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Making ‘The Ask’ to Internal Stakeholders: The Influence of Organizational Identification on University Faculty and Staff Giving

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MAKING ‘THE ASK’ TO INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS: 
THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION ON UNIVERSITY 
FACULTY AND STAFF GIVING

A Thesis 
Presented to 
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Master of Arts

By 
Lora Haley Ashley

August 2018
MAKING 'THE ASK' TO INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:
The Influence of Organizational Identification on University Faculty and Staff Giving

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I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Michael Ashley, who stood by my side through this entire journey and encouraged me along the way. Also, to my momma, Michelle Burklow, I still hope I make you the proudest.
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The purpose of this study was to explore faculty/staff identification with their employing university and how that, in turn, may influence their decision to financially support the institution, or not. This study employed a case study approach and a mixed methods research design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data. An online survey using Cheney’s (1982) Organizational Identification Questionnaire measured faculty/staff members’ identification with the organization and with their specific departments. The survey also collected data on faculty/staff past charitable giving. Following the survey, qualitative focus groups and interviews were conducted with faculty/staff members to explore what factors contributed to their decisions to support the university, or not. The survey data revealed that faculty and staff members identify more highly with their departments and staff members identify more highly overall than faculty members. Yet, the survey also revealed that faculty members gave more financially to the university than did staff members. A thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed three overarching factors that influenced faculty/staff decisions to give, or not: affinity, capacity to give, and awareness. These findings offer insight to higher education universities and institutions about how identification between the faculty/staff members and the organization can affect their decisions to support the university. This case study makes a contribution to the literature on charitable giving, employee giving, and
specifically, faculty/staff giving. It also extends extant literature on organizational identification, particularly targets of identification in a higher education context. Finally, this study offers practical implications for other universities, suggests directions for future research, and acknowledges the limitations.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Many nonprofit organizations (NPOs) rely heavily, and sometimes completely, on private support to fund initiatives for the organization. Universities and other higher education institutions are no exception, especially in the case of rapidly declining state funding. According to Mitchell, Leachman, and Masterson (2016), “Most states have slashed higher education funding” (p. 1). In fact, the authors reported that, for the 2016-2017 school year, state funding for public colleges was nearly $10 billion less than it was just a decade ago. These deep cuts have created budget crises across institutions (Mitchell et al., 2017), and many universities are finding themselves having to make major budget decisions in order to provide funding for programs and initiatives.

One answer to the budget deficits has been cultivating private support. As a result, universities are looking in every direction for monetary support and investments from alumni, friends, and other stakeholders. When looking at potential stakeholders for a university, some of the top prospects are alumni, but faculty and staff members are also important as potential donors. Their connection to their institutions often runs deep. However, faculty and staff members can sometimes be seen as disconnected and unsupportive.

Regardless of which role someone plays in an organization, the way that organizational stakeholders identify with the organization plays a major role in its success, especially in a nonprofit context where so much of the organization’s work is dependent on volunteers and donors. In higher education, specifically, there are many different stakeholders that hold clout for the organization, from alumni and friends, to corporate donors, community leaders, and political decision makers. One important group
that seems to get overlooked includes the university’s faculty and staff. Exploring how faculty and staff members identify with their institutions could shed light on the extent to which they do or do not choose to support their employing university with financial resources.

Although faculty/staff giving is a timely topic given current higher education funding trends, there is a lack of research exploring faculty and staff members specifically, in regard to their charitable support of their employing institutions and also their organizational identification. As universities continue to solicit donors, this research study will shed light on the very group of people that works to keep the universities open and running-- the faculty and staff members. This study will provide insight into faculty and staff members’ identification with their institutions and consequently, how that identification may correlate with their financial support (or lack of support) of the institution.

This introductory chapter has outlined the budget context of higher education, as well as the importance of organizational identification and the role that it plays in the success of organizations. The next chapter offers a thorough review of literature regarding charitable giving and organizational identification. The third chapter depicts the methodology used in this case study of a higher education institution, including participant descriptions, data collection, and analysis. The fourth chapter presents the findings from both the quantitative survey and the qualitative focus groups and interviews. These findings include test results and overarching themes portrayed by participant quotes. The final chapter interprets the findings, as well as discusses limitations of the study, future research ideas, and applies the findings to real-world
functions to better understand and improve faculty/staff identification with their employing university, which may potentially influence their decision to financially support that university.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since higher education institutions are challenged to find an increasing number of sources of private support, this chapter summarizes relevant literature about charitable giving trends, as well as organizational identification. First, charitable giving trends were reviewed to create an understanding of how individuals in the United States choose to financially support nonprofit organizations (NPOs). More specifically, studies focusing on employee giving were examined to understand the trends that emerge within the workplace when charitable giving is encouraged by employers and supervisors. Second, organizational identification literature was reviewed, as individuals’ identification levels may influence if and how much one supports nonprofit organizations. In this case, the organizational identification of faculty and staff may play an important part in their decisions to support their employing higher education institutions.

Charitable Giving

Nonprofit organizations rely heavily on donations and support from a variety of donors. To understand better the importance of faculty and staff giving at higher education institutions, it is first important to understand the context of charitable giving within the nonprofit sector. This section focuses on relevant research as it relates to American philanthropy, individual giving trends, higher education giving, and specifically, employee giving.

American Philanthropy

Giving back is something that Americans seem to value, and many consider charitable giving as important within the American culture. In 2016, $390.05 billion was
given to nonprofit organizations and charities (Giving USA, 2017). Of those dollars, individuals made up 72% of giving with $281.86 billion, followed by foundations with 15% ($59.28 billion), bequests with 8% ($30.36 billion), and lastly, corporations with 5% ($18.55 billion) (Giving USA, 2017). Because individuals make up nearly three-fourths of all private contributions (Giving USA, 2017), it is important to examine the trends among individual donors.

Donors make their gifts to a plethora of nonprofit organizations. Historically, religious organizations receive the most donor dollars. The second largest recipient group includes educational institutions with 15% of the dollars totaling $59.77 billion. The remainder of donor dollars are designated in the areas of human services (12%), foundations (10%), health (8%), public-society benefit (8%), arts, culture, and humanities (5%), international affairs (6%), environment/animals (3%), and finally to individuals (2%) (Giving USA, 2017). The nonprofit organizations to which donors choose to give reveal the things that are valued most by the philanthropic audience. Although donors have many choices where they can place their charity dollars, education seems to be highly valued by the American public, as evidenced by the dollars donated to colleges and universities.

**Individual Giving**

With more than 1.57 million nonprofit organizations in the United States alone (NCCS, 2016), there are many options for individuals to choose from as they go “shopping” for a charity to support. That makes for fierce competition among NPOs, each of which needs donor dollars to support their respective cause. Because philanthropic giving is a personal decision, it is important to understand what influences
donor choices. Sargeant (1999) explored donor behavior and concluded, “It seems clear from the foregoing that a variety of different factors have the impact to effect charity giving behavior. The factors are often complex and inter-related and suggest both altruistic and selfish motivations for giving” (p. 227). This study demonstrated that individuals are influenced by many factors when making charitable contribution decisions, including to whom and how much. Those factors can be outside influences like demographics, such as age and gender, along with social class/income. There could also be more innate inspirations such as feeling empathy, sympathy, and also self-interest. The final portion of the model that Sargeant described were the outputs of these factors which include different types of gifts such as time, talent, treasures, not just outright cash gifts, and donor loyalty.

A better understanding of donor behavior can help NPOs better target and cultivate potential supporters. According to Sargeant (1999), “A greater understanding of the variables in the model postulated…would assist charities in focusing their efforts on those individuals most likely to offer some form of support…(and) should serve to greatly reduce the costs of a given donor recruitment programme” (p. 228). Sargeant’s model of donor behavior can help guide charities and other philanthropic groups when trying to appeal to the donor audience. Since potential donors have many options available to them, knowing what may influence them can help nonprofit organizations be more strategic in their attempts to gain donors.

When investigating giving, donor wealth often comes into question. When individuals are philanthropic, they usually give of their time, talent, or treasures. In this case, the donation of treasures is important. However, the income levels of people who
donate and how much they give have been questioned, specifically those from wealthier households. Schervish and Havens (1998) stated:

We conclude that the very high-income households are not all saints or sinners. In the measured amounts and measured proportions of their incomes they contribute to charity, they are not uniformly and substantially more generous relative to their income and wealth than are middle- and lower-income households. (p. 432)

In other words, despite their wealth, as individual donors, individuals with higher incomes do not give any more proportionally than lower and middle-income households. Schervish and Havens confirmed, “We found that on average lower-, middle-, and even high-income households contribute about the same percentage of their income” (p. 421).

In short, it does not matter the wealth of the individual, but more their philanthropic personalities or their desire to give back to others.

Attracting donors, regardless of wealth, is not enough. These are important dollars on which organizations depend, so keeping donors loyal is also necessary to the success of NPOs. Sargeant (2001) advocated for relationship fundraising and emphasized the importance of keeping donors past their first gift. Sargeant stated:

In the for-profit context, a number of studies have addressed the primary reasons customers stop doing business with a particular organization. Translating these factors to the voluntary sector context suggests that donors might stop supporting an organization because they can no longer afford it…or develop a change in attitude toward a voluntary organization and thus terminate their giving. (p. 179)

Sargeant concluded that NPOs should ensure donors know that they have a place within the organization and that their support is appreciated. Sargeant suggested, “Charities
should be actively demonstrating that they care for their supporters and that giving to charity can be a pleasant and rewarding experience” (p. 190). Donors need to be given a reason to remember the organization. If they feel as if they are a part of something, then they are more likely to continue to give. The relationship between the donor and the organization is an important part that keeps donors engaged and keeps the giving cycle going.

In short, giving back is an individual matter, a decision made for oneself, and can be influenced by a number of factors. There are many types of nonprofit organizations and charities that donors can support. Many choose to give to colleges and universities, making higher education one of the most popular areas of giving.

**Higher Education Giving**

In the U.S., people often choose to support and invest in higher education institutions. As mentioned above, the Giving USA report (2017) stated that education received $59.77 billion or 15% of all donor dollars in 2016, an increase from previous years. Financial support can be given to a university’s general fund, designated for a particular department or program, or however the donor chooses. This trend in increasing private funding to universities and other institutions is to combat the decline of funding provided by state governments. The gaps that are left by budget cuts create the perfect place for philanthropic individuals to support higher education institutions. In short, state funding is no longer sufficient, and private support is needed for institutions to be successful.

When exploring charitable giving to higher education, university alumni are an important source of potential donors. Lara and Johnson (2014) stated, “Philanthropic
giving by alumni is clearly an important, and increasingly important, source of financing for institutions of higher education” (p. 302). Leslie and Ramey (1986) explored the reasons behind supporting higher education institutions and found the following:

Alumni may respond well also to emphasis upon the long-standing traditions of the institution and to its prestige (age and quality rating). Alumni and non-alumni individuals presumably will respond favorably to shortfalls in state support....

Current institutional efforts at fund-raising appear to be primarily reactive in nature. Much more important are the long-standing ties developed between institutions and organizational contributors, and it is this reality that should be kept in the forefront of fund-raising efforts. (p. 25)

Weerts and Ronca (2009) also examined alumni giving and the factors that determined or at least influenced giving. They found, “Key characteristics relate to attitudes, beliefs, income, and keeping in touch with [the university], and number of degrees from competing universities” (p. 114). The connection that alumni have to a university, as well as the needs of the university, both play a large part in encouraging supportive behavior.

Alumni may feel that giving to their alma mater is a way to repay the institution for the education and experiences given to them. That endearing tie becomes the institution’s basis for cultivating charitable gifts.

Drezner (2006), however, warned that universities must also consider the overall economic context when soliciting private support. In the past decade, the US economy has been lacking stability, which might affect philanthropic giving to higher education. Drezner suggested that “Further understanding the relationship between the economy’s cycles and philanthropic giving, including the correlation of tax cuts to donations, will
help colleges and universities better prepare” (p. 290). In short, many factors, some of which institutions have no control, play a large role in the success of institutional advancement and bringing in donor dollars to support programs and cushion budget shortfalls.

Employee Giving

When an organization encourages its employees to support nonprofit organizations, it can not only shape the organization’s culture, but also shape employees’ views and actions, sometimes creating a new habit of charitable giving or at least fostering the habit while the individual is an employee. Mize Smith and Sypher (2006) explored employee giving based on encouragement by the employer. They found that employees’ charitable giving may be largely dependent on the employing organization, not necessarily the charity they are supporting. In this study, Mize Smith and Sypher uncovered, “Those who have a ‘drive’ to give find it most convenient and rewarding to give in ways that the organization suggests….Consequently, if one changes workplaces, the possibilities of continued giving to a specific charity are likely diminished” (p. 27). This suggests that the employees’ connection to their workplace or employer influenced their philanthropic action, as they followed the lead of the organization and supported the preferred charities of their employer. While the chosen charity benefits from the employees’ support, the donor may not have actually connected to the NPO or cause itself.

However, not all employees are only connected to giving because of their employer’s suggestions. Those who are already philanthropically inclined may find their identification strengthened when working for a philanthropic-minded employer. Mize
Smith (2013) discovered that “one’s philanthropic identity, or the degree to which charitable giving is a part of the self-concept, may be influenced by the ways in which charitable giving gets talked about and enacted in the workplace” (p. 142). In this case, the employer’s encouragement solidified the philanthropic habits of the employees, making their identification with giving more salient. When an employer encourages such behaviors, or nurtures a philanthropic culture, it is likely that the organization’s employees will pick up on that and take action themselves. As Mize Smith concluded, “Given that one’s identity is often inextricably tied to work, employees are likely to be influenced to some extent by the discourse and activities of their philanthropic-minded employers” (p. 146). Therefore, employers have a great opportunity to foster a culture that encourages philanthropic giving and, in turn, make philanthropists out of their employees, just by using their organizational influence.

In the context of higher education, little research has examined the giving culture fostered among university employees. As described above, universities have tended to view alumni as the primary source of private support. Consequently, they have directed most of their attention to cultivating alumni relationships in preparation for donor solicitations. One exception in the literature is March (2005) that explored faculty and staff giving practices across American public institutions. Findings revealed that institutional size and Carnegie classification affected the giving percentages of both faculty and staff, while geographic location also affected the percentage of faculty gifts. In addition, both faculty and staff gave restricted gifts substantially more than unrestricted gifts. While this study offered important insights to higher education
employee giving, it did not explore employee identification or factors influencing employees’ philanthropic decisions.

In summary, while charitable giving literature has explored donor behaviors, including higher education and workplace contexts, scholars have given less attention to employees of the nonprofit sector, particularly in higher education, and why they may or may not choose to support their nonprofit employers.

Organizational Identification

Organizational identification is a topic that is and has been studied in many contexts. Simply put, it is the “oneness” that individuals feel with a particular organization (Cheney, 1983). Burke (1969) adopted a rhetorical approach to identification, saying, “Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity” (p. 22). In other words, the many divisions found in society create a need for individuals to make associations, often with those who are like-minded, and to find groups to which they can “belong.” Burke examined how demographic or extrinsic factors may influence people to find groups of similar others to which they could attach. This was foundational work that recognized reasons why people may identify and associate with varying groups.

Cheney (1983) later built upon Burke’s (1969) ideologies, stating, “As an individual response to the divisions of society, a person acts to identify with some target(s), i.e., persons, families, groups collectivities and to a lesser extent, values, goals, knowledge, activities, objects” (p. 145). Cheney suggested that individuals are always looking for ways to “fit-in” in some capacity, and organizations such as employers offer
an opportunity for connection. Consequently, “An individual who is inclined to identify with an organization (or an organizational subunit) will be open to persuasive efforts from various sources within that unit” (Cheney, p. 146). In short, when individuals identify with an organization, they generally adopt the organization’s ideologies and see themselves as sharing the same values. Therefore, cultivating strong organizational identification among its members is a common goal for most organizations.

Organizational identification (OI or OID) can occur on different levels and to varying degrees, both positively and negatively (i.e., misidentification). Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley (2008) stated, “OI has been formulated in various ways, ranging from quite narrow to quite broad” (p. 328). This array of ranges shows the complexity and importance of identification in an organization, both for the individual and also for the organization. Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley go on to summarize identification this way:

It roots the individual in the organization. In defining oneself in terms of the identity of the relevant collective or role, one becomes a microcosm of the collective or role, ready and willing to enact its identity and act in its best interests even at the expense of oneself. (p. 359)

Organizational identification blurs the lines between individual and organization and swirls them into one entity that is working toward fulfilling a common goal. When individuals are strongly connected to an organization, they may become champions of that organization and consequently, longtime supporters.

Specifically, in the case of nonprofit organizations, organizational identification of donors and volunteers may influence their support for NPOs. Highly identified donors
and volunteers create a reliable source of support for nonprofit organizations. The identification of nonprofit employees has received less attention to date, but may be increasingly important in nonprofit areas of higher education where private support is more and more critical.

**Organizational Identification Measurements**

Several researchers have attempted to measure organizational identification, as well as organizational efforts to persuade people to identify and connect with an organization. Cheney (1983), for example, examined organizational tactics to induce identification found in employee newsletters. Specifically, the common ground technique was “studied in terms of (1) frequency of appearance, (2) the variety of types of articles (e.g., news, policy statements, job-related information, human interest, etc.) manifesting the strategy, and (3) the diversity of ways in which similarity or commonality is expressed” (Cheney, p. 150). These three tenets lay the groundwork for how an organization makes a connection through some type of communication with their employees. Cheney stated, “Each tactic involves an associational process whereby the concerns of the employee are directly or indirectly identified with those of the organization” (p. 153). The organization shows similarities between itself and the employee to create a sense of connectedness, based on common ideas. Cheney also examined identification by antithesis, whereas “employees are urged to ‘unite’ against a common ‘enemy,’ usually some threat from the environment” (p. 153). Analyzing these identification inducement strategies in organizational messages is one way to explore identification techniques.
Other researchers have taken a more multi-method approach to studying organizational identification. For example, DiSanza and Bullis (1999) employed the Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) OCQ, Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. In addition, they analyzed newsletters using Cheney’s (1983) categories and then interviewed employees with the Focus Interview Method they adopted from Merton and Kendall (1946). This mixed methods study used three different types of scales in combination to uncover the connection between organizational identification, commitment, and the luring language that was used in National Forests Service newsletters. DiSanza and Bullis concluded, “The data revealed that organizations continue to use identification strategies and tactics first identified by Cheney (1983a). It also revealed four categories of responses, including nonidentification, textual identification, contextual identification, and dis-identification responses” (p. 395). In other words, organizational members are subjected to the same tactics used to appeal to their interests, which, in turn, cultivate their identification with the organization. DiSanza and Bullis’ use of different methodological approaches validated Cheney’s results and laid a foundation for the development of other scales.

Another often used scale is the Organizational Identification Questionnaire (OIQ) which was developed by Cheney (1982) as part of his dissertation. From its creation, it has been used in several studies including Johnson, Johnson, and Heimberg (1999) who explored the structure of the OIQ, Riketta (2005) who compared commitment and identification using the Mael scale (Mael and Tetrick, 1992) and the OIQ, and Miller, Allen, Casey, and Johnson (2000) where they employed the OIQ across a one-year period at an organization. Miller et al. analyzed the questionnaire and explained, “The OIQ was
primarily composed of selected items from six established instruments (Brown, 1969; Buchanan, 1974; Lodahl & Kejner, 1965; Mowday et al., 1979; Patchen, 1970; Schneider, Hall, & Nygren, 1971)” (p. 629). Since its first inception, the OIQ has been questioned and scrutinized. Miller and colleagues took a closer examination of the usefulness and reliability of the OIQ scale. They reviewed the many criticisms of the OIQ and completed “a series of confirmatory factor analyses to assess the OIQ measure in four organizations and at four points in time” (Miller et al., p. 637). Miller et al. found, “The OIQ is unidimensional across four organizations and more than four time periods…results also reveal that only 12 of 25 items contribute in a meaningful manner…12 items essentially constitute an affective measure of OC [organizational commitment], not organizational identification” (p. 647). Their analysis concluded with a call for the OIQ scale to be retired since it is not providing any unique information to researchers outside what they can learn from using the organizational commitment scale. In short, Miller and colleagues claimed the OIQ scale did not truly measure the concept of organizational identification. Despite this criticism, the OIQ continues to be used by scholars across disciplines, as few scales have been proven any more valid or reliable.

**Identification Targets**

Research has found that one’s identification with an organization may be composed of identification with multiple targets, including not only the organization itself, but also departments, work groups, and professions. For example, when studying the identification of employees in geographically dispersed organizations, Scott (1997) found that employees identified to varying degrees with the county, area, and state levels
of their organization. Overall, greater identification occurred with more localized targets and among participants with longer organizational tenure.

Similarly, Russo (1998) found multiple targets of identification among newspaper journalists. However, contrary to Scott’s (1997) localized targets, in this case, participants were more highly identified with the profession than with the employing newspaper but also felt attachment “to their coworkers, their readers, and to the values and tasks of a journalist” (p. 99). This line of research demonstrates the potential not only for multiple targets of identification, but also for tensions across competing identities. This could be the same for university faculty members who, like journalists, may also identify with their profession or discipline.

Ashforth and Johnson (2001) further addressed the idea of multiple organizational identities, suggesting that identities are “nested” or embedded within one another. They described lower order identities as those resulting from one’s job or workgroup and higher order identities emanating from one’s connections with a division or the organization as a whole. According to Ashforth and Johnson, lower-order identities are likely more exclusive, concrete, and proximal, increasing the likelihood that “lower order identities will generally be more subjectively important and situationally relevant, that is more salient, than higher order identities” (p. 35). The authors concluded that multiple identities may all be salient at once and that organizations must learn to manage individuals’ multiple selves.

In the context of higher education, it is likely that employees also have competing targets of identification. Faculty and staff often belong to multiple groups related to their
employment. At any one time, they may identify with varying targets such as departments, programs, colleges, and disciplines, in addition to the institution itself.

**Identification and the Nonprofit Sector**

Another interesting look at competing targets in organizational identification is the use of Cheney and Tompkins (1987) quadrants: (I) Low Identification/Low Commitment, (II) Low Identification/ High Commitment, (III) High Identification/ Low Commitment, (IV) High Identification/ High Commitment. The authors developed this typology to explain the relationship between an individual and an organization, showing that it is a fluid, ever-changing account. Cheney and Tompkins indicated, “An interpretive causality rules so that specific identification points us toward specific commitments and specific commitments, in turn, modify our identifications. Identification and commitment may thus be understood in the dialectical synthesis of life narratives” (p. 10). These quadrants show the ebb and flow of an organizational member as they move through different phases with an organization. It is ideal that organizational members stay in quadrant IV, but that is not reality. The reality is that each of the four quadrants exists, and organizational members move between the quadrants during their organizational involvement.

Within a nonprofit context, Mize Smith (2004) utilized those quadrants to explore the organizational identification of nonprofit board members. The four quadrants exemplify the relationship, and often inconsistencies, between board members’ identification with the nonprofit and their commitment, or lack thereof, to exert effort on behalf of the NPO. This is a common struggle among organizational members, such as board members, as some may strongly identify with the organization but do not have time
to commit, while others may have the time to commit but do not feel connected. Not surprisingly, Mize Smith found that board members who resided in quadrant IV were more likely to work harder for the organization and its mission. This research offers insight into the complexities of identification targets and the ways in which such targets may vary within a nonprofit context.

Identification has also been somewhat explored among nonprofit donors. Schervish and Havens (1997) posited that “the level of measured charitable giving, and perhaps of volunteering, depends less than previously thought on issues of generosity or other frameworks of consciousness. Instead, it depends on the factors that generate the individual's and household's communities of participation” (p. 256). This speaks to the fact that donors are now influenced by so many outside factors, and those factors, such as their employer, influence their charitable giving.

In an empirical study of university alumni, Mael and Ashforth (1992) found that organizational identification predicted several supportive behaviors of alumni toward their alma mater, including financial contributions. Mael and Ashforth affirmed that “these findings offer some promise for organizations. They indicate that individuals who identify with the organization are apt to support the organization in various ways, and that identification can be encouraged through various means” (p. 117). Specifically, the authors found that alumni perceptions of “organizational prestige, distinctiveness, and competitive excellence” may influence their level of organizational identification (p. 117). Although their study focused on alumni, these findings may be relevant to other university constituents, such as faculty and staff. By managing the perceptions of
potential donors, a university may cultivate stronger organizational identification which could influence their support.

In the context of higher education, faculty and staff may be asked to support the institutions for which they work. When working at an educational institution, it is possible that the faculty and staff members may also be alumni from that particular university, making them possibly have a deeper connection to the university. Borden, Shaker, and Keener (2014) suggested that “organizational attachments resulting from both alumni status and employee appointment as a faculty or staff member have been hypothesized to impact individuals’ donation propensities, including giving likelihood and potential gift amount” (p. 211). Borden et al. concluded that it is useful to remember “alumni and employee status as components of cross-cutting individual identities and of considering the potential of this kind of construct for studying other multi-faceted institutional relationships as well” (p. 214). When looking at why some faculty and staff support their employing university and others do not, it seems that an important factor is whether or not their employing university is their alma mater. Based on this study, if faculty or staff members are alumni of the university in which they are employed, they are more likely to give. Their previous connection to the institution may increase their identification with and, in turn, their support for their employer.

The literature up to this point has shown that organizational members have varying levels of identification with an organization, and those levels fluctuate over time. An individual’s identification is also comprised of simultaneously competing targets within the organization. Looking generally at identification within the nonprofit sector, there has been substantial research done to help understand the way that identification
works in this unique sector. Specifically, in the nonprofit sector, one’s identification with
an organization may translate into financial support from those organizational members.
In general, research has demonstrated that when members are connected, they will
support the organization’s cause. While past nonprofit research has explored the
supportive behaviors of volunteers, donors, alumni, and other members, the literature
appears to be lacking focus on another major group of nonprofit constituents—
employees.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature pertaining to the trends in American
philanthropy and individual giving, as well as the specific contexts of higher education
and workplace giving. It has also delved into organizational identification, measurement
scales, identification targets, and identification in the nonprofit sector. In the review of
this literature, many connections and common findings emerged pertaining to nonprofit
organizations and the identification between the organization and its members.
Nonprofits need outside support in order to prosper and achieve their missions, and it
appears that support may be influenced by levels of organizational identification.

More specifically, the connections across the literature point to relationships
among charitable giving in the context of higher education, university employees as
potential donors, and the role of identification in faculty/staff decisions about supporting
their institutions with monetary donations. Therefore, this study explores the following
research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do faculty/staff identify with their employing institution?
RQ2: How does faculty/staff giving differ based on levels of organizational identification?

RQ 3: What factors contribute to faculty/staff decisions to charitably support (or not) their employing institution?

The next chapter will outline the specific methodology employed in this study, particularly the research design, participants, data collection procedures, data analysis, and role of the researcher.
CHAPTER 3  
METHODOLOGY

The goals of this study are three-fold: (a) to examine the extent to which university faculty and staff members identify with their institutions; (b) to determine how that identification correlates with their charitable support of that institution; and (c) to explore what factors contribute to their charitable giving decisions toward the institution in which they are employed. Consequently, this study employed a case study approach and a mixed methods research design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data. The study began with an electronic survey that was sent to the faculty and staff at one American university. Next, three focus groups and three individual interviews were conducted with faculty and staff members of that university to delve deeper into the results from the survey.

This order of data collection allowed the researcher to first gain a big picture understanding of faculty/staff organizational identification and charitable giving trends at the case institution. The quantitative method offers a multitude of helpful information including “testing and validating already constructed theories about how (and to a lesser degree, why) phenomena occur” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2013, p. 19). Quantitative data are able to answer more of the ‘what’ and ‘when’ about the topic being researched. Survey results then guided focus group conversations to help the researcher gain a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between their identification and financial support of the university. The value of qualitative research is that it provides “rich descriptions of complex phenomena” and illuminates “the experience and interpretation of events by actors with widely differing stakes and roles” (Sofaer, 1999, p. 1101). The
focus groups and interviews provided the rich interpretations of ‘how’ and ‘why’ participants responded to the survey as they did. The remainder of this chapter discusses the research context in which the study took place, the guidelines used when soliciting participants from the university, and procedures for both data collection methods (survey and focus groups/interviews), as well as verification procedures and how those were used to counter any potential biases of the researcher.

**Research Context**

As discussed in previous chapters, higher education institutions comprise a large portion of American nonprofit organizations. For years, public universities across the country have experienced a steady decline in funding from state government. Mitchell, Leachman, and Masterson (2016) stated, “Years of cuts in state funding for public colleges and universities have driven up tuition and harmed students’ educational experiences by forcing faculty reductions, fewer course offerings, and campus closings” (p. 1). This nationwide decline has, in turn, created a need for private support to help fill the gaps left by cuts in government support. Many universities across the country have conducted capital campaigns in an attempt to bolster private support from alumni, friends, and corporate partners, as well as faculty and staff members. When looking for faculty and staff support, many universities have found that it is not an easy ask and that those dollars do not come easy, in most cases. Mally (2011) explained:

> [Faculty and staff] might feel as though they are already giving to your organization simply by means of their employment, since they are often paid less than they would make in a comparable position in the for-profit world…you also want to foster the same sense of affinity among employees that you do among
other donors—the kind of affinity that can only come from opening one’s checkbook in support of your cause. (p. 1)

This challenging environment of university internal fundraising is the context of this research.

This particular study took place at MHU, a pseudonym given to a mid-sized, public university in the southern United States. The university has a student population of approximately 20,000 (undergraduate and graduate). It employs nearly 800 full-time faculty, more than 400 part-time faculty, nearly 1,400 full-time staff, and nearly 700 part-time staff. In the last decade, the university’s public funding from state appropriations has decreased from 30.3% of its annual budget to 24%. Consequently, in that same time frame, private support has increased from $14.5 million in Fiscal Year 2006 to $23.1 million in Fiscal Year 2016. As funding from the state began to subside, the needs of the university continued to increase. With funding falling and expenses rising, the only way to combat the potential shortfall was to solicit funds in other ways, hence the creation of or transition to a philanthropic giving culture. Consequently, the university started to conduct capital campaigns to increase awareness about financial needs and to increase private support from faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the university. In the Fiscal Year 2017, there were more than of 950 faculty/staff donors which resulted in more than $800,000 of private support for the university.

Participants

Total participants of the survey portion of the study included 146 faculty and 208 staff members from across the university, including the regional campuses of the university. Total participants of the focus groups and interviews included 5 faculty and 11
staff members from the main campus. To be eligible to participate, individuals must have met the following criteria: (a) be 18 years of age or older, (b) be a full-time employee of the university, and (c) have completed at least one year of employment at this university. These criteria were selected because the nature of part-time work, such as student employees or adjunct faculty who teach only one class, would likely influence one’s identification level as compared to full-time employees. Also, extant literature has suggested that employment tenure may be related to organizational identification (Hall & Schneider, 1972), and those who have been employed less than one year may not yet have experienced a faculty/staff fundraising campaign.

Collectively, participants included 112 men and 241 women and 1 person identifying as other. Participants self-identified as Caucasian (311), African American (22), Hispanic (2), Asian (4), and Other (15). Participants’ years of university service ranged from 1 to 31 years. Demographic questions did not inquire about department or program, as this information coupled with other data could potentially reveal a participant’s identity if s/he worked in a small area of the university. See Table 1 for summary of participant characteristics.

**Table 1**

**Participant Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
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<td>311</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>117</td>
<td>252</td>
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<td>324</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection Procedures

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A), data were collected using two methods: (a) quantitative surveys and (b) qualitative focus groups and interviews.

Quantitative Instrumentation

Qualtrics, an online survey program, was used to administer the Organizational Identification Questionnaire (OIQ) to university faculty and staff. Many studies have employed the OIQ as a measure of identification. Cheney (1983) used the OIQ to measure identification between faculty, staff, and graduate students and their university with a reported Cronbach’s alpha of .94. Cheney also revealed that a single factor solution represented 73% of the variance further demonstrating the OIQ’s reliability.

In the years following the creation of the OIQ, several other scholars have utilized the scale. For example, Kassing (2000) employed the scale to measure how freedom of speech in the workplace correlated with organizational identification. He used all 25 items from the OIQ along with other scales to measure the other aspects of his study (i.e., freedom of speech and dissent). Kassing stated, “In this study the scale produced a coefficient alpha of .94 ($M = 85.55, SD = 16.29$)” (p. 391). The analysis of the data and the results corroborated the validity of the OIQ. Kuhn and Nelson (2002) employed a variety of the OIQ to conduct a longitudinal study to look at organizational identification. They, too, checked the reliability of the instrument and explained:

An assessment of the reliability of each subscale for both administrations produced satisfactory results. At time one, Cronbach’s alpha was sufficient for work group (.86), division (.80), organization (.88), and profession or occupation...
Likewise, in the second administration, the four subscales were reliable: work group (.89), division (.79), organization (.86), and profession or occupation (.86). (pp. 17-18)

This study demonstrated the reliability of the OIQ over time, showing that in a longitudinal study, the results were reliable across multiple uses of the OIQ. More recently, Gautam, Dick, and Wagner (2004) revised the OIQ and used a portion of the scale, employing an 8-item questionnaire. The results from the Gautam, Dick, and Wagner study yielded an alpha=.89, again demonstrating the high reliability of the scale to measure organizational identification. This study yielded an alpha= .95 for the OIQ in its use for the university as a whole and an alpha=.96 for the department version of the OIQ. This study continued the demonstration of high reliability of this scale.

In addition to the OIQ, demographic questions collected data on participant rank (instructor, assistant, associate, full, or administration), gender, ethnicity, campus location (main campus or regional campus), ranges of past charitable giving to the university, and number of years of charitable giving. The complete survey can be found in Appendix B.

**Qualitative Focus Groups**

Following the completion of the survey, faculty and staff received an email invitation to participate in one of four focus groups to further discuss the emerging results from the survey. Kitzinger (1995) stated, “The idea behind the focus group method is that group processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one to one interview” (p. 299). This type of qualitative data collection allows for conversations to occur between participants and bring their interpretations to the quantitative results. One focus group was conducted with a total of
two faculty. Due to the lack of participation during the faculty focus group, additional individual interviews were conducted with three faculty members for a total of five faculty participants. Two additional focus groups were conducted with a total of 11 staff members (five participants in one group and six participants in the second group). This made for a total of 16 participants. Faculty and staff were separated to avoid any chance of faculty and staff representation from the same department/program that might create power issues that would keep either from speaking freely.

All three focus groups were conducted during regular work hours and in a focus group room on the main campus. Questions were open-ended and started by generally asking participants about their thoughts on faculty/staff being asked to make charitable donations to their employer. Questions increasingly became more specific asking participants about their opinions as to why they or their peers do or do not financially support the university for which they work. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix C.

The focus groups were video recorded using a video camera set up discreetly in the corner of the room and lasted from 70 to 77 minutes, with an average of 73 minutes. The individual interviews were audio recorded and lasted from 27 to 35 minutes, with an average of 30 minutes. Focus group conversations and interviews were later transcribed verbatim. Each transcript ranged from 22 to 60 double spaced pages, resulting in 248 total pages of double spaced text.
Data Analysis

Survey Data

Once the surveys were completed, the data were first reviewed to determine if all those who responded were eligible given the three criteria outlined above. The data were then analyzed to examine participant’s organizational identification levels. Next, the data were analyzed to determine any correlations between participants’ level of organizational identification and their level of charitable giving to the university. Finally, t-tests were calculated to examine differences between faculty and staff on levels of organizational identification and charitable giving.

Focus Group and Interview Data

Once the transcriptions were completed, the qualitative data were analyzed using an open coding method to see what themes emerged. More specifically, a thematic analysis was conducted following the constant-comparative method outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1998). Open coding was completed by coding each line based on its relevance to the research questions. This open coding process produced approximately 826 codes which were placed into a codebook. Once the codes were created, they were examined for similarities and placed into larger categories based on their commonalities. Finally, the data were reviewed for any relationships among and across categories that might suggest overarching themes based again on relevance to research questions. Themes were constituted following at least one of Owen’s (1984) criteria of repetition, recurrence, or forcefulness. At last, the transcripts were reviewed again to pull out important quotes that exemplified the themes, as well as any outlying responses that challenged the original themes.
Verification Procedures

When reporting the results and findings from a research study, it is of the upmost importance that the information shared by the participants is reflected in the write up, (Creswell & Miller, 2000). When quoting participants, it is important to highlight the descriptions that truly bring the topic to life. After all, “The purpose of a thick description is that it creates verisimilitude statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study” (Creswell & Miller, pp. 128-129). Using the actual words of the participants illuminates what is reality to that group of people. As mentioned before, it brings to life the perceptions and experiences of the participants.

In addition to the use of participant quotes and rich, thick description, other verification procedures can help ensure that data are reported accurately, and participant voices are heard. For example, survey results and correlations were verified by a faculty mentor who regularly conducts quantitative research. In addition, overarching themes were reviewed by four focus group participants, who provided feedback on whether the interpretations exemplified the views and feelings of the participants. Finally, to add further credibility, the study’s findings were reviewed by two of the researcher’s peers who work in some capacity with university fundraising. Based upon their professional opinions and the data provided, both confirmed the plausibility and trustworthiness of the researcher’s interpretations.

Role of the Researcher

Exploring organizational identification has been a topic that has interested me since I began studying organizational communication. Nonprofit organizations and the
need for fundraising have also always been interests of mine. I believe that combining these areas helps us, as scholars, to understand the connections between people and the organizations they choose to support. Faculty/staff giving at a university is directly related to my current position, where I work in the Office of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement, as an Annual Fund Gift Officer. My experience as a fundraiser has sparked my interest in these topics but has also provided me with a unique insight into the world of higher education and private support. I am able to understand the process of philanthropy, along with the giving culture that exists at the university. I am also able to access data and information from the university about charitable giving. My work experience and connection to the topic has given me a knowledge base in which to create and guide the focus group questions, as well as an understanding when interpreting participants’ responses.

While my role with the university provides me with great insights, I must also acknowledge the potential for my own biases. As an employee of the university, I have prior knowledge and preconceived notions about the way faculty and staff feel about the university, as well as why they may or may not financially support the university. In order to remain as unbiased as possible, I used the verification procedures mentioned above to ensure that I am not imposing my own views or opinions onto the data. I made every effort to ensure that my interpretations of the data were based solely on the views and opinions provided by the participants. I allowed categories and themes to emerge from the data, using an emic approach to the study. Gudykunst (1997) explained, “The emic approach focuses on studying communication from the inside of specific cultures—understanding communication as the members of the cultures understand them” (p. 329).
In this case, I will be looking at it from the inside of the culture of the university as faculty and staff members see reality. Better understanding the organizational identification of faculty and staff and how that relates to their philanthropic giving will help my university along with universities across the country that may increasingly need the support of these important stakeholders.

In summary, this chapter has outlined the research design of this study, including the research context, participants, mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative data collection, data analysis, verification procedures, and the role of the researcher. The next chapter reports the results of the survey and the findings of the focus groups and interviews.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This research study examined three research questions that guided the survey as well as the protocol used during the focus groups and interviews. The first research question explored the extent to which faculty and staff identify with their employing institution. The second research question asked how faculty and staff giving related to their organizational identification. The final research question explored factors that might influence faculty/staff members to charitably support (or not) their employing institution. The data that emerged from the survey portion of the study contributed to understanding the first two research questions regarding faculty/staff identification and their giving patterns.

In order to answer the first research question addressing differences in employee levels of organizational and departmental identification a series of independent samples t-tests were calculated. An independent samples t-test indicated a significant difference in levels of organizational identification (OID) observed between faculty and staff members, \( t(352) = -3.50, p = .012 \). Staff members \((M = 5.13; SD = 1.00)\) had significantly higher levels of organizational identification than faculty members \((M = 4.73; SD = 1.16)\).

A second independent samples t-test indicated that there was also a significant difference in levels of departmental identification (DID) observed between faculty and staff members, \( t(352) = -2.58, p = .001 \). Specifically, staff members \((M = 5.48; SD = 0.97)\) also had significantly higher levels of departmental identification than faculty members \((M = 5.18; SD = 1.20)\).
In order to understand if there were significant differences between faculty and staff giving, a chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between faculty/staff status and past charitable giving to their employing institution. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2 (5, N = 353) = 16.59, p = .005$ indicating that faculty contributed at higher amounts than staff.

In order to address the second research question about how faculty/staff giving differs based on their organizational identification, a one-way ANOVA was run. There was a statistically significant difference between levels of past giving based on organizational identification as determined by the one-way ANOVA, $F(5, 347) = 6.04, p = .000$. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that employees who gave the least amount of money ($0-99) had significantly lower levels of organizational identification ($M = 4.75, p = .003$) than individuals who gave $100-499, $1,000-9,999, or $25,000 or more.

Furthermore, the Spearman Rank Order showed a small significant positive correlation between organizational identification and the amount of past gifts ($r = .25$). The number of years employed also had a moderately significant positive relationship with past giving ($r = .51$). There was a small significant positive correlation between departmental identification and past giving ($r = .14$).

In order to gain a better understanding from the faculty and staff members’ perspective, the qualitative portion of the study was employed. The second portion of the research study was comprised of three focus groups including 13 participants, in addition to three individual interviews. The data that emerged from the transcriptions compiled insights into the third research question regarding what factors contribute to faculty/staff members deciding whether or not to charitably support their employing institution. In-
depth analysis of the data revealed three overarching themes that seemed to encompass the reasoning behind whether or not faculty/staff members supported the university with charitable contributions: Affinity, Capacity to Give, and Awareness. Each theme is comprised of numerous categories that further exemplify the data.

**Affinity**

The theme of Affinity emerged from the conversations that occurred during the focus groups and interviews. As the survey data revealed, the faculty/staff members had low identification with the institution but were more identified with their departments, in the case of both faculty and staff members. Upon further investigation, participants revealed that, although most lacked an overall strong identification with their employing institution, several had connections with other entities that made them feel identified. Participants discussed the importance of three types of affinity: *Institutional Affinity, Departmental Affinity,* and *Individual Affinity.* According to these participants, each type of affinity contributes to their decision to support their university charitably, or not.

**Institutional Affinity.** According to participants, *Institutional Affinity* referred to their feelings in regard to the institution itself, possibly translated as their affinity, or lack thereof, with the administration and values of the organization, which, in turn, influenced their loyalty and giving to MHU. Of all 16 participants, each one spoke of a lack of unknown organizational values, and some even questioned their loyalty to the university. For example, Allison, a staff member, admitted, “I don’t know if I am loyal right now.” Jackie, a fellow staff member, felt similarly, stating:
I think I feel less loyal to the university; the university seems like it’s an institution. It’s hard to feel loyal to that, especially because I didn’t get any degrees here or anything, just sort of coming into it as an employer.

Similar feelings were expressed by faculty members as well. Jeffery, a faculty member, explained, “Well, I don’t know about loyal, but I stay here, ok. So, what keeps me at MHU is predominantly things outside of MHU.” Jeffery went on to explain that his wife liked her job and the community, and so they stayed. Another faculty member, Allen, stated, “So there’s a certain chump element to being loyal. You’re kind of a chump if you’re that, too loyal, because ultimately this is a marketing thing.” These sentiments were echoed by other participants who also believed that the university had, in a sense, lost its way.

The lack of loyalty and institutional affinity among some participants may be due to a lack of understanding about MHU’s values. In one focus group session of staff members, participants agreed that they were unsure of the organization’s values. Jackie said, “I don’t know what our values are.” She was followed by Raley, “Yeah, that was getting ready to come out of my mouth.” Similarly, in another focus group, faculty members also confirmed the debatable values. When asked what MHU’s values are, Katie stated, “I don’t think they know right now.” Charlie agreed and added that the university had somewhat gone adrift, saying:

I’m not sure what MHU’s values are…yeah, again, what are the values, right? I, this, when I was a student here, I felt like education was the primary value…I feel like, you know, I’m not sure what the values are really.
In contrast, some participants, who were also degreed alumni of the university had mixed feelings. Although they echoed the uncertainty, they also felt some connection to the institution because of their personal tie to the university. For example, Katie, a faculty member, explained,

Oh my God, my whole life revolves around this place. My whole life, entire life. Even my personal life because my spouse works here too. So, it’s 24/7 I’m breathing MHU, and it’s always been like that because when I was with anybody, we all worked at MHU together, so we brought MHU home with us.

So, although there was a common feeling of low institutional affinity among both faculty and staff members, those who have had a previous connection to the university, as a student, seemed to have more positive thoughts about an MHU from the past.

**Departmental Affinity.** While all the participants expressed some uncertainty about the institution as a whole, they all were very firm in their connection to their respective departments. Faculty and staff alike explained how their *Departmental Affinity* created a solid connection to the institution. For example, Matt, a staff member, explained, “Each department has a piece in that university mission, and then within that, you have pride and how you make that mission work in your department and how you support that university mission.” He took pride in being a part of his department and then, in turn, what role his department played in the bigger picture. Matt was not alone in these feelings of strong connection to the department. Allison, a fellow staff member, explained it this way: “MHU is a stepping stone. Like, I don’t consider myself a [school mascot]. I don’t know what that means. I still don’t get [the university mascot], but I am loyal to my department and to the faculty and staff we serve.” In this case, she was firm
in her lack of identification with the institution but instead was highly identified with the work she does in her own department.

The department connections were discussed throughout the interviews and focus groups. Some participants even mentioned their affinity reaching beyond their own department borders to other departments across the divisions. Samantha, a staff member, described,

I think that in [my department] specifically, there are certain areas that we feel like, kinda like a family because we do work so closely together. In some of the other departments, we kinda all mingle and help each other out. I think in my division, specifically, feels more like we’re there to help. We try to ease people’s stress and bring new avenues for people.

The five faculty members shared similar sentiments. As Katie explained,

You know, some of us have been here 30 years, and there’s a whole, like a family, in our department in particular because we work so hard to get our department, which we may not last now, but we did work really, really hard to get it, and we kind of became a family in that process, and the same thing with my department head.

To many of the participants, the departments had become more than a work group; they were more of a family unit. Larry, another faculty member stated, “I like that there is this department here, and something that keeps me loyal is that, like, I want what’s best for them and what’s best for the students in the department.” This faculty member, and others, always seemed to have the department’s best interests at heart.
Individual Affinity. Aside from the affinity that the participants expressed with their departments, 11 participants revealed a strong Individual Affinity with people in the organization, particularly coworkers. One staff member, Claire, stated,

My connection right now, because I didn’t have experience of going to school here, I feel more of a connection to individuals and personal relationships at this point than I do the university. Does that make sense? I feel like I have developed more personal relationships.

The personal connections seemed to be a common thread among several of the participants. Elaine, a staff member, concluded,

I mean, yeah, I don’t really have anything to compare it to, but it’s like I can identify different, like, people that have kind of took me under their wing and kind of helped me on to the next step, and there’s kind of always been somebody else, and so for me, it’s definitely been the people here that have kept me connected.

Not only did the staff members build relationships with one another, they also forged connections with the students across campus. As Jackie explained, “I feel loyal to the students and the student body. The students who come and go, it’s them…I feel a much stronger commitment to the students who are here.” Clearly, the personal relationships were an important part of the identification that staff members have.

There were no distinct differences among the responses from faculty members. They, too, valued their personal relationships across the institution and believed students were the real connection between them and the institution. For example, Charlie, a faculty member, stated,
You know, the, the largest part of my job is here in [this building] dealing with teaching [this subject], and most of my identity is bound up with my role, you know, as a professor and my relationships with students and my colleagues here on this floor.

Allen, another faculty member, explained his connection with people, saying, “I identify with, I had friends who were in various departments, some that are in sciences and so forth, but I don’t identify with the institution. I identify with friends that I’ve known and people that have maybe common goals.” The students also accounted for participants’ affinity toward their employer. Jeffery stated, “I feel a connection [with students] because I want them to be successful, so the identification I think is through the students. I connect through the people that have a connection probably through my department.”

The data concludes the important role that personal relationships play in the identification of the faculty members.

In summary, the theme of Affinity encapsulates the importance that participants placed on feeling connected to their employing. In short, their connections with the institution as a whole were lacking, with the exception of those who had prior experience with the university as a student. The faculty and staff members all spoke highly of their connections to their departments, and that seemed to be where the real identification began for the employees. They also spoke of the bonds that have been created with people across the institution, particularly students who seemed to be valued among the most important relationships. According to these participants, each type of affinity influenced faculty and staff members’ decisions about charitably supporting their employing institution.
Capacity to Give

The second theme of Capacity to Give materialized from the data set as well and also contributed to participants’ charitable giving decisions. Within this theme, there are two main categories: Financial Capacity and Philanthropic Capacity. That is, capacity is comprised of financial ability to give, as well as willingness to give financially to the university. These faculty and staff expressed some distinct differences in their thoughts about the capacity to give.

Financial Capacity. Not surprisingly, Financial Capacity was a major factor that influenced their financial support. Interestingly, of the 16 participants, six reported to financially support the institution, two staff and four faculty members. The participants were made aware of preliminary survey results which found that faculty members financially give more to the university than do staff members. When questioned, both faculty and staff members had an explanation for this.

In one focus group of staff members, Mandy, Linda, and Elaine replied in unison: “They make more.” Similar statements were made in the other staff focus group as well. Claire, a staff member, explained,

It could be that if staff collectively felt that they were underappreciated, why would you want to give to someplace where you felt? And also, I do think that, I suppose it depends on what department you work in because salaries change. If you’re tenure, how long have you been here, how much do you make? I think that has something to do with it as well.
Based on the data that emerged, the staff members felt sure that faculty members give more because they make more. Jackie, another staff member, explained how she felt it was even cultural, stating:

I think that there is something culturally there as well, that one of the biggest differences between, so other PhDs, other historians, my friends that I went to grad school with, they came from families that were not like mine. Even though faculty salaries are not super high here, grossly overgeneralizing, but [faculty] tend to have more generational wealth that probably frees up the idea of giving more than what I grew up with.

Here, Jackie suggested that faculty not only have more money to give, but also may be more used to the idea of charitable giving and financially supporting other causes.

When faculty members were asked why they give more financially to the university, they expressed similar views. Jeffery, a faculty member, stated, “I think it might just be that faculty probably make more.” He was echoed by Allen who said, “Yeah, it’s like, we make more. I mean, staff are paid terribly. Some aren’t, but a lot of them are.” Another faculty member, Charlie, stated, “I’d say probably because staff members make even less than faculty members do.” It was a shared conception among both faculty and staff members that faculty members are more financially supportive of the university simply because they have more financial capacity to do so.

**Philanthropic Capacity.** As mentioned, six of the 16 participants privately supported the university. Those participants explained their reasons for giving. Those reasons were different based on the individual. Of those who did not give, interestingly, their lack of charitable support was not attributed to their financial situations, but rather
to their mental understanding of why they would give, as captured in the category of *Philanthropic Capacity*.

Two of the 11 staff members had supported the university financially, either currently or at some point in the past. One of those was Linda who explained, “I’ve done the basics. I mean, I also did the Alumni association for years, and then they had a [program] for my daughter every single year.” Another staff member, Matt, concluded:

I look at it two ways because the money I give goes straight back to my department. So, I’m a little different that it doesn’t go to the general fund, and the money that I give, I’m gonna give anyway. I think about teachers, and they should do a Foundation [gift] because I know teachers buy stuff for the class, and most of the stuff I buy is for award banquets, appreciation things, and I’m gonna buy them anyway. So, I give to the Foundation, and I get reimbursed. So, it’s win-win for everybody.

These two staff donors explained the reasoning behind why they give. Linda was an alumna and gave back to the Alumni Association. Matt gave directly to his department because he feels that he would buy things for his area anyway. Not everyone agreed, however, as Elaine stated, “I feel like I make a better impact, not monetarily. Like I, you know, I feel like my interactions, my work here with students, is much more impactful than me giving, you know, 10 or 15 dollars here.” It wasn’t that she couldn’t give back; rather she felt that she made a bigger impact as an employee than any small donation she would make ever could.

The faculty members had an interesting take on why they chose to give to the areas that they do. When asked if they financially supported the university, Allen, a
faculty member, explained, “I actually do, I give money to a scholarship for first generation kids, but it’s not the institution; it’s to the scholarship fund.” By giving directly to a scholarship fund, Allen did not feel like he was supporting the university. Rather, he was supporting his students, and that was what was important to him. Other faculty members also spoke of supporting a specific program or service on campus, such as public broadcasting. As Charlie stated,

Well, with the minimal money that I give, I greatly value public radio. I think it’s necessary. It’s a necessary corrective to the bullshit, so called news, that you see on main, mainstream television. So, I really want public radio around now and until I’m dead and hopefully after.

Like Charlie, others also did not consider those type of gifts as supporting the university itself. Jeffery explained, “Well, actually, I do give to [the public radio station], the radio station, but that’s not the university. I give to the public radio.” When asked how she supported MHU, Katie, another faculty member, answered, “NPR for one thing and again, I do give money to the things that I use and that I take part in. So [the university recreational facility] has always been the place I give money to.” These faculty members gave to the programs and services that were important to them. Interestingly enough, they did not feel that they were giving to the institution by supporting these specific areas.

In summary, the theme of Capacity to Give describes the financial and philanthropic capacity that the faculty and staff have in terms of financially supporting the university. The common perception from both faculty and staff members was that faculty make more money, so that makes them more capable of giving. The participants who made charitable donations seemed to support the university for a variety of personal
reasons, each designating their gift for a particular department or program as opposed to
the university’s general fund. Consequently, participant donors, especially faculty, were
quick to point out that their support was not actually for the university, but instead
benefitted the specific entities that were important to them. Their philanthropic capacity
emerged from the data as a major contributor behind faculty and staff members
decisions’ to support the institution financially, or not.

Awareness

The third theme, Awareness, became evident in the database as several questions
were posed regarding participants’ understanding of the faculty/staff giving campaign, as
well as private support for higher education. It was apparent that there is an opportunity
to educate faculty and staff because of their lack of awareness. Within this theme
emerged two main categories that illustrate participants’ lack of understanding about
charitable giving at MHU: Faculty/Staff Giving Campaign and Importance of Private
Support. While faculty and staff expressed their affinity, and lack thereof, and discussed
their capacity to give, this final theme encompasses their perceptions of why the
university would even ask for faculty and staff support.

Faculty/Staff Giving Campaign. Upon asking participants if they were aware of
the faculty/staff campaign, there was an evident misunderstanding. From this
overwhelming misconception came the category of Faculty/Staff Giving Campaign.
Overall, both faculty and staff participants did not know what the campaign was about
and sometimes confused it as just another logo or brand for the university. One staff
member, Claire, reluctantly said, “It’s a way to donate money, right?” Another staff
member, Matt, stated, “I thought it was a foundation campaign.” Although other staff
members, Jackie, Mandy and Linda, remembered getting a pin with the logo on it, the remaining staff members did not recall knowing anything about the campaign.

The faculty members had similar responses that ranged from no recollection of the faculty/staff campaign to remembering the receipt of some emails. When asked specifically about the campaign, Allen admitted that he knew nothing, followed by Jeffery stating, “Isn’t that that little app on the phone?” Larry also claimed to not have received any information about it, while Charlie thought it was “one of the logos of the many that I’ve seen on merchandise or at least in the marketing.” One faculty member, Katie, was the only one to remember having received some campaign information. There was an obvious misconception among most participants.

In general, there was little to no solid understanding of the faculty/staff campaign. Even those who felt they had some understanding responded with little confidence in what they were saying. Awareness could be a major contributing factor to faculty and staff members’ lack of financial support to the university. Perhaps they just do not know the need.

**Importance of Private Support.** Aside from the misconception of the campaign, the faculty and staff participants did not seem to have a good understanding of why the university would even ask them to give back financially to the institution. From the data emerged this category of *Importance of Private Support.* The participants were asked about their support of the university and how they felt about being asked to donate to their employing institution. The overall opinion was negative, with few participants understanding why they were being asked to give back financially to the institution.
The staff members did not seem to understand why they were being asked to give back to the university at all. Samantha stated, “I don’t feel good about that.” She was very uncomfortable with the fact that relentlessly they were asked to give money to the place they were employed. She was followed by Raley’s question, “Why would I?” Allison also questioned why she and others would ever make a charitable donation, saying, “I think the ones that are not from here, they’re like, ‘Why would I do that?’ I think it’s part of the messaging though. I think they always ask, myself included, like, ‘Well, what is this going to?’”

Others simply had other financial obligations that they prioritized first, such as Lyla who explained,

I just put down thousands of dollars to the Department of Education, paid off my student loans. So that’s done, and that’s really nice, but prior to like a month ago, my approach has always been, ‘I’m not gonna give you money. I’m still paying on my student loans.’

Overall, these staff members were not aware of the need to give back to the university financially.

The faculty participants shared mixed responses about supporting the university financially. Some felt it was understandable, while others were not as empathetic to the university’s need. Charlie, a faculty member stated, I think it’s a good idea if they make enough money to give and feel like their money is being well used. I would whole heartedly support. I support a few; again, I don’t make a whole lot of money. There’s not much left over at the end of
the month to give anyway, the faculty/staff giving, that’s fine. I also resent the assumption that we should give much because I feel like I’ve given a lot.

Katie, a fellow faculty member, somewhat agreed stating, “Well, since 90% of us went to school here, I think that that’s probably, yeah, I mean, I get it, and I’ve always kind of given to different things until recently.”

While Charlie and Katie seemed to understand the university’s position on asking faculty and staff members to give, other faculty participants did not. At first, Jeffery adamantly stated, “I don’t think they should ask,” but eventually softened to say, “People can donate if they want to. Now sometimes it never hurts to ask.” Although he didn’t want to be asked to give back, he acknowledged that perhaps it wasn’t a bad idea to encourage and ask faculty and staff members to give financially because some may not know how to give back.

The other faculty members were not as agreeable. Larry, for example, stated, “I think it’s a little like offensive and off putting because there’s just not like, I don’t feel like, it’s weird. I think it’s strange in general to ask one’s employees to contribute.” Allen was much more straightforward, declaring, “Quite frankly, that’s insulting. I work here.”

Overall, the fact that the university would even ask for money from its faculty and staff seemed quite alarming to most of these participants. Interestingly, no one acknowledged the trends of decreasing public support and consequently the need for more private support among most all public higher education institutions. The lack of awareness may be one of the causes behind them choosing not to give, suggesting that the university has room for improvement in terms of spreading awareness and understanding behind asking faculty and staff to support the university.
Summary

Three research questions of interest guided the questions for the survey, as well as the focus groups and interviews. The first two research questions explored faculty/staff identification with their employing institution and how their giving habits differed based on those levels of identification. The third research question was proposed to gain a better understanding of the factors that contribute to faculty and staff members’ decisions to charitably support the university, or not. Based on the 351 survey responses, faculty and staff members were more strongly identified with their departments, than they were with the university. The survey also concluded that although staff members are more highly identified than faculty members, faculty members gave more financially in total dollars to the university.

Sixteen faculty and staff members (11 staff and 5 faculty) then took part in focus groups and interviews to share their thoughts on potential contributing factors to their charitable decisions. From these data, Affinity, Capacity to Give, and Awareness were the three main themes that emerged as contributing factors. Further interpretations of the findings and possible practical implications will be discussed in the following chapter.
Higher Education is a unique environment in the sense that there are many different goals to be accomplished. The institutions function as both a business, in a sense, as well as a school. State funded universities are nonprofit organizations that seek funding to cover operating costs and expenditures. As the funding from state allocations continues to decrease, the difference must be made up in some way to keep the institutions from operating in the red. Many universities seek alumni, friends, and corporations for private support for university programs and initiatives. Other groups of potential donors are the faculty and staff members at the institutions. The purpose of this study was to examine the identification between faculty/staff members and their employing institutions and how their identification may affect their decision to financially support the university. Three specific research questions were addressed in this study: (a) To what extent do faculty/staff identify with their employing institution? (b) How does faculty/staff giving differ based on levels of organizational identification? and (c) What factors contribute to faculty/staff decisions to charitably support (or not) their employing institution? This mixed methods study used a survey of 354 faculty/staff respondents to explore the first two research questions and then focus groups and interviews with 16 faculty/staff participants to explore the third research question.

In response to RQ1 about faculty/staff identification, staff members reported higher identification levels than faculty members with both the organization and their departments. These findings may be explained in part by the concept of identification targets. As Ashforth and Johnson (2001) explained, organizational identities are “nested,”
and identification may be targeted toward various aspects related to an organization, such as one’s job, workgroup, department, or division, in addition to the organization as a whole. While multiple identifications can and do exist simultaneously, staff members may experience less competition among targets than do faculty. For example, faculty are more likely than staff to be involved with their disciplines and may feel stronger connections to their profession than to their current institution/department. It is not uncommon for faculty to move from one institution to another to develop their academic careers, suggesting that their attachment to higher education extends beyond one particular institution. Consequently, the university and its departments should try to forge stronger bonds between faculty members and their institution. As Russo (1998) explained,

> Managers of such groups should consider means of acknowledging, retaining, and building on the traditional values that inform their professional employees’ approach to their work. In doing so, they can harness an important existing resource to achieve congruent goals of the organization. Even in situations where organizational priorities are not entirely consistent with professional employees' expectations, acknowledging those expectations and values may serve to establish a common ground and contribute toward achievement of common efforts (p. 106).

Although the faculty, and possibly staff members, have competing identities between their discipline, department, and the institution, it is possible for those identities to thrive simultaneously. This is when the connection between the faculty and staff members begins to grow so strongly with their department. The department acts as the channel for the faculty/staff members to carry out their given tasks/discipline.
Scott (1997) further examined the notion of multiple targets and concluded that “the more localized targets tend to be associated with higher identification” (p. 509). In this case, for staff members, their departments meet Ashforth and Johnson’s criteria of lower order identity targets. That is, departments are smaller with exclusive membership, are more concrete, and are in more direct and immediate proximity, as compared to the larger entity of the whole university. It makes sense that while staff members identify with the organization, they identify more strongly with the units and people with whom they work most closely. Furthermore, according to Ashforth and Johnson, “identification with a given level tends to generalize to other levels such that the subjective importance and therefore the salience of the implicated identities tends to generalize as well” (p. 39). In short, for staff members, the organization and their departments may become more mutually supporting targets in which identification for both grows stronger, rather than competing targets in which identification for one results in less for another.

The second finding regarding RQ2 and the relationship between organizational identification and charitable giving to the institution was perhaps more surprising. Faculty members, although lacking identification, gave more financially to the university. At first glance, this finding seems to contradict extant literature that suggests the importance of donor identification. Schervish and Havens (1998), for example, posit that charitable giving increases as people feel identified with others and their needs. In this case, we would expect faculty donors to be more identified with the university if they are supporting it with their monetary resources. However, upon a closer examination of the qualitative data, faculty reported supporting specific programs and areas of interest and intentionally did not support the overall university or its general fund. That is, they
financially supported the areas in which they identified with more, which is more consistent with Schervish and Havens. This finding also supports March (2005), one of the few studies that has explored faculty and staff giving practices at U.S. public institutions. March’s research also found that faculty were much more likely to give restricted or designated gifts as opposed to unrestricted donations. Furthermore, based on the survey results, those who were at the university for a longer tenure also gave more financially. This may be attributed to accumulated wealth but also reflects a potential increase in identification over time, as found by Scott (1997).

For RQ3, focus groups and interviews explored factors that might contribute to faculty/staff decisions to give back to the university, and three overarching themes emerged: their affinity, their capacity to give, and their awareness. The affinity or connection that the faculty and staff members felt was a major influencer on their decisions to give or not to give. Although studies have been completed on alumni giving back to their alma maters, similar factors seemed to influence these faculty and staff members as well. As Mael and Ashforth (1992) explained, those “who identify with the organization are apt to support the organization in various ways, and that identification can be encouraged through various means” (p. 117). The identification and the affinity that these faculty and staff members have heavily influenced their decision to give. On one hand, their affinity, or lack thereof, with the university made them question why they would give. On the other hand, their connection with their departments and their coworkers and students encouraged some to support the university, albeit in sometimes indirect ways.
The capacity to give was another major factor that seemed to influence their charitable support. Participant responses suggested that faculty members gave more financially because they had more income to spare. Schervish and Havens (1998) explored why people give and found that “charitable giving increases in direct relation to…the greater the amount of discretionary resources” (p. 2). It is important to note, however, that income was not the most important factor. Rather income was the third strongest factor, behind “community of participation” and “invitation to participate” (p. 2), respectively. “Communities of participation” are described by Schervish and Havens as “networks of formal and informal relationships to which people are associated” (p. 1). The types of programs that garnered the support of faculty donors seem to reflect the networks and relationships that were most important to them. Therefore, it is likely that when faculty were invited to support the university, it was not merely their financial means that motivated them, but also their associations, as evidenced by their designated gifts.

Finally, this study suggests that faculty and staff members’ lack of awareness about the faculty/staff giving campaign and also about the importance of giving back to the university. As state funding for public universities continues to decrease, the gap in resources needed must be filled. These faculty and staff members did not feel like they should have to help carry that burden. They felt that the university needed financial support, but not from them, as employees. Mize Smith (2013) explored how employers could cultivate philanthropic mindedness and giving habits among their employees. She found that while some employees came into the organization with some sense of charitableness, other employees did not. For both groups, the philanthropic culture of the
workplace influenced employees to give and volunteer more than they did before their employment. In this case, the university may have a similar opportunity to create and foster a culture that encourages a more philanthropic mind set for its faculty/staff members. While some participants demonstrated awareness of the faculty/staff campaign, there was little, if any, discussion about higher education trends and the growing funding needs of most all public institutions. There appears to be plenty of room for cultivating the philanthropic culture further.

**Practical Implications**

The findings of this study, along with the guidance of the literature, can be used by the case study university and others to improve the identification among organizational members and perhaps, in turn, to influence faculty/staff decisions to financially support the university.

Based on these data, faculty and staff members clearly have differing levels of identification with and commitment to the university. To better understand faculty and staff members’ identification and commitment and thus how to move them toward greater levels of identification, the typology created by Cheney and Tompkins (1987) can be employed. The typology includes four quadrants: (I) Low Identification/Low Commitment, (II) Low Identification/ High Commitment, (III) High Identification/ Low Commitment, (IV) High Identification/ High Commitment. Using this typology, the university can better target both those who are ready to give and those who need more cultivation.

The faculty/staff members who are in quadrant one, low identification/low commitment would be the members who are non-donors and have no real connection to
the university. These faculty/staff members may also be thinking about or looking for employment elsewhere. These employees would be the most difficult to influence and connect to the university, as well as the hardest to transition into donors. The second quadrant, low identification/high commitment, would encompass the faculty/staff members who are using the institution as more of a “stepping stone.” They have no personal connection to the university but instead see the university as a means to help them achieve their career goals. They are committed to doing their job and achieving goals, but more for their own enhancement. These faculty/staff members may be donors, but they are likely supporting areas that they consider “not the university.” The third quadrant, high identification/low commitment, contains the faculty/staff members who are highly identified with the university, possibly alumni of the institution, but they are not involved in any way; they are likely non-donors. The final quadrant, high identification/high commitment, contains the ideal faculty/staff member. They are not only highly identified with the university but also committed to the institution. They likely support the university in multiple ways and understand the importance of private support.

As Cheney and Tompkins (1987) discussed, it is difficult for organizational members to stay in the in-between quadrants, II and III. Most people will experience distress when they are unevenly identified and committed. Therefore, most people are more likely to fall in the low-low or high-high category. The job of the university is to try to transition faculty and staff members into the high-high category. Ideally, faculty and staff would be highly identified and highly committed to the university and consequently, financially support its goals and initiatives. The university can strategically cultivate
quadrant IV members in several ways. The first step would be to cultivate a culture where faculty and staff members, whether they are alumni or not, feel connected to the university. They need to feel a part of the institution and share the organization’s values. At the same time, while their identification is being fostered, they must come to understand the importance of their identification and commitment to the university. In this study, there was clearly a lot of misunderstanding. That confusion not only prevented some participants from giving, but it also created a wedge in the minds of some faculty/staff members, creating an ‘us vs. them’ mentality.

In summary, the findings from this study shed light on the importance of faculty/staff identification with their employing institution and how organizational identification levels may affect their decision to financially support the university. Consequently, this study offers some ways to better understand faculty/staff perspectives on charitable giving, as well as how to transition them into more identified/committed organizational members.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this research makes an important contribution to our understanding of faculty/staff identification and their decisions to financially support the university, there were some limitations to the study. These limitations could be addressed in future studies to further explore the topic of faculty/staff giving. The first limitation is that the study was a case study and only surveyed and interviewed faculty/staff members from one public university. Private support for public universities is a growing topic, especially as state funding continues to decline. Future research could expand this study by exploring other universities and their giving cultures. Future studies could also compare public vs.
private universities and how identification and related giving decisions among faculty/staff members may differ.

The second limitation of the study was the number of participants for the focus groups. Although there was a good number of staff participants, there was not a substantial showing of faculty members. Efforts were made to conduct supplementary interviews with faculty members; however, participants may have been more open or remembered other things if they had been in a focus group setting. Future studies with more faculty and staff participants could be used to further verify the results of this study.

Another potential drawback of this research was the climate in which the study was conducted. The survey, focus groups, and interviews were conducted within a budget crisis/layoff at the university. Although declining state funding and ensuing budget cuts are common and happen at universities across the country, this university was experiencing one of its first major cuts in some time. The atmosphere at the university was unusually gloomy and dim since some employees had just lost their jobs, which occurred in the midst of data collection. This atypical context may have influenced some participants’ responses, particularly their reflections on their identification and connection to the university, as well as their opinions on giving back to the university financially. Although the participants were encouraged to think about the questions overall, not just how they were feeling in the moment, some emotions may have influenced the negativity of their responses. A future study could be conducted to compare identification during different organizational climates. Despite these limitations, this study explored the timely topic of faculty/staff giving and extends extant literature on identification and charitable giving.
Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to examine faculty/staff identification with their employing university and further explore how and what factors influence their decision to financially support the university. The quantitative portion of this study concluded that faculty and staff members are more highly identified with their departments than they are with the university as a whole, but overall staff members are more highly identified than faculty members. However, faculty members gave more financially to the university even though they were less identified. The qualitative findings suggest that affinity (i.e., the institution, department, and people), capacity to give (i.e., financial capacity and philanthropic capacity), and awareness (i.e., faculty/staff giving campaign and importance of private support) were major contributing factors when it came to faculty/staff members deciding to financially support the university, or not.

Although there were some limitations to the study, this case study makes a contribution to the literature on charitable giving, employee giving, and specifically faculty/staff giving. It also extends extant literature on organizational identification, particularly targets of identification in a higher education context. Most studies have shed light on the alumni of a university. In contrast, this study highlights the identification of university employees, an important stakeholder group. Additionally, the findings from this study, although based on one university, could be used by other universities and higher education institutions to better understand, cultivate, and foster a more identifiable, philanthropic culture among their faculty and staff members. Faculty and staff members are an important part of the operation of a university. In short, state
funding will likely continue to decrease, meaning that support from faculty and staff members will continue to grow in necessity. Therefore, it is important that they understand why they are being asked to give, as well as how their gifts not only support the institution, but also, and most importantly to these participants, how their gifts benefit the students.
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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

IMPLIED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Faculty and Staff Giving
Investigators: Haley Ashley haley.ashley@wku.edu – WKU Department of Communication

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your agreement to participate in this project.

You must be 18 years old or older to participate in this research study. You must also be a current full-time employee of WKU and have been employed for at least one year.

Please read the following paragraphs for details about the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and contact the researcher using the email address provided above to ask any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please click on the survey link provided at the end of this form. You should keep a copy of this form for your records.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project: It is my understanding that the purpose of this project is to explore the identification that faculty and staff members have with their employing institution and how that identification correlates with their financial support of the institution.

2. Explanation of Procedures: It is my understanding that I will participate in an online survey asking questions about my identification with and past support of WKU. It should take approximately 10-15 minutes of my time.

3. Discomfort and Risks: It is my understanding that this study places me at little to no risk. The probability of harm anticipated is no greater than I would encounter in everyday life.

4. Benefits: It is my understanding that in return for my participation, I will be placed in a drawing to win a $50 Amazon gift card. I will also have an opportunity to give my opinions and experiences which will help generate knowledge that will help us understand better organizational identification, specifically between faculty/staff members and their employing university and then how that identification relates to those employees financially supporting the intuition, or not.

5. Confidentiality: It is my understanding that my survey responses will be confidential. Upon completion, I will be directed to another survey site where I can share my name and email address for the gift card drawing and to express interest in participating in a follow-up focus group. However, this information will NOT be linked to my survey responses. Records will be viewed, stored, and maintained in private, secure files only accessible by the researcher and faculty sponsor for three years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality, and any other subject identifiers will be altered or reported only in comprehensive form.

6. Refusal/Withdrawal: Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

Your continued cooperation with the following research implies your consent.

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD.

Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator
Tele: (270) 745-2129

WKU IRB# 18-249
APPROVAL: 1/25/2018
END DATE: 4/20/2018
EXPEDITED
ORIGINAL: 1/25/2018
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT
(focus groups)

Project Title: Faculty and Staff Giving
Investigators: Haley Ashley haley.ashley@wku.edu –WKU Department of Communication

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

You must be 18 years old or older to participate in this research study. You must also be a current full-time employee of WKU and have been employed for at least one year.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy of this form to keep.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project:
   It is my understanding that the purpose of this project is to explore the identification that faculty and staff members have with their employing institution and how that identification correlates with their financial support of the institution.

2. Explanation of Procedures:
   It is my understanding that I will participate in one focus group asking questions about my identification with and past support of WKU. It should take approximately one hour of my time.

3. Discomfort and Risks:
   It is my understanding that this study places me at little to no risk. The probability of harm anticipated is no greater than I would encounter in everyday life.

4. Benefits:
   It is my understanding that in return for my participation, I will receive a $20 Walmart gift card. I will also have an opportunity to give my opinions and experiences which will help generate knowledge that will help us understand better organizational identification, specifically between faculty/staff members and their employing university and then how that identification relates to those employees financially supporting the intuition, or not.
5. **Confidentiality:**
   It is my understanding that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. Records will be viewed, stored, and maintained in private, secure files only accessible by the researcher and faculty sponsor for three years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality, and any other subject identifiers will be altered or reported only in comprehensive form.

6. **Refusal/Withdrawal:**
   Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

   You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

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Signature of Participant ___________________________ Date ____________

Witness ___________________________ Date ____________

- I agree to the audio/video recording of the research. *(Initial here)* __________

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**THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD.**

Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator

TELEPHONE: (270) 745-2129

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**WKU IRB# 18-249**
**APPROVED: 1/25/2018**
**END DATE: 4/20/2018**
**EXPEDITED**
**ORIGINAL: 1/25/2018**
APPENDIX B

Survey Questionnaire

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE - Cheney (1983)

1. I would probably continue working for MHU if I did not need the money.
2. In general, the people employed by MHU are working toward the same goals.
3. I am proud to be an employee of MHU.
4. MHU’s image in the community represents me well.
5. I often describe myself to others by saying “I work for MHU” or “I am from MHU”.
6. I try to make on-the-job decision by considering the consequences of my actions for MHU.
7. We at MHU are different from others in our field.
8. I am glad I chose to work for MHU rather than another university.
9. I talk up MHU to my friends as a great university to work for.
10. In general, I view MHU’s problems as my problems.
11. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to help MHU to be successful.
12. I become irritated when I hear others outside MHU critique the university.
13. I have warm feelings toward MHU as a place to work.
14. I would be willing to spend the rest of my career with MHU.
15. I feel that MHU cares about me.
16. The record of MHU is an example of what dedicated people can achieve.
17. I have a lot in common with others employed by MHU.
18. I find it difficult to agree with MHU’s policies on important matters relating to me. (R)
19. My association with MHU is only a small part of who I am. (R)
20. I tell others about projects that MHU is working on.
21. I find that my values and the values of MHU are veer similar.
22. I feel very little loyalty to MHU. (R)
23. I would describe MHU as a large “family” in which most members feel a sense of belonging.
24. I find it easy to identify myself with MHU.
25. I really care about the fate of MHU.

DEPARTMENTAL IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE - Cheney (1983)

1. I would probably continue working for my department if I did not need the money.
2. In general, the people employed by my department are working toward the same goals.
3. I am proud to be an employee of my department.
4. My department’s image in the community represents me well.
5. I often describe myself to others by saying “I work for my department” or “I am from my department”.
6. I try to make on-the-job decision by considering the consequences of my actions for my department.
7. We at my department are different from others in our field.
8. I am glad I chose to work for my department rather than another university.
9. I talk up my department to my friends as a great university to work for.
10. In general, I view my department’s problems as my problems.
11. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to help my department to be successful.
12. I become irritated when I hear others outside my department critique the university.
13. I have warm feelings toward my department as a place to work.
14. I would be willing to spend the rest of my career with my department.
15. I feel that my department cares about me.
16. The record of my department is an example of what dedicated people can achieve.
17. I have a lot in common with others employed by my department.
18. I find it difficult to agree with my department’s policies on important matters relating to me. (R)
19. My association with my department is only a small part of who I am. (R)
20. I tell others about projects that my department is working on.
21. I find that my values and the values of my department are veer similar.
22. I feel very little loyalty to my department. (R)
23. I would describe my department as a large “family” in which most members feel a sense of belonging.
24. I find it easy to identify myself with my department.
25. I really care about the fate of my department.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

26. Gender:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Other

27. Ethnicity:
   a) White
   b) Hispanic or Latino
   c) Black or African American
   d) Native American or American Indian
   e) Asian / Pacific Islander
   f) Other

28. Education Level:
   a. High school graduate
   b. Some college credit, no degree
   c. Trade/technical/vocational training
   d. Associate degree
   e. Bachelor’s degree
   f. Master’s degree
   g. Professional degree
   h. Doctorate degree

29. Are you a Degreed Alum of MHU? Yes/No
30. Are you a full-time employee of MHU? Yes/No
   a. Faculty or staff?
      i. If faculty: rank?
1. Instructor
2. Assistant Professor
3. Associate Professor
4. Full Professor
   ii. If faculty: Is 50%+ of your workload Administrative? Yes/No

31. Years of full-time employment at MHU:
   a. 1-5 years
   b. 6-10 years
   c. 11-15 years
   d. 16-20 years
   e. 21-25 years
   f. 26-30 years
   g. 31+ years

32. Campus Location:
   a. Bowling Green
   b. Elizabethtown/Ft. Knox
   c. Glasgow
   d. Owensboro

33. Past Gift amounts to MHU:
   a. 0-99 dollars
   b. 100-499 dollars
   c. 500-999 dollars
   d. 1000-9999 dollars
   e. 10,000-25,000 dollars
   f. 25,000+ dollars
   g. 

34. Total number of years you have made a monetary donation to MHU.
   a. Never Given
   b. 1 year
   c. 2 years
   d. 3 years
   e. 4 years
   f. 5 years
   g. 6 years
   h. 7 years
   i. 8 years
   j. 9 years
   k. 10+ years

35. Would you be willing to participate in a follow up focus group? Yes/No
   a. If yes, once the survey is completed you will be taken to another site to provide
      your information for future contact
APPENDIX C

Focus Group/Interview Questions

RQ1:

What is it like to work at MHU?
Why did you decide to start working at MHU?
What does it mean to you to be a MHU Faculty/Staff Member?
What keeps you coming back to MHU, instead of finding work elsewhere?
What ways to do you feel connected or unconnected to MHU?

RQ2:

What do you know about the faculty/staff campaignMHU?
Do you agree with faculty/staff giving?
Do you support MHU? Why/why not?
What ways do you support MHU?
What ways does MHU need support?

RQ3:

Why do you support the areas that you do?
What would make you support MHU financially?
Explain why you support MHU financially or why you do not.
Do you support other nonprofits? Why?