Reaching Sustainability

A study designed to explore non-profit sustainability through training and resource development.

Kelly Atamanchuk

Student Researcher, Okanagan College

REACHING SUSTAINBILITY: A STUDY DESIGNED TO EXPLORE NON-PROFIT SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH TRAINING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT.

Presented to: Sheilagh Seaton, Co-leader, Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence

Prepared by: Kelly Atamanchuk

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Abstract

Purpose: This report aims to identify ways in which non-profit organizations can be encouraged and engaged to participate in training activities.

Research Approach: The research is descriptive in nature and builds upon previous experience and knowledge of the Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence. Data was collected from an Internet survey with 44 respondents from social serving non-profit organizations in Kelowna, B.C., Canada. Respondents were asked about the barriers they face prevents them from participating in training, how individuals prefer to learn and their awareness level of online training opportunities.

Findings: Respondents found that time, money and relevancy of current training offered created a gap in participation. The most preferred learning method was through face to face facilitation, followed by on the job learning. Respondents most preferred to attend training workshops and least preferred learning through articles and reports. Over 90% of respondents were willing to use online resources for training. Most respondents agreed they had low to moderate awareness of training courses available online.

Research Limitations: The findings are limited to the thoughts of individuals in non-profit organizations in the Central Okanagan.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction

The research is conducted on behalf of the Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC) to help reach organizational sustainability. The research project was completed to find out current and future training needs of non-profit organizations in Kelowna, B.C., Canada. The project aims to uncover the preferred learning methods of individuals working with non-profit organizations. Section 1.1 will discuss background information regarding the Scotiabank NPC and the research completed.

1.1 Background

The Scotiabank NPC was founded in 2014. The organization combines the efforts of student researchers and Okanagan School of Business professors to uncover strategies to reach sustainability in non-profit organizations (Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence, 2016). Since being founded, the Scotiabank NPC has conducted two studies regarding sustainability in social serving non-profit organizations. These research studies focused on challenges faced by organizations and mission attainment (Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence, 2016). The main goal of the Scotiabank NPC is to identify the needs of non-profit organizations and improve sustainability (Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence, 2016). Research has uncovered that improvements need to be made in the sector to be sustainable with the shrinking amounts of government and corporate funding (Wright, Sparling, Seaton, & Lenz, 2015).

The Scotiabank NPC has offered two in-person training workshops to provide non-profit organizations with valuable learning (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 16th, 2016). The workshop content is determined by student researchers who work with non-profit organizations in the Central Okanagan. These student researchers determine organizational gaps that need to be addressed to improve sustainability. Once the curriculum is identified, Scotiabank NPC facilitators have delivered the needed content to participating organizations in face to face workshops (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 16th, 2016).

The Scotiabank NPC would like to determine in what other ways (besides face-to face workshops) people prefer to learn. Other potential methods of delivery can include online learning, videoconferences, and/or webinars (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 16th, 2016). By learning the appropriate curriculum, organizations can use their knowledge to become more sustainable (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 16th, 2016).

On the Scotiabank NPC website, individuals have access to a database of available training workshops, e-learning and programs (Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence, 2016). Organizations can enroll in training courses hosted by third parties at their convenience to help expand their job knowledge. There are many resources available for non-profit organizations but not all organizations make use of the training (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 24th, 2016). This research seeks to identify common barriers preventing employees and volunteers of organizations from participating in expanding their knowledge and abilities.

1.2 Purpose

The Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence is dedicated to sustainability by identifying and providing the training and learning needs of non-profit organizations in the Central Okanagan. To identify their needs, the research seeks to uncover the barriers non-profit organizations face when deciding to participate or to not participate in learning and training activities. This information seeks to answer the following decision statement:

In what ways can the people of non-profit organizations be encouraged and engaged in training and resource development?

To answer the decision statement, specific research objectives have been created.

These research objectives provide the information necessary to answer the above decision statement:

RO1: To determine common barriers that prevent non-profit organizations from participating in training and learning opportunities.

RO2: To determine the preferred learning methods of non-profit training from all levels of employment in organizations (executive director, board members, management, staff and volunteers).

RO3: Determine the level of awareness around the training and learning resources available online for non-profit organizations

1.3 Significance

The Scotiabank NPC will use the research findings to better communicate, offer and facilitate training. The significance of the research is largely based on the impact it will have on non-profit organizations. The research will help organizations access and choose training to help their employees become more competent and sustainable in the long run.

1.4 Nature and Scope of the Report

This research is descriptive in nature. Chapter Two, Literature Review, identifies the current gaps in research regarding training limitations, barriers and online awareness found by other researchers. Following the review of literature, Chapter Three discusses the research strategy and methodology used to collect data. This chapter focuses on the sample population, the sample size and the margin of error. Next, Chapter Four analyzes that data and presents the research findings. The findings are discussion in relation to the research objectives. Lastly, Chapter Five pulls out conclusions from the data and the literature review, and recommendations are made.

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review shows previous research related to the topic completed by other researchers and organizations. The purpose of the literature review is to identify what is already known about the decision statement. The gaps found in the literature review formulate the research objectives. The background information presented in Chapter One and known gaps in research has formulated the following decision statement:

> *In what ways can the people of non-profit organizations be encouraged and engaged in training and resource development?*

The literature review shows a gap in research towards increasing engagement in training for non-profit organizations in the Central Okanagan. The literature review begins with the decision statement of the research. Next, the main concepts of the research are defined. Following the definitions, a review of literature related to the barriers of training and development in non-profit organizations is conducted. The literature review identifies the gaps in research and identifies the research objectives of this study.

2.2 Definitions

To understand the Scotiabank NPC's goal of achieving sustainability through training resources, each research concept must be defined. The meaning of employee engagement and training is defined below.

2.2.1 Employee Engagement

Gebauer and Lowman (2009) define employee engagement as having a strong connection with the organization; so much so they are willing to go the extra mile of what is expected to help the organization succeed (Mone, Eisinger, Guggenheim, Price, Stine, 2011 p. 206). Mone and London (2009) suggest an engaged employee would feel "involved, committed, passionate and empowered and demonstrates those behaviours in

their work" (Mone et al., 2009, p. 206). An engaged employee will likely have a positive effect on the performance of an organization.

2.2.2 Training

Training is defined as an "organized activity aimed at imparting information and/or instructions to improve the recipient's performance or to help him or her attain a required level of knowledge or skill" (Businessdictionary.com, n.d.). Training can increase an individual's job understanding and maximize their role in the organization, it "allows organizations to adapt, compete, excel, innovate, produce, be safe, improve service and reach goals" (Salas, Tannanbaum, Kraiger, Smith-Jentsch, 2012, p. 74). When employees gain knowledge, and understanding, the organization benefits in terms of human capital. The goal of training is to create a sustainable change in behavior to perform more competently on the job (Salas, et al., 2012).

2.3 Training and Development in Non-Profit Organizations

Non-profit organizations are faced with a multitude of challenges affecting their ability to operate at their greatest capacity. Organizations and their employees need to constantly adapt to a changing environment, changing patterns of social and community needs, and the diversity and distinctiveness of the non-profit sector (Akingbola, 2006). The employees of non-profit organizations require a wide range of skills and put in long hours to complete their job (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014).

Common challenges found in human resources of non-profit organizations include limited finances, lack of qualified people in their organization, limited access to affordable education and training, difficulty transferring skills and difficulty attracting qualified volunteers and employees (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). These barriers effect employee job satisfaction, engagement and commitment, as well as the capacity of the organization (Zareie & Navimipour, 2016). These barriers play a role in the encouragement to participate in training and being actively engaged in learning on the job.

2.3.2 Limited Financial Resources

According to Ference Weicker (2014), 71% of employees' report spending less than three percent of their organization's annual revenues on employee and volunteer training. This figure also includes 41% of organizations that spend less than one percent on training (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). On average, it is estimated that the employers spend $13,180 annually on employee training (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). This level of annual training expenditures does not accurately reflect many small non-profit organizations. Organizations are generally mission driven and if given extra funds, it seems they would likely put the money towards programs rather than employees.

2.3.3 Lack of Qualified People in Their Organization

There is a need to expand and enhance current employee skills (HR Council, 2008). According to a study conducted for Step Up BC in 2014, one in four employees working at a non-profit organization in British Columbia reported a skills gap (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). While nine out of ten employees in Canada thought, their organization had the necessary skills needed for the organization, employees did suggest improvements should be made (HR Council, 2008). Most employees believed more training was needed in fundraising, marketing, HR and finance (HR Council, 2008).

A lack of employee skills and experience can impact their ability to perform tasks effectively and sustainably. In British Columbia, only 8% of organizations had an employee who spent their time at work doing strategic planning, 6% had an employee who focused solely on social media and communication, 5% had an employee who focused most their time on human resource activities and only 4% had an employee who spent their time with information technology (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). These job roles are crucial to sustainability when it comes to long term planning, fund development and employee and volunteer recruitment.

2.3.4 Limited Access to Affordable Education and Training

Non-profit organizations have access to training resource databases on the Internet. Some courses are offered at no charge and others can range to thousands of dollars depending on the course and certification. Like Ference Weicker & Co (2014) mentioned, 71% of organizations spend less than three percent of revenue on training as most expenditures are on programs, employee salaries, property leases and administrative supplies.

2.3.5 Difficulty Transferring Skills

There is a transfer of training skills gap amongst for-profit and non- profit organizations (Salas et al, 2012). Salas et al (2012) suggests that transferring of new skills is a barrier when employees are not given opportunities to perform or do not receive support from their peers or supervisors. When barriers are removed, employees can increase their skills transfer and decrease the chance of losing their new skill (Salas, et al., 2012).

2.3.6 Difficulty Attracting Qualified Volunteers and Employees

There is a need to recruit more qualified applicants (HR Council, 2008) in non-profit organizations. As the Baby Boomer generation begins to retire, worsening skill shortages for non-profit organizations are expected (Salas et al, 2012). Recruiting employees to non-profit organizations is challenging because applicants must possess adequate knowledge and skills as well as believe in the organization's mission (Akingbola, 2006) Low job security is also a factor that affects recruitment due to the small size of many non-profit organizations and their short-term funding (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014).

The literature shows that employees and volunteers are attracted to the non-profit sector based on the importance of the sector, positive work environments and collaborative cultures (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014). Most employees of non-profit organizations are motivated intrinsically by the opportunity to serve their community and work in an organization that aligns with their personal values (Akingbola, 2006). They may have the heart to serve the organizations mission but lack certain job skills. These factors may also limit the employee's room for career advancement (Ference Weicker & Co, 2014).

2.4 The Need for Training and How It Can Be Effective

"Training is essential to the effectiveness and survival of non-profit organizations" (Akingbola, 2006 p. 1711) especially, during a time of constant innovation and a changing environment. Research has identified that training that is properly designed works well, and the way training is designed, delivered and implemented plays a large role in its effectiveness (Salas, et al., 2012). When employees learn new skills, they can impact their organization by applying new knowledge and making more informed decisions (Ho, Yeung, 2015).

The use of effective training can positively impact organizational performance (Akingbola, 2006). For training to be effective, a team leader needs to initiate the following four practices: "(a) guide trainees to the right training, (b) clarify trainees' expectations, (c) prepare trainees, and (d) reinforce learning objectives (Salas et al, 2012, p. 83). Salas et al. (2012) also determined that the way trainees are notified about training influences the actual training course.

Training effectiveness can vary on the persons' level of engagement with the organization, position and age. Research has identified that the age of the trainee impacts the preference of the training method and its effectiveness (Salas, et al. 2012). An older worked may require a different method and a greater amount of time to complete training (Salas, et al, 2012). Salas et al. (2012), also suggest that sufficient time be given to older trainees to study, review, practice and master training content.

2.5 Remaining Knowledge Gaps

2.5.1 Barriers in the Central Okanagan

The research done by Step Up BC shows that one in four employees believed they had a skills gap at their organization (Ference Weicker & Co., 2014) and that employees believed that their skills in marketing, HR, finance and fundraising could be improved (HR Council, 2008). A conference proceeding at ANZAM 2015, looked at for-profit small businesses lack of participation in training and development. The findings showed

that the lack of participation in training and development was due to high costs, the loss of work time and the lack of relevant courses offered (Susomrith, Coetzer, 2015). The factors mentioned above are consistent with non-profit organizations. There is a gap in literature to understanding the common barriers to training specific to the Central Okanagan. This has formulated research objective one:

> *RO 1: To determine the common barriers that prevents non-profit organizations from participating in training and learning opportunities.*

This research objective aims to establish which barriers impact organizations in the Central Okanagan. This objective also looks to determine if resources offered in the Central Okanagan are being underutilized, irrelevant or hard to access. By identifying the common barriers, the Scotiabank NPC can try to diminish their effect on training participation. If these barriers can be mitigated, the Scotiabank NPC can offer training resources based on these limitations.

2.5.2 Preferred Learning Methods

According the HR Council of Canada (2008), the least satisfying aspect of a non-profit employee's job is training and professional development (HR Council, 2008). An employee's motivation to learn can greatly influence the effect of actual learning obtained (Salas et al, 2012). If the Scotiabank NPC can break down the barriers preventing training, research objective two will examine how employees and volunteers prefer to learn. This gap has formulated research objective two:

> *RO 2: To determine the preferred learning methods of non-profit training from all levels of employment in organizations (executive directors, board members, staff, management/supervisors and volunteers).*

Are the appropriate and relevant training resources being offered? By asking employees and volunteers how they prefer to learn, the Scotiabank NPC can focus on the preferred methods to attract the most people to training.

2.5.3 Online Training Awareness

There is also a research gap in how organizations access training. Salas et al. (2012) also determined the way trainees are notified about training influences the actual training course. There is no research that shows the level of awareness of online learning and training resources for non-profit organizations. This research looks to find answers regarding how well-aware employees are with access to e-learning resources and their availability. This gap in research has formulated the final research objective:

> *RO 3: Determine the level of awareness around the training and learning resources available online for non-profit organizations.*

2.6 Conclusion

This literature review shows that previous research is relevant to the decision statement. Much literature has analyzed the barriers that affect the encouragement and engagement of training and resource development in non-profit organizations. How does this data relate to non-profit organizations in Kelowna, B.C.? With the research gaps addressed, the following research objectives aim to bridge the gaps:

> *Ro1: To determine the common barriers that prevents non-profit organizations from participating in training and learning opportunities*
> *.*
> *Ro2: To determine the preferred learning methods of non-profit training from all levels of employment in organizations (executive directors, board members, staff, management/supervisors and volunteers).*
>
> *RO3: Determine the level of awareness around the training and learning resources available online for non-profit organizations.*

The next section, Chapter Three, discusses the research strategy and methodology used to answer the research objectives.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

The research project uses primary data to answer the research objectives. The primary data was collected through an Internet survey. This chapter discusses the research design, the sample characteristics, data collection methods, instrument evaluation and the analysis tools used. Section 3.1 discusses the research design.

3.1 Research Design

Previous exploratory research completed by Scotiabank NPC has identified a need to investigate training in non-profit organizations. The Scotiabank NPC has determined that more training efforts need to be in place to help non-profits in Kelowna become more sustainable (Scotiabank NPC, 2016). The Scotiabank NPC has been able to gain a good understanding of non-profit organizations in Kelowna by having already researched factors contributing to mission attainment and common challenges. These studies found that the most preferred learning method was through face to face interaction (S. Seaton, Personal Communication, September 18th, 2016).

With the use of the previous studies, this research is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research is defined as describing characteristics of people, groups, organizations and environments (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). The research describes what role the respondents have in the organization, what training methods they prefer and don't prefer and why, and how they would wish to access training at their organization. The research questions identified preferences and characteristics in individuals involved in non-profit organizations.

3.2 Sample design

The target population are the individuals working or volunteering at social service non-profit organizations in the Central Okanagan. The respondents were located in Kelowna, B.C. The population was selected based on the direct impact that the Scotiabank NPC has

with the people involved in these organizations. This group either use training already or could benefit from using training resources in the future. The unit of analysis looked at the individuals themselves, as the research aimed to identify individual preferences.

 To gain an accurate representation of all levels of employment, surveys were given out to staff, volunteers, board members, management and executive directors. The research selected a wide array of people involved in the operations of non-profit organizations to identify trends in specific roles. The sample consisted of 44 respondents. This number includes five volunteers, sixteen staff members, six supervisors/ managers, six executive directors and eight board members. Due to the small sample size, results are presented with an 85% confidence level. A low response rate may have been caused by survey fatigue.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected through an Internet survey. The survey questions were created based on the research objectives and secondary research. The survey was delivered with a brief explanation of its purpose in the Kelowna Community Resources (KCR) monthly email newsletter, the Scotiabank NPC website and the Scotiabank NPC email database. Participants from a discussion panel held at Okanagan College in January 2017, were invited to complete the online survey. Executive directors were also encouraged to send the survey link to board members and other relevant respondents who did not directly receive an invitation to participate in the research.

Administered through the Internet, respondents could complete the survey anonymously and on their own time (Zikmund et al., 2013). The survey consisted of 20 questions and was hosted online through Qualtrics. Survey questions varied from multiple choice, multi answer, scale and open ended questions. To see the survey please visit Appendix A.

Prior research conducted by the Scotiabank NPC was used to create the survey questions, as the reports had a good understanding of the target population. Data from other sources were only used if it was relevant in terms of publishing date, location and population of

interest (Zikmund et al., 2013). Other elements of the research design included scholarly reports and industry statistics. Industry reports regarding sustainability in the non-profit sector provided background information to the research project. Secondary data was collected based on for-profit and non-profit organizations and their training practices.

3.4 Instrument Evaluation

The quality of the research largely depends on the reliability, validity and sensitivity of the data. Strong measures were taken to ensure the data is of high quality. Reliability refers to the data's internal consistency (Zikmund et al., 2013). The survey used a few similar questions that if answered consistently, should yield reliable results. For example, questions four and five of the survey should be consistent if respondents choose to prefer learning through webinars, they may also find webinars more effective.

Validity refers to the accuracy of a measure and its truthfulness in representing a concept (Zikmund et al., 2013). The questions were based off the research objectives and therefore reflect the concepts involved. The questions were designed to represent the entire scope of respondent's possible answers. Sensitivity refers to the "measurement instruments ability to accurately measure variability in responses" (Zikmund et al, 2013, p. 305). Sensitivity was ensured by using five point scales on attitudinal questions. For questions where answers were provided, the list of answers were exhaustive and represented many possible response choices.

3.5 Analysis

The research conducted was of both quantitative and qualitative nature. A variety of non-parametric tests were used due to the small sample size. Non-parametric tests such as frequencies, Kruskal- Wallis, and cross tabulations were used. Qualitative measurement questions were placed in categories when reoccurring themes were discovered and then analyzed based on trends in the data. The analysis compared individuals based on their job role at the organization.

Grouping questions were used to identify personal characteristics of respondents such as their age group and length of involvement in the non-profit organization. These demographic questions were used to analyze their willingness to participate in training based off their time in their role.

3.6 Conclusion

The questions created for the survey were based on previous research and the research objectives. The survey was made up of both quantitative and qualitative questions to capture sensitivity in the results. The questions were designed in a way to create meaningful results. The results can be found in the next section, Chapter Four, Discussion and Findings.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The primary research collected followed the research methodology presented in Chapter Three. Responses collected were both qualitative and quantitative. In this section, the participants are described. This chapter presents the data though graphs, tables and charts. The research findings are presented based on each research objective. Final thoughts and key findings are included at the end of this chapter.

4.2 Participants

There were a total of 44 responses collected from individuals in non-profit organizations in Kelowna, B.C. The participants consisted of volunteers (5), staff members (16), supervisors/managers (6), executive directors (6) and board members (9), and two others (did not identify with a role). Most respondents were in the age range of 35-64 (31 respondents), followed by eight participants who under 34, and two participants were over 65. Of the respondents, 54.5% had more than 13 years' involvement in the non-profit sector. The majority (54.5%) of respondents have been in their role at their organization for less than five years. The participants' responses to the questions will be discussed through the research objectives.

4.3 Common Barriers That Prevent Non-Profit Organizations from Participating in Training

Research objective one focused on determining common barriers individuals face at their organization that prevent them from training. Many common barriers such as time, financial ability, interest, awareness, training delivery, motivation and relevance were factors that individuals thought played an important role in whether they will participate in training. The ranking order of the most common barriers can be found in Appendix B. When it comes to participating in training, each respondent was asked to rate each factor on the level of importance, shown in Figure 4.3.1. On a scale of one to five (1= not important, 2= slightly

important, 3= important and 4= very important), respondents were asked to rate the importance of each factor. Each factor was rated to be important or very important.

4.3.1 Time

The data shows that time was the most common barrier that currently prevents training in non-profit organizations. Of the respondents, 70.5% believed that time was a big factor in preventing training in non-profit organizations. Time was also rated to have the highest average level of importance, 4.5, when it comes to whether respondents participated in training.

Figure 4.3.1 Average Importance of Each Factor

As many respondents commented, time was a common barrier due to the heavy reliance on volunteers. One respondent mentioned that, "the non-profit that I am involved with is very small, [has] a volunteer board, and one very part time paid staff person. The time we commit to the organization is mostly to move forward with our projects and activities," therefore finding time for training is tough. Another respondent mentioned that the non-profit he or she works with is a total volunteer run organization where time commitment to training varies.

4.3.2 Relevance

Of the respondents, 61.4% answered that the relevance of the training offered prevented them from training. The relevancy of training received an average rating of 4.31. Respondents mentioned that training needs to be "relevant to my organization" and presented in specific segments (i.e. child care, volunteering, etc.).

4.3.3 Financial Ability

Having the financial ability to participate in training was a barrier identified by 56.8% of respondents. Respondents were concerned about the cost of training. One respondent answered that their organization "does not have a budget to support training" and another mentioned that the training needs to be affordable for it be considered by the organization. Other concerns

regarding the organizations financial ability to support training included the quality, size and affordability of the training.

4.3.4 Final Concerns About Training

When asked to comment on any other concerns or barriers with training, respondent's answers were grouped into three common themes. Time was mentioned the most frequently by respondents followed by money or finding room in the organizations budget. Other concerns included the quality of the training regarding the facilitator, relevance to the organization and the method of delivery. One respondent answered, "very rarely is training offered that is relevant not only to our organization, but more specifically to size which impacts time and finance." Like the previous quote, another respondent had concerns about the "quality [of the training] and making sure we can afford" it.

From the data, willingness to learn was not a barrier identified by the respondents. Motivation was selected as barrier by only 11% of respondents. respondents agreed (mean= 4.48) that they were interested in training. They also agreed that the organization where they work encourages training (mean= 4.00).

4.4 The Preferred Learning Methods of All Levels of Employment in Non-Profit Organizations (Executive Director, Board Members, Management, Staff and Volunteers).

Research objective two is focused on identifying the preferred learning methods of individuals at non-profit organizations. The objective looks at the current training conducted at organizations and how much time is put towards training each month. The most preferred method of training delivery is identified as well as many other preferred methods.

4.4.1 Current State of Training

Table 4.4.1 Training hours per month	
Current Hours	Number of people
0-2	26
3 to 5	8
6 to 8	6
9+	2

To better understand the preferred learning methods of respondents, the research focused on the current training state at non-profit organizations. As discussed in section 4.3.1, time is the biggest factor that prevents training. From the data, most organizations currently spend zero to two hours per month on training. Table 4.4.1 shows how many hours individuals at non-profit organizations are currently spending on training per month. To find out how often each method was used in the past year, see Appendix C to view the cross tabulation. In the past year, articles were used more than 10 times by ten of the respondents. Articles were the highest used method, followed by reports (seven respondents have used reports more than 10 times in the past year).

4.4.2 Preferred Learning Experience

Respondents were asked to select their most preferred method of training based on four different learning experiences. Facilitated learning was selected to be the most preferred by respondents at 36.6%. Figure 4.4.2 shows how many of each respondent preferred each learning experience. A small number of people preferred individual (self-study) learning.
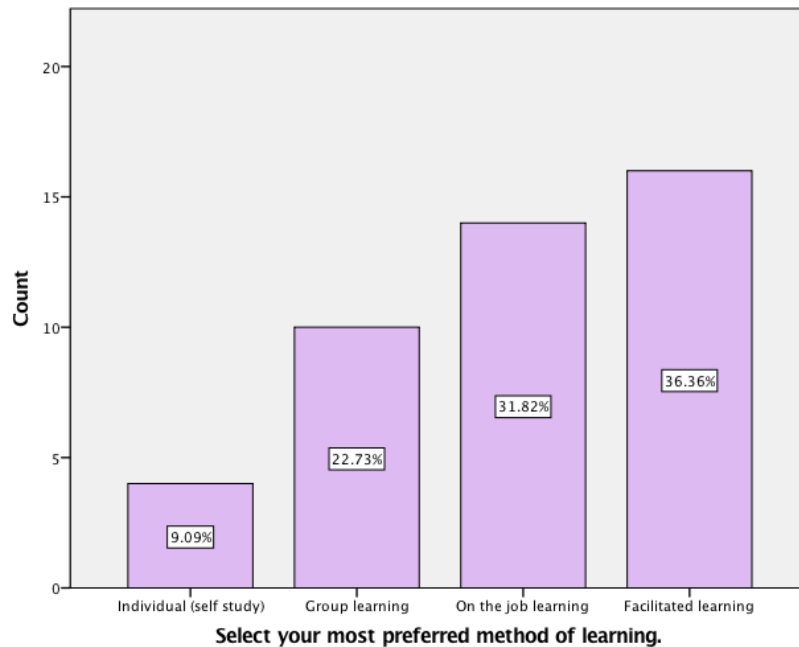
Figure 4.4.2 Preferred learning methods by individuals

In addition to the most preferred learning experience, respondents were also asked to comment on how training could best be delivered. The responses collected reflected the facilitated learning preference. Common

themes included interactivity, hands on experiential learning, implementation plans, and face to face experiences. Other common themes included providing assessments and training refreshers to "ensure the training is being used and used correctly."

4.4.3 Preferred Training Method Delivery

Respondents were asked to rate their preference level for each training delivery method on a five-point scale (1= highly unpreferred, 2= unpreferred, 3= neutral, 4= preferred, 5= highly preferred). Workshops (mean= 4.14) had the highest average preference by respondents. This is reflected by the facilitated learning experience preference mentioned above. Both workshops and seminars involve in person facilitation and discussion. Figure 4.4.3 shows the average preference for each training method. Except for reports, each method was positively (mean> 3, neutral) viewed by respondents. Even though reports were not preferred, they were used more than 10 times in a year by seven respondents. Training methods that received positive preference such as articles, E- learning modules and webinars can all be accessed online.

Figure 4.4.3 Preferred Training Methods

4.4.4 Online Training and Learning

Respondents were asked if they were willing to access and use training online. Figure 4.4.4 shows that 93% of respondents would likely be willing to use online resources in the future.

When respondents were asked about how to best receive training, many people turned to online delivery and the following comments were collected:

"We recently participated in a province-wide Videoconference using Zoom. This was great."

"online self-paced training is good to, for when you cannot commit to a full or half day workshop/seminar."

"A combination of in person, online and real life experiences."

"Being able to interact with a teacher or small group directly - even online, would be my preferred method."
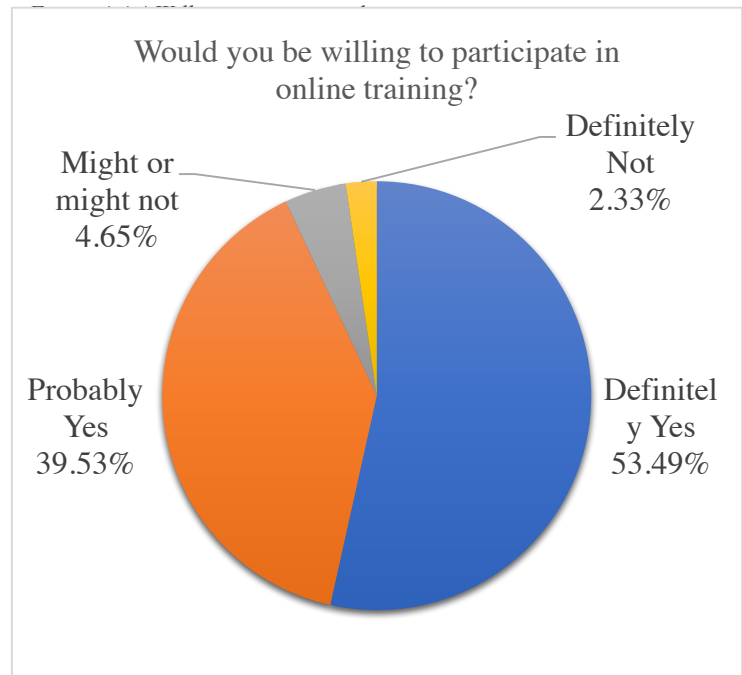
Most respondents were willing to bring their training online. In the next section, research objective three will discuss the current level of awareness towards online training resources.

Figure 4.4.4 Online Training Willingness

4.4 The Level of Awareness Around the Training and Learning Resources Available Online for Non-profit Organizations

Research objective three is based on the respondent's awareness regarding online training resources available to them. The questions were based on the current general awareness of online resources and awareness regarding the Scotiabank NPC website.

4.5.1 Training Awareness

Awareness of online training resources varied amongst all individuals. When conducting a Kruskal-Wallis test, there were no significant differences between individuals' role at the

organization and their awareness of online resources. Figure 4.6 shows a cross tabulation of how each role is aware of online training resources.

Table 4.6 Job Role and Online Awareness

Role	No awareness	Low awareness	Moderate awareness	High awareness	Total
Other	0	1	0	0	1
Board Member	0	6	2	0	8
Executive Director	1	0	5	0	6
Supervisor/Manager	0	1	2	3	6
Staff member	3	6	7	0	16
Volunteer	2	1	2	0	5
Total	6	15	18	3	42

4.5.2 Scotiabank NPC Website Awareness

Respondents were also asked about their awareness towards the Scotiabank NPC website. A Kruskal- Wallis test (see Appendix C) found that there was a significant difference (p<0.05) in the familiarity of respondents with Scotiabank NPC and their level of awareness towards online training. This means that a significant number of respondents familiar with non-profit online resources were also familiar with the Scotiabank NPC website.

4.5.3 Scotiabank NPC Website Resources

Lastly, the respondents who were familiar with the Scotiabank NPC website were asked about which resources they have used. Respondents have accessed articles, event info, research reports and board resources from the Scotiabank NPC website.

4.6 Other Findings

For respondents to become more effective at their jobs, the survey asked participants how they would like to receive training information updates. The most common response (72.7%) was through an email newsletter through the Scotiabank NPC. The second most common response (27.3%) included information regarding training in the KCR monthly email Newsletter. Respondents also hoped to hear about training offers through their supervisor (22.7%).

4.7 Conclusion

The barriers preventing training identified in research objective one gives the Scotiabank NPC an understanding of what individuals are facing at their organization. By identifying the preferred methods of training, new training can reflect the preferences of respondents. The research uncovered that respondents are willing to learn through online platforms or a variety of both in person and online experiences. Since individuals are willing to learn online, research objective three measured the level of awareness of the training offered through the Internet. Research objective three has uncovered a gap where individuals are willing to learn online but are not well-aware of the resources available. Chapter 5 will present recommendations from the data collected.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five connects the research from the literature review with the findings in Chapter Four. Conclusions from the research are made about the decision statement. Limitations regarding the usability of results are mentioned. Lastly, recommendations are discussed. Conclusions about the research objectives are discussed in the next section.

5.2 Conclusions About Research Objectives

Conclusions have been made from the data collected in the literature review and through the survey results. The conclusions for each research objective are found below.

5.2.1 Common Barriers That Prevent Non-Profit Organizations from Participating in Training

The research showed that common barriers included time, money and relevance. Ference Weicker's (2014) research presented in the literature review agrees with the findings from the survey. The individuals thought that there is limited access to affordable training and limited funds to pay for it. Much of the organizations' budgets go directly to programs, employee wages, property leases and administration rather than employee development. Respondents expressed they were eager to spend time training when the organization compensated the staff member. A large concern for staff members was that they were not being paid for training days. For volunteers, the organization did not have enough money or time to support training.

Organizations are looking for relevant, segment-specific training that can directly impact the effectiveness of their staff. The literature showed a gap in recruiting qualified applicants and therefore training is needed. The training methods currently offered are non-transferable on the job (Susomrith, Coetzer, 2015) and lack relevancy. When employees do not receive support from supervisors or training facilitators, the skills are lost when they don't have the opportunity to use them on the job.

5.2.2 The Preferred Learning Methods of All Levels of Employment in Non-Profit Organizations (Executive Director, Board Members, Management, Staff and Volunteers).

The survey shows the most preferred learning experience was through facilitated training. Client, Sheilagh Seaton of The Scotiabank NPC predicted that respondents would prefer face to face training because of interaction, in person and real life experiences, and hands on application. Respondents agreed that they would be interested in a combination of facilitated and online learning methods. This outcome aligns with what the Scotiabank NPC expected from their previous experience. On the job learning was also very popular amongst the respondents. The training design, delivery and implementation will impact the training methods preference and effectiveness (Salas, et al., 2012).

5.2.3 The Level of Awareness Around the Training and Learning Resources Available Online for Non-Profit Organizations.

The research shows awareness of online training resources needs to be increased. Fifteen of the 42 respondents agreed to having low awareness of online resources and 18 of the 42 said their awareness level was moderate. The survey determined that over 90% of respondents were likely to use online training resources. Affordable, online training can be completed at home or in short spurts of free time at the office which may help organizations gain access.

5.3 Conclusions About the Decision Statement

Non-profit organizations can be encouraged to participate in training if resource providers attend to the timely and financial needs of organizations. The research shows that organizational budgets do not support ongoing training initiatives. Training needs to be made more affordable to organizations. Based on the results, over half of respondents spend less than two hours per month on training, but over three quarters of respondents were willing to spend more time (see Appendix E). Employees will be engaged if the right training course and delivery method are offered. If training can be tailored to the segments (childcare, affordable housing, etc.) of the organization, the resources may be more relevant to the training needs. Employees prefer when training is transferrable to the job, where skills gaps within organizations can be reduced.

5.4 Limitations

There are limitations to be considered when reading this report. The margin of error is 85% due to the smaller than expected sample size. The research is also limited by the administration of the survey though the Internet. Responses were collected anonymously and there is no way of knowing which type of organization the individuals are involved with, and how many responses were obtained from each organization. The research was based off social serving non-profits in the Kelowna, B.C. area and may not reflect the needs of organizations in other locations.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the survey results, the Scotiabank NPC can choose to adopt the following recommendations. The way training is designed, delivered and implemented determines its effectiveness on the organization (Salas, et al., 2012). It is recommended that the Scotiabank NPC use a combination of both facilitated and online learning methods. Online materials can be accessed by a larger audience on the individuals own time. If both in person and online facilitation are used to deliver content, individuals can learn the concepts in advance and apply them during face to face training.

How do organizations know if the training offered is worth their time and money? Since the Scotiabank NPC has a database list on their website, it is recommended that they add a 'Reviews' section. This way organizations that create training content and those that access it can understand the pros and cons of each course before they spend time and money. The Scotiabank NPC can highlight training opportunities with the best reviews or have a "Recommended" tab on the website. After conducting training activities, the Scotiabank NPC should encourage feedback from attendees to improve the training offered.

The Scotiabank NPC should create monthly email newsletters highlighting training courses or opportunities in the Okanagan. Individuals want to be updated about training opportunities through email newsletters. To increase the awareness of training courses listed online, links from the newsletters can bring individuals to the training page on the Scotiabank NPC website.

The Scotiabank NPC can play a role in encouraging non-profit organizations to participate in training by creating training packages. These packages can guide trainees to the right training that is affordable and relevant to each organization's needs. The Scotiabank NPC can then gather information such as a training itinerary to clarify attendee's expectations. The Scotiabank NPC can then prepare trainees with any online material that needs to be completed prior to the facilitation or webinar. Lastly, training is not effective unless it is implemented on the job. The Scotiabank NPC shall provide follow up refreshers to the training attendees and check in on progress.

Lastly, further research should be conducted by the Scotiabank NPC to gain a better understanding of training efforts by organizations and their employees and volunteers. The research should be conducted outside of Kelowna, B.C., because the population may have suffered from survey fatigue. Conducting research in other areas such as Vernon or Penticton will give new perspectives from organizations that may be relevant to the Scotiabank NPC.

5.6 Conclusion

The research has identified recommendations that the Scotiabank NPC can take to improve sustainability at nonprofit organizations in Kelowna, B.C., Canada. Becoming sustainable includes empowering and investing in the people involved in your organization. This includes providing support to trainees and giving them the opportunity to implement their skills. Training hopes to create a sustainable change in [employee or volunteer] behavior to perform more competently on the job (Salas, et al., 2012). The Scotiabank NPC can take on the role as the middle man, connecting training opportunities to non-profit organizations in need by bridging the gaps identified.

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Appendix A

Survey
Scotiabank NPC Learning Methods Survey

Q0 January 16th, 2017
Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study called Reaching Sustainability: A study designed to explore non-profit sustainability through training and resource development. This survey designed for the Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC), will analyze learning methods and common barriers that prevent training in non-profit organizations. The goal of the Scotiabank NPC is to provide resources to help organizations become more sustainable. The Scotiabank NPC will base its facilitation of learning materials on how most people prefer to learn. This research is being conducted by Kelly Atamanchuk, an Okanagan College student, and is a course requirement for the Honours Bachelor of Business Administration Degree. The project is carried out under the supervision of professor Lee Cartier.

Your participation in the survey is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the survey at any time. You also have the right to leave any questions unanswered. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality. No names appear on the questionnaire and results will be reported for the entire survey rather than on an individual basis. There are no perceived risks associated with participating in this survey.

The information gathered for this research study will be accessible only to the student researcher and the supervisor. Data will be stored in another country and subject to the privacy laws of that country, until destroyed in April 2017. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer. The research results will be presented to all clients and students enrolled in this course. As well a report will be presented to Sheilagh Seaton of the Scotiabank NPC, in April 2017. This report may be used as an example to future students enrolled in the Honours program at Okanagan College.

The results collected will allow Scotiabank NPC to deliver training methods in the most preferred ways based on answers provided by respondents. The results will also help eliminate barriers when it comes to participating in training. The results will help non-profit organizations access training materials that best suit their preferences. This research will benefit non-profit organizations as the Scotiabank delivers information regarding advancing staff member knowledge through learning and training, as well as sustainability.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the research study being conducted, please feel free to contact the student researcher, Kelly Atamanchuk at kelly.atamanchuk@myokanagan.bc.ca or the research supervisor, Lee Cartier, at 250-762-5445 (local 4289). Furthermore, if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the Chair, Research Ethics Board through the Office of Research Services at reb@okanagan.bc.ca or 250-762-5445 ext. 4736. This project has been approved by the Okanagan College Research Ethics Board.

The following questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Upon its completion and return to the student researcher, it will be assumed that your consent has been given to use the information collected.

Thank you for your participation,

Kelly Atamanchuk Student Researcher, Okanagan College

- Continue (1)
- Exit (2)

Q1 What is your level of awareness towards online training resources available to non-profit organizations?
- No awareness (1)
- Low awareness (2)
- Moderate awareness (3)
- High awareness (4)

Q2 Select your most preferred method of learning.
- Individual (self study) (1)
- Group learning (2)
- On the job learning (3)
- Facilitated learning (4)

Q3 In the past year, how often have you used the following training resources in your non-profit role?

	0-2 (1)	3-5 (2)	6-9 (3)	10+ (4)
Webinars (1)	○	○	○	○
Workshops (2)	○	○	○	○
Reports (3)	○	○	○	○
Video conferences (4)	○	○	○	○
Seminars (5)	○	○	○	○
E -learning modules (6)	○	○	○	○
Toolkits (7)	○	○	○	○
Articles (8)	○	○	○	○
Other: (9)	○	○	○	○

Q4 Rate your level of preference for each learning delivery method.

	Highly unpreferred (1)	Unpreferred (2)	Neutral (3)	Preferred (4)	Highly preferred (5)
Webinars (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Workshops (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Reports (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Video Conference (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Seminars (5)	○	○	○	○	○
E- learning modules (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Toolkits (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Articles (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Other: (9)	○	○	○	○	○

Q5 From your experience, rate the level of effectiveness of each delivery method by moving the slider across the scale. If you have not used the learning method, please select Have Not Used.
_____ Webinars (1)
_____ Workshops (2)
_____ Reports (3)
_____ Video Conferences (4)
_____ Seminars (5)
_____ E-Learning Modules (6)
_____ Toolkits (7)
_____ Articles (8)
_____ Other: (9)

Q6 Would you be willing to use online resources for training in the future?
○ Definitely yes (1)
○ Probably yes (2)
○ Might or might not (3)
○ Probably not (4)
○ Definitely not (5)

Display This Question:
   If Would you be willing to use online resources for training in the future? Definitely not Is Selected
   And Would you be willing to use online resources for training in the future? Probably not Is Selected
Q7 Please explain why you would not be willing to use online resources for training.

Q8 Do any of these factors prevent you from participating in training? Select all that apply:
- ❑ Time (1)
- ❑ Money (2)
- ❑ Level of interest (3)
- ❑ Level of awareness (4)
- ❑ The method in which training is delivered (5)
- ❑ Motivation (6)
- ❑ Relevance to your organization (7)
- ❑ Other (8) _____

Q9 How important are the following factors when you are choosing to participate in training.

	Not important (1)	Slightly Important (2)	Moderately Important (3)	Important (4)	Very Important (5)
Time (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Money (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Interest level (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Awareness level (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Delivery Method (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Motivation (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Relevance (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Other: (8)	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 For each statement select your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I am interested in training and learning materials. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Training would benefit my organization. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
My organization doesn't have enough time for training (3)	○	○	○	○	○
The training resources available reflect the needs of my organization. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
My organization encourages training. (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 In the left hand column, please select how many hours per month you currently use training. In the right hand column, please select how many hours per month you would be willing to put towards training.

	Currently (1)	Willing (2)
0-2 hours (1)	❑	❑
3-5 hours (2)	❑	❑
6-8 hours (3)	❑	❑
9+ hours (4)	❑	❑

Q12 Would you be more open to using different methods of training if you received some kind of certificate or credential after completion?
- ○ Definitely yes (1)
- ○ Probably yes (2)
- ○ Might or might not (3)
- ○ Probably not (4)
- ○ Definitely not (5)

Q13 Do you have any other concerns or barriers in regards to receiving training?

Q14   To assist people to better do their jobs, what do you think would be the best way to deliver training?

Q15 How would you like to receive information on training materials and resources? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Email Newsletter (1)
- ❑ Direct Mail (2)
- ❑ Kelowna Community Resources Newsletter (3)
- ❑ Scotiabank NPC Website (4)
- ❑ Phone (5)
- ❑ Through a supervisor (6)
- ❑ Other: (7) _____

Q2 The Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC) is an organization made up of Okanagan College Professors and student researchers whose goal is to make non-profit organizations more sustainable by providing training resources. How familiar are you with the training resources available to non-profit organizations on the Scotiabank NPC website?
- ○ Unfamiliar (1)
- ○ Somewhat familiar (3)
- ○ Familiar (4)
- ○ Very famiiar (5)

Display This Question:
    If The Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC) is an organization made up of Okanagan College Professors and student researchers whose goal is to make non-profit organizations mor... Unfamiliar Is Not Selected
Q2A How often have you visited the Scotiabank NPC website in the past year?
- ○ 0 times (1)
- ○ 1-4 times (2)
- ○ 5-9 times (3)
- ○ 10+ times (4)

Display This Question:
    If The Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC) is an organization made up of Okanagan College Professors and student researchers whose goal is to make non-profit organizations mor... Unfamiliar Is Not Selected
Q2B When accessing the Scotiabank NPC website, please explain which website resources you have used.

Q16 Please select the age group that describes you.
- ○ 0-34 (1)
- ○ 35-64 (2)
- ○ 65+ (3)

Q17 What is your role of employment at the non-profit organization where you work?
- ○ Volunteer (1)
- ○ Staff member (2)
- ○ Supervisor/ Manager (3)
- ○ Executive Director (4)
- ○ Board Member (5)
- ○ Other (please specify): (6) _____

Q18 How long have you been in your role at the non-profit organization you are working with?
- ○ 0-4 years (1)
- ○ 5-9 years (2)
- ○ 10-14 years (3)
- ○ 15-19 years (4)
- ○ 20+ years (5)

Q19 In general, how long have you been involved in the non-profit sector?
- ○ 0-4 years (1)
- ○ 5-8 years (2)
- ○ 9-12 years (3)
- ○ 13+ years (4)

Appendix B

The different barriers selected by individuals that commonly prevent training. Ranked by most occurring selection.

Method	# Selected	Percentage
Time	31	70.5%
Relevance	27	61.4%
Money	25	56.8%
Delivery	22	50.0%
Awareness	17	36.4%
Interest	16	36.4%
Motivation	5	11.4%

Appendix C

Methods of training used per year.

Usage per year	0-2 times		3 to 5 times		6 to 9 times		10+ times		Total
Toolkits	85.71%	30	8.57%	3	2.86%	1	2.86%	1	35
Other:	80.00%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	20.00%	1	5
E -learning modules	78.38%	29	16.22%	6	2.70%	1	2.70%	1	37
Video conferences	75.68%	28	21.62%	8	0.00%	0	2.70%	1	37
Seminars	72.22%	26	13.89%	5	13.89%	5	0.00%	0	36
Webinars	64.29%	27	23.81%	10	4.76%	2	7.14%	3	42
Workshops	60.47%	26	20.93%	9	11.63%	5	6.98%	3	43
Reports	54.05%	20	21.62%	8	5.41%	2	18.92%	7	37
Articles	42.50%	17	20.00%	8	12.50%	5	25.00%	10	40

Appendix D

Kruskal- Wallis test showing significant differences between Scotiabank NPC familiarity and level of awareness of online resources available.

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of The Scotiabank Centre for Non-Profit Excellence (Scotiabank NPC) is an organization made up of Okanagan College Professors and student researchers whose goal is to make non-profit organizations more sustainable by providing training resources. How familiar are you with the training resources available to non-profit organizations on the Scotiabank NPC website? is the same across categories of What is your level of awareness towards online training resources available to non-profit organizations?.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.005	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Appendix E

Hours spent training

Number of Hours	Currently spent	Willing to spend
0-2	26	9
3 to 5	8	17
6 to 8	6	6
9+	2	9