**Robert Morris University Honors Thesis of Evyn Selden**

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**Program Evaluation of the Non- Profit the Global Sisterhood, Inc.**

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**Abstract**

This research project involved an evaluation of the nonprofit organization The Global Sisterhood, Inc. This company was recently created by Dr. Shellie Hipsky, previously a Professor of Education at Robert Morris University. Through multiple means, The Global Sisterhood aims to educate, provide resources, and build global connections through networking in order to help women and girls around the world attain their goals. In order for the organization to make the most impact and continue to grow in ways that the various stakeholders need, it is important that information about the needs of various stakeholders are examined, and that the mission statement is clear and being intentionally pursued. In order to determine the needs of various stakeholders, this project involves conducting a needs assessment program evaluation. The means of data collection include a survey of supporters, and an in-depth interview of Dr. Hipsky, the leader of the program.

**Introduction**

The Global Sisterhood, is nonprofit organization founded by Dr. Shellie Hipsky. Dr. Hipsky was a tenured professor in the School of Education and Social Sciences at Robert Morris University, located outside of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. After the fall semester of 2015, she resigned from her academic position which she held for twelve years to continue to pursue her passion of inspiring and connecting others globally. Dr. Hipsky claims The Global Sisterhood, Inc. began two years ago through a steady progression of working with different people through multiple means. Dr. Hipsky’s writing of the book Ordinary People Extraordinary Planet kicked off the development. Then through different forms of media, such as the TV show Inspiring Lives with Dr. Shellie Hipsky and the radio channel Empowering Women Radio, Dr. Hipsky began to tell the life stories of women all around the globe that were in need of a means to disseminate their messages. Dr. Hipsky began to connect the dots of empowerment, inspiration and balance within each of these women. She also began connecting them with one another based on personal mission to allow everyone the opportunity to reach their full personal and professional potential. After two years of research and development that culminated in a three part book series titled Common Threads, Dr. Hipsky realized an additional gap and need existed for a nonprofit organization for women to globally connect, inspire and empower. In a recent interview she said the organization’s development had a “life of its own, and that life had so many women’s voices that needed to be heard” (Shellie Hipsky, personal communication).  Thus, The Global Sisterhood, Inc. (Global Sisterhood) was created.

The Global Sisterhood, Inc. officially became a nonprofit organization in January of 2016. Currently its mission statement is to educate, provide resources, and networking opportunities for women and girls internationally; with the purpose of supporting one another’s missions and movements to make each other's goals and dreams a reality. Currently, The Global Sisterhood, Inc. is pursuing achieving this mission through multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube; as well as hosting events like The Global Sisterhood, Inc Summit and Gala this past February. Some more specific short term goals of the sisterhood include advocacy and building the organization from within. The organization is looking to continue to spread globally through all members by personally and professionally networking. Organizational Chapters are also beginning to be formed in different locations around the world. In the long term the organization would like to essentially become a hub for women’s empowerment and inspiration. They want to continue to form a global community, with multiple smaller communities within the larger organizational structure, that have specific focuses locally or through a common mission. Overall, The Global Sisterhood, Inc. wants to continue grow their family of women around the world to change the world.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate The Global Sisterhood, Inc. from within in order help them to continue to grow exponentially and successfully. As a new organization, it is very important the foundation of the organization is laid and everyone participating understands the underlying mission. In order to make the most impact and continue to grow in various ways, the numerous stakeholders’ demographics, needs, and possible contributions were examined. This study also examined the organization's goals, the founder’s expectations, and stakeholders’ expectations, to ensure they all align and to examine the extent to which the mission statement is clear and being intentionally pursued. Overall, this study’s purpose is to provide guidance and instruction, that if followed, will lead to the advancement and achievement of The Global Sisterhood, Inc.’s mission statement.

**Review of Literature**

Nonprofit Structure

Nonprofits must have five key characteristics in order to be called nonprofits. These include: being institutionalized to some degree in terms of an organizational system of operations, being privately separated from the government, distributing profits into the mission of the business rather than returning it to owners, being self governing and having some sort of voluntary participation (Morris, 2000). Nonprofits tend to face levels of scrutiny and are often referred to as the “poor stepchild” in the corporate world (Ries, 2014) due to their lack of business structure. Rather than the rate of success being counted in dollars, it is determined by a commitment and contribution to a better world (Ries, 2014). It can often be difficult to measure, but by taking the time to develop a vision and mission, a nonprofit organization is able to focus and strengthen itself to obtain future concrete goals (Kilpatrick & Silverman, 2005). The difficulty rests in finding the balance between financial stability, the more corporate world goal, and the mission.

Mission Statements

        Mission statements are critical tools for achieving organizational success, because they are used to motivate staff and volunteers, are the framework for decision-making, and are a mechanism for signaling organizational legitimacy. It is possible for organizations to communicate their mission through their actions. All nonprofit organizations first must portray who and what they are and then demonstrate that they can do what they say they can (Bull, 2007). However, it is necessary to be able to evolve, adapt and have a flexibility factor related to related to the goals of the organization (Kilpatrick & Silverman, 2005). Jacobs, Marudas, Epstein and Mcfarlan all agree it is important that board members, CEOs and anyone else who may help make or be affected by the mission statement understand the importance and goals that are to be accomplished (2009, 2011). Understanding the mission statement fully is crucial because “without mission and its accountability, nonprofits have nothing” (Epstein & McFarland, 2011). Ultimately, mission statements are a foundation of a nonprofit.

Balance of Business and Mission

        A social mission is what makes an organization a nonprofit, but money, finances and business-related aspects are what keeps it running. A relationship exists between being business-like and pursuing a social mission that oftentimes creates tension. It is not recommended a binary relationship be established, but instead an understanding of two distinct, but interconnected puzzle pieces (Sanders & McCellan, 2014). A successful balance is possible when both the finance department and mission department are able to work cohesively through communication, education, involvement, reporting and an alignment of strategic goals that are acknowledged within each department (Pomeranz, 2008). Overall, the mission department needs to have a good financial understanding, discipline, and flexibility, while the finance department needs to be educated on why the mission staff does what they do. The finance department must be able to say no to alluring but distracting funding opportunities presented, but the mission department must also be willing to accept donations that are not completely aligned with the vision in order to avoid tunnel vision and encourage constructive mission growth (Kilpatrick & Silverman, 2005). Balance between the mission and business side of a nonprofit organization is essential, and without it success is not possible.

The Measurement of Success within a Nonprofit

Measuring success in a nonprofit focuses on achieving mission-related goals by measuring how the targeted community is impacted and affected. Epstein & McFarlan (2011b) propose five clusters to evaluate a nonprofit well; these include: inputs: the key tangibles and intangibles, activities: specific programs and tasks, outputs: products and services that are a result of the organization’s activities, outcomes: specific changes in behavior and individuals affected by the delivery of the products and services, and impacts: benefits to communities and societies as a whole as a result of the nonprofits outcomes. However it is still difficult to break an organization’s mission work down and grade it as efficient or inefficient. Meanwhile, measuring the successful of a nonprofit financially may seem easy. A nonprofit organization is efficient if every dollar spent returns a dollar. However, the most common definition of the word efficient is too normal of a measurement for a sector that is not normal at all (Brooks, 2006). This leads to the concept of “balance” as a performance measurement tool, involving self-reflection of the manager and board member's own perception of their organization (Bull, 2007). Some nonprofits are social driven utilizing a loose business framework while others are enterprise driven focusing on a structural business framework. Finding the balance between the two commonly causes pressure and stress between different departments. Measuring the success of a nonprofit organization can be done many different ways, but overall an organization must be responsibly completing their mission.

As new nonprofit organizations are created, networking is important to gain access to critical knowledge and funding. It also provides a means to find employees, volunteers and donors whose goals are aligned with the company’s mission. Hiring believers of the mission can increase job satisfaction and productivity (Kirk & Nolan, 2010). Networking also provides many opportunities for growth.

The Benefits of Networking

        There are countless advantages to networking. It is widely accepted that networks provide opportunities for business advice, encouragement and support. In particular, much like businesses have greater success when employees' visions are aligned to the company’s mission (Kirk & Nolan, 2010), networks are successful when the interactions among members are mutual (De Tona & Lentin, 2011). Formal networks can provide opportunities for brainstorming and access to resources that increase development and growth (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013; Cooper, Hampton & McGowan, 2009). They also help identify opportunities for personal and business success (Cooper, Hampton & McGowan, 2009). Networking encourages positive personal and professional development (Ismail & Rasdi, 2007). Research has suggested that women network differently than their male counterparts (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009). In general, networking is able “to provide women opportunities to make contacts, provide successful role models for each other, generate solutions to problems and disseminate information” (Casbolt & DeWine, 1983, pg. 58).

Women Networking in Business

        Networking is widely recognized as a fundamental entrepreneurial skill that is vital in identifying opportunities, disseminating information and accessing resources necessary for current and future growth. For women in business, networking represents a means of emotional support, relationship building and career development. Thus the needs and characteristics of female entrepreneurs’ networks are quite diverse. In addition, Holmquist (1997) suggests female entrepreneurs also differ, coming in ‘all sizes,’ from different backgrounds and with different thoughts on enterprise establishment and growth.  As a result, women entrepreneurs have different levels of motivation for networking (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013) and different methods to do so (Casbolt & DeWine, 1983).

Networking

There are different types of networks, each with a different value or purpose. Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding (2013) discuss two types of networks for women entrepreneurs, personal and business, describing how each type has its own characteristics and makeup. Personal networks are seen as a personal supportive asset and provide emotional support. Meanwhile, business networks are used for actual business-related tasks including brainstorming, development and growth (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). Friends, family and mentors would be included in a personal network, while all others that are able to provide business advice are included in one’s business network. Women tend to create informal networks that encourage social relationships (Copper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009). Networks can also be heterogeneous or homogenous (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). Heterogeneous networks are demographically and characteristically diverse based on factors such as age, gender, income, and occupational sector. Homogenous networks tend to have less diversity and members tend to share very similar characteristics. Being a part of a diverse heterogeneous network increases a woman’s motivation and willingness to participate in positive expansive network growth (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013).

        Businesswomen’s willingness to participate in networking can be broken down into three different levels of motivation: not willing, willing and extra willing (Bogren et al,, 2013). The more willing women are to network, the more expansive attitudes they hold and the more diverse and heterogeneous their network becomes. Overall, increased diversity in the network makes it more effective because diversity provides balance and a successful transition from one entrepreneurial stage to the next (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013).  Effective networks also have both informal and formal dimensions (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009). Highly formal networks tend to utilize more of a mentor-mentee approach, while highly informal networks can consist of two friends giving one another support and advice. Both types are effective but having a mix is most effective. Lastly, successful networks that reflect diversity and encourage relationships provide access to individuals and organizations that are essential in providing resources for support, decision-making and growth (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009).

        Diversity is encouraged within a network, but having like-minded individuals within a network is equally important (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013).  A network functions better and is more successful when there are more participants that fully support it and perceive it to have a collective function (Hersby, Ryan, & Jetten, 2009). Overall the more diverse and deep the characteristics of an entrepreneur's network, the better the access is to better opportunities and knowledge.

Network Stages of Business

        All networks begin with one person and then expand in various ways. The literature describes building networks in stages (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009; Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013; De Tona & Lentin, 2011) that are linked to the stage of development of the business. During the pre-start of a business, new women entrepreneurs look to networking as a way to gain information needed to establish the validity of a business idea (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009). Then, women tend to find the motivation to start the business from the encouragement and support of a small network of close friends and family around them (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009; Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013; De Tona & Lentin, 2011). Overall, this informal network provides mutual support among all that are included (De Tona & Lentin, 2011). Also for more established entrepreneurs starting another new business, networking is a way to start to learn a new sector of business and maintain a sound reputation (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009). Lastly, networking in the early stages of business prevents isolation from others that could be key to achievement (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009; De Tona & Lentin, 2011).

Overall, once the business is actually up and running, women focus on a more concentrated network, centering on obtaining the resources they need to continue to be successful (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). For example, these networking activities can occur both formally and informally with customers and suppliers (De Tona & Lentin, 2011). Over time entrepreneurs become more familiar with the wants and needs of their business. Based on this knowledge they are then able to select a more suitable network for success that can provide advice, support and help make business decisions in the areas they need (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). For more established entrepreneurs, a more formal network is able to provide expert advice and information in certain areas. For example, the advice of accountants, lawyers and consultants can be beneficial to a growing business (De Tona & Lentin, 2011). Further along, gaining a positive public reputation is important. If necessary gaining the support from any government bodies, neighboring businesses or local organizations is key to positive growth (De Tona & Lentin, 2011).

Mixed Gender Networks

        One of the largest challenges women face today, especially entrepreneurs, is social, political and economical inequality. Social inequality leads to an uneven distribution of social capital, or networking potential, among people (Alfred, 2009). As a result of social inequality, groups in the top hierarchy social positions exclude others in lower positions, such as women. Essentially, the top positions deny the lower positioned women the opportunity to access key knowledge and information through isolation. This potentially limits a woman’s business growth. Typically men hold these higher positions so, subsequently; women tend to form small informal initiatives to large national political movements with the goal of equality (Alfred, 2009). While these groups are beneficial in many ways, such as being able to discuss openly in a judgment free environment, having a gender mixed network is more beneficial than a female exclusive network, because exclusion of males is a mirror of the social inequality within the hierarchy. Excluding all males in a network can potentially limit a woman’s resources and “access to networks with critical information that can enhance a women’s development, career and life transitions” (Alfred, 2009, pg. 9). Therefore, having a gender mixed network is more beneficial than a female exclusive network (Alfred, 2009).

Modes of Networking

        There are endless ways of networking formally and informally. While family and friends provide a solid foundation, a personal willingness to participate in new networks is important (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). Personal contacts with other entrepreneurs, both male and female, are valuable (Bogren, Friedrichs, Rennemo, & Widding, 2013). It is also recommended entrepreneurs extend their formal network to include their own internal staff members to provide their own opinions and recommendations (Cooper, Hampton, & McGowan, 2009; De Tona & Lentin, 2011).

Technology has exponentially created new ways to network. Email and the Internet opened new frontiers in communication technology, reshaping the personal and professional lives of people globally (Dyrud, 2011). Face-to-face networking has traditionally been problematic in sparsely populated areas, but Skype and Facetime have enabled people to simulate this interaction. Social media such as Twitter and Facebook have also allowed people from across the globe connect. In 2015, Facebook surpassed 1.55 billion monthly users. As David Kirkpatrick (2011) explains Facebook is “a technological powerhouse with unprecedented influence across modern life, both public and private” (pg. 24). Also in 2014, Ruben Boling, Max Burns and Geoffrey Dick conducted a study that concluded Facebook was overall beneficial to entrepreneurs because of its easiness to setup and modify personal and business accounts (Boling, Burns, & Dick, 2014). It is evident technology has positively changed the way we communicate and network locally, nationally and internationally.

International Networking

        Networking internationally also provides expansive opportunities for growth and knowledge. Having a more diverse and wider network helps entrepreneurs gain a greater access of people with a wider and deeper pool of knowledge (Ismail & Rasdi, 2007) that is highly valuable (Lebedko, 2014). There is more knowledge to share and learn from because globalization continues to shrink the world (Woodhead, 2007). Also international networking provides a way to receive better recognition for one’s path breaking and creative work (Ismail & Rasdi, 2007). In 2007, Maimunah Ismail and Roziah Mohd Rasdi conducted a survey where almost all respondents “mentioned international networking as a crucial effort in consolidating their career” (pg. 161). It was concluded their belief was that international recognition would make them more visible among others (Ismail & Rasdi, 2007). Networking internationally also enables active engagement for conferences, meetings and collaborative projects. A larger circle of knowledge provides a larger set of specialized expertise and skills. This enables the development of cutting edge collaborative projects abroad (Ismail & Rasdi, 2007). Overall, international networking broadens one’s opportunities for more expansive knowledge, recognition and skills.

**Methods**

In order for The Global Sisterhood, Inc to make the most impact and continue to grow in ways that fulfill the needs of the numerous consumers, it is important that the information about the needs of the various stakeholders are examined, and that the mission statement is distinct and being intentionally pursued. In order to determine the needs of the various stakeholders, this project involved conducting a needs assessment evaluation. Also, to ensure the founder’s and stakeholders’ expectations aligned, both parties were questioned and examined. The specific means of data collection included a survey of supporters and consumers and an in-depth interview of Dr. Shellie Hipsky.

First, the survey was used to collect the demographics, needs and possible contributions of a sample of members of The Global Sisterhood, Inc. The survey included various types of questions including: multiple choice, ordinal scale, interval scale, and open ended. It was administered in two different formats.  First, it was distributed in hard copy form (see appendix A) at The Global Sisterhood, Inc Mastermind event held in downtown Pittsburgh on March 12, 2016. Thirty nine participants were presented information on why the survey was being distributed and instructions on how to fill it out in a proper fashion. They were then given fifteen minutes to complete it. The second distribution of surveys was done through an online survey software program. These participants were all members of the Global Sisterhood for Empowering Women Facebook page.They accessed the survey through a link posted within the Facebook page. The format and questions of the online survey were the exact same as the hard copy survey previously distributed. Thirteen participants took part in the survey from Monday March 28th to Monday April 4th, 2016. A total of fifty two members participated in the collection of data. All of the survey data was compiled into the online software survey program QuestionPro. The program created a frequency table for each individual question that included the frequency of each response.

Next, an in depth interview was conducted with Dr. Shellie Hipsky on April 1, 2016. The purpose was to discuss multiple topics through open ended questions. These topics included: how The Global Sisterhood, Inc. was formed, what the mission statement was and how it was developed, and also the future expectations and directions of the organization. A semi-structured interview protocol was followed in a one on one setting over a time period of forty minutes (see appendix B). The audio and video of the interview were recorded for future reference and transcribed.

To reiterate, all the data was collected through the survey and the interview. An acceptable amount of Global Sisterhood, Inc members participated in the survey to be able to define it as a sample of the stakeholders. The interview contained many general questions, but provided enough to depth to understand the purpose and mission of The Global Sisterhood, Inc. All results were drawn from the analysis of the survey and the interview.

**Results**

All fifty two participants of the survey were female. They represented five different countries around the globe. These included: Pakistan (1), Canada (1), Singapore (1), South Africa (2) and the United States of America (47). Within the United States of America nine states were represented. These included: Pennsylvania (30), New Jersey (7), New York (4), Ohio (1), Massachusetts (1), South Carolina (1), Maryland (1), Vermont (1) and California (1). Continuing, the age range of participants was very diverse. Shown below is the frequency table of the number of women that fell into each certain age group.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age Group:** | | |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| 18 – 24 | 2 | 3.8 |
| 25 – 29 | 3 | 5.8 |
| 30 – 34 | 2 | 3.8 |
| 35 – 39 | 8 | 15.4 |
| 40 – 44 | 7 | 13.5 |
| 45 – 49 | 10 | 19.2 |
| 50 – 54 | 8 | 15.4 |
| 55 – 59 | 7 | 13.5 |
| 60 -over | 5 | 9.6 |
| Total | 52 | 100.0 |

The most popular age group of 45-49 year olds included only 19.2% of the women. The majority of women were fairly evenly spread between the ages of 35 to 59. Lastly, the women had various employment statuses among themselves and some women held multiple employment roles. The majority of women were self employed in some way (65%). Meanwhile eleven participants reported working for a for-profit business, while ten claimed to work in a nonprofit business. Lastly, three women were not employed outside their homes. The diversity of the demographics of the sample of members of The Global Sisterhood, Inc. is very clear. While all members were female, the location of primary residence, age, and employment status varied greatly.

Next, the participants were questioned how they became involved with The Global Sisterhood, Inc. Seen below is the frequency table produced representing the ways members might have learned about The Global Sisterhood, Inc. Participants were allowed to select multiple options.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **How did you learn about the Global Sisterhood?** | | |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| Personal Networking | 16 | 30.8 |
| Professional Networking | 15 | 28.8 |
| Social Media | 13 | 25.0 |
| Through being Interviewed for the trilogy Common Threads | 13 | 25.0 |
| Through Reading Common Threads | 2 | 3.8 |
| Through Empowering Women’s Radio | 10 | 19.2 |
| Other | 21 | 40.1 |

The top four answers, excluding the “Other” category, were reported with similar frequencies.   Each member has learned about the Global Sisterhood in a different way or ways. This result is beneficial to the organization because it means their tops methods of reaching out, connecting and inspiring are working. The organization is spreading globally through multiple means.

Continuing within the “Other” write in answer option, two different themes arose. The first was members found out about the Global Sisterhood through other nonprofit organizations or events. The second theme, was members learned about the organization through being connected to or knowing Dr. Hipsky personally or professionally. Fourteen of twenty one that had marked “Other” specifically mentioned her name as their person of contact to the organization. This finding not only shows the importance of personal and professional networking, but that Dr. Hipsky has a strong ability to network. In the personal interview with Dr. Hipsky she mentioned connecting with others always being a level of comfort for her. Her mom used to say when she was a child she would never have to worry because she would always leave with a new best friend. Her ability to connect with a diverse group of others is confirmed through this finding.

Next, participants of the survey were asked to rank seven possible areas of focus by order of what they think the global sisterhood should be driven by. Forty six out of fifty two women participated in this question correctly. Shown below is the frequency table. The seven areas of focus included: personal networking, professional networking, education, career exposure, philanthropy, advocacy and support through inspiration, encouragement, balance and empowerment. Almost half of the women voted support through inspiration, encouragement, balance and empowerment as the  most important area of focus The Global Sisterhood, Inc should be driven by. The frequency table below shows the frequency of responses that ranked each area of focus first, second or third important out of the seven.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Areas of Focus** | | |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| Personal Networking | 10 | 21.7 |
| Professional Networking | 20 | 43.5 |
| Education | 20 | 43.5 |
| Career Exposure | 9 | 20.0 |
| Philanthropy | 21 | 45.6 |
| Advocacy | 25 | 54.3 |
| Support (Inspiration, Encouragement, Balance, Empowerment) | 33 | 71.7 |

This analysis shows again the dominance of the area of focus of support. It also shows that the sample of women are divided between four different areas almost equally. Professional networking, education, philanthropy, and advocacy all hold strong importance, but career exposure and personal networking hold little importance. During the interview the numeric finding of professional networking being more important than personal networking was expressed to Dr. Hipsky. She said “I think it is really interesting, because if it wasn’t for the personal connections then the professional networking wouldn’t be happening.” While numerically professionally seems to be a more important area of focus, Dr. Hipsky believes other wise. Her opinion is supported through previous research that has found women are more prone to create personal relationships with the members within their networks.

Next, the women were asked to rank twenty one specific areas of focus on an interval scale. The scale had three options per specific area: not important, moderately important, and very important. The data analysis shows that the women agreed upon the top five answers as being all at least moderately important. Then, over 82% of the women agreed the top five areas of focus were very important. The top five most important categories are listed below in table form.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific Areas of Focus** | | |
|  | Moderately and Very Important | Very Important |
| Providing Encouragement | 100% | 86.3% |
| Providing Inspiration | 100% | 84.3% |
| Connecting Members who provide different resources | 100% | 84.3% |
| Sharing stories of personal success | 100% | 82.4% |
| Sharing stories of professional success | 100% | 82.4% |

The top ranked areas of focus can all be categorized as intangible areas of focus. They cannot be measured using a financial or numerical scale. They are ideas that revolve around inspiration, encouragement and empowerment. This finding relates back why The Global Sisterhood, Inc is a nonprofit organization. The mission of the organization revolves around an intangible idea rather than financial gain. The mission is unable to be measured with a strictly numeric scale. The sample of members that participated in the survey showed their personal preference in the goal of the organization. They all showed a significant interest in the intangibles.

These top areas of focus can also be categorized as outward focused. They are focused on the spread of ideas around the world. Rather than concentrating solely on the current members of The Global Sisterhood, Inc, these areas look to include everyone globally. This finding also relates back to why The Global Sisterhood, Inc is a nonprofit organization. The organization focuses on inclusion and success of others, rather than greed amongst current members for financial gain.

To continue, the least important areas of focused are listed below in a second frequency table. The table shows the percentage of members who believed each area of focus was very important and not important at all. It is important to compare both frequencies because although some members believed these areas of focus were not important at all, numerically more members believed these areas of focus were very important.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific Areas of Focus** | | |
|  | Very Important | Not Important |
| Hosting Webinars | 35.3% | 13.7% |
| Career Exposure | 37.3% | 7.8% |
| Hosting Retreats | 39.2% | 15.7% |
| Hosting social events for Fundraising | 49.0% | 20.4% |

The diversity in answers makes it unclear if The Global Sisterhood, Inc. should invest any assets in these areas of focus or not. Further, three of four of these categories can be categorized as tangibles areas of focus. They consistent of actual events that can be held that would most likely bring in financial endorsements or success that can be easily measured. Even though career exposure is not as tangible as an area of focus as the other three areas, it is inward focused rather than outward. All of these areas of focus are. They focus on the exposure and participation of the current members. These areas of focus are opposite of the top five areas of focus.

The next set of  interval scale questions involved the personal impact The Global Sisterhood, Inc had on its current members. Participants were asked their agreement level of five separate statements. Their options were: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific Areas of Focus** | | | | |
|  | Number of Participants | Strongly Agree | Strongly Agree and Agree | Mean |
| I have made friendships through the Global Sisterhood. | 51 | 70.6% | 98.1% | 3.667 |
| I have made business connections through the Global Sisterhood. | 50 | 54.0% | 94.0% | 3.440 |
| Involvement with the Global Sisterhood has increased the diversity of my relationships. | 51 | 56.9% | 94.2% | 3.490 |
| I have received some form of marketing for my personal brand or my business through the Global Sisterhood. | 50 | 44.0% | 82.0% | 3.220 |
| I have contributed in a humanitarian or philanthropic way through the Global Sisterhood. | 50 | 42.0% | 82.0% | 3.300 |

 Overall, the majority of participants at least agreed with all of the statements. Overwhelming, 70.6% of participants strongly agreed they had made friendships through the organization. In addition, 27.5% of the participants at agreed they had made friendships. Only one person disagreed. This finding contradicts the early finding that professional networking is a more important area of focus then personal networking. Even though the women of the organization might not want to focus on building friendships, it clearly happens.

The numeric means shown in the frequency table represent the numerical score of the level of agreement. Four is equal to strongly agree, while one equals strongly disagree. The means were all found to be clearly over three. This finding confirms the current members agree The Global Sisterhood, Inc is completing its mission statement in multiple ways.

As the last interval question, participants of the survey were asked how they could each personally best contribute to The Global Sisterhood with their current talents, skills and resources. There were eighteen specific ways of contribution that had a three part interval scale of low or no potential, moderate potential and high potential. The specific ways of contribution was focused on tangible ways the members could use their talents, skills and resources. However, the ways of contribution were focused both inward and outwardly. The frequency table is shown below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Low or No Potential | | Moderate Potential | | High Potential | |
| n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Host a fundraising event | 16 | 31.4% | 21 | 41.2% | 14 | 27.5% |
| Host a professional development event | 15 | 30.0% | 15 | 30.0% | 20 | 40.0% |
| Host a professional networking event | 16 | 31.4% | 14 | 27.5% | 21 | 41.2% |
| Host a social networking event | 12 | 23.5% | 20 | 39.2% | 19 | 37.3% |
| Host a retreat | 22 | 44.0% | 13 | 26.0% | 15 | 30.0% |
| Make a motivational video | 14 | 28.6% | 12 | 24.5% | 23 | 46.9% |
| Serve as a Guest Blogger for the Global Sisterhood online | 12 | 23.5% | 16 | 31.4% | 23 | 45.1% |
| Serve as a social media contributor | 7 | 13.7% | 13 | 25.5% | 31 | 60.8% |
| Write articles for Inspiring Lives Magazine | 6 | 12.0% | 13 | 26.0% | 31 | 62.0% |
| Be interviewed for Empowering Women Radio | 5 | 10.0% | 8 | 16.0% | 37 | 74.0% |
| Volunteer for Global or Community Service | 3 | 5.9% | 17 | 33.3% | 31 | 60.8% |
| Web development | 37 | 72.5% | 8 | 15.7% | 6 | 11.8% |
| Copy editing | 31 | 60.8% | 12 | 23.5% | 8 | 15.7% |
| Provide Financial support | 25 | 52.1% | 16 | 33.3% | 7 | 14.6% |
| Contribute to silent auctions | 13 | 26.0% | 20 | 40.0% | 17 | 34.0% |
| Contribute to Swag Bags | 14 | 27.5% | 21 | 41.2% | 16 | 31.4% |
| Provide advertising opportunities | 22 | 44.0% | 14 | 28.0% | 14 | 28.0% |
| Be considered for serving on the Board of the Global Sisterhood | 2 | 3.9% | 16 | 31.4% | 33 | 64.7% |

Among the most popular answers were: serving as a social media coordinator, writing articles for Inspiring Lives magazine, being interviewed for Empowering Women Radio, volunteering for global or community service and being considered for serving on the board of The Global Sisterhood, Inc. These five ways to contribute were dominate with percentages of members strongly agreeing from 60.8% to 74%. The way to contribute with the next highest percentage, the sixth overall, was 46.9%. It is clear the top five ways to contribute were dominate over the other ways to contribute. The theme of these top contributions have an outward focus on spreading the organization globally. They also continue to emphasis the importance of inspiring, empowering and encouraging others, especially through nonfictional stories on multiple forms of media.

Next, the women participating in the survey were given two open-ended response questions. The first was “what does The Global Sisterhood, Inc. mean to you?” This response carried many themes, including: the next generation, encouragement, help or change, a network, empowerment, impact and global. A great answer that represents many of the main themes was “ (The Global Sisterhood is) a group of dynamic women coming together as one unit to inspire, encourage and uplift their sisters in their dreams and goal for the betterment of the globe.” The most prevalent theme in over twenty six of forty nine responses was networking. Women described the organization as a “camaraderie of souls,” “strong partnership,” and “community.” These answers show the personal connection within the network of women. The second most prevalent answer was encouragement and empowerment within over twenty three responses. Statements like “lift you up,” “support,” and “empower” were used to describe the organization. Lastly, phrases like “betterment of the globe,” “serve the world,” and “make a difference” show the theme of helping others, but in particularly globally. Each of these themes strongly relates back to the mission statement of the organization.

The second open response was “in what direction would you like to see The Global Sisterhood, Inc move in the next 1-5 years?” This response showed themes of global, expand and network. The participants used words such as “around the world,” “thrive in all continents,” and “all the world” to describe the want for the organization to be a global nonprofit. Then, words such as “grow” and “increase” were used to express the want to expand the organization. These themes were often times found together in the same responses, because the members expressed interest in the global expansion. This theme fits in perfectly with the name and mission of the organization. It is evident the members of the organization understand the mission of The Global Sisterhood and their expectations align.

The last question asked if the survey participant planned to continue to be involved with The Global Sisterhood. All fifty two women responded. Fifty checked the yes check box and two checked the unsure checkbox. The two women who were unsure were brand new to the organization and just being introduced to The Global Sisterhood, Inc. through the Mastermind event held on March 12, 2016 where the hard copy surveys were distributed. It is expected the other fifty women will continue to participate in The Global Sisterhood, Inc. in some way.

**Recommendations for Global Sisterhood**

Overall, the research completed provided a thorough understanding of The Global Sisterhood. Through the survey the various stakeholder’s demographics, needs and possible contributions were examined. Through the interview with Dr. Hipsky the foundations of the organization and her expectations for the future were explored. Both pieces provided a good amount of data to draw conclusions on what the organization, the board members and the stakeholders should focus on in order to become the most successful in terms of the organization’s mission statement.

* Balance between mission and finances
* Women do tend to create more personal relationships when networking than men
* Networks can provide endless access to resources, role models, and encouragement
* Diversity but like-mindedness among networks is important for success.
* Differences in Literature
* Example short term and long term goals
* Summary of Recommendations
* Should evaluate on a yearly basis to ensure going and growing in the right direction
* Confirm everyone on same page
* Emphasis mission statement
* Make everyone conscious of the directions need to go to complete goal
* Hold members accountable

**Data Shortcomings and Recommendations for Future Research**

Within the data collected there were shortcomings. The amount of members that participated in the survey was very few compared to the total amount of members that are apart of The Global Sisterhood. The data analyzed represents a small sample of the members of the organization. In the future an evaluator should seek a larger sample for better comparative consistency with the sample and actual organization. Also, the research on how The Global Sisterhood was formed, its mission statement and its future expectations was very brief. Only the founder, Dr. Hipsky, was interviewed. In the future, the board members and key stakeholders should also be interviewed to seek multiple perspectives. Overall, a larger sample should be used to provide more data.

Continuing, research within the nonprofit sector is becoming more common as nonprofit organizations are becoming more prevalent among all areas of the United States of America. Nonprofit organizations support an infinite amount of causes and will always be needed. Nonprofit research must continue to focus on the nonprofit’s organizational mission statement. It is the backbone of the organization and what guides the board members, staff, volunteers and any decisions being made. In order to evaluate the success of the mission statement, evaluators must focus on the tangible and the intangible goals of the organization and also the inward and outward areas of focus of the organization. A nonprofit must be generally outward focused. Also it should be noted, often times a nonprofit focuses on intangible goals that cannot be easily measured, but that is what makes them a nonprofit organization. These characteristics make nonprofit organizations who they are. Evaluators must be conscious of them.