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Research Paper

**Gamification Techniques Implemented to Increase Engagement and Donations in the nonProfit sector in Los Angeles to Counteract the Negative Effects of the Global Pandemic, Covid-19.**

**Master Thesis**

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Digital Marketing

Submitted by:

**Alondra Gomez-Leyva**

Supervised by:

**Roberta Giannini**

Geneva, Switzerland

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## **Declaration of Authorship**

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Date: 03/01/2021

Name: Alondra Gomez-Leyva

Signature: Alondra Gomez-Leyva

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Best Wishes,

Alondra Gomez-Leyva

## **List of Abbreviations**

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KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LA	Los Angeles
Covid-19	Coronavirus
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communications
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
SJT	Situational Judgment Test

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## Abstract

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Gamification has quickly grown into a popular, innovative concept that has been implemented into many businesses across the globe. Its large acceptance rate has been due to its phenomenal contributions to improving engagement and sense of personal gratification through the implementation of game-like features through social media, apps, websites, television and many other resources. Gamification is incorporating game-like features, such as points, prizes and competition, in order to motivate people to perform better or interact more. This can potentially be helpful to companies because it can function in multiple ways. It can encourage employee or client performance to improve, increase engagement, and drive in more donations for nonprofits.

The efforts of this research paper are to find drivers and motivators to increase awareness, engagement and donations by implementing gamification in various aspects of nonprofits. Nonprofits have been negatively impacted by the long-lasting effects of Covid-19 so it is crucial for these organizations to find effective alternatives in order to continue helping communities around LA. If gamification can help find creative, interactive ways to get people to realize the importance of their engagement and donations, this can become a mutually beneficial relationship where nonprofits gain traffic and participants have fun while helping out those in need.

It is important to know what resources must be researched in order to discover whether gamification can help restore tranquility within highly needed nonprofits in the LA area. Will increasing efforts on research and implementations of gamification improve the levels of engagement and overall success in nonprofits located in Los Angeles? The importance of this particular question is focused on proving the immense power that gamification can have on any organization or business. The world is in a huge crisis and everyone can use a helping hand. However, it can be tough to generate generous donations and consistent engagement throughout rough times. As a result, gamification creates a small escape into a world of fun, game-like features that can motivate people to participate and give back to the community a lot more.

The main findings support the hypothesis that gamification has a hidden power that can drive up success for almost any company, more specifically for this study, nonprofits. Research proves that using gamification techniques increase competition and cooperation which can be an incredibly useful tactic for businesses around the world (Morschheuser, 2019). Competition and cooperation are of utmost importance because they are some of the most powerful drivers. If a business can find a way to get a bit of both out of a person, they can achieve many goals. This paper will potentially help individuals understand how exactly one can trigger competition and cooperation. Feeling fulfilled and accomplished is a personal goal that an average person prioritizes (Landers, 2015). This will be a theory to implement into the research because it will help readers understand which emotions

motivate people the most to donate. This theory definitely matters for research purposes because it is a key insight that will help determine what drives people in order to gain traffic and overall engagement with nonProfits in LA.

In order to strengthen gamification studies, nonprofits must stay up-to-date on current trends and future opportunities in order to maximize their chances of success. This research paper is an opportunity for businesses to learn more about creative ways to engage employees, clients and potential donors. Every tip and fact given throughout this paper is solely for the purpose of increasing success for businesses. Although the research is primarily focused on nonProfits, the concept of gamification can be easily put into any business around the globe.

**Keywords:** [Gamification, nonProfits, Social Media, Engagement, Social Behavior]



## 1. Introduction

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Do you remember the undeniable excitement that you could not contain as a child when the teacher said you were going to play a game? There was something about the rush of competition that fueled you unlike anything else. George Bernard Shaw once said, “We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing”<sup>1</sup>. This quote encompasses the goal of gamification. The implementation of these game structures can transport you back to the good old days in hopes of achieving higher engagement and donation rates.

### 1.1 Background

Gamification continues to be a growing concept that has caught the attention of many corporations. Whether it’s global industries, universities, or smaller groups, incorporating the concept of game-like features to achieve an overall goal appears to be quite effective. This research paper comes across a multitude of evidence and research that will help explain and show you how gamification can impact an organization. This research will magnify nonprofits across Los Angeles due to the fact that it has been one of the most negatively impacted sectors due to the global pandemic. Although this specific research will be focused on the nonprofit sector, the concept of gamification can be adapted by almost any organization. The usefulness of this idea is that it can be implemented on a global scale or in a relatively small business and still maintain the same function.

Nonprofit organizations are not funded by the government which means that they rely heavily on donations. This means that if the global pandemic continues to affect the US economy, it will heavily impact nonprofits. Nonprofits matter now more than ever due to the predicted increase of deaths and suicides (Barna, 2020). Research shows that deaths and suicide can increase over time because the lack of resources and opportunities can lead people to depression and anxiety, which can then lead to higher deaths. To avoid this, it is crucial for nonprofits to continue functioning properly so that they can help maintain people on their feet. If gamification can help improve the performance of these nonprofit organizations, imagine what it could also do for businesses around the world.

To have a clearer understanding of why nonprofits should matter to us, it is important to dive deeper into how much they impact communities. As mentioned before, nonprofits rely mostly on donors given that they do not receive government funding. Unfortunately, donations decreased significantly due to the global outbreak of Covid-19. Since Covid-19 is still new and quite unknown, a lot of research has been allocated towards it, but it has been quite difficult to collect information according to many research sites. The National Council of Nonprofits has been one of the many organizations to focus on the

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<sup>1</sup> (2020, October 3). Brainy Quotes. <https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/george-bernard-shaw-quotes>

impacts of Covid-19 across the United States (Nonprofits, 2020)<sup>2</sup>. For research purposes, the research targets specifically Los Angeles, California. The biggest problem that most nonprofits face is that many donors have paused their funding. This affects nonprofits because most of them have people depending on them for essential services and resources. They find it disappointing to be limited with resources and opportunities seeing the vast amount of need across Los Angeles, especially when it comes to hunger and homelessness (Nonprofits, 2020).

The idea throughout this research paper is to discover helpful gamification alternatives for nonprofits in order to help them reach their full potential once again. The California Independent Sector shows that there are 144,728 nonprofits registered in California, nearly 20,000 of those being found in Los Angeles (State, 2020)<sup>3</sup>. This is simply the number for one of many cities, so imagine the immense impact a potential promising solution can have on a global scale.

It is no secret that technology has slowly taken over the world and continues to open doors. A small part of the research will be focused on the impact gamification in technology can have on these nonprofits. To be able to show that these technological advancements can prove useful along with gamification, a study was done with 3D virtual environments. Research shows that the implementation of gamification showed that it was efficient when it came to rules, goals, problem solving and feedback for each stage of the activity providing motivational means for innovation (Ionica, 2015). This study helps take a better look at the game-like features that can be applied to nonprofit organizations. In their research, they discovered that adding rules, goals, problem solving and feedback were very effective in terms of increasing engagement, which is one of the main goals.

## **1.2 Thesis Objectives**

Although the overarching goal is to help nonprofits, the idea is that this research paper can easily be implemented by almost any organization or company. Research proves that gamification helps improve the following three core marketing concepts: engagement, brand loyalty and brand awareness (Lucassen, 2014). These core concepts align perfectly with the vision and goals for nonprofits in LA. Engagement is the main short-term goal because it is necessary to boost donations in order to achieve the goal of providing as many essential resources as possible. However, brand loyalty and brand awareness are the long-term goals because this is what keeps nonprofits on their feet. If potential and existing donors continue actively engaging with the gamified strategies, they become loyal supporters. As a result, the need to continue collecting donations from one-time donors becomes less of a need and more of a bonus.

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<sup>2</sup> (2020, October 3). Council of Nonprofits. <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofits-and-coronavirus-covid-19#data>

<sup>3</sup> (2020, October 5). California Independent Sector. <https://independentsector.org/resource/state-profile-cali/>

Another key point is integrated marketing communications (IMC). IMC focuses on delivering clear messages and clearly communicating through various promotional tools that reinforce one another in order to achieve a goal (Lake, 2019). IMC is made up of various interchangeable pillars, such as public relations, business and advertising. The concept of IMC can be useful when determining how to implement gamified tactics and strategies. IMC highlights the growth of marketing channels which one can use to proactively reach key performance indicators (KPI). The benefit of IMC strategies is that it compiles a cohesive plan that connects across platforms to achieve a common goal.

Before diving deeper into the research, it is important to highlight what the reader should expect from this paper. The reader will come across previous research that shows the promising success one can reach when implementing gamification tips and strategies largely focused on nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles. This paper will also provide different tactics and strategies across many social media platforms that can be implemented in hopes of increasing engagement. This paper will draw attention to specific nonprofit organizations in the Los Angeles area so that the reader can become aware of the current need in hopes of continuing to spread awareness.

Even though the projected outcome is that gamification will be beneficial to nonprofit organizations, one can observe potential negative impacts it can have. By analyzing the potential counter argument, one can better prepare by finding alternatives that can help solve those potential issues. To strengthen gamification studies, nonprofits must stay up-to-date on current trends and future opportunities in order to truly have the chance of reaching their full potential and to continue providing essential resources to communities in need in the LA area.

## 2. Literature Review

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Ever wonder how someone can magically get children to voluntarily increase their daily intake of healthy veggies? The solution is here and no, it is not actually magic. It is called gamification. Gamification is the utilization of game-like features so that one may engage users more effectively in hopes of achieving a desired outcome. In this case, the desired outcome is increasing donations and overall engagement with nonprofit organizations in the Los Angeles area after covid negatively impacted many under resourced communities. Throughout this research paper, the reader will be able to comprehend the impact gamification can have on almost anything, examples of the effectiveness of gamification and also highlight and breakdown the skepticism some may have.

Although the initial story about magically getting kids and young adults to voluntarily eat more veggies might have sounded impossible, it is actually a proven study. It is no secret that children and young adults normally find it less appealing to eat vegetables over the average adult. Research shows that after conducting an experiment, results showed that the average young adult, around age 23, was incentivized to increase their vegetable intake simply by applying a gamified app into their lives (Nour, 2018). Researchers discovered that visuals were the key motivators and what was most effective in order to achieve the goal. Additionally, participants shared that visual guides throughout social media encouraged them to become more self aware of their health and inclined them more towards a healthy lifestyle. This addresses the importance of visuals in gamification features. In order to maximize efficiency for potential donors or volunteers in nonprofits, it is important to know what truly motivates people.

### 2.1 Theoretical

#### 2.1.1 Expectancy Theory and Gamification

In order for nonprofits to develop a better understanding of the motivators behind gamification, it is important to guide them with suggestions and research about where and how gamification can be implemented. Many case studies and research support the hypothesis that gamification can elevate organizations and businesses (Love, 2016; Landers, 2015; Nour, 2018; Novian, 2018). It is no secret that social media has quickly become one of the most popular and effective methods of communication and advertising. Therefore, it is important to compile gamified techniques and strategies to increase accessibility, engagement and impact. Research shows that the proper mix of social media and gaming features can be very beneficial to an organization (Love, 2016).

The Expectancy Theory helps understand human motivations. The interesting thing about this theory is that it can be broken down into three separate motivational processes: expectancy, instrumentality and valence. Expectancy targets understanding how likely someone is to believe that actions will lead to a consequence. An example of this is that if someone donates more

money, they will gain more points on their gamified donation profile. Instrumentality focuses on the concept that consequence will lead to a reward. Following the previous example, if one gains more points on their profiles, they may experience a feeling of fulfillment and accomplishment. The last concept, valence, is the value one places on a reward. Feeling fulfilled and accomplished is a personal goal that someone can choose to prioritize (Landers, 2015). This theory can be helpful because it can break down the way people are motivated to donate or perform a desired action.

### **2.1.2 Situational Judgment Test**

Although it is crucial to focus attention on potential volunteers and donors for these nonprofit organizations, it is still important for the organizations to prioritize employees. Research shows that gamification can help attract prospective employees by following the situational judgment test (SJT) methodology (Georgiou, 2019). To be more specific, the test focuses on giving people gamified experiences of issues they could potentially face in the industry in order to judge them based on how well or how poorly they react to the simulations. The article focuses its attention on how prospective employees gain soft skills through gamification which can later benefit the nonprofits and future research. This is an opportunity for nonprofits because it allows them to find potential employees with similar visions and common goals. This means that nonprofits can effectively find people who are interested and willing to help the organization grow and succeed.

Even though this paper is meant to support the hypothesis that gamification has a positive and effective impact on nonprofits, it is also important to draw attention to some of the down sides. SJT has proven to be very effective in many studies. However, other research has also discovered limitations. In a recent study, researchers found that although the tests were accurate predictors of job performance, they lacked the ability to measure personality (Olaru, 2019). The personality traits that are difficult to measure are conscientiousness and dependability. It is important to highlight this point in order for organizations to be fully aware of the limitations in order to maximize efficiency and decrease possible errors. The study attempted to try and measure conscientiousness and dependability in hopes of increasing the accuracy of the test.

## **2.2 Empirical**

### **2.2.1 Gamification and Social Media / Online Engagement**

Gamification continues to be an important, new concept that comes with many promising opportunities for businesses. In the study done on vegetable intake, researchers found social media and mobile-gaming to be the most effective (Nour, 2018). These findings are useful because they are easily applicable into nonprofit organizations. One of the strategies that can potentially be implemented is a mobile application game where images and earning badges are the goals of the game.

Museums are known for their decrease in popularity throughout the years (Novian, 2018). Increasing tourism continues to be a goal for museums and many other tourist attractions. As a result, this research helps provide useful information, such as the importance of promotion on social media. The benefit of gamification is that it can accomplish a goal without drastically increasing overall cost. The helpful aspect of social media is the accessibility to so many updated features that allow companies to interact and gather information straight from their customers and potential clients. For example, museums can show exhibitions online in order to catch people's attention, create polls to discover what it is that people are interested in and scope out other creative marketing campaigns throughout social media.

Social media holds a tremendous amount of power over younger generations which means that it can be a powerful technique for businesses with a younger target audience. When it comes to nonprofits, social media will play a huge role in getting people to volunteer. It is crucial that people understand a cause before getting involved because they need to understand the nonprofits' values and mission. Therefore, social media allows nonprofits the opportunity to educate potential volunteers on the importance of their involvement and impact. Gamification has become an ongoing strategy for schools and universities when it comes to teaching. Research shows that gamified techniques are much more effective than the traditional learning approach (de-Marcos, 2014). This continues to prove that gamification can truly impact the lives of younger generations and adults in general. The overall assessment in the study showed that participants' attitudes were very positive which left researchers optimistic about the impact gamification and social media can have on education and businesses.

The concept of gamification has been so revolutionary that even governmental services have started implementing it in order to increase online engagement. A study conducted focused on methods to improve online engagement for individuals who require basic legal assistance (Kimbrow, 2016). The researchers narrowed their attention primarily on the American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services. Research showed that the implementation of gamification led to gaining traffic on the page and increased overall engagement. Yet another example that continues to represent the success of gamification.

### ***2.2.2 Gamification in the Mobile and Social Era***

Cell phone applications have become one of the most useful services around the world. A perfect example of this is a popular navigation app called "Waze". The app implemented gamification in order to gain a larger audience. In order to increase engagement, the app creators made sure to gamify the activity of going places (The, 2015). The reason that this app stood out more than the traditional navigation apps was the fact that it incorporated fun, creative game-like features where drivers could warn other people where cops were hiding or if there was a lot of traffic so that they could avoid getting stuck.

“Waze” has gone above and beyond with the implementation of gamification because they have found so many ways to maintain their app at the top. One of the newest features is advertisements. Every so often, app users are given free drinks or snacks from nearby locations in order to help those businesses gain more customers (The, 2015). Research like this shows the innovative ways in which gamification can heavily influence businesses and organizations.

Piggy-backing off of social media and online engagement, it is important to analyze what it is that social networking can really do for individuals. Research has proven that social behavior is heavily influenced by social platforms (Patel, 2017). Therefore, it is a powerful tool that when used appropriately, can be incredibly effective. Social behavior represents the way one behavior can affect or influence others. This truly comes into play when it comes to social media and gamification because it means that by engaging or interesting one individual, they can influence other individuals or groups to want to do the same. An example of this is the rise of social media influencers. Therefore, if gamification can influence potential donors, volunteers, employees or pretty much anyone, imagine the ripple effect it can have among those individuals’ friends, family members or followers. The power of social media and gamification can continue to be a force to be reckoned with. Along with social behavior, organizational behavior is also an important topic when it comes to recruitment. Organizational behavior provides insight into the ways employees and participants behave and perform in the field (Mullins, 2014).

A group of researchers put together a case study where they tested the effectiveness of social incentive-based gamification strategies in order to see if it would encourage communities to partake in more physical activity (Patel, 2017). One of the most significant factors of this study that made it successful was the implementation of social incentives, such as peer support, accountability and collaboration. Sure enough, results were matching up with the study’s hypothesis. The implementation of game-like features into people’s everyday lives was encouraging them to be more physically active throughout the 12 weeks of the challenge. After the 12-week challenge, they were offered an additional 12-week follow-up period where they were allowed to continue increasing their physical activity and researchers were shocked to see how motivated participants were to continue with the challenge. This proves that not only do gamified techniques prove to be effective, but also sustainable. Another study that tracks physical activity also incorporated gamified strategies and tactics in order to achieve desired results and were just as successful as the previously mentioned case study (Slomksi, 2017). Both of these studies continue to show the effectiveness of gamification which shows promising results if implemented appropriately into nonprofit organizations or businesses.

The way data is collected and analyzed continues to be crucial because it is what allows organizations to determine goals and KPIs. As a result, it is important to find efficient methods that encourage people to participate when it comes to answering questions and surveys in order to have a better sense

of people's wants and needs. Recently, a surveying organization decided to conduct research in the gamification sector. In order to test different ways to increase engagement in their organization, they decided to create two types of surveys, traditional ones and then gamified surveys. The research proved once again that the gamified strategy was way more effective than the traditional method (Triantoro, 2020). The purpose of this research was to show individuals and other

Although the entire paper is compiled to show the reader why this research is yet to be thoroughly researched, the researcher believed that the above key factors of gamification are some of the biggest points of why this study matters. Social behavior is an important key to life and if gamification can influence the way the public behaves or reacts to an organization or business, this can be a game changer. Additionally, given that covid-19 has been a recent pandemic, there is still so much left to research and to discover. As a result, it is important to discover unique, effective methods to influence social behavior depending on the desired outcome.

### ***2.2.3 Negative Impacts of Covid-19***

The inspiration behind the topic of this research paper started after seeing the negative impacts that covid-19 had on the world, more specifically, under resourced communities. Los Angeles is known for its large numbers in homelessness and hunger (Abrams, 2020). As a result, this research was narrowed down to the nonprofit sector in the Los Angeles area, in hopes that the findings of this can help decrease the negative impact of covid-19 and increase the opportunities. The opportunity lies in the fact that gamification has proven to help gain more engagement, donations and volunteers. This can lead to more resources for underprivileged and underserved communities.

A study conducted soon after the pandemic struck the United States shows the various negative effects it had on the Los Angeles community (Abrams, 2020). From the get-go, most front-line workers who were expected to resume normal work hours were those who have some of the lowest incomes. Many of these front-line workers were required to continue showing up to work even though businesses were not meeting hygienic requirements. This put almost all front-line workers at the highest risk. Additionally, front line workers could not really afford the right precautions resources, such as masks, hand sanitizers and cleansing wipes. Due to having little access to these important resources, front line workers were some of the first to get infected and spread the virus.

Homelessness was already a major issue in the United States. However, after the economic crisis caused by the covid-19 global pandemic, the numbers of homeless people skyrocketed to alarming levels. Research shows that the already existing homeless community, "Skid Row", suffered immensely from increasing case numbers throughout Los Angeles. Given that most homeless people lack being safely housed or sanitary equipment, this became a huge fear for nonprofit organizations focused primarily on "Skid Row" (Abrams,



2020). Not only were “Skid Row” nonprofits heavily affected, but also other important systems around the LA area. Los Angeles was affected in so many ways. One of the biggest problems was inadequate prison systems. Given that many people come in and out of prisons, it is hard to manage a disease that may or may not be airborne and highly contagious.

To assess the impact of covid-19, researchers focused their study on poor housing conditions and were not very shocked to find out that living in poorer neighborhoods or in smaller homes meant higher rates of covid-19 (Ahmad, 2020). Researchers were not surprised to discover that low income housing faced higher risks of infection given that they lack space to isolate infected roommates or family members and did not have enough financial stability to afford the hygienic essentials. In order to try and gather the most accurate representation of the spread of covid-19 throughout poor housing conditions, researchers gathered data from various reliable sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the US Census Bureau and the John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (Ahmad, 2020). The overall risk and mortality rate were nearly a 50% higher risk than that of average or high-income homes.

Many nonprofit organizations are started in hopes of really making an impact or a difference in a community or with a specific group of people. In this particular case study, the nonprofits being researched are those whose goals align with providing resources and opportunities to under resourced, poorer communities throughout the global pandemic. A study focused on interpersonal and structural violence due to covid-19 shows that this pandemic has exposed the devastations that come along with living in a poor community with few resources (Samra, 2020). Poorer communities continue becoming more vulnerable due to social forces driving them away. Deindustrialization, rising levels of social inequality and wealth disparities, public-private sector services disinvestment, rise in underground economies and gentrification have been the leading social forces that have driven these under resourced neighborhoods to worse circumstances (Samra, 2020). Research shows that social inequality is toxic for communities, especially during a global pandemic when the economy is drastically suffering (Samra, 2020). Unemployment continues to increase at an alarming rate, and this becomes an even bigger issue to low-income communities because they have to provide more and more essential services and resources to help these families stay afloat. As a result, the importance of these nonprofit organizations today is bigger than ever. Finding creative and effective solutions for organizations reduces the desperation and fear that families have when they don’t know where their next meal will come from or if they will have enough money to cover their monthly expenses.

The reality is that although this research is zoomed in on Los Angeles primarily, covid-19 has taken the world by storm. If poverty is increasing and financial stability is hard to find in a big city that has thousands of nonprofits to reach out to for help, imagine how much more underprivileged countries are struggling. The opportunity that comes with this research paper is the simplicity of applying these methods to almost any business or organization.

An example of this global need is a research conducted in India. Child nutrition is one of the most crucial topics throughout all of India, which means that most programs found there are focused towards helping prevent starvation and malnutrition (Upadhyay, 2020). Covid-19 posed a threat to the status of children's nutrition because with a mandatory lockdown, many businesses were unable to proceed with regular working hours. Due to this lack of resources, many small communities had to come together to provide food for these kids. This is an example of what nonprofits in Los Angeles were facing when everything suddenly shut down and they were required to fulfill basic human needs without the normal amount of support they'd receive prior to covid-19.

In order to assess the reasons why nonprofit organizations are started, one must first understand what inspired the mission and values of the organization. Some researchers focused their studies predominantly on the Los Angeles nonprofit sector to discover what factors impacted nonprofits the most. Results demonstrated that nonprofits were heavily influenced by sociodemographic characteristics (Wo, 2018). Sociodemographic characteristics are made up of multiple factors, such as age, gender, education, ethnicity, income and many more. In other words, researchers found a pattern throughout Los Angeles. They discovered that most nonprofits were founded in areas with a heavy population of low-income families (Wo, 2018).

### **3. Methods**

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After gathering contextual evidence throughout the Literature Review, it is clear that there is an opportunity that can change the path of nonprofit organizations. Although there is substantial evidence that defends the introduction of gamification, it is important to outline how this paper will do so. Gamification has become a concept to look out for. As businesses or organizations learn more and more about it, the more accessible research becomes. However, a large part of gamification research does not specifically analyze the negative effects of covid-19 on nonprofits. The research is mostly guided towards education and businesses. As a result, this leaves a large blank space that this paper can fill. The overall purpose of this research paper is to find useful information and build gamified strategies that can be easily implemented into nonprofits in order to gain more volunteers and drive up donations in hopes of helping out underrepresented and under resourced communities in the LA area.

#### **3.1 Model**

Before diving deeper into what gamified strategies and tactics could be implemented, it is imperative to break down the model that will be followed. The purpose of this is to find ways to increase donations, volunteers and engagement with game-like features, such as badges, points and rewards. The variables that will be identified throughout the study are gamification, donations, volunteers and engagement. The expected cause, gamification, will be the independent variable, while the dependent variables are donations, volunteers and engagement. This model differs significantly from any research done before due to the recent impacts of covid-19 that started affecting the United States, Los Angeles more specifically, in early 2020. Due to covid-19 being a current issue, there is a lack of available research on gamification during a global pandemic and how it can be used to counteract the negative effects of it.

#### **3.2 Hypothesis**

After gathering valuable information and collecting data from various sources, the hypothesis is that the more gamified strategies are implemented into nonprofit organizations, the more it will motivate individuals to volunteer, donate and engage more with the organization. By incorporating points, badges, rewards and other incentives will motivate individuals to show up. Once they have shown up, the happiness and fulfillment they get from seeing the impact they have had on the community will ignite the desire to continue being part of the change. Another part of the hypothesis is that these gamified strategies and tactics will not only prove to be successful for organizations, but also useful for businesses and any other field that needs it. Some other examples are in education or parenting. Gamification can be implemented into nearly anything.

### **3.3 Research Setting**

#### **3.3.1 Research Process**

The journey throughout the second semester of 2020 has been far from easy. Every day brought so many new obstacles and it was rough at times to continue, but knowing the severe need for help throughout nonprofit organizations in LA motivated the research to push through in hopes that this research will be utilized properly by them. In order to further explain the results and potential usability of this research, it is important to first understand the thought process behind the research itself.

Although there were many limitations, the internet did play a major role in gathering primary research. To gain a better understanding of where the average donor or volunteer was at, a Google Doc Form titled “Gamification in Nonprofit Organizations” was created. The form contained the following description in order to make sure that participants were fully aware of what gamification was: ‘Thank you for taking the time to help me out! Before you get started, here’s a simple breakdown of what gamification is and how they plan to implement it in order to help nonprofits increase donations and engagement. Gamification is the implementation of game-like features, such as points, badges, rewards, in order to motivate participants to achieve a specific goal. Hope this was helpful!’ They were very mindful of creating a description that was easy to understand conceptually because it would affect the way they potentially responded to the rest of the questions. Additionally, they made sure to keep the survey brief in order to not scare off potential participants. They know how huge surveys can result in the researcher not completing it, whereas, short surveys are quick and don’t take up much time. Every question was created with a specific purpose, not simply to fill up space. In order for this research to be successful, they want to bring you guys with the researcher through her thought process, so let’s dive deep into every question.

Questions 1 and 2 are focused on gathering demographic information. The purpose of gathering participant’s ages and gender is to be able to form a primary and secondary target audience for nonprofits. Providing a potential target audience for the organizations is beneficial because it allows them to properly target the people they want to reach. Advertising can be efficient for organizations and businesses in general, but targeted advertising is known for being way more effective. If this research can show organizations what age groups should be targeted as volunteers and which ones as donors, it will be beneficial when it comes to allocating a budget for spreading awareness through advertising and marketing. Knowing facts like age and gender allows the marketer to select colors, themes or subjects that can appeal to a certain age group or gender in order to get their attention. Question 3 is specifically placed there in order to encourage participants to scroll up and read the description of gamification and in order for the researcher to gain a better understanding of whether the participants understand what gamification is or not. If the majority of participants respond that they understand, then their answers will be a lot more accurate than those who don’t really understand

the concept. Question 4 allows researchers to get a sense of who is interested in giving back to the community. The answers to this will guide marketers in the right direction when it comes to their target audience as well. Question 5 is harder to analyze because it is a scale question which asks participants to rate their likelihood of helping nonprofit organizations if fun, engaging games were incorporated. The hopes are that participants are highly motivated by the implementation of games, but if not, it will give researchers the opportunity to find more engaging gamified strategies that participants do find appealing.

Question 6 continues focused on the concept of gamification, more specifically, rewards. Historically, rewards have always been one of the greatest incentives for getting participants to perform the way you want them to. As a result, this is a potentially effective gamified strategy. In order to discover whether this would be effective or not, the survey will help guide people's perceptions of rewards. Although question 7 is a question, its purpose is also to inform participants that nonprofit organizations are not funded by the government. Some may find this as an obvious question, but others may be surprised to find this out. In general, it is an important statement to make in order for participants to realize the impact of their donations and participation.

Question 8 allows participants to select more than one answer. This question is geared towards grasping a better understanding of how participants feel after performing an act of service or an act of kindness. To maintain the question unbiased, there are even amounts of positive and negative emotions, such as fulfilled, happy, motivated, no difference, unmotivated, annoyed and unfulfilled. The purpose of this question is to hopefully support the previous research that talks about fulfillment and how it is a strong motivator when it comes to donating and volunteering. Question 9 ties in an important part of the research which is the effects of covid-19. This also allows researchers to see whether there is a shift from question 4. In question 4, they were simply asked if they are someone who wants to give back to the community. In question 9, one focuses attention to post-covid which means that if participants' answers change, it potentially can mean that they too have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The final question in the survey is focused on the way people want to give back if interested. It simply asks if they prefer to donate money or time or both. Again, with this individual information, one can better understand how to target certain age groups. Overall, every question has a functional purpose to try and prove the hypothesis or to find successful methods to improve engagement, donations and volunteers.

### **3.3.2 Research Limitations**

Given the fact that the world is currently in a terrible pandemic, it has been quite challenging to focus and put together a research plan. The original plan was to go out to the organizations in person to gather useful information straight from the source. Given the risks of covid-19 and the current restrictions imposed by the city of Los Angeles, the access to these facilities

has been limited. The researcher had the opportunity to contact one specific nonprofit called “The Rescue Mission” in LA that focuses on hunger and homelessness because she wanted to donate clothes. Her interactions with them were mostly over the phone and one was in person, but socially distanced. The day she was able to drop off the donations, she got the chance to speak with an employee who expressed the deep need for resources.

Collecting research in general can come with many limitations. However, throw in a global pandemic and the difficulty increases by a million. As mentioned before, nonprofit organizations have been dealing with a lot of growing needs throughout communities. As a result, it has been incredibly difficult to contact nonprofits and find available resources for this research paper. Trying to find someone willing to allocate time towards a research paper has been nearly impossible because their priorities lie within their communities that are in need. In order to find individuals willing to take part in this research, it was crucial to use as many resources as possible. The first attempt towards coming in contact with nonprofits was LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a useful platform for social networking. Through LinkedIn, it was a lot easier to find current employees in nonprofits, but it was extremely tough to get them to reply. Those who did reply were not very willing to partake in this research given that there is already too much on their plate during these tough times.

The second alternative to come into contact with potential interviewees was through personal networking. Given that she has personally volunteered and worked with multiple organizations across Los Angeles, she attempted to contact previous associates in order to see if they would lend her a helping hand. Unfortunately, most of the messages found no responses and the few who replied were also incredibly busy. Finding individuals who have volunteered or donated before to nonprofits in LA have been quite easy to find given that many of them are close friends whom she shares a passion to give back with.

### **3.3.3 Current Situation**

The current situation that this research paper addresses is the negative effects of covid-19 in LA communities and how nonprofit organizations can be provided with gamified strategies and tactics to help solve this issue. Although covid-19 has been around for almost a year now and there is much more research available on the topic, it also continues to be difficult to gather accurate data because it is such an unknown disease. Given that gamification has always been a concept that has caught her attention, she found covid-19 as a great research opportunity. Giving back to the community has always been a strong passion of hers. Therefore, when she had to come up with a research topic, she figured why not select one where she can create a business research proposal while also finding ways to help nonprofits. As mentioned previously, this paper is not focused towards businesses, but the idea is that the gamified strategies and tactics can be easily translated into almost anything, business, education and organizations. The strategy is suitable for the thesis because it opens many doors on ways to collect data.

Although gathering some primary research can be limiting because of covid-19, there is a high relevance of data collection methods throughout this paper because they're all focused on benefitting under resourced communities and helping organizations (and potentially businesses) increase their overall engagement.

### **3.4 Research Strategy**

#### **3.4.1 Type of Data**

The type of data one can collect can be endless. However, for the purpose of this research paper, secondary research, surveys and interviews will be the primary methods in which data will be collected. In order to test the model, the researcher will start by creating a quick, 10-question survey for hundreds of participants in order to gain a better understanding of their perception on everything regarding this thesis topic: gamification, nonprofit organizations, volunteering, donations and other important, useful details. The posed research question is whether or not the implementation of gamification can help increase engagement, donations and volunteers throughout nonprofit organizations across the Los Angeles area. Collecting this type of data will help gear people's interest and overall reactions to the concept of gamification. Discovering whether gamification motivates individuals to want to do something allows this research to show the power it can truly have on any organization, business or individual.

#### **3.4.2 Data Collection**

In order to make sure that the participants for the survey and interviews represent a diversity of demographics, the researcher will be extra careful when it comes to selecting them. She double checked every demographic aspect in order to make sure that there are people of different ages, gender, ethnicity, religion and so on. Geographically, she needed most of her participants to live in or near the Los Angeles area given that the research is mainly focused on LA. To gather participants, she started by creating a list of family, friends, coworkers, classmates, professors, previous employers, individuals whom she has previously volunteered with, nonprofit organizations I'm familiar with and social networking sites where she can find individuals that fit the necessary target audience for this research. As mentioned multiple times, covid-19 has altered almost everything one once knew. Instead of conducting interviews in person or physically visiting a nonprofit, everything became digital. Surveys are quite simple when it comes to the technological aspect of things because it is simply a link you forward to people. However, the interviews will be very challenging. For starters, it is easy for individuals to avoid phone calls or emails when they're working from home or very busy, so it has been difficult to come in contact with someone. Also, all interviewees are required to sign a consent form which makes it even more difficult to get someone to find the time to willingly go the extra mile to help her out. Conducting the interviews online can also be a challenge because sometimes technology does not cooperate, and it fails when one most needs it. Hopefully, this all goes as planned and things eventually work out.

### **3.4.3 Unit of Analysis**

The interesting part about this research project is that instead of selecting a specific profiled participant, one is sort of working in the opposite direction. The researcher wants to start off with an incredibly diverse group of individuals in order to narrow down who the primary and secondary target audiences will be. The goal is to get participants of all ages over the age of 18. The reason the researcher went with individuals over 18 is because minors come along with permission slips and a lot of added paperwork that is not really necessary at the moment. In a perfect world, one would have a proper representation of every age, gender and ethnicity. However, realistically she is aware that sometimes it is hard to do that. It was definitely hard to contact and gather a diverse group given the circumstances of this pandemic, but it was intended to be as diverse as possible. As expected, a large number of participants are around her age or a bit older. As a result, she was intentional about finding people a lot older than them and with different backgrounds and ethnicities. Additionally, it was made a point to find people with different majors, careers and experience in order to try and represent as many different people as possible. It was truly believed that she was incredibly intentional with her overall participants and she hoped that with them, it would be able to prove the hypothesis and help out nonprofit organizations.

### **3.4.4 Data Analysis**

Analyzing the collected data is probably the most important and valuable strategy that can either prove the hypothesis or destroy it. The magic that lies within data is that it can be interpreted in so many different ways. For example, if the researcher sees a repetitive response between people of the same gender or age, it can potentially be an opportunity to target them in a certain way that fits their similar responses. Similar responses usually mean that they think alike or have overlapping beliefs. As a result, the likelihood of them being motivated or persuaded by the same incentive is very high.

The first task will be to analyze the survey results because that will help the researcher select her participants for the interviews. Google Forms already provides an automatic data analyzer in the Responses tab. It breaks down the participant's responses into percentages and groups them. Not only does it provide the percentages, but also it allows you to view every individual submission, that way one can find individual trends and not just overall ones. This is a perfect way to filter the data online and it guarantees very accurate results.

The second task will be to evaluate and analyze the interviews. This will be a lot more challenging than the Google Forms survey due to the fact that it is a lot more subjective. The survey itself is objective because participants only have a few options to choose from, whereas in an interview, the open-ended questions have endless answer opportunities. The overall goal while analyzing the interviews is to see if there is any overlap between the interviews and the survey. Also, to go more in depth as to why individuals feel



a certain way about something. The limitation that comes with surveys is that the individual cannot really express why they selected an answer or explain if they were torn between two options. An interview allows the interviewer the ability to really question the participant's thought process in order to understand where they're coming from a little better.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1 Data Sources**

Although most of the research is secondary data, the researcher made sure to prioritize primary data as well. For the purpose of this section, she will focus on the primary data which was made up of a Google Forms survey and a series of interviews. When it comes to the survey itself, it clearly took a cross-sectional data approach, meaning that she observed many subjects at the same point in time. For the survey and interviews, it took a panel data approach because she decided to focus on multiple people at multiple times. The survey will be the first documentation of people's perspectives and understanding of the topic. Then, the interview will follow up with selected participants who completed the survey to ask more in depth questions. This allows the interviewer to also explain the questions in case they were misinterpreted by the participants.

After compiling a list of 10 questions for the survey, the researcher quickly formed a copy & paste strategy in order to save time while still efficiently asking individuals to part-take in the research. The researcher was able to gather a little over 250 responses which is very useful because the more participants there are, the more accurate the responses can be.

Gathering the interviewees was a bit more complicated given the covid-19 restrictions in California. Everyone is highly recommended to stay at home and work from home, so it has become incredibly difficult to contact anyone willing to donate their free time to a grad student. Two of the survey participants took part in the interview process. Interviewee 1 and 2 both allowed the researcher the chance to do a more in-depth interview about the thesis topic. Both interviews were conducted through zoom, recorded and transcribed. The researcher faced some small issues trying to find a way to get the interviewees to digitally sign the consent form, but eventually all things worked out.

#### **3.5.2 Unit of Observation**

The original goal was to gather a large pool of diverse participants and thankfully, that goal was achieved. Although her fears came true and the large majority were around her age group, there was still a lot of diversity in every other aspect, such as gender, ethnicity, educational level, career and so on. This really allowed the researcher to grasp a good understanding of what the majority of Los Angeles residents experience and what motivates them to take action. The age ranges of participants were 18-24, 25-45, 46-60 and 60+. The researcher did catch an error. The age 25 was accidentally placed twice in the survey so that may have skewed the data a little bit, but it should

have been too bad. More than half of participants were female, the rest were made up of males and individuals who identify as non-binary. Given that many of these individuals are known personally, the researcher is aware that many of them have incredibly diverse ethnicities. Some of the participants are Mexican, African American, Chinese, Japanese, Lebanese, Turkish, Bulgarian, Tunisian, Indian and a few other ethnicities. Their background knowledge, experiences and careers also really vary. There are professors, middle school/high school teachers, lawyers, athletes, students, stay-at-home parents, marketers, business owners and so many others. The wide diversity found within the participants was exceptional and very useful for research purposes.

When it came to the interviews, both participants were qualified and intelligent. Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 are both Pepperdine University alumnus. They both majored in Integrated Marketing Communications, so they had a sense of what gamification is. Both interviewees were female because that was the largest suggested demographic for potential nonprofits. They are between the ages of 23 and 25 which is also a target demographic. Both interviewees have previously worked for nonprofits in Los Angeles and have also spent many years volunteering.

### **3.5.3 Data Analysis**

The methods chosen were thoughtfully and intentionally selected. For the primary research, the researcher chose to use qualitative data, both surveys and interviews. The survey method really allowed the researcher to grasp the overall consensus and perspectives on gamification and nonprofit organizations. The interview method allowed her to go more in depth by discussing their responses to the survey and asking additional questions throughout the interview. Each method served its own purpose. The survey method's purpose was to gain an understanding of what people knew about gamification, what motivated them to donate or volunteer and to see if the possibility of implementing game-like features would encourage or motivate them to participate more. It also allowed to gather data on trends that could be useful for marketers so that they know what audience to target. The interview method's purpose was to incorporate open-ended questions where the researcher could potentially learn and discover ideas that had not already occurred to me. In other words, she may be pursuing a specific hypothesis in her mind so most of her questions can be towards that and she could possibly be missing out on a topic opportunity that can be brought up or suggested to her by the interviewee. This allows the interviewee to truly express and explain their decision-making process and for her to better understand how the average person perceives gamification. She is quite pleased with the methods she selected for this research project.

### **3.5.4 Limitations**

The researcher previously listed multiple limitations that were imposed by the global pandemic, covid-19, but there were a few other limitations that came along with the outcomes of data collection. One of the biggest limitations was

the lack of observations. She would have loved the chance to explore the nonprofit organizations myself to see the work they're currently doing. Getting to physically visit the locations would have allowed her to get so much more data because she would have written about what she saw, not simply what I'm told. Being someone who constantly volunteers with various nonprofits in LA, the researcher is aware that some of their services aren't executed as well as they say they are. As a result, she finds it hard to take employee's answers into consideration because she believes the answers may not be super honest or accurate. She mentioned earlier that she realized a small error within the survey. While entering the age ranges for people to select for their age, she accidentally wrote 18-25 and 25-45. This could potentially skew the data based on how many 25-years old took the survey. The researcher does not think it would affect it too much, but it is something she needed to make a note of. Aside from these and the previously listed covid-19 limitations, the researcher believed this was the best she could do given the circumstances currently being faced.

## 4. Findings

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Although one may think that the hard work is done because all of the data is officially collected, that is not the case. Describing and analyzing the data is the most crucial part. In doing this, we can discover trends that can either support or oppose the original hypothesis. Additionally, it can potentially open new doors for further research. The key to a useful research project is thoroughly analyzing your collected data in order to provide readers with the most succinct, accurate information. In this case, the research was focused on determining whether or not implementing gamified strategies and tactics in nonprofit organizations would help or hinder with increasing engagement, donations and volunteers. After months of collecting primary and secondary data, here are the analyzed results. The emerging themes discovered throughout the survey and interviews will be explained more in depth in the conclusion.

### 4.1 Trends

#### 4.1.1 Survey Trends

After conducting a long process of Google Form surveys, research supported the hypothesis that implementing gamification could benefit nonprofit organizations by bettering their engagement, donations and volunteers. The survey focused on a few things. First, it was geared towards capturing the demographics of participants to be able to project a primary and secondary target audience for nonprofits. Second, to get an understanding of how well people know the concept of gamification and to educate those who had never heard the term. Third, to discover what motivates the general public to give back to their community. Lastly, research whether or not people are driven by rewards or gamified tactics. The benefit of Google Forms is that it automatically breaks down the collected data in order for the researcher to easily analyze it. Additionally, it also allows the research to not only see the large percentages of responses, but also observe every individual response in order to discover potential trends.

Before diving into the individual responses, one must first analyze the responses as a whole. The majority of participants, nearly 88%, were between the ages of 18 and 45. More than half of the participants were female, a little over 60%, while the remaining participants were mostly male and a few who identify as non-binary. Before asking the participants to take the survey, they were provided a short introduction to the concept of gamification. The introduction's purpose was to help the participants understand how the researcher was planning to implement gamification. Thankfully, the description seemed to be quite simple and clear given that nearly 97% of the survey participants found it helpful. Over 98% of the participants expressed wanting to give back to the community. More than 55% of the participants marked an 8-10 on the likelihood of participating in helping nonprofit organizations if they added fun, engaging games. Around 29% voted a 5-7 which is still quite optimistic and an opportunity for nonprofits to convince them to participate. Nearly 67% of participants admitted to

becoming incentivized by the idea of a reward. They claimed that offering a reward would encourage them to donate and volunteer more. Surprisingly, over 95% of participants marked down that they were aware the nonprofits were not funded by the government. To assess the general public's emotions after having volunteered or donated in the past, they were asked to mark all the emotions that applied to them. Nearly 70% responded fulfilled, 77% happy, 55% motivated, 2.8% no difference and 0.4% annoyed. Out of 250 participants, not a single one selected unmotivated or unfulfilled. To tie in an important factor of the study, participants were asked if they would be interested in helping individuals who were negatively affected by covid-19. Almost 95% of them said yes. Lastly, in order to grasp a good understanding of whether individuals prefer to donate money or donate time or both, they were asked which way they preferred. 47.6% said both, 32% said donate time and 20.4% answered donate money. All of these numbers will serve a big purpose when being thoroughly analyzed for the conclusion and recommendations.

There were 250 participants for the survey which kept the research busy analyzing every response individually. As mentioned before, the great thing about Google Forms is that it allows the researcher individual responses that were submitted. The trends that were discovered in the individual responses was that young participants were more willing to donate time, while older participants were willing to donate money.

#### **4.1.2 Interview Trends**

The advantage of interviewing participants is that the interviewer has the chance to ask follow-up questions and dig deep into the interviewees brain to understand their thought process. The limitations of the surveys are that participants are expected to select an answer without being able to express their opinion. Perhaps they had some ideas or were torn between options. In this case, the researcher never discovers what people were truly thinking.

In Interviewee 1's interview, a lot of great information was collected. As someone who had a lot of previous experience working with and volunteering at nonprofit organizations in LA, she was very insightful about what motivates her now and what gamified strategies could potentially motivate her to do more in her community. A great example that she mentioned was adding a rewards system to nonprofits, similar to those at Starbucks and Chick-fil-A. The idea is that the rewards system would allow individuals the chance to rack up points or rewards to incentivize clients to return and continue being clients. This could be very useful for nonprofits because it could motivate individuals to return more often in order to gain more points or rewards. Additionally, she mentioned the importance of communication between her and the nonprofits she volunteers at. She said she really appreciates receiving some sort of feedback that shows the impact she has made on the organization. Another good insight about gamification is that she mentioned that although individual games would motivate her, it wouldn't be long before she became unmotivated. She suggested that group events and games would

be more appealing because they include the concept of competition which drives many individuals as well.

Similar to Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2 offered such great perspectives on nonprofit organizations and gamification. Although she wasn't as familiar with gamification as Interviewee 1, she is currently employed by a nonprofit so she understands the value behind them. A great piece of information and advice that she offered was turning donating and volunteering as part of her vocation. She commented on how nonprofits touched her heart and as a result, that has inspired her to continue volunteering. She mentioned that sense of fulfillment that the researcher mentioned throughout her research. Interviewee 2 affirmed the idea that seeing her direct impact on individuals in communities and building a relationship with them motivated her to want to continue coming back and doing more.

#### **4.1.3 Secondary Research Trends**

Both the survey and interviews left many open doors of opportunity for future research. As a result, the researcher proceeded to further research the trends discovered throughout this time. As mentioned below, the research allowed the researcher to compile a primary and secondary target audience for the nonprofits. In order to continue backing up the concept that these suggested target audiences could be effective, the researcher found scholarly articles and data that supports the hypothesis. Primary research has shown that age affects the methods in which individuals give back to their communities. An ongoing trend that was noticed across all primary research is that younger participants were more willing to donate time, while older participants were more willing to donate money.

Adolescents' habits of donations have been heavily influenced by their levels of perceptions according to a study conducted by researchers (Spaans, 2020). The behavioral index of giving was assessed through this study and researchers discovered that many individuals were very willing to donate their gift money as a donation. However, they weren't as mentally stimulated about collecting donations when it came to collect for someone else. On the other hand, when the donations were for them, they would be way more engaged and interested. This research showed that there were significant differences between participants in the subjective value of prosocial outcomes.

A significant concept to potentially further research is that of the Virtue Identity Measure according to researchers (Taylor-Collins, 2019). This is quite a new concept among researchers, but it is primarily created to assess an individual's virtue identity. For this specific study, individuals were observed to assess their habits of social action. The social actions that were thoroughly studied were volunteering, campaigning and fundraising. The results showed that adolescents in the United Kingdom were more likely to participate in social activities than any other generation. Therefore, this is sufficient evidence to persuade nonprofits in LA to apply the same method across the city in hopes that adolescents there will also be motivated to participate and give back.

Another potentially useful research method is that of predicting giving trends among adolescents. Research shows that adolescents are more likely to give more to friends and family than they are to classmates and strangers (van de Groep, 2020). The study measured the amount of social rewards that adolescents allocated for the following groups of people: friends, classmates and strangers. To no surprise, they allocated the most to friends, then classmates and lastly strangers. The concept of donating and volunteering at nonprofits is that you are essentially helping out strangers for the common good of society. As a result, this may backfire on nonprofits. However, one can easily turn this potential threat into an opportunity. A great advantage one can take from this research is using existing donors and volunteers and encouraging them to invite their friends and family to join. This should then encourage their friends and family to be more inclined to help because although they're helping a stranger, they feel more familiar because they were recommended by someone they trust.

The uniqueness of this research is that a large chunk of it is focused on the effects of covid-19 in Los Angeles. Given that covid-19 has been around for almost a year, there has since been a lot of new research on the topic. To narrow down the research, a study found that adolescents found themselves with limited opportunities after being impacted by the pandemic (van de Groep, 2020). The study targeted adolescents' mood, empathy and prosocial behavior. The study began by comparing adolescents' moods and empathy three weeks before covid-19 and throughout it. The results showed that most adolescents prioritized their families, friends, frontline workers and individuals with covid-19 or a poor immune system. When it came to unfamiliar peers, they weren't as concerned for them. Again, this can be an opportunity for nonprofits. If they express the degree of urgency for those affected by covid-19, they may get a higher level of engagement from adolescents.

After analyzing adolescents, it was time to also see behavioral patterns of older generations. Research shows that there are multiple reasons as to why older adults donate more money than the average adolescent (Mortality, 2019). For starters, over time, people have the chance to have a larger savings account. Therefore, they have more financial stability to donate money whereas adolescents are barely starting adulthood and find it hard to give the little money they have. Given that they still want to give back, they donate their time instead. Additionally, an older person's increasing proximity to life's end encourages them to want to give back. They are aware that once they're gone from Earth, they won't be taking their money with them so they start to think of younger generations and how they can help. This is what also results in an increase in donations.

## **4.2 Suggested Target Audiences**

The primary and secondary target audience can be interchangeable depending on the goal of the nonprofit organization. Although both methods benefit the organization, one must determine whether the organization's goal is to increase donations or volunteers. So, although the categories below are

listed as primary and secondary, they are easily interchangeable, but for the sake of this research paper, we will put one in primary and one in secondary.

#### ***4.2.1 Primary Target Audience***

If the nonprofit organization's main goal is to increase engagement and volunteers, the survey results show that a great primary audience is individuals between the ages of 18 and 24. Participants between these ages answered that they were more willing to donate their time, and some said both time and money. However, the majority of participants voted mostly for donating time. To be more specific, females are probably a better demographic for nonprofits because they were more willing to give back to their community than men. Many of the 18-24-year-old females who took the survey all said they would be more inclined to donate or volunteer if they were rewarded.

#### ***4.2.2 Secondary Target Audience***

The suggested secondary target audience is an older demographic. More specifically, adults around the ages of 45-60+. Like the younger generation, they too seem to be very inclined towards wanting to give back to communities affected by covid-19. However, most potential donors between these ages weren't very interested in volunteering. Most of these older people were more interested in donating money instead of their time. The research has opened doors to discover whether or not their age is why there is such a sudden change. Most of the older people willing to donate were men so that would be a good demographic to target.



## **5. Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations**

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### **5.1 Conclusions**

After hours of research and analyzing the collected data, the researcher can conclude that the hypothesis continues to be highly supported. The initial hypothesis was that the implementation of gamification into nonprofit organizations would help increase engagement, donations and volunteers after the negative effects of the global pandemic, covid-19. This stands true according to the primary and secondary research.

Some of the secondary research that was conducted showed that adding gamified strategies and tactics highly motivated individuals to perform specific tasks. A good takeaway from individual interviews was that both individuals found it very interesting and appealing to incorporate gamified strategies into almost any and every task in their lives. One of the interviewees mentioned that she was incredibly task-driven and the idea of adding a point system to existing nonprofit organizations she volunteers at would highly motivate her to want to continue going more and more.

Additionally, self-fulfillment played an important role throughout this research. Research, survey results and the interview data all proved that a huge incentive for individuals is a sense of fulfillment after giving back and helping a community or person who truly needs it. Research showed that fulfillment was an emotion that many individuals chose to prioritize (Landers, 2015). IT is no secret that emotions can be a very powerful tool. This is important to keep in mind given the fact that it can easily be implemented when targeting potential donors and volunteers. If the advertiser can hook people's attention and emotions, the likelihood of these individuals wanting to partake in the nonprofit organizations can be a lot higher.

As a result, given all of the information throughout this research paper, it is safe to say that gamification can only help, not hinder the potential growth in engagement, donations and volunteers for nonprofit organizations across LA and potentially across the world. The beauty about the concept of gamification is that across the board, it checks almost every need a company may have. It incentivizes individuals to want to perform more or better in hopes of being rewarded with points, badges, gifts, etc.

### **5.2 Limitations**

Given that this world has been struck by devastation and hardships due to the global pandemic that is still affecting individuals every day, limitations and problems were faced often throughout the research. The researchers' initial issue was the accessibility to reliable, scholarly articles throughout the university's online library. Luckily, she still had access to her previous university's online databases and journal which proved to be incredibly helpful. The following limitation was that covid-19 was incredibly recent. Therefore, there weren't too many credible sources or existing research that could guide the researcher in a specific direction. This limitation was slowly diminished by the growing resources that are becoming more available as

months go by. Compared to the amount of information available about covid-19 in March, today's articles are much more in depth and useful. Research becomes more and more valuable over time because it allows us to see trends and changes over a period of time. This has been proven throughout the research. Some of the most helpful resources were found in the most recent months and completely altered the path the researcher followed during her research.

The most complicated step throughout the research process was definitely trying to find individuals to interview. Everyone has been through such a rough, chaotic year, so extra time is more of a luxury that not many people have. Therefore, it was very difficult for the researcher to have access to credible individuals who would be able to provide valuable information about this study. To the researcher's good luck, two survey participants had previous experience with nonprofit organizations and were willing to donate their time. Initially, the researcher attempted to contact nonprofit organizations she had previously volunteered with, but no luck. Then, she moved onto LinkedIn where she attempted to contact multiple organizations across LA. Although some did reply, every single individual had so much going on that they did not have the time to answer some questions. This in itself proves the need nonprofits currently have during covid-19. Every single employee the researcher contacted said they were understaffed and under resourced due to the increasing demands in the community after the negative impacts of covid-19. This served as research as well.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

To sum up all of the collected data, the researcher has compiled a list of recommendations for nonprofit organizations and potentially any organization or business to have access to implement them. Given that so much primary and secondary data was gathered, there are an infinite number of recommendations possible. However, the goal of the researcher was to provide nonprofits with the utmost useful, current information in hopes of achieving a specific goal, increasing engagement, donations and volunteers.

#### **5.3.1 Gamified Strategies**

Throughout this entire research process, the focus has been around the concept of gamification. However, now it is time to actually implement it into nonprofit organizations to clearly explain and show how to execute it. The first recommendation offered is to create an application/website that donors and volunteers can easily access. In this application/website, they will be able to gain badges, points and rewards after completing volunteer hours or donating certain amounts of money or items. Additionally, they will have access to a chat where they can communicate with one another. Allowing participants to communicate builds a community aspect to donating and volunteering. If individuals start to feel like they belong to the community, they might be more likely to participate more. The reader can access samples of the application/website in the Appendix. Appendix D allows the reader an inside look to what some app pages can look like. For example, having a QR code

available to scan in and out while volunteering can encourage volunteers to want to stay longer in order to gain more points. The second image below Appendix D can be a photo booth where participants and volunteers can take a break and capture some fun memories together. The images can easily be found through the app, making the images easily accessible. Lastly, having fun challenges, such as “This or That” can help participants find commonality amongst each other to create new friendships.

### **5.3.2 Advertising**

A potential game changer for nonprofit organizations is the implementation of advertising. Although advertising costs money, it does spread awareness and can potentially drive in more donors and volunteers. The reason this is a key recommendation is that both interviewees mentioned discovering nonprofits through social media advertisements. Given that social media has become a powerful tool for businesses, it can also help nonprofits get more donations and volunteers. A key point is to incorporate gamification to the ads in order to make them unique and to encourage more people to want to interact with them. For visual examples, the reader can access them in the Appendix. Appendix C shows some examples of interactive advertisements. The first image would be a poster or sign where individuals can peel off a piece of paper to reveal a question. Similarly, the second image offers individuals coffee in exchange for their time. This exchange benefits the nonprofits while allowing other businesses, such as coffee shops, the opportunity to advertise through them.

### **5.3.3 Thinking Forward**

The arguments presented in this research paper can go beyond nonprofit organizations, they can open up doors for so many businesses on a global scale. Given that the research is not limited to a specific area or organization, the concept of gamification can really be implemented anywhere. This is an opportunity for future researchers to try and implement it into small businesses, educational institutions or their everyday lives. Whether the reader is trying to increase awareness and profits or trying to get their kids to eat more vegetables, gamification can be the next most powerful tool to accomplish any given goal. By incorporating any of the gamified recommendations listed above, any organization should be able to reach their desired outcomes.

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## Appendices

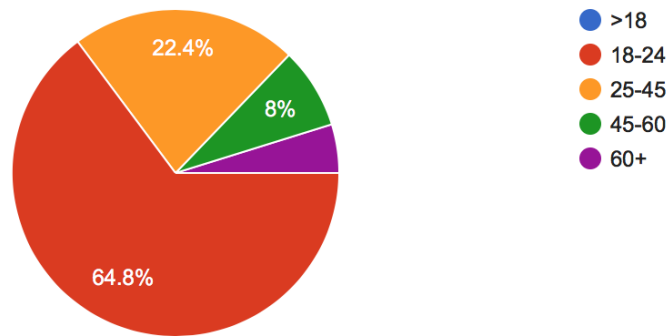
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### Appendix A: Survey Results

#### Question 1

How old are you?

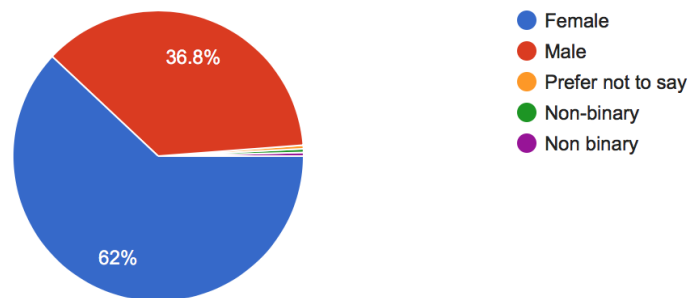
250 responses



#### Question 2

What gender do you identify as?

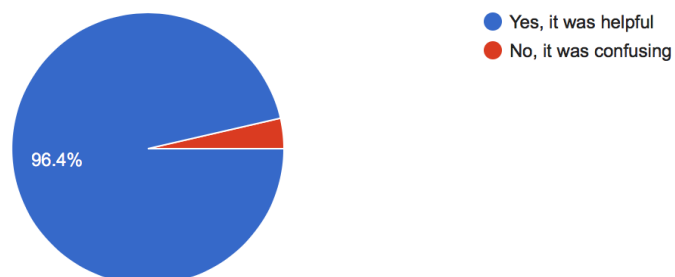
250 responses



#### Question 3

After reading the short paragraph above, do you feel like you understand what gamification is?

250 responses

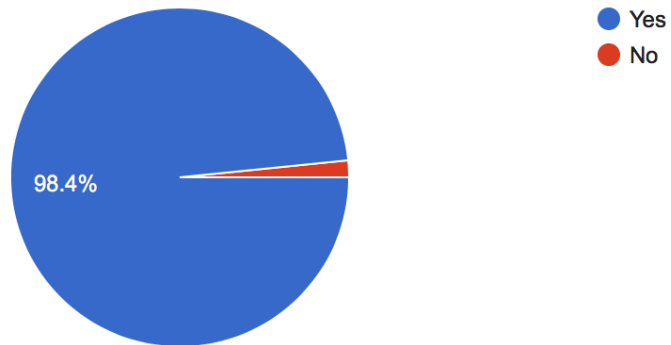




### Question 4

Are you someone who wants to give back to the community?

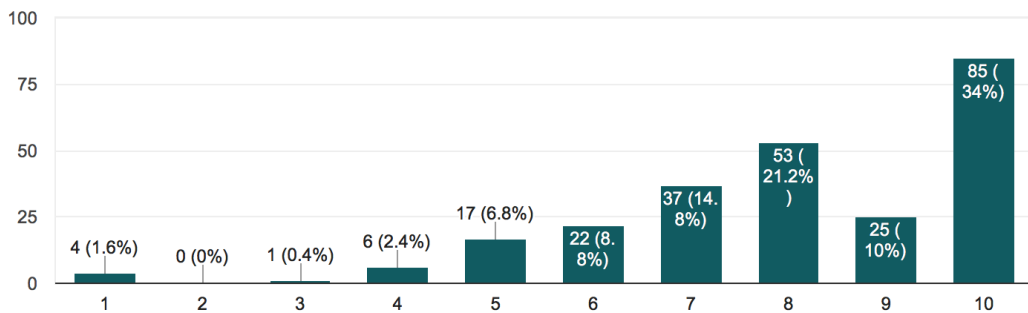
250 responses



### Question 5

On a scale from 1-10, how likely are you to participate in helping nonprofit organizations if they added fun, engaging games?

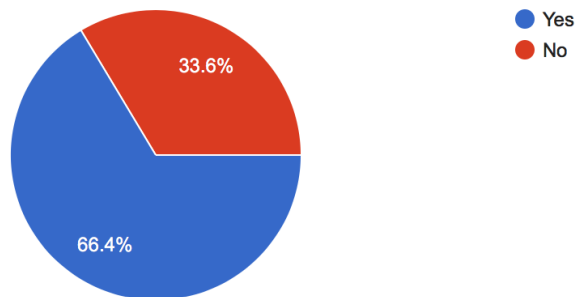
250 responses



### Question 6

Would you be more inclined to help volunteer or donate if you knew you would be rewarded?

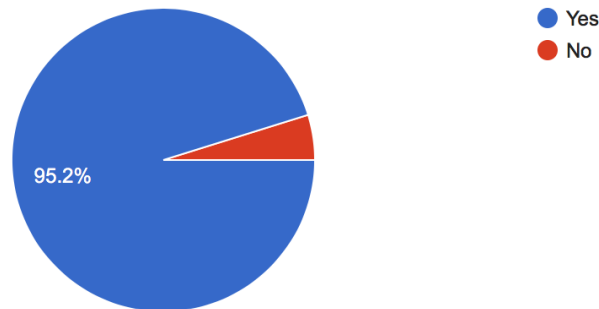
250 responses



### Question 7

Did you know that nonprofit organizations are not funded by the government so they rely mostly on donors/donations?

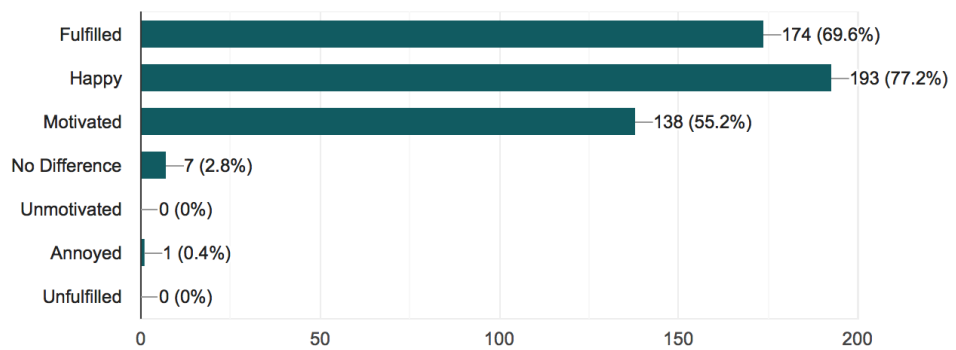
250 responses



### Question 8

If you have volunteered or donated before, how did you feel after? (select ALL that apply)

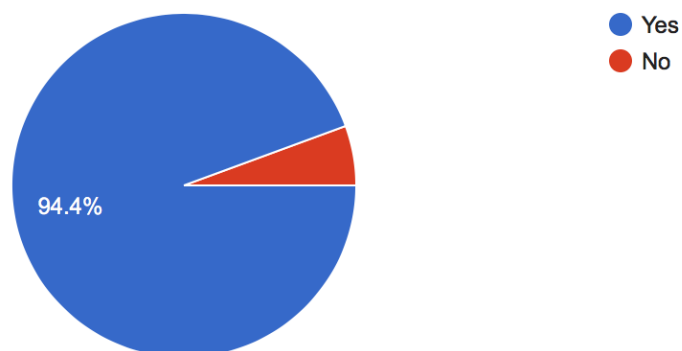
250 responses



### Question 9

Would you want to help individuals who were affected negatively by covid-19?

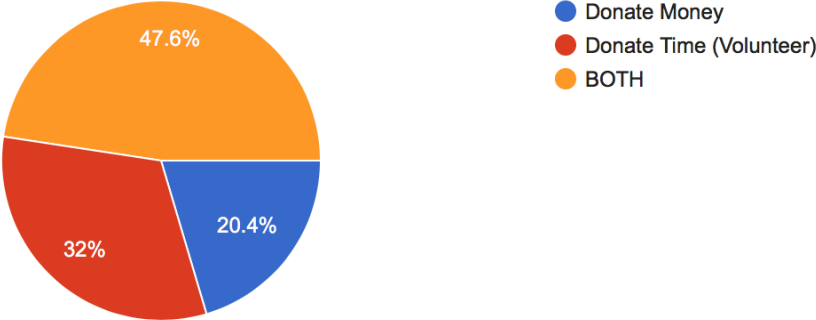
250 responses



### Question 10

Do you prefer to donate money or donate time (volunteer)?

250 responses



## Appendix B: Interview Results

### **Link for Caroline Herron Interview:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXalfbcjYgg>

### **Signed Consent Form for Caroline Herron:**



Last updated: May 2020

#### **Appendix - Consent form**

##### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I agree to participate in the research project entitled "Gamification Techniques Implemented to Increase Engagement and Donations in the nonProfit sector in Los Angeles to Counteract the Negative Effects of the Global Pandemic, Covid-19" undertaken by the researcher: Alondra Gomez-Leyva

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have agreed to participate in this study.
- I have been informed of and understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice.
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.
- Details relating to anonymity and confidentiality have been explained and I understand these.
- I have had the opportunity to ask any questions.
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature:  Date: 12/7/2020  
Caroline Herron (Dec 7, 2020 19:53 EST)

**Geneva Business School**  
W [gbsge.com](http://gbsge.com) | E [geneva@gbsge.com](mailto:geneva@gbsge.com)



## ***Interview Transcript for Caroline Herron:***

**Alondra:** hi can you hear me fine yes can you hear me okay

**Caroline:** yes i can hear you great

**Alondra:** hi caroline

**Lauren:** hi how are you alondra

**Alondra:** i'm doing really good okay so thank you so much for allowing me to interview you today and i received your consent form signed so thank you very much for that that was very helpful so just to give you a little brief summary of what it is that i'm doing i'm working on my thesis for my master's currently and i decided to focus my thesis on implementing gamification strategies into nonprofit organizations due to the fact that a lot of them were really really heavily and negatively impacted because of covid19 and so the hopes of implementing gamification is that they'll get more engagement donations and volunteers so i hope that your answers are very useful to me and that you can learn something today as well so let's get started any questions you have before or

**Caroline:** no i'm ready

**Alondra:** okay awesome okay so how often do you interact with non-profit organizations in los angeles

**Caroline:** i would say if i had to like base it off of yearly um probably two to three times a year i used to work for a non-profit actually when i was in college at pepperdine so when i was working there i was obviously interacting with them a lot i think i want to be interacting more with los angeles nonprofits i think i just need to do more research on it too because there are so many out

there and so many ways to like give back and so many different organizations that help so many different causes but yeah i would say probably two to three times a year

**Alondra:** that's great so what non-profit organizations have you donated to or volunteered at before if you know the names or just what the organization was about

**Caroline:** yeah i used to work for the west side food bank it was actually an internship and i was volunteer based because i didn't get paid for it but i did get school credit so yeah that westside food bank and it served the westside of los angeles and basically what they did was they provided food to food pantries so the food pantries are the ones that give the food to the people who are in need or the people who need food go and they buy it from there i'm sorry they pick it up from there and so on and so forth but the westside food bank what they do is they distribute it to those food pantries and then they also collect monetary donations so that they can buy food and also food donations as well so they can provide that also to the food pantries so that was the one that i really worked with most and then i guess you can count pepperdine too as a non-profit i mean it is so it's a non-profit university and yeah basically with that i i would just i had little on campus jobs like tutoring or what else did i do there and i think yeah i think it was mostly tutoring with pepperdine but i definitely give back to pepperdine as often as i can so especially when like the students call and are asking for donations i always love to give back and i particularly like to give back to the abroad program that i did which was in lausanne switzerland

**Alondra:** that's so cool i actually used to volunteer for the first one he talked about when i was in high school so that's pretty cool

**Caroline:** yeah gosh that was cool

**Alondra:** okay so why did you choose to donate or volunteer those specific organizations

**Caroline:** so i got connected to the west side food bank through one of my professors and i just really loved the people i fell in love with the cause and just the people the way they they ran the organization and how much passion and compassion that they had for people and those in need and truly they were just some of the most giving and kind people to work with so i'm lucky that i ended up helping out with them and basically why i choose pepperdine is because i have a personal connection and that's that i went to school there and i really learned a lot from pepperdine i've been given a lot of opportunities through pepperdine university so i of course want to give back and i want to make sure that the students that are to come in the future years and future classes that graduate from there have the same opportunities and continue to have the same level of education that i did from pepperdine and yes the west side food bank i just continue to work with them and give back to them as often as i can just because i love them and i think that they have really great work ethic and what they do providing food is such a necessity and so without them like a lot of people would go unfed and i think they just make a very very big impact in los angeles

**Alondra:** that's awesome you kind of answered this question already but maybe for any other non-profits that you've maybe volunteered or donated at how do you normally find out about these organizations is it like online word of mouth social media

**Caroline:** i definitely find out through word of mouth i think that's the most powerful way that i find out because i always love to give back to things especially that have helped my friends or people that i know so i think another way would be social media i haven't done too much through it but definitely like through facebook fundraisers and stuff like that i find out about a lot of nonprofits and stuff like that i i'm a sucker for giving back to all things animals so i recently gave back to somebody who was posting asking for donations for their dog but you know if part of those donations also went to the humane society of i believe it was chicago or maybe with cincinnati ohio but yeah definitely social media has impacted me a little bit and it helped me guide me to which nonprofits to give back to

**Alondra:** oh i love that so i mean clearly you've donated and volunteered so what would you say motivates you to do so

**Caroline:** i think it's wonderful to be able to give back i think the feeling you get after you've given back whether it's money or time it's really rewarding and i think it's great to see like the difference that you make and sometimes you don't see that difference automatically but you know it's there and definitely thinking about all the people that you're impacting and helping or maybe it's not people maybe it's animals but you know i just think overall it's just a very rewarding feeling to know that you've done something to help and like gone out of your way and like it's easy to get caught up in our day-to-day and not think about how lucky we are to have the things we do like food or clothes and stuff like that so to be able to know that i'm helping and giving somebody

something that you know is not just like a guarantee every day is really impactful does that answer the question no

**Alondra:** definitely yeah and i 100 agree so the next question is geared more towards the concept of gamification so i'm just curious if you are aware of what it is or have heard about it before

**Caroline:** yes i've definitely heard about it we discussed it a little bit in one of my undergrad classes at pepperdine so know a little bit about it

**Alondra:** okay awesome that's great so this is more of a personal question so would you say that you enjoy playing games just in life in general and would you say that it could potentially motivate you to perform everyday tasks

**Caroline:** i definitely enjoy playing games i love a good board game i'm not super big on video games but i do like to play games and sports and stuff i think it definitely would motivate me to engage in things if there was a gaming aspect to whatever the the task or event might be i would definitely be more inclined because i'm very competitive so anything with competition i'm there for it

**Alondra:** awesome and would you say that when it came to like playing games

are you more of a someone who likes to play individually or in a group

**Caroline:** i definitely like to play in a group so i played volleyball when i was when i was in high school and i think it was a lot more fun to to share in the wins and even the losses with the group so yeah definitely more of a team player than just to play it individually i think when i play individually i get a little bit not discouraged but yeah it's just not as fun and not as motivated to keep up with it if it's just me so yeah definitely more involved in things that are with the team

**Alondra:** no that makes sense so do you think that potentially incorporating game like features like points badges rewards would maybe encourage you to want to donate or volunteer more often

**Caroline:** i think so i think whenever i get something back from an organization as recognition of my donations i always think that's really great like even if it's like a thank you note or like a calendar for whatever it is i think that's really cool and then for the gaming aspect yeah i definitely think it would be cool also just to help me keep track of like how much i've given to an organization and like gotten to a certain level i mean we see all this stuff in like everything like with our starbucks app chick-fil-a like those are the things i have like you've gotten this many stars this many you're on the red level or whatever it is so i think having that with non-profits would be really fun and really cool especially if you're like we're competing with your friends to see who is going to raise more money or be more giving you know i think that would be really fun and cool

**Alondra:** i love that example with like chick-fil-a and starbucks hadn't thought of that so i love that would you say that covid19 has affected the way that you interact with nonprofits

**Caroline:** yeah i definitely would say it has i mean i would love to volunteer more and that's something that like after college that isn't as accessible maybe i think at pepperdine we were always doing things there was always you know postings of people who needed help like volunteers stuff like that and i have a little bit of that in the workplace the opportunities to volunteer and such but i think it's always so rewarding and fun when you go in person

when you help with a run walk or whatever it might be like a fundraiser in person it's always really fun because you get to meet other people where volunteers or other people work at the organization or even some of the people that the organization is helping so i think because of like covid 19 and everything that's happening this year i think it definitely has affected my ability to give back to nonprofits or at least give my time i feel like i've done a pretty good job of still donating and now that i have like a job a stable job that allows me to like have a stable income it's easier for me to give money of course like when we're going through college and we have like a lot of other expenses if you're paying for your own housing your tuition and books and stuff like that or you just don't have a job because you're in class full-time i think definitely it's nice to be able to have that sense of disposable income that i can use and give back to different organizations that have either helped me or are helping people and causes that i'm very passionate about

**Alondra:** i absolutely agree and then just final question would you say that you prefer donating your time or money or both and why

**Caroline:** oh that's a really good question i think i really like both because i think money is more of that instant gratification i guess you could say you could just be like wow like i gave twenty dollars that's amazing like you can really put a price on that and obviously it's money so i think that's something that's really cool for me to be like wow like i earned that money but i was also like you know motivated enough to give that money back to somebody who might need it more so i really do enjoy like giving money and i feel like that helps a lot and i think it's really hard for non-profits sometimes to get people to donate especially like you know they have like their big donors and stuff like that who always give back a hundred thousand dollars or whatever it is but to get like an individual a new person to donate i think that is like very very impactful and very important for nonprofits but i also think that volunteering like i said is the most like gratifying thing because you can see it right then and then it's like your hard work and like or you're making connection with the people that need the help or whatever you're doing you're making connections with these people that work the volunteers are the people that actually are working for the organization and it kind of motivates me to even come back or like dig deeper and go further with that organization so yeah i would say it's kind of split i really enjoy doing both and i'm grateful and that i've been able to do both within my lifetime and i really am going to continue to do both i love non-profits and i think they provide such an essential service to people everywhere so it's really great to be able to give back in any way shape or form and it's always great to see how grateful the organizations are and the people are for just even if you give five dollars or even a dollar like people are so grateful for whatever you can give and so that's yeah both ways i love giving my time and my money

**Alondra:** that was super super helpful all your answers were great so thank you so much caroline for your time and i really really appreciate it i don't know if you have any other questions or if you're all good

**Caroline:** no i'm all good thank you so much for being so attentive and it was great to have this conversation with you

**Alondra:** likewise well thank you so much and i hope you have a great rest of your evening

**Caroline:** thank you too bye bye



**Link for Lauren Chong Moore Interview:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Avbl9jKQkg>

**Signed Consent Form for Lauren Chong Moore:**



Last updated: May 2020

**Appendix - Consent form**

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I agree to participate in the research project entitled "Gamification Techniques Implemented to Increase Engagement and Donations in the nonProfit sector in Los Angeles to Counteract the Negative Effects of the Global Pandemic, Covid-19" undertaken by the researcher: Alondra Gomez-Leyva

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have agreed to participate in this study.
- I have been informed of and understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice.
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.
- Details relating to anonymity and confidentiality have been explained and I understand these.
- I have had the opportunity to ask any questions.
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 12/07/20 \_\_\_\_\_



**Interview Transcript for Lauren Chong Moore:**

**Alondra:** Hi.

**Lauren:** Hello. Can you hear me okay

**Alondra:** Yes. Can you hear me okay?

**Lauren:** Yes

**Alondra:** Okay, great! Hi lauren! How are you?

**Lauren:** I'm doing really well. How are you?

**Alondra:** I'm doing great. Thank you so much for taking the time to allow me to interview you for my thesis. I just got your signature on the consent form so thank you so much that was very helpful. So i'm just gonna give you a quick little brief summary of what I'm doing here, so I'm writing a thesis in my masters and I'm focusing it on implementing gamification into non-profit organizations in the hopes that it's going to increase engagement, donations and overall volunteers after the effects of covid, specifically in the Los Angeles area. Because it's been impacted very very heavily with what happened with

covid and the pandemic so i hope that you're able to help me by answering a few questions. I hope that kind of makes sense and if you're not sure what gamification is i'll maybe clarify as we go through the questions.

**Lauren:** That was a great overview. That's perfect.

**Alondra:** Okay awesome! Okay i'm gonna get started. i'm gonna be reading the questions off so if my eyes are off it's because they're there so let's start with how often do you interact with nonprofit organizations in los angeles?

**Lauren:** I would say on a daily basis because I'm an employee for a non-profit. i've been the program manager at radcamp, stands for rising above disabilities camp, for over three years now so i work with people with special needs and i do that on a daily basis but outside of my time as an employee i also volunteer for them as well for those you know overtime hours so to speak so i do that quite a few times a year when we're able to be on site at the camps.

**Alondra:** That's awesome. Okay so the next question is what nonprofit organizations have you donated to or volunteered at before? I know you mentioned rad camp but i'm not sure if there's maybe any others?

**Lauren:** yeah i've donated to black lives matter los angeles and the quinn murphy foundation that's based out of san diego and then in terms of my time i've been involved with rad camp since high school so i'm very attached to that um to that organization in particular but i also participated in something called project serve while i was a student at pepperdine university so i went to chicago for about a week and every day we interacted with a different non-profit there i don't know the names off the top of my head but there was an elderly home one day we did a food bank another day so that was really cool to see you know the variety of services that are available to the different populations

**Alondra:** no that's fine even if you don't have exact names that's still very helpful so just to kind of follow up with that question why do you choose to donate or volunteer at these organizations?

**Lauren:** i feel like it's a different reason for each cause um like specifically for rad camp i just like really believe in the power of inclusion and having been a volunteer in high school and being able to establish a really personal relationship and friendship with someone with special needs it i don't know just like really touched me and kind of left an imprint on my heart so it's

something that is easy for me to return to on a yearly basis because i want to see those friends that i've made those connections with and i that probably could be said for the other organizations too just like i believe in the importance and power of inclusion like it's super important to make sure that society reflects the population, yeah

**Alondra:** yeah i love that and again to just kind of follow up on those questions

if you have worked with these non-profit organizations how did you find out about them was it online word of mouth social media

**Lauren:** for blm los angeles one of my mentors from pepperdine is heavily involved with them so i saw it mostly on her social media and hearing her experiences with them and then quinn murphy foundation our family that lives in san diego that's their non-profit so it's very personal to them so we of course want to support that and radcamp i heard about in high school they had a recruiter come get a presentation and they got me from that moment on

**Alondra:** that's awesome uh okay so if you have, which clearly you have, donated or volunteered before what motivated you to do so

**Lauren:** I think I mean it's kind of my philosophy for work because I try to make work like a vocation versus you know just like a career. it's really important to give back and i just like grew up with those kind of values and i feel like pepperdine also helped like reinforce that too it's like you need to think outside of yourself outside of your daily schedule and really look around you and be in touch with the people around you so i feel like there are daily reminders as we're out and about in the world that we need to connect and give back

**Alondra:** yeah i like that. so to move on to the concept of gamification are you aware of what gamification is?

**Lauren:** i wasn't before your overview but now i think i understand that it's just like incorporating games into nonprofits just so you can increase you said like donations and participation

**Alondra:** yes exactly! so it sounds like a very complicated concept but it's fairly easy to understand so it's just implementing game like features like points badges rewards sort of to incentivize participants to get them to like i said in this case donate more to volunteer more so i guess a follow-up question is do you enjoy playing games and would you say they motivate you to perform everyday tasks?

**Lauren:** i don't play games often but when i do i really enjoy it and what was the second part of that question

**Alondra:** it was would you say they would or could motivate you to perform everyday tasks

**Lauren:** yes i think so i'm very you know to-do lists task oriented so i feel like with especially with like a point system that would motivate me for sure

**Alondra:** and then do you prefer like playing games or doing activities as such individually or in groups

**Lauren:** i feel like it depends on what the task is i'm open to both but it's always more fun with a group

**Alondra:** and then would incorporating these game-like features that i mentioned earlier would they to donating or volunteering would they encourage you to want to do it more often

**Lauren:** i think so especially if you have like for instance the point system keeps coming to mind if i had like a little card from the nonprofit with a point system it's like that visual daily reminder so i feel like that would always bring the non-profit just like incorporate it into my daily life a little bit more and if you're starting to go back and volunteer more and more get to know more people then that also will encourage you to kind of get in on the game side if you have teams and things like that so i think would be really positive

**Alondra:** yeah i love that idea and then also as i mentioned my study is also a fact like in studying the effects of covid so would you say that covid 19 has affected the way that you interact with nonprofits

**Lauren:** absolutely. as an employee for rad i mean we host in-person overnight summer camps and we haven't been able to do that so we've been transitioning everything to online services which has been difficult because a lot of the people who have special needs already are receiving so much programming over zoom so there's like a bit of a fatigue with all of that but we have been able to do that and we can't wait to be back in person that's ultimately the goal for everybody because that's that's the experience i feel like that's what really hooks volunteers is that in person connection we're all doing the best we can over zoom but of those summer camps in person are probably what makes the most significant impact

**Alondra:** no i absolutely agree and then just the last question is do you prefer donating your time to volunteer or money or both and if so why

**Lauren:** i think both for the ones where i can be there in person that of course is super fulfilling it kind of fills my cup and keeps me going so i definitely need to have that part of my life but then for other organizations where i can't physically be there like our families organization in san diego it feels nice to know that i can support in another way and if i found an organization somewhere else in the united states i'd still be able to be in touch with them and support what they're doing and help further their mission so i think both

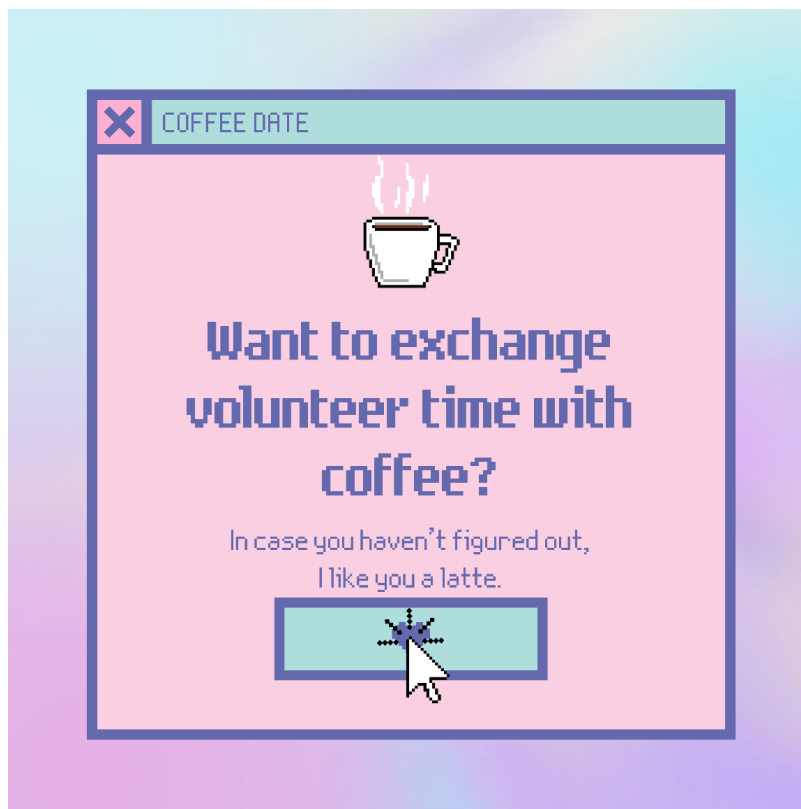
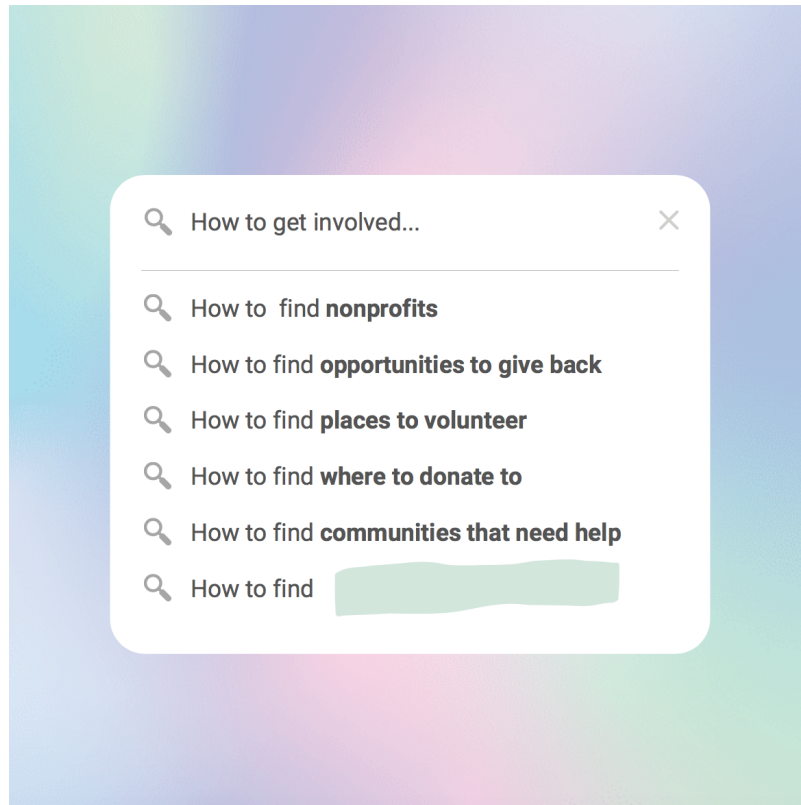
**Alondra:** wow no thank you so much this definitely has opened so many new doors and things that i can research so thank you so much for taking the time to sign a consent form and to allow me to ask you a few questions i don't know if you have any other questions for me or if we're all set

**Lauren:** thank you so much for your time i really enjoyed participating

**Alondra:** thank you lauren i hope you have a great rest of your day  
thank you

**Lauren:** you too bye bye

## Appendix C: Advertisement Designs



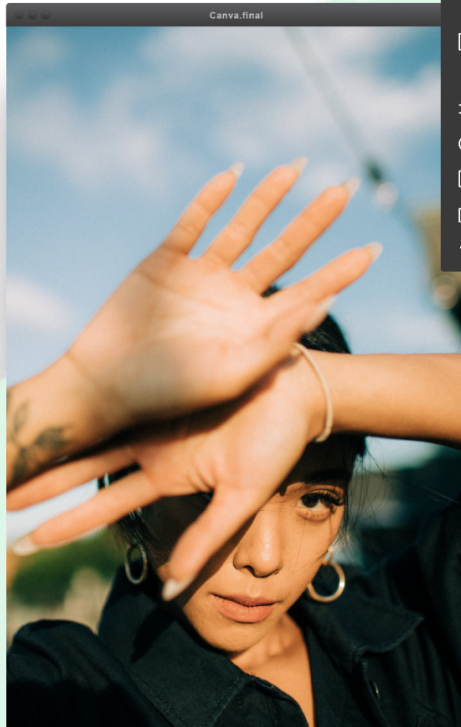
## Appendix D: App Designs



# GIVING BACK

## NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

GIVE BACK TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS



# THIS OR THAT

## Which one will you choose?

Donate	Volunteer
Nonprofit	Government
Play Alone	Play with Friends
Points	Rewards
Weekdays	Weekend
Los Angeles	New York