# The Impact of the Undergraduate Social Experience on Young Alumni Annual Giving

Matthew J. Gin
*Taylor University*

THE IMPACT OF THE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

ON YOUNG ALUMNI ANNUAL GIVING

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By

Matthew J. Gin

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> # Higher Education and Student Development
> # Taylor University
> # Upland, Indiana

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MASTERS THESIS
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This is to certify that the Thesis of

Matthew J. Gin

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The Impact of the Undergraduate Social Experience on Alumni Giving

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the
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in Higher Education and Student Development
May 2009

_____        _____
Ben Sells, PhD.                Date        Tim Herrmann, PhD.            Date
Thesis Supervisor                            Member, Thesis Hearing Committee


_____
Scott Gaier, PhD.                Date
Member, Thesis Hearing Committee


_____
Tim Herrmann, PhD.                Date
Director, M.A. in Higher Education and Student Development

ABSTRACT

Alumni giving is essential for institutions of higher education. Colleges and universities expend considerable effort and expenses to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward gifts from alumni. However, alumni giving is also a result of what happens during the pre-alumni stage; while alumni are still students. This study observes the social experience of undergraduate students and attempts to find predictors of future alumni giving of young alumni. Four subscales and 21 items were correlated with alumni participation in the annual fund as well as against the monetary amount of those gifts. Two of the four subscales–Relationships and Environment–were found to be significant predictors of the number of fiscal years alumni will give to the institution's annual fund. One of the subscales, Relationships, was found to be significantly correlated with the amount of money given to the annual fund.

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another, I am so glad to be able to live life with you.

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INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Introduction

There are nearly 1.5 million non-profit organizations in the United States, including over 4,000 regionally accredited colleges and universities. This creates competition for resources among organizations; competition only exacerbated by the current economic situation. Within higher education, alumni giving is critical for the health and sustainability of the institution. In 2008, alumni gave 27.5% of all gifts to institutions of higher education, totaling $8.7 billion (Council for Aid of Education, 2009). Since there is such competition between a graduate's alma mater and other non-profit interests, institutions of higher education must maintain strong relationships with alumni in order to raise the funds necessary to function.

Due to limited resources, institutions cannot afford to waste time, money, and energy in their efforts to secure contributions. They must be wise in their decision-making and be efficient with their fundraising strategies. If development offices could better understand why alumni choose to give back to their alma maters, they could become more efficient in their fundraising pursuits. They could focus their limited time, energy, and money on the prospects who are most likely to give. This added knowledge

would also allow institutions to be more connected to their alumni, helping them to be more effective in securing larger gifts for the school.

It is also important for institutions to continue to strengthen their relationship with alumni. Research has shown that the alumni who feel the most connected to their alma mater are more likely to contribute financially to the institution (Gaier, 2001; Gaier, 2003; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Miller & Casebeer, 1990; Mosser, 1993). If universities were able to better cultivate those relationships through engaging students before graduation, they would not have to spend as much time, energy, and money rebuilding those relationships after graduation. This maximization of the return on investment has been the motivation for most of the scholarship in the area of alumni giving (Moore, 2008, p. 44).

While the dollars given to colleges and universities are important, there has always been an interest in the percentage of alumni who make financial contributions to their alma maters. A solid giving base sends a strong message to foundations and corporations about the level of satisfaction alumni have about the institution. A high percentage of alumni giving also helps to secure a successful financial future.

Recently there has been an increase of interest in the percentage of alumni giving. This phenomenon is partly due to the increased popularity of the *U.S. News and World Report* Best Colleges Rankings and other similar publications (U.S. News and World Report, 2004). Approximately 2.2 million copies of the *U.S. News* rankings are sold each year, making a large impact on admissions and development offices (Pike, 2003, p. 3). By understanding the reasons alumni give, efforts may be made during the undergraduate

years to positively impact the percentage of alumni who choose to make gifts and the size of those gifts.

## Research Questions

This study addresses the research question: Does student engagement during the undergraduate years have an impact on young alumni annual giving at a private, evangelical, liberal arts university in the Midwest? More specifically, the research examines which types of engagement–measured by subscales and items taken from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)–have a statistically significant impact both on the consistency of giving as well as the size of those gifts.

*Engagement* is a term that has been popularized throughout higher education circles in a large part because of George Kuh and his work at the Indiana University. Much of the work he has done in the past few decades has been in promoting this concept. Kuh (2009) explains the premise:

> The more students study a subject, the more they know about it, and the more
>
> students practice and get feedback from faculty and staff members on their
>
> writing and collaborative problem solving, the deeper they come to understand
>
> what they are learning and the more adept they become at managing complexity,
>
> tolerating ambiguity, and working with people from different backgrounds or with
>
> different views…engagement helps to develop habits of the mind and heart that
>
> enlarge their capacity for continuous learning and personal development (p. 5).

Kuh's concept of engagement has traditionally been used to measure learning outcomes. This study drew a connection between engagement and alumni giving.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The academic study of fundraising is less robust than in many other areas of

higher education. Much of the literature in the field is anecdotal rather than empirical in

nature. The research is conducted by practitioners for practitioners and not necessarily to

supplement the body of empirical work that exists in academe (Brittingham & Pezzullo,

1989). In response to this, several empirical studies have been conducted to learn more

about the motivation and causes for giving over the last couple of decades. Most of this

literature has been geared towards understanding the giving patterns of alumni in order to

secure more gifts (Moore, 2008). This study adds to that body of literature by providing

correlative data for the reasons alumni give.

Alumni give back to their alma maters for many reasons. There are often many

memories, emotions, and desires that come into play when alumni choose to make gifts.

Several models have been constructed to help understand the influences of alumni giving.

Sun (2007) described the giving process by looking at four variables and their

impact on alumni giving: (1) demographic variables, (2) alumni motivation, (3) alumni

experience, and (4) student experience (see Figure 1). He hypothesized that all four of

these variables are significant predictors of alumni giving. Through his research he confirmed that to some extent all four of the variables were significant influences on alumni giving.

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┌──────────────────────┐
│  Student Experience  │──────────┐
└──────────────────────┘          │
┌──────────────────────┐          ▼
│  Alumni Experience   │───────┐ ┌──────────────────────┐
└──────────────────────┘       └▶│   Alumni Donation    │
┌──────────────────────┐       ▲ └──────────────────────┘
│   Alumni Motivation  │───────┘
└──────────────────────┘       ▲
┌──────────────────────┐       │
│ Demographic Variables│───────┘
└──────────────────────┘
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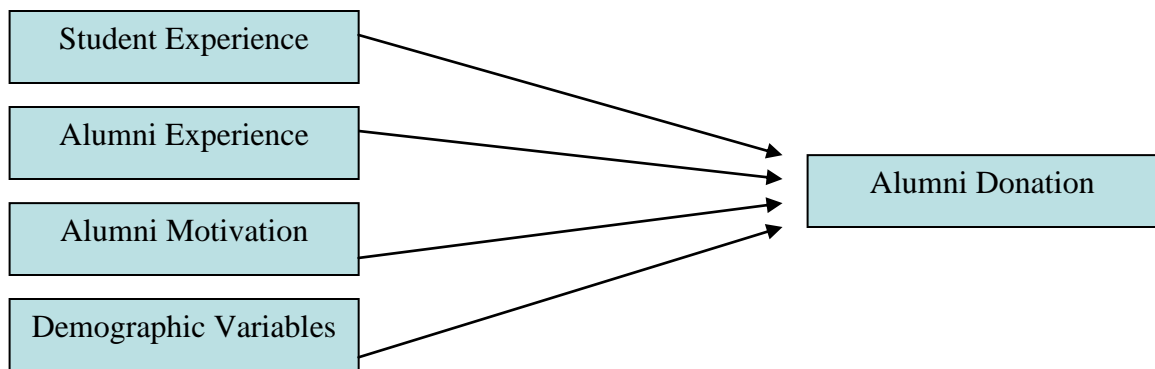
*Figure 1.* Sun's Alumni-giving decision model

Demographic Variables

Demographic variables are those characteristics that define alumni. They are characteristics of the alumni themselves, rather than characteristics that are gained from attending a particular institution. Most of the studies on alumni giving have tested a variety of demographic variables. These variables are the most accessible to development professionals and are the easiest to identify. Sun (2007) looked at a variety of demographic variables: graduation year, gender, ethnicity, type of degree, state of residence, and membership of the alumni association. He found that the two demographics that distinguished donors from non-donors were graduation year and gender. Women tend to donate more regularly to the institution, and more recent alumni tend to make smaller gifts. He also found that ethnicity, degree type, state of residence, and alumni association membership status were mildly significant.

Taylor and Martin (1995) looked at 17 different demographic variables to determine factors of alumni giving. The variables can be split into two categories: student variables and alumni variables. Of those pertaining to students, there were two variables that were found to be significant factors in predicting alumni giving: need for financial support and participation in a special interest group. Family income, reading alumni publications, enrollment in graduate programs, and involvement with the university as alumni were all alumni factors that predict giving.

In looking at the amount of money alumni donate, Bruggink and Siddiqui (1995) found that family income, Greek status, activity as alumni, distance from campus, years from graduation, marital status, and academic major were all significant factors.

These findings mirror the non-empirically based literature in the development field and matches what has been anecdotally understood by development professionals. Prospect researchers who work for institutions often look at family wealth, marital status, alumni involvement, and academic major as important factors when investigating prospects (T.N. Ford, personal communication, August 11, 2009).

Alumni Motivation

"Alumni motivation is the internal desire that is rooted deeply enough in one's awareness to induce a desire to give to the alma mater" (Sun, 2007, p. 308). Miracle (1977) found that alumni who understood the financial situation and recognized the need would be more likely to give than those who do not recognize the need. Those who feel deeply for the causes of the institution are more likely to make financial gifts.

Consistently research has found "that alumni who were more informed about the university had more positive perceptions of it, were more aware of and linked with perceived institutional needs, and, therefore were more likely to give than those not well informed" (Sun, 2007, p. 327). Those alumni who are involved after graduation through maintained contact with university employees (faculty, staff, and administrators), reading alumni publications, and attending events on campus are all more motivated to make gifts (Oglesby, 1991; Taylor & Martin, 1995). Leslie and Ramey (1986) also found that for alumni, motivation was a key factor in alumni giving. They found institutional prestige and the perceived need of the institution to both be significant parts of alumni motivation.

<div align="center">Alumni Experience</div>

Several studies have investigated the relationship between the postgraduate experience of alumni and their giving. In attempting to describe and predict alumni giving behavior from demographic information, alumni motivation, and alumni experience, Shadoian (1989) found that the number of visits alumni make back to their alma mater, the number of alumni publications they read, and the continued contacts with faculty members to be significant determinants of alumni giving. Oglesby's (1991) results strengthened Shadoian's findings, mirroring her results. He found that a greater level of postgraduate involvement with an institution is a stronger predictor of alumni giving.

Gaier (2001) discovered a direct link between alumni involvement and alumni giving. He described a naturally occurring process between a positive college experience and alumni giving: the experiences during the college years impact alumni perceptions

and opinions which influence the level of alumni involvement. Within this process, alumni involvement plays a key role in determining alumni giving. "The presence and level of alumni involvement is a strong factor related to alumni voluntary support" (p. 7).

Young and Fischer (1996) conducted a similar study and came to the same conclusions. They found involvement in the institution after graduation to have a significant impact on the choice to give to the institution. This follows the research since alumni giving is a subset of alumni involvement. Because of this conclusion, Young and Fischer recommend that higher education administrators do whatever is necessary to get as many alumni involved with institutional functions and activities.

Student Experience

Understanding the experience that students have during their undergraduate years and how that impacts alumni giving may have the most significant implications for higher education professionals. Development professionals often work to affect the alumni experience, but neglect the importance of the student experience. The student experience is unique in that it cannot be duplicated. If alumni are not satisfied with their undergraduate experiences, those feelings will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Institutions of higher education have only four years to positively impact students, and the strength of that relationship will have a lasting effect for decades to come.

During the four years students are on campus, students are much more accessible to the institution than they will be after graduation. This period of time when students are on campus is essential to the institution's connection with students and can have the greatest effect on whether they decide to give in the future.

Involvement

Astin has been a leading scholar of the student experience. He has created a model to describe the learning process: Input (I) + Environment (E) = Output (O) (Astin, 1993; Astin 1999b). Students come into college with certain characteristics, baggage, and experiences (I = Input). Throughout their collegiate career they are exposed to ideas, people, and information that cause them to change who they are (E = Experience). By the time they graduate, the students have become different people (O = Output). By observing the change from the beginning of their experience to the end, learning can be measured (O − I = E).

Over the past several decades Astin has "fleshed out and popularized the quality of effort concept with his 'theory of involvement'" (Kuh, 2009, p. 6). He defines involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (Astin, 1999b, p. 518). Involvement increases when time studying, participation in student organizations, and interaction with faculty and students increases. Ultimately, involvement is an action term and has less to do with the attitude of the student and more with the behavior of that student (Astin, 1993; Astin, 1999a).

Engagement

The concept of involvement fits in nicely with Kuh's idea of engagement. The student engagement construct has existed and evolved through several iterations over the course of the last century: time on task, quality of effort, student involvement, social and

academic integration, good practices in undergraduate education, and outcomes (Kuh, 2009). Today "student engagement" is the term that is most often used to describe the time and energy students place in their pursuit of learning (Kuh, 2002; Kuh 2009).

Student Experience and Alumni Giving

Johnson and Eckel (1998) discuss the transition from students to alumni. They speak of the unfortunate reality that most current students are ignorant about the role of alumni. This is mostly due to the fact that students have limited interaction with alumni, and the interaction they do have is often a negative experience. Johnson and Eckel argue that the development of active alumni must begin prior to graduation by educating students during their tenure. They stress the following:

The experiences of students while enrolling are strongly coupled to their later feelings about the institution as alumni. Graduates who had a rewarding experience may feel more connected to their alma mater, become more involved, and contribute financially when able. (p.229)

This view is echoed by Gardner and Van der Veer (1998) who stress the importance of optimizing student engagement in order to maximize alumni giving. "The senior year may be our last chance to cultivate students for future roles as involved alumni" (p. 6). The authors showed that satisfied alumni are the ones who are the most likely to financially support their alma mater.

Moore (2008) looked specifically at the student experience measured by NSSE and how that affects giving of young alumni. He measured the correlation between the five established benchmarks and correlated them to the giving rates of the classes that

participated in those studies. He found that there was no correlation between giving and three of the benchmarks: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, and Student Faculty Interaction. There was a moderate, positive correlation between Supportive Campus Environment and alumni giving, and a small, negative correlation between alumni giving and Enriching Educational Experiences. While this study's findings fill a hole in the literature by connecting a national student engagement survey with alumni giving, he does admit that it may be more beneficial to measure students' individual scores and track whether those individuals made financial contributions to their alma mater.

Types of Student Experience

When looking at the student experience, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) described two unique inputs: the academic experience and the social experience. The academic experience involves coursework, advising, faculty interaction, preparedness in the field of study, and preparedness for first job. The social experience includes extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, residence life, relationships with other students, working on or off campus, growth in the understanding of diversity, and spiritual growth. Research has been conducted in order to measure the correlation between alumni giving and each type of experience.

*Academic experience.*

Gaier (2003) found a significant relationship between the academic undergraduate experience of students and their subsequent alumni giving. The greater the satisfaction alumni had with their academic experience, the more likely they were to make a financial

contribution to the institution. He found that "the undergraduate experience is the key for unlocking information and understanding regarding why alumni give and participate with the university" (p. 18).

Miller and Casebeer (1990) conducted a similar study in which they were able to connect alumni giving to two main factors: academic achievement and satisfaction. They partially related giving to the undergraduate experience, but found that a large majority of donors were satisfied with their experience during their tenure. They found that 85% of their participants would repeat their undergraduate experience at the same institution, 89% would recommend their alma mater to a prospective student, and 94% were satisfied with the education they received.

Sun (2007) also found similar results concluding that the impact on career factor of the student experience variable significantly influenced alumni donations. He found that "satisfaction was…greater for those alumni who had developed relationships with university faculty and staff during their educational experiences. If alumni were satisfied with their previous student experiences they were more inclined to give" (p. 327).

Moore (2008) found slightly different results than Sun. In comparing the NSSE benchmarks with alumni giving, he found that higher levels of Enriching Educational Experiences led to lower levels of alumni giving. Institutions that had a higher percentage of students involved in learning communities, internships, and community service had lower giving levels. He concluded it was most likely due to fact that students who are more involved in community service are often pursuing service oriented careers and would require further education.

*Social experience.*

Not much research exists specifically on the social experience of students and how it relates to alumni giving. This is partially because there has not been a good instrument to measure and quantify the social experience of students until the creation of NSSE nearly a decade ago.

Sun (2007) found that the undergraduate experience had a large impact on alumni giving. He found that both the extracurricular activities in which students participated and strength of the relationships that were created during the undergraduate experience were determining factors.

Thomas and Smart (2005) were also able to show a connection between the social experience of students and alumni giving. They found that involvement in social activities as well as involvement in campus leadership were two predictors of alumni giving. Beyond these studies, the research is relatively silent regarding the social experience.

## Conclusion

A review of the literature has shown that while there is some research on alumni giving, there is little research that looks at students' social experiences and alumni giving. The reasons alumni give to their alma maters are numerous and complex. In looking at determinants of giving, there have been four areas that have been studied: demographic information, alumni experience, alumni motivation, and student experience. Several factors within each area have been shown to be correlated with increased alumni giving.

Student engagement can be separated into the academic experience and the social experience. The literature is virtually silent about the social experience. Further research is necessary and a deeper look into the types of student engagement and how they play a part in preparing students to become active alumni would be helpful for higher education professionals. Many institutions have been involved with using NSSE data in the assessment of their institution, and connecting the results from this survey with alumni giving could have significant benefits for those institutions.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem Statement

This study examines the relationship between student engagement and alumni giving at a private, evangelical, liberal arts university in the Midwest. The research attempts to answer the question: Does student engagement (defined by items and subscales taken from NSSE) during the undergraduate years have an impact on alumni giving of young alumni to the annual fund?

Participants

Participants in this study are alumni who graduated from a small, private, evangelical, liberal arts university in the Midwest. The studied institution has an alumni base of 14,676 alumni on record (alumni who graduated from the institution and are living). Participants were chosen based on their participation in NSSE during their senior year. The survey was administered in 2002 and 2005. In 2002, 385 students graduated from the studied institution. A random sample of those students was invited to participate in the study, and 111 students responded (28.8%). In 2005, 402 students graduated. A random sample of those students was invited to participate in the study, and 230

responded (57.2%). Overall, there were a possible 787 students who qualified for participation in the study. Of those who qualified, 341 responded (43.3%).

Historically, the studied institution has held to a ratio comprised of 55% females and 45% males (Pocket Facts, 2009). Of the 341 total participants, 181 were female (53.1%) and 160 were male (46.9%). This ratio was an accurate representation of the population during the years of study.

Special attention was given to the fact that the alumni surveyed are all considered young or new alumni (less than 10 years since graduation). Research has shown that once alumni are further removed from graduation, their connection to the school has less to do with their student experience and more to do with their alumni experience (Bruggink & Siddiqui, 1995; Gaier 2003; Miller & Casebeer, 1990). Because this study intended to measure student experience, young alumni were the ideal participants for the study.

Procedures

The NSSE data (the independent variable) was collected in 2002 and 2005 from graduating seniors through surveys administered during the spring semester. This data has been stored and maintained by the university and permission to use this data was obtained through the Provost's office.

Records of giving (the dependent variable) were obtained through the development office with permission from the Vice President for University Advancement. Records were identified by their student identification number which matched participants' identification number on the NSSE survey. This assured the confidentiality of all participants.

This study looks exclusively at annual fund giving rather than total giving to the institution. The annual fund is the yearly effort to secure unrestricted gifts to the university for budgetary purposes. It helps to bridge the gap between tuition and the operating costs of the school.

Because special projects and initiatives of the institution may have a stronger draw on certain demographics, giving to the annual fund was measured to capture the essence of "general giving" to the institution. This would help protect against outliers who made large, one-time gifts to special areas other than the annual fund that would skew the data set.

<div align="center">Instrument</div>

NSSE was developed by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research under the direction of Kuh, Ewell and others (Kuh, 2003; Kuh, 2009; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2007; Moore, 2008; Pike, 2003). The survey was launched nationally in 2000 with 276 schools participating. Its use has steadily increased each year with 772 schools participating in 2008 (Kuh, 2009).

The survey is scored using self-reports with students reflecting on their past experiences. While this does not always create an accurate representation of what is happening in reality, the validity and credibility of self-reporting has been thoroughly researched (Kuh, 2009).

Items

From NSSE, 21 items were selected as relevant to this study (See Appendix A). These items were chosen based on their face validity; they most aligned to the social experience construct created by the investigator.

All of the items on NSSE have been studied and have proven to be valid. Throughout the years, items have been changed, removed, and added based on analysis of the psychometrics and other testing. All of this study's chosen items have been found to be reliable (Kuh 2009).

Subscales

NSSE has traditionally used five institutional benchmarks developed from items from the survey: (1) Level of Academic Challenge, (2) Active and Collaborative Learning, (3) Student Interaction with Faculty Members, (4) Enriching Educational Experiences, and (5) Supportive Campus Environment (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2009). While these scales are beneficial for studying the entire student experience, this study looked particularly at the social experience of students.

Because none of the five benchmarks specifically identified with social experience (several include aspects of the social experience but also contain other measures), the researcher chose to develop four subscales to assess aspects of the social experience: (1) Relationships, (2) Time Usage, (3) Conversations, and (4) Environment. These subscales were comprised of questions from NSSE and each subscale used items only from one section of the survey.

The *Relationships* subscale looked specifically at the level of interaction students had with others affiliated with the institution during their tenure as students. It measured the connection with other students, faculty members, and administrative personnel and offices.

*Time Usage* examined six measures of how students could spend their time:

1. Working for pay on campus

2. Working for pay off campus

3. Participation in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)

4. Participating in relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)

5. Providing care for dependents (parents, children, spouse, etc.)

6. Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.).

Two of these items, working for pay on campus and participation in co-curricular activities are associated with positive engagement. The other four items are negatively associated with engagement and were reverse-scored to account for this phenomenon.

*Conversations* measured the amount of meaningful relationships students had with faculty and other students. This subscale measured how frequently students did the following:

1. Talked about their career plans to a faculty member or advisor

2. Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)

3. Had  serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own

4. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values.

The subscale *Environment* looked at both the institutional contribution and the institutional environment of the student experience. In evaluating the institutional contribution, four areas were measured:

1. Understanding one's self

2. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

3. Developing a personal code of values and ethics

4. Contributing to the welfare of the community

In looking at the areas that were emphasized by the institution four areas were measured:

1. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds

2. Helping a student cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

3. Providing the support  needed to thrive socially

4. Attempting campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

The data was analyzed in three steps using the SPSS software.

Step 1

In the first step, descriptive statistics were used to ensure that the sample

population was an accurate reflection of the entire population, both in sex and in

graduation class.

A factor analysis was run for the data. Because these items were being grouped

into subscales, it was important to verify that the items within each subscale were

measuring the factor they were intending to measure.

Step 2

The second step verified the reliability of the data set and the subscales. Because

the subscales were created for this study and were not used previously, it is important to

verify that the items within the subscales are reliable and all accurately measure the same

construct (Creswell, 2003). Items that are measuring the same construct should correlate

among themselves (LaNasa, Cabrera, & Transgrud, 2007). A reliability analysis was run

for each of the subscales to ensure that the variables within each subscale were in fact

measuring the same construct.

Step 3

The third step in the data analysis measured the correlation of the dependent

variables (percentage of years given and dollars given per year to the annual fund) with

the independent variables (NSSE items and subscales). First, the giving data was

transformed from total fiscal years given to the annual fund to a percentage of years

given by dividing by the number of years since graduation. This put the data on a

consistent scale, allowing for the number of years given for all participants to range from

zero (never given a gift) to one (given a gift every fiscal year since graduation). This was also done with the total giving amount to the annual fund to create the variable *Average gift per year*.

A bivariate correlation was run for each of the subscales and all of the items against the percentage of years given and the average gift per year to determine whether a significant correlation existed between the two sets of variables.

CHAPTER 4


RESULTS

This study looked at the social experience of undergraduate students and the

impact it has on alumni giving. The social experience was measured by a series of items

and subscales developed from NSSE data and was compared through correlation

regressions to the alumni giving data. This was done in three steps.

Step 1

In Step 1, descriptive statistics were used to ensure that the sample was an

accurate representation of the complete data set (all living graduates of the institution).

The studied institution has an alumni base of 14,676 living graduates. The NSSE data

was collected from students graduating in 2002 and 2005. During these years, the studied

institution graduated 385 and 402 students, respectively. All first-year and graduating

seniors were invited to participate in the survey. As this study was only interested in the

social experience of students who have completed their time at the institution, only senior

students participated in the study. A total of 111 students participated from the class of

2002 (28.8%), and 230 students responded from the class of 2005 (57.2%). Overall, this

was a 43.3% response rate from the two classes.

Particular attention was given to the sex of the participants as several studies have found sex to be a significant determinant of alumni giving (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1989; Miller & Casebeer, 1990; Mosser, 1993; Oglesby, 1991; Sun, Hoffman, & Grady 2007). Historically the studied institution has maintained a student body comprised of 55% females and 45% males (Pocket Facts, 2009). The institution believes that preserving a near equal gender balance helps preserve a particular experience for students. Of the 341 participants, 181 were female and 160 were male. This ratio of 53.1% to 46.9% was not significantly different from the population size and was an accurate representation of the population.

Table 1

*Sex of Participants*

| Sex | Count | Percentage | Population Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 160 | 46.9% | 45.0% |
| Female | 181 | 53.1% | 55.0% |

It is important to run a factor analysis to limit the number of predictors in a study. It is also important to check for singularity; to ensure that there is not an excessive amount of intercorrelations among the predictors. A correlation matrix was used to examine the data, and some issues of collinearity arose. Because of this, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was obtained to ensure that a factor analysis would be beneficial (KMO = .797). A factor analysis was run, resulting in a total of 6 factors.

Table 2

*Total Variance Explained*

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Total | % of Variance | Cum. % | Total | % of Variance | Cum. % |
| 1 | 4.563 | 21.728 | 21.728 | 3.797 | 18.082 | 18.082 |
| 2 | 1.755 | 8.359 | 30.087 | 1.891 | 9.005 | 27.087 |
| 3 | 1.443 | 6.873 | 36.960 | 1.587 | 7.555 | 34.642 |
| 4 | 1.276 | 6.076 | 43.036 | 1.479 | 7.043 | 41.685 |
| 5 | 1.171 | 5.578 | 48.613 | 1.332 | 6.343 | 48.028 |
| 6 | 1.091 | 5.197 | 53.811 | 1.214 | 5.783 | 53.811 |
| 7 | 0.978 | 4.656 | 58.467 | | | |
| 8 | 0.943 | 4.490 | 62.957 | | | |
| 9 | 0.911 | 4.338 | 67.295 | | | |
| 10 | 0.865 | 4.120 | 71.415 | | | |
| 11 | 0.813 | 3.874 | 75.289 | | | |
| 12 | 0.729 | 3.470 | 78.759 | | | |
| 13 | 0.691 | 3.290 | 82.049 | | | |
| 14 | 0.651 | 3.100 | 85.148 | | | |
| 15 | 0.592 | 2.818 | 87.966 | | | |
| 16 | 0.549 | 2.614 | 90.580 | | | |
| 17 | 0.475 | 2.261 | 92.841 | | | |
| 18 | 0.417 | 1.984 | 94.825 | | | |
| 19 | 0.393 | 1.872 | 96.697 | | | |
| 20 | 0.374 | 1.781 | 98.477 | | | |
| 21 | 0.320 | 1.523 | 100.000 | | | |

From this analysis, the 21 items from the study were connected with the six factors.

Table 3

*Factor Analysis*

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Institutional emphasis on providing support you need to thrive socially | .775 | | | | | |
| Institutional emphasis on helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities | .714 | | | | | |
| Institutional contribution to developing a personal code of values and ethics | .690 | | | | | |
| Institutional contribution to understanding Self | .688 | | | | | |
| Institutional contribution to contributing to the welfare of the community | .661 | | | | | |
| Institutional emphasis on encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic Backgrounds | .512 | | | | | |
| Institutional emphasis on attending campus events and activities | .492 | | | | | |
| Relationship with other students | .427 | | | | | |
| Had serious conversations with students of different race or ethnicity other than own | | .770 | | | | |
| Had serious conversations with students who are different in terms of religious beliefs, political views, or personal values | | .701 | | | | |
| Institutional contribution to understanding people of other races and ethnic Backgrounds | | .516 | | | | |
| Relationship with faculty members | | | .791 | | | |
| Relationship with administrative personnel and offices | | | .505 | | | |
| Providing care for dependents living with you | | | .464 | | | |
| Worked with faculty on activities other than Coursework | | | | .673 | | |
| Participating in co-curricular activities | | | | .618 | | |
| Talked about career plans with faculty member or advisor | | | | .451 | | |
| Working for pay on campus | | | | | .782 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Working for pay off campus | .538 |
| Relaxing and socializing | .804 |
| Commuting to class | .554 |

A factor analysis is an exploratory step which shows the possible number of factors within a study. Since it is exploratory in nature, it is not necessarily the final authority on a scale. Even though the factor analysis identified six factors from the selected items, the items were organized into four subscales. This was done because the researcher saw more face validity in the four subscales than within the six factors.

Step 2

The purpose of the second step was to verify the reliability of the data set and the subscales. NSSE has been extensively tested and the items have all shown to be reliable. Through focus groups, cognitive testing, and various psychometric analyses, items have been changed, removed, and added over the years to make the survey stronger and more robust (Kuh, 2009). But because subscales were created from the items (as opposed to using the standard NSSE benchmarks), those subscales also needed to be proven reliable.

All four of the subscales were analyzed for reliability, showing that the items were in fact measuring the same construct. Three of the four subscales were found to have adequate reliability. The fourth, Time Usage, had a low level of reliability. The items within that subscale were all taken from the same NSSE question, which has been shown to be reliable. The low score is most likely due to a lack of variance within the scores.

Table 4

*Reliability of the Subscales*

| Subscale | Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items |
|---|---|---|
| Relationships | .609 | 3 |
| Time Usage | .309 | 6 |
| Conversations | .597 | 4 |
| Environment | .813 | 8 |

*Note:* Cronbach's Alpha scores in the range of $.6 - .7$ are considered acceptable scores, with scores near .8 being a good score (Kuh, 2002).

## Step 3

In the third step of the data analysis, the correlation between student engagement and alumni giving was measured. There were four different subscales that contained 21 items measuring the social engagement of students. These were correlated with the percentage of years that alumni had made financial gifts to the institution as well as the amount of money given per year.

Alumni Giving Participation

The first set of items dealt with the quality of relationships students had with other students, faculty members, and administrative personnel and offices. They were asked to rank the quality of relationships on a 7-point Likert scale. These scores were then correlated with the percentage of years the alumni had given since graduation. All three relationship variables were found to be positively significant determinants of alumni giving. Relationships with students were found to be mildly significant ($p \leq .05$) while relationships with faculty members and relationships with administrative personnel and offices were found to be extremely significant ($p \leq .001$).

Table 5

*Correlation of Relationships with Alumni Giving Percentage*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Relationship with other students | 0.124 | .023* |
| Relationship with faculty members | 0.173 | .001*** |
| Relationship with administrative personnel and offices | 0.205 | .000*** |

*p ≤ .05.  **p ≤ .01.  ***p ≤ .001.

The next set of items measured the amount of time students spent on various activities: working for pay on campus, working for pay off campus, participating in co-curricular activities, relaxing and socializing, providing care for dependents, and commuting to class. They were given spans of time and asked to check the box that most closely reflected a typical 7-day week. None of the six items were found to be significantly correlated with Alumni Participation, although working for pay on campus was nearly significant (p ≤ .05).

Table 6

*Correlation of Time Usage with Alumni Giving Percentage*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Working for pay on campus | 0.107 | .051 |
| Working for pay off campus | -0.051 | .354 |
| Participating in co-curricular activities | 0.072 | .190 |
| Relaxing and socializing | -0.073 | .183 |
| Providing care for dependents living with you | 0.070 | .200 |
| Commuting to class | 0.063 | .248 |

*p ≤ .05.  **p ≤ .01.  ***p ≤ .001.

The third set of items measured the frequency of conversations in which students engaged during the current school year. The four items observed how often students talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor, worked with faculty members

on activities other than coursework, had serious conversations with students of a different

race or ethnicity, and had serious conversations with students who are very different in

terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values. Of those four items,

only working with a faculty member on activities other than coursework was found to be

significantly correlated with alumni giving. It was positively related ($p \leq .01$).

Table 7

*Correlation of Conversations with Alumni Giving Percentage*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Talked about career plans with faculty member or advisor | 0.069 | .202 |
| Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework | 0.145 | .007** |
| Had serious conversations with students of different race or ethnicity other than own | -0.011 | .846 |
| Had serious conversations with students who are different in terms of religious beliefs, political views, or personal values | -0.013 | .815 |

*p ≤ .05.  **p ≤ .01.  ***p ≤ .001.

The last set of items measured the environment of the institution. These eight

items were broken into two sets of four. The first set measured the extent of the

contribution of the institution to the growth of knowledge, skills, and personal

development in several areas: understanding yourself, understanding people of other

racial and ethnic backgrounds, developing a personal code of values and ethics, and

contributing to the welfare of the community. The second set of items measured the level

of emphasis the institution placed on four areas: encouraging contact among students

from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds, helping cope with non-

academic responsibilities, providing support to thrive socially, and attending campus

events. Of these eight variables, six of them were found to be significantly and positively

related to Alumni Participation. The two that were not significantly correlated were the

two variables that dealt with diversity.

Table 8

*Correlation of Environment with Alumni Giving Percentage*

| | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Institutional Contribution to: | | |
|     Understanding of self | 0.149 | .006** |
|     Understanding of other races and ethnic backgrounds | 0.044 | .420 |
|     Developing a personal code of values and ethics | 0.210 | .000*** |
|     Contributing to the welfare of the community | 0.175 | .001*** |
| Institutional Emphasis on: | | |
|     Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds | 0.053 | .339 |
|     Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities | 0.147 | .007** |
|     Providing the support you need to thrive socially | 0.238 | .000*** |
|     Attending campus events and activities | 0.155 | .004** |

$*p \leq .05.$  $**p \leq .01.$  $***p \leq .001.$

The four subscales were created by computing the mean of the items contained

within each subscale. Once the items within each scale were measured for correlation

with Alumni Participation, the subscales were then measured. Of the four subscales, two

of them were found to be significantly correlated with Alumni Participation:

Relationships and Environment. Both of them were positively correlated and significant

$(p \leq .001)$.

Table 9

*Correlation of Subscales with Alumni Giving Percentage*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Relationships | 0.222 | .000*** |
| Time Usage | 0.083 | .127 |
| Conversations | 0.068 | .208 |
| Environment | 0.219 | .000*** |

$*p \le .05. \quad **p \le .01. \quad ***p \le .001.$

Alumni Giving Amount

Tests were also run to determine whether there was a correlation between the NSSE subscales and items with the amount of money alumni gave. The first set of items, which measured the level of relationships students had, was first measured against the Alumni Giving Amount. Of the three variables, only relationships with administrative personnel and offices were found to have a significant correlation. The correlation was positive and significant ($p \le .01$).

Table 10

*Correlation of Relationships with Alumni Giving Amount*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Relationship with other students | 0.042 | .440 |
| Relationship with faculty members | 0.081 | .134 |
| Relationship with administrative personnel and offices | 0.169 | .002** |

$*p \le .05. \quad **p \le .01. \quad ***p \le .001.$

When looking at the correlation between the second group of items (which measure how students spend their time) and Alumni Giving Amount, only one item was found to have a correlative relationship–Participation in Co-curricular Activities–which had a moderate positive relationship.

Table 11

*Correlation of Time Usage with Alumni Giving Amount*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Worked for pay on campus | 0.080 | .141 |
| Worked for pay off campus | -0.020 | .718 |
| Participated in co-curricular activities | 0.119 | .028* |
| Relaxed and socialized | -0.039 | .474 |
| Provided care for dependents | 0.095 | .080 |
| Commuted to class | -0.057 | .298 |

*p ≤ .05.  **p ≤ .01.  ***p ≤ .001.

The four items measuring the amount of conversations in which students engaged were then measured against Alumni Giving Amount. Working with faculty members on activities other than coursework had a strong, positive correlation and was the only item with a significant correlation.

Table 12

*Correlation of Conversations with Alumni Giving Amount*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Talked about career plans with faculty | 0.071 | .193 |
| Worked with faculty on non-coursework | 0.194 | .000*** |
| Had serious conversations with students of different race or ethnicity | -0.043 | .427 |
| Had serious conversations with students of different religion, political views, personal values | 0.029 | .591 |

*p ≤ .05.  **p ≤ .01.  ***p ≤ .001.

The final group of items measured the environment of the institution. There were eight items within this subscale. Of those items, only one was found to have a significant correlation with Alumni Giving Amount: Providing the support to thrive socially. There was a moderate, positive correlation (p ≤ .05).

Table 13

*Correlation of Environment with Alumni Giving Amount*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Institutional Contribution to: |  |  |
| Understanding of self | 0.046 | .402 |
| Understanding of other races and ethnic backgrounds | -0.045 | .404 |
| Developing a personal code of values and ethics | 0.067 | .220 |
| Contributing to the welfare of the community | 0.048 | .381 |
| Institutional Emphasis on: |  |  |
| Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds | 0.002 | .968 |
| Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities | 0.097 | .074 |
| Providing the support you need to thrive socially | 0.127 | .019* |
| Attending campus events and activities | 0.051 | .350 |

$*p \leq .05.$  $**p \leq .01.$  $***p \leq .001.$

The subscales were also tested for correlation against Alumni Giving Amount.

The Relationship subscale was the only subscale to have a significant correlation. It was

found to have a positive correlation significant ($p \leq .01$).

Table 14

*Correlation of Subscales with Alumni Giving Amount*

|  | R | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| Relationships | 0.139 | .010** |
| Time Usage | 0.083 | .128 |
| Conversations | 0.089 | .101 |
| Environment | 0.073 | .177 |

$*p \leq .05.$  $**p \leq .01.$  $***p \leq .001.$

Summary of Results

From this sample, it can be concluded that there are many facets of the social experience that influence alumni participation. The relationships that students develop during their tenure will impact whether or not they choose to give back. The satisfaction with the environment of the school will also influence whether they give. There are also aspects of the social experience that affect the amount of money given back to the institution.

Of all the studied factors of alumni giving, the relationships with students, faculty, and administrators that were built during the undergraduate years were found to have the largest impact. A student's time is marked by relationships with others. When students graduate from an institution, they often state their affinity to their alma mater. Looking at these results, when alumni identify a relationship with an institution, they may actually be referring to relationships with people who attended or work at the school.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Findings

Alumni Giving Participation

There were many connections between the social experience of students and their subsequent participation in alumni giving. Of the four subscales, two of them were found to be significantly correlated to Alumni Giving Participation–Relationships and Environment–with both of them having very strong positive correlations.

Intuitively it makes sense that alumni who have developed stronger relationships with other students, faculty, and administrators will have more positive feelings associated with the school and will be more likely to support it after graduation. It also naturally flows that relationships that are built outside of the classroom in the typical educational setting will have a larger impact on students than those built through classroom interaction because of the one-on-one nature of the relationship. When students have more individualized interaction with other students, faculty, and staff, it has the potential for greater impact than interaction within a larger group (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005). It then makes sense that relationships with administrative personnel and offices will have the greatest impact on the students' social

experience and their subsequent alumni giving due to the fact that these relationships generally occur in one-on-one settings. These relationships could form through campus jobs (working for pay on campus was nearly shown to be significantly correlated to alumni giving percentage), student leadership positions, or even through necessary contact between students and various offices around campus.

These results connect with much of the body of literature that already exists (Gaier, 2001; Johnson & Eckel, 1998; Miller & Casebeer, 1990; Moore, 2008; Oglesby, 1991; Sun, 2007; Shadoian, 1998; Taylor & Martin, 1995; Young & Fischer, 1996). Building strong relationships between students and members of the institution is an important in making students feel connected to the institution. This connection not only helps students to become more involved while they are on campus, but also leads to continued involvement with the institution after graduation.

A correlation with Environment also naturally flows. Students who have more positive perceptions of their institution and the school's ability to positively affect students would be the most likely to be financial contributors. This is backed by the fundraising literature (Miller & Casebeer, 1990; Moore, 2008; Oglesby, 1991; Sun, 2007; Shadoian, 1998; Thomas & Smart, 2005; Young & Fischer, 1996).

The way students spend their time and the conversations had were ultimately not found to be significant indicators of future alumni giving. While these activities may prove to have an impact on the engagement level of students, they have no apparent subsequent impact on their giving patterns.

Alumni Giving Amount

There was not a correlation between most of the social experience items and alumni giving amount. The relationships students build during their college years was found to be the only significant indicator of giving amount. In particular, the relationship with staff played a key role in the findings. This makes sense as students who established strong relationships with staff through individualized attention would be willing to make larger gifts to the institution.

This study found that students who develop stronger relationships with staff members are more likely to make larger gifts to the institution. This probably relates to the fact that alumni feel a stronger connection to an institution when they still know staff employed by the institution. This would also create a stronger attraction for alumni to visit campus; a variable which is correlated with higher alumni giving (Oglesby, 1991; Shadoian, 1989; Sun 2007).

The way students spend their time, the conversations in which they are involved, and the environment of the institution were all found to be insignificant in determining the amount of money alumni will give. Alumni giving is a very complex topic and there may be multiple reasons for this lack of correlation. One possible explanation is that the study does not take earnings and net worth into account. This study does not look at the amount of money alumni have to give, which may be a closer predictor of the size of gifts alumni choose to give (Bruggink & Siddiqui, 1995).

Significance

There is not a wealth of empirical research conducted on higher education fundraising. One reason for this is because fundraising has not historically been a significant interest to researchers of higher education (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1989). Most of the information on fundraising has been anecdotal in nature. Another reason for this is because graduate students who have written doctoral dissertations on alumni giving tend to be practitioners and have little time and incentive to publish (Brittingham & Pezzullo, 1989). This study begins to fill a gap in the literature.

This study is also significant because it looks at the undergraduate social experience as a possible factor of alumni giving. While the hypothesis that student engagement leads to higher alumni satisfaction and greater alumni giving has been anecdotally accepted, the research on this topic is relatively silent. Even fewer experts speak specifically about the relationship between the undergraduate social experience and alumni giving. While this may affect the way development professionals view alumni, it also has the potential to affect the way student development and admissions staff view their role in the institution.

Implications for Practice

There are several implications this study can have on the practice of higher education professionals in many different areas of the university. As institutions place more weight on alumni giving and specifically alumni participation, this study emphasizes the importance of the social aspect of the student experience.

Development Office

For development professionals, it is important to understand the impact of strong relationships students develop with other students, faculty members, and staff. Alumni are more likely to give if they have lasting relationships with those who are employed or attend the institution. This is particularly true with administrative offices. This study indicates that development professionals could help to facilitate more consistent alumni giving and larger gifts in the future by allowing students to have greater contact with staff in their daily lives as students. Generally, the development office employs students to assist in their fundraising efforts. This provides students the opportunity to grow closer to staff members while also educating students about the importance of philanthropy.

Development professionals would also find it beneficial to encourage other administrative offices around campus to find additional ways to interact with students. Facilitating positive interactions with these offices could yield large results for future giving. The educating of staff around campus–the president's office, financial aid, admissions, housekeeping, etc.–needs to be a higher priority for development offices.

Because there are a limited amount of resources that can be designated for fundraising purposes, it is important for development offices to be selective in the prospects they solicit. The results of this study show that alumni who had a stronger positive social experience during their undergraduate years would be more likely to donate; specifically those alumni who developed relationships with faculty and staff during their collegiate experience. As institutions seek to develop a strong young alumni

giving rate to serve as the foundation for future fundraising efforts, these highly involved students pose as perfect candidates.

Academic Affairs Office

The results of this study echo the multitude of research about the importance of student-faculty interaction. The closer students feel to faculty members and the more interaction they have inside and outside of the classroom, the more likely students are to give back to the institution. The creation and expansion of opportunities for faculty to invest in students through casual–but significant–conversations outside of the classroom could have lasting impacts on the students and the institution.

One way the academic affairs office can help to contribute to the out of classroom relationships between faculty and students is through mentoring programs within the students' majors. While students have a professor within their major as an academic advisor, these relationships often consist of short meetings when it is time to register for the next semester of classes. Academic deans and department chairs need to emphasize to their faculty members the importance of personal relationships with students. Not only is interaction between students and faculty helpful to the students academically, but this study shows that there are also implications for alumni giving.

Another way the academic affairs office can influence future alumni giving is through encouraging faculty to use students as assistants in research projects. This study has shown that working with faculty on non-coursework is significantly correlated to both alumni participation and giving amount. Not only does this provide important, real-life experience for students and inexpensive assistance for faculty, but it also can build

relationships between the faculty and students and lead to increased alumni giving in the future.

Student Development Office

For student development professionals, this study holds implications about the importance of creating an environment that welcomes engagement. By investing in students and helping them understand themselves, develop a system of values and ethics, and teaching them the importance of investing in the community, students are more likely to give back to the institution. Also by helping students deal with non-academic responsibilities, thrive socially, and attend campus events, student development professionals can have a drastic impact on the way alumni choose to give back.

Other Campus Offices

The findings of this study show that working for pay on campus positively affects future alumni giving. Knowing this fact should impact the way campus offices view student workers and the roles that they play within the institution. While it may be more convenient and even more efficient to seek an external hire for an assistant position, perhaps it would be more beneficial for the institution to hire several student workers instead. By employing those students, they have more interaction with faculty and staff, increasing their undergraduate social experience.

Admissions Office

In the current economic climate, retention is an important statistic for institutions of higher education. Many schools rely heavily on tuition dollars to cover the annual budget. Because of its connectivity to retention, the social experience of students has

become an important factor for admissions offices. But this study shows that the social experience of students may have longer lasting effects than just during the four years students are on campus. In times of financial difficulty, all staff and faculty find themselves becoming admissions counselors at one time or another; either by recruiting students or helping to retain them. Perhaps as those employees work to improve the campus environment they should consider themselves development officers as well.

Limitations

One noteworthy limitation of this study is that it was not intended to look at all possible variables of alumni giving. Alumni choose to give to their alma maters for many different reasons. It is a much more complex process than can be explained in one study. The purpose of this study was to look specifically at the social experience of students and to determine whether there are any types of experiences that correlated with alumni giving.

This study only examined young alumni giving. While the findings of this study may not always pertain to alumni further from graduation, student engagement likely has more impact on young alumni giving while other factors begin to have more of an influence as time from graduation increases. However, young alumni giving patterns probably impact older alumni giving patterns. So if engagement helps to increase young alumni giving, it will probably have an indirect effect on older alumni giving.

There are dozens of confounding variables that have been shown to be significant determinants of alumni giving: amount of debt, distance from campus, amount of alumni involvement, household income, etc. Because this study utilized NSSE and institutional

data and the participants were not actually contacted by the investigator, there was no opportunity to account for these confounding variables in this study.

This study looked at one institution: a private, evangelical, liberal arts university in the Midwest. It would be overstepping the scope of this study to generalize these results to all schools at all times. At most, the results have implications for similar schools, and should pique the interests of development professionals at those institutions.

Another limitation of this study was the lack of variance in responses for some of the items. Being a school with a residential campus and a traditionally aged student body, the studied institution does not have many students who care for dependents or spend much time commuting to class. This has led to a lower reliability score for the Time Usage subscale that may affect how accurately the construct was being measured.

Suggestions for Future Research

With gaping holes in the fundraising literature, there are plenty of opportunities for significant findings for future researchers. A future study should expand upon these results by looking at more institutions. With more schools utilizing NSSE each year, the opportunity to correlate alumni giving with social engagement increases. Institutions from diverse Carnegie classes, geographical regions, sizes, and types should all be studied.

Future studies should also examine the interaction of the multiple factors of giving. This study looked at individual items and individual subscales created from NSSE items and their impact on alumni giving. It would also be beneficial to look at the interaction of these variables and how that impacts the results.

Finally, while NSSE has proven to be one of the leading measures of student engagement, it may be beneficial to look at other surveys to identify other facets of student's social engagement that may impact alumni giving. By looking at these nuances, the constructs are only strengthened and practitioners can have a greater understanding of the motivation of alumni to give.

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Appendix A: Items and Subscales from the National Survey of Student Engagement

**8** Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution.

Relationships with:

| a. Other Students | b. Faculty Members | c. Administrative Personnel and Offices |
|---|---|---|
| Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging ▼ | Available, Helpful, Sympathetic ▼ | Helpful, Considerate, Flexible ▼ |
| 7 ☐ | 7 ☐ | 7 ☐ |
| 6 ☐ | 6 ☐ | 6 ☐ |
| 5 ☐ | 5 ☐ | 5 ☐ |
| 4 ☐ | 4 ☐ | 4 ☐ |
| 3 ☐ | 3 ☐ | 3 ☐ |
| 2 ☐ | 2 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| 1 ☐ | 1 ☐ | 1 ☐ |
| ▲ Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation | ▲ Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic | ▲ Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid |

**9** About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

# of hours per week

| | 0 | 1-5 | 6-10 | 11-15 | 16-20 | 21-25 | 26-30 | More than 30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| b. Working for pay **on campus** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c. Working for pay **off campus** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| d. Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| e. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| f. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| g. Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**1** In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? Mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: ☒ or ■

| | Very often ▼ | Often ▼ | Some-times ▼ | Never ▼ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| s. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| v. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**11** To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

| | Very much ▼ | Quite a bit ▼ | Some ▼ | Very little ▼ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| k. Understanding yourself | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| l. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| o. Contributing to the welfare of your community | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**10** To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

| | Very much ▼ | Quite a bit ▼ | Some ▼ | Very little ▼ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| f. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |