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Original Paper

Fundraising in the Higher Education Context: A Topical and Theoretical Literature Review

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Abstract

This paper aims at design a topical and theoretical literature review about fundraising in the higher education context. Fundraising is a topic that deserves a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach relating to the focus of the analysis: there are some themes that have been investigated more than others, whereas others have been objects of analysis without any theoretical framework support. Hence, literature about fundraising is still lacking and calls for further investigations and analyses. This paper aims at identifying the state of the art about fundraising literature and the gap(s) that further investigation should try to fill.

Keywords

fundraising, universities, literature review, theoretical framework

1. Introduction

Fundraising in higher education context is an issue that has been discussed by several studies since the Thirties of the XX century (Flack, 1932; Stover, 1930). However, these works were lacking relating to the historical perspective and scientific rigor: they were not supported by a theoretical framework, since they were delivered by fundraising practitioners rather than academic scholars. The situation changed in the middle of the 1970s, when several researches about educational fundraising were published, covering a lot of relating topics, like fundraising strategies, donors' behavior, donations drivers and funding challenges (Lasher & Cook, 1996).

Moreover, collecting funds to sustain education institutions is a very ancient activity that has existed since the foundation of the Academy of Plato (Fisher, 1989; Brittingam & Pezzullo 1990). However, there are a few literature references regarding educational philanthropy at those times. The situation started to change when the first universities were born in the Middle Age (Lasher & Cook, 1996).

Within these institutions presidents and deans were in charge for fundraising issues, in order to support the academic activities (Schachner, 1962). When the Modern Age started, this situation did not change, since the role of rectors as fundraisers was reinforced. In fact, in the USA collegiate fundraising started in 1640, with the first president of Harvard College. This is not the only fundraising's best practice, since there were several colonial colleges, in the British North American colonies, that were seeking for financial support by philanthropists, before and after the American Revolution (Curti & Nash, 1965; McAnear, 1952, 1955). The strategic role of presidents has continued throughout the XVIII and XIX centuries: in those days, they were aided by several professional figures, like the governing board, alumni board and deans. However, the fundraising success was linked with executive leadership, since philanthropic relationships were mainly based on trust and loyalty (Stover, 1930). Then, it was only in the XX century that universities started to organize and develop fundraising campaigns through professional techniques (Lasher & Cook, 1996). First of all, in the 1920s a new position was created in the higher education context: the development officer. Anyway, fundraising responsibility was still in charge of universities' presidents and their staff (Flack, 1932). The following step was to delegate the fundraising function to a vice president, who had the role of coordinator with other functions, like alumni affairs and public relations (Jacobson, 1990). In some universities, after the World War I, a fundraising consultant was in charge for this task (Cutlip, 1965). Finally, since the 1950s universities started to employ their own professional fundraising staffs, developing the actual organizational structure, according to which presidents are in charge of fundraising strategy, being assisted by delegates in charge of fundraising management and coordination with other relating functions (Reck, 1976).

From the historical perspective aforementioned, it is clear that fundraising has grown in term of importance within the higher education context. Since the Middle Age, presidents have maintained their role in determining success or failure of fundraising activities, since they are those who formulate the general strategy and vision, who decide which fundraising campaigns have to be run and, eventually, who are crucial in managing relations among different board of trustees, like the governing board and the alumni board (Cowley, 1980; Panas, 1984; Lasher & Cook, 1996).

Furthermore, according to Lasher and Cook (1996), literature about fundraising issues within the higher education context, especially relating to the presidents' role, has been lacking till the 1970s and the 1980s. Thus, in the 1990s several scholars started to be interested in building a theoretical perspective about this topic (Kelly, 1991). Besides, since in 2008 a huge economic crisis started, known as "Big Recession", the interest of scholars about fundraising issues has grown considerably, considering different contexts, like nonprofit sector and public entities. Among the latter, universities are attracting greater attention from academics (Mapulanga, 2013). Eventually, a new fundraising's phenomenon was born in the 2000s: crowdfunding (Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2010). Nowadays, crowdfunding has become one of the most effective fundraising tools, even within higher education

(Colasanti et al., 2018).

Since the Big Recession has started, governmental financing to higher education and especially to public universities has been reduced severely. Hence, these institutions were forced to consider the competitive financing promoted at international, national and local level. Obviously, this change led to develop new processes and to organize new organizational units for managing all the relating activities. This study will be focused mainly on philanthropy, but it is worthwhile to consider the role of "competitive fundraising", especially referring to the context of analysis, which is those of Italian public universities.

Hence, fundraising is an interdisciplinary topic, which covers different fields of studies in different contexts of analysis. Literature review shown in this paper will be focused on the public sector and in particular on public higher education context.

This paper starts with the methodology used to design the literature review. This section is followed by the literature review about fundraising in the higher education context, providing a general description of the streams of literature individuated. Afterwards, the results of the review are discussed as the literature gap(s) and further development of the analysis. Finally, some general conclusions are proposed.

2. Method

The aim of this paper is to deliver a summary of the state of the art in fundraising within higher education context. Moreover, this literature review enhances to identify the boundaries of the existing frameworks and, hence, new areas of investigations. Eventually, this paper's results are useful to recognize literature gap(s) and further research questions (Rowley & Slack, 2004).

The on-line database used to search for literature about the topic is Scopus (https://www.scopus.com). The reasons why it was chosen are various: first of all it is the largest database of peer-reviewed literature, with grounded theoretical basis and a critical approach to conceptual models. Furthermore, the literature includes scientific journals, books and conference proceedings. All them have been considered for the creation of this paper. The search was done considering title, abstract and keywords of the references, using the following keywords and the Boalean operators in capital letters:

- fundraising AND universities: 346 results;
- crowdfunding AND universities: 65 results;
- fundraising AND higher education: 69 results;
- crowdfunding AND higher education: 8 results.

Literature Review was drawn together following the process in five steps described by Rowley and Slack (2004). First of all, the documents were scanned in order to have some insights into the most important topics to be included in the literature review. Besides, all abstracts were read in order to understand if each literature resource was suitable to the topic/context and the aim of this study, not considering those that were off-topic. Hence, the outputs of this first step were a reduction in the number of references (from 488 to 160) and the categorization of the latter within similar research themes.

Then, the second step consists in making notes of the most important topics delivered by the literature resources, in order to recognize the sources to be cited in the paper. Afterwards, literature review has to be structured, identifying the key themes, throughout the review, as categories according to which each source has to be included. Hence, the structure of the literature review emerges from the literature itself, without pre-defined building approach. Then, the broad structure of the review is defined: all the documents considered are ascribed to the sections shown in the following paragraph.

3. Result

Fundraising is a very multi-faceted topic that can be investigated by several points of view. This is confirmed by the literature considered by this study and summarized in Table 1: the first column identifies the number of the group to which each reference belong according to its focus of analysis; the second column shows the number of papers and books contained in each group, whereas the third column specifies the focus of analysis of the references included in each group (some of them are included in more than one group). Finally, the fourth column indicates the main theoretical frameworks used by some literature sources in order to support their researches. These studies are shown in the fifth column.

The first group of references is focused on factors that can influence fundraising success. Most of them are empirical studies that try to develop models to understand which are the key performance drivers of a fundraising campaign, according to different contexts of analysis. Moreover, some predictive models for fundraising's output are delivered by quantitative studies (Colombo et al., 2015; Vequist, 2017; Yang et al., 2017;). However, although results shown by these types of researches are quite interesting in terms of empirical suggestions for fundraising practitioners, general conclusions are quite tautological because they simply link past results to future goals, without considering interaction effects. Furthermore, the first group of references provides the factors that can affect fundraising's process results in terms of output, which is the amount of money gathered by donors. Obviously, these factors are not general, but they are linked to the type of the institution, which has begun the fundraising process, and to the context in which it operates. Before the beginning of the digital era, Berger and Smith (1997) indicate the language's style used in direct mailing as a crucial factor for fundraising success. In detail, they show how suggesting a donation, expressing the frame in a positive or negative way and the inclusion or not of at least two independent types of institutional information, in addition to donors' segmentation variables, affect fundraising performance. Later, different scholars pointed out the crucial role of good writing and communicational abilities required by storytelling (Allison, 2015; Doan & Morris, 2012; Zhou & Ye, 2018). Nowadays, this kind of abilities is really important for those institutions that are active in getting funds through the social networks (Vequist, 2015). Indeed, on-line fundraising is becoming more and more popular since several people are easily achievable through the Internet. Hence, all factors like social influence of promoters, interpersonal skills, viral marketing and viral networks affect fundraising process output (Doan & Morris, 2012; Yang et al., 2017; Zhou & Ye, 2018). Beyond the crucial role of on-line fundraising and social networks, providing clear information to donors' (transparency), as precise fundraising goals, means and outcome (accountability), has an impact on the fundraising performance (Ahlers et al., 2015; Doan & Morris, 2012). Hence, all the fundraising tasks aforementioned need a professional staff in charge with fundraising processes output and performance. Factors relating to organization and human resources, like leaders' skills, staffs' professional capacity, collaboration and relationships' building are not overlooked by the literature (Breeze et al., 2011; Doan & Morris, 2012). More specifically, Breeze et al. (2011) distinguish fundraising performance factors as institutional privilege, internal and external factors. Moreover, the former concerns university's reputation as education and research's institute, organization's wealth from financial point of view and networks with other (public and private) institutions. Relating to the latter, Breeze et al. considers focus and investment on fundraising activities and fundraising's cultures of universities as "internal success factors". Finally, external factors deal with social, economic and political environments and regards cultural practices towards philanthropy and the existence of tax break for donations.

Despite the number of works included in the first group of references is quite considerable (30), researches supported by a grounded theoretical framework are only a few (2). In fact, in his historiographical essay, Freeman (2010) states that he adopts Agency Theory as a framework to explore the institutional experiences and documents of northern black colleges in order to explore the philanthropy within African-American higher education in the XIX century. This framework is useful to understand why, within African-American higher education context there has been a static view of philanthropy. However, Freeman does not contribute to the development of this theory, using it only to support the results of his research. Then, Allison et al. (2015), in their paper about crowdfunding within a prosocial microlending context, adopt Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Self-determination Theory in order to explain lenders behaviors: they conclude that lenders are more likely to sustain others when the support is perceived as a chance to help other rather than when it seems a business opportunity. Again, these theoretical frameworks are used to explain and support research's results, but researchers do not add any contribution to them.

The second group of references is the most numerous one (52) and it is mainly focused on the organizational changes and institutional challenges introduced by fundraising practices. First of all, the introduction of the latter includes the presence of fundraising professional staff, in order to make fundraising an effective and efficient process (Chen et al., 2017; Cuillier & Stoffle, 2011; Sung, 2016). Moreover, even the organizational chart can be developed and changed after the introduction of fundraising practices and professional staff (Scott, 2013), overcoming some organizational barriers (Webb Farley, 2018). More specifically, these studies are focused on the role of fundraising managers within universities, also relating to their power and influence, and on the relationship between academics and fundraising professional staff (Daly, 2013; Shaker & Nathan, 2017).

The second group of references is not only the most numerous one, but it provides also literature that proposes quite several theoretical frameworks to justify and support their results. The first approach is provided by Nyman et al. (2016), who propose Co-creation of Value to explain the role of university fundraisers in their relationships with donors. They define university's philanthropists as social investors who want to be engaged with the leaders "of the organization in co-creating the philanthropic vision for their gift" (Nyman et al., 2016, p. 1235). Moreover, this vision is crucial for the university's fundraisers' to get long-term donations (social investment) from these philanthropists. Hence, the latter do not co-create value only for the university, but also with and for the society within which the organization operates.

Then, interesting insights are provided by Warren et al. (2016), who, starting from the Neoliberalism approach, explore the role of professional networks in knowledge exchange dynamics among university fundraisers. They conclude that these networks are important for fundraisers in order to develop their professional abilities, capabilities and competences, overcoming the university's organizational barriers, both institutional and geographical ones. Hence professional networks and groups are a crucial virtual space to establish a relatively new profession as that of "university's fundraisers".

Besides, Huynh and Patton (2015) and Huynh (2016) combine two different theoretical frameworks: Resource Based View and Social Network Theory. Their aim is to explore university's spin-offs fundraising issues, trying to understand, from one perspective, the role of entrepreneurial capabilities in influencing spin-offs' fundraising ability, and from another perspective, how social networks affect this ability. Besides, another theoretical framework adopted is Resource Dependence Theory (Mitchell, 2014). Even if this paper regards issues relating to non-governmental organizations, it adopts RDT to analyze the relationship between the dependence of an organization from external resources and its organizational autonomy. Therefore, this dynamic is also ascribable to universities that actually depend on the external environment as well (Chan, 2016). Finally, the last theoretical approach proposed by this stream of literature is Public Choice Theory (Cox, 2010). However, this paper states the consideration of this framework, without presenting and explaining it. Moreover, the approach is not used to support results, preferring the author another framework (Supplanting Theory). Then, the theoretical contribution to both is quite limited.

The third group of references considered by study is focused on issues that are becoming more and more important relating to fundraising, especially within public sector (Rooney, 1999). Even if contributions are quite scarce (6), this stream of literature cannot be disregarded because it deals with fundraising effectiveness and efficiency. Actually, these papers are more focused on efficiency rather than effectiveness, providing some indicators of the former, as a ratio of fundraising expenses to total expenditures by an organization (Lee & Shon, 2018) and return of investments (fundraising revenues/fundraising expenses) in fundraising (Rooney, 1999). However, even if this ratio are important indicators for assess fundraising strategy, there other measures that have can enlarge knowledge about the fundraising efficiency concept itself, as per dollar effects of investments in human resources and physical capital (Kreisman, 2017). Relating to the theoretical framework adopted by this field of study, Resource Dependence Theory is the only one. More specifically, Sacristan Lopez de los Mozos et al. (2016) start from this approach to understand how fundraising efficiency changes according to different level of revenues' diversification. According to them, increasing the level of revenues diversification has a negative impact on general organizational efficiency, making fundraising outputs harder to be obtained.

The fourth stream of literature shown in the table 1, investigates donors' behaviors and donations' drivers by mainly testing the validity of some quantitative approaches, as Price-Information Trade-Off (Wong & Ortmann, 2016), Finite Mixture Models (Durango-Cohen et al., 2013a; Durango-Cohen & Balasubrumanian, 2015) and Multiple Discrete Choice Models (Durango-Cohen et al., 2013b). Beyond the validity of the aforementioned quantitative methodologies, what is really interesting among these references is the proposition of some theoretical models, which add some contributions to the relating literature. In fact, Wong and Ortmann (2016) define the propose a model to test the conditions under which the independent benefit from giving, the charity price (fundraising expenses by organization) and the information cost (cost of information acquisition by donors) provide information for giving decisions. Furthermore, the model demonstrates that giving decisions by donors can be influenced by price-information trade-off. Under this condition, donors care about charity price because they consider their donations as social investments and want them to maximize charitable output. However, at the same time, they do not want to search for charity price because it is costly. Then, Finite Mixture Models and Multiple Discrete Choice Models are used to provide segmentations of university donors, such as alumni, in order to have a deeper knowledge of donation likelihood and behavior (Durango-Cohen et al., 2013a; 2013b; Durango-Cohen & Balasubrumanian, 2015). The aim of these studies is to test the validity of the models, without providing any theoretical contributions, but only some practical implications for fundraisers.

The fifth group of studies considered by this research, relates to issues that apparently do not deal with fundraising, especially within higher education context. The number of the references is not so large, but they provide some interesting theoretical contributions that can be studied also within universities context. In fact, external stakeholders' engagement is often the condition *sine qua non* to reach fundraising effectiveness. The investigation carried out by Iorio et al. (2017) explains how the introduction of fundraising practices amongst academics lead to an increase in knowledge transfer activities. This fact can be considered as a fundraising outcome. External stakeholder engagement is clearly linked to Civic Engagement (Carè et al., 2018) and Responsibility (Mat-jizat & Khalid, 2016). The frameworks aforementioned are discussed within investigations about on-line fundraising and its recent development, which is crowdfunding (sixth group of references). This multi and inter-disciplinarity is caused by the fact that crowdfunding regards different contexts, from the entrepreneurial one (equity-based crowdfunding and reward-based crowdfunding) to public and nonprofit sectors (donation-based crowdfunding and social lending). Moreover, the references included in this group belong to different fields of study.

Starting from on-line fundraising challenges faced by universities, the dialogic theory is proposed to understand if their web presence is effective or not. Moreover, this framework introduces five principles for universities to use to enhance their on-line presence and establish long lasting relationships with website's visitors. Actually, most universities are characterized by a lacking web presence that is not able to support dialogic exchanges with their donors. Furthermore, according to the Dialogic Theory, universities' website visitors need consistent messages, updates and, above all, chances to be engaged in the universities' activities (Bucci & Waters, 2014). Hence, effective website management has a positive effect on on-line fundraising results and universities have to invest more on this type of communication (McAllister, 2013).

The natural evolution of on-line fundraising is crowdfunding, which moves from crowdsourcing stream of literature and, then, from Open Innovation framework (Carè et al., 2018). According to the New Public Governance paradigm, crowdfunding is a fundraising tool that enables co-operation between public sector and the "crowd", which is non-state actors belonging to civil society (Osborne, 2010; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Moreover, crowdfunding is a means of innovating governmental organizations' funding by involving citizens (the "crowd").

The seventh group of references regards financial stability and growth: even if this stream of literature is mainly addressed to non-profit organizations' context, it is worth to consider the link between financial performance and growth capacity, even within public higher education sector. More specifically, Chikoto-Schultz and Neely (2016) state that high financial performance organizations tend to be older and larger (considering unrestricted net assets and total revenues). Moreover, they are also more likely to report capital assets and report high levels of compensation. Finally, they tend to contain their total spending by exercising efficiency by investing in talented officers, but limiting the share of officer compensation, administrative, and fundraising expenses, as a percentage of total expenses. These results are informative for stakeholders who want to understand the profile of an organization that is successfully able to achieve both capacity growth and financial stability. The theoretical framework adopted is Sustainability approach (Pati & Lee, 2016).

Then, the eighth group of studies shown in table 1 is one of the most interesting considering the aim of this research. In fact, the focus of the analysis is fundraising's outcome, and, even if the number of references is not large, it is worthwhile to consider this stream of literature also relating to the theoretical framework proposed to analyzed results within public Higher Education context: Resource Dependence Theory (Caton & Mistriner, 2016). Moreover, insights from these studies support the following considerations for community college leaders: Resource Dependence Theory as a useful framework in identifying resource relationships within the environment; the model of market responsive institutions as a strategy when successfully applying Resource Dependence Theory; and the distributed leadership model as a supported framework in overcoming the challenges presented by the emerging leadership competency of fundraising. These results are useful for academic leaders as examples that may provide guidance in professional development, project management, and directions for innovation in an ever-changing society and public universities system. Further investigation within this field of study can provide rich opportunities and contributions to the discussions of thought about leaders and change agents in the field of higher education and leadership.

Finally, the last group is focused on fundraising regulation, adopting the Statutory versus non-statutory framework (Breen, 2012). Although this stream of literature seems to be not very attractive from social sciences' point of view, the diffusion of the fundraising practices throughout public universities is calling for a fundraising regulation and policy. According to this framework, first of all success for each regime (statutory versus non-statutory) is defined and analyzed to understand whether broader policy lessons for fundraising regulation may be learnt from these implementation experiences to date. Moreover, the key challenges facing each regime are identified and defined. The framework tackles the broader question of how measuring success in regulatory terms and argues for better identification of the constituency to be regulated, thereby enabling prioritization of the salient performance indicators that should be included in any non-statutory framework.

All the aforementioned streams of literature and relating theoretical framework are the main source of literature considered for starting this study and to build a "theoretical ground floor" useful to explore and understand the state of the art of the literature. Besides those references previously shown and explained, there are other "minor" fields of study and approaches, as entrepreneurial models for universities (Williams, 2010); the genesis of fundraising (Hufton, 2008); fundraising's tools and life cycle (Hekmat & Heischmidt, 1993). Entrepreneurial models for universities move from the assumption that even public universities have been affected by the introduction of some market-oriented mechanisms, as for examples performance-based funding (best universities receive more funds from government) and competitive-based funding (best research projects get funded by local, national and international institutions). These mechanisms have obviously contributed to the fundraising practices and tools' introduction, particularly relating to crowdfunding. However, a precise theoretical framework does not support those studies, probably because the latter is quite new considering the context of analysis (public universities). Fundraising's tools and life cycle is a context driven field of study, which does not allow generalizing results of the analysis. However, Higher

Education literature concerning these themes is still lacking. Finally, the genesis of fundraising has been investigated through an historical perspective, especially by American researchers than have focused their studies on the quite-widespread fundraising tradition of the American Higher Education context. Therefore, it would be interesting to adopt the same approach in European context of analysis to develop comparisons and build a relating theoretical framework.

Table 1. A Summary of the Literature Review

GROUP	NUMBER OF REFERENCES	FOCUS OF ANALYSIS	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	REFERENCES FOR T.F.
1	30	Factors influencing fundraising (campaigns') sucess.	Agency Theory; Cognitive Evaluation Theory.	Freeman, 2010; Allison et al., 2015.
2	51	Organizational changes and institutional challanges introduced by fundraising practices.	Co-creation of Value; Neoliberalism; Resource Dependence Theory; Social Network Theory; Resource-based View; Sustainability; Public Choice Theory.	Nyman et al., 2016; Warren et al., 2016; Huynh & Patton, 2015; Mitchell, 2014; Pati & Lee, 2016; Cox, 2010.
3	6	Fundraising effectivenes and efficiency.	Resource Dependence Theory.	Sacristan Lopez de los Mozos, 2016.
4	38	Donors' behaviour and donations' drivers.	Price-cost Trade-off; Finite-mixture Models; Multiple Discrete Choice Models.	Wong & Ortmann, 2016; Durango-Cohen & Balasubramanian, 2014; Durango-Cohen et al., 2013a; Durango-Cohen et al. 2013b.
5	9	External and stakeholder engagement.	Civic Engagement and Civic Responsability.	Carè et al., 2017; Mat-jizat & Khalid, 2016.
6	20	Online fundraising and Crowdfunding	Dialogic Theory; Social Engagement; Social Innovation; Open Innovation; Civic Engagement.	Bucci & Waters, 2014; McAllister, 2013; Colasanti et al. 2018; Ono et al., 2017; Bulock & Watkinson, 2017; Carè et al. 2017.
7	3	Financial stability and financial growth.	Sustainability.	Pati & Lee, 2016.
8	5	Fundraising's outcome.	Resource Dependence Theory.	Caton & Mistriner, 2016.
9	4	Fundraising regulation.	Statutory versus non-statutory framework.	Breen, 2012.

As previously stated, fundraising is a multi-faceted and inter-disciplinary topic that can be studied taking into consideration several contexts of analysis. However, in order to have results that can be generalized they must be supported by theory. Actually, this study moves from the Resource Dependence Theory framework (Drees & Heugens, 2013; Malatesta & Smith, 2014, Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). First of all, fundraising process is based on social exchanges dynamics, whose impact affects fundraising outcomes. Relating to the latters, Lasher and Cook (1996) individuated the key variables:

- Leadership of academics and administrative staffs deals with; the willingness to be involved in the fundraising process; abilities and skills in fundraising, effective management of the institutions; effort and commitment; moral integrity; fiscal vitality of the institution; effective planning; effective stewardship of resources; donors' confidence, and appropriate gratitude and recognition of donations.
- Financial capability of constituency.
- A clear and strong institutional mission.
- Personal relationship between donors and institution leaders.
- Donors' engagement in institution's activities.
- Institution's reputation, history and tradition.
- Informed and committed constituency.
- Predisposition of donors to give.
- Society's confidence in the value created by the institution.
- Economic, political and social situation.
- Tax policy in terms of state laws encouraging or not philanthropy.

All the variables aforementioned are crucial for fundraising effectiveness. Then, the lack or scarcity of one or some of them reduces the overall impact of the others.

Figure 1 represents fundraising process within higher education context as a social exchange model. Moreover, it is focused on exchange relationships between donors and academic leaders. In fact, the core of social exchange theory is individuals' and organizations' interdependence, as "a situation in which another has discretion to take actions which affect the focal organization's interests (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 145).

From Figure 1 it is possible to state that university's fundraising is driven by two forces: a continuous and recurrent financial need due to the public nature of higher education, and the competition from other universities and nonprofit organizations, thus reinforcing a tendency toward reputation maximization. As a result, universities tend to follow a strategy of reputation maximization, although this is less generally true of some institutional types such as universities with low quality and few resources.

As shown in Figure 1, the Central Actors (Circle B) in academic fund raising are the chief executive officer (President), volunteers (the Board of Trustees), academic deans, and fundraising staff (including the chief development officer). Four types of intervening forces influence all of these positions: environmental, institutional, personal, and role forces (Lasher & Cook, 1996). All these actors are involved in Initial Action Strategies (Circle D) such as strategic planning, leadership recruitment, policy formulation, budget analysis, program development, staff training, internal needs assessment, communication and public relations efforts, stakeholders' engagement's special events, cultivation activities, and solicitation.

Furthermore, Initial strategies normally focus on smaller annual gifts with most donor prospects. These prospects, then, respond in one of several different ways. They may give no response or, if such a call is answered, the response may be postponement or avoidance. Besides, some prospects respond negatively to such requests by choosing not to contribute, whereas other prospects make a donation for various reasons. Usually, for a short-term response, donors will not be as concerned with institutional prerequisites as they are for a long-term response, since they are not investing as much. However, in some cases, first-time donors will make a major gift, either in cash or capital assets, or through a bequest. The arrow going from Circle D to Circle H represents this type of response (Figure 1). Such a gift may originate through the donor's own initiative or in response to a specific proposal put forth by the institution. Other first-time donors may choose to give at the same level and frequency on a repeating basis and may never mature as a donor for a particular institution by advancing to higher giving levels. Such donor behavior forms a type of loop represented by the arrow going from Circle F to Circle D (Figure 1). Hence, the pattern of behavior, which universities try to encourage, is to move donors from one level to the next, in terms of the gifts' size and the extent of their involvement in and commitment to the organization. This is represented by the step-wise progression from Circle D to Circle I, and in order to encourage this donor development a common feature of most fundraising strategies is the existence of giving "clubs" representing specific donation levels.

The arrow going from Circle I to Circle G represents another loop: this is the case of the donor who provides major gifts periodically, either spontaneously or in response to individualized requests. Besides, this behavior may culminate in a bequest or testamentary gift that will be the donor's ultimate expression of commitment to the institution. A final type of donor response is not represented in Figure 1: it is the rare case where an unknown or unsolicited donor initiates a gift. This donor may schedule an appointment with the development office, to obtain information and/or to discuss his or her interest in making a gift or supporting a certain activity. Hence, there are a number of variations for each type of donor response, but the primary aim of Figure 1 is to illustrate fundraising from an institutional perspective and to show the systematic and cyclical nature of the fundraising process.

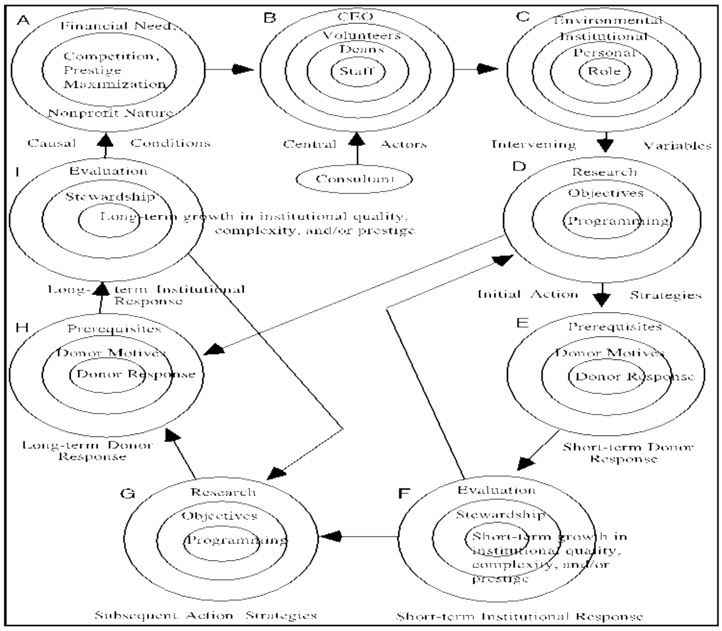

Figure 1. Social exchange model of fund raising in higher education.

14

Figure 1. The Social Exchange Model of Fundraising in Higher Education

Source: Lasher & Cook, 1996.

Then, Figure 2 seeks to provide deeper and more integrated explanation of presidential fundraising than the general context one, shown in Circles B and C of Figure 1. This model shows that presidential fundraising is a developmental process with different decision and with four types of intervening forces, which have an impact on presidents at each stage in the process. To understand this model, it is necessary to consider each decision separately. First, it is obviously necessary for an individual to be selected as the president of a university. Then, in accepting this position, an individual brings with him or her established leadership styles, personality characteristics, administrative and educational experiences, attitudes, values, beliefs, and interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, this president also carries with him or her some self-created role expectations for the position. Besides, others defined as role senders, both inside and outside the organization have some role expectations associated with the presidency as well. From another perspective, the president also inherits established traditions, history, culture, and other aspects of the organizational life, since an institution is a complex and dynamic social organism. Finally, the president inherits environmental conditions such as capacity of the donor base; philanthropic tradition of the local community, region, and state; economic situation; governmental tax policy; competition from other public institutions and non-profit organizations; and public opinion toward universities.

These four forces interact to produce the president's level of participation in fundraising, which is the next step in the model. Presidential participation can be viewed as a continuum, with one extreme being no participation in fundraising, and the other extreme being full participation. Obviously, very few presidents operate at either extreme. Instead, the majority is located somewhere between these polar opposites. Moreover, one reason for these different levels of participation is that typically one of the four forces is predominant among the others. In reality, all the four forces exert differing levels of influence on presidents and thus affect presidential decision-making and behavior in varying degrees. Hence, presidents must develop an integrated view of these forces in order to use the fundraising potential of their institutions and to maximize the fundraising effectiveness and success.

In summary, presidents both bring with them and inherit certain realities that interact to determine how much time and energy they spend on fundraising and on which parts of the fundraising process and programs they focus their efforts and attention. Furthermore, these forces also determine how well presidents will perform in fundraising: hence, there is a multiple effect although the strength of each force changes over time and collectively the four forces change presidents over time as well.

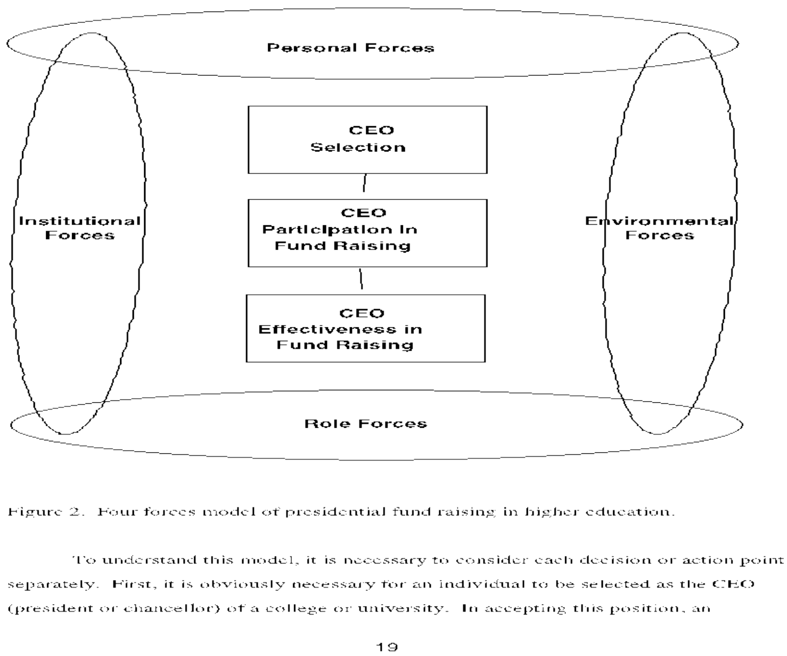

Figure 2. Four Forces Model of Presidential Fundraising in Higher Education

Source: Lasher & Cook, 1996.

4. Discussion

The RDT approach presents some implications. First of all, although the president of a university is typically the central player on the fundraising team, presidents have a limited number of cards they can play with donor prospects, as the stature of the presidential office or position, the quality and prestige of the university being represented, the importance of higher education to society, interpersonal skills, appeals to donor motives, the strength of relationship between the donor and the university, the stature and prestige of members of the development team. In addition, presidents must have a sense of what is possible and desirable for their institutions, and this can come only through strategic planning activities and process.

Second, fundraising must be studied more as a team effort than as the responsibility of any one person or position, as a dynamic process rather than as a series of static steps. Moreover, the subtlety and complexity inherent to the fundraising process can only be fully appreciated as a dynamic group activity involving a number of interpersonal relationships, role transactions, and social exchanges.

Third, although basic aspects of fundraising are among different organizations, fundraising is situation-specific and can only be fully understood in terms of a particular context. Furthermore, there are considerable variations between institutions of the same type, as universities. Differences in culture, history, tradition, mission, number of alumni, capacity of the donor base, prestige, academic quality, commitment, effort, leadership style of the president and development officers play a critical role in fundraising outcomes. Hence, results relating to one institution are not automatically replicable at another institution.

Finally, it is perhaps better to speak of fundraising effectiveness rather than fundraising success. However, both are important: success is probably an easier concept to grasp and to quantify and fits more readily within a short-term time period, which is where most fundraisers and presidents have to operate. From another perspective, the long-term stability, growth, and maturity of an organization's development program are dependent upon variables and forces that may have little to do with a particular comprehensive campaign or annual fund drive. Hence, effectiveness emphasizes performance relative to fundraising potential given present capabilities and realities, whereas success emphasizes performance relative to a predetermined goal in a predetermined time period. Therefore, fundraisers and presidents need to have both short-term and long-term objectives for their institutions. The concept of effectiveness also carries with it a broader perspective on fund raising and encourages more focus on basic prerequisites that must usually be in place before donors will consider making a major or ultimate gift to an institution.

The models previously shown imply new ground in enhancing an understanding of university's fundraising in general and presidential fundraising in particular. These models are useful both for scholars and for practitioners. Table 1 provides a comprehensive guideline to decision-makers such as presidents, vice presidents for development, and governing boards regarding the key variables or prerequisites for sustained effectiveness in fundraising. Moreover, this list provides administrators with a tool to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of their institutions relating to fundraising potential and capability. Then, Figure 1 provides an overview of the fundraising process at universities. It is focused on a general context that is dynamic and changing rather than a series of events that are static and predictable.

Finally, Figure 2 focuses on presidential fundraising. In this model, intervening variables include environmental, institutional, role, and personal forces. These forces interact to determine who is selected as a university's president, the extent and direction of the president's involvement in fundraising, and the effectiveness of the latter in fundraising process. The same four forces also have an impact on other key players on the fundraising team such as academic leaders and senior members of the fundraising staff.

The analysis of the state of the art of the literature shows that fundraising is a topic that deserves a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach relating to the focus of the analysis. Moreover, there are some themes that have been investigated more than others. Besides some of have been objects of analysis without any theoretical framework support. Hence, this could be the starting point for focusing the theoretical analysis on fundraising as a means to support university's outcome. This means that the investigation does not concern with fundraising's outcome, but it deals with the impact of fundraising output on university's outcome and, hence, on university's mission. The assumption behind this reasoning is the triangular relation among fundraising process' output, university's outcome and university's mission. From this perspective, literature is still lacking and calls for further investigations and analyses.

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