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# Roles and Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards: The Peace Case

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NONPROFIT BOARDS: THE PEACE CASE


By

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ABSTRACT
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NONPROFIT BOARDS: THE PEACE CASE

Patrick Kennelly, B.A.

Marquette University, 2012

This exploratory study identifies the levels of importance and fulfillment of board roles and responsibilities by nonprofit peacemaking organization board members and executive directors. It suggests a three-component framework for understanding board governance. By employing purposive non-probability sampling, this study used board governance instruments, developed by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver's (1999), to identify a three-component framework: strategic activities, resource planning, and evaluations for nonprofit organizations whose mission is peacemaking. It examines the relevance of the framework suggested by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver's (1999) for nonprofit peacemaking organizations. The results of this study can be used by nonprofit peacemaking organizations to improve their governance capacity and prompt future research about the governance of nonprofit peacemaking organizational boards.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Patrick Kennelly, B.A.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Roles and Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards: The Peace Case**

Nonprofit literature identifies numerous roles and functions for nonprofit board members. Research has documented a correlation between fulfillment of these roles by the board and successful fulfillment of the mission by the nonprofit organization. However, when taken as an aggregate, the lists of board roles are often long and cumbersome. Consequently, such lists have been of little practical use for boards. In order to address this impracticality scholars have proposed frameworks to better understand board roles. Inglis (1997) proposed an empirically supported theoretical framework for understanding the roles of board members of amateur sports organizations, and subsequently performed empirical testing on it. This framework was re-examined by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) to see if it was applicable to nonprofit organizations. Building upon the work of Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999), this study aims to determine whether or not their three-component-framework of strategic activities, resource planning, and operations is applicable to nonprofit peacemaking organizations.

**Literature Review**

This review examines literature that deals with American involvement in violence, the origins of nonprofits that work for peace, and the role that boards play in governance and mission fulfillment.

Dr. King's claim that the U.S. is the largest purveyor of violence in the world remains true today. The United States is engaged in unprecedented levels of violence.  According to the Small Arms Report (2007), the United States has 270 million of the world's 875 million known firearms, or 90 weapons for every 100 Americans. The United States is also the largest exporter of firearms and light weapons, with a track record of exporting weapons to countries with a

history of human rights abuses and weapons misuse. Domestically, over 100,000 people are shot

or killed in the United States each year. The United States has the world's highest military

expenditures and U.S. military spending accounts for nearly 45% of world military expenditures

(Hellmann, 2010).  Americans are engaged in military violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen,

Pakistan, Somalia, the Philippines, and Columbia  (DeYoung & Jaffe, 2010). Despite the

presence of peace organizations and the claim that nonviolence is widely understood in U.S.

mainstream thought and institutions (Chatfield, 1999), the current level of violence indicates that

nonprofit peacemaking institutions have not accomplished their mission of building a peaceful

society free of violence.

During every period in their short history, Americans have organized themselves to

pursue peace. The roots of these peacemaking efforts can be traced to a variety of sources:

pacifist religious sects, moral revivalism, free trade liberalism, social reform movements,

democratic nationalism, internationalism, industrial philanthropy, and conservative monarchy

(Cortright, 2008). Despite the historical presence of peace societies and local peace movements,

it was not until the 1880-1890, the progressive era,  that the United States witnessed the

formation of national nonprofit organizations with a mission focused on nonviolent peacemaking

(Cortright, 2008). Throughout the twentieth century these nonprofit peacemaking organizations

worked to confront violence and end war, racism, environmental degradation, the proliferation of

nuclear weapons, and other human rights violations (Chatfield, 1999). Woehrle, Coy, and Maney

(2008) assert that these nonprofit peacemaking organizations contributed to shifting cultural

practices, to the development of public discussion on peace issues, and to the demand for

accountability in foreign policy. However, despite these gains the researchers note there is still

much work to be done by the peacemaking organizations in order to create a peaceful culture.

Additionally, the literature on the governance of nonprofit organizations has not focused

specifically on peacemaking nonprofits. Consequently, it is necessary to examine the literature

on nonprofit governance.

According to the literature and the law, the nonprofit board is legally responsible for the

nonprofit's governance (Cargo, 1997; Eyster, 1974; Hyatt & Charney, 2005; Welytok &

Welytok, 2007). Despite this, the literature has not yet fully developed theories on how

nonprofits should accomplish their missions or what factors are important for mission

fulfillment.

In an effort to explore mission accomplishment research has examined the roles of

boards. Some of these studies focused on the types of functions boards perform. In the literature,

the governance functions of the board are referred to as roles and responsibilities. The literature

has identified a variety of roles and responsibilities board members fulfill in order for a nonprofit

to achieve its mission. Brown and Chao (2007) state that board members have thirteen primary

roles and responsibilities: fund development, strategy and planning, financial oversight, public

relations, insurance of board member vitality, policy oversight, maintenance of a relationship

with the executive, provision of guidance and expertise to the organization, facilitation of grants

for the organization, generation of community respect, being a "working board," encouragement

of board membership, and becoming knowledgeable about the organization. Iecovich (2004)

claims that the literature identifies the following roles and responsibilities that nonprofit boards

must fulfill: to set and accomplish the mission of the organization, policy development, strategic

planning, monitoring fiscal matters and fundraising, monitoring and appraisal of programs and

services, management of senior human resources, maintenance of relationships with the task

environment, and self-assessment of the board's performance and effectiveness. Studies by Fenn

(1971), Green and Griesinger (1996), as well as Hevsi and Millstein (2001) have identified

similar lists of roles and responsibilities.

Realizing that governance was effected by how roles and responsibilities were executed

some research is focused on the efficiency of boards and board processes. Bradshaw, Murray, &

Wolpin (1992) report that boards perceived as being proactive have an effect on the nonprofit's

performance. Additionally, they claim that proactive boards tend to have higher degrees of

formalization, as demonstrated by the following: strategic planning, development of a common

vision of the organization's activities, and operation according to guidelines for meeting

management. They also noted that the more formalized boards have a higher, although more

limited, effect on organizational performance impacting objective measures such as increasing

the budget of the nonprofit and avoiding deficits. Parker (2007) noted that humor and informality

are keys to the development and maintenance of board relationships. He also noted that the use

of structured agendas and managed meetings impacts the success of the meetings.

Other research has focused on perceptions of board members and executives' board

governance. Heimovics and Herman (1990) report that the chief executive, rather than the board,

is perceived as responsible for the nonprofit's successes and failures by both the board and chief

executive. Preston and Brown (2004) examined how levels of commitment impact board

member performance. Their research suggests that the following contribute to a positive role in

effective commitment by board member and executive-perceived participation and performance

by board members: a positive correlation between normative commitment, executive-perceived

participation of board members, and the number of hours donated to the organization; and a

positive relationship between board member self-reported involvement and executive judgments

of participation and value. Inglis (1997) discovered that perceptions differ by gender. She

discovered that female board members tend to rate roles related to mission and planning as more important than male board members.

Research examining the fulfillment of nonprofit roles and responsibilities has dealt with individual contributions and board contributions. Iecovich (2004) claimed that the level of participation by boards and levels of contributions by individual board members varies by organization. In a study examining whether the roles and responsibilities identified in the nonprofit literature were applicable to amateur sports organizations, Inglis (1997) proposed a theoretical framework for understanding the roles and responsibilities of amateur sports organizations. She also found that board members rate the importance of roles and responsibilities as more important than their ratings of fulfillment of these roles and responsibilities.

Noting that lists of roles and responsibilities were often too extensive and impractical for use by boards, Inglis (1997) researched the availability of empirical support for a theoretical framework based upon the roles and responsibilities identified in the literature. Using factor analysis with oblimin rotation and Kaiser normalizations, their research identified a four-part framework to group the roles and responsibilities of the board of amateur sports organizations as follows: mission, planning, executive director, and community relations.

To assess the practicality and usefulness of Inglis's (1997) framework Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) developed two instruments to determine if a similar framework was applicable for community nonprofit boards. Their research identified a three-factor framework for grouping roles and responsibilities:

- Strategic activities involve planning, collaborating to construct an organizational mission and vision, assessing the performance of the CEO or executive director

and board, establishing policies so that staff can deliver programs and services,

and expanding into the community to build partnerships and respond to needs.

- Operations involves activities related to strategic planning, fund development, and

  advocacy by developing and delivering programs and services, advocating for the

  interests of groups, and raising funds for the organization.

- Resource planning involves managing the organization's financial and human

  resources. This includes setting annual budget allocations, hiring senior staff other

  than the executive director or chief executive officer, and setting financial policy.

Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) note a gap exists between what board members of

community organizations rank as important functions versus how the same board members rank

their fulfillment of those functions. Additionally, they claim that this gap between importance

and fulfillment data suggests that the boards of nonprofit organizations need to reduce the gap so

that important functions are fulfilled. They also note the need for further research about roles and

responsibilities. In particular, they call for additional examination of the "assessment of how

important the roles are perceived to be and the degree to which the roles and responsibilities are

being fulfilled" (Inglis, Alexander, & Weaver, 1999, p. 165).

This study seeks to identify the levels of importance and fulfillment of board roles and

responsibilities in the context of Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver's (1999) three-component

framework: strategic activities, resource planning, and operations for nonprofit organizations

whose mission is peacemaking. The study also seeks to determine if the three-component

framework is applicable to nonprofit peacemaking organizations.

**Methodology**

The data reported in this paper is the result of a quantitative study employing purposive non-probability sampling. Board members and executive directors of nonprofits whose organizational mission is peacemaking were asked to complete the scale and questionnaire developed by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999). The researcher selected organizations that had activities targeted toward peacemaking both nationally in the United States and internationally. The researcher consulted with a panel of experts to verify the appropriateness of the selected organization for participation in this study. These experts included two Peace Studies professors, one Noble Peace Prize nominee; and three individuals who work full-time in community peace organizations and who have experience in domestic and international peacemaking. The organizations selected include two organizations that approach peacemaking through an academic orientation and several organizations that approached peacemaking using an applied orientation.

Initially, the researcher approached board members and executive directors though e-mail correspondence and phone calls. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and communicated that study participants will be informed that participation is completely voluntary, that all responses would be anonymous, that no identification of individual participants or organizational names would be released and all data would be reported in aggregate.

After the organization agreed to participate in the study, the researcher distributed the survey electronically to the executive director and board members. Using Opinio, respondents were asked to rate on two separate five-point Likert scales the degree of importance of each role and responsibility and the degree of fulfillment of each role and responsibility. A 'not applicable' response was available for each item. The researcher gathered demographic data on the operating

budget of each nonprofit, the size of the board, number of annual meetings, and number of years

of existence, as well as demographic information of the board members, including gender, and

years of service on the organizations' boards. A follow-up e-mail was sent to the executive

director and board member of each organization to encourage participation in the study.

## Results and Discussion

Eleven organizations were invited to participate in the survey and ten organizations

agreed to participate. The executive director or equivalent from each organization was asked to

provide information about the organization. Six organizations provided information about the

organization including number of board meetings and operating budget. Five organizations

provided information about the organization age.  This information is presented in Table 1.

| Table 1. Organizations Information | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| If you are the executive director or equivalent please indicate the number of years the nonprofit has been operating | | | If you are the executive director or equivalent please indicate the number of board meetings held each year. | |
| Years in Existence | # of Organizations | | # of Board Meetings | # of Organizations |
| 0-5 | 1 | | 0 | 0 |
| 6-10 | 0 | | 1 | 0 |
| 11-25 | 3 | | 2 | 0 |
| 26-50 | 1 | | 3 | 4 |
| 76+ | 1 | | 4 | 1 |
| Total | 5 | | 5+ | 1 |
| | | | Total | 6 |
| If you are the executive director or equivalent please indicate the nonprofits operating budget | | | | |
| Operating Budget | # of Organizations | | | |
| $0-$50,000 | 1 | | | |
| $50,001-$250,00 | 3 | | | |
| $250,001-$500,000 | 1 | | | |
| $500,000+ | 1 | | | |
| Total | 6 | | | |

Of the 104 surveys distributed, 62 surveys were returned. All of the returned surveys were usable resulting in a response rate of 59%. While a 100% response rate is desirable, the 59% response rate is appropriate for research and is a higher response rate than typically achieved with the use of email-administered surveys (Baruch & Holton, 2008).

The sample consisted of executive directors or CEOs or Presidents, executive board members, and board members or council members or committee members. Demographic information including gender, position, and years of service in their position was gathered. This information is presented in Table 2.

| Table 2. Respondent Demographics | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Please indicate your gender** | | | | **Please indicate your position** | | |
| Gender | Frequency | Percent | | | Frequency | Percent |
| No Answer | 4 | 6.5 | | Board Member or Council Member or Committee Member | 36 | 58.1 |
| Female | 23 | 37.1 | | Executive Board Member | 19 | 30.6 |
| Male | 35 | 56.5 | | Executive Director or CEO or President | 7 | 11.3 |
| Total | 62 | 100.0 | | Total | 62 | 100.0 |

| **Please indicate the number of years you have served in your position** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Years | Frequency | Percent |
| No Answer | 1 | 1.6 |
| 0-1 | 9 | 14.5 |
| 1-2 | 15 | 24.2 |
| 3 | 8 | 12.9 |
| 4 | 2 | 3.2 |
| 5 | 4 | 6.5 |
| 5+ | 23 | 37.1 |
| Total | 62 | 100.0 |

**Factor Analysis**

To determine whether or not Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver's (1999) three component framework of strategic activities, resource planning, and operations is applicable to nonprofit

peacemaking organizations, it was necessary to subject the data gathered on the fourteen roles

and responsibilities listed in the instrument to a principal components analysis (PCA) using

SPSS Version 19. Before running the PCA, the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis

was evaluated. The correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 or higher.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .732 for the importance of roles questions. The Kaiser-

Meyer-Olkin value was .682 for the fulfillment of roles questions. Both of these scores exceeded

the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for both sets of

questions was .000. This score did not exceed the .05 threshold to infer statistical significance

(Pallant, 2007). These scores support the factorability of the correlation matrix.

The initial PCA indicated the presence of four components for the importance of roles

and responsibilities questions and the presence of three components for fulfillment of roles and

responsibilities questions with eigenvalues exceeding 1. In both PCAs, the secree plot revealed a

clear break after the third component. After conducting Catell's secree test, it was decided to

retain three components for further analysis.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 11

**Table 3 Factor Matrices for Board Roles and Responsibilities**

| | Factor 1 Operations ** | | Factor 2 Evaluations ** | | Activities ** | | Communilities *** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Importance | Fullfilment | Importance | Fullfilment | Importance | Fullfilment | Importance | Fullfilment |
| Developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization | 0.214 | 0.714 | 0.274 | -0.015 | **-0.772** | **0.577** | 0.599 | 0.619 |
| Setting financial policy | 0.373 | **0.87** | 0.445 | 0.007 | -0.647 | 0.257 | 0.528 | 0.769 |
| Setting annual budget allocations | **0.308** | **0.773** | 0.181 | 0.082 | -0.629 | 0.288 | 0.414 | 0.612 |
| Developing collaborations and partnerships | 0.65 | 0.138 | 0.192 | 0.47 | **-0.317** | **0.696** | 0.45 | 0.626 |
| Ensuring a mission and vision for the organization | 0.009 | 0.463 | 0.137 | -0.107 | **-0.795** | **0.532** | 0.69 | 0.387 |
| Hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive director/CEO) | **0.637** | **0.449** | 0.247 | 0.343 | -0.304 | 0.376 | 0.445 | 0.357 |
| Responding to community needs | **0.628** | 0.164 | 0.476 | 0.164 | -0.265 | 0.815 | 0.564 | 0.691 |
| Setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services | **0.507** | **0.805** | 0.164 | -0.08 | -0.657 | 0.217 | 0.545 | 0.659 |
| Raising funds for the organization | **0.433** | **0.336** | 0.711 | 0.106 | -0.345 | 0.682 | 0.637 | 0.471 |
| Developing specific programs and services | **0.823** | 0.277 | -0.222 | 0.795 | -0.217 | 0.415 | 0.779 | 0.762 |
| Ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing | 0.086 | 0.613 | **0.682** | **-0.424** | -0.514 | 0.573 | 0.582 | 0.736 |
| Advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves | **0.655** | 0.22 | 0.097 | 0.194 | -0.156 | 0.7 | 0.431 | 0.499 |
| Evaluation of the executive director/CEO's performance | -0.127 | 0.55 | **0.85** | **-0.565** | -0.138 | 0.258 | 0.774 | 0.62 |
| Delivering specific programs and service | **0.83** | 0.239 | -0.188 | 0.857 | -0.118 | **0.403** | 0.769 | 0.841 |
| Eigenvalues | 4.517 | 4.837 | 2.395 | 2.426 | 1.295 | 1.387 | | |
| Percentage Variance | 32.263 | 34.5 | 17.109 | 17.32 | 9.248 | 9.907 | | |

* Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. a. 3 components extracted

** Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

*** Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

In order to compare the results from this study to Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) a three-component solution was forced for the importance of roles and responsibilities questions. Table 3 provides the factors, items, their loadings, coefficients, variance, and eigenvalues. The results of the PCAs revealed that each of the roles and responsibilities identified by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) could be arranged in empirically supported and conceptually meaningful groups. This grouping supports the claim that these fourteen roles and responsibilities are relevant for nonprofit peacemaking boards to consider.

The roles and responsibilities associated with the first factor focus on operations. Operations contains nine roles and responsibilities that deal with the fiscal and internal operations of nonprofits. Four of the roles and responsibilities are the same as the four roles and responsibilities that Inglis (1997) and Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) identified as operations. These roles and responsibilities are: raising funds for the organization, developing and delivering specific programs and services, and advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves. The remaining five roles and responsibilities are: setting financial policy, setting annual budget allocations, hiring senior paid staff other than the executive director or CEO, setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services, and responding to community needs. This categorization of operations seems appropriate for these nine roles and responsibilities because it is consistent with Inglis, Alexander, & Weaver's (1999) definition of operations as internally focused and pertaining to the roles and responsibilities associated with task of advocating, planning, and fundraising.

The roles and responsibilities associated with the second factor focus on evaluation. This factor contains two roles and responsibilities that focus on monitoring the performance of the

nonprofits' leadership. These factors are an ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing, and evaluation of the executive director/CEO's performance. It seems appropriate that board members would perceive these roles as important given their legal and moral responsibility for the nonprofit's operation. The evaluation factors reflect the emphasis in the literature that board members should strive to ensure that good governance and leadership exist for the organization (Fenn, 1971; Green & Griesinger (1996); Hevsi & Millstein, 2001).

The roles and responsibilities associated with the third factor focus on strategic activities. The operations contain three roles and responsibilities. These are developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization, developing collaborations and partnerships, and ensuring a mission and vision for the organization.  The grouping of strategic activities reflects the emphasis in the literature on board members' responsibility for the mission of the nonprofit and its long-term well-being (Iecovich, 2004; Brown & Chao, 2007). Although developing collaborations and partnerships did not have the high empirical rankings of the other two factors, it seems appropriately grouped under strategic activities given the emphasis in the literature of board members serving as community connectors and boundary expanders (Brown & Chao, 2007).  The categorical grouping of these activities is consistent with Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver's (1999) identification of strategic activities being future and externally focused.


**Descriptive Statistics and the Roles**

In order to determine the rankings of importance and fulfillment of board roles and responsibilities, both means and standard deviations for each of the fourteen roles were calculated and are presented in Table 4.

Using the rating developed by Inglis, Alexander, and Weavers (1999), a 4.00 or higher on a five point scale indicated a high ranking, eight roles and responsibilities were rated as high in

importance to participants: ensuring a mission and vision for the organization (mean = 4.72), developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization (mean = 4.45), setting financial policy (mean = 4.33), evaluation of the executive director/CEO's performance (mean = 4.29), setting annual budget allocations (mean = 4.24), setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services (mean = 4.17), responding to community needs (mean = 4.11) and raising funds for the organization (mean = 4.09). It is of note that both this study and that by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) found the roles and responsibilities to be of high importance.

Six roles and responsibilities were ranked between 3.00 to 3.99 range on the five point scale, a ranking Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) identified as indicating moderate importance: ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing (mean= 3.98), developing collaborations and partnerships (mean = 3.86), advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves (mean = 3.73), developing specific programs and services (mean = 3.31), hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive director/CEO) (mean = 3.07), delivering specific programs and services (mean = 3.02).

Five of the roles and responsibilities that received high ratings of importance received moderate rates of fulfillment: developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization (mean = 3.86), setting annual budget allocations (mean = 3.84), evaluation of the executive director/CEO's performance (mean = 3.82), setting financial policy (mean = 3.57), responding to community needs (mean = 3.67). This suggests that these are roles and responsibilities that board members and executive directors are attempting to fulfill but may need additional education or support in order to fulfill.

Five of the roles and responsibilities that received moderate ratings of importance also received moderate ratings of fulfillment: developing collaborations and partnerships (mean = 3.54), setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services (mean = 3.24), ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing (mean = 3.19), advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves (mean = 3.18), delivering specific programs and services (mean = 3.00). This data suggest the boards of peacemaking organizations and executive directors believe they are satisfactorily completing these roles and responsibilities.

| Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Board Roles and Responsibilities: Importance and Fulfillment | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of setting financial policy. | 4.33 | .893 | .118 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are setting financial policy. | 3.70 | 1.224 | .162 |
| Pair 2 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of ensuring a mission and vision for the organization. | 4.72 | .521 | .067 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are ensuring a mission and vision for the organization. | 4.25 | .907 | .116 |
| Pair 3 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization | 4.45 | .730 | .096 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization. | 3.86 | 1.067 | .140 |
| Pair 4 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of responding to community needs | 4.11 | .965 | .131 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are responding to community needs. | 3.67 | .952 | .130 |
| Pair 5 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of evaluating the executive director/CEO's performance | 4.29 | .866 | .124 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are conducting evaluation of the executive director/CEO's performance. | 3.82 | 1.364 | .195 |
| Pair 6 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of developing collaborations and partnerships. | 3.86 | .862 | .115 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are developing collaborations and partnerships. | 3.54 | 1.111 | .149 |
| Pair 7 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services. | 4.17 | .841 | .114 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services. | 3.57 | 1.207 | .164 |
| Pair 8 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of conducting ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing. | 3.98 | 1.017 | .134 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are engaged in ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing. | 3.19 | 1.344 | .176 |
| Pair 9 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of setting annual budget allocations. | 4.24 | .947 | .135 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are setting annual budget allocations. | 3.84 | .943 | .135 |
| Pair 10 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of raising funds for the organization. | 4.09 | 1.061 | .146 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are raising funds for the organization. | 2.98 | 1.278 | .176 |
| Pair 11 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves. | 3.73 | 1.065 | .160 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves. | 3.18 | .922 | .139 |
| Pair 12 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of developing specific programs and services. | 3.31 | 1.271 | .173 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are developing specific programs and services. | 2.96 | 1.273 | .173 |
| Pair 13 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of delivering specific programs and service. | 3.02 | 1.498 | .204 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are delivering specific programs and service. | 3.00 | 1.374 | .187 |
| Pair 14 — Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, for the importance of hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive director/CEO). | 3.07 | 1.387 | .212 |
| Please indicate your level of agreement, as it pertains to your position in the organization, that you are involved in the hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive director/CEO). | 2.49 | 1.420 | .217 |

Four roles and responsibilities identified of moderate importance received mean

fulfillment rankings below 3.0 suggesting that board members are not fulfilling these roles.

These roles and responsibilities are raising funds for the organization (mean = 2.98), developing

specific programs and services (mean = 2.96), hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive

director/CEO) (mean=2.49). This suggests that board members may not fully understand how to

fulfill the roles and responsibilities that received moderate importance rankings or these roles

and responsibilities may be neglected. These are roles and responsibilities on which peace

organizations may need to focus to improve the capacity of the board members and executive

directors to fulfill each.

In order to determine whether a statistical difference existed between the ratings of

importance and fulfillment for the roles and responsibilities a paired sample t-test was conducted.

These results are presented in Table 5. With the exception of delivering specific programs and

service, the t-test revealed that there was empirical support to claim that for every role and

responsibility, there was a significant difference between the board member or executive

directors rating of importance and the board members rating of fulfillment of that role and

responsibility. This test supports Inglis, Alexander, and Weavers (1999) claim that nonprofit

organizations need to be more attuned to fulfilling these roles and responsibilities.

This study supports the roles and responsibilities prescribed in the literature as an

appropriate framework for understanding board roles and responsibilities (Fenn, 1971; Green &

Griesinger, 1996; Hevsi & Millstein, 2001). The differences between board members' rankings

of the importance of activities versus the lower fulfillment rankings suggest that nonprofit

peacemaking organizations need to examine and attend to these discrepancies. This study

supports the suggestion by Inglis, Alexander, and Weaver (1999) that board roles and

responsibilities can be grouped into a meaningful framework for understanding the functions of

nonprofit boards. In particular, it supports the categories of strategy and operation, albeit with a

slightly different understanding. It also suggests that for nonprofit peacemaking organizations

evaluation is a more appropriate third category of roles and responsibilities than resource

planning.

| Table 5. Paired Samples Test Paired Differences | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Difference | | | | | |
| Roles & Responsibilities | Mean (Importance - Fulfillment) | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Lower | Upper | t | n*** | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Setting financial policy | .632 | 1.080 | .143 | .345 | .918 | 4.417 | 57 | 56 | .000 |
| Ensuring a mission and vision for the organization | .475 | .887 | .114 | .248 | .703 | 4.186 | 61 | 60 | .000 |
| Developing and assessing long-range plans and overall strategy for the organization | .586 | 1.009 | .133 | .321 | .852 | 4.423 | 58 | 57 | .000 |
| Responding to community needs | .444 | 1.003 | .137 | .171 | .718 | 3.256 | 54 | 53 | .002 |
| Evaluating the executive director/CEO's performance | .469 | 1.174 | .168 | .132 | .807 | 2.798 | 49 | 48 | .007 |
| Developing collaborations and partnership | .321 | .917 | .122 | .076 | .567 | 2.624 | 56 | 55 | .011 |
| Setting policy from which the paid staff and program volunteers can deliver the programs and services | .593 | 1.108 | .151 | .290 | .895 | 3.931 | 54 | 53 | .000 |
| Conducting ongoing evaluation of how well the board is doing | .793 | 1.253 | .165 | .464 | 1.123 | 4.820 | 58 | 57 | .000 |
| Setting annual budget allocations | .408 | .864 | .123 | .160 | .656 | 3.307 | 49 | 48 | .002 |
| Raising funds for the organization | 1.113 | 1.266 | .174 | .764 | 1.462 | 6.402 | 53 | 52 | .000 |
| Advocating for the interests of certain groups or persons the organization serves | .545 | .901 | .136 | .272 | .819 | 4.016 | 44 | 43 | .000 |
| Developing specific programs and services | .352 | 1.200 | .163 | .024 | .679 | 2.155 | 54 | 53 | .036 |
| Delivering specific programs and service | .019 | 1.266 | .172 | -.327 | .364 | .107 | 54 | 53 | .915 |
| Hiring senior paid staff (other than the executive director/CEO) | .581 | 1.314 | .200 | .177 | .986 | 2.902 | 43 | 42 | .006 |
| *Specified alpha value of .05* | | | | | | | | | |
| **95% confidence interval of the difference | | | | | | | | | |
| ***When respondents indicated 'not applicable', it was not possible to compare the means from all of the surveys. | | | | | | | | | |

**Implications for nonprofit peacemaking organizations & future research**

The three-factor framework of strategic activity, operation, and evaluation supported in

this study serves as a simple, concise way of understanding nonprofit peacemaking organization

board governance. It may be useful for board members and executive directors to think of their

roles and responsibilities within a cycle of governance operations (see Figure 1). This circular

model may assist board members in ensuring they attend to the task of each of the components.

The connections between each component may help remind board members that each component

impacts and informs the other components.

**Figure 1**
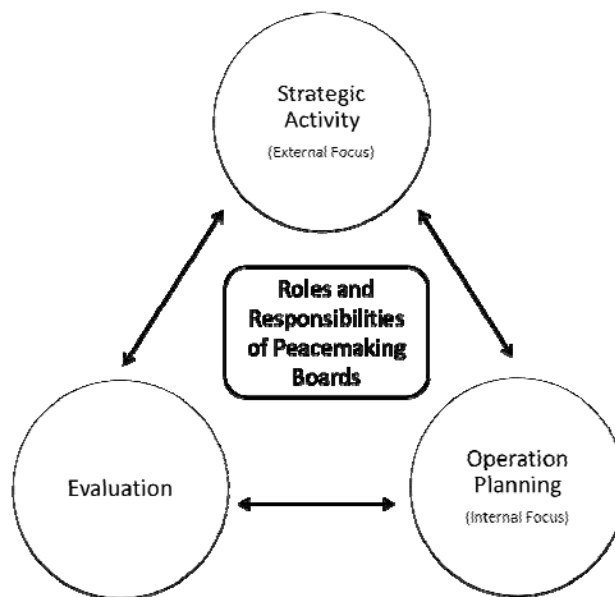


The strategic activity component encourages the board members to pay attention to

ensuring the mission while developing a strategy to guide the organization and also to develop

the external relationships necessary so that organization will thrive. When considering the

strategic activity component, it is imperative that the operational capacity of the organization and

its previous evaluations be considered. The second component of operations addresses the

implementation component of the strategic activity. This component is useful for board and

nonprofit leadership to consider how their work enables the nonprofit peacemaking organization

to achieve its objectives. The third component calls for reflection and evaluation of the leader

and board of the organizations. It follows that the evaluation should be based on the strategy and

operations of organizations. Further, the result of the evaluation must inform the strategic

activity and operations of the nonprofit in the future.

This study and framework may be useful for nonprofit peacemaking organizations in a

variety of ways. First, it provides a concise way for board members to conceptualize their work.

This understanding of governance may inform how board members allocate their time, the types

of board development practices in place, and the skill set the board seeks for potential new

members. This framework may also be useful for board education and communication. The

study may also spark conversations about how boards ensure they fulfill their moral and legal

obligations as directors. Organizations can use this framework to help promote understanding of

the purpose of the board.

Future research is necessary to examine how these roles and responsibilities are actually

fulfilled. Questions such as: why do board members perceive certain roles as important?  How do

board members perceive fulfillment of roles?  Can boards increase engagement in other areas

where fulfillment rates were below rankings of importance? How do boards members use the

three-factor framework proposed in this study? Does the adoption of the framework for

understanding governance improve organizational efficacy? How do gender, age, and other

factors influence board member perception? How and why do board members' and executive

directors' perceptions vary as they relate to board governance? Is there a connection between the

level of fulfillment of one of the categories in the framework and the fulfillment of the other

categories? How do board members determine which roles to strive to fulfill?

Given the continued expansion of violence in the world and the critical role that nonprofit

peacemaking organizations hold in proliferating information, strategies and knowledge about the

peacemaking process and its importance, it is essential that the boards of nonprofit peacemaking

organizations examine and strive to fulfill their roles and responsibilities. The three-factor

framework of strategic activity, operations, and evaluations is a simple and practical tool for this

purpose.

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