010). It is within this context that our research on deliberative crowdsourcing resides. We are interested in the ways in which crowdsourcing can be used as a tool to create mini-publics engaged in deliberation. To date only a handful of studies have approached the topic of crowdsourcing from the deliberative governance perspective, and all of these articles have focused on policymaking rather than its use in the management of public programs (Aitamurto, 2012; Aitamurto & Landemore, 2015; Landemore, 2015).

In the national intelligence community, there has been widespread outsourcing of government intelligence gathering in recent years (Chesterman, 2008; Shorrock, 2008). Approximately 70% of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence has been spent on the outsourcing of intelligence gathering and analysis (Shorrock, 2008). The private sector intelligence community has inherent conflicts in its operations, as they are profit driven, have shareholders, and are at times outside the reach of the law (Chesterman, 2008; Johnson, 2010; Shorrock, 2008). Organizations beyond the intelligence community access intelligence or information from outside their organization to guide policy and decision making. The Federal Reserve System, for example, relies upon information compiled by Fed staff. These reports draw upon not just data and analysis done by Fed staff but also from privately sourced data on economic conditions, bond yields, and real estate markets, to name a few. The former president of the Federal Reserve

Bank in Minneapolis, Kocherlakota (2010), has stated that “the Federal Reserve System is deliberately designed so that the residents of Main Street are able to have a voice in monetary policy.”

It is clear that information on a wide range of government functions are not solely generated within the government internally. And while “spying for hire,” as Shorrock (2008) puts it, may have become the norm, spying or gathering intelligence for “pleasure” is rare, not driven by profit, is done in the open, and exploits publicly available information. The primary case examples we present in this article are from instances of intelligence/information gathering that occurred outside the context of direct government control—though we do present a number of smaller examples throughout the article that include government input or management.

Public sector managers, whether working for the National Security Agency (NSA) or the Federal Reserve Bank, draw upon information from a wide range of sources. The primary cases we present in this article are relevant to the investigation of public sector intelligence/information gathering because they demonstrate public deliberation, the gathering of a mini-public, and the production of new knowledge that could be key to making informed decisions that provide a public benefit. And while these primary cases had their genesis outside of the public sector, there is no reason to believe that these cases are unique to the context outside of public management. Government actors have the potential to produce similar results, given they encourage deliberations following the lessons we learn from our cases. There are limitations and reservations that should be considered before using crowdsourcing in the deliberative processes of intelligence gathering or other public management scenarios, and these are presented in our conclusion.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows: first we provide a brief summary of deliberative governance focusing on the primary lessons offered by Scott et al. (2004), as they relate to the best practices for using crowdsourcing in government as described by Brabham (2013a). These streams of literature were applied to a series of case studies in order to produce a concept of deliberative crowdsourcing. We then discuss the payoffs and limitations of crowdsourced information gathering. We conclude with the implications of crowdsourced information gathering for public organizations.

Deliberative Governance as a Lens to Understand Crowdsourcing

Deliberative governance provides a theoretical lens for understanding the applications of crowdsourcing discussed in the cases that follow. We will demonstrate in our two cases of crowdsourced intelligence/information gathering that discourse, a multi-way and multi-partner dialogue, provides a reasoned approach to engaging the vast and dispersed crowd to create public value.

As governmental entities seek to engage the crowd to provide this public value, the enhancing administrative legitimacy in these dialogues becomes important. A dialogue-focused approach, claims Dryzek (2010), rather than simple “head counts,” will enhance administrative legitimacy. To Dryzek (2010), discourse is most effective as a feature of mini-publics, which, in turn, empower participants as a form of discursive representation to form a meta-consensus. A critical feature of mini-publics involves smaller groups of deliberators that act as almost instructive microcosms to a larger conversation. These smaller groups involve a more localized or task-specific forum purposed to reach consensus, discover new ways of considering something, or figuring out solutions while deepening an understanding of social problems. This

conceptualization of a process of discourse demonstrates politics in action not merely for purposes of reaching an agreement, but instead to encourage civic competence through engagement and contestation (Spicer, 2010). The cases of crowdsourcing in this article represent mini-publics derived from civic engagement, which is driven by the crowd's competence and dedication to the task—though not all crowdsourcing is dialogue-driven; others include micro-tasking (small jobs completed, typically for compensation) and tournament crowdsourcing (Aitamurto & Landemore, 2015; Prpić, Taeihagh, & Melton 2015).

This article is focused on investigating the ways in which deliberative governance can be applied, rather than just the theory that Dryzek and others have developed. We turn to the work of Scott et al. (2004), which designated seven preliminary lessons of deliberative governance by working on a case involving a rural agricultural-based community. They note that deliberative governance “is both descriptive of a growing set of processes that involve citizens in public issues, and a normative response to our currently depleted levels of social capital” (Scott et al., 2004, p. 17). The concern here resides in the ongoing polarization of our politics, which reduces the possibilities for intersecting discourses and creates an increasingly difficult balancing act for administrators needing to manage tensions within governance systems. Our interest is in exploring the role of crowdsourcing as a mini-public deliberative medium to open up possibilities for engagement and discourse. To further develop the research and theory in this area of practice, we will present a set of practical concepts that can be derived from deliberative governance, as described by Scott et al. (2004), in the discussion of our cases.

Scott et al. (2004), building from Dryzek's work, sought to explore deliberative processes in action that could provide a promising strategy for renewing public trust and involvement in democratic institutions. Their research produced seven lessons to guide the way in which public administrators could apply deliberative governance to broaden and deepen their approach to citizen engagement and public issues. Scott et al. (2004) and the deliberative governance literature is theoretically based, with little evidence of associated empirical testing. As such, we will also draw from a set of empirical best practices from the government crowdsourcing literature (Brabham, 2013a). Brabham's (2013a) best practices focus on the question of “how”: how we can learn about the motivations of the crowd; how to define a clear/interesting problem; etc.

Brabham (2013a) describes 10 best practices across three crowdsourcing phases: planning, implementation, and post-implementation. These best practices were created to provide “a practical guide for any government organization hoping to extend their problem solving abilities by crowdsourcing the public participation process of governance” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 21). While the best practices contribute to an applied perspective for initiating a crowdsourcing activity, they are, at best, only superficially connected to the wealth of public administration literature associated with public participation, governance, and deliberation. Furthermore, the applied steps offer little to public managers tasked with a crowdsourcing initiative from a conceptual perspective. In other words, the best practices are useful when organizing primary tasks, but offer little when considering the challenges that arise when engaging in deliberative practices to organize and manage the process. Moreover, by combining Brabham's (2013a) best practices to Scott et al.'s (2004) deliberation lessons, we build upon the crowdsourcing literature by connecting theory to practice. We note that there remains slippage between the literature streams from which additional administrative conceptual footing necessary for implementing and managing a crowdsourced initiative can be explored. For example, an administrator can appreciate that deliberation is an ongoing process that requires facilitation skills (Scott et al., 2004). Or that crowdsourcing must begin by defining the problem, determining the level of commitment to the outcomes, and knowing the community (Brabham, 2013a), there are still

Table 1. Deliberative Governance Lessons and Crowdsourcing Best Practices

Scott et al.'s (2013) 7 lessons of deliberative governance	
Lesson 1	DG is an ongoing, developmental process that should be understood as a series of connected experiences
Lesson 2	Deliberation works best when it begins early so that changed minds can make a difference
Lesson 3	Deliberation requires facilitation skills, management and a significant investment of public resources
Lesson 4	The outcomes of deliberation are always uncertain and should assist stakeholders in articulating interests and seeking mutual interests
Lesson 5	Deliberation produces tangible and intangible benefits for building social capital
Lesson 6	Deliberation is only part of the story and should be placed in a broader context of public involvement
Lesson 7	DG will not develop in isolation therefore practitioners and scholars should take steps to build informal networks and learning communities in order to share experiences
Brabham's (2013a) 10 best practices for executing crowdsourced applications	
Practice 1	"Clearly define the problem and solution parameters" (p. 21).
Practice 2	"Determine the level of commitment to the outcomes" (p. 22).
Practice 3	"Know the online community and their motivations" (p. 23).
Practice 4	"Invest in usable, stimulating, well designed tools" (p. 24).
Practice 5	"Craft policies that consider the legal needs of the organization and the online community" (p. 24).
Practice 6	"Launch a promotional plan and a plan to grow and sustain the community" (p. 25).
Practice 7	"Be honest, transparent, and responsive (p. 26).
Practice 8	"Be involved, but share control" (p. 26).
Practice 9	"Acknowledge users and follow through on obligations" (p. 27).
Practice 10	"Asses the project from many angles" (p. 28).

remaining conceptual questions, such as the role of administration, transaction costs, and relationship-building approaches, or when/if an initiative can be called off or shut down.

Furthermore, because deliberation, as described by Scott et al. (2004), and crowdsourcing, as described by Brabham (2013a), both depict a shared top-down and bottom-up approach in which the locus of control is between the organization and the (online) community, common administrative concepts such as those associated with the checks and balances of hierarchy, control, and structure formation designed to manage input may no longer hold. This means that administrators are on new footing when engaging in a crowdsourced initiatives and therefore need updated conceptual frameworks for managing, analyzing, and deciding upon the next steps. Therefore, our purpose is to create a connection between the experiences of public managers and explore the theory-practice intersection through our case analysis by applying the deliberation lessons from Scott et al. (2004) to the 10 best practices of Brabham (2013a) to flush out administrative concepts around the practice of crowdsourcing.

In light of this, we set out to explore what administrative concepts could be learned for crowdsourcing intelligence/information gathering. Table 1 summarizes the seven deliberative governance lessons from Scott et al. (2004) and the 10 best practices in government crowdsourcing (Brabham, 2013a, 2013b). These two applied literature streams set the stage for our cases and subsequent analysis. With these in mind, we enter into an analysis of the cases.

Cases Studies

The following sections examine two cases of crowdsourced intelligence or information gathering. The first case demonstrates how a blog comments section turned up “intelligence to die for” in evaluating a mysterious Syrian site. While the second is a set of shorter, inter-related case examples, that demonstrate how the crowd can gather a wide range of information and map it jointly to enhance our knowledge of the unknown or rapidly changing environments—often called crowdmapping.

Case 1: The Box on the Euphrates

A boxy building rests on the bank of the Euphrates in al Kibar, Syria—the purpose and contents are unclear. What is known is that this “Box on the Euphrates” is not an original—it replaced an earlier building on the site, and plenty is known about that building. The Box’s predecessor allegedly housed a nuclear reactor, a structure that had been in place for more than six years, and was likely built with North Korean technical assistance. Although the precise intent of building the reactor is unclear, one thing is known: in early September 2007, during the Six-Party Talks with North Korea, Israel executed air strikes on the Box. The next month, Syria scraped the site clean. This is the story not of the Box itself, but of how we came to know what we know about this site. Without security clearances, dedicated satellites, wiretapping, or travel budgets, a loose collective crowdsourced the collection and analysis of publicly available information sources to create estimates that complement and compete with the products of the intelligence community and its global counterparts.

The Public Deliberation of the Box on the Euphrates

On October 25, 2007, the blog ArmsControlWonk.com (Lewis, 2007a) published a brief post on the destruction of the “Box on the Euphrates,” a structure near the river in Syria suspected to house a nuclear reactor. The post mentioned two New York Times articles describing the site, an Israeli air strike on it the previous month, and purported aid provided by North Korea to Syria in establishing its nuclear program. Almost immediately people began populating the blog comments section with analyses of both satellite imagery and the political dynamics involved. Various commenters speculated that the site was “scraped” to build a new building, and identified gates, a railroad with a fenced-in stop and evidence of additional scraping on a nearby hill. On October 26 (Lewis, 2007b), the blog featured a wider-angle satellite photo with another building nearby and speculated on how the intelligence was being addressed from a political frame. The commenters again began providing spontaneous analysis using a surprising amount of publicly available information. One poster noted, “not sure about your assessment of that second image as a ‘box.’ Instead of another building with 150-square-foot footprint, I see two 40-foot-x-140-foot buildings spaced 50 feet apart; the space between them is pretty close to the same color as the nearby paving” (Lewis, 2007b). Another observed, “the scale/speed of the cleanup suggests that they did not have to remove a lot of concrete (if they did, that should have been visible on someone’s remote sensing systems). Removal of large amounts of reinforced

concrete is a laborious task unless they chose to dynamite it first. Demolition is likely to be seen and heard. Even if the physical destruction is not seen, the movement of earth movers, dump trucks can be seen” (Lewis, 2007b).

An October 29 post (Lewis, 2007c) confirmed that the intelligence community had known about the Box for quite some time, noting that intelligence about the building was restricted to a few senior officials (and that the intelligence community was kept largely in the dark). The 43 comments that followed exemplified the potentially high quality of crowdsourced analysis, including NASA photos of the site attesting to the age of the building, analysis photos from the Institute for Science and International Security, a cutaway illustration of what a reactor looks like, pictures of reactor pumps, and images of the Box’s suspected cousin in Yongbyon, North Korea and a British reactor. One commenter provided a speculative timeline to explain the timing of Israel’s attack and diplomatic silence. Others considered the Box’s site and surrounding geography with possible motives for the decision to place the structure there.

The next post on the subject, on November 5 (Lewis, 2007d), featured an on-the-ground picture of the region and mentioned its proximity to well-known tourist sites. The post observed that portrayal of the site as remote indicated biases toward the conclusion that the site held a reactor. The comments section again came alive with coordinates, satellite photos, and insightful analyses of what was known and what current theories had emerged. A post on the blog the next day (Lewis 2007e) complemented analysis that led to construction dates, height of the building, and more reliable images taken by a Japanese tourist.

Discussion of the Box was then quiet for two months until January 12, 2008 (Lewis 2008a), when a new post observed that the Box appeared to be under re-construction and warned again of a bias toward concluding that the site was intended to house another reactor. Commenters began to evaluate the height of the box by establishing the time the satellite passed over, calculating the length of the shadow it cast, and then counting the pixels in the satellite images. Characteristics of a team began to emerge from the commenters, with one person offering to perform calculations if someone else could provide a satellite over-flight time, and yet another doing the research to find these data. With the over-flight time, the former speculated, “if the sun’s altitude was 26.850 degrees then the height of the north west corner of the roof is 0.235 x the width (i.e., the east-west dimension) of the building. Given the ... estimate that the building is 60 metres by 60 metres, this puts the edge of the roof at 14.1 metres high. By a similar method, the raised centre of the roof is then 15.7 metres high” (Lewis, 2008a). After some discussion, the commenter revised the estimate: “If I correct my original estimates, I end up at 16.5 m for the corner and 18.4 m for the roof apex, which, in the grand scheme of things, is the same as Yale’s values. After all, the pixels are a bit blurry, and at the angles we’re talking about a change of (an assumed) building width from just 60 to 62 m will change the height calculation by 0.5 m.”

A January 24, 2008, post (Lewis, 2008b) noted that two prominent experts had an op-ed in the Washington Post on North Korea’s compliance with its nuclear commitments. In the op-ed, Albright and Shire (2008) reference the newly built “Box in the Desert” and claim, “It is almost certainly not a reactor.” After three months of relative silence, an April 24 post (Lewis, 2008c) highlighted articles in the New York Times (Sanger, 2008) and Washington Post (Wright, 2008a 2008b) offering photographic evidence that the Box was, in fact, a reactor. Commenters discussed comparisons of the Box and Yongbyon and typical procedures preventing the introduction of cameras into such a facility. A comment near the end of the thread makes an observation that includes an analysis that allows for the estimation of the number of fuel rods and eventual output of the reactor, particular as it compares with the Yongbyon facility (Lewis,

2008b). Another commenter noted that the ArmsControlWonk.com volunteers and the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had encountered the same issues in explaining the absence of a hot water outlet pipe, and yet another located that pipe on Google Maps.

A follow-up post the next day (Lewis, 2008d) questioned the timing of the release of evidence about the Box, followed in the comments with a pragmatic discussion of the politics and espionage methods involved in the release, especially regarding the progress of the Six-Party Talks with North Korea. A subsequent post of a CIA briefing on the matter resulted in an extended parsing of the briefing's wording, inflections, and omissions. A frequent commenter observed that the arms control community tends to think in terms of national programs and suggested that modern nuclear programs may employ a division of labor, making use of different nation-states' strengths while keeping the collaboration below suspicion on the whole. An April 27 post (Lewis, 2008e) featured impressive graphic representations of the Box's facilities configuration and that of the Yongbyon reactor. The comments for this post included ground-level photographs of the Syrian reactor during construction and noted significant differences between the Box and Yongbyon. A commenter, obviously familiar with nuclear plants, observed: "I also am not convinced by the suggestion that the spent fuel pond would be within the building, as that puts it rather close to the reactor. I doubt having so much water so close to a reactor is good for safety reasons, and also the pond water should be as cool as possible to minimise Magnox fuel corrosion, and having it so close to a big heat source could make that tricky" (Lewis, 2008e). It followed with analysis that included highly specific details on the reactors and calculations of their size. Contributors discussed further differences in the infrastructure between the Box and Yongbyon, including animated images with grid overlays to aid in assessing dimension. This was followed by a fairly technical discussion among the commenters, including terminology and methods of size assessment.

Blog commenters offer more examples of the crowd-produced outcomes, but, for brevity's sake, it seems clear from these examples that the potential for complex analysis exists in this context. A prominent intelligence analyst, featured in a New York Times article, claimed that the work done by the ArmsControlWonk analysis was "intel to die for" (Broad, 2008). While not always predictable, it is clearer and clearer that the crowd is capable of real quality work.

Case 2: Crowdmapping

In the United States we take for granted that we have maps to find all of the places that we might need to find. Using a traditional map made from paper, we can follow street names on that map to find our way to where we need to go. Increasingly, GPS-enabled mapping, using dedicated GPS mapping devices or through a smartphone, has become the norm. However, in many places in the world there are no accurate or reliable maps. If you want to get from point A to point B in a place shrouded in secrecy like North Korea, how do you go about gathering that geographical information? This is where geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) comes into play. In fact, there is an agency within the US military infrastructure dedicated to gathering GEOINT, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). "Anyone who sails a U.S. ship, flies a U.S. aircraft, makes national policy decisions, fights wars, locates targets, responds to natural disasters, or even navigates with a cellphone relies on NGA" (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, 2013). Whether they are on the battlefield or on a humanitarian mission, those in the military need to know where to go and understand their surroundings. Using GEOINT gathered from a variety of sources, the NGA says that they help to "Know the Earth ... Show the Way ... Understand the World" (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, 2013).

The NGA and other parts of the national intelligence community gather information from many traditional sources of intelligence. This might include government and commercial satellite and aerial imagery (using visible and infrared images) and information from the personnel on the ground. These data sources can provide precise information about elevation, depths, topography, and other physical features. However, these images may not always provide a complete picture of the reality on the ground. There also may not be sufficient information from the ground to provide more detailed data on local conditions to provide a full picture of the environment. In a dynamic and changing crisis environment, gathering information may be challenging for the formal intelligence community, particularly if they do not yet have any boots on the ground.

With the advent of crowdsourcing, the NGA and other mechanisms within the broader intelligence community do not have to rely solely upon their own agents and analysts to collect and analyze potentially vital geographical information. They can now rely upon crowdmapping to fill in the gaps. For many applications of crowdmapping, the information could not be collected “without mass-participation, and would most likely be left undone without crowdsourcing” (Aitamurto, 2012, p. 10). These mapping projects, whether or not they have national intelligence applications, “are an efficient way to visually demonstrate the geographical spread of a phenomenon, whether that is violence, bribing, snow storms, or traffic jams” (Aitamurto, 2012, p. 10).

Crowdmapping Example 1: Google MapMaker

Few places in the world are as mysterious as North Korea; and few places in the world have also escaped Google Maps. However, thanks to crowdsourcing North Korea can now be added to the places we can search using Google Maps. In January 2013, Google released its North Korean map, which includes monuments, parks, streets, gulags, and train stops in its capital, Pyongyang. Prior to the January release, the map entry for North Korea was vacant aside from a place marker for Pyongyang and a single river. Google has credited a group of crowd-mappers with the details of North Korea, stating that they started building it in 2009 “based on satellite images, public information and local knowledge” (Mysore, 2013).

The crowd-mappers used Google MapMaker, a service that allows users to add data to areas with imprecise or inaccurate details. The program works much like Wikipedia, wherein users check the data submitted by other users, and information is constantly updated. Along with street names and other details, Google has linked photographs to their respective sites, allowing people from around the world a truer view of one of Earth’s most unknown places.

Richard Hintz, a Google map contributor, explained that using the MapMaker program “you can trace over the imagery and define a road” (How Google finally mapped North Korea, 2013). The contributors, like Hintz, are not necessarily people with on-the-ground knowledge of North Korea but rather just had an interest in contributing to the mapping project. To ensure that “there is a continuum of credibility” for the maps, a check was established where each new feature that is added “is held for review” before being added to the final product (How Google finally mapped North Korea, 2013). This review process can help to avoid some common complaints of wikis that allow open access to editing.

The Google MapMaker platform is very much a bottom-up approach to mapmaking—even if Google directs it. Crowdsourcing needs direction but seems to work best with a broad range of contributors. Democratization in map making has the potential “to add to an old science by allowing anyone with access to a computer to upload their findings” (Valdes, 2013). De Leeuw et

al. (2011) find that the local knowledge that is aggregated via crowdsourcing actually had greater level accuracy than professional surveyors in urban areas of western Kenya. This finding provides support to the power of the crowd and the importance of local knowledge in many map-making endeavors.

However, it is “also important that we acknowledge the pitfalls and limits of crowdmapping. In many parts of the world such citizen mapping has proven challenging, if not downright dangerous. In many places, little can be achieved without the approval of local and or national authorities—especially in North Korea” (Valdes, 2013). Crowdmapping has the benefit of being flexible and easy to modify in response to the changing environment and new (and local) knowledge. But that changing environment may be changing so fast and may be so volatile that the just-created map is already out of date or misleading. Without third-party verification or trust systems (rating users, for example), faith in these maps may be limited.

Crowdmapping Example 2: OpenStreetMap

OpenStreetMap bills itself as a project that “creates and distributes free geographic data for the world.” The creators of the service say it was started due to most “free” maps “[having] legal or technical restrictions on their use, holding back people from using them in creative, productive, or unexpected ways” (OpenStreetMap, 2013).

The service is a true wiki, which allows users to add, modify, and delete data. In order to modify or create a map, a user must sign up and agree to share their contributions under OpenStreetMap’s license, ensuring that data stays free for everyone while allowing information to be attributed to specific sources. OpenStreetMap specifically mentions that pseudonyms or nicknames are preferred, and that email addresses will never be sold or used for purposes other than validation and user messaging.

The OpenStreetMap platform is interesting in that it unites communities that are interested in many different features of maps. In its special-interest topics section, a user can find a map for the blind, humanitarian relief maps, infrastructure maps, and a wide variety of other specialized designations. These maps allow certain niche map-users a specialized and experienced community with which to collaborate and consult.

The humanitarian map section of OpenStreetMap shows the value of these services. Humanitarian maps were created for many crises around the world, including the recent coups and secession in Mali, post-election crisis in Iran, and continuing conflicts in the Palestinian Territories.

Crowdmapping Example 3: Ushahidi

Disaster relief organizations and those in need of disaster assistance have been using the website Ushahidi.com¹ as a gathering point on the Internet to identify where resources are and where they need to go. In the aftermath of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, people were able to send text messages (SMS), email messages, Twitter messages, or Internet postings to Ushahidi’s website identifying their location and their needs. Ushahidi had volunteers in Boston who translated these messages from the original Creole/French into English. This information was then logged, mapped, and put onto their website (Nelson & Patel, 2011). With this information from the Ushahidi volunteers, aid agencies from around the world working in Haiti were better

¹ Ushahidi means “testimony” in Swahili.

Table 2. Administrative Concepts for Crowdsourced Intelligence/Information Gathering

Concept #1	Administrators must determine what role they want to play.
Concept #2	Crowdsourcing is not free.
Concept #3	Know when to hit the off switch.
Concept #4	Relationships matter and have to be nurtured.
Concept #5	The crowdsourcing does not operate in a vacuum.

able to target their relief efforts. Ushahidi has been used in a number of other emergency/disaster situations around the world.

Ushahidi's Crowdfunder service is a crowdsourcing mapping tool that provides a streamlined way in which maps can be created from reports sent in from various sources (primarily phones and computers), creating a near real-time picture of a situation. Crowdfunder opens this service up to the public without the need of a server. Crowdfunder allows anyone to build any map free of charge, creating various streams of information that are open to the public at large.

Crowdfunder is incredibly simple and malleable. Any individual can create a subdomain to host his or her specific map. Because this site is hosted on Ushahidi servers, it does not require installation of any software, nor does it necessitate other components such as server space or domain and hosting services. Once the site is set up, crowd can input the data through various technological platforms; this data are aggregated in real-time or near real-time on the site. This data can be interactive, allowing users to upload pictures and videos. The Crowdfunder and Ushahidi platforms can be linked to social media as well, including Twitter and Facebook, which allows it to be readily accessible in the contemporary internet era. Additionally, all input is logged and tracked over time, and Crowdfunder includes several tools to analyze real-time data

Case Analysis and Discussion

These cases offer a range of potential benefits to not just the intelligence community but to public organizations across all levels of government that are seeking alternative methods for gathering information on their communities. To analyze the cases, we look first to the theoretical deliberative governance lessons of Scott et al. (2004) and then draw upon the empirical best practices proposed by Brabham (2013a)—lists of both can be found in table 1. From the cases we presented in this article and the lessons of deliberative governance and the practical best practices, we propose five administrative concepts that draw from theory and practice to guide managers in the utilization of crowdsourcing for intelligence/information gathering. An overview of these concepts are provided in table 2.

Concept 1: Administrators must determine what role they want to play.

Do you want to act as a process manager, as process participants, and/or as receivers of information? The crowd may gather with or without an agency's involvement, thus identifying the agency role is vital (though some roles may be outside of your hands). Being involved gives administrators a choice in their role because they will likely not be able to stop the discourse from happening.

In the cases presented in this article, the discourse was an ongoing, developmental process that should be understood as a series of connected experiences (Deliberative Governance Lesson 1 or DG 1). The commenters on ArmsControlWonk came back to the blog time and time again to

provide further insight, provide corrections, and discuss what they thought might be going on on the shores of the Euphrates. The blog provided a venue for the creation of a mini-public—a space for nonelites to have open discourse on a complex public issue (Dryzek, 2010) that ultimately created high-quality intelligence. In the crowdmapping examples a variety of entities provided administrative roles: some were private sector (North Korea and Google), some are open-source driven (OpenStreetMaps), and some were a hybrid of public, private, and volunteer administration (Ushahidi). In these examples, the public sector stood mostly to the side and let the crowd create intelligence for them. This does not have to be the case—public organizations can be more of a driver of these activities, as NASA experienced when it engaged the crowd to find star clusters in newly release photos of galaxies (Wolford, 2014).

Individuals from around the world were permitted to share either their time (tracing roads visible from satellite images), providing their personal experiences and insight from visits to these places (Syria and North Korea, for example), or providing their technical expertise (nuclear physics, mathematics, satellite imagery). The participants in these projects were connected to the goal and understood it as an ongoing and developmental process (DG Lesson 1). Their contributions through these deliberative processes did not provide them with material benefits but rather a community of similarly oriented people.

When choosing the role a public organization wants to have in the crowdsourcing process, it ought to take heed of DG Lesson 2, which is that deliberation works best when it begins early so that changed minds can make a difference. If the project is administered (or steered) by a public organization, the organization should recognize that deliberation should not be an afterthought; rather, it needs to be there from the start, allowing participants to have a role in steering as well. By allowing the mini-publics to form and have a role in the outcome, we can draw from the DG Lesson 4, which would indicate that, due to the uncertain outcomes of many of these projects, knowing the interests of participants will facilitate a more successful outcome. If people providing Creole to English translation are forced into action without consent or without knowledge of the goal, their motivations to contribute will be diminished. If we asked people to trace roads onto a map without sharing with those participants the outcome of the map, would they contribute? Furthermore, if we asked for the crowd to help create these maps, then did not allow them access to the cumulative project at the end of the project, the outcome does not provide something in the shared/mutual interest; rather, it just creates something for the private interest of those that hold the new knowledge. Regardless of what role the public sector plays in a crowdsourcing venture, if the deliberations generated by crowdsourcing are going to be able to change minds, expand knowledge, and provide for the public good, these connected and shared experiences of crowdsourcing in the public sector should be able to produce openly shared knowledge and administrators need to consider their role in this process.

As active participants in crowdsourcing, i.e., more than just passive recipients of information, governments need “to communicate to the online community exactly how much impact user-submitted ideas and labor will have on the organization,” which is part of what Brabham (2013a, p. 22) delineates when asking governments to determine their “level of commitment to the outcomes.” In the cases we present in this article, the outcomes are informational or advisory, and participants are aware of this. The Obama Administration implemented an online petition process that can create new knowledge for the administration on the priorities of the public. However, the expectation the Administration set out from the start was not that they would implement a petition as is, but rather that it would provide an official response. While some petitions are humorous (see the request to build the Death Star (Shawcross, 2013), others are more serious (such as the request to resettle Syrian Refugees (We The People Team, 2015). What is common regardless of the seriousness is that, once the set threshold for participation is

surpassed, the White House follows through and creates a response—though the depth of the official response does vary substantially. These roles require resources from governments, which leads to our next concept.

Concept #2: Crowdsourcing is not free.

Transactions costs can, however, be minimized when the crowd is a willing and engaged participant. This means engaging the crowd early and often by providing feedback on how the crowd's involvement and ideas matter. Crowdsourcing is reducing transactions costs for sharing information and deliberating (Clark et al., 2016). DG Lesson 3 indicates that deliberation requires facilitation skills, management, and a significant investment of public resources. While the crowd can produce “free” labor, the coordination and management of these projects is not free. If a public agency were to use the case examples provided in this article as templates for engaging the crowd to produce intelligence/information, it should be clear that consistent engagement, one that has pay-off or value for both sides, will be necessary—though the benefits may be less visible at times when building social capital (DG Lesson 5).

In the case of the Syrian box analysis, the group's ability to coordinate their energies to gather and analyze information was facilitated by a simple set of blog posts and the comments that followed each post. Comments in the blog were managed by ArmsControlWonk contributors, not the commenters themselves. Controlling or moderating the flow of information via this type of deliberation is one of the biggest transaction costs for crowdsourcing. For example, the magazine Popular Science recently shut down the comments section of its website because of what the editors describe as “a fractious minority” that is able to wield “enough power to skew a reader's perception of a story” (LaBarre, 2013). They further note that “commenters shape public opinion; public opinion shapes public policy; public policy shapes how and whether and what research gets funded—you start to see why we feel compelled to hit the ‘off’ switch” (LaBarre, 2013). Online trolls have been driving what Popular Science sees as a “politically motivated, decades-long war on expertise [which] has eroded the popular consensus on a wide variety of scientifically validated topics. Everything, from evolution to the origins of climate change, is mistakenly up for grabs again” (LaBarre, 2013).

In the case of the Box in Syria the Internet troll problem did not create a degradation of the deliberations because someone internally, a blog moderator, has the control of the off switch (i.e., not allowing a comment to be posted); thus, there are clear trade-offs. It takes resources to moderate comments, but the moderation removes the motivation of the trolls—instant gratification and attention to their flame throwing comments. Their “every sadism” cannot infect the crowd if the moderators are able to prevent them from entering the scene. Clearly, utilizing this tool in the public sector becomes more challenging than it does for a private entity like ArmsControlWonk, because of perceptions of First Amendment encroachment that moderation may create. This exemplifies another advantage of the distance that a private blog like the one used in our example provides. In the end, the ArmsControlWonk blog is not a democracy but more a benevolent dictatorship. Its governance is subjective, but it provides just enough structure to allow for deliberations to move the conversation forward. Though unwritten, the rules between and among the blog and its commenters are clear, and they are followed. This is one of the keys to the success of private sector crowdsourced solutions as well.

The tools used in the crowdmapping projects are a bit more technically complex than a web page comment box, yet still quite accessible and rapidly reduce the transactions costs associated with coordinating the deliberations of the crowd. The real tool in all of these mapping examples is the intelligence that goes into making them, while the technology itself is merely facilitative in

reducing transactions costs. The successes of these mapping projects that are connecting the crowd appear to have some similarities to those that we saw in the Box example. Again, we have a situation where people voluntarily bring bits of intelligence to the table and by and large agree to be bound by some minimal rules. The Google MapMaker project would appear to have a lot more checks in place to assure reliability, as additions to the maps are held for review—similar to a comment moderation in our Box case. When they made this map of North Korea, it was not done to aid in a military action or provide humanitarian aid to the people in that country (though this information may be used in that way in the future). This map appears to have been done for intellectual curiosity or to serve as a challenge for those involved. Nonetheless, the cost of producing this map was not free and again required a substantial investment to moderate the flow and quality of information. It was not intended to be a democratic map making process, but rather one that is as accurate as possible.

As the name would imply, the OpenStreetMap project is more open to change than the Google mapping project but still offers a set of tools to users to assure reliability over the long run. Using these maps you can see what changes have been made and by whom (although the users are mostly anonyms). And Ushahidi offers some tools similar to those seen on OpenStreetMap through its integration with social media, email, and SMS—essentially allowing real-time information sharing that can be shared to a map. These two open platforms could be ripe for manipulation, but the bargain here is that the open nature allows for faster updates in times when information is needed quickly (humanitarian crises, for example). For the sake of certain time-sensitive situations, we might be able to excuse some of the noise that is introduced to our intelligence to avoid unnecessarily increasing the transactions cost when speed of information delivery may be the most important feature. Nonetheless, deliberative crowdsourcing requires an investment in time and resources to appropriately produce public value.

Looking at Concept 2 with the Brabham (2013a) best practice perspective, it becomes clear that other factors can drive the cost of crowdsourcing. He finds that it is the clarity of the tasks the crowd is being asked to complete that drive success (Brabham, 2013a). It is clear that the crowd can perform complex analysis (see the analysis of the Box as an example) by breaking down the problem into smaller tasks on their own. This made the process of analysis manageable and clear, rather than just saying “let’s figure this out.” New information was posted, deliberated, and conclusions drawn piecemeal, rather than from one vague request. A well-framed problem, with clear parameters on expected contributions will improve the experience (Brabham, 2013a) and has the real potential to reduce the transactions cost. The citizen map makers were not given a broad task, like: produce a map of the roads of North Korea. Rather they were given access to tools, like Google MapMaker, that allowed them to complete very discreet tasks—tracing individual roads at their own pace, for example.

An overly broad question can “generate thoughtful responses and may turn out to be quite a valuable exercise in public participation,” but these questions “will also elicit from citizens a wide range of responses, many vague, few feasible, which present city planners with the problem of selecting the best ideas from a mixed bag of apples and oranges” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 21). Brabham (2013a) suggests that “only a specific question will effectively engage citizens in the co-creation of a useful information resource or new actionable idea” (p. 21). Once the task, or ask, has been developed and is in the public sphere, managers need to be aware of the reactions that will be generated, which leads to our next concept.

Concept #3: Know when to hit the off switch.

Projects will fail and can create unnecessary risk. There is a difference between destructive trolling and constructive deliberation. The proposed Concept 2 and Concept 3 have overlap in the challenges with online trolls. Online trolls, the flame throwing, mostly anonymous commenters, diminish the value of the free flow of ideas found in the comment sections (Buckels, Trapnell, & Paulhus, 2014; CBC News, 2014; Findlay, 2014; LaBarre, 2013; West & McDonnell, 2013). Trolls spew their hatred, falsehoods, and negativity with the veil of anonymity provided online. Trolls and their comments are creating “a false sense that a topic is more controversial than it really is” and do so because “when it comes to online commenting, throwing bombs gets more attention than being nice, and makes readers double down on their preexisting beliefs” (West & McDonnell, 2013). Buckels et al. (2014) found in their research on Internet trolls that the trolls do their work because they enjoy the harm it causes, or more specifically: “trolling correlated positively with sadism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism” and is described as an “[i]nternet manifestation of everyday sadism” (p. 1).

Knowing when to hit the off switch on the deliberation is also based in DG Lesson 4, in that the outcomes of deliberation are uncertain. You will not know the outcome at the start of the process, but by understanding and assisting stakeholders throughout, agencies can better understand when to stop the process.

When the cost of engaging and conducting discourse becomes too high, public officials need to disengage from the process. They need to make it clear that the behavior is counter to the public interest. This is, of course, a very difficult line to walk. In the aftermath of the bombing of the Boston Marathon, Reddit users misidentified suspects, and newspapers printed images of the individuals, potentially ruining these innocent people’s lives (Sanchez, 2013). This is a clear example of when the discourse went wrong and created a destructive force that could lead to very real dangers for innocent individuals. This incident represents what can happen with no moderation in the discourse. The Reddit users that identified the wrong individuals in the Boston case were likely genuine in their interest to provide for the public good, but since there are little to no consequences to the crowd’s failures, negative consequences in this quest are unsurprising.

If gone unchecked, un-monitored, or un-moderated, trolls (or misguided actors) could introduce risk into projects like those of OpenStreetMap or Ushahidi. DG Lesson 3 provides further insight into our proposed concept, by asserting that deliberation requires facilitation skills, management, and a significant investment of public resources. Brabham’s (2013a) best practice 5 can provide further depth to this concept as well. The legal issues associated with these deliberations “cluster around issues of preserving free speech and navigating copyright and intellectual property issues” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 24). Managing crowdsourcing and knowing when to exit the process is not about smashing dissent, but rather it goes back to our second concept—this process is not free.

Understanding the types of resistance the public may express sheds light on what an agency might expect. Brabham (2013a) outlines four types of resistance: disruptive, destructive, cracking, and ignoring. Disruptive “crowdslapping” is a form of rational deliberation “that might normally appear in any face-to-face traditional public participation activity” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 24). These deliberations are useful, expected, and a welcome part of our democratic process. Hitting the off-switch here would not be beneficial to the process. The destructive form of “crowdslapping” takes the form of the previously mentioned Internet trolls and is seen as being much “more aggressive” because it can take over deliberations “with repetitive or offensive

content that discourages others from engaging in a productive dialogue” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 24). This is a situation when an agency might think of hitting the off switch and finding mechanisms to throttle back or redirect deliberations or risk efforts falling apart on their own. Cracking takes destructive crowdslapping several steps farther. It is “the term for malicious hacking” and will prevent “other citizens from participating” in the deliberations (Brabham, 2013a, p. 25). Cracking is “akin to...calling in a bomb threat” and should not be tolerated (Brabham, 2013a, p. 25). Brabham (2013a) describes ignoring as “the most powerful form of protest in crowdsourcing” (p. 25). This was seen clearly in the ArmsControlWonk case with the April 30 post entitled “Wonk School” (Lewis, 2008e), which the crowd largely ignored.

If the kill-switch is initiated, agencies should do so in “content-neutral ways for the sake of public discourse,” which can be accomplished similarly to “public forum in legal terms, which means government can control the time, place, and manner of speech” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 25). Allowing citizens to govern themselves also alleviates some pressure of public officials to do so. Noveck (2009) and Brabham (2013a) both find that the crowd itself is effective in measuring contributor quality—often this comes as raking or “reputational icons attached to users” (Brabham, 2013a, p. 25). In a fair, open, and agreed-upon process by which people can participate, negative outcomes or their effects can be reduced. This leads to our next concept.

Concept #4: Relationships matter and have to be nurtured.

Relationships matter for public involvement and are important for sustaining despite pitfalls of initiatives. Things will often not go according to plan; thus administrators must develop the necessary soft skills for nurturing meaningful online community relationships that will allow for sustainability in the face of failure.

Failure may occur for a lot of reasons when public agencies are reliant upon the public for inputs. When crowdsourcing works, it can work very well. Unfortunately, it is not always going to work reliably (even without the problem of Internet trolls). In the case of the Box in Syria, there was no formal request to contribute to the analysis. In fact, there was no mention of performing any collection or analysis from the outset. Although a central actor may not be yet present or evident, there are major actors that dominate or guide discussions, such as the ones who initiate a conversation, in this case the blogger ArmsControlWonk Jeffery Lewis. Lewis and the other bloggers on the site come to the discussion with an interest, sophistication, and imbedded knowledge in the subject area—similar to what would be seen in a government agent moderating such a discussion.

Interestingly, an April 30 “assignment” post entitled “Wonk School” (Lewis, 2008e) generated very low response and high resistance. The post explicitly asked for readers to examine a satellite image, and several respondents noted that they would rather not waste time on the assignment. Many were the same people who contributed willingly to the Box analysis. It would appear difficult, if not impossible to order up crowdsourced intelligence without a better understanding of what types of questions and assignments will draw in the crowd. By nurturing relationships over the long-run, assuring a pay-off to the interested parties, showing a responsiveness by the government to the intelligence/information that is gathered, then, and perhaps only then, could a more on-demand style analysis be generated. DG Lesson 6 contends that the deliberation itself is only part of the story and should be placed in a broader context of public involvement. By looking more broadly at public involvement, we are able to see why people engage and why they contribute, so that we can better understand what motives people to contribute in one instance but not in another seemingly identical situation.

Brabham (2013a) proposes that governments need to “be honest, transparent, and responsive” and that participants “should feel as though their voices will be heard and their ideas handled with care” (p. 26). Thus, when local governments around the country are implementing 311 systems (nonemergency versions of 911), online reporting portals, and smartphone applications that all allow for the easy reporting of nonemergency quality of life issues, they need to be honest—not just about how long it will take to repair something but also that they are genuinely invested in the process. This may come in the form of a filled pothole or in the form of an acknowledgment and thanks to participants (Brabham, 2013a). Cities using the SeeClickFix platform for online and mobile non-emergency reporting acknowledge top users, giving ranks/titles (“Jane Jacobs” or “Digital Superhero,” for example) to the users, and also gives Civic Points to these participants based on how many requests they have submitted (SeeClickFix, 2015).

When cities are responsive in how they deal with submitted requests via these platforms, citizens have been shown to be more satisfied with their local governments (Clark & Shurik, 2016). Conversely, when local governments do not seek to nurture these relationships and are generally unresponsive to citizen requests, citizens will disengage from the deliberative process (Clark & Shurik, 2016). And it is this inaction and unresponsive relationships that leads to the fifth and final concept.

Concept #5: Crowdsourcing does not operate in a vacuum.

The important concept of a mini-public as it relates to crowdsourcing is that the mini-publics act as a microcosm to the public at large, and facilitate a more “manageable” form of discourse that can include diverse opinions. However, the critical issue for a mini-public is the bringing together of differing discursive elements to enhance inquiry. The fact that mini-publics do not operate in a vacuum has less to do with “how many” people are involved but more about the overlapping discursive elements that have the potential to enrich or enhance the depth of understanding and learning. The deliberative governance lessons provide backing to our proposed concept. DG Lesson 7 asserts that deliberative governance will not develop in isolation; therefore, practitioners and scholars should take steps to build informal networks and learning communities in order to share experiences. Thus, by fostering the developing of networks, the potential of the mini-public is enhanced by bringing in the overlapping discursive elements (the diversity of the crowd) to improve the quality of the intelligence that is generated. Both of our cases bring together these diverse elements of the population to engage in discourse. The individuals participating in the Box case were not all nuclear nonproliferation experts or nuclear physicists. Rather, they were a motley collection of individuals that came together with their varying pieces of expertise that allowed the group (mini-public) to create the intelligence to die for. The mapping of North Korean roadways was not done by geographers or military intelligence officers. Rather, they drew from the intelligence and labor of people from around the world who simply had a desire to contribute. In both of these instances, intellectually diverse mini-publics were created and enriched how all of these different individuals might think about these particular problems.

Building and sustaining these mini-publics means that governments need to work to promote their efforts (Brabham, 2013a). When the city of Cleveland launched its 311 service, the city was in a soft-launch mode and did not tell anyone about it (D. Brown, personal communication, May 22, 2014). While this practice is not uncommon to work out the kinks of new deliberative formats (A. Soverign, personal communication, December 9, 2015; J. Valle, personal communication, November 25, 2015; J. Eaton, personal communication, November 25, 2015; R. Dietz, personal communication, November 2, 2015; C. McEwen, personal communication,

December 4, 2015; B. Sylvester, personal communication, December 4, 2015; S. Weber, personal communication, October 21, 2015; J. Takacs, personal communication, October 21, 2015), what has separated Cleveland from other cities is that it stayed in soft-launch for more than five years, have not yet actively used the new deliberative tools to engage the public, nor told the public they exist (Meyer, 2013). Without actively engaging and promoting the use of these tools, deliberations never begin, mini-publics never form, and no public or private value is created.

Conclusion

The aims of ArmsControlWonk and crowdmapping are not to replace the intelligence community. Nor is the aim of these projects just to blow off steam. For the Box case, the aim was likely a collective effort to solve a puzzle, and it worked. Similarly, when we look at the examples of crowdmapping, the goal is not to supplant traditional mapping endeavors in the private sector or in government. But what these crowdmapping projects do appear to promise, is an augmentation to these traditional sources by offering a product to a niche audience or client, frequently in real-time (or close to it compared with traditional paper maps). They do not promise the expertise or precision of the NGA or commercial entities, but rather, they offer a new layer of (potentially) rich intelligence in rapidly changing environments.

And while none of these cases were directed by a government entity, they did create products of value to government and the public at large. Governments at all levels have successfully utilized crowdsourcing projects to gather information or intelligence. The formal structures of modern governments, particularly the rules and regulations that guide their everyday operations, limit the ability to use internal resources to follow up on theories or ideas. Crowdsourcing activities like the Box were possible because a large group of intelligent people had some very good ideas and very few barriers to sharing them. This case demonstrates the potential to generate knowledge in ways not possible within organizations that are more strictly rule-based and mission-driven. There is little reason to believe that this sort of intelligence gathering and analysis is only possible on the ArmsControlWonk blog—thus replicability is likely. Finding mini-publics and sustaining them will not be free, but the concepts we presented in this article will help to guide public managers in thinking about how they might work for their organizations.

The North Korean map's creation was more structured in its development but is still driven by people's innate curiosity with a place we know little about. If a similar task were given to map a place that was not mysterious or newsworthy, we likely would have seen a different result. As with the case of the Box, the North Korean mapping project was successful in part because it had some ground rules to participation and some direction (by Google), but the participants were able to contribute as much or as little as they wanted, solely based on their intellectual curiosity. Both OpenStreetMaps and Ushahidi are more open platforms for crowdsourcing than the example of the North Korean map—though all three rely upon the crowd for their intelligence. With any platform that is open to information in the way these platforms are, there is a need to balance the necessity of accuracy, with the speed at which information must be transmitted. When responding to humanitarian crises, where delays of minutes or hours may be vital to a person's survival, removing barriers to communication and facilitating information transfer will be the most important characteristic. In those instances the moderation, which can improve the quality of information, would need to be eased to ensure a rapid response when necessary. When, as was the case for the Box or the North Korean map, information flows are not contributing to life-or-death decision-making and a high level of accuracy is the key, then tighter control and moderation become critical for success.

A predicament inherent in the public sector use of crowdsourcing is the decision of what crowdsourcing should and should not be doing for government. Do we use it primarily as an information gathering tool, an analytic tool, public participation tool, or for something else altogether? Managers in the public sector have utilized the crowd to provide intelligence in some form or another for many years, but the forms that it is taking today were never possible because the transactions costs associated with coordinating such a large and diverse group were so high. Thus, the question becomes, how seriously should public sector managers in general and those in the intelligence community, more specifically, take this information? This question remains unanswered and will be a struggle as agencies find beneficial ways to incorporate it. Of course, when it comes to some glaringly obvious issues—the intelligence community should look at publicly available information as well as classified data—there is lingering suspicion that every hack with a John LeCarré novel under one arm and a Time magazine under the other thinks he will bring down al Qaeda or ISIS. Fortunately, the wisdom of the crowds is remarkably efficient, at weeding out such cavalier exceptions in favor of thoughtful, reasoned analysis of the available data. The question of how much analysis public managers can expect from the crowd will remain an issue, and certainly point to the need of continued professional staffing at all levels of government to make quality, informed decisions.

What many prior crowdsourcing efforts, such as the National Open Source Enterprise (NOSE) and a director for open source intelligence within the US government, missed was the novelty and velocity of mass collaboration. As NOSE and others try to build the structure and control familiar to established, cohesive organizations, open-source intelligence is moving far faster—and without waiting for permission.

Evidence revealed in the Edward Snowden case has demonstrated that governments (United States and others) are forging ahead with efforts to mine huge data sources (some authorized and some not) to find clues to the next terrorist attack. With computing power increasing exponentially and the piles of data growing even faster, it is clear that the need for thoughtful, reasoned collection and analysis of intelligence will continue to increase. The crowd can play a complementary role, particularly in cases where human intelligence continues to trump sophisticated algorithms and search protocols.

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Current Issues in Practice

City of Little Rock Neighborhood Alert Centers: An Assessment Report

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The City of Little Rock's Neighborhood Alert Center program assessment focuses on understanding program functions, how these centers serve the respective neighborhoods, and the roles and responsibilities of neighborhood facilitators (program directors stationed at each location). A case study approach is used to provide a holistic, rigorous evaluation of the program. Though much has changed for these centers since the inception of the program, this assessment reveals that citizens appreciate the Neighborhood Alert Centers and their neighborhood facilitators. Assessment results show that these centers are key components to sustaining healthy, vibrant Little Rock neighborhoods. The project demonstrates the usefulness of an outside evaluation for providing recommendations to enhance a program and increase its capacity.

Keywords: Neighborhood Capacity, Community Building, Citizen Engagement

The City of Little Rock commissioned the Institute of Government (IOG) to conduct an assessment of the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs' Neighborhood Alert Center program. These neighborhood centers are staffed with a city employee (neighborhood facilitator) and serve as hubs of city government within select neighborhoods; these centers link residents with basic city services, law enforcement, and code enforcement as well as other service needs. This program assessment focuses on the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of these Neighborhood Alert Centers: in serving their neighborhoods; the service functions of these facilities since program's inception; and the roles, responsibilities, and duties of the Neighborhood Alert Centers' neighborhood facilitators. The assessment consists of:

- Assessing Formal/Informal Roles, Responsibilities, and Duties of Facilitators: researchers conducted in-depth interviews with neighborhood facilitators at each of these Neighborhood Alert Centers;
- Gauging Community Perspective: researchers solicited feedback from neighborhood residents through focus groups at neighborhood association meetings;
- Preferred Practices of other Communities: researchers compared Little Rock's program with analogous programs in similar cities; and,
- Performance Data: researchers reviewed quantitative data on code compliance (from the first quarter of 2007 through the second quarter of 2013) and criminal activities (defined as property and violent crimes from 2000 to 2012).

In conducting this program assessment, other important factors are uncovered about these centers' development, maturation, and evolution over time within these neighborhoods. Foremost of these revelations is the recognition of the expanded role these centers have assumed for these communities and neighborhoods. As a result, the research scope of this program evaluation expanded to provide information contextualizing these neighborhoods and considering new functions adapted as part of each neighborhood facilitator's roles and responsibilities as well as their importance in serving their respective neighborhoods.

Bacot, H., Diaz, C., Moore, B., & Day, B. (2017). City of Little Rock Neighborhood Alert Centers: An assessment report. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 3(1), 79-99.
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Given these changes in service orientation and recognizing fully developed service areas and constituents for the Neighborhood Alert Center program, we find these centers warranted and essential to sustaining Little Rock neighborhoods. Based on this assessment, several recommendations are provided the City of Little Rock for improving and sustaining these Neighborhood Alert Centers in a new service environment. To date the City of Little Rock has implemented nearly all of the recommendations and is considering expanding the program into other neighborhoods.

In completing this project, faculty, researchers, city administrators, and city staff worked closely to ensure complete and accurate information was shared. In full, this project proved an exemplary case example of how university faculty and researchers can work with city administration and staff to conduct a worthwhile and practical assessment of a city program. Through this collaboration, the university catalyzes its connections to the community by utilizing its expertise, highlighting its community connections, and creating partnerships to address important community issues. Collaborative research between faculty and city administration create reciprocal and advantageous relationships for both university and community. As a result, universities, especially urban universities, serve as vital community resources that, through community partnerships, can address important neighborhood issues that benefit the greater community (Trani & Holsworth, 2010). Universities are in such a position because these institutions harness many resources that "... are unique among institutions in the scale and breadth of human, cultural, and economic resources they control, including many of the attributes required for successful economic and community development – leadership, expertise, capital, land, and tools for innovation" (Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, 2010, p. 2). As is the case herein, the collaboration among university faculty and researchers, city administrators, and city practitioners combines the resources and expertise of these entities to provide a review of a long-standing neighborhood program in the City of Little Rock. Working together, this combination of practitioners and academics prepared a program assessment that addresses realities of program administration and performance and provides recommendations for program changes and improvements that are feasible politically and practically.

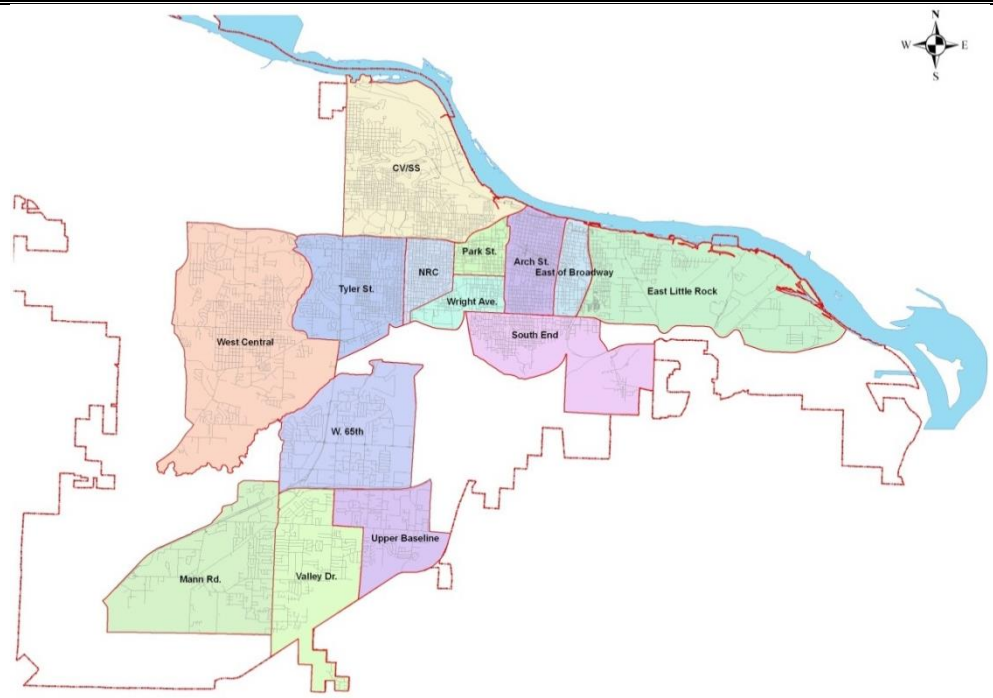
Assessing the City of Little Rock's Neighborhood Alert Center Program

The Neighborhood Alert Center Program: Background and Current Status¹

As originally envisioned in the early 1990s, a Neighborhood Alert Center provides an extension of city service functions directly in various neighborhoods of Little Rock. These Neighborhood Alert Centers were established by the City of Little Rock in response to escalating gang and drug violence across the community. Although these operations were originally intended to serve as a one-stop shop for residents to address complaints in the neighborhood (e.g., gang activity, graffiti, etc.), these operations have evolved over time to become, in practice, neighborhood centers that facilitate neighborhood organization and community engagement (e.g., National Night Out, providing space for neighborhood association meetings, community gardening, neighborhood cleanups, etc.) as well as becoming *the* place in these neighborhoods where residents can learn about various local events and city services (e.g., recycling, applying for reduced-rate utility bills, applying for city jobs, etc.).

¹Much of this section *quotes directly* from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Program's website on the history of the program (City of Little Rock, 2013a).

Figure 1. Neighborhood Alert Center Boundaries



Source: City of Little Rock (2013a)

The Neighborhood Alert Center system was originally intended to address the issues of crime, illegal sale and abuse of drugs, and the deterioration of neighborhoods and housing. These problems were acute in the early 1990s to such a degree that they spurred the city to apply for a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant to fund the project. According to the grant proposal, the Neighborhood Alert Center system identifies, alerts, mobilizes, and integrates forces necessary to successfully fight substance abuse in defined neighborhoods (Boland, 1994). The goal of this effort was to improve the life conditions of residents and create positive neighborhood environments that lower the risk of substance abuse as well as the criminal element that often coexists with substance abuse. A historical depiction of the Neighborhood Alert Center program is available from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs (City of Little Rock, 2013b).

Over the years, neighborhood facilitators, who are stationed at each center, have become the most visible city representative assigned to these communities. Many residents look to their neighborhood facilitator to address problems, answer questions, and act as a liaison between them and the City of Little Rock. There are 11 Neighborhood Alert Centers and 13 service areas (as a few centers share service area responsibilities). Figure 1 displays the respective service areas of these centers.

Efficacy of Neighborhood Centers

Based on the evidence, neighborhood centers appear to be a viable solution for not only connecting local government to communities but also for sustaining stability across neighborhoods. These community connections manifested by neighborhood centers pose real consequences for communities, as devolving decision making about neighborhood-level issues typically enhance neighborhood quality of life (Ostrom, 1990). Moreover, decentralizing city services to a neighborhood level as is done through Neighborhood Alert Centers in Little Rock is

a more efficient means for addressing micro-level issues or problems. As some city-level decisions may lack full or adequate information for addressing the issue satisfactorily, neighborhood or community organizations may inform the situation more fully and thereby more readily provide a viable resolution (Levy, Meltsner, & Wildavsky, 1974; Lineberry, 1977); such resolutions are most viable when there is a collaborative government effort to promote citizen involvement. These Neighborhood Alert Centers act as vehicles for promoting such citizen or community involvement, and the City of Little Rock is able to cultivate and sustain an active citizenry through these centers; this becomes a mechanism for promoting discourse and input across neighborhoods. In fact, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) call for this new focus as part of reforming government to be more responsive; they state that

public administrators should focus on their responsibility to serve and empower citizens as they manage public organizations and implement public policy. In other words, with citizens at the forefront, the emphasis should not be placed on either steering or rowing the government boat, but rather on building public institutions marked by integrity and responsiveness (p. 549).

Through these centers, citizens are afforded additional avenues in which to participate and engage local government, which promotes trust among members of these communities. As a result, these Neighborhood Alert Centers play an important role in mitigating neighborhood, or micro-level problems as well as disseminating information about city services that work to improve the quality of life in these neighborhoods. This opportunity the City of Little Rock provides its citizens for “self-governance” via these Neighborhood Alert Centers has sustained neighborhood activity and institutionalized a path for citizens to advocate for their neighborhoods, which has likely mitigated neighborhood blight typical of other cities (particularly during the recent economic downturn) (Ostrom, 1990).

Developing strong neighborhoods and communities requires commitment by cities and the City of Little Rock demonstrates its commitment via these Neighborhood Alert Centers. In committing its resources to these communities, the City of Little Rock has established within these neighborhoods a community anchor to which residents can turn for information or assistance. Sustaining and transforming communities requires immersion in the community, such as this commitment by the city. In committing resources (fiscal and personnel) in these neighborhoods, the City of Little Rock becomes closer to its citizens and families and, in doing so, provides its citizens with a platform for engaging and embracing their community. Such efforts instill community pride in citizens that beget community connections and relationships and leads to improved neighborhood capacity among residents (Portney & Berry, 1999). The City of Little Rock’s Neighborhood Alert Centers serve their communities well by extending city service functions directly into the neighborhoods, thus straight to the citizens of Little Rock.

The Program Assessment Process

This research examines the Neighborhood Alert Center program using a mix of data, information, and approaches. First, as understanding that the community is important for providing study context, a characterization of the community is provided to offer a sense of these neighborhoods and their respective assets and challenges. To establish a sense of what other cities are doing in this arena, a comparative city matrix is prepared to provide some sense of Little Rock’s program vis-à-vis practices by other municipalities. Upon understanding program context, findings from facilitator and community interviews are discussed and service trends across Neighborhood Alert Center areas are catalogued and evaluated. Finally, program recommendations are provided along with a current status report for each one. This evaluation

is an example of how a university center and local government entity can collaborate to deliver a viable and rigorous but affordable program evaluation the community.

Project Approach and Methodology

A case study approach infused with mixed-methodologies (focus group and personal interviews as well as demographic, crime, code enforcement, and social service data) is used to assess the utility of the Neighborhood Alert Centers program for the respective neighborhoods, along with evaluating the roles, responsibilities, and functions of the center facilitators. The case study approach as employed herein permits rigorous evaluation of several objectives established in consultation with city administrators prior to the study; these are assessing Neighborhood Alert Centers facilitator formal/informal roles, responsibilities, and duties; gauging community perspectives; preferred practices of other communities; and performance data.

Assessment and evaluation processes include:

- an intensive case study assessment and review of the Neighborhood Alert Center program;
- personal interviews of Neighborhood Alert Center facilitators using a standardized questionnaire;
- guided inquiries of attendees at neighborhood meetings, which includes standardized instruments used to guide conversations with citizen or neighborhood groups at community meetings; and,
- analysis of secondary data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Little Rock Police Department, the Little Rock Code Compliance Department, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) IOG Center for Public Collaboration.

For the personal interviews that gauge facilitator roles, individual in-depth face-to-face personal interviews are conducted with each Neighborhood Alert Center facilitator. A structured questionnaire is used to inquire of facilitators' roles in their locations, these neighborhoods, their daily/weekly duties, job tasks, challenges of the position, and other tasks that they like to or believe should be done but are not. Appointments were scheduled with each facilitator at their Neighborhood Alert Center at a time convenient to their schedules. Data about facilitator duties and Neighborhood Alert Center functions represent the population of Neighborhood Facilitators in the aggregate; these data are presented as actual frequency counts or percentages and, as such, there is no statistical analysis provided. These data provide an accurate depiction of the general functions, activities, and setting for these Neighborhood Alert Centers and their personnel.

Group sessions (which are similar to focus groups) are conducted with citizens at neighborhood association meetings in the community/neighborhoods served by the respective Neighborhood Alert Center (during the study period); these group sessions are guided by a standardized questionnaire. Further, the group sessions served to ascertain collective views across a host of questions about services offered by these Neighborhood Alert Centers as well as about their neighborhood facilitators, and the neighborhood generally. Though these are strictly convenience "surveys," i.e., only those willing to participate did so, results from these "community conversations" are best described as 'impressionistic' and general descriptions of perspectives. These surveys are not randomized efforts, and these results cannot be extrapolated to other populations.

The assessment also depends on secondary data from a variety of sources, including the City of Little Rock (for code compliance and crime statistics), the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Arkansas Department of Human Services. These data are matched as closely as possible to the corresponding Neighborhood Alert Center service areas. The code compliance data extends back to 2007, while the crime data is from 2000 to 2013. Proper protocols and institutional review board compliance procedures are observed in the conduct and administration of this research.

The Community Context of Neighborhood Alert Center Service Areas

A better understanding of the situation for these neighborhoods and communities is acquired by placing the community in context. A community characterization helps uncover the underlying social structure that assists in contextualizing research findings and create an understanding of a community's needs and resources, as well as acquire an appreciation of the community by assessing socioeconomic and demographic information (Bacot, 2008). Set in the southern United States, Little Rock is located in a state and region marked by political difference and deference relative to the rest of the country (Black & Black, 1987; Key, 1949). Over time scholars have pointed to the unique political features of the region and further distinguished states based on social and cultural factors (Black & Black, 1987; Key, 1949). Cities such as Little Rock, while progressive by southern standards, tend to be traditional compared with metropolitan counterparts located elsewhere in the United States.

A community's identity is further understood by its demographic characteristics, which are instrumental in understanding an identity that comprises the overall community. Due to its status as the largest city in Arkansas, the state's capital, and its pronounced wealth relative to most other areas of the state, Little Rock is quite different from other communities and regions of the state. As a result, knowledge of the social demography of neighborhoods served by the Neighborhood Alert Center program provides a cursory glimpse into their constitution and challenges.

With the exception of the Capital View/Stift Station service area, Neighborhood Alert Centers serve neighborhoods that are predominantly African American and have an average median annual household income of \$32,134. In eight of the Neighborhood Alert Center service areas, women outnumber men. In three of these Neighborhood Alert Center service areas – East Little Rock, Valley Dr., and W. 65th St. – women outnumber men by at least 10% (see table 2). Ten of these service areas have average median household incomes well below 185% of the 2013 federal poverty guidelines for a family of four (Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). As is surmised from a review of these data, about half of the Neighborhood Alert Center service areas are characterized by low-income households and comparatively lower overall home values; such factors speak to the importance of the assistance provided to citizens of these communities. These services not only sustain these communities, but work to preserve residents' property values and hopefully increase property values due to greater attention and resulting maintenance of residences, which also translates into better overall valuations across neighborhoods. In fact, as Craw observes, strong neighborhoods and the resulting institutions they beget “play an important role in addressing neighborhood-level problems and providing regulation and services that enhance neighborhood quality of life overall” (Craw, 2013, p. 3).

As a result, the more that neighborhood decisions are abdicated to the neighborhood level, area residents' must nurture a sense of community governance via shared norms. Again, as Craw (2013) observes, these can take many forms in the urban community, e.g., “reciprocity among neighbors, socially enforced norms (for instance, on noise, litter, home maintenance), informal

Table 1. Matrix of Neighborhood Alert Center Services Provided in Select Cities in the U.S.

	Beaumont, TX	Cincinnati, OH	Columbia, SC	Dayton, OH	Durham, NC	Greensboro, NC	Kansas City, KS	Mobile, AL	Norfolk, VA	Richmond, VA	St. Louis, MO	Little Rock, AR
Program Comparable to Little Rock's NAC												
Neighborhood Center Facility							✓					✓
Neighborhood Facilitator/Coordinator												
Assigned to Neighborhood Center							✓					✓
Liaison between City and Residents				✓								✓
Neighborhood/Community Engagement Center												
Includes Facilitator/Coordinator		✓		✓			✓				✓	✓
Includes Police Officer				✓			✓	✓			✓	
Includes Code Compliance Officer		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Provides Meeting Space							✓					✓

institutional arrangements on business activity and land use (e.g., Venkatesh, 2008), and neighborhood improvement and social organizations (p. 4).” In organizing these efforts via Neighborhood Alert Centers, the city creates institutions to serve as an established entity and community anchor in these neighborhoods as well as seeks to align city initiatives and services with residential/neighborhood concerns or be able to advocate such arrangements (Craw, 2013).

Best Practices: Neighborhood Programs in Comparable Cities

In order to assess the Neighborhood Alert Center program, comparable programs in other cities are utilized to establish a standard for comparison. In selecting cities for comparisons and as is feasible, municipalities are first judged based on similarities in population size and racial demographics relative to the City of Little Rock. While similar cities typically offer comparable programs, there are no cities that have programs directly analogous to Little Rock’s Neighborhood Alert Center program. Nevertheless, all of these cities do have programs that serve a similar purpose as Little Rock’s Neighborhood Alert Center program (see table 2). In many of these comparison cities, neighborhood/community engagement centers serve multiple purposes for residents that include some of the same services provided by Little Rock’s Neighborhood Alert Centers; unlike the Little Rock program, most of these centers have an educational and recreational focus.

Table 1 displays information that underscores the uniqueness of Little Rock’s Neighborhood Alert Center program, especially the provision of a “one-stop shop” to its citizens seeking city services. While other cities provide similar services, only Little Rock centralizes these services in distinct community locations. The one commonality across programs is that, other than Little Rock, none of these programs has the word “alert” in the program’s title. This naming of centers is significant, as the connotation of alert implies that the Neighborhood Alert Centers are police substations (which they are not) or only serve to address exigent problems in the neighborhood. Removing or replacing the word “alert” and changing the program’s name to something more inviting or conventional (based on other cities) may heighten engagement across neighborhoods.

Table 2. Population Demographics of Neighborhood Alert Center Service Areas (2007-2011)

Neighborhood Alert Center	Total Pop	Gender		Race/Ethnicity						Housing & Income*	
		Male	Female	White	Black	Latino	Native American /Alaska Native	Asian	Two+ Races	Median HH Income	Median Home Value
Park St.	6,987	3,635 (52%)	3,352 (48%)	2,588 (37%)	4,093 (59%)	90 (1%)	5 (.07%)	63 (1%)	139 (2%)	\$28,363	\$165,420
CV/SS	42,597	19,879 (47%)	22,718 (53%)	32,466 (76%)	6,452 (15%)	1,183 (3%)	161 (.38%)	1,472 (3.5%)	838 (2%)	\$63,235	\$251,603
East Little Rock	2,048	830 (41%)	1,218 (59%)	433 (21%)	1,546 (75%)	69 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	\$30,939	\$66,033
East of Broadway	2,798	1,463 (52%)	1,335 (48%)	953 (34%)	1,719 (61%)	91 (3%)	0 (0%)	5 (.18%)	25 (1%)	\$17,361	\$75,733
Mann Rd.	8,676	4,131 (48%)	4,545 (52%)	2,863 (33%)	5,021 (58%)	675 (8%)	0 (0%)	14 (.16%)	103 (1%)	\$38,352	\$112,250
NRC	4,122	2,202 (53%)	1,920 (47%)	619 (15%)	3,181 (77%)	218 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	88 (2%)	\$22,698	\$61,783
South End	10,241	5,031 (49%)	5,210 (51%)	2,250 (22%)	7,357 (72%)	456 (4%)	12 (.12%)	8 (.08%)	151 (1%)	\$34,273	\$82,100
Tyler St.	21,940	10,107 (46%)	11,833 (54%)	5,757 (26%)	14,364 (65%)	829 (4%)	133 (.61%)	300 (1%)	490 (2%)	\$30,673	\$89,495
Upper Baseline	9,198	4,608 (50%)	4,590 (50%)	1,464 (16%)	4,685 (51%)	2,929 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	120 (1%)	\$28,025	\$69,220
Valley Dr.	12,269	5,562 (45%)	6,707 (55%)	1,780 (15%)	8,884 (72%)	1,365 (11%)	115 (1%)	34 (.28%)	71 (.58%)	\$35,201	\$85,683
W. 65th St.	10,774	4,854 (45%)	5,920 (55%)	2,400 (22%)	6,567 (61%)	1,382 (13%)	60 (.56%)	36 (.33%)	319 (3%)	\$33,329	\$75,300
West Central	19,558	9,474 (48%)	10,084 (52%)	7,578 (39%)	9,743 (50%)	2,041 (10%)	31 (.16%)	47 (.24%)	118 (.60%)	\$44,837	\$111,047
Total/Median	151,208	71,776	79,432	61,151	73,612	11,328	517	1,979	2,462	\$32,134	\$83,892

Figures for “Native Hawaiian” and “Other” are omitted due to few numbers (159 total)

*These data are based on a composite median calculation from block-level medians across service areas.

Source: Census Bureau (2013); USA.com (2013)

Another popular feature across cities is the use of nonprofit organizations and volunteers to provide this service. While a worthwhile public–private partnership, such a decision to incorporate volunteers and/or nonprofit organizations into Neighborhood Alert Centers must ensure proper preparation for these centers and their facilitators. Facilitators need volunteer training and management skills; thus, it is essential that organizations invest in the development of their staff to ensure that volunteers are well supported; only by doing so is the volunteer experience satisfying and productive for the volunteer, the community, and the city. Volunteer management is increasingly recognized as a distinct and vital role across organizations of all sizes in nonprofit and public sectors alike. People with volunteer management responsibilities have a challenging job; thus, they must be able to inspire people to give their time freely, maintain their motivation, ensure that they match skilled people with relevant roles, and ensure that paid staff and volunteers are able to work well together. If Little Rock decides to explore the use of volunteers in Neighborhood Alert Centers, it must consider the tangible aspects for ensuring success for this effort.

The Neighborhood Alert Center Program Assessment

Assessing Roles and Responsibilities of Neighborhood Facilitators

Interviews are conducted with each of the Neighborhood Facilitators to acquire insight about their perspectives of their roles and responsibilities. From these interviews a consistent theme emerges among neighborhood facilitators: they view their role in the neighborhoods as one that *helps and empowers residents*. As such, they also perceive their role as one that guides residents to resources they need and connects them to the City of Little Rock, or “City Hall” as it is affectionately referred, for services or needs that can be met by other divisions within the city. Most facilitators consider themselves the neighborhood ambassador, such that if there is a consensus in the neighborhood that more speed bumps or bicycle patrols are needed, for example, the neighborhood facilitator is responsible for communicating these needs to city administration. These facilitators also serve as sources and conduits of information for the neighborhood. In addition, facilitators assist residents with a myriad of needs, from helping them navigate city services to assisting them with securing necessary permits and cooperation from the appropriate city department.

Personal Interviews

Neighborhood facilitators were interviewed about the roles and responsibilities of their position. These interviews reveal many obstacles that facilitators believe stand in the way of their doing their job effectively. Based upon these interviews, these obstacles include: (1) lack of resources/support from city administration; (2) lack of attention from city management; and, (3) being micromanaged and too much redundant busywork. In general, poor pay and generally outdated work materials/functions have created low morale among these facilitators. Most facilitators complain of having to use old, outdated equipment and of never having sufficient resources to do their jobs properly. Eight out of 10 facilitators (80%) feel city administration micromanages them and that they do not have the leeway and flexibility needed to respond to immediate problems in the neighborhoods they serve. Many of these facilitators also complain about the lack of support they receive from administration and complain about “busywork” and duplication in assigned tasks.

Tables 3 and 4 present information about the current and hypothetical job duties for facilitators based on their responses (to those duties as presented). A list of activities derived from the

Table 3. Frequency of Current Job Tasks

Current Job Tasks	How Often Do You Perform This Task?					
	Several Times a Day	Three Times a Day	Twice a Day	Once a Day	Weekly	Rarely
Coordinates plans and strategies to solve problems identified by neighborhood residents.	50%	0%	20%	30%	0%	0%
Work and interact with police officers and code enforcement officers assigned to Neighborhood Alert Center.	70%	10%	0%	20%	0%	0%
Ensure that the Neighborhood Alert Center facility is cleaned and maintained.	0%	0%	0%	20%	70%	10%
Use a computer to communicate and to maintain files and records.	90%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%
Identify neighborhood needs, problems, and goals through meetings and/or surveys with various stakeholders.	10%	10%	0%	10%	60%	10%
Inspect the neighborhood on foot and by vehicle.	0%	0%	0%	30%	70%	0%
Organize and facilitate neighborhood meetings.	0%	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
Maintain log of Neighborhood Alert Center activities; compile activity and progress reports.	10%	0%	10%	40%	20%	20%
Identify and compile list of neighborhood-based resources.	0%	0%	0%	20%	20%	60%
Answer questions from neighborhood residents and general public.	60%	20%	10%	10%	0%	0%
Implement plans for relocation assistance in the event of emergencies or disasters.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Assist with planning and organizing neighborhood-based programs, projects, and activities.	0%	0%	0%	30%	40%	30%

current neighborhood facilitator's job description is presented in table 3. From these results, there is evidence of consistency across facilitators on how they occupy their workdays. The majority of facilitators (70%) indicate that they conduct weekly inspections of their assigned neighborhoods by vehicle and on foot, and over half (60%) respond that they identify neighborhood needs, problems, and goals on at least a weekly basis. Over half (60%) of these facilitators organize neighborhood meetings on a weekly basis and coordinate strategies to resolve issues or problems (brought to their attention by residents) several times a day. Other duties performed on a regular basis by facilitators are basic, routine activities involving the neighborhood, e.g., answering questions for neighbors (see table 3). As is evident from these results, facilitators are immersed in these neighborhoods and perform important civic engagement activities that forge social capital among residents in these communities.

Table 4. What Job Tasks Interest Neighborhood Facilitators

Potential/Hypothetical Job Task	How Interested Are You in Doing These Things?				
	Not at all Interested	Uninterested	Interested	Definitely Interested	No Opinion Don't Know
Follow up on resident complaints (e.g., tall weeds, barking dogs) to determine if issue has been resolved.	10%	0%	54%	27%	9%
Act as neighborhood ombudsman or liaison between residents and the city.	0%	0%	73%	27%	0%
Pick up trash in the Neighborhood Alert Center facility's parking area.	18%	27%	45%	0%	10%
Monitor active public nuisance cases in assigned neighborhood.	0%	27%	63%	10%	0%
Promote city's quality of life initiatives in the neighborhood.	0%	1%	63%	36%	0%
Coordinate volunteer and nonprofit activities in assigned neighborhood.	10%	0%	36%	54%	0%
Meet every resident in the assigned Neighborhood Alert Center's neighborhood.	0%	10%	54%	36%	0%
Review and evaluate effectiveness of Neighborhood Alert Center's programs and projects.	0%	18%	63%	19%	0%
Conduct basic clerical work in Neighborhood Alert Center facility (e.g., answer phones, type correspondence, order office supplies).	0%	36%	54%	0%	10%
Oversee and manage Neighborhood Alert Center's budget.	10%	0%	63%	27%	0%
Assist in city's outreach initiatives to the assigned neighborhood.	0%	0%	73%	27%	0%
Develop training curricula and materials for various neighborhood groups and representatives, according to neighborhood need.	0%	18%	72%	10%	0%
Recruit and coordinate volunteers at the Neighborhood Alert Center.	0%	10%	45%	45%	0%
Draft proposed budget for assigned Neighborhood Alert Center with input from neighborhood groups and representatives.	10%	0%	27%	54%	9%

Having explored their actual job duties, facilitators are then asked about hypothetical tasks, or job duties to determine what, if any, tasks they view as needed or unnecessary (see table 4). Many of these items appear on job descriptions for similar positions in other cities. When asked

what job tasks they would like to do, most report that they would be “interested” in performing the tasks listed (see table 4). Most facilitators mention that they already perform these tasks anyway. Of interest in these results is the facilitator’s interest in engaging volunteers and assisting with nonprofit organization activities in the neighborhood. From these results, it is apparent that facilitators prefer to have some financial wherewithal to support community activities (e.g., cookouts, National Night Out supplies, etc.).

Residents’ Perspectives on Neighborhood Facilitators and Alert Centers

Residents’ opinions about their Neighborhood Alert Centers and neighborhood facilitators are solicited around questions about neighborhood characteristics and quality of life. More specifically, residents are asked about services they use at their Neighborhood Alert Centers and what, if any, additional services they would like the city to offer through the Neighborhood Alert Centers.

As the neighborhood hub, these centers serve as a focal point or anchor institution in the neighborhood, which proves important for fostering social capital and engaging citizens in their neighborhoods. “Social capital” is made up of the features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 1995). Personal interaction and, more importantly, the intensity of that interaction generate increasing levels of social capital in a neighborhood. In turn, social capital induces people to become more involved and take responsibility for the well-being and success of their communities (Portney & Berry, 1999; Saegert, 2006). Neighborhood Alert Centers provide the necessary infrastructure for building this social capital in Little Rock’s neighborhoods, and the neighborhood facilitators catalyze and sustain the personal interaction among neighbors that fuels this social capital. Neighborhoods with higher levels of social capital tend to have a higher quality of life for their residents, which translate to other desirable characteristics of neighborhoods (e.g., housing values, home maintenance, safe neighborhoods, etc.).

Given the trust citizens have in facilitators, citizens often seek their assistance for practically any matter. Citizens regularly call upon facilitators to help them navigate local government to acquire needed services and benefits (such as applying for a reduced-rate water bill). Facilitators serve as intercessors between neighborhood residents and various local government agencies. The facilitator does just that – facilitates neighborhood action and acts as a liaison between the neighborhood and local government.

Residents attending neighborhood association meetings typically express general support for and satisfaction with the Neighborhood Alert Center and their neighborhood facilitators. Those residents attending these meetings generally express the sentiment that facilitators are not sufficiently appreciated for all the work they do, especially in emergency situations when, for example, residents are displaced due to a house fire and have to find temporary accommodations, clothing, and food. In other words, residents see facilitators as ombudsmen, especially for specialized services or unique needs (e.g., for elderly residents). Although the evidence is anecdotal, residents perceive facilitators as advocates for dealing with city government and bringing improvements to the neighborhood (such as speed bumps or increased police patrols in problem areas). This ombudsman role for the facilitators “connects” residents to their local government. Facilitators are essentially *the* key contact point between city programs/initiatives and neighborhood residents (Purdue, 2001).

Those residents attending neighborhood association meetings are nearly unanimous in voicing the opinion that they would like to see the COPP officers return to the Neighborhood Alert Center. These residents also want more educational programs and senior citizen services offered at the Neighborhood Alert Centers. As an example of providing complementary services, one facilitator suggests that facilitators be given notary public commissions in order to further serve citizens by being able to notarize paperwork (e.g., code compliance officers' paperwork must oftentimes be notarized).

Assessing Service Trends Across Neighborhood Alert Center Neighborhoods

Understanding how well neighborhoods with Neighborhood Alert Centers have fared over time is somewhat difficult to assess. Due to the current or past presence of code compliance and law enforcement officers, an assessment of activities related to neighborhood appearance and crime can inform how neighborhoods fare over time in these specific service arenas. In assessing code compliance violations, data are tracked for trends from 2007–2013; the following compliance areas are tracked: abandoned vehicles, graffiti, high grass and weeds, housing code violations, illegal dumping, parking in yards, and trash or debris on the premise. These compliance areas are fairly obvious and easy to understand. Violent and property crimes were tracked from 2000–2012 for each neighborhood in the study. Violent crimes consist of murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013a). Property crimes consist of burglary, larceny, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013b). All crimes are measured per reported incident.² As can be surmised, these indicators demonstrate the importance of these services provided by the Neighborhood Alert Centers in Little Rock neighborhoods by providing trends for these services over time.

Though not identified formally as a facilitator role, social service functions have entered into the repertoire of facilitator duties. Unfortunately, data for assessing social services are not indexed at a level, geographic or division, to approximate by neighborhood. In lieu of social service data at the neighborhood level, information about social services is reported for the entire county (and by broad area, i.e., north, east, south, and west); while this does not speak to the activity per Neighborhood Alert Center areas, this summary of social services data provides a snapshot of the prevalence of such services in the community at large; this representation provides only an overall impression of social service utilization across the county.

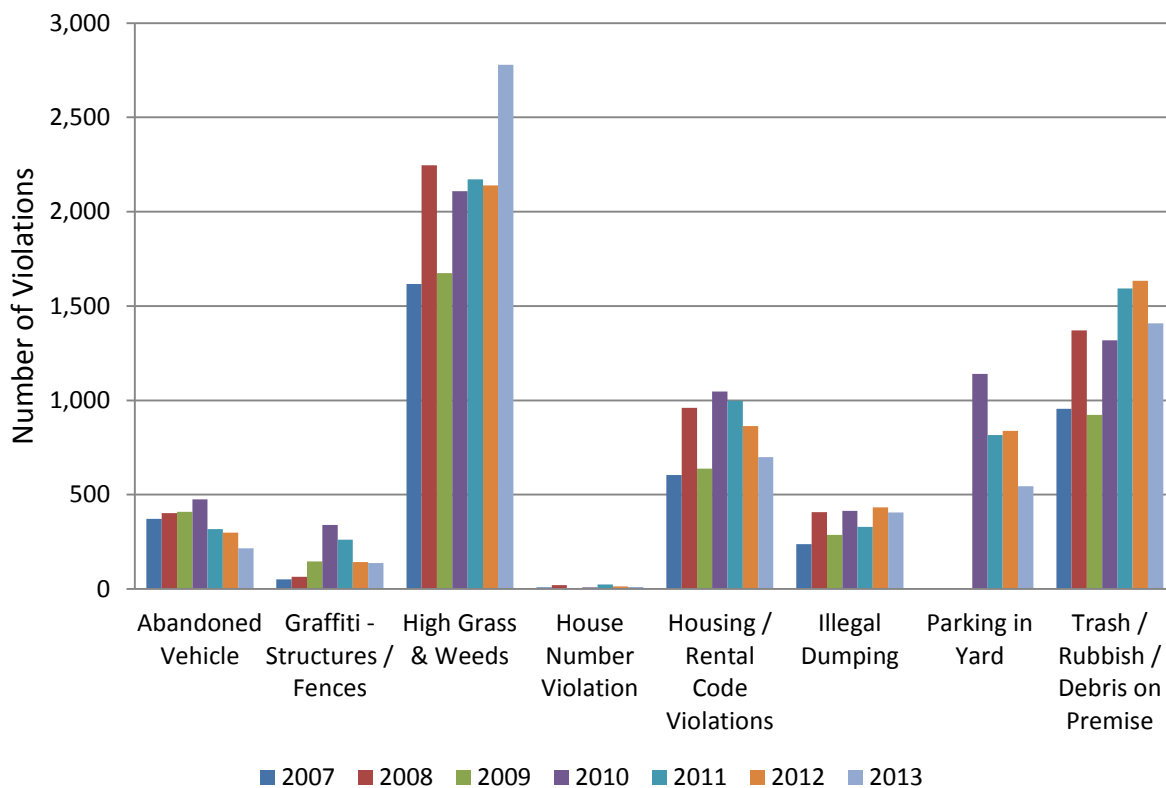
Code Compliance

The information in figure 2 illustrates the number and category of code compliance issues in Neighborhood Alert Center boundaries (City of Little Rock, 2013b).³ Understanding code compliance issues in these service areas lends insight into the status of these neighborhoods. In other words, a high number of compliance issues does not necessarily indicate problems in the area; yet, excessive code compliance issues (higher than typical) provides evidence that an issue exists. Recognizing the limitations for interpreting the data, an understanding of compliance issues across neighborhood service areas is simply based on the presence or absence of a trend or whether the issue is stabilized. As such, complaints likely serve as indications of self-monitoring occurring in a neighborhood. For example, a high number of code violations may simply mean residents are more vigilant about their neighborhood and its appearance; residents

² These frequency counts are not standardized by population; comparisons across service areas are not recommended.

³ These compliance data figures are based on code compliance reports (City of Little Rock, 2013b).

Figure 2. Code Compliance in Little Rock NAC Neighborhoods, 2007-2013



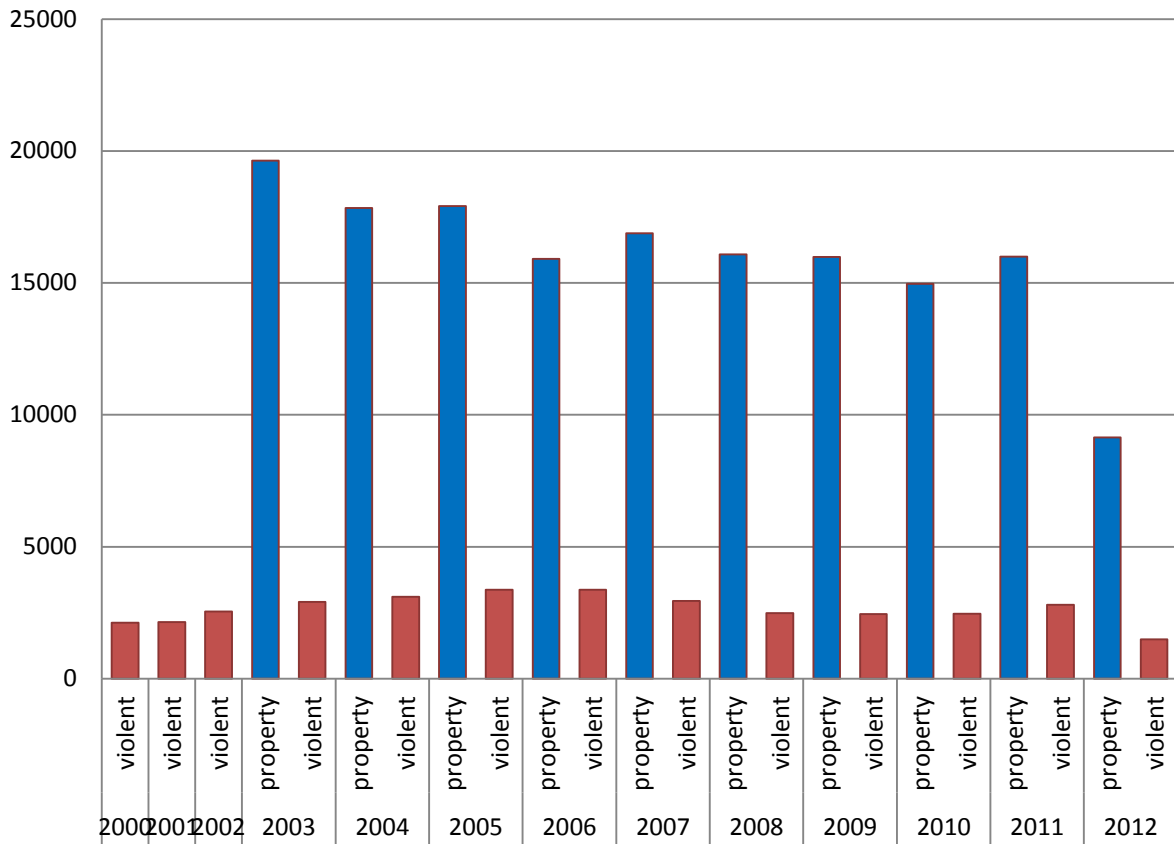
Source: City of Little Rock (2013b)

are communicating and interacting to confront these issues and problems in these neighborhoods. Overall, there appears to be noticeable improvement across Neighborhood Alert Center service areas over the past few years. While some Neighborhood Alert Center service areas have more code compliance issues than others, the most common category of code offenses cited in the Neighborhood Alert Center service areas is high grass/weeds violation.

As shown in figure 2, specific code compliance violations are more prevalent in some service areas than other areas. As well, in the per neighborhood breakdown of the compliance issues (not shown), certain violations are more prevalent in certain service areas. High grass/weed and trash/debris compliance easily exceed the other compliance factors; these compliance issues, along with illegal dumping, appear to be trending upward over time relative to other compliance issues. All other compliance issues have been trending downward, especially since 2010. Across specific service areas, high grass/weeds is the most reported compliance issue with trash/debris reports mirroring these reported categories, though at a slightly lower frequency.

The findings from these trends also see that the City of Little Rock is making tremendous strides in a few key areas of code compliance – abandoned vehicles, housing code violations, and parking in yards; code compliance complaints for these three areas are trending downward at promising levels. The most dramatic improvement is with “parking in yards,” which dropped from a high of 1,140 complaints in 2010 to 545 complaints in 2013 (a change of 52%). Of the Neighborhood Alert Center service areas, there appears to be a normal distribution with regard to code compliance complaints – three service area have low complaint levels, three service areas have high complaint levels, and the remaining service areas (6) have similar moderate levels of compliance complaints.

Figure 3. Property and Violent Crimes in Little Rock NAC Neighborhoods, 2000-2012



Source: Little Rock Police Department (2013)

Crime and Public Safety

Crime and public safety are issues of particular importance to these neighborhoods, both for the direct manifestation of crime itself and for its indirect consequences. Whether people feel safe in their community comprises an essential feature of healthy and thriving neighborhoods and is related to other efforts at neighborhood improvement. Residents who feel unsafe in their neighborhood are sometimes less likely to come together to solve problems (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Residents who have the means to move out of areas they consider unsafe may do so, as may local businesses. Potential investors also consider safety in making economic development investment decisions (Greenberg, Verma, Dillman, & Chaskin, 2010).

Crime, both property crime and violent crime, are of special concern to residents in these neighborhoods. Fear of crime can stimulate and accelerate neighborhood decline by encouraging residents to withdraw physically and psychologically from community life, resulting in a commensurate decline in a neighborhood's social capital (Skogan, 1986). On the other hand, as social capital in these neighborhoods increases, violent crime is likely to decrease in these neighborhoods (Burchfield & Silver, 2013).

The aggregate number of property and violent crimes in these Neighborhood Alert Center's service area is displayed in figure 3. These data represent only those crimes reported in these neighborhoods and then only when a reported crime matches an address that falls within a particular Neighborhood Alert Center's service area. The total number of reported crimes within

Table 5. Total Number of Referrals Accepted for Investigation, Pulaski County

Region	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*
East	7	1	322	432	533	526	382
Jacksonville	20	10	442	771	774	817	577
North	35	21	621	903	958	1,057	818
South	3,178	3,206	1,571	1,009	972	949	721
Southwest	3	1	624	603	672	721	506
Total	3,243	3,239	3,580	3,718	3,909	4,070	3,004

*As of October 31, 2013

Source: Arkansas Department of Human Services (2013)

the Neighborhood Alert Center boundaries, both violent and property crimes is 194,581 from 2000 to 2012 (Little Rock Police Department [LRPD], 2013).⁴ From these data, there is a definite downward trend in crime, albeit a gradual trend. For property crime, there was a slow, steady decrease from 2003 to 2012. A similar pattern is evident for violent crime, which increases from 2000 to 2006, then begins a gradual decline through 2012. Overall, crime rates for most of these service areas are on the decline; though some areas are experiencing greater rates of decline than others, nearly every service area is experiencing a reduction in crime.

Social Services

A final assessment, though by proxy only, is the service area's social services. Using these figures as illustrative of the issue's potential presence in Little Rock neighborhoods, the number of child-welfare investigations initiated by the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services is presented in table 5. These figures of importance are for only those cases occurring in southern Pulaski County, which encompasses all Neighborhood Alert Center service areas (and more). These social service data trends present information on child welfare issues that provides viable information for understanding likely future service considerations for the Neighborhood Alert Center service program, especially when recognizing these services are becoming part of the neighborhood facilitators' responsibilities. Other service areas that need to be considered for future planning for the Neighborhood Alert Center service program are general public health and gerontological services, particularly as elderly homeowners age in place.

Program Recommendations

To meet their full potential, the city needs to make the Neighborhood Alert Centers and the neighborhood facilitators who work in these locations more of a priority in their efforts to serve the citizens of Little Rock. To do so, city officials need to equip, support, and fund Neighborhood Alert Centers and facilitators at a level necessary to ensure their success. Based on this assessment of the Neighborhood Alert Center program, accompanying data, and interviews, the following recommendations were presented to the City of Little Rock's city manager, mayor, and board of directors for their consideration. Because these recommendations were made, the City of Little Rock has considered them, and the status of each is as noted in table 6.

⁴ Data on both violent and property crime for the period between 2000 and 2012 are based on LRPD crime statistics (LRPD, 2013).

Table 6. Status of Report Recommendations

Recommendation	Status
Create a defined administrative official/designee to connect Facilitators to their central division and with whom s/he can work with directly and consult regularly for guidance and direction.	The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs has a clear departmental structure that is understood across the department; all Resource Specialists report to a single Supervisor in the Department.
Rename the Neighborhood Alert Center facilities.	The centers have all been renamed “Neighborhood Resource Centers” and signage updated.
Provide a new job title to the Neighborhood Facilitators.	The job title has been changed to “Resource Specialist” and was effective City-wide in 2015.
Recognize changed service provision needs for neighborhoods and changing duties based on these transformations.	Community Oriented Police Services and Community Oriented Police Officers have been assigned for coverage at most Neighborhood Resource Centers. Staff is investigating the installation of computer kiosks at Neighborhood Resource Centers for use by residents. Resource Specialists have partnered with the American Cancer Society to receive training to become Community Health Advisors. All Resource Specialists have obtained Notary Public commissions.
Cultivate organizational culture to impress upon Neighborhood Facilitators that these are “mini-City Halls” and they are “community ambassadors” for neighborhood service areas.	Customer service training has been provided by Next Level Training. Also, Resource Specialists disseminate information regarding other Departments within the City when appropriate.
Provide assistance to Neighborhood Facilitators through volunteer associations.	This effort is ongoing and varied. The Department is reviewing a possible partnership with the “Arkansas Workforce Center at Little Rock” to allow centers to be utilized as job training sites.
Expand centers to unserved areas.	One Resource Center was moved to a new location and another was re-opened after being closed for several years.
Provide Neighborhood Facilitators with discretionary budgets.	Resource Specialists are provided a budget to carry out specific activities and are given the autonomy to purchase items while working with neighborhood volunteers. Resource Specialists have more autonomy now than prior to the study.
Provide continued training to Neighborhood Facilitators.	Training efforts are ongoing, primarily in the customer service arena, to Resource Specialists.
Rotate Neighborhood Facilitators to other areas.	Resource Specialists have increased their efforts to collaborate, but a full rotation is not being pursued.

Source: E. Cox (personal communication, March 1, 2016)

Conclusion

This assessment project illustrates the blending together of practitioner experience and expertise with academic researchers' knowledge in an applied setting; though often wished for, it is not often accomplished successfully. Yet, one of the roles of an urban university such as UALR is to foster closer, mutually beneficial, relationships with the community it serves (Cox, 2000). As with its peer institutions, UALR has committed itself to greater engagement in the Little Rock community and has thus become "integral to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the community" (Friedman, Perry, & Menendez, 2014, p. 1). Friedman et al. (2014) underscore the importance of universities to communities' well-being, "[u]nderstanding that their fortunes are tied in part to those of their neighbors and physical surroundings, many have expanded their efforts to engage new partners and address pressing community issues (p. 1)." Institutions of higher education play active roles in shaping the physical and social environments of their communities. As urban universities are "grounded in place," their commitment to a place is long-term and manifests itself in many ways by contributing, as in this case, to the stabilizing of fragile neighborhoods, creating a sense of place in these neighborhoods, promoting safety and security, and engaging issues of importance across communities (Friedman et al., 2014, p. 16).

With the interdependence of urban universities and their surrounding communities, relationships between an urban university and its community must be complementary and symbiotic. An urban university is a permanent economic fixture in the community; as such these institutions are significant contributors to a city's economy (Steinacker, 2005). Leaders of urban universities are realizing that their institutions must be active participants in their communities (Shaffer & Wright, 2010). This assessment provides an example of how the university and community, through the collaboration of academics and practitioners, can cooperate to provide an insightful and meaningful evaluation study with practical implications. The changes implemented by the city point to the benefits of enlisting an outside evaluation to generate viable, feasible recommendations about the program.

Through this collaborative research relationship, researchers were able to accommodate the assessment needs of the city. For example, the utility of the comparative city service assessment proved especially important to practitioners for demonstrating other strategies currently in use as well as providing substantive evidence for many of the recommendations stemming from this program assessment. As well, the incorporation of city officials and employees into the assessment process permitted researchers to target the assessment accordingly. In so doing, the assessment focused on the program, its employees, community constituents, and the intra-organizational dynamics of the program.

Based on this collaborative/cooperative approach, the assessment was able to provide information to support these recommendations and reinforce the need for these centers as well as the realization that these centers are essential to Little Rock neighborhoods. In fact, one of the more tangible "discoveries" emerged because of this tailored approach to assessment, i.e., the City of Little Rock enjoys an organized neighborhood association network largely due to the functions and services provided through the Neighborhood Alert Center program. Finally, these recommendations were offered as viable, implementable strategies, and, to its credit, the City of Little Rock has largely acted on most of these recommendations that likely will improve, enhance, and sustain this valuable city service and program.

Disclosure Statement

Funding for this study was provided by the City of Little Rock. One author of this study is the City Manager of the City of Little Rock (Mr. Moore) and another was the Assistant City Manager of the City of Little Rock (Mr. Day) during the time this study was conducted.

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Author Biographies

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Bruce T. Moore is the City of Little Rock city manager. Prior to that appointment in 2002, he served in a variety of capacities with the City of Little Rock, including assistant to the mayor and assistant to the city manager. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Arkansas City Manager's Association (ACMA), president of the National Forum of Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) Board of Directors, Henderson State University Board of Trustees, Little Rock Regional Chamber Board of Directors, Downtown Little Rock Partnership Executive Board, and the St. Vincent Health System Board of Directors. He has been the recipient of the Just Communities of Arkansas Humanitarian Award, one of Arkansas Business' "40 Under 40," and the United States Army Commendation Medal/Operation Desert Storm. He has completed the Senior Executive in State and Local Government Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He has an MPA from Arkansas State University and a BS from Henderson State University.

Bryan Day is the executive director of the Little Rock Port Authority. Prior to assuming this position in 2014, he spent 20 years working for the City of Little Rock. With the City of Little Rock, he served as the assistant city manager and director of Little Rock Parks and Recreation. He is a board member on the Arkansas Oklahoma Port Operators Association and the Inland Rivers, Ports and Terminals Association. He participates in the National Waterways Council, the Southeast Economic Development Council, and the Inland Rivers, Ports and Terminals Association. Bryan serves as a member of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Transportation Advisory Council, the Arkansas District Export Council, and is active in the local community, having served on numerous boards and commissions. He received his BA and MPA from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Book Review

Diversity and Philanthropy: Expanding the Circle of Giving by Lilya Wagner

Kathryn Yandell – North Carolina State University

Wagner, L. (2016). *Diversity and Philanthropy: Expanding the Circle of Giving*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. \$60.00 (hard cover), ISBN: 978-1-4408-4044-9.

In her book, *Diversity and Philanthropy: Expanding the Circle of Giving*, author Lilya Wagner argues that greater awareness of the effect of culture on philanthropy is important both in the United States and abroad. As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this book is to “provide cross-cultural insights that can enhance nonprofit and fundraising practice” (p. xix). The book brings together information from research and experiences in cross-cultural philanthropy, therefore providing a rich resource to those, especially nonprofit practitioners and volunteers, seeking greater understanding of the differences in philanthropy among diverse cultures.

Wagner provides two reasons for the need to understand philanthropy as a global practice. The first is that nonprofits play a critical role in the shaping of a local civil society because of shifting social and political developments, which are often supported and accomplished through philanthropy. Second, as population groups migrate and establish themselves in places other than their countries of origin, understanding international philanthropic practices and traditions helps define cross-cultural philanthropy. It is this second point that is a continual theme of the book. Wagner’s point is that changing demographics makes it important for nonprofit leaders everywhere to be proficient in cross-cultural philanthropy, and she argues that a “one size fits all” approach to philanthropy and fundraising results in lost opportunities for nonprofit organizations.

In chapter one, Wagner discusses the concepts of philanthropy and culture. The premise of the chapter is cultural awareness begins with understanding what defines philanthropy and culture. Robert Payton, the founding director of the Center on Philanthropy at IU, defined philanthropy as “voluntary action for the public good.” This has been the widely accepted definition of philanthropy in the United States, but philanthropy is interpreted differently among other countries, cultures, and populations, which, in turn, shapes how people respond to fundraising appeals. In the United States, a long-held myth regarding minorities, or people of color, has been that they do not give. Citing *The Chronical of Philanthropy*, Wagner shares that “African Americans give 25 percent more of their discretionary income to charity than whites (p. 53).” The chapter titled “African Roots and American Practices” focuses on the history, motivations, attitudes, and preferences for giving among African Americans. One point made is that African Americans traditionally have not viewed their participation in giving as philanthropy. If this discussion is used to create a definition of philanthropy in the African-American tradition, the definition may be an obligation to support and assist family and community through the giving of time, money, and material items. While the differences between the two definitions offered may seem like a matter of semantics to some, Wagner makes the point that an examination of philanthropy as shaped by culture is valuable for providing a foundation or framework for the practice of giving.

A deeper discussion of the need for a global perspective is provided in the next chapter, which in effect sets up the following chapters’ focus on specific groups, populations, and cultures. Stating

Yandell, K. (2017). Diversity and philanthropy: Expanding the circle of giving by Lilya Wagner. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 3(1), 100-102. doi:10.20899/jpna.3.1.100-102

that culture is most easily explained as a people's way of life, Wagner adds that some cultural meanings are easily recognized, while others are more subtle requiring careful observations in order to come to conclusions about the culture itself. Chapters three through eight offer insights into specific cultures in regard to fundraising practices. As culture shapes behaviors and practices, Wagner offers that a basic understanding of cultural differences may allow organizations and their personnel to function more productively.

The ensuing discussions of giving traditions of Spanish-speaking people, Africans, African Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Arab Americans, Jewish traditions, and native people provide information on ways of giving as well as types of causes traditionally preferred within these cultures and groups. Additionally, suggestions for choice of fundraising strategies for prospects and donors within each group are offered. It is important for the potential reader to understand that this book is not intended as a primer on how to raise money from specific cultures, groups and populations, rather the book offers "cautious generalizations" regarding "identity-based philanthropy." Some of these generalizations are that definitions and concepts of philanthropy matter; community is significant; and customs and traditions that are part of an ethnic identity affect philanthropy. The discussions of each specific culture, group or population underscore these points. For those who seek a deeper investigation of the specific cultures, groups, or populations presented in the book, Wagner provides a list of additional readings at the end of each chapter providing the reader with a rich resource for further study.

Another interesting feature of this book are the personal perspectives offered at the end of the chapters. These perspectives are authored by academics, practitioners, philanthropists, consultants, community and social leaders, and nonprofit professionals. Each essay offers a unique perspective on topics related to the information presented in the proceeding chapter. Following the chapter on the culturally proficient professional and nonprofit, Adam Martinez, EdD, presents a personal reflection of how he sees himself as a professional, as a fundraiser, as an educator, and as an American of Mexican descent. The essay gives life to Wagner's argument that nonprofit professionals should realize that we need to "broaden the definition of philanthropy to include traditions, preferences, and ways of giving by diverse populations and not attempt to function under the comfortable 'one size fits all' mentality (p. 205)."

Wagner's book indeed achieves its stated purpose. While not exhaustive in scope, the information included does raise awareness of the effect of cultural differences on philanthropy and ultimately on the practice of fundraising. The inclusion of additional sources for recommended readings would be helpful to those who wish to learn more about specific groups, cultures, and populations as well as those who wish to increase cultural awareness and become more culturally competent.

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The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest that relate to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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Kathryn Yandell is a doctoral student at North Carolina State University, with a research focus on nonprofit governance. Kathryn has 25 years' experience in fundraising and is a cofounder of and senior consultant for Gamble Squared LLC, a fundraising consulting firm.

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Book Review

Bring Back the Bureaucrats by John J. DiIulio, Jr.

Benjamin M. Brunjes – University of Washington

DiIulio, J. J. (2014). *Bring Back the Bureaucrats*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press. \$12.95 (paperback), ISBN: 978-59947-467-0.

There is a long tradition of scholarship assessing how organizational complexity influences public administration. As governments are increasingly reliant on one another and on private sector partners in all phases of the policy process, researchers have attempted to determine how to best manage complex networks (O'Toole, 1997), identify the ramifications of intergovernmental policy devolution (Rivlin, 2009), and provide insights into reform efforts that strive to make governments operate more like for-profit firms (Box, 1999). In these studies, scholars have struggled with determining what these changes mean for both public values and organizational management. From the perspective of public values, organizational complexity can weaken democratic accountability mechanisms and reduce transparency (Rosenbloom & Piotrowski, 2007). Management scholars worry that complex structures increase transaction costs and widen information asymmetries between government principals and their private sector agents (Brown, Potoski, & Van Slyke, 2006; Peters & Pierre, 1998). With increasing complexity, measuring and managing performance become at once both more necessary and more difficult to accomplish (Moynihan, 2008). However, the promise of increased efficiency and effectiveness, along with ongoing political pressures, has spurred the use of complex organizational structures anyway (Kettl, 2006).

In *Bring Back the Bureaucrats*, John J. DiIulio, Jr. highlights many of these longstanding concerns, expressing frustration with a federal government that is increasingly behaving as a "leviathan by proxy." DiIulio, currently on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania and a fellow at the Brookings and Manhattan Institutes, calls for a return to direct service provision through the hiring of a million new federal employees by 2035. Though other scholars have noted that federal employment has not kept pace with public demands for services (Light, 2008), few have presented such direct hiring recommendations. In DiIulio's view, a stronger federal bureaucracy will reduce much of the uncertainty about where and how federal funds are used, provide a closer tie between government and American citizens, and limit the influence of contracting and intergovernmental lobbies. As a result, this proposal is consistent with calls for a return to the centralization of policy implementation and a firmer control of administrative activities from institutional overseers (Balla, 1998; Wood & Waterman, 1991). For others who have embraced complexity, networks, and collaboration as management challenges of the future, the core themes of this book are an indictment of much of the propriety of much of the discourse in public administration today. Should scholars be more worried about the dark sides of public service delivery networks and their potential to undermine traditional democratic institutions? DiIulio strongly advocates for taking steps to reduce complexity as a way to protect public values, ensure more effective use of public funds, and increase administrative accountability.

DiIulio's argument rests on the assertion that today's federal government is both huge and hidden from view. Through the use of grants, contracts, and intergovernmental agreements, federal agencies are involved in nearly every aspect of American society. However, due to the mechanisms used, the extent and cost of a system is obscured from most citizens. Political actors have allowed this to occur to curry favor with an electorate that demands ever more despite a

cultural aversion to “big” government. Through the use of debt financing, which places the financial burden of policies on future generations, and proxy administrative instruments (such as grants and contracts), political actors have been able to provide desired services without raising taxes despite long-term threats to the nation. In this system, corporate and intergovernmental lobbies have a strong interest in maintaining the ever-growing flow of federal funds, which, over time, have come to be essential for many firms, charities, and governments. As a result, some of the core elements of democracy, primarily responsiveness to citizens and the checks and balances system, are at risk as self-interested organizations and politicians bargain over the dispersal of funds behind closed doors. According to DiIulio, the problem is exacerbated by a weakened bureaucracy, which lacks the human capital to effectively oversee grants and contracts, thus creating a system that further enables special interests to subvert democratic processes.

DiIulio’s argument is clearly presented and backed by numerous reports from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Congressional Budgeting Office (CBO), and non-governmental think tanks, which indicate that complexity is increasing in federal agencies. As many scholars in public administration (Moe & Gilmour, 1995), political science (Mayer, 1995), and law (Minow, 2003) have recognized, the influence of innumerable, varied actors with uncertain motivations has the potential to significantly alter policy processes in this country. However, these studies tend to presume the dominance of certain public values, usually accountability and control, over other values, such as responsiveness and efficiency. Importantly, DiIulio holds that these other values, purportedly associated with networks, contracts, and grants, are not being achieved due to the lack of sufficient administrative capacity in the federal government. This argument is both powerful and important for the discourse around public policy and public administration in the United States.

However, it is also a familiar argument to public administration scholars. Indeed, concerns associated with contracting, grants, and intergovernmental networks have been voiced for decades (DeHoog, 1984; Frederickson, 1997; Moe, 1987; Raab & Milward, 2003) particularly regarding implications for democratic values and human capital concerns. There have even been prominent calls for returns to stronger, bureaucracy-led government (Olsen, 2006). It is here that DiIulio fails to deliver on his promise. DiIulio references very little of the relevant existing and active scholarship on topics central to his argument. He claims that “for the most part, respected academics have learned to love Leviathan by Proxy and profess various concepts and techniques for manipulating and mastering it in the public interest” (p. 82). With this generalization, DiIulio discounts both the breadth and diversity of scholarship on these topics in the public affairs literature. In doing so, he fails to take advantage of a wealth of theoretical and empirical knowledge regarding how complexity has influenced public organizations. As a result, his proposed systemic remedies are not backed by the leading empirical evidence and ring hollow. DiIulio falls back on general prescriptions that are overly reliant on political decision-makers who are extremely unlikely to act on the problems presented due to the political culture that he blames for creating the problem.

Bring Back the Bureaucrats is the sort of book that could be a rallying flag for scholars and practitioners of public administration. Indeed, it is widely recognized that the current federal workforce is shrinking per capita, and that procurement officials in particular are overworked and undertrained. Further, there are many who worry about how contracts, excessive lobbying, and the diffusion of authority will affect public values and democratic institutions. Those who are concerned about these trends will find this book both informative and underwhelming. DiIulio makes a strong case that “Leviathan by Proxy” is a threat to our government system but

fails to present realistic policy solutions based on empirical evidence and the decades of scholarship that should inform this discussion.

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