

# **Conceptualizing participatory philanthropy: A nonprofit-centered framework for understanding participants in charity sports events**

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## **1. Introduction**

The phenomenon of sports charity events, in support of fundraising and awareness for nonprofit organizations has expanded considerably in recent years (Scott & Solomon, 2003). Charity sport events (CSE), as they are labeled in the leisure, tourism, and sports literature (e.g., Filo, Funk, & O'Brien, 2008, 2009; Woolf, Heere & Walker, 2013), provide beneficiary organizations with an opportunity to communicate their mission to a large participant base and raise essential donations, while providing a meaningful event experience for participants. Alongside fundraising benefits for the organization, these sports events have become arenas for participants to fulfill and enact altruistic, athletic, and touristic passions and identities (Berger, Greenspan, & Kohn, 2007). The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure (King, 2004; Scott & Solomon, 2003), for example, is a venue in which individuals enact “multiple identities” (Ramarajan, xx) including philanthropist, runner, survivor, and woman.

The expansion of CSEs worldwide has led the expansion of research on this philanthropic practice, with scholars examining topics such as the motivations of participants to join the events (Bennet et al., 2007; Filo, Funk & O'Brien, 2011), participants' beliefs in how much their participation is making a difference (Filo, Groza, & Fairley, 2012), their actual experiences during the event (Coghlan & Filo, 2013) and the impact of CSEs on organizational branding (Woolf, Heere, & Walker, 2013). However, the philanthropy literature has given only limited attention to this promising fundraising method, especially from a theoretical vantage point.

This paper addresses the need for a more comprehensive approach to understanding CSEs as a fundraising forum. The question that motivates the paper is can we develop a deeper, more integrated and more practically relevant understanding of charitable sports events by exploring

the motivations and experiences of participants in the context of the philanthropic literature.

Accordingly, we set in this paper the following goals: **First**, to summarize existing knowledge on charity sports events and to suggest common themes. We situate the CSEs literature within the broader literature of *consumer culture* theory. **Second**, to introduce the concept of **participatory philanthropy** as a hybrid form of philanthropy, event participation, and identity production. This term represents a form of philanthropy wherein the donor is actively engaged in a sport event as a participant, a donor and a fundraiser. We argue that participant philanthropists are not only **donors** of time and money, they are also **agents** actively engaged in raising funds for the beneficiary organization as they produce and enact their own chosen identities. These multiple roles have not, to date, been thoroughly conceptualized.

**Third**, to develop a preliminary ‘model’ of **participatory philanthropy**, and show how such a model differs from extant donor and fundraising theories. We argue that in charity sports events, where participants are also required to tap their networks for donations, participants are not only *donors* (and perhaps ‘novice’ athletes); over time, they serve as *agents* for the nonprofit as they fundraise on its behalf. Furthermore, the benefiting organization no longer acts only as a nonprofit organization. Rather, the organization mounting an “event” with staff members must assume the role of event organizer. With ever-larger CSEs, such event management is no trivial task, assigned as an after-thought to a development officer’s job description. Through the engagement of participants in sports activities, organizers must not only motivate and tap participants’ commitment of time, effort, and financial resources to the event itself, but must also tap, motivate and manage participants as messengers and fundraisers for their voluntary organization. The theoretical underpinnings for this suggested model comprise literature on the “consumption” of sports tourism, philanthropic behavior, altruism, identity formation and fund raising management.

## 2. Literature review

In this section, we first define *charitable sports events*. Next, we reviews the literature relevant to such events and suggest common themes. We situate the CSEs literature within the broader literature of *consumer culture* theory. We conclude by integrating the various understandings through the concept of participatory philanthropy, and characterize the key elements of this concept.

### 2.1. Definition of charitable sports events

Charitable sports events (CSEs) are philanthropic / fundraising activities that aim to engage

as many people as possible in a physically challenging sports activity for charitable purposes. They tap into the growth of health-oriented lifestyles among socio-economically comfortable middle class, middle-aged populations. Participants in CSEs normally pay a set registration fee and are required to raise a minimum dollar amount in support of a non-profit organization. Participation involves a significant commitment of physical, psychological, and financial resources before, during, and even after a public, normally well publicized, sporting event. At its early stage – in the late twentieth century – this method of fund raising was used in “walks”, skipping, or swimming events in which donors “sponsored” participants on a per-mile basis. Participants “earned” donations from supporters only for the actual distance completed. These events have evolved to include a diverse set of noncompetitive events (fun runs, weekend walks, marathon races, multi-day bicycle rides, swim contests, dragon boating), in which participants are asked to raise large amounts in support of nonprofit organizations and causes. Donors commit funds now not for performance, but simply for participation. Event participants can thus be identified as both *philanthropists / donors* – who donate their own time and money in support of local, national or international social causes – and as *agent fundraisers* - who actively engage in raising funds from peers, co-workers, or family “on behalf of” an organization.<sup>1</sup> Today, active individuals – those engaged in sports activities for leisure – are swamped with requests and opportunities to take part in sports activities for charitable purposes, and friends and family of these individuals are likewise ‘swamped’ by requests to support peers in their ‘active philanthropic’ activities.

One difficulty in understanding CSEs is a clear grasp of what these events actually are. From the perspective of the organization, charity sports events have the goal of attracting participants who can: (1) raise large amounts of money, (2) become loyal by repeating the events, (3) are attached to the cause, and (4) spread positive word-of-mouth about the organization to others. From the perspective of the participant, charitable sports events can be characterized by a combination of five features:

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Pallotta and his *for-profit* event-management company Pallotta TeamWorks is one of the first initiatives associated with charitable sports events in the US (Pallotta, 2008). Pallotta organized the first AIDSRides from San Francisco to Los Angeles with 478 riding participants, raising over \$1 million. Later on, he led the Avon Walks for

- (1) **Financial giving:** participants pay hundreds of dollars as registration fees, expend money out of their pocket to travel to the event location, and purchase equipment and lodging before and/or after the event;
- (2) **Giving of volunteer time:** participants voluntarily invest many unpaid hours of training for the sport activity involved, raising funds, and travelling to the event;
- (3) **Giving of expertise:** participants utilize their social capital, networks of acquaintances, sports skills to train others, fundraising skills (if any) in support of the requirement to raise funds on behalf of the beneficiary organization;
- (4) **Personal sports challenge:** participants – usually avid yet novice athletes – commit to what in their eyes is a major personal challenge, training, often working through injury, acquiring specialized equipment and specialized skills.
- (5) **Support for a charitable cause:** all things considered, the main purpose of these events is financially and publicly (through public communications) supporting a “worthy” charitable cause.

## 2.2. Research on charitable sports events

Research on CSEs has developed primarily in the leisure, tourism, and sports literature. The focus of prior research, by and large, has been on participants’ identities, motivations to join CSEs (Bennet et al., 2007; Filo, Funk & O’Brien, 2011), experiences, connections to the event (Coghlan & Filo, 2013; Filo, Groza, & Fairley, 2012), and the impact of such events on organizational branding (Woolf, Heere, & Walker, 2013). For example, an analysis of the relationship between participants’ motivation for participation, belief in how much their participation is making a difference, and their actual attachment to (and identification with) the sports event (Filo, Groza, & Fairley, 2012) revealed that *social* and *philanthropic motivations* were contributing most to participants’ belief in making a difference, which in turn encouraged participants’ attachment to the cause and the event.

The research has also shown that several identities are at play in CSEs, motivating both the participants and the organizations involved (Berger, Greenspan & Kohn, 2007; Filo et al., 2008, 2009; Wood, Snelgrove, & Danylchuk, 2010). Most researchers (e.g., Filo, Funk, & O’Brien, 2008; Scott & Solomon, 2003; Webber, 2004; Wharf Higgins & Lauzon, 2003) discuss how CSEs provide participants an opportunity to engage in two meaningful activities – sports / leisure activity and philanthropy – simultaneously, hence increasing the attractiveness of such events to those seeking to engage in a personally meaningful activity on top of philanthropic goals. But, in fact, these events may be linked to multiple and sometimes conflicting identities (Ramarajan, Berger, & Greenspan, 2012). For example, enacted identities include being a volunteer, a donor/

philanthropist, an athlete, a member of an ethnic or a social group and so on. At the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, the event provides a venue in which individuals can engage identities such as “activist”, runner (“fitness event junkies”), survivor, and the “social butterflies” who run for social interactions (Scott & Solomon, 2003). These multiple identities interact with each other in enhancing and conflicting ways, and affect participants’ identification with the causes, and the funds raised (= benefits to the organization). Finally, CSEs provide direct benefits to participants as they engage in physical exercise and improve their health (Filo et al., 2012), but also come with financial, psychological and social costs. Yet, despite its proliferation, interesting characteristics, and fundraising potential, this method of fund raising is largely under-investigated in the nonprofit-philanthropic literature. In particular, the non-profit academic literature has not to date focused on either a conceptual or a managerial understanding of these events.

### **2.3. Participants as consumers / producers, and the Consumer Culture Theory**

Consumer behavior is the process of *acquisition*, *consumption* and *disposal* of products or services. Most consumer behavior models present a “consumption cycle” (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) that is composed of a sequence of steps including the processes of information search, purchase/acquisition, consumption (possession, use & adoption), and finally dispossession of the product or service involved (e.g., Belk, 1988). The field of *Consumer Culture Theory* (CCT) further links consumption processes to broader cultural meanings situated in time and place. CCT explores how consumers actively modify, transform, and appropriate symbolic meanings encoded in products, services, or experiences in order to fit and manifest their particular personal and social circumstances, identities, or life goals (Mick & Buhl, 1992). From this perspective, the marketplace (broadly defined) is a source of inputs, props, and mechanisms, which consumers can use to construct and enact their individual or collective identities.

If historically, the gender, social class, culture, or cohort to which one was born (*habitus*) was seen to unbendingly define one’s identity, current approaches provide for greater fluidity in identity formation based on cultural, social and other conditions (McCracken, 1986). Actors are “free” to create and change identities of their choice almost on a minute-by-minute or hour-by-hour basis (Fournier, 1998). CCT sees the “objects” and “activities” acquired in the marketplace as not only consumed, but also used to construct, express, and **produce** personal identities, and thus contribute to the life journeys and the motivations of the *consumers/producers* involved. By participating in the consumption process, “consumers” become, in effect, “producers” of their

own and sometimes others' identity. This self-consumption/production occurs through processes of knowing, using, controlling, mastering, and otherwise acquiring products, services, and experiences (Belk, 1988).

This CCT perspective allows for the dual understanding of participants as both *consumers* of the event (providing their resources in exchange for the identity and other benefits they receive) as well as *producers* of the event (acting as agents for the cause and thereby facilitating the services of the charity). To date, limited consumer research has attended specifically to philanthropic, sport, or tourist activities (e.g., Bennett et al., 2007; Hassay & Peloza, 2009; Scott & Solomon, 2003).

### 3. Defining “participatory philanthropy”

We offer the notion of **participatory philanthropy** to describe and fit charitable sports events into a nonprofit context. The notion of participatory philanthropy describes philanthropic undertakings where donors participate in physically challenging sports events as part of their act of giving.<sup>2</sup> We label this phenomenon *participatory philanthropy* for two main reasons. First, in participatory philanthropy, individuals are not only giving money to a cause; they are also *participating* directly in an event. They engage in a challenging physical activity, that does not only test their financial abilities or philanthropic tendencies but also their personal endurance and stamina of holding to a physically demanding activity over a long period of time, whether it is a day or a five-day bike ride, a run, or a swim.

Second, participatory philanthropists are acting not only as donors, but also as fundraisers. As earlier described, CSEs aim not only to engage individuals who donate their own time and money in support of social causes. Rather, they are required to act as fundraisers in support of the beneficiary organization, a requirement which is oftentimes written into the event regulations. Riders are thus being asked to *participate* in an organizational task of raising funds from their

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<sup>2</sup> The notions “participatory” and “participation” have been used in other contexts to describe the act of inclusion of stakeholders, citizens, or the public in decision-making processes. For example: citizen participation in planning decision-making forums, public participation in civil society, or the common concept of participatory democracy (Polletta, 2002). In the context of philanthropy, the concept participation and “participatory philanthropy” have been used occasionally to describe forms of philanthropy “where groups of individuals pool money and time to donate to a cause with which they connect” (Broadhurst, 2012) or where community/stakeholders are granted power in the philanthropic decision-making process (Johnson, 2013). Unlike our notion of participatory philanthropy, the philanthropic decisions in these cases are collectively made. The phenomenon of giving circles (Eikenberry, 2006, 2008) could also be viewed as an example of participatory philanthropy. However, as elaborated above, our understating of *participation* and *participatory philanthropy* is different, and pertains to the active engagement in physically challenging activity and the active engagement in fundraising efforts on behalf of charitable organizations.

friends, family, co-workers, neighbors and the like, hence the second meaning of *participatory*.

Nevertheless, while the first meaning of participatory – the physical challenge – is perceived as a driving motivation for donor participation, the fundraising aspect of their participation is not always perceived positively. For example, one interviewee in a charity bike ride in Israel has explicitly said that the fund-raising component was “*probably the least favorite part of the whole thing [ride]*” (cited in Berger, Greenspan, & Kohn, 2007). In other words, ‘*participatory philanthropists*’ participate in these CSEs as consumers of the event experience (riders in a challenging ride, swimmers or runners), paying their registration fee and their time and training in exchange for the athletic and social achievement. But importantly, they also participate as producers of the event by raising money and awareness for the beneficiary organization / cause.

In what follows, we pose the question ‘*How is participatory philanthropy different from existing fund-raising and donor models?*’ We connect participatory philanthropy to existing giving and fundraising models and argue that these models are insufficient for describing participatory philanthropists. We thus offer an initial account of what constitutes an alternative model to mainstream charitable giving and fundraising models. Our model describes participatory philanthropy as an integrated continuum drawing on a combination of donor and fundraiser identities.

### **3.1. Participatory philanthropists as donors**

The opportunity to *engage* and *participate* in a meaningful and challenging sports event is perceived as a strong motivation for donor participants to invest their time and money in support of a cause. In many cases such participants are much more identified with the sport than with the cause, about which many often know little, at least initially. Were the cause the only or even prime motivator, then the riders might act as “typical” philanthropists that just write a check and stay home, saving their money and time (and actually giving more to the cause). A vivid example of the difference between a typical philanthropist and a participatory philanthropist is found in a quote made by a female rider of a charity sports event (Berger, Greenspan, & Kohn, 2007). In her words:

*“My husband said to me: “You’re going to Israel spending \$400 for the privilege; you’re spending \$1,500 for your ticket; you’re going to spend at least \$2000-\$3000 in Israel, and you’re going to do this and this. Why don’t you just give the hospital [the beneficiary organization] \$5,000 and stay home and work?”*

This quote highlights the fact that more than the cause, it was the event– the physically

challenging *participatory* component of the bike ride – that was the main driver for participation and donation. Many participants, in fact, hardly knew the beneficiary organization, or what the money was needed for before deciding to participate. The participatory component of this fundraising method provides participants the opportunity and motivation to engage and commit to a cause about which they might otherwise have never known. At the same time, it provides the beneficiary organization a pool of fundraiser participant agents and their social networks they might otherwise have never attracted.

The opportunity to participate in a meaningful process of giving, and to choose the cause to support – two mechanisms that characterize CSEs and participatory philanthropists – could be viewed within the recently emerging literature on the individualization and designated giving in philanthropy (e.g., Barman, 2008). Individualization of philanthropy allows donors greater discretion over their giving decision, and greater involvement with their chosen charities (Breeze, 2012). In a world where people are searching for meaning and fulfillment in their everyday lives, philanthropic activities have become arenas in which people can fulfill their individual identities and dreams: socio-economic, altruistic, religious and so on. Designated, individualized giving has been gaining popularity in the last few decades in the realm of Jewish philanthropy, for example. It has been widely documented that communal giving to Jewish Federations has significantly declined, replaced by the emergence of private Jewish family foundations (Tobin & Weinberg, 2007), and direct individual giving to specific causes of choice (Cohen & Eisen, 2000; Wertheimer, 1997). The same trend has been seen in shifted giving practices in United Way agencies (Barman, 2008). *Participatory* philanthropy can thus be seen as an enactment of *individualized* philanthropy wherein the participant is really giving of him or herself as well as collecting from others.

The nonprofit literature is abundant with models of donors and their motivations for giving (e.g., Bekkers & Wiepking, 2012; Sargeant, 1999; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). A question is raised whether charitable sports events fit any of these models. In a series of studies, Sargeant and his colleagues (Sargeant, 1999; Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007) proposed an input/output **model** that looks at the organization's marketing and branding decisions as the fundamental starting point to understanding donor choice and behaviors (1999, p. 218). They trace the impact of an organization's communication appeals, brand imagery, and method of solicitation on prospective donors' perceptions through to their donation behaviors in terms of a set of *outcomes*: type of donation (cash gifts, time, in kind), share of the donation, and loyalty / commitment of the donor. Importantly, the typical *inputs* included as triggers are limited to



organizational decisions related to marketing the charity.

Neither the sport event input, nor the participatory output of CSEs fit fully into this model. In the SCE domain, for instance, the brand imagery and method of solicitation are weak influencers of participation (see Berger, Greenspan & Kohn, 2007). In other words, nowhere in these models do we see the impact of longer or shorter events, better or worse on-the-road support, event location, or community development. Furthermore, the typical output behaviors do not include, certainly not explicitly, SCE participants' fundraising behaviors - such as the number of potential donors approached, amounts raised from each donor, method of donor solicitation etc. While the input-output model could possibly be expanded to account for these items, doing so obscures the unique aspects of the participatory fundraising role, rather than donating role, of the participants.

### **3.2. Participatory philanthropists as fundraising agents**

Theorization about the fundraiser occupation/activity has been challenging because fundraisers' precise roles and numbers are difficult to ascertain. Furthermore, there seems a lack of public interest, verging on hostility, towards fundraising and fundraisers, given the conception that fundraisers "waste organizational resources" and may even misuse donation money. Even the nomenclature of fundraiser occupations, that is the introduction of "development officer", "development offices" etc., have served to obscure rather than clarify the profession. Researchers have also been slow to look at fundraisers, funding management etc. adopting a donor-centric perspective. The literature has not developed a clear definition of who is a fundraiser, why practitioners hold various titles, and why the occupation has no set requirements for entry or credentialing. What work does exist posits a "role theory" based approach. Kelly's (1998) *fundraising roles* is a central model for understanding fundraising agents and their organizational roles. Kelly suggested a framework of four organizational roles for fundraisers: technician, liaison, expert prescriber, and problem solving process facilitator; the last three could also be collapsed into a combined "manager" role.<sup>3</sup>

A *liaison* role is enacted by consultants who do not fund raise by themselves, but rather advise "behind the scene" to others – managers or volunteers – on gift solicitation. They normally do not have other organizational responsibilities. Opposite to *liaison*, an *expert*

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<sup>3</sup> Role theory differentiates between roles and tasks. **Tasks**, such as soliciting for donations or attending meetings with donors, are part of one's duties. **Roles** move beyond the specific tasks to look at one's actions in context to and relations with the organization.

*prescriber* has the sole responsibility in the organization of soliciting funds. He or (oftentimes) she is the expert, with minimal involvement of managers or trustees in the fundraising process; but such rigid division of responsibilities can be harmful to the organization. Those holding a *problem-solving process facilitator* role collaborate with others within the organization, and are part of the organization's strategic planning team. They participate in decision making on problems wider than their fundraising responsibilities. Their success is measured not by the amount of money raised, but by the extent to which fundraising helped the organization achieve its goals. Finally, the *technician* role is considered an introductory job to the fundraising profession, as this role is primarily concerned with implementing other people's fund raising decisions. They are not part of the management team, and do not participate in strategic planning or decision-making.

To some extent, every fundraiser holds all four roles but enacts one predominantly – the one that represents the worldview held by people in the organization regarding what fundraisers should be doing to achieve organizational success (Kelly, 1998). There is some movement according to a recent comparative study towards professionalization in the fundraising field (Breeze & Sceife, 2015), but of course participatory philanthropists are volunteer, unprofessional (and currently untrained) fundraisers. They are 'extra-organizational' agents, with virtually no say in the organization, or even the event in which they are participating. They are given almost no training, no direction, no compensation and very little support in their fund raising role. At best, event managers provide sample letter or telephone scripts, some minimal promotional material and access to website pages through which donors can give online.

By producing, or at least modifying solicitation materials, such as letters to potential supporters, videos, and emails, participatory philanthropists could be seen as enacting the technician role. They do have a liaison role to play, too, by possibly advising their supporters of the kind of donation to be made to the organization. However, their capacity as experts or problem-solvers in the fund raising task is questioned and circumscribed. Clearly, extant models apply mostly to full- or part-time 'professional' fundraisers, and efforts to professionalize the role puts even more distance between organizational fundraisers and participant philanthropists (Lysakowski, 2002). Finally, in parallel but opposite to the donor models, the fundraising models exclude the athlete and tourist roles held by, and viewed as vital for, the participants in CSEs. At the very least, the participants could be seen as something 'to manage' by the professionals, if only their motivations and behaviors could be more fully understood.

### 3.3. An integrated model of participatory philanthropy: Between donors and fundraisers?

Participant philanthropists can be viewed as having a dual philanthropic role: on the one hand, their role as “donors” positions them as recipients of communication and other organizational efforts; and on the other hand their role as “fundraisers” positions them as soliciting agents for the organization. Table 1 summarizes such views by presenting characteristics of the dual role of participatory philanthropists.

**Table 1 - Characteristics of participant philanthropists in CSEs**

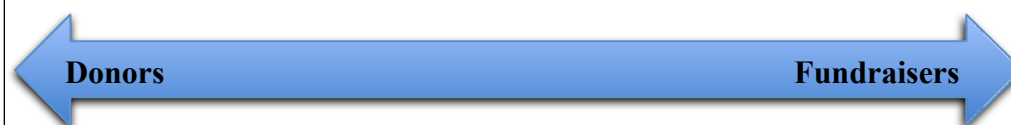
	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Fundraisers</b>
(1) Identity (“Who they are”)	<b>Donors / philanthropists:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose to participate based on organizational efforts</li> <li>• Pay the required amounts from their own pocket</li> </ul>	<b>Fundraising agents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in fundraising effort from a network of friends, co-workers, family, neighbors</li> <li>• Raise more than the minimum</li> </ul>
(2) Organizational role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External donors; stakeholders</li> <li>• Part of the organization’s external environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• - Fundraising agents of the organization</li> </ul>
(3) Consumer culture perspective	<b>“Consumers” of the event:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Buy” the event; artifacts &amp; perks they can identify with (jerseys; riding images)</li> <li>• Feeling of tourists (top hotels; benefit package)</li> <li>• Passive</li> </ul>	<b>“Producers” of the event:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sell the “cause” to others (or are they selling themselves &amp; their skills?)</li> <li>• Prepare sample letters, videos, call and otherwise solicit donations</li> <li>• Active</li> </ul>
(4) Motivation / driving mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the value of the ‘benefits’ expected – either identity benefits, skills acquired, stuff relative to the effort to achieve minimum fund raising threshold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of the cause; ‘sellability’ of the cause</li> <li>• Network of social capital – extent of the reciprocity of personal network</li> </ul>

(5) Recommendations for event organizers / beneficiary organization	<b>Motivate them as donors;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run an excellent event providing a benefit package that will attract participants</li> <li>• Sell the value of the event to event consumers; better connect them to the cause</li> <li>• This is a shorter-term perspective</li> </ul>	<b>Motivate them as agents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in participants' fundraising skills; view this investment as long-term</li> <li>• Package the cause as something that is easy to 'sell'</li> <li>• Tap their 'competitive' and 'team' spirit on the fundraising</li> </ul>
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A full appreciation of the SCE context calls for an integrated model that problematizes the binary nature of the donor/fundraiser distinction made in the table above. Participatory philanthropists act as both donors and fund-raisers in the context of charitable sports event. Neither the donor- oriented theory, nor the fundraiser-oriented theory fully meets participatory philanthropists' circumstances and motivations.

Therefore, one possible modeling perspective on this issue is to suggest an integrated model in which each participant philanthropist may rest on a continuum of donor/fundraiser identities (Figure 1). This continuum extends from the "pure" donor who may personally pay the minimum fundraising amounts required, defying by this act any fundraising role, to the 'large' dollar fundraiser who devotes great energy and resources to raising well above the minimum, from an extensive social capital network. In between both extremes sit the vast majority of participants who tap their social network to at least raise the minimum, and somewhat more if they can, but for whom the fundraising is of lower focus and may even carry a very negative valence. The location of each participatory philanthropist on the continuum is a function of the characteristics presented in Table 1 above.

**Figure 1 - An integrated model of participant philanthropists**



### 3.4. Questions and implications regarding the integrated continuum

The integrated participatory philanthropist continuous model raises some rather interesting questions of both a practical and a theoretical nature. It is the goal of this section to begin that

task of raising those questions.

- What does the ‘typical’ population distribution of participants on such a continuum look like?
- Does the “80-20” marketing rule apply in that 80% of the funds raised, are raised by the big fundraisers?
- If so, what factors might influence the location of participants on this continuum
- Participants’ initial identity/identities?
  - The nature of the cause? Personal connection to the cause
  - Location of the event? (Community / outside the community?)
  - Past experience as fundraiser?
  - The size / structure of the participant’s network of peers and supporters?
  - Longevity with the event / cause
- Can staff / event managers influence people’s location on the continuum?
- Is there a time element involved in identity formation? Is there a ‘process’ of movement along the continuum? Do participants start as donors and eventually shift their identity and identification to become organizational fundraisers?

#### **4. Implications and Conclusion**

Several implications arise based on the proposed model above:

##### **4.1. How might organizations motivate their participatory philanthropists to maximize their fund-raising efforts? Recommendations for event organizers:**

An organizational-level perspective on participatory philanthropy would imply that organizations engaged in charity sports events, or planning to engage in such fundraising methods, should view themselves as event organizers. Given the challenging management task of repeatedly mounting these events, it is important that organizations recognize that they (or their outsourced event managers) are event managers whose task is to both attract participants as donors to their event and as fundraisers for their cause. Such a view, of donors as fundraising agents, and developing a work plan towards managing fundraisers with the goal of tapping their social and professional networks, could improve fundraising outcomes and participant commitments to the charity and the cause. As evidenced in the table above, the identities, motivations, benefits, and required activities of the event managers differ across these two models. Event managers should therefore adjust their practices depending on whether participants are viewed as fundraising agents, donors, or a combination of both.

##### **4.2. Which types of organizations might benefit from a participatory focus to their fundraising efforts?**

We believe that these organizations must be “sellable,” offer “meaningful” engagement, and are likely to elicit deep emotional response, such as the case of cancer, sick children, or

environmental issues. But what happens to causes that do not elicit such deep emotional responses as does breast cancer or a sick kid? What is the fate of causes that are complex (universities), ambivalent (youth-at-risk?), or even repulsive (ethnic minorities? women's shelters??)?

**4.3. Should organizations focus on and emphasize the value of their cause, or the value of other identity domains such as athletics, tourism or ethnicity in order to attract and motivate donors?**

In order to maximize the utilization of the donor/fundraising agents, organizations should provide these agents relevant identity inputs beyond the "cause." Sports activities attached to philanthropic goals are one such example, but it might be the case that participatory philanthropists might find interest in other activities such as tourism or ethnicity-related attractions that are tied to their philanthropy.

In conclusion, the notion of participatory philanthropy and the preliminary model presented in this paper provide better understanding of charities already involved in, or seeking to garner additional support from charity sport events (CSEs) as a non-traditional method of fundraising. The model narrows the gap between *donors* and *fundraisers* and suggests, perhaps, better understanding of the practices of both 'sides'. Past research found that donors hold antagonistic attitudes towards fundraisers, especially if they carry out expensive fundraising methods (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2005; Schervish & Havens, 2002). At the same time, donors also overestimate fundraising costs of charitable organizations (Bekkers, 2003; Sargeant et al., 2000). Perhaps the idea and the practice of participatory philanthropy will minimize past tensions between these organizational roles in nonprofit organizations.

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