

## Non-Governmental and Not-for-Profit Organizational Effectiveness: A Modern Synthesis

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**Abstract** NGO/NPO effectiveness remains a prominent concern for scholars and practitioners, but the literature on this issue is increasingly fragmented along disciplinary lines. We address this problem by presenting a comprehensive and interdisciplinary review of the literature on NGO and NPO effectiveness using citation analysis. In order to uncover commonalities across disciplines concerned with similar questions, we deploy a structured literature review using snowball sampling within citation networks. This approach limits author biases, fosters an interdisciplinary perspective, and adds a different methodological approach to conventional content-based literature reviews. Our review uncovers three trends: (1) there is broad scholarly consensus that unidimensional measures of effectiveness are not useful—even though such measures are commonly used by NGO/NPO rating agencies; (2) the scholarship on NGO/NPO effectiveness is dominated by conceptual works, while empirical studies remain rare; (3) a consensus on how to operationalize effectiveness remains elusive. These results suggest that progress in our understanding of NGO/NPO effectiveness requires enhanced efforts at crossing disciplinary divides, adding empirical analyses, and increasing attention to develop shared categories and methodologies.

**Résumé** L'efficacité des ONG/ASBL demeure un sujet majeur de réflexion des chercheurs et praticiens mais les publications sur cette question sont de plus en plus

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fragmentées le long des lignes disciplinaires. Nous traitons ce problème par la présentation d'une étude exhaustive et interdisciplinaire des publications sur l'efficacité des ONG et des ASBL en recourant à une analyse de citations. Afin d'identifier des éléments communs à travers les disciplines s'intéressant à des questions similaires, nous développons une étude structurée des publications en utilisant un échantillonnage en chaîne au sein des réseaux de citations. Cette approche limite les partis-pris des auteurs, favorise une perspective interdisciplinaire et ajoute une approche méthodologique différente aux études conventionnelles des publications basées sur le contenu. Notre étude met en évidence trois tendances: (1) il existe un large consensus intellectuel quant au fait que les mesures unidimensionnelles de l'efficacité ne sont pas utiles bien que ces dernières soient couramment utilisées par les agences de notation des ONG et des ABSL; (2) la recherche sur l'efficacité des ONG et des ABSL est dominée par des travaux conceptuels, alors que les études empiriques sont encore rares; (3) un consensus sur la manière d'opérationnaliser l'efficacité demeure inexistant. Ces résultats indiquent qu'une compréhension optimisée de l'efficacité des ONG/ABSL exige des efforts accrus visant à traverser les divisions disciplinaires, ajouter des analyses empiriques et être plus attentif au développement de catégories et méthodologies communes.

**Zusammenfassung** Die Effektivität von nicht-staatlichen bzw. Nonprofit-Organisationen ist für Gelehrte und Fachleute nach wie vor von wichtigem Belang; doch ist die Literatur zu diesem Thema entlang disziplinärer Linien vermehrt zersplittert. Wir behandeln dieses Problem, indem wir eine umfassende und interdisziplinäre Auswertung der Literatur zur Effektivität von nicht-staatlichen bzw. Nonprofit-Organisationen präsentieren, wobei wir auf die Zitationsanalyse zurückgreifen. Um Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen den betroffenen Disziplinen aufzudecken, die sich mit ähnlichen Fragen beschäftigen, nehmen wir eine strukturierte Literaturlauswertung vor und wenden das Schneeballverfahren innerhalb der Zitationsnetzwerke an. Diese Vorgehensweise schränkt die Voreingenommenheit des Autors ein, fördert eine interdisziplinäre Perspektive und ergänzt die konventionellen inhaltsbasierenden Literaturlauswertungen durch eine weitere methodologische Vorgehensweise. Unsere Prüfung enthüllt drei Trends: (1) es herrscht weitgehend Einigkeit zwischen den Gelehrten, dass eindimensionale Effektivitätsmaße nicht zweckdienlich sind—auch wenn diese Maße im Allgemeinen von Ratingagenturen für nicht-staatliche bzw. Nonprofit-Organisationen angewandt werden; (2) die Wissenschaft in Bezug auf die Effektivität von nicht-staatlichen bzw. Nonprofit-Organisationen wird von konzeptionellen Arbeiten dominiert, während empirische Studien eher die Seltenheit sind; (3) Einigkeit darüber, wie die Effektivität zu operationalisieren ist, liegt fern. Diese Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass zur Erlangung eines besseren Verständnisses der Effektivität von nicht-staatlichen bzw. Nonprofit-Organisationen größere Anstrengungen unternommen werden müssen, die dazu führen sollen, die disziplinären Differenzen zu überkommen, empirische Analysen hinzuzufügen und das Augenmerk erhöht darauf zu legen, gemeinsame Kategorien und Methodologien zu entwickeln.

**Resumen** La efectividad de las ONG/NPO (Organizaciones No Gubernamentales/Organizaciones Sin Ánimo de Lucro) sigue siendo una preocupación destacada para

eruditos y profesionales, pero el material publicado sobre esta cuestión está cada vez más fragmentado en líneas disciplinarias. Abordamos este problema presentando una revisión integral e interdisciplinaria del material publicado sobre la efectividad de las ONG/NPO utilizando el análisis de citas. Con el fin de descubrir los elementos comunes entre las disciplinas afectadas con cuestiones similares, desplegamos una revisión estructurada del material publicado utilizando el muestreo de bola de nieve dentro de las redes de citas. Este enfoque limita los sesgos de los autores, fomenta una perspectiva interdisciplinaria, y añade un enfoque metodológico diferente a las revisiones convencionales del material publicado basadas en el contenido. Nuestra revisión descubre tres tendencias: (1) existe un amplio consenso entre los eruditos de que las medidas unidimensionales de efectividad no son útiles aunque dichas medidas sean utilizadas comúnmente por las agencias de calificación de ONG/NPO; (2) el mundo de los eruditos de la efectividad de las ONG/NPO está dominado por trabajos conceptuales, mientras que los estudios empíricos siguen siendo raros; (3) un consenso sobre cómo operacionalizar la efectividad sigue resultando esquivo. Estos resultados sugieren que el progreso en nuestra comprensión de la efectividad de las ONG/NPO requiere un aumento en los esfuerzos por superar las divisiones disciplinarias, añadir análisis empíricos, y aumentar la atención para desarrollar categorías y metodologías compartidas.

**Keywords** Non-for-profit organizations · Non-governmental organizations · Structured literature review

Effectiveness as a measure of organizational success has for decades attracted scholarly attention from across the social sciences. In recent years, the issue of effectiveness has taken on additional urgency among practitioners due to more explicit demands for accountability, transparency, and financial responsibility (Unerman and O'Dwyer 2006; Ebrahim and Weisband 2007; Brown 2008). Self-appointed watchdogs, such as Charity Navigator and the American Institute of Philanthropy, have emerged as important institutions of assessment, evaluating the financial performance metrics of what have come to be called non-profit organizations (NPOs) in the public administration literature and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the political science and international relations literature.<sup>1</sup> As the domestic and international visibility of NPOs/NGOs increases, concerns about their effectiveness and accountability will continue to grow.

The study of NPO/NGO effectiveness originally emerged as a subfield of organizational effectiveness. Over time, it has become fragmented and spread across disciplines, including not-for-profit studies, international relations, international development, management, and economics of organizations. This fragmentation

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<sup>1</sup> A growing literature has pointed to the detrimental effects created by a view that reduces NGO effectiveness to a ratio of program spending (Wing and Hager 2004; Lowell et al. 2005; Goggins Gregory and Howard 2009). We discuss the origins of this movement below in the section *A Historical Look at Organizational & NPO/NGO Effectiveness*. More recently, some of the rating agencies, including Charity Navigator, have pledged to change their evaluation criteria to include measures of actual performance. See Charity Navigator et al. (2009). See also footnotes 4 and 15.

undermines collaboration and the sharing of insights, particularly if scholars remain unaware of work outside their respective disciplines. Depending on the field and topic of study, organizations can be labeled nonprofits (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), interest groups, advocacy networks, or social movements, to name just a few. These different labels signify not only a fragmentation of research on similar types of actors but also very different assumptions about the role of these actors in public policy. Reading scholarship from these various literatures reveals many commonalities and shared interests; however, synergies based on truly interdisciplinary scholarship remain rare.<sup>2</sup>

The need for an interdisciplinary review became apparent to the authors because of our different disciplinary backgrounds. While one works primarily in organizational management and NGO policy, two come from a background in international relations. Despite the fact we work on a similar subject matter, we seemed to draw on different literatures and, as a result, focus on different elements of NGO/NPO effectiveness.

NGOs in international relations are often studied in the context of transnational advocacy networks, defining effectiveness as the ability to mobilize resources and public opinion to influence policy at the national or international level. Development studies, on the other hand, grew out of an emphasis on economic growth. Here tools of impact evaluation (IE) and monitoring & evaluation (M&E) prevail and counterfactuals are predominantly used to determine the impact of an individual organization (Ebrahim and Rangan 2010). Finally, within the not-for-profit literature, a well-established research agenda on effectiveness mirroring the broader research on organizational effectiveness exists. This literature emphasizes more traditional organizational variables, such as management, boards, fiscal health, and mission.

The goal of our structured literature review is, therefore, to provide an interdisciplinary analysis of the state of the literature on NPO/NGO effectiveness. Thus far, scholarly reviews of the literature, whether conducted as a standalone piece or as the preface to an empirical study, have tended to capture only the works within one discipline.<sup>3</sup> Given the extensive amount of research on NGOs/NPOs taking place throughout the social sciences, we argue that a comprehensive, interdisciplinary review is not only helpful but essential to obtaining an accurate picture of the current state of the literature.

In this article, we review the academic literature produced over the last 10 years on the effectiveness of NGOs and NPOs. To conduct our inquiry, we employ a structured literature review which uses computer software developed by one of the authors. This approach allows us to overcome the potential disciplinary biases of a reviewer and break down disciplinary boundaries. By using a form of network

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<sup>2</sup> For an exception, see the Transnational NGO Initiative at the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs; see [http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan\\_tngo.aspx](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan_tngo.aspx).

<sup>3</sup> For example, a review published by Forbes in 1998 concentrates on these six nonprofit journals: *Academy of Management Journal*, *Administration in Social Work*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, and *Voluntas*.

analysis, a structured literature review limits biases in the selection phase and captures key research patterns published *across* scholarly communities.

The article is organized in three sections. In the first section, we briefly review studies of organizational effectiveness since the 1960s. Although, the study of NPO/NGO effectiveness has today spread across disciplines, it was first discussed in the organizational studies literature, which came out of the business and public administration disciplines. Many scholars in international relations remain often unaware of (or do not acknowledge) this body of scholarship. Our discussion seeks to highlight the contributions of this literature to modern day studies of NGOs and NPOs and contextualize the structured literature review that follows.

In the second section, we provide an overview of the structured literature review methodology. This approach begins with a search of academic databases as well as advice from experts to identify seminal articles. These articles are then used as the seeds for a citation network built using new computer software. A structured literature review adds to the traditional review in two important ways. First, it creates an intellectual map based on citation networks over time, opening up new paths to analyzing intellectual histories of a given concept. Second, it adds a more refined understanding of what kinds of themes and approaches prevail across disciplines, because it discloses linkages between works that may not be obvious to a single author attempting to review the literature on a given topic.

Finally, we summarize the key trends uncovered by this method. We find broad consensus among scholars that unidimensional measures of effectiveness are inadequate. While everyone agrees that effectiveness is a complex issue to capture, the literature is split between those championing reputational and those preferring multi-dimensional approaches to effectiveness. Second, very few studies on NPO/NGO effectiveness advance knowledge accumulation through empirical analysis (either qualitative or quantitative). The majority of the literature in our sample is conceptual, often advancing new theories rather than testing existing ones.<sup>4</sup> Third, the majority of articles we surveyed fail to adequately define effectiveness, and there is significant variation regarding the level of analysis (program, organization, or sector) chosen.

These findings point to fundamental issues that all scholars, regardless of their disciplinary background, appear to be struggling with. A lack of shared definitions and empirical foundations undermine progress in our collective understanding of organizational effectiveness. Future scholarship on this topic should, *at a minimum*, consciously cross disciplinary boundaries, use more empirically driven analyses, and clearly state the preferred definition of effectiveness and the level of analysis.

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<sup>4</sup> We recognize that our own paper is conceptual in nature as well and does not provide empirical evidence. However, we hope to provide a significantly improved framework that will facilitate empirical analysis.

## A Historical Perspective: Organizational Effectiveness

Our structured literature review concentrates on works concerned with NGO/NPO effectiveness from the past decade. This literature has roots in scholarship of the 1950s raising questions about organizational effectiveness. These earlier research efforts often go unacknowledged in more recent analysis of NGOs and civil society in disciplines other than public administration. In this section, we provide a basic outline of the literature on organizational effectiveness to contextualize our review and highlight the importance of this literature to modern day studies of NGO/NPO effectiveness.

The field of organizational effectiveness emerged out of organizational sociology, industrial psychology, and other administrative sciences with a scholarly base in business schools. Early reviews of the field sought to distil important dimensions of effectiveness and establish a common set of research propositions across the field. Price (1968), for example, reviewed 50 empirical studies on organizational effectiveness and grouped the studies into four main categories: economic performance, internal political process, management control structures, and population ecology. These early efforts to develop a common set of propositions were aimed at creating a coherent and progressive research agenda. But instead of the proposed convergence, scholarship quickly split into three different schools with distinct approaches to effectiveness: goal attainment, resource-control (a system resource perspective), and social constructivism/reputational perspectives.

Etzioni (1964, p. 3) was one of the first to articulate the goal attainment approach to effectiveness, writing that organizations are “deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals”. Under this approach, progress toward stated goals defined effectiveness (Campbell 1977; Sheehan 1996; Spar and Dail 2002). However, as subsequent scholarship attempted to generalize about effectiveness based on ideas of goal attainment, several challenges emerged. Organizations rarely have a single or a coherent set of goals. It is often difficult to track goal attainment, and organizations that compete for resources do not necessarily share the same goals. In response to these criticisms, scholars began to resort to two types of proxies for effectiveness. The first focused on measures of survival and organizational growth (the system-resource approach) and the second on reputational measures.

The system resource approach links goal attainment to organizational survival by assuming that organizations achieving their goals are also likely to receive continued financial support (Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum 1957; Yuchtman and Seashore 1967). This approach presumes that organizational activities:

[...] take the form of transactions in which scarce and valued resources are exchanged under competitive conditions. The organization’s success over a period of time in this competition for resources—i.e., its bargaining position in a given environment—is regarded as an expression of its overall effectiveness (Yuchtman and Seashore 1967, p. 891).

By using a system resource approach, scholars circumvent the challenge of empirically identifying actual *impact* as a measurement of the progress toward specific goals and, instead, focus on the organizational sustainability component of effectiveness.<sup>5</sup>

The reputational school evolved from projects like Georgopoulos and Mann's (1962) five-year study of community hospitals in Michigan where the authors developed a measure of effectiveness from surveys of key experts in the hospital system. In general, this approach relies on aggregating subjective performance measures, as reported by key informants or organizational stakeholders. Survey scales can be standardized to create and compare outcomes across organizations and provide proxy measures for dimensions of effectiveness. This allows scholars to take into account the viewpoints of multiple stakeholders and solve the conundrum of conflicting goals by assigning different weights to different measures. Most importantly, this school emphasizes that *perception* of the organization is crucial for understanding an organization's effectiveness.<sup>6</sup> The reputational approach was adapted and expanded by a series of subsequent studies (Price 1971; Jobson and Schneck 1982) and proliferated into many ranking systems of academic departments, athletic teams, and other institutions. While social constructivists view reputation as a social fact independent of and possibly more important than objective measures of effectiveness, a rationalist approach takes reputation primarily as a record of past behavior which is one of many components relevant to assessing the performance of a given organization (Sharman 2007).

By the 1980s, no single perspective on organizational effectiveness had prevailed and questions regarding their usefulness mounted. The goal attainment approach continued to face challenges based on the existence of too many and often contradictory goals (Quinn and Cameron 1983; Cyert and March 1992) and the difficulties associated with measuring results (Herman and Renz 1999). The system resource approach was challenged for its narrow definition of effectiveness that does not actually touch on performance. Finally, reputation models ran into issues of how to weigh diverging views of multiple stakeholders about what makes an organization effective (Friedlander and Pickle 1968).

In response to these challenges, the literature moved toward the adoption of more complex models of effectiveness, such as multi-dimensional models (Connolly et al. 1980; Cameron and Whetten 1983; Zammuto 1984; Foster and Lock 1990), competing values models (Quinn and Rohrbaugh 1983), contingency models (Lewin and Minton 1986; Ebrahim and Rangan 2010), and a balanced scorecard approach (Kaplan and Norton 1996). These models typically incorporate aspects of the goal, system resource, and reputational approaches. Similarly, as scholars recognized that organizations regularly deal with many constituencies and may have

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<sup>5</sup> See also footnotes 1 and 15. This view remains prevalent today in the methodologies of self-appointed rating watchdogs which include organizational growth as a key indicator for a successful not-for-profit. In the United States, the availability of financial data based on 990 forms combined with an absence of good measures for actual impact has driven the reporting practices of watchdogs emerging since the 1990s.

<sup>6</sup> Aldrich clarifies that perception is important, because it affects an organization's ability to operate in a given community or industry, retain customers, raise capital for growth, gain protection from political or regulatory figures, and attract dynamic employees (Aldrich 1999, pp. 228–332).

varied or conflicting reputations, research has developed more complex, multiple-stakeholder approaches (Zammuto 1984; Herman and Renz 1999), and such models are now prevalent in academic research, such as the management literature.<sup>7</sup>

The ubiquitous problem of measurement (Steers 1975) and a lack of consensus regarding on measure of effectiveness also contributed to the emergence of a critical school of effectiveness studies. Goodman et al. (1983) pronounce the conceptual demise of effectiveness, and Hannan and Freeman (1977) went so far as calling for the abolition of effectiveness studies in the organizational sciences. Following these pronouncements, scholarship in this area increasingly resorted to new labels to investigate similar questions. With the emergence of new subfields, researchers found opportunities to adopt more specific and narrowly defined research questions and focus on dependent variables, such as employee productivity (management), organizational death (population ecology), or market share (strategy), without having to bring up the difficult question of organizational effectiveness.

## Study Methodology

Our study employs a new method, a *structured literature review*, to systematically review literature relevant to a given topic across disciplines (Harris et al. forthcoming). A structured literature review uses the relationships inherent in paper citations to systematically explore a corpus of knowledge. This method follows four main steps. First, academic databases are searched and subject experts are queried to identify a set of seed articles that pertain to the research topic. Second, a citation network is created around the seed articles using a snowball sampling method. Third, the most central (i.e., most cited) articles are sorted from this network, and a selection criteria is applied to create a sample of articles that represents the emergent discourse of a field. Finally, the sample is coded and the content of individual articles analyzed.

This approach builds on a vast collection of theories and methodologies from the field of bibliometrics, the mathematical study of scientific publications (Garfield 1979; Glänzel 2003) but is unique in its data collection method (de Solla Price 1965). The structured nature of the review is meant to *minimize any bias* introduced by a researcher's discipline or search patterns and provide a more representative overview of scholarship in a particular field. This is particularly important in fields, such as NGO/NPO effectiveness, where research crosses several disciplines and appears in a wide variety of journals.

### Step 1: Seed Articles

Seven seed articles were used to create the citation network. The appropriate number of seed articles varies with each review and is judged by the set of articles identified by experts and preliminary keyword searches. Articles were chosen based

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<sup>7</sup> Kaplan and Norton have remained top sellers in the applied management literature and have received thousands of citations for their academic work.

upon the criteria that they pertain specifically to the study of NGO/NPO effectiveness. Because the sampling process moves forward in time (see next section), seed articles cannot be too recent or they will result in a small and insufficient collection of articles (Table 1).

To create an extensive but manageable universe of literature to sample from, we gathered all articles within a distance of three linkages (or levels) from the seed articles. Extending the search past three levels generates a large proportion of articles in the sample that do not pertain to the topic, and three levels are sufficient for capturing the most relevant citations.<sup>8</sup> Sample framework articles then will still need to be filtered for relevance.

### Step 2: Generating the Network

The citation network is generated using snowball sampling based on the seed articles that were identified in the previous step.<sup>9</sup> All of the articles that cite a seed article become a part of the sample, as do articles that cite articles citing the seed articles and the articles that cite those articles. In network terms, a paper represents a node and a citation represents a link between two nodes. Enumerating the network in this way allows the researcher to generate a large collection of publications on a topic and then use characteristics of the network to select a compact, representative sample of the most salient publications within the set.

From our seed articles, we built a citation network of 4,879 publications. The Google Scholar<sup>10</sup> database was used to collect citation information, because it is one of the most exhaustive scholarly databases available (Noruzi 2005), is free and easy to access, and most importantly, makes citation information easily available (Meho 2006). Google Scholar citations only move forward in time (publications have data on “cited by” instead of “cites”). As a result, it is important to choose seed articles from the near-distant past to get a good historical snapshot of the topic. This requires a slightly different mindset from other bibliometric approaches, which start with a scientific discovery and move backwards in time (Garfield 2001). Bibliometric approaches trace the key articles or citation chains that were instrumental in the discovery, whereas the method used here aids in capturing the emergent consensus in a field (or the lack thereof). The seed articles for this review were largely taken from the late 1990s.

### Step 3: Selecting a Representative Set

Citation networks summarize the evolution of research on a particular topic by identifying the set of publications that are central to a field. Ninety percent of

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<sup>8</sup> To understand why this is the case, see the expansive literature on small world properties of networks (e.g., Milgram 1967; Watts and Strogatz 1998).

<sup>9</sup> It is possible to generate a constrained sample by only selecting a certain percentage of the articles at each sampling stage, and it can be shown that by utilizing search rank information in scholar to select the sample exponential reductions in sample size can be achieved while still retaining the important structural features of the citation network (see: Lecy et al. 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <http://scholar.google.com/>.

**Table 1** Seed articles

Bebbington and Mitlin	1996	NGO capacity and effectiveness: a review of themes in NGO-related research recently funded by ESCOR
Edwards and Hulme	1996	Beyond the magic bullet: NGO performance and accountability in the post-cold war world
Forbes	1998	Measuring the unmeasurable: empirical studies of nonprofit organization effectiveness from 1977 to 1997
Fowler	2002	Assessing NGO performance: difficulties, dilemmas and a way ahead
Herman	1990	Methodological issues in studying the effectiveness of nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations
Najam	1998	Searching for NGO effectiveness
Williams and Kindle	1992	Effectiveness of nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations: some methodological caveats

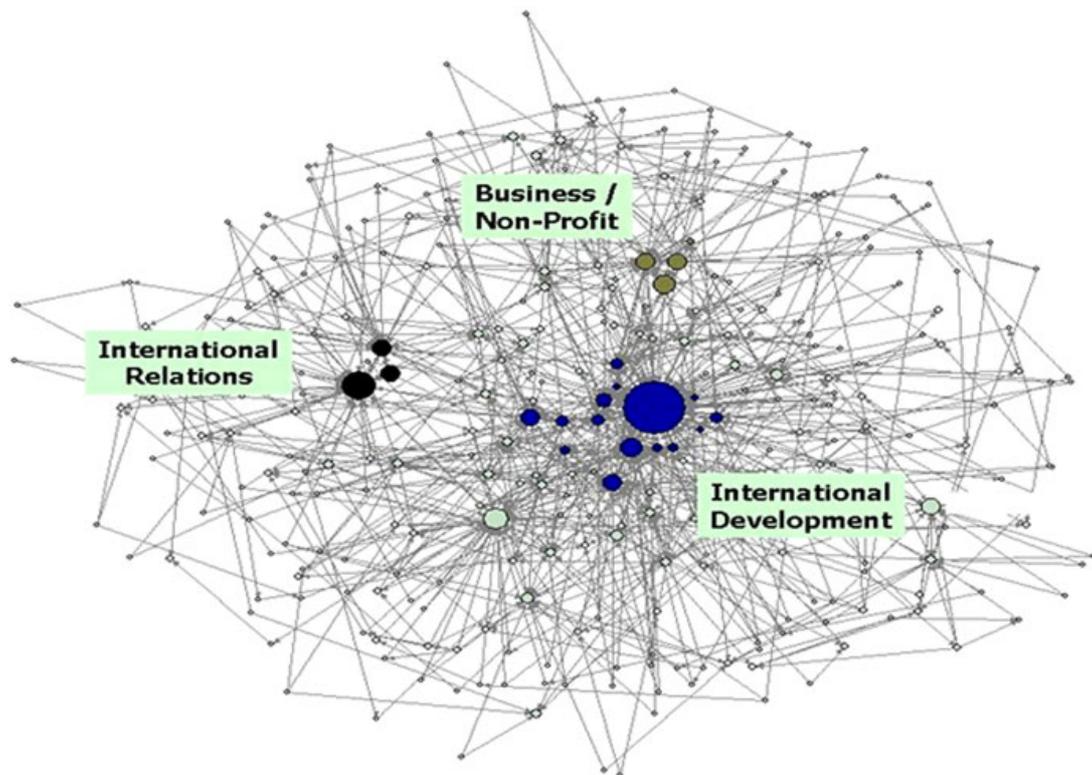
scholarly publications are never cited (Meho 2006), and the core of a research field is represented by a few seminal pieces.<sup>11</sup> These seminal pieces can be easily identified through citation patterns. As a result, the sample that best represents the discourse of a domain is not a random sample but the set of publications that are most highly cited. They are the pieces that are referenced by other scholars and thus shape the content and future directions of a field. Such a set of articles is a good indicator of the current discourse in a field (McCain 1991; Estabrooks et al. 2004).

Due to the fragmentation of research on NGO/NPO effectiveness, we elected to review a relatively large set of articles. Our sample was sorted by the number of times each publication was cited and then the selection criterion was applied. We then narrowed the sample to articles that were cited at least 20 times and discussed NGO/NPO effectiveness (as determined by the titles and abstracts) either explicitly or implicitly (i.e., case studies, method pieces, and empirical program evaluations). We did not include articles on corporate social responsibility or NGO accountability. Both are admittedly linked to effectiveness, but there is an expansive literature on these topics that left them outside of the scope of this literature review. This left us with an original sample of 105 articles. In the reading stage, several articles were determined to be outside the scope of the study (i.e., they did not address effectiveness explicitly or implicitly) and were eliminated. The final sample consisted of 64 articles. A list of the sample can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

#### Step 4: Review of the Articles

In the final step of this research, we reviewed all of the articles in the sample and coded each article based on a set of questions, including: “is the article empirical in nature?,” “what is its level of analysis?,” or “how is effectiveness defined?” Our coding scheme can be found in [Appendix 2](#). From these codes, we drew findings regarding current trends in research on NGO/NPO effectiveness.

<sup>11</sup> This is consistent with laws of information sciences identified by Zipf and Bradford (Zipf 1935; de Solla Price 1976; Garfield 1980).



**Fig. 1** Primary journal clusters of articles in the sample. Size represents the number of articles appearing in the journal and links represent an article in one journal citing an article in another journal

The disciplinary divisions mentioned previously are apparent in the network collected for the sample. If the network is transposed using journal names instead of article titles, clustering around three nodes, not-for-profit studies, international relations, and international development, becomes apparent (see Fig. 1). The clear clustering of articles suggests that notions of effectiveness are primarily shaped by disciplinary lenses.

### **Trends in Research on NGO/NPO Effectiveness**

While the articles in our sample varied dramatically in substance, collectively they suggest three key trends about the current state of the literature on NGO/NPO effectiveness: (1) there is broad consensus that unidimensional measures of effectiveness are not useful; (2) the scholarship on NGO and NPO effectiveness is dominated by conceptual and theoretical works, while empirical studies remain rare; and, (3) a consensus on how to operationalize effectiveness remains elusive. In the following section, we outline each of these findings in greater depth, noting their impact on the field of study. In particular, we focus on the latter two findings, arguing that the absence of stated assumptions and lack of clarity on the level of analysis, combined with limited empirical work, hampers the emergence of a cumulative research program.

## Beyond Single Dimensions of Effectiveness

First, our sample confirms a consensus that singular measures of NGO/NPO effectiveness are not useful. While such singular measures are still prevalent in practice and among charity watchdogs, scholars uniformly reject them. However, the rejection of simple measures has not yet led to the emergence of a widely shared alternative type of measurement.

As Herman and Renz (1999) note, an organization can be effective in one realm of operations but not an effective organization overall. An NGO may have strong management and high project impact on the ground but poor leadership and financial management at the head office. Alternatively, another NGO might have high-profile board members and very effective fundraising but little impact in the field. Depending on the kind of evaluation used, either of these organizations can be said to be effective or ineffective.

Notions of effectiveness emerging from the NGO/NPO research include: *project impact* (Eisinger 2002); *financial efficiency* (charity watchdogs); *managerial effectiveness* (Lewis 2001); *board effectiveness* (Herman and Renz 1999); and *effective use of partnerships and networks* (Bacon 2005). Authors in the sample also emphasize the idea that effectiveness is dependent upon context. Edwards, for example, claims that “...there is no such thing as a universally appropriate strategy among NGOs across such different contexts...NGOs can increase the opportunities for effective work...by using the right strategies in the right combinations” (Edwards 1999, p. 371).

While there is no agreement on measurement, two multidimensional approaches are dominant in our study sample—reputation approaches and hybrid multidimensional approaches.<sup>12</sup> Reputation approaches (what Herman and Renz refer to as “social constructivism” and what Forbes calls an “emergent” approach), emphasize the dialectic relationship between stakeholders and structures:

“[It places] an emphasis on understanding the interactions within and among organizations that lead to the development of criteria for evaluating organizational effectiveness as well as the roles that information and communication play in shaping judgments of effectiveness” (Forbes 1998).

Reputation measures assert strong assumptions about the malleability of effectiveness and the importance of taking into account perceptions of effectiveness by multiple stakeholders. Although, it is not ubiquitous in the effectiveness literature, there is growing support for this approach (Forbes 1998; Edwards 1999; Herman and Renz 2004). The challenge for such an approach is to adequately develop a model of effectiveness that captures the diversity of interests and views within the NGO environment.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Goal-oriented models have been heavily criticized within the effectiveness literature (Herman and Renz 1999), which explains why these models are not popular within the study sample. Also note that resource models, although not prominent in the literature, are used by organizations like Charity Navigator because financial data is readily available, whereas program data or reputation data is not.

<sup>13</sup> For example, Herman and Renz (2004) identify the following constituents: clients, employees, funders, licensing and accrediting bodies, boards of directors, and vendors.

The hybrid approach tries to integrate multiple measures of effectiveness into a single model.<sup>14</sup> For example, Sowa et al. (2004) put forth what they label a “multidimensional and integrated model of not-for-profit organizational effectiveness” (MIMNOE), which emphasizes management and program variables, and Kaplan (2001) draws on the “balanced scorecard” approach to produce a model that incorporates measures of customer relations, operating performance, organizational learning, and growth. Both MIMNOE and the balanced scorecard approach incorporate goals, resources, and reputation. The shift toward multidimensional approaches is also visible in Charity Navigator’s ongoing efforts to revise its ratings system. Rather than focus almost exclusive attention on overhead ratios, Charity Navigator as well as other watchdogs in the nonprofit field are now exploring how impact and reputational data can supplement narrow financial metrics.<sup>15</sup> While, watchdogs are not likely to assess the results and impact themselves, they may make future rating systems conditional on how forthcoming an organization is in reporting on results and outcomes as well as on how credible such reports are (Mitchell and Schmitz 2010).

The challenge with any multidimensional model is to establish “systems of evaluation that are simpler and more accessible, not more complex” (Ebrahim 2005, p. 70). Multidimensional models will be useful if they are accessible and user-friendly. However, in practice, they can be difficult to employ. They often require aggregation assumptions (Kaplan and Elliott 1997) and present measurement challenges (Steers 1975).<sup>16</sup> Contingency frameworks, which vary measurement tools based on the overall ambition of an organization’s goals and its operational strategy, may provide a way around these challenges (Ebrahim and Rangan 2010).

### NGO Effectiveness Scholarship Lacks Empirical Analysis

Our research also finds that the majority of articles on NGO/NPO effectiveness lack solid empirical analysis. We classified 40 of the 64 articles sampled as being primarily “theory/framing” articles. By comparison, the next largest categories “program evaluation” and “case studies,” included only nine and seven articles, respectively.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the majority of the articles (57%) were primarily argumentative in nature (as opposed to being based on empirical evidence). The majority of highly cited academic work on effectiveness focuses on adding new

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<sup>14</sup> This was a trend in the organizational literature in the 1970s and continues in the current not-for-profit literature.

<sup>15</sup> President and CEO of Charity Navigator, Ken Berger, outlined a new rating system based on three major components (financial health, accountability and transparency, and outcomes) during an Interaction Forum in July 2009 (Heiberg and Bruno-van Vijfeijken 2009).

<sup>16</sup> For example, Sowa et al. (2004) recommend applying the MIMNOE using structural equation models (SEM) to account for imperfect construct measurement and hierarchical linear models (HLM) to ensure unbiased estimation, as a result necessitating simultaneous assessment of effectiveness of several organizations within a single industry.

<sup>17</sup> In addition, we classified four articles as primarily “literature reviews” and four as “other” (“other” includes: methodology, how-to, and large-N).

theory or analytical frames to the research agenda, while it is rare to come across efforts to test the validity of those frameworks based on empirical evidence.<sup>18</sup>

This trend correlates with analyses on the number and quality of program evaluations conducted by NPOs and NGOs on their own programs.<sup>19</sup> In a survey of not-for-profit human services organizations in Dallas (Texas), Hoefler asked whether a program evaluation of their largest program had taken place in the past 2 years (Hoefler 2000).<sup>20</sup> Of the respondents, 24% indicated that no such evaluation had taken place. Of those that reported a program evaluation, only 17% reported that they used a design that rigorously controlled for threats to internal validity.<sup>21</sup> These results are confirmed by Charity Navigator, which also found that only 10% of surveyed NGOs regularly used program evaluation (Heiberg and Bruno-van Vijfeijken 2009).

According to Hoefler's research, the main reasons for a lack of program evaluations are costs and donors—either because there was not enough money to conduct an evaluation (48%) or because their funders did not require an evaluation (43%).<sup>22</sup> Only 14% of respondents felt there was no need for an evaluation. Based on a study of Detroit nonprofits, Thomson confirms the central role of funders in shaping outcome measurements, showing that reporting requirements imposed by donors override resource constraints and can increase the rigor of outcome measurement (Thomson 2010). For scholars, such funding incentives may be less relevant; however, more rigorous, empirical (both qualitative and quantitative) research should be fostered by journal editors and the community overall.

The lack of empirical analysis (in both the academic and practitioner communities) has thus far limited the usefulness of the literature on NGO/NPO effectiveness. Many of the theory and framing articles we reviewed are interesting and potentially very valuable. However, in order to move forward, interested scholars ought to subject these theories to empirical validation using the wide array of qualitative and quantitative methodologies available to them. Such efforts would also be a timely complement to the efforts of charity watchdogs shifting attention away from financial metrics toward reporting on actual outcomes.

### Definitions of Effectiveness

Finally, we find that the term “effectiveness” is often not defined or the definition provided is incomplete. The majority of articles in our sample (43 of 64) did not provide a definition of effectiveness. Among the remaining 21 articles, eighteen

<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, many of the articles in our study using a more qualitative approach relied on underdeveloped case studies and anecdotal evidence rather than a more rigorous qualitative framework.

<sup>19</sup> It is important to note that, to the best of our knowledge, no large scale survey of NPOs or NGOs regarding program evaluation has been conducted. Therefore, these numbers are preliminary.

<sup>20</sup> This survey had 91 respondents, for a return rate of 57%.

<sup>21</sup> The author did not ask about the use of experimental designs that included a random assignment of clients to either treatment or a control group, because previous communications had indicated that there would not be any program evaluations with this type of design in the Dallas area.

<sup>22</sup> In addition, 48% indicated that there was not enough staff time available and 33% indicated that they did not have the proper knowledge to conduct an evaluation.

offered a definition of effectiveness, while three argued that multiple definitions of effectiveness should be considered. In addition, levels of analysis were often unclear and varied widely. Some articles discussed NGO/NPO effectiveness in the context of influencing other actors. Others defined effectiveness as employing management techniques to minimize costs. Still others spoke of effective boards that provide fundraising support. Given that effectiveness is used tacitly in most articles and there is high variation in levels of analysis, it comes as no surprise that we were not able to identify a significant consensus and common purpose across scholarship principally sharing an interest in effectiveness questions.

A proper definition of effectiveness is a basic requirement to build a solid measure of performance. Consider two studies. First, Barnow (2000) examined the case of 640 local job training programs managed by the government under the Job Training Partnership Act. In order to ensure performance, each unit was required to report a set of indicators as part of a performance management system. The indicators then were used to rank the performance of the units, make decisions on resources, and reorganize ineffective units through layoffs. When these indicators were correlated to an impact evaluation performed by Barnow, they were found to be only slightly correlated and resulted in rankings with a high amount of error. A focus on *outputs* instead of *impacts* proved to be problematic in this instance, because the indicators collected were not representative of the organizational goals that they were trying to measure.

Second, a study by Friedlander and Pickle (1968) examines perceptions of organizational effectiveness for 98 small businesses by vested interest groups: owners, employees, government, customers, suppliers, and creditors. The authors found mostly weak and sometimes negative correlations between the different perceptions of effectiveness. Translated into nonprofit terms, donors, the board, managers, and beneficiaries all have very different understandings of what effectiveness entails. Unless scholars find ways of conceptually articulating these differences, the frameworks proposed by each constituent will likely not mesh and their demands not be appropriately accounted for. These are high-stakes endeavors with real implications for the activities and funding of NGOs and NPOs.

Definitions vary by discipline—different literatures have developed different research agendas and primary interests with regard to NGOs/NPOs. These divisions are a natural part of the research process and do not prove problematic for effectiveness studies. For example, international relation scholars will likely always have a tendency to evaluate the relative power of transnational NGOs compared to other players in global affairs. This particular understanding of effectiveness does not have to be shared by scholars in the management or not-for-profit literature. What is problematic is the lack of conceptual clarity within each body of literature as well as the lack of efforts to integrate insights across disciplines. In a period where nonprofits are increasingly called upon to demonstrate effectiveness, it is especially important for definitions to be clearly stated upfront. In addition, awareness of research across disciplinary divides can strengthen cumulative knowledge production. This requires reflection on the levels of analysis and measurement systems employed in different contexts as well as some standardizing of terminologies.

## A Framework for Donors

A contemporary review of the uses of effectiveness research in the NPO/NGO realm is particularly important, given the increasing demand for performance measures by donors. There is scholarly consensus that unidimensional measures of effectiveness are unsatisfactory, although these measures continue to enjoy popularity among donors. Multidimensional models might be more theoretically useful, but as Cameron and Whetton (1983) point out, decisions about the domain of activity to evaluate, stakeholders included in the assessment, the level of analysis, and many other factors then complicate any efforts to establish a common standard. International relations scholars might use the term *effectiveness* to describe the ability of NGOs to mobilize networks of actors and change public discourse around issues, whereas nonprofit scholars are more likely to use the term *effectiveness* to describe a set of managerial practices and financial controls.

In our review, we encountered four domains that can be used to better guide performance assessments: managerial, program, network, and legitimacy. Each domain is a discrete set of tasks and practices that are loosely coupled within the organization. More domains could be identified, but these four appeared most frequently in the literature reviewed for this study. Collectively, they suggest the range of variables associated regularly with organizational effectiveness. Each can be evaluated separately, allowing for the reduction of the complexity often associated with trying to gauge overall organizational effectiveness.

### *Managerial Effectiveness*

Organizations that want to survive and grow must develop core competencies in areas such as managerial leadership, development of human resources, board governance, adequate financial controls, and planning and budgeting processes. This domain is commonly evaluated, because many measures like financial ratios and human resource statistics can be quantified. In addition, there are many audit systems available, including the balanced scorecard (Kaplan 2001).

### *Program Effectiveness*

The evaluation literature differentiates between the implementation of a program and the impact of a program. When NPOs and NGOs are contracted to provide services, they are typically assessed by measuring program output or outcomes but not necessarily for program impact. Performance can be split into efficiency and effectiveness. The field of program evaluation is half a century old and has developed many useful experimental, quasi-experimental, observational, and qualitative approaches to gauging impact.<sup>23</sup> However, as our structured literature review showed, only a small minority of programs attempt to measure impact at this level of rigor. Once better indicators for program impact are in place, a logical next step would be to not only assess effectiveness at the program level but to describe the impact an organization has overall.

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<sup>23</sup> See the work of the MIT Poverty Action lab for some inspiring examples.

### *Network Effectiveness*

Both NGOs and NPOs operate within a context of networks, whether as part of a coalition working toward a specific policy change or as part of a service-delivery network. The concept of networked governance has become prominent in the field of public administration and is a very active area of research (O'Toole 1997; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000; Rhodes 2000; Provan and Milward 2001; Provan and Kenis 2008). Effective organizations are likely to be those that can mobilize actors through networks or leverage resources and achieve strategic objectives through participating in networks.

### *Legitimacy*

NPOs and NGOs rely on their brand. Name recognition, differentiation within markets, and affiliations with successful campaigns or popular causes enable organizations to raise funds, gain access to policy processes, and recruit support from partners or donors. In cases like the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), an event that causes a loss of legitimacy can lead to the abrupt death of the organization. For this reason, leaders spend a great deal of energy trying to maintain and enhance the legitimacy of their organizations. Without the ability to fundraise or mobilize partners, organizations will not be capable of achieving strategic objectives. Legitimacy and effectiveness are tied by a continuous feedback loop, because legitimacy is often driven by past performance and by myriad interactions with peer groups. As a result, measuring legitimacy can serve as one proxy for assessing effectiveness.

The narrowing of effectiveness to a particular domain has two advantages for donors and others interested in rating performance. First, there is an inherent trade-off between the complexity of a measure and its usability. Academics may favor multidimensional models, but they can be challenging for practitioners to develop, apply, and interpret. Second, multidimensional models suffer from inconsistencies due to different weighting systems. In multidimensional models, changing the weights of the various dimensions in the model can drastically change the rank-ordering of a set of organizations. As a result, three different models may produce three different rankings. Narrowing the evaluation to an organizational domain does not eliminate the challenge of measuring performance, but it can simplify the issue of selecting weights for different dimensions of performance.

## **Conclusions**

The novel approach to conduct literature reviews utilized here is useful for scholars interested in a more systematic approach to literature reviews. A structured literature review is particularly helpful in fields where the literature straddles multiple disciplines. Traditional literature reviews based on keyword searches leave significant room for error based on the biases and disciplinary limits inherent to an individual's perception of the relevant literature. A structured literature review

avoids such problems by delegating the creation of the citation network to a software program.

Our structured literature review on NGO/NPO effectiveness confirms a widely held consensus rejecting unidimensional measures of effectiveness, but also highlights the lack of a consensus on appropriate alternative measures. We also find that a much needed scholarly consensus on better measurements of effectiveness is primarily hampered by a lack of empirical studies and the absence of explicit definitions and identifications of basic parameters, such as levels of analysis. These limitations are often the result of disciplinary boundaries, which create an illusion of shared knowledge and provide insufficient incentives to be more explicit about one's assumptions.

The good news is that there is no shortage of promising complex models for assessing effectiveness, and the upcoming changes in the methodologies of major charity watchdogs will offer even more variation. The bad news is that these models have rarely been empirically tested. In spite of the current heated debates on "strategic philanthropy" and increasing pressures to show measurable results in the policy arena, research lags behind practice. As a result, scholars interested in advancing the literature on NGO/NPO impact often ignore the academic literature and rely on what they see as more advanced thinking emerging from the think tanks, government agencies, and funding organizations (Ebrahim and Rangan 2010). However, scholars have an opportunity to shape the agenda on effectiveness by offering conceptual clarity and developing a better understanding of the dynamics that lead to organizational efficacy. Scholars of NGO/NPO effectiveness must be a peculiar breed—one that can reach across disciplinary boundaries to hone in on the subject despite variation in language across contexts.

This structured literature review points to a number of specific areas for future research. First, it is crucial to analyze individual organizations that adopt more complex measurements of effectiveness. If an organization adopts a multidimensional model, an analysis of the adoption processes can help us understand the difficulties of putting these ideas into everyday practice. Eventually, researchers could also capture information about if and how these new practices actually improve impact. Second, academics should develop measurement systems that are appropriate to individual organizations and sectors. Scholars need to take variation in size, sector, and mission seriously, designing studies that compare the appropriateness of different measurements across those variables. Central to this endeavor are empirically based advances along the disaggregated dimensions of managerial, program, and network effectiveness. Finally, we need to better understand the role of legitimacy and reputation. Investigating reputational effects can rely on strong rationalist and constructivist foundations and explore the importance of intersubjective peer recognition within NGO/NPO networks. Scholarship has a unique role to play in moving beyond the recent dominance of unidimensional and efficiency-based proxies for NGO/NPO effectiveness.

## Appendix 1

See Table 2.

**Table 2** Sample

Author	Year	Title
<i>Journal Articles &amp; Chapters</i>		
Atack	1999	Four criteria of development NGO legitimacy
Bacarro	2001	Civil society, NGOs, and decent work policies: sorting out the issues
Bacon	2004	Confronting the coffee crisis: can fair trade, organic, and specialty coffees reduce small-scale farmer vulnerability in Northern Nicaragua?
Bebbington	2002	Global networks and local developments: agendas for development geography
Bebbington	2004	NGOs and uneven development: geographies of development intervention
Bebbington	2005	Donor–NGO relationships and representations of livelihood in nongovernmental aid chains
Betsill and Bulkeley	2004	Transnational networks and global environmental governance: the cities for Climate Protect Program
Betsill and Corell	2001	NGO influences in international environmental negotiations: a framework for analysis
Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff	2002	Government–nonprofit relations in comparative perspective: evolution, themes and new directions
Brown	2005	Exploring the association between board and organizational performance in nonprofit organizations
Brown and Moore	2001	Symposium: new roles and challenges for NGOs
Callen et al.	2003	Board composition, committees, and organizational efficiency: the case of non-profits
Corell and Betsill	2001	A comparative look at NGO influence in international environmental negotiations
Dubnick	2003	Accountability and the promise of performance: in search of mechanisms
Ebrahim	2005	Accountability myopia: losing sight of organizational learning
Edwards	1999	NGO performance: what breeds success? New evidence from South Asia
Edwards	1997	Organizational learning in NGOs: what have we learned?
Edwards and Hulme	1996	Too close for comfort? The impact of official aid on non-governmental organizations
Edwards et al.	2007	NGOs in a global future: marrying local delivery to worldwide leverage
Eisinger	2002	Organizational capacity and effectiveness of Street-Level Food programs
Forbes	1998	Measuring the unmeasurable: empirical studies of nonprofit organization effectiveness from 1977 to 1997
Fowler	2000	NGDOs as a moment in history: beyond aid to social entrepreneurship or civic innovation?
Fowler	2002	Assessing NGO performance: difficulties, dilemmas and a way ahead in NGO management
Godfrey et al.	2002	Technical assistance and capacity development in an aid-dependent economy: the experience of Cambodia
Gugerty and Kremer	2000	Outside funding of community organizations: benefiting or displacing the poor?
Herman and Renz	1999	Theses on non-profit organizational effectiveness
Herman and Renz	2000	Board practices of especially effective and less effective local nonprofit organizations
Herman and Renz	2004	Doing things right: effectiveness in local. nonprofit organizations, a panel study
Hickey and Mohan	2005	Relocating participation within a radical politics of development
Hofer	2000	Accountability in action? Program evaluation in non-profit human service agencies
Johnson and Wilson	2000	Biting the bullet: civil society, social learning and the transformation of local governance
Kaplan	2001	Strategic performance measurement and management in non-profit organizations

Table 2 continued

Author	Year	Title
Lewis	1998	Development NGOs and the challenge of partnership: changing relations between North and South
Lewis et al.	2003	Practice, power and meaning: frameworks for studying organizational culture in multi-agency rural development projects
Loevinsohn and Harding	2005	Buying results? Contracting for health service delivery in developing countries
Mohan	2002	The disappointments of civil society: the politics of NGO intervention in Northern Ghana
Moore	2004	The fair trade movement: parameters, issues and future research
Mosse	2004	Is good policy unimplementable? Reflections on ethnography of aid policy and practice
Murray and Tassie	1994	Evaluating the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations in the Jossey-Bass handbook of nonprofit leadership and management
Pender	2001	From 'structural adjustment' to 'comprehensive development framework': conditionality transformed?
Pfeiffer	2003	International NGOs and primary health care in Mozambique: the need for a new model of collaboration
Platteau	2004	Monitoring elite capture in community-driven development
Poole et al.	2001	Improving the quality of outcome evaluation plans
Potter and Brough	2004	Systemic capacity building: a hierarchy of needs
Reynolds et al.	2004	Fair trade coffee: building producer capacity via global networks
Roper and Pettit	2002	Development and the learning organization: an introduction
Sowa et al.	2004	No longer "unmeasurable"? A multi-dimensional integrated model of nonprofit organizational effectiveness
Speckbacher	2003	The economics of performance management in nonprofit organizations
Tarrow	2001	Transnational politics: contention and institutions in international politics (2001)
Townsend and Townsend	2004	Accountability, motivation and practice: NGOs North and South
Townsend et al.	2002	The role of the transnational community of non-governmental organizations: governance or poverty reduction?
Uvin et al.	2000	Think large and act small: toward a new paradigm for NGO scaling up
Warleigh	2001	'Europeanizing' civil society: NGOs as agents of political socialization
Williams	2004	Evaluating participatory development: tyranny, power and (re)politicisation
Zaidi	1999	NGO failure and the need to bring bank the state
<i>Books</i>		
Edwards and Hulme	1996	Beyond the magic bullet: NGO performance and accountability in the post-cold war world
Hudock	1999	NGOs and civil society: democracy by proxy?
Lewis	2001	The management of non-governmental development organizations
Ottaway and Carothers (eds.)	2000	Funding virtue: civil society aid and democracy promotion
Poister	2003	Measuring performance in public and nonprofit organizations
Ebrahim	2003	NGOs and organizational change: discourse, reporting and learning
Anheier	2005	Nonprofit organizations: theory, management, and policy
Gibbs et al.	1999	Nongovernmental organizations and world bank-supported projects

## Appendix 2

- Title:            Author:            Journal:            Year:            Sample ID:            Coder & Date:
- I. What kind of piece is it?
    - a. Case study
    - b. Program Evaluation
    - c. Theoretical / Framing article
    - d. Methods piece
    - e. Literature review
    - f. Other:
  - II. What is the academic field of the study? (mutually exclusive responses)
    - a. Political Science (IR)
    - b. Economics
    - c. Development studies
    - d. Not-for-profit (public administration)
    - e. Interdisciplinary
  - III. What is the topic area of the study (health, education, etc)?
  - IV. What is the author's major argument/point?
  - V. Effectiveness discussions
    - a. Does the author talk explicitly about effectiveness?
    - b. Does the piece contain an explicit definition of effectiveness?
  - VI. What is the level of analysis:
    - a. Program Level
    - b. Organizational Level
    - c. Campaign Level
    - d. Sector / Network Level
  - VII. If you were to conduct a study based on the author's work what would be the variables?
 

IVs: \_\_\_\_\_

DVs: \_\_\_\_\_
  - VIII. What form of outcome is discussed?: (choose all that apply?)
    - i. Mission-related
      1. Program outcome (e.g., delivery of service)
      2. Institutional outcome (change of law and/or government or firm practice)
      3. Normative outcome (change of public opinion)
      4. Participatory outcome (more active or representative civil society)
      5. Capacity building of external organization (government, etc)
    - ii. Organization-related
      1. Organizational outcome: i.e. improving management, survival, growth  
list: \_\_\_\_\_
    - iii. TNGO Sector-related
      1. Change in goals / definitions / standards of the sector
      2. Networking, collaboration and capacity-building among civil society orgs
    - iv. Other:
  - IX. What type of methodology does the article use? (mutually exclusive)
    - a. Argumentative – making a logical case for something
    - b. Quantitative – correlational or causal analysis of large-N data
    - c. Qualitative – causal analysis based on case study, process tracing
    - d. Interpretative – rejects conventional social science methods of cause and effect analysis
    - e. Other (explain):
  - X. Does the article assume or argue for a rights-based/transformational approach to development? Yes/No  
Does the author explicitly mention the North/South NGO divide? Yes/No

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