
The Impact of Social Media on Charitable Giving for Nonprofit Organizationsⁱ

Namchul Shin
(Pace University)
New York

ABSTRACT

Research has extensively studied nonprofit organizations' use of social media for communications and interactions with supporters. However, there has been limited research examining the impact of social media on charitable giving. This research attempts to address the gap by empirically examining the relationship between the use of social media and charitable giving for nonprofit organizations. We employ a data set of the Nonprofit Times' top 100 nonprofits ranked by total revenue for the empirical analysis. As measures for social media traction, i.e., how extensively nonprofits draw supporters on their social media sites, we use Facebook Likes, Twitter Followers, and Instagram Followers. Our base model estimates charitable giving influenced by social media traction while controlling other variables such as total assets and industry. We extend the base model by incorporating the economic model of giving proposed by Weisbrod and Dominguez (1986). This research sheds light on the literature on the use of IT for charitable giving in the nonprofit sector by adding new knowledge on the impact of social media. It examines different social media platforms by employing such social media traction measures as Facebook Likes and Twitter and Instagram Followers, which have little been investigated in previous research.

Keywords: Nonprofit organizations, social media, charitable giving, economic model

ⁱ Recommended Citation:

Shin, Namchul (2024) "The Impact of Social Media on Charitable Giving for Nonprofit Organization," *Journal of International Technology and Information Management*: Vol. 32: Iss. 1, Article 6. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58729/1941-6679.1580>

INTRODUCTION

Charitable giving has steadily grown in recent years (MacLaughlin et al., 2021). According to the 2021 Charitable Giving Report (MacLaughlin et al., 2021), the percentage of total fundraising made from online sources has grown continually from 2013 to 2019 (Figure 1). Notably, a significant increase in online giving was observed in 2020; 13% of fundraising came from online donations, the highest percentage ever for online giving.ⁱⁱ Online donations also grew 21% over the year. While the pandemic of 2020 might have influenced how we give, not just how we live and work, the upward trend in online giving over the years is largely persistent. It signifies that digital fundraising would play a critical role in a nonprofit organization's strategy.

Aligned with the digital fundraising strategy, nonprofit organizations increasingly use social media to communicate with the public and promote charitable giving. Social media creates a dialog capacity with an otherwise static website by offering the opportunity to share information and interact with the public (Young, 2017). Mathos and Norman (2012) suggest that nonprofit organizations need to use social media to communicate with the public and engage them with their social media sites for fundraising campaigns. However, Carboni and Maxwell (2015) state that while many nonprofit organizations have a social media presence, there are variances in how well organizations use social media to engage stakeholders. Simply having a social media presence is not enough to engage stakeholders. What matters is how strategically organizations use social media to realize their organizational goals. A related issue would be which social media platforms are best for engaging donors.

Most Americans say they use social media, such as Facebook and YouTube. According to the Pew Research Center's report on social media use in 2021, Seventy-two percent of Americans say they ever use any social media sites. However, the share has remained relatively stable over the past five years (Auxier and Anderson, 2021). While Facebook is one of the dominant social media sites, its growth has leveled off in recent years. Instagram and Twitter are also widely used, next to Facebook. According to the report, the age gaps between younger and older

ⁱⁱ Tabas (2021) states in her Forbes article that fundraising has become more challenging during the pandemic, and it was down 18% compared to prior years. However, as people became more comfortable using digital devices and social media during the pandemic, they became more engaged in supporting nonprofit organizations. It is also notable that The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that e-commerce sales in the third quarter of 2020 accounted for 14.3% of total sales. These phenomena indicate that doner behaviors resemble consumer behaviors (MacLaughlin et al., 2021).

Americans vary across social media platforms. For example, Facebook and Twitter are commonly used across different age groups, compared to Instagram and Snapchat.

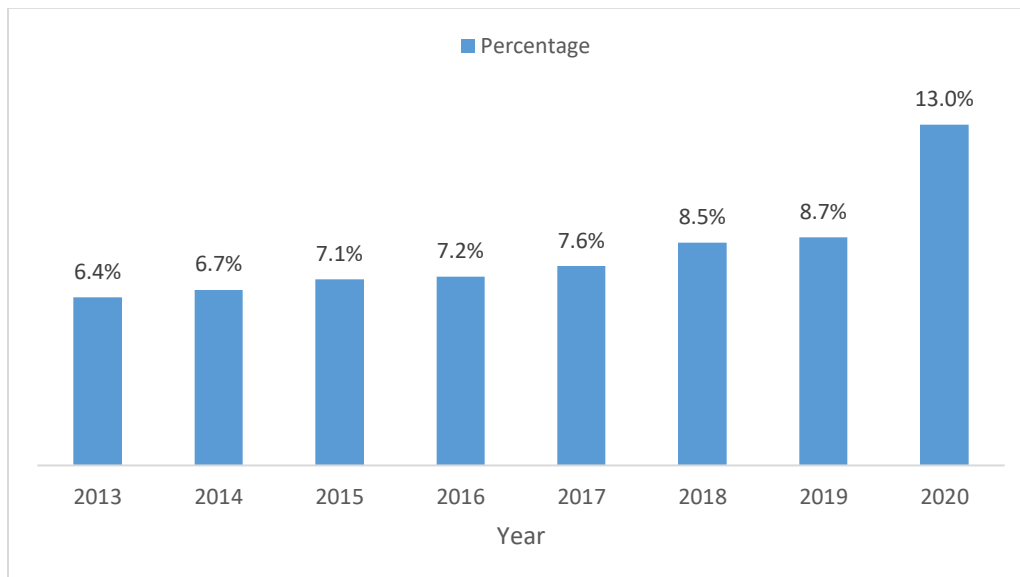
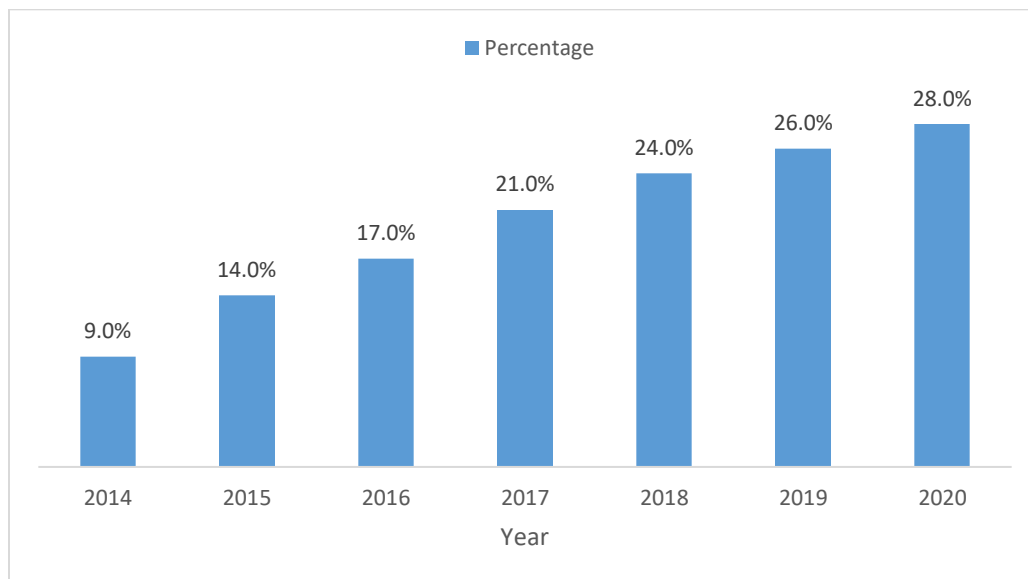


Figure 1. Percentage of Total Fundraising from Online Sources
(Source: Charitable Giving Report, 2019, 2020, and 2021)

In recent years, online giving on mobile phones has increased, along with the use of social media (LaMagna, 2015). The trends in online giving made on mobile devices also illustrate steady growth from 2014 to 2020 (Figure 2). The smartphone generation is heavily active on social media, creating a new opportunity for charities. As the number of people using smartphones increases, the potential of social media for charities increases since they make online donations easier (Chambers, 2013).



**Figure 2. Percentage of Online Donations Made on Mobile Devices
(Source: Charitable Giving Report, 2021)**

Research has extensively studied nonprofit organizations' use of social media for communications and interactions (or engagement) with supporters. However, there has been limited empirical research examining the impact of social media on charitable giving (Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc, 2018; Bhati and McDonnell, 2020; Lee, 2021). Some studies used a measure of organizations' Facebook Page Likes to examine the role of social media in fundraising (Bhati and McDonnell, 2020; Lee, 2021). Some investigated at the event level, such as Omaha Gives, Omaha Community Foundation's fundraising event (Bhati and McDonnell, 2020), and some examined fundraising for a specific interest, such as fundraising for arts promotion and support (Lee, 2021). However, more research is needed at the organizational level to answer the question of whether the public's engagement through social media leads to increased contributions to various nonprofit organizations (Carboni and Maxwell, 2015). This research attempts to address these gaps by conducting an organizational-level study examining empirically the relationship between social media and charitable giving as measured by the amount of donations. We also incorporate other factors suggested by the economic model of giving, which considers donations as the proxy for the aggregate demand for an organization's output. These factors include price, quality, and information about the organization's outputs available to donors. Our research contributes to the literature on IT impacts on charitable giving by conducting an organizational-level study on the contribution of social media use to donations. It also examines different social media platforms by employing social media traction measures, such as

Facebook Likes, Twitter Followers, and Instagram Followers, which have little been analyzed in previous research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media and Charitable Giving

Fundraising is critical for nonprofit organizations to fulfill their social missions. Communicating with supporters and building relationships with them is essential for fundraising. Research shows that social media has the potential for better interactions with stakeholders and can be used to engage them in fostering relationships, which can contribute to fundraising (Waters et al., 2009; Saxton and Wang, 2014; Lee, 2021). As mobile phones have become the primary device for digital communication, and the smartphone generation is heavily active on social media, nonprofit organizations recognize the opportunity arising from social media and increasingly use it for their online fundraising (Shin, 2019). While the use of social media for communications and interactions (or engagement) with supporters is well-explored in the literature, however, there is still limited research on nonprofit's use of social media for fundraising (Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc, 2018; Bhati and McDonnell, 2020; Lee, 2021).

Lee (2021) states that in a Web 2.0 environment, social media popularity is measured with such indices as friend stats and “likes” on Facebook and follower counts and retweets on Twitter. She argues that online popularity may reduce the information asymmetry between an organization and its stakeholders, as advertising does in the consumer market. By examining nonprofit local art organizations' social media popularity, she shows that Facebook “likes” is positively associated with their revenue, not just charitable giving but program service revenue. Her findings imply that social media popularity contributes to reducing the information gap between an organization and its stakeholders and increasing their trust in the organization. Other studies also report that the total number of Facebook “likes” is associated with increased charitable giving (Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc, 2018; Bhati and McDonnell, 2020). Bhati and McDonnell (2020) show the effectiveness of social media for fundraising success by examining nonprofit organizations participating in Omaha Gives 2015. Fundraising success was measured by donor numbers and donation amounts, and the effectiveness of social media was measured by the number of “likes” on Facebook, the number of posts, and the number of post shares. Focusing on the use of Facebook for nonprofit organizations' fundraising events, their study extends previous research on fundraising campaigns, such as a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit's use of social

media for a Giving Day campaign (Dixon and Keyes, 2013) and the Swedish Red Cross's use of social media for sharing of the photo of 3-year-old Syrian child *Aylan Kurdi* washed up dead on a beach in Turkey (Slovic et al., 2017). The former campaign generated nearly 114,000 USD in additional funds, and the latter increased the average number of daily donations by a factor of 100 in the following week. By examining Facebook "likes" and charitable behavior in auction experiments, Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc (2018) show that the number of Facebook "likes" increases willingness to pay in charity auctions; it has a direct signaling effect (signals for quality, credibility, and reputation of the charity) and an indirect social contagion effect (signals passed onto Facebook friends) on willingness to pay. While Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc (2018) did not analyze financial outcomes directly, such as revenues or contributions, their study was one of the first studies examining charitable giving influenced by social media use, looking beyond its potential for improved communication and relationship building. These studies focused on specific social media, such as Facebook, but their analysis was at the event level (or campaign level), not at the organizational level.

Table 1. A Summary Review of Studies on the Relationship Between Social Media and Charitable Giving

Study	Measures of Social Media Use	Unit of Analysis	Context	Findings
Dixon and Keyes (2013)	NA ¹	Event	A Giving Day campaign on Facebook	The one-day campaign on Facebook generated additional funds of nearly 114,000 USD
Saxton and Wang (2014)	Number of Members on Nonprofit Organizations' Causes Pages	Organization	Facebook Causes Application for the 2008 Nonprofit Times Top 100 Nonprofits	The number of members on Facebook Causes is positively associated with charitable giving.

Slovic et al. (2017)	NA ¹	Event	A posting of the photo of 3-year-old Syrian child Aylan Kurdi on social media	Increased the average number of daily donations by a factor of 100 in the following week.
Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc (2018)	Number of Facebook Likes	Event	Charity Auction (Experiment)	Increased the auction selling prices (willingness to pay)
Bhati and McDonnell (2020)	Number of Facebook Likes, Posts, and Post Shares	Event	Omaha Give 2015	Facebook “likes”, “posts”, and “post shares” are positively associated with donation amounts and donors numbers.
Lee (2021)	Number of Facebook Likes	Organization	Local Art Organizations	Facebook “likes” is positively related to revenue.

¹ No measures are used since it is not an empirical study.

It is also notable that while the public supports nonprofit organizations’ missions and activities on their social media pages, for example, by clicking the like button on Facebook or by following on Twitter, it does not necessarily mean they are actively committed to those missions and activities by making donations. The online (or social media) practice of supporting a social cause can be simply done for self-gratification without making very little commitment. Cabrera and his colleagues (2017) argue that the more public a display of support for a cause online is, the more likely the action represents self-serving slacktivism rather than having a real impact on the cause. Christensen (2012) also argues that online participation is nothing more than slacktivism, which enhances the feel-good factor of

participants but has little impact on real-life implications. Lee (2021) also states that Facebook's study reported by Smallwood (2016) showed a weak link between user engagement, such as “likes” and “shares,” and a brand's success. It appears that the question of slacktivism in social media use subjects to an empirical analysis. However, the extant literature generally suggests that nonprofits’ use of social media contributes to charitable giving by improving their communications with the public, relationship building, and trustworthiness (Waters et al., 2009; Saxton and Wong, 2014; Haruvy and Popkowski Leszczyc, 2018; Shin, 2019; Bhati and McDonnell, 2020; Lee, 2021). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The use of social media by nonprofit organizations has a positive relationship with charitable giving.

The Economic Model of Giving

The economic model of giving (Weisbrod and Domingues, 1986) is well-established in economics literature. In this model, nonprofit organizations are considered private providers of public goods, and donations are the proxy for the aggregate demand for the organization’s output (Saxton and Wang, 2014). The model posits that, as in the consumer market, the level of donations is determined by price, quality, and the information about both price and quality available to the donor. It assumes that when donors give contributions of money, they give not a dollar’s worth of money but rather a dollar of output. Thus, price is defined as the cost to a donor of purchasing one dollar’s worth of the organization’s output. According to the definition, fundraising expenditures increase the price of giving by reducing the portion of the marginal dollar that is passed onto output-producing activities (Weisbrod and Domingues, 1986). Saxton and Wang (2014) indicate that it is a function of efficiency, with which the organization turns donations into programmatic output. Given that nonprofits can devote resources to programs after fundraising expenditures are incurred, price is measured as the ratio of donations to program expenses (i.e., donations minus fundraising expenses). When fundraising expenses are high, prices are high, leading to lower aggregate donations from supporters.

Even though nonprofit organizations are well-informed about the qualities of their own output, potential donors are unsure about them. A high level of information asymmetry between nonprofit organizations and donors is common in the market of charitable giving, where donors are not the consumers of the final output (Weisbrod and Dominguez, 1986). In such a market, product and service qualities are unobservable before the purchase (donation), and the final outputs are hard to quantify (Cnaan et al., 2011; Saxton et al., 2022; Lee, 2021). In a market

with a high level of information asymmetry, fundraising activities are crucial for spreading information on the qualities of final outputs, as often done through advertising in the consumer market. (Weisbrod and Dominguez, 1986; Saxton and Wang, 2014). Thus, fundraising expenditures increase donations directly by reducing information asymmetry (reducing information costs for donors) and increasing donor demand for nonprofit outputs.

As manifested in the economic model of giving, fundraising expenditures positively affect charitable giving (directly increasing donations) by reducing information costs. However, on the contrary, they have countervailing negative effects on charitable giving (indirectly decreasing the level of donations) by increasing the price of giving. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2: Fundraising expenditures have a positive relationship with charitable giving.

Hypothesis 3: The price of giving (increased by fundraising expenditures) has a negative relationship with charitable giving.

METHODOLOGY AND MODEL

In order to examine the relationship between the use of social media and charitable giving, we conduct ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression analyses of nonprofit organizations' donations with social media traction.ⁱⁱⁱ Social media traction refers to the extent to which nonprofit organizations engage the public on their social media platforms. We employ a data set of the Nonprofit Times' top 100 nonprofits ranked by total revenue.^{iv} The data set provides financial data, such as total revenue, including contributions and grants, total expenses, fundraising expenses, and total assets. As a measure of donations, we use contributions and grants, which are revenues from public and government support.^v As measures for

ⁱⁱⁱ OLS regression is a widely used regression technique for cross sectional data; other regression techniques, such as fixed effects regression, can significantly decrease the degrees of freedom (Pandey and Bright, 2008).

^{iv} The list of the top 100 nonprofit organizations (NPT Top 100) has been published annually by the Nonprofit Times. According to the Nonprofit Times (2021), the NPT Top 100 ranks nonprofit organizations in the United States by total revenue, at least 10% of which is derived from public support. The NPT Top 100 dataset has been used previous research (Saxton and Wang, 2014; Shin and Chen, 2016), and the 2021 NPT Top 100 dataset is publicly available at <https://thenonprofittimes.com/report/the-2021-npt-100-donors-stood-tall-led-with-big-gifts/>.

^v A similar measure, "contributions, gifts, and grants," was used in the study done by Weisbrod and Dominguez (1986). We include government support in the measure of donations since government officials might use social media and be influenced by nonprofits' social media use, like the public.

social media traction, we use the number of “likes” on Facebook and the number of followers on Twitter and Instagram. We collected the data on the three measures in October 2000 and constructed a data set by combining them with the top 100 nonprofit data for the same year, available from the Nonprofit Times.

The data set includes 100 nonprofit organizations across various industry sectors, such as health, welfare, and cultural activities. The sample statistics are shown in Table 2. The correlations of variables are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Summary Statistics

Variables	Mean	St. Dev.	Observations
Contributions and Grants (millions)	\$740.2	\$959.8	100
Total Revenue (millions)	\$798.8	\$1,044.0	100
Total Fundraising Expenses (millions)	\$44.8	\$72.5	100
Total Expenses (millions)	\$750.6	\$1,013.0	100
Total Assets (millions)	\$1,370.0	\$2,496.0	99
Price (CG/(CG-Fund))	1.076	.082	100
Years of Operation ¹	77.37	46.5	100
Facebook Likes (000)	719.6	1,060.7	80
Twitter Followers (000)	605.8	1,394.6	80
Instagram Followers (000)	368.4	919.9	78

¹ The years of operation of an organization is calculated by subtracting the year founded from the year 2020, which is the last year of the sample data collected.

Table 3. Correlations¹

	Ln(CG)	Ln(FB)	Ln(TWT)	Ln(ITF)	Ln(TA)	Ln(Price)	Ln(Fund)	OpYears
Ln(Contributions and Grants)	1 (100 ²)							
Ln(Facebook Likes)	.132 (80)	1 (80)						
Ln(Twitter Followers)	.226** (80)	.849*** (80)	1 (80)					
Ln(Instagram Followers)	.085 (78)	.854*** (78)	.889*** (78)	1 (78)				
Ln(Total Assets)	.319*** (99)	.298*** (80)	.307*** (80)	.351*** (78)	1 (99)			
Ln(Price)	-.066 (100)	.508*** (80)	.404*** (80)	.465*** (78)	.335*** (99)	1 (100)		
Ln(Fundraising Expenses)	.439*** (100)	.598*** (80)	.511*** (80)	.505*** (78)	.507*** (99)	.661*** (100)	1 (100)	
OpYears	.182* (100)	.152 (80)	.228** (80)	.280** (78)	.527*** (99)	.241** (100)	.406*** (100)	1 (100)

¹ Pearson Correlations (2-tailed)

² Number of observations.

*** <.01, ** <.05, * <.10

Model

Our base model (Model 1) estimates charitable giving as measured by contributions and grants influenced by social media traction as measured by the number of “likes” on Facebook and the number of followers on both Twitter and Instagram while controlling for total assets and the industry classified by health, welfare, and cultural activities.

$$\text{LnCG}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{LnFL}_i + \beta_2 \text{LnTF}_i + \beta_3 \text{LnIF}_i + \beta_4 \text{LnTA}_i + \text{Industry}_i + \varepsilon_i$$

(Model 1)

We extend the above model to incorporate the economic model of giving proposed by Weisbrod and Dominguez (1986). As presented earlier, price is measured as the ratio of donations to program expenses (i.e., donations minus fundraising expenses). When fundraising expenses are high, prices are high, leading to lower aggregate donations from supporters. In the consumer market, information on the qualities of the firms' output is transferred to consumers through advertising. Fundraising activities play a similar role as advertising in helping spread information on the quality of the organizations' programs (Weisbrod and Dominguez, 1986; Saxton and Wang, 2014). We use the number of years an organization has been in operation (years of operation) as a proxy measure of quality.

By incorporating the constructs in the economic model of giving, we propose the following analytical model (Model 2). We apply the log transformation to such explanatory variables as contributions and grants, social media traction, total assets, price, and fundraising expenses.

$$\text{LnCG}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{LnFL}_i + \beta_2 \text{LnTF}_i + \beta_3 \text{LnIF}_i + \beta_4 \text{LnTA}_i + \beta_5 \text{LnPrice}_i + \beta_6 \text{LnFund}_i + \beta_7 \text{OpYears}_i + \beta_8 \text{OpYears}_i \times \text{LnFund}_i + \text{Industry}_i + \varepsilon_i$$

(Model 2)

CG stands for contributions and grants. FL is a social media traction measured by the number of "likes" on Facebook. TF and IF are social media traction measured by the number of followers on Twitter and Instagram, respectively. TA stands for total assets. Price is constructed by the calculation of (contributions and grants) divided by (contributions and grants – fundraising expenses). Fund represents fundraising expenses. While fundraising efforts can increase the level of contributions directly, they may decrease contributions by increasing the price of giving. Thus, we expect the coefficient of fundraising expenses to be positive, but the coefficient of price is negative. OpYears is the years of operation for a nonprofit organization, which indicates the stock of goodwill owned by the organization. The interaction term of OpYears and fundraising expenses is included to examine the marginal effectiveness of fundraising activities for an organization with a certain number of operational years. Industry is a dummy variable for the industry sector. Given the small sample size, the industry sector is classified into three sectors: health, welfare, and cultural activities. The welfare sector includes environment and animals, human services, international, foreign affairs, and public and societal

benefits. The sector of cultural activities includes arts, culture, humanities, and religion.

RESULT

Our results show that Twitter Followers are positively associated with donations, and the positive relationship is significant at a level of .01 in both Models 1 and 2 (Table 4). However, the coefficient of Facebook Likes and Instagram Followers is negative and not significant in general. These results suggest that the types of social media have varying impacts on the public's engagement in fundraising campaigns. One reason might be that such an index as "likes" on Facebook does not necessarily influence donations since clicking the like button might simply represent self-serving slacktivism, as discussed earlier. While Instagram followers might support nonprofit organizations by tracking them, they might also make very little commitment. Another reason might be that compared to Twitter, Instagram is used mainly by a younger group of people but is not commonly used across different age groups (Auxier and Anderson, 2021). In summary, our results suggest that followers on Twitter might be more involved in nonprofit organizations' missions and activities by making donations.^{vi}

As expected, price is negatively associated with donations, and the negative relationship is significant at a level of .01. It appears that fundraising expenses have no effect on an increase in donations. While the result is surprising, it might be due to the pandemic that occurred in 2020 when online activities increased significantly. However, the interaction effect of fundraising expenses and years of operation suggests that fundraising efforts are more effective for increasing donations for older nonprofit organizations. Our results also show that the oldness of nonprofit organizations is negatively associated with donations. However, the coefficient of OpYears is small in magnitude, indicating that most of the variation in donations is captured by the price of donations and social media traction, such as Twitter Followers. Our results also show that there is variation in donations across industries.

^{vi} We run the analysis using donations as measured by public support (excluding government support), and the results are similar even though the significance of the coefficient of Twitter Followers goes down. The results are available upon request.

Table 4: Regression Results for Facebook Likes, Twitter Followers, and Instagram Followers

Variables	Model 1	Model 2
Ln(Facebook Likes)	-.047(.098)	-.069 (.078)
Ln(Twitter Followers)	.263*** (.091)	.186*** (.067)
Ln(Instagram Followers)	-.149* (.084)	-.075 (.063)
Ln(Asset)	.137* (.069)	.046 (.060)
Health	.715** (.328)	.490* (.247)
Welfare	.761*** (.285)	.343 (.219)
Ln(Price)		-6.804*** (1.152)
Ln(Fund)		.046 (.077)
OpYears		-.078*** (.014)
OpYears x Ln(Fund)		.005*** (.001)
Adjusted R ²	.160	.559
F Value	3.437***	10.769***
Number of Observations	78	78

*p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01

¹ standard error

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research empirically examines the impact of social media use for charitable giving for nonprofit organizations by employing a data set of the Nonprofit Times' top 100 nonprofits and social media traction data, such as the number of "likes" on Facebook and the number of followers on Twitter and Instagram. Our findings show that the number of followers on Twitter is highly associated with increased donations, but not the number of "likes" on Facebook and the number of followers on Instagram. These findings suggest that the types of social media have varying impacts on the public's engagement in fundraising campaigns; followers on social media like Twitter might be more involved in nonprofit organizations' missions and activities by making donations. On the other hand, clicking the "likes" button on Facebook or simply following on Instagram might be just self-serving slacktivism.

This research sheds light on the literature on IT impacts on charitable giving in the nonprofit sector by adding new knowledge. The contribution of this research is twofold: First, it conducts an organizational-level study of the relationship between social media use and donations to nonprofit organizations. Second, it examines different social media platforms using such measures as Facebook Likes, Twitter

Followers, and Instagram Followers, which have little been analyzed in previous research. Di Lauro and his colleagues (2019) state that previous research studied social media in general. Thus, it was difficult to fully understand which social media platforms are more beneficial than others. As evidenced in this research, diverse types of social media might not have the same impact on nonprofit organizations' fundraising.

This research is not free from limitations. Since the study used the cross-sectional data set for one year (the year 2020), the impact of social media on fundraising might be unique in that year. Future research needs to collect more data on social media traction over several years for a longitudinal study. This research also focuses on U.S. nonprofit organizations partly because of data availability. According to Global NGO Technology Report (2019), there are differences in the percentage of nonprofit organizations across countries using social media to engage their supporters and donors, e.g., 97% of nonprofits in the United States and Canada versus 82% of nonprofits in Asian countries. Thus, if data is available, including non-US nonprofit organizations in the analysis and examining how they promote charitable giving using social media would be an interesting future research direction. Lastly, this research used three social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It would be interesting to study whether there is a differential impact of the age gaps in social media use on donations by including more social media platforms, such as YouTube and Snapchat.

Social media platforms have different demographics (Auxier and Anderson, 2021; Morand, 2023; Streissguth, 2023). According to Auxier and Anderson (2021), the age gaps between younger and older Americans vary across social media platforms. For example, the age gaps are narrower for Facebook and Twitter than for Instagram and Snapchat. It indicates that Facebook and Twitter are commonly used across different age groups, compared to Instagram and Snapchat, which may influence the amount of fundraising. Thus, nonprofit organizations do not need to be on every single social media platform. They can choose a few platforms that best suit their content and target a specific audience, engaging them with their content (Morand, 2023; Streissgut, 2023). While people of all ages widely use Facebook, the primary demographic is between 25 and 35. Instagram is owned by Meta, the same company that owns Facebook. Even though many of the same features are available on Instagram as on Facebook, Instagram's demographics are more skewed to younger people. Nonprofit organizations use Facebook to share events and fundraising using video and text, but they can use Instagram more for posting visual content, including photos and videos. Like Facebook, Twitter is commonly used by different age groups, and nonprofit organizations can share quick updates, links to their websites, or discussions with

their followers. It is also a popular place to organize and communicate about actions and run hashtag campaigns, a common strategy for social media for nonprofits (Tabas, 2021; Morand, 2023; Streissguth, 2023). In short, more research is needed to investigate how nonprofit organizations best use different types of social media for charitable giving and why specific social media platforms are more beneficial than others.^{vii}

REFERENCES

- Auxier, B. and Anderson, M. (2021). "Social Media Use in 2021," Pew Research Center, 1, 1-4. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/04/07/social-media-use-in-2021/> Accessed on December 19, 2023
- Bhati, A., & McDonnell, D. (2020). "Success in An Online Giving Day: The Role of Social Media in Fundraising," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 49(1), 74-92.
- Cabrera, N. L., Matias, C. E., & Moyota, R. (2017). "Activism or Slacktivism? The Potential and Pitfalls of Social Media in Contemporary Student Activism," *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 10(4), 400–415.
- Carboni, J.L. and S. P. Maxwell. (2015). "Effective Social Media Engagement for Nonprofits: What Matters?" *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 1(1), 18-28.
- Chambers, S. (2013). "Charities Must Make the Most of Smartphone and Tablet Technology," *The Guardian*, February 15. <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2013/feb/15/charities-smartphone-table-technology-future> Accessed on December 19, 2023
- Christensen, H. S. (2012). "Simply Slacktivism? Internet Participation in Finland," *JeDEM-eJournal of eDemocracy and Open Government*, 4(1), 1–23.
- Cnaan, R. A., Jones, K., Dickin, A., & Salomon, M. (2011). "Nonprofit Watchdogs: Do They Serve the Average Donor?" *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 21(4), 381-397.
- Dixon, B. and Keyes, D. (2013). "The Permanent Disruption of Social Media," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, pp. 24-29.

^{vii} We gratefully acknowledge the support from the Wilson Center for Social Entrepreneurship.

-
- Haruvy, E. and Popkowski Leszczyc, P. T. L. (2018). "The Influence of Social Media on Charitable Fundraising," *SSRN Working Paper*, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3201494 Accessed on December 19, 2023
- LaMagna, M. (2015). "Smartphones Make It Easier to Give to Charity, But There Are Drawbacks," *MarketWatch* <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-smartphones-have-made-us-more-generous-2015-12-16> Accessed on December 19, 2023
- Di Lauro, S., Tursunbayeva, A., & Antonelli, G. (2019). "How Nonprofit Organizations Use Social Media for Fundraising: A Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Business and Management*, 14(7), 1-22.
- Global NGO Technology Report (2019). Fundraise. <https://www.funraise.org/techreport> Accessed on December 19, 2023
- Lee, Y. J. (2021). "Liked on Facebook, Liked for Real? Nonprofits' Online Popularity and Financial Performance," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 31(3), 609-621.
- MacLaughlin, S., Longfield, C., and Vellake, A. (2019). "Charitable Giving Report: How Nonprofit Fundraising Performed in 2018," Blackbaud Institute.
- MacLaughlin, S., Duff, E., Granger, B., Perrotti, E., Thomson, A., Torres, G., and Vellake, A. (2020). "Charitable Giving Report: Using 2019 Data to Transform Your Strategy," Blackbaud Institute.
- MacLaughlin, S., Perrotti, E., Thomson, A., and Vellake, A. (2021). "Charitable Giving Report: Using 2020 Data to Transform Your Strategy," Blackbaud Institute.
- Mathos, M. and Norman, C. (2012). *101 Social Media Tactics for Nonprofits: A Field Guide*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Morand, T (2023). "The Ultimate Social Media Guide for Nonprofits," *WildApricot*. <https://www.wildapricot.com/blog/social-media-guide-for-nonprofits> Accessed on December 19, 2023
- Pandey, S. and Bright, C. L. (2008). "What Are Degrees of Freedom?" *Social Work Research*, 32(2), 119-128.

Saxton, G. D., Kuo, J. S., & Ho, Y. C. (2012). “The Determinants of Voluntary Financial Disclosure by Nonprofit Organizations,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(6), 1051-1071.

Saxton, G. D. and Wang, L. (2014). “The Social Network Effect: The Determinants of Giving Through Social Media,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 5, pp. 850-868.

Shin, N. and Chen, Q. (2016) “An Exploratory Study of Nonprofit Organisations’ Use of the Internet for Communications and Fundraising,” *International Journal of Technology, Policy and Management*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp.32–44.

Shin, N. (2019). “The Impact of the Web and Social Media on the Performance of Nonprofit Organizations,” *Journal of International Technology and Information Management*, 27(4), 17-35.

Slovic, P., Vastfjall, D., Erlandsson, A., and Gregory, R. (2017). “Iconic Photographs and the Ebb and Flow of Empathic Response to Humanitarian Disasters,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(4), pp. 640-644.

Smallwood, B. (2016). “Resisting the Siren Call of Popular Digital Media Measures: Facebook Research Shows No Link Between Trendy Online Metrics and Ad Effectiveness,” *Journal of Advertising Research*, 56(2), 126–131.

Streissguth, A (2023). “Social Media for Nonprofits: A Comprehensive Guide,” Constant Contact. <https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/social-media-for-nonprofits/> Accessed on December 19, 2023

Tabas, J. (2021). “How Nonprofits Can Use Social Media to Increase Donations and Boost Visibility,” *Forbes*, March 6. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2021/03/06/how-nonprofits-can-use-social-media-to-increase-donations-and-boost-visibility/?sh=61ee7b182bb7> Accessed on December 19, 2023

The Nonprofit Times (November 3, 2021) “The 2021 NPT Top 100: An Annual In-depth Study of America’s Largest Nonprofits.” <https://thenonprofittimes.com/report/the-2021-npt-100-donors-stood-tall-led-with-big-gifts/> Accessed on December 19, 2023

Waters, R. D., Burnett, E., Lamm, A., and Lucas, J. (2009). "Engaging Stakeholders through Social Networking: How Nonprofit Organizations Are Using Facebook," *Public Relations Review*, Vol. 35, pp. 102-106.

Weisbrod, B. A. and Dominguez, N. D. (1986). "Demand for Collective Goods in Private Nonprofit Markets: Can Fundraising Expenditures Help Overcome Free-Rider Behavior?" *Journal of Public Economics*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 83-96.

Young, J. A. (2017). "Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs: The Adoption and Utilization of Social Media in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations," *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 41(1), 44-57.