VENTURE PHILANTHROPISTS: AN EXPLORATION OF GIFTING TO
EDUCATION
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Venture Philanthropists: An Exploration of Gifting to Education
Dissertation directed by Dr. Corinne Harmon

This ethnography explored venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group, in the context of gifting to education, within the time period 2009-2012. Twenty-six venture philanthropists, contributing over $100,000 or more during the time period, participated in the study. *The Gift of Education* served as the conceptual framework. Themes identified as inspiring gifting were commitment, family, and making a difference. Themes identified as influencing gifting were outcomes, economics, and humanitarian outreach. Themes identified as informing gifting were networks, reporting, and affiliations. Subject responses demonstrate partial adherence to the conceptual framework components. Findings also indicate the existence of unnamed funding structures that pool education gifting, in order to target education reform.

*Keywords:* education, education reform, venture philanthropy, The Gift of Education, NVivo, ethnography
DEDICATION

To Eric – never break team.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest appreciation goes to the colleagues, friends, and family who have supported my education.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary” (King, 1981, p. 34).

Philanthropy was, is, and always will be, about money. The trifecta of money, power, and privilege contributed to the accumulation of wealth for early philanthropists, and continues to the present day (Curti, 1957; Frumkin, 2006).

“Philanthropy occupies a complex and conflicted position in American society” (Frumkin, 2006, p. 1). Wealthy donors, by virtue of their vast resources, can affect change quickly. However, the impact of their philanthropic gifts, and the intention of those gifts, may not be simpatico. Dr. Martin Luther King’s quote (1981) foreshadowed this contentious role of philanthropy in society.

Society has traditionally placed a high value on giving back to society (Dickinson, 2008). Giving back to society was originally termed charity, or the “acts of generosity that transfer resources voluntarily from one party, the donor, to another party, the recipient” (Frumkin, 2006, p. 4). Charity has roots as far back as Christianity and the church (Curti, 1957). One example of an individual charitable act that began within the church was the offering of individual gifts during the church service. The offering ritual institutionalized over time, and across all faiths, demonstrated the value placed on charitable giving (Hermanowicz & Morgan, 1999).

Over time, philanthropy emerged as a way for individuals to use their wealth for specific purposes toward the greater social good (Dickinson, 2008; Fox, 1992; Lagemann,
For example, charitable gifts inspired the building of colleges and universities (Thelin, 2003).

Philanthropists are individuals who have given generously of their wealth to social causes, and the term philanthropy describes this giving process (Abate, Jewell, & McLean, 2001). Famous philanthropists have included Brad Pitt, known for his philanthropic work building eco-friendly homes for Hurricane Katrina victims. Michael J. Fox worked to find a cure for Parkinson’s disease, through the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Mother Theresa, known for the enrollment of the world in causes of humanity, became iconic as a result of her philanthropic efforts (“Power of Giving,” 2012).

Large philanthropic foundations, created by successful companies and/or individuals (Dickinson, 2008), also contributed to the forward progression of the United States social agenda. For example, The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, founded in 1930 and at one time the largest foundation in the United States, focused grant making on helping people help themselves (“W. K. Kellogg Foundation,” 2012). William Hewlett, one of the founders of Hewlett-Packard, along with his wife, created the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. This foundation remained true to the founding principles of making grants to solve social and environmental problems (“The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation,” 2012). Corporations remained charitable leaders, as reflected in Table 1.
Table 1

2011 Top 10 Corporate Charitable Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Cash Given</th>
<th>Products Given</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Pretax Profits Given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>$342,350,438</td>
<td>$616,591,031</td>
<td>$958,941,469</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldman Sachs Group</td>
<td>$337,077,886</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$337,077,886</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exxon Mobil Corporation</td>
<td>$232,658,037</td>
<td>$2,007,943</td>
<td>$234,665,980</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells Fargo &amp; Company</td>
<td>$213,481,849</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$213,481,849</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chevron Corporation</td>
<td>$209,280,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$209,280,000</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of America</td>
<td>$208,425,075</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$208,425,075</td>
<td>CBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPMorgan Chase &amp; Company</td>
<td>$202,961,667</td>
<td>$70,473,269</td>
<td>$273,434,936</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Corporation</td>
<td>$146,119,380</td>
<td>$63,155,311</td>
<td>$209,274,691</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Electric Company</td>
<td>$144,100,000</td>
<td>$1,900,000</td>
<td>$146,000,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citigroup</td>
<td>$121,910,534</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$121,910,534</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Philanthropy has been integral to the growth of education over the 20th century (Berman, 1983; Lagemann, 1992). J. D. Rockefeller (1909) was one of the first philanthropists to call on the wealthy to support education, “If the people can be educated to help themselves, we strike at the root of many evils of the world” (p. 113). Rockefeller formed the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913 (“Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012). Since its inception, the Rockefeller Foundation has made it a priority to fund education (“Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012). Examples of institutions that benefited from the Rockefeller Foundation include Rockefeller University, John Hopkins University, American School of Classic Studies,
Columbia University, Harvard University, and Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (“Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012).

Another industrialist of this era was Andrew Carnegie, who made his fortune in the steel industry (Kurland, 1973). Andrew Carnegie formed the Carnegie Corporation in 1911 “to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding” (“Carnegie Corporation of New York,” 2012) as a fulfillment of his philosophy to work, save money, and give money away (Fox, 1992). During that time, Carnegie gave his corporation over $125 million, noted as the largest single philanthropic individual gift to date (“Carnegie Corporation of New York,” 2012).

Carnegie, like Rockefeller, believed the main consideration of philanthropy was to help people help themselves (Edge, 2004). The Carnegie Corporation prioritized the funding of education as one method to help people help themselves. As an example, the Carnegie Corporation has funded over 2,509 Carnegie libraries (“Carnegie Corporation of New York,” 2012).

The evolution of the term charitable giving morphed into philanthropic giving slowly over time (Frumkin, 2006). Philanthropy transformed, yet again, with the emergence of venture philanthropy in the early 1990s (Saltman, 2009). Venture philanthropy was originally coined in Europe over a decade ago (John, 2006) to describe the application of entrepreneurial concepts to philanthropic policy making (Pepin, 2005). Venture philanthropy focused on the relationship between the funder and the recipient (Frumkin, 2003).
Over the past 10 years, studies in philanthropy and education demonstrated the rising popularity of venture philanthropy (Frumkin, 2003; Hess, 2012; Saltman, 2009, 2010). Venture philanthropy in education utilized a business model of metaphors, logic, and language (Saltman, 2010) to reframe the relationship between grant maker and grantee to one of “investor and an investee” (Frumkin, 2006, p. 281). The term venture philanthropist depicts the investor. For this study, a venture philanthropist was defined as a philanthropist that employed a corporate model of gifting. For example, donations were considered investments, grant reporting considered a return on investment report, and the impact of giving interpreted as social returns (Saltman, 2010).

Studies in venture philanthropy education have illustrated Dr. Martin Luther King’s warning about philanthropy. “Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary,” (King, 1981, p. 34). While there are sparse studies published on venture philanthropy in education, (Saltman, 2011), the literature demonstrated two distinct frames of reference on the topic. One frame of reference was that venture philanthropy supported educational entrepreneurship (Smith & Petersen, 2006) and necessary education reform (Hess, 2005b). The other perspective framed venture philanthropy in education as the corporatization of education that was destroying the public education system (Kovacs, 2011; Saltman, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

Dr. Kenneth Saltman’s (2010) work in *The Gift of Education: Public Education and Venture Philanthropy* (Saltman, 2010) served as the conceptual framework for this study.
To date, Saltman’s work (2010) has not served as a formal conceptual framework for a published study (Saltman, 2012, personal communication). The conceptual framework narrative and figures relied solely on Saltman’s (2010) *The Gift of Education*. For the purpose of this study, Saltman’s conceptual framework was termed Gift of Education (Saltman, 2010, p. 26).

Saltman’s thesis remained consistent throughout his research (Giroux & Saltman, 2009; Saltman, 2000, 2009, 2011). Saltman posited that venture philanthropists have a conscious and purposeful agenda “to create an educational market” (Saltman, 2010, p. 34). The thesis was straightforward.

What is largely represented in both mass media and educational policy literature as generosity, care, and goodwill is nothing short of a coordinated effort to destroy public education. That is, what appears as generosity and goodwill is in reality its diametrical opposite: the destruction of universal provision for public education, the foundation for deepening educational inequality rather than an attempt to remedy it, the production of a system primarily designed to benefit investors at the expense of the poorest citizens, and a worsening of the racial and gendered inequality that currently structures public schooling (Saltman, 2010, p. 34).

Saltman (2010) placed the responsibility of this “coordinated effort to destroy public education” (p. 34) directly on the venture philanthropist. Venture philanthropists created a “circuit of privatization – whereby the most crucial aspects of the phenomenon redistribute educational governance and financial control” (Saltman, 2010, p. 36).
Saltman cited both venture *philanthropies*, and venture *philanthropists* as purposefully using corporatization to rework public education and the framing of issues, practices, and policies (Saltman, 2010).

The rationale for the choice of Saltman’s (2010) work as the conceptual framework for this study was two-fold. First, Saltman provided a critical analysis of venture philanthropy and education (Saltman, 2000, 2011). His work provided a detailed framework for the identification of venture philanthropic activity in education, through the clear identification of the framework assumptions and overview, language taxonomy, and funding structures. The framework also served to support a holistic inquiry (Creswell, 2013) into the culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists.

**Gift of Education Framework**

This author created the following framework directly from Saltman’s (2010) *The Gift of Education: Public Education and Venture Philanthropy*. Three figures were developed to graphically depict the framework. Figure 1, *Saltman’s discourse on the Gift of Education: Overview and Assumptions*, provided an overview of the framework assumptions and components. Figure 2, *Gift of Education: Language Taxonomy*, was the component of the framework that depicted the language taxonomy. Figure 3, *Gift of Education: Funding Structures*, outlined the third component of the framework that detailed funding structure outcomes and domains. The content of the framework was restricted to the phrase level (Carpenter, 2005; Neuendorf, 2002).
Gift of Education: overview and assumptions

Gift of education provided a lens to explore how venture philanthropy influenced education through the process of corporatization (Saltman, 2010). “Corporatization conflates the public and private purposes of public schooling, treating schooling like a for-profit business,” (Saltman, 2010, p. 26). There are several assumptions associated with corporatization (Saltman, 2010).

First, the corporatization process employs business metaphors, logic, and language. Second, corporatization conflates the public and private purposes of public schooling, treating schooling like a for-profit business. Third, corporatization instrumentalizes knowledge, disconnecting it from the broader political, ethical, and cultural issues. Fourth, corporatization emphasizes the ideology of corporate culture that involves making meanings and identifications compatible with a business vision for the future. Fifth, corporatization assumes the possibility of measurable neutral and objective student achievement, and assumes that influencing a teachers practice will change this measurement. Sixth, corporatization eschews approaches to learning that understand pedagogical questions in relation to power.

There are components to the Gift of Education framework. The first was the language taxonomy. The second component outlined the Gift of Education funding structures. See Figure 1 for Saltman’s (2010) discourse on the Gift of Education: Overview and Assumptions.
Gift of Education: language taxonomy

According to the conceptual framework, venture philanthropists frame their education concerns using market language. Venture philanthropists evaluate teachers, and alter the knowledge process used to train teachers, in order to educate students. The Gift
of Education: Language Taxonomy outlines educational concerns by market language rather than educational vocabulary (Saltman, 2010). The taxonomy includes four categories. These categories are teachers, knowledge process, students, and schools.

The language associated with teachers includes the economic terms incentives, accountability, and performance based assessment. Teachers utilize a knowledge process with many descriptors. The knowledge process assumes teaching can be more efficient through technological modifications to instruction. It employs standardization and reutilization through emphasis on standardization of curriculum. High stakes testing language is a part of the knowledge process taxonomy as is methods-based instruction, scripted lessons, and the efficient delivery of instruction. Business ideologies identified in this taxonomy include business terms, such as performance based assessment and school turnarounds. The knowledge process language taxonomy also refers to knowledge as discreet units of product, currency for jobs, and a commodity to be produced by experts and delivered by teachers. The knowledge process frames students as consumers. Finally, the knowledge process language depicts education through market-based terms of competition and choice.

Teachers utilize a knowledge process to educate students. The student language taxonomy includes incentives, referring to students as consumers of education, clients of teachers, and productive individuals. Students are trained to take a stake in the economy, and the focus is on student achievement.

Teachers utilize a knowledge process to educate students in schools. The school language taxonomy employs business terms to reference schools. Market languages used
to describe schools include formation, commercialized, site, replicate, franchise, market model, and privatized schools financed by vouchers and tax credits. The taxonomy also lists school characteristics. Language describing school characteristics include equality, access, citizenship, democratic educational practice, monopoly, failure, efficient, accountable, choice, commercialized, stake, scaled up, brand, achievement, excellence, corporate culture in all aspects of schooling, and performance based assessment. Figure 2 outlines the *Gift of Education: Language Taxonomy*. 
Figure 2. Saltman’s Gift of Education: Language Taxonomy. 6, 7, 8 & 10 directly reflect the research questions. Adapted from Saltman, K. (2010). The gift of education: Public education and venture philanthropy. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
**Gift of Education: funding structures**

Venture philanthropy funding initiatives are structured specifically for outcomes. These outcomes are achieved through facilitating the entry of professionals, especially business professionals, into the teacher workforce. Outcomes are also accomplished through the fostering and funding of alternative certifications, typically of shorter duration and removed from academic control. Venture philanthropists fund the implementation and development of data base systems for teacher recruitment, and the measuring of teacher performance through student standard test scores. Finally, venture philanthropy includes the funding of schools similar to corporate turnarounds.

These funding initiatives target three domains: economic, political, and cultural. The Gift of Education framework describes the economic domain as the funding of school privatization, deregulation, for profit schools, real estate deals for charter schools, and the elimination of unions. The political domain includes funding of lobbying efforts, the establishment of a national charter franchise network, expansion of charter schools, implementation of vouchers and tax credits, and the remaking of teacher education that removes critical and intellectual content. The cultural domain includes the funding of largely rightist forms of education policy and practice, an emphasis on test based accountability, teacher bonus pay for test scores, school commercialism, corporate forms of school administration, and conservative school models. Figure 3 depicts the *Gift of Education: Funding Structures.*
Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education served as the platform of this study to dive deeper into understanding venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group. What is known about the decision making of venture philanthropists? How are venture
philanthropists inspired to give to education? The term inspiration was utilized to capture the subject’s intrinsic motivators (Patton, 2002) towards giving.

Do venture philanthropists consciously employ corporatization as a group when gifting?

How are venture philanthropists influenced and informed in their gifting? The term influenced was employed to capture the subject’s extrinsic factors (Patton, 2002) toward giving. Are trustees, officers, and foundation staff empowered to make gifting decisions for them (Gallagher & Bailey, 2000)?

Construction of the Problem

Researchers focused on venture philanthropy and its effects on education are distinctly divided in their findings (Giroux & Saltman, 2009; Sales, 2012; Saltman, 2000; 2011). One point of view postulated that venture philanthropists, rooted in corporatization methods, were hurting public education (Giroux, 2009; Giroux & Saltman, 2009; Saltman, 2000). For example, Kovacs (2011) outlined the negative impact The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has had on public education through its support of charter schools. From the opposing viewpoint, venture philanthropy in public education was hailed as transformative for public education (Hess, 2012; Kumashiro et al., 2012). From this standpoint, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was commended for supporting charter schools and their positive influence on public education. (Hess, 2012; Kumashiro et al., 2012).

Whatever viewpoint, venture philanthropy has proved to be a viable strategy to change education (Kumashiro et al., 2012; Lagemann, 1992). “Venture philanthropists
are involved in all aspects of education reform, policy, and practice from finance to administration, from pedagogy to curriculum” (Saltman, 2011, p. 3).

That is, venture philanthropy is contributing to both the privatization of public schooling as well as the transformation of public schooling on the model of corporate culture – from voucher schemes to charter schools to the remaking of teacher education, educational leadership, and classrooms (Saltman, 2011, p. 3).

The presence of venture philanthropic gifting, combined with the dearth of public education financial support, has bolstered grant-seeking activity from public schools (Kovacs, 2011; Saltman, 2011; Sprecher, 2012). Schools pursued venture funding, seemingly unaware of the quiescent consequences of venture philanthropy and public education (Hess, 2005a; Kovacs, 2011). One researcher even encouraged schools to cater to venture philanthropists. “The reality is that venture philanthropists will continue to play an important role given the economic struggles facing urban public schools, but we need to learn how to better target their funds” (Shiller, 2012, p. 13).

Venture philanthropists expect accountability for their investment through different reporting models – such as a return on investment report (Sprecher, 2012). Schools, ill equipped to write sophisticated funding proposals or return on investment reports, have struggled with grant reporting (Gasman, 2012).

The seed money that underfunded schools desperately seek allows the venture philanthropist to ‘leverage’ influence over educational policy and planning, curriculum and instructional practices, and to influence the very
idea of what it means to be an educated person. Though the implications for educational reform are vast, there has been scant scholarship on venture philanthropy in education (Saltman, 2011, p. 3).

The researcher deduced a cycle of venture philanthropy developed over time, as schools aggressively sought and received venture philanthropy grants. As noted by Shiller (2012), the response from schools suffering from lack of public funding was the pursuit of venture philanthropy funds. Venture philanthropists responded to these requests by gifting to education utilizing a corporate business model. Some researchers argued that school administrators, not savvy to corporatization of education, remained naive to the potential consequences of venture philanthropy. The venture philanthropy cycle of funding is illustrated in Figure 4.

![Figure 4. Venture Philanthropy Cycle of Funding.](image-url)
Purpose of the Study

Understanding venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group is an important step to understanding the venture philanthropy cycle of funding (Potts, 2011). This ethnographic inquiry into venture philanthropists as a sub-culture (Patton, 2002) was designed to understand what inspired and influenced venture philanthropists giving to education, and what informed them of their decisions.

A goal of the study was to contribute professional knowledge to the field of philanthropy in education. Over the last ten years, there has been an increase in the amount of publications that explored the impact of venture philanthropy on public education and policy (Ball, 2010; Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011a). To date, a study has not been published that has focused on the culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists in education. This dissertation responded to this gap in research by exploring the ways venture philanthropists are inspired, influenced, and informed in gifting to education.

Overview of the Methodology

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. How are venture philanthropists inspired to give to education?
2. How are venture philanthropists influenced to give to education?
3. What informed venture philanthropists’ giving to education?

The goal of this national study was to provide a qualitative analysis of the research on this topic; by reaching data saturation through interviewing approximately 20 - 30 individuals in the field of venture philanthropy. The scope of this study was venture philanthropists who have contributed a minimum of $100,000 to education from 2009 -
2012. The process of planning and scoping this study relied on *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Creswell, 2013).

This study was ethnography, focused on venture philanthropists’ culture sharing themes of inspiration, influence, and information. Data was collected through the Gift of Education framework (Saltman, 2010), and analyzed for shared patterns of values, beliefs, and language (Creswell, 2013).
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Philanthropy has long served as the altruistic flag for individuals, foundations, and companies. Dr. Merle Curti (1957) was the first academic researcher that focused on philanthropy as a field of research. Curti (1957) called on others to study philanthropy by asking, “Who can doubt that the character and dimensions of American civilization may be illuminated by sustained inquiries into American experience in giving,” (p. 363)?

Philanthropy has been the research focus of academic pursuits across a variety of fields, from economics (Wolff, 1999), sociology (Dickinson, 2008; Pearson, 2006), psychology (Frumkin, 2006), women’s studies (Fulton, 2007; Mesch, 2009), business (Ball, 2009; Maas & Liket, 2010), international studies (Hooper, 2012; Stone, 2010), to education (Hess, 2012; Kumashiro, et al., 2012; Scott, 2009). Initially, philanthropic research produced qualitative studies, largely focused on the philanthropist (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011a). Research expanded to include quantitative studies focused on empirical measurements of why people donate to charity (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011a).

This literature review addressed the evolution of venture philanthropy, from traditional philanthropic initiatives, to venture philanthropy, to venture philanthropy and education.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy developed out of western civilization (Curti, 1957). Before philanthropy, there was charity. As religious denominations formed, individual followers made charitable donations to support the building of churches (Aebischer, 2012). Charity
also played an important part in building religious based colleges and universities (Thelin, 2003).

The industrial age facilitated the tremendous accumulation of individual and corporate wealth (Berman, 1983; Edge, 2004; “Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012). During the early 1990s, philanthropy was defined as “giving money away (or its equivalent) to persons outside the family and to institutions without a definite or immediate *quid pro quo* for purposes traditionally considered philanthropic” (Dickinson, 2008, p. 34). Cornelius Vanderbilt (Stiles, 2009), J. D. Rockefeller (“Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012), and Andrew Carnegie (“Carnegie Corporation of New York,” 2012; Dickinson, 2008) surfaced as early philanthropists. Both Rockefeller and Carnegie formed philanthropic foundations that remained in operation (Kurland, 1973; “Rockefeller Foundation: Innovation for the next 100 years,” 2012).

Philanthropic giving structures developed between 1929 and 1959 remained viable to today (Dickinson, 2008). These types of giving structures included gifts to private institutions during the life of the donor, charitable bequests, corporate gifts, foundation gifts resulting from an endowment, corporate gifts resulting from an endowment, and individual giving (Dickinson, 2008; Frumkin, 2006). Education was an early benefactor of philanthropy (Aebischer, 2012; Clotfelter & Ehrlich, 2001; Thelin, 2003). To date, education has remained a priority for individuals and foundations alike. In 2007, the top ten foundations awarding education grants totaled $1,234,198,015 (Table 2).
### Table 2

*Top 10 Foundations Awarding Grants for Education (circa 2007)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation Name</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total Dollars Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>$309,984,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>$201,470,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>$172,921,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton Family Foundation, Inc.</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>$119,169,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilly Endowment, Inc.</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>$116,813,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Duke Endowment</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>$94,412,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community Foundation</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>$65,594,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. K. Kellogg Foundation</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>$60,303,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnegie Corporation of New York</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>$49,451,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Starr Foundation</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>$43,986,830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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**Changing tides of philanthropy in education**

A literature review on philanthropic giving in education demonstrated a shift in giving – from institutional to policy (Berman, 1983; Gasman, 2012). Traditional philanthropists gifted substantial monetary gifts to educational institutions, and empowered the institutional leadership to allocate the gift (Frumkin, 2006). Over the last 25 years, philanthropists designated their financial gifts (Dickinson, 2008). Philanthropic giving began to focus on influencing policy (Frumkin, 2006). The policy focus of philanthropic giving provided the springboard to understand the ramifications of venture philanthropy on creation of educational policy.
The influence of philanthropy on public policy literature demonstrated two important lessons. First, there has been a shift in grant-making trends. Over the past 75 years, foundations that originally funded specific cause-related non-profits and educational institutions have now funded collaborative efforts to affect change at the policy level (Frumkin, 2006; Wolff, 1999). Foundations have shifted their reporting standards from number of recipients served, to outcome variables such as recidivism, retention, and graduation rates (Boser, 2011; Canton, 2007; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2012). These outcome variables served to build the foundation for policy driven philanthropy (Dickinson, 2008; Scott, 2009).

Secondly, philanthropy can be contentious (Halme & Laurila, 2009; Johansson, Elgstrom, Kimanzu, Nylund, & Persson, 2010). Over the past 25 years, philanthropy became the weapon for winning the battle on policy changes in education. Often the desire for financial resources clouded the recipient’s understanding of the real price paid in exchange for the grant (Silver, 1997). Teachers and administrators, desperate for funds, often overlooked the expectations associated with the gifts (Saltman, 2000). In light of dissatisfaction with funding requirements, philanthropic influences on educational policy creation became a popular subject area for research, with philanthropic motives called into question (Kumashiro, et al., 2012).

**Venture Philanthropy**

Understanding the emergence of venture philanthropy was important preparation for this study. The term, *venture philanthropy*, was originally coined in Europe over a decade ago (John, 2006; Pepin, 2005) to describe the application of entrepreneurial
concepts to philanthropic policy making. Venture philanthropy emerged in the United States during the 1990s as a way to transform grant making (Moody, 2008; Potts, 2011). Tied heavily to innovation, philanthropic organizations developed shared terminologies, concepts, and best practices; which resulted in a new “cultural repertoire” of business (Moody, 2008, p. 325). This cultural repertoire assisted to differentiate venture philanthropy from other types of philanthropy. Wealthy donors, familiar with business strategies and practices, resonated soundly with this repertoire (Hess, 2005a).

Initially, the spread of venture philanthropy was attributed to diffusion of innovation, based on Roger’s theory of innovation (Rogers, 1983). Venture philanthropy was new, and the cultural repertoire was familiar to successful people. The use of business metaphors, logic, and language characterized venture philanthropy (Saltman, 2010). It merged business and charity into one conversation, and allowed individuals to network in a positive way. Business practices were now also applied to grant making, such as conducting due diligence (Moody, 2008). The dot. com era produced wealthy individuals, for example Michael Dell and Bill Gates. With the onset of venture philanthropy, these philanthropists smoothly transitioned into charitable giving with their newfound wealth.

**Venture Philanthropy and Education**

Philanthropists began to grow impatient and intolerant of educational bureaucracies and systems (Gallagher & Bailey, 2000; Hess, 2005a). As a result, some philanthropists become policy entrepreneurs (Zahariadis, 2007). Philanthropies became policy advocates. For example, The Colorado Legacy Foundation substantially funded by
the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was the leader in the creation and passing of Senate Bill 191 on teacher effectiveness in Colorado (“Colorado Legacy Foundation,” 2012). Recent studies explored the role of venture philanthropy on the creation of educational policy (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011a, 2011b; Hess, 2012; Pepin, 2005; Saltman, 2000).

Saltman (2000) argued the presence of venture philanthropy methods in the funding of educational policy by neoliberals. The term neoliberalism entailed “redistributing public goods to private controls while espousing market triumphalism” (Saltman, 2009, p. 53). Neoliberals practiced venture philanthropy within a venture capital paradigm (Crane & Meyer, 2011). Based upon this paradigm, venture philanthropy was the impetus for the corporatization of educational philanthropy (Saltman, 2009).

Not only did the grant making terms change, but the mind-set of philanthropists changed as well (Moody, 2008; Qihai, 2011; Sales, 2012). Education as Enforcement: The Militarization and Corporatization of Schools (Saltman, 2011) posited that the agenda of venture philanthropy was the privatization of education all together. Neoliberal was the term for the individual philanthropist with this ideology (Saltman, 2009). Saltman’s premise was that venture philanthropists are out to privatize education, and in doing so, destroying public education (Saltman, 2009).

Literature also hailed the work of venture philanthropists like Bill and Melinda Gates and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Hess, 2005b). The 2011 top individual philanthropists list (Table 3) was the proverbial who’s who of self-identified venture
philanthropists. Philanthropic foundations contributed generously to educational needs and the creation of educational policy.

The Colorado Legacy Foundation is one example of venture philanthropy (“Colorado Legacy Foundation,” 2012). Through a collaborative funding effort with other venture philanthropy foundations (Table 4), the Colorado Legacy Foundation successfully lead the effort to pass a teacher effectiveness bill (Ensuring Quality Instruction Through Educator Effectiveness (EQuITEE), 2010).

Table 3
2011 Top 10 Individual Charitable Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Cash Given</th>
<th>Source of Wealth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret A. Cargill</td>
<td>$6,000,000,000</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William S. Dietrich II</td>
<td>$500,000,000</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul G. Allen</td>
<td>$372,600,000</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Soros</td>
<td>$335,000,000</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael R. Bloomberg</td>
<td>$311,300,000</td>
<td>Media and Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond G. and Ruth C. Perelman</td>
<td>$227,300,000</td>
<td>Finance, Investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David and Dana Dornsife</td>
<td>$200,000,000</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert E. and Dorothy J. King</td>
<td>$166,500,000</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur G. and Margaret B. Glasgow</td>
<td>$125,000,000</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John and Julie Mork</td>
<td>$110,000,000</td>
<td>Oil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>Donation to CLF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Community Foundation</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPMorgan Chase Foundation</td>
<td>$51,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniels Fund</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donnell-Kay Foundation</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,701,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>Donation to CLF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</td>
<td>$9,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9,700,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 2010 and 2011</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,401,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 3
Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study explored how venture philanthropists are inspired and influenced to give to education, and what informed their decision. The study focused on venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group, specifically philanthropists that have funded $100,000 or more to education over three years (2009-2012). An ethnographic research inquiry (Creswell, 2012) served as foundation for the methodology. The methodology development of this study was influenced by the work of Anfara (2006), Creswell (2013), Hammersley (1995), Patton (2002), and Wolcott (2008). The conceptual framework for this study was derived from Dr. Kenneth Saltman’s (2010) *The Gift of Education: Public Education and Venture Philanthropy*. An interactive study design (Maxwell, 2005) supported the qualitative and non-experimental study dimensions.

Research Approach

This study was conducted within the ethnography tradition of inquiry (Creswell, 2012). Three primary reasons supported this decision. First, it is the nature of the group itself. Patton (2002) summarized the fundamental question addressed by ethnography. “What is the culture of this group of people” (Patton, 202, p. 81)? Education venture philanthropists are a group of people who have been perceived as having a funding agenda over the last 10 years (Hess, 2005a, 2013; Saltman, 2000, 2011). This funding agenda is an aggregate of the venture philanthropic activity, and the activity’s impact on education.
Over the past 10 years, there has been an increase of articles and books published on the impact of venture philanthropy on education. A debate was present on the positive or negative impact on education by venture philanthropists. For example, writings by Giroux (2009), Kovacs (2011), and Saltman (2000, 2009, 2011) argued that the venture philanthropists corporate agenda was hurting public education. Conversely, Hess (2005a, 2005b), Frumkin (2003), and Sales (2012) argued that education was benefiting from the influence of venture philanthropy.

This debate is a complex puzzle and affords ample opportunity for future inquiry into the impact of venture philanthropy on education. One obvious piece of the puzzle is addressed by this study, that of the venture philanthropists. Neither side of the debate has conducted a study focused on the culture of venture philanthropists as a group. This ethnography focused on this identifiable group of people, and supported inquiry into the research questions. How do venture philanthropists share information? What inspires them to give to education and how are they influenced? What patterns, regularities, or group behaviors are identified (Wolcott, 2008) valid to their philanthropic giving? An ethnography qualitative study design supports the identification of “learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group” (Creswell, 2013, p. 90).

The second reason this study was conducted as ethnography was directly related to the choice of conceptual framework. Ethnography study includes language as a unit of study (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education conceptual framework included language taxonomy to identify the presence of venture philanthropy.
Realist ethnography (Creswell, 2013) supported the objective accounting of synthesized language data, filtered through the conceptual framework.

In addition to language as a unit of study, the choice of ethnography supported the identification of subject response patterns. These patterns were then open to interpretation and conclusions from a cultural perspective (Chambers, 2000; Wolcott, 2008). Venture philanthropists operated as a culture-sharing group, and future academic endeavors will benefit from understanding how this group works and operates in their funding behaviors.

Accumulating knowledge and understanding of venture philanthropist behavior patterns sheds light on the motives and inspiration supporting their behaviors – a direct tie to the research questions of this study. Goodenough (1981) stressed the importance of knowing a culture-sharing language, and how that language informed the identification of group culture-sharing patterns. Goodenough (1981) emphasized the identification of these patterns are essential if one wants to understand how groups make decisions, how they feel about these decisions, and how groups go about acting on these decisions.

The third rationale that supported the selection of an ethnography methodology for this study rests on the shoulders of the primary researcher. The researcher has been a member of the philanthropic community for over 25 years, as a philanthropist and a philanthropy consultant. Conducting ethnography allows me to take into consideration my own experience of this culture and offer insights as appropriate (Patton, 2002; Spindler & Hammond, 2000). The researcher’s membership in the philanthropic culture inherently influenced the development of this ethnographic methodology. In the same
way, the researcher has the burden to report findings addressed to the academic community (Goodenough, 1981).

“What is required is that the researcher be very clear about the theoretical framework being used and the implications of that perspective on study focus, data collection, fieldwork, and analysis” (Patton, 2002, p. 31). This burden was addressed through the selection of Saltman’s Gift of Education (2010) conceptual framework. The framework supported systematic data analysis through the use of NVivo software. Relationships to concepts, pattern identification, and subject demographics were independently identified through deductive coding.

Finally, ethnography encompassed the researcher’s membership of the philanthropic community, and her access to gatekeepers. In turn, the gatekeepers provided entry to venture philanthropists, and referrals from venture philanthropists to others in the culture-sharing group (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Likewise, key informants and potential participants known by the researcher afforded access to members of the venture philanthropic community (Gilchrist, 1992).

**Study Design**

An interactive study design was selected for this ethnography (Maxwell, 2005). Other authors have created similar interactive designs (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Maxwell’s (2005) study design stood out due to its complimentary yet seemingly opposing features. The selection was based on two design benefits, mainly the structure of the design, and at the same time the flexibility of the design. “What is innovative is the way the relationships among the components are conceptualized,” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 4).
In this design the components are not linear, but rather integrated and dynamic (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell (2003) described this design “as consisting of the actual components of a study and the ways in which these components connect with and influence one another,” (p. 245). The structure entailed five key components: goal, conceptual framework, research questions, methods, and validity.

The first component highlighted the goal of the study – to contribute professional knowledge toward the practice of philanthropy in education. By incorporating the goal as a component of the study design, it consistently drove the study toward the bigger picture of academic contribution (Maxwell & Loomis, 2003). The goal intended to shed light on the venture philanthropists as individuals within a culture-sharing group, and not just what they funded in education. The goal component served as a cornerstone of the design.

The second design component was the conceptual framework. Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education served as the conceptual framework for this study design. This component served to guide and inform the research, data collection, and data analysis (Maxwell & Loomis, 2003; Maxwell, 1992). The conceptual framework provided the required structure to hone the analysis toward the research questions. Any heuristic knowledge that stemmed from the study provided an opportunity for new research inquiry and design.

The third design component contained the research questions. Research questions formed the basis for the study. The interactive study design supported the integration of the research questions throughout the study (Maxwell, 2005). The interactive study design served to support the structure of the conceptual framework, while simultaneously
provided a context to study the relationship of the research questions to the other components for final analysis.

Methods made up the fourth component of the study design. Included in the methods component are the participants, details of data sampling, data collection methods, and data analysis strategies and techniques (Maxwell, 2005). The methods component included the use of NVivo technology (“QSR International,” 2013) for data analysis. NVivo was the analytical software that synthesized vast amounts of data, created data records, supported data browsing capabilities, coded, and finally identified data patterns related to the research questions (Azeem & Salfi, 2012).

The fifth component of the study design was validity. This component of the design addressed credibility of the study, triangulation methods conducted to increase validity (Creswell, 2012) and limitations. The validity component held the tension between the methods and the research questions, and influenced the methods to build overall confidence in the findings. The interactive design model (Maxwell, 2005) supported ongoing attention to validity threats of the study.

The components of the interactive design operated much like a “rubber band” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 6). This rubber band provided flexibility when required through the qualitative process. Simultaneously, the rubber band can only be stretched so far or it breaks. The interactive study design (Figure 5) paved a path for study with some move ability with clear study parameters.
Narrative Writing

This study relied on the narrative writing structure for interpretation of findings (Creswell, 2012). This structure is useful for two reasons. First, it allows for theme analysis of what participants said, how the participants shared their information, and a rich description of the participants responses (Riessman, 2007). Second, this writing structure provided the researcher with the flexibility to develop a complete picture of what informed the venture philanthropist through the use of a variety of writing methods - from metaphors to epiphanies (Creswell, 2012; Denzin, 2001).
Sample

Venture philanthropists were the culture-sharing group for this ethnography. This culture-sharing group was identified by the following selection criteria. The first criterion was that the philanthropist self-identified as a venture philanthropist, or as an active participant in venture philanthropy. Second, members contributed a minimum of $100,000 to education over the 2009-2012 time period. Education was defined as any K-12, or higher education, institution or program. The unit of analysis was the individual philanthropist. The venture philanthropist was not required to be a United States citizen, but must have funded education within the United States, including US territories. Funding had to be from the philanthropists’ personal funds, trust funds, or gifts channeled through a family foundation or family office. Only subjects over the age of 18 were included in the study.

Subjects were recruited through purposeful sampling (Fetterman, 2010). Purposeful sampling was selected based on the culture-sharing group in the study (Creswell, 2012). The researcher initially accessed the sample through identified gatekeepers and key informants (Creswell, 2013) known by the researcher. Additionally, through her professional contacts, the researcher contacted members of the culture-sharing group. After the first interview, snowball sampling was also used for participant recruitment (Maxwell, 2005).

The goal of the study was to interview between 20-30 participants to achieve data saturation (Creswell, 2012). Sample size for studies that utilized a clear conceptual framework, and utilized deductive analysis from that framework (Goetz & LeCompte,
achieved data saturation more expeditiously than those with a more flexible analytical framework. Due to the structured conceptual framework utilized by the study, in conjunction with the deductive coding methods of analysis, the study included 27 interviews with participants. Two subjects were eliminated due to noncompliance with the sampling criteria, resulting in 25 total subjects. Data saturation was achieved with the sample.

Attention to the participant’s rights and privacy was paramount to subject recruitment for this study. Maintaining confidentiality of the identity and responses of the participants was critical to the success of this study. This study functioned as a dissertation research project, and did not serve a specific client. At the inception of the study, this researcher followed the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) Institutional Research Board (IRB) research protocols. Throughout this process, study time, budget, data, and political constraints were identified and addressed. This study received IRB approval and operated under IRB Protocol No 13-107. All subjects signed the informed consent form. The approved interview protocols were followed (see Appendix A for full IRB approved procedures). A budget of $1800 was allocated for research, interviews, technical assistance, and production. The study remained within budget. Data constraints were minimal.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Supporting the ethnography and study design were the procedures of the study, including data collection methods and NVivo software (Wolcott, 2008). Data was collected through subject interviews and public information review.


**Public information review**

Public information provided verification of participant’s philanthropic activity. It also served to authenticate subject specific contributions toward education. Significant efforts were expended to avoid duplication of data, including data triangulation of interviews, philanthropic leadership data, and document review. At times, complex financial structuring of individual philanthropic endeavors (foundations, private family foundations, family offices, etc.) made verification through public information extremely difficult. Procedures included Google search, specific to the funding window 2009-2012. The cut-off for Google search was 10 pages. All data was compiled into an Excel spreadsheet that hyper-linked to a minimum of two validation sources. This study required two public information sources to validate a subject’s philanthropic giving. Subjects were eliminated from the data set if this requirement was not met.

Examples of public information included news releases, newspapers, industry magazines, institutional websites, annual reports, grantee annual reports, family foundation annual reports, and Secretary of State annual reporting. Refer to Appendix B for a complete list of sources that provided verification of subject philanthropic activity.

**Personal interviews**

Twenty-seven personal interviews were conducted over a period of one month. Twenty-five subjects were included in the study. Per IRB approval, the study maintained compliance of interview protocols and procedures (Appendix C). Participants were contacted initially through email by the researcher, and asked to participate in the study.
The initial email included the Interview Consent Form. Individuals were asked to fax the signed consent form to the researcher prior to the interview.

The Gift of Education framework (Saltman, 2010) informed the open-ended interview questions. Table 5 outlined the interview questions and their connection to the conceptual framework.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Informed by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How are you inspired to give to education?</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How are you influenced to give to education?</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do these experiences shape your decisions to education philanthropy?</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How would you describe public education?</td>
<td>Figure 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How would you describe the role of public education today?</td>
<td>Figure 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What concerns do you have about education today?</td>
<td>Figure 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How should teachers best educate students?</td>
<td>Figure 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How do you hope to change the outcomes of education?</td>
<td>Figure 2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you target your funding to education? How?</td>
<td>Figure 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How do you assess or evaluate successful philanthropic funding?</td>
<td>Figure 1,2, &amp; 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 1, 2 and 3 within this document graphically display the conceptual framework components that supported the selection of interview questions. In addition to the interview questions direct tie to the conceptual framework, questions were also tied together through a concept structure (Fetterman, 2010). A concept structure of interview questions supported the inquiry into patterns of behavior of the subjects, and allowed the researcher the flexibility to inquire into social relationships among the group (Creswell, 2013; Goetz & LeCompte, 2009). The relationship structure of the interview questions and sub-questions is displayed in Table 6.
Interviews were conducted via the phone, Skype, FaceTime, and in person. All interviews were audio-recorded, and ranged from 20 – 30 minutes. Due to NVivo advances, the researcher uploaded all interview recordings directly into NVivo for transcription. NVivo technology inaccurately transcribed the interviews; consequently the researcher manually transcribed all interviews. Once the transcription was complete, the audio-files were destroyed per IRB requirements.

The researcher maintained confidentiality of participant identities and interview information. All subject identities were coded (S1, S2, etc.) in chronological order of the interviews. During the interview process, the research questions and IRB approved interview questions were asked in the same order, using an online subject verification form. This form supported note taking and maintained the structure of the interview (Appendix D).

**Data Analysis Procedures**

**NVivo software**

The qualitative data analysis software NVivo was the tool used by this study. NVivo supported the entire scope of the project, from conceptualization and coding of data, to the modeling of the findings. NVivo’s capability to link data within the dataset was another justification for the selection of NVivo as the analysis tool. “In short NVivo assists in the management and synthesis of ideas. It offers a variety of analyzing tools for developing new understandings and theories about the data and testing of answers to research questions” (Azeem & Salfi, 2012, p. 262). These research tools supported the management of data, management of ideas through data linkages while maintaining the
original context, querying of data, graphic modeling of data, and reporting insights gained from analysis and outcomes (Bazeley, 2007).

**NVivo procedures**

A new project was created within the researcher’s NVivo account. Subject codes were assigned and subject names were eliminated from the data set. Classified demographics and attributes were assigned to each subject. Demographics and attributes included age (open), gender (male, female, other), venture philanthropist self identified (yes, no, other), years of post high school education (0-15), higher education institutions attended (open), professional position (open), industry affiliation (open), do you give through a family foundation (yes, no, other), do you give through a corporate foundation (yes, no, other), and do you give anonymously (yes, no, sometimes, other).

Based upon Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education three component conceptual framework (refer to Figures 1, 2, and 3), a tree node structure was created in NVivo. This tree node structure was created with selected *hot* words derived directly from the conceptual framework. The first phase of data analysis was to explore the relationship of subject responses to the conceptual framework.

Interview questions were separated from the transcript of subject responses. Subject interview responses were then combined and imported into NVivo. Based upon the *hot* words, the researcher conducted queries. NVivo queries allow the exploration of data from multiple perspectives (Richards, 2006). Text and compound search queries were conducted to deductively code the data per the conceptual framework. Saltman’s Gift of Education (2010) served as the codebook for this study (Appendix E). Each query
was then saved as a node. A node is a category resulting from deductive coding in NVivo (Richards, 2006). The creation of nodes stemmed from the coding of the conceptual framework.

Once initial nodes were created, the researcher conducted additional queries. These queries used Boolean operators. Boolean operators are conjunctions (and, or, not, or and not) used to combine or exclude keywords in a search (Richards, 2006). Boolean operators supported the expansion of data search to relevant terms nearby in the text. NVivo allowed for up to a seven-word expansion, with this study limiting it to four-word expansion. Additional queries and compound queries were conducted based upon Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education conceptual framework. These queries were saved as additional nodes.

Through queries, NVivo delivered statistical reporting based upon the previously established tree node structure. Through this repetitive process, individual subject responses were analyzed for word frequency against the conceptual framework tree node structure. Each individual response was then established as a subject node. Once completed, subject nodes were combined into a set. An NVivo set demonstrated an overview of how individual subjects and the collective fit the conceptual framework. Queries were then combined with subject attributes.

After analyzing the conceptual framework, queries were run per the three research questions. These queries were established as free nodes to distinguish themselves from the previous framework inquiries. The free nodes were compiled as a set. This process
was duplicated combining questions together under the three main research questions (Table 6).

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions With Sub-Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are you inspired to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you hope to change the outcomes of education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What informs your decisions to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe your venture philanthropic activities in education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the role of public education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What concerns do you have about education today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you assess or evaluate successful philanthropic funding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you influenced to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do these experiences shape your decisions to education philanthropy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you target your funding to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How should teachers best educate students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher utilized NVivo model generation (Azeem & Salfi, 2012) to depict the relationship of the subject set to the conceptual framework and the research questions. The researcher expanded on this model to explore subject-coding frequencies. This step showcased individual subject profiles and placed them within a spectrum that demonstrated their overall compatibility of the Gift of Education framework. It turn, the same process was followed to model the spectrum of responses based upon the research questions.
Validity and Reliability

This study included measures to enhance validity of the study, as well as support the credibility of the findings. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design* (Creswell, 2013), and Maxwell’s (2005) *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* informed the selection of validation strategies. These strategies included rigorous attention to credibility, deductive coding, respondent validation, searching for discrepant evidence, triangulation, comparison, and a discussion of study limitations.

Rigorous attention was given to the issues of credibility. One method to address credibility was the implementation of Saltman’s (2010) conceptual framework as both the lens of the study and the codebook for data analysis. Deductive coding allowed for quasi-statistics with qualitative data (Azeem & Salfi, 2012; Creswell & Miller, 2000). In light of the researcher’s membership in the culture-sharing group, this strategy also addressed researcher-coding bias (Creswell, 2013). The second method employed to address credibility was the acknowledgement of the researcher’s membership in the culture-sharing group. This membership provided access to the participants. It also created a high stakes issue of confidentiality (Patton, 2002).

This study incorporated respondent validation (Maxwell, 2005), or member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Throughout the interview, before moving on to the next question, the researcher would mirror back the subject’s responses. This process included statements such as “Am I hearing you correctly, I hear you saying”; and “Am I interpreting what you are saying correctly, I hear you saying.” Following the conclusion of the interview, subjects were given the opportunity to clarify their responses, reiterate
points, and review their answers. The researcher also conducted random member checking with seven subjects to verify their responses.

Searching for discrepant evidence (Maxwell, 2005) specifically addressed the concern over sampling criteria. To qualify, participants must have contributed a minimum of $100,000 to education over the time period 2009-2012. Extensive research was conducted to corroborate participant eligibility. Two sources were required to qualify the participant to continue on with the study (See Appendix B for a list of validation sources). Two individuals were disqualified due to sampling criteria.

Triangulation methods increased the validity of the study. Methods triangulation provided consistency in findings generated by these different NVivo queries (Azeem & Salfi, 2012; Richards, 2006). Triangulation of sources (Patton, 2002) validated subject participation. Upon conclusion of the data collection and analysis, triangulation of sources checked for consistency of what subjects reported in light of the study’s conceptual framework.

Another triangulation method employed by the study was peer checking (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000). The researcher recruited a colleague with over 20 years of philanthropy experience to serve as a peer checker. Debriefing sessions (Creswell, 2013) were conducted to address possible researcher bias. A total of four sessions were held over the length of this study. Subject confidentiality was maintained throughout the peer checking sessions.
Limitations

There were several potential limitations to this study. To the researcher’s knowledge, this was the first study that focused on what informs and inspires the venture philanthropist in their giving to education. This study explored new ground. A second potential limitation was researcher bias due to her 25-year experience in the field of philanthropy. Access to participants remained a concern. Delimitations addressed this issue and included commitment to anonymity, anonymity in coding of data and quoting, and deductive coding of Gift of Education as a conceptual framework.

The choice of *The Gift of Education* (Saltman, 2010) as the conceptual framework was a possible limitation. Saltman’s work (2010) had not served as a formal conceptual framework for a study of any kind, let alone this one. In a conversation, Dr. Saltman stated he did not have *The Gift of Education* graphically depicted for use as a conceptual framework. Dr. Saltman encouraged the researcher to use the book for the formulation of the framework. Hence, the researcher developed the framework graphics. To address this limitation, deductive coding drove data through the framework toward analysis. *The Gift of Education* (Saltman, 2010) served as both the conceptual framework and the codebook.
Chapter 4

Results

Overview

This study explored how venture philanthropists are influenced and inspired to give to education, and what informed their decisions. This ethnographic study focused on the culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists through Saltman’s (2010) Gift to Education conceptual framework. The results chapter was divided into three sections. The first section focused on attributes of the sample. The second section focused on the sample’s fit into the Gift of Education framework (Saltman, 2010). The third section of the data analysis addressed the research questions, weaving results and discussion from the preceding sections. All subjects discussed are referred to as S for subject, and their identification number.

Sample Attributes

Gender and age

Twenty-seven individuals were interviewed for this study, with a total of 25 included in the final sample. The sample included 60% males, 40% females, and 0 subjects reporting as other. Subjects also reported their age, with two participants who declined to report. The span of ages reported ranged from 28-85. Specifically, five subjects reported being under 50 (28, 34, 40, 41, 46); eight subjects age ranged between 50-60 (50, 52, 53, 57, 58, 58, 60, 60,); five subjects age ranged from 61-71 (64, 64, 70, 70, 71); and five subjects age ranged from 72-85 (73, 76, 74, 76, 85). Total participating subjects ages spanned over seven decades.
**Education**

The sample represented a wide spectrum of post high school education. One subject did not complete high school, three subjects had no post-high school education, and one subject reported 12 years of post high school education. Figure 6 depicted subject years of high school education, with the years of education followed by the number of subjects in parenthesis.

![Figure 6: Years Post High School Education. Derived through NVivo software analysis.](image)

Subjects were asked to name the colleges, universities, or other institutions of higher learning that they attended, even if they did not graduate from those institutions. The responses included both public and private institutions. Subjects reported a total attendance to 19 private institutions, compared to 8 public institutions. Four subjects attended Stanford University, and four attended Harvard University. Institutions reported
spanned the United States from coast to coast, including the Midwest and southern regions. Table 7 lists the institutions and attendance totals.

Table 7

*Higher Education Institutions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington State University</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollins University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Kentucky</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Western Reserve University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas State University</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hopkins University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Business School</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wharton School of Business</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan College</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Washington University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Law School</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Florida</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern California</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Wesley Memorial School of Nursing</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton College</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern Medical School</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Black School of Nursing</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ambrose University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard University</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith College</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado State University</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Public Institutions              | 8       | 9         |
| Total Private Institutions             | 19      | 22        |

Note. Gathered through NVivo attribute feature.
Professional position

Subjects provided their current professional positions as part of the interview. Four subjects declined to provide this information, and three subjects provided more than one answer. Nine subjects reported their positions as philanthropists; with seven subjects who reported holding a corporate position (CEO, Chairman, or President). Three participants reported their position as an entrepreneur. These subjects did not specify the type of entrepreneur -- social, venture, education, etc. Table 8 depicted the professional positions as reported by the subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropist</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball Player</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Servant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired Physician</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Gathered through NVivo attribute feature.
Industry affiliation

Subjects were requested to report their industry affiliation (Table 9). Subjects reported a wide spectrum of responses. Four subjects declined to answer the question, and four subjects provided more than one answer. It was interesting to note that the industry affiliations were not easily matched to professional positions.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Affiliation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Law</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Sports</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteerism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Gathered through NVivo attribute feature.

Method of giving

Subjects were asked to specifically address the manner of their philanthropic contributions. Three attributes related to the methods of giving, specifically giving through a family foundation, giving through a corporate foundation, and giving anonymously. When asked if they gave through a family foundation or corporate
foundation, subjects were provided with the options of yes, no, or other. When asked if they gave anonymously, subjects were provided with the options of yes, no, sometimes, or other. None of the subjects responded to the other option, hence, it is not included in the table. Table 10 depicts the subject responses per these three attributes. Four subjects declined to answer the question, and three subjects provided more than one answer. The majority of subjects contributed through a foundation of some type. Subjects gave both anonymously and openly. It appeared all subjects were clear on the vehicle of giving, as they did not provide sometimes as an answer for the type of foundation used for their philanthropy.

Table 10

*Methods of Giving*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Foundation</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Foundation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymously</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Gathered from NVivo analysis and interviews.

Subjects self reported their years of philanthropic giving, as well as years of giving to education. All 25 subjects responded to the inquiry, as shown in Table 9. In all but three cases, subjects reported greater years of philanthropic giving than years of philanthropic giving to education. These three cases reported identical answers for both questions. All three subjects had been active in philanthropy under 10 years. A total of 10 subjects reported 10 years of less of philanthropic giving and giving to education. The
spectrum of philanthropic giving also spanned to 10 subjects being active 20 years or more in philanthropy.

**Years of philanthropic activity and contributions**

Subjects also reported financial contributions made to education over the study time period 2009-2012. Table 11 also includes financial contributions reported by subjects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Years of Philanthropic Giving</th>
<th>Years of Philanthropic Giving to Education</th>
<th>Financial amount to education 2009 - 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>118,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>101,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1,000,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>89,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1,304,234,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Gathered through NVivo analysis.
Grants

To guard subject confidentiality, the grantees of these contributions were not listed in the same table. Subjects were not asked to report every education grant; hence the total dollar figures varied per subject. Additionally, participants gave multiple answers regarding grant-making activity. In some cases, participants stated general areas of funding rather than the specific institution or program (Table 12).

Table 12

_Education Grants_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical research education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Community</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Foundation Education Program</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education institution</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 private school</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver public schools</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and engineering K-12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern Medical School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago inner-city public schools</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey public schools</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venture Philanthropy Partners</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 public schools</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My funding group</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A funding partner</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My giving circle</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another foundation who gives to public education reform</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Questions

Research questions were each coded for word frequency. Questions were then combined with their sub-questions to gain a stronger and richer perspective on the responses. In grouping the research sub-question that related to how a subject was inspired to give to education, inspiration referred to subject intrinsic characteristics. When grouping sub-questions that related to how subjects were influenced to give to education, influence referred to subject extrinsic characteristics. Research questions and sub-questions are listed in Table 13.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions With Sub-Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are you inspired to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you hope to change the outcomes of education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What informs your decisions to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe your venture philanthropic activities in education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the role of public education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What concerns do you have about education today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you assess or evaluate successful philanthropic funding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you influenced to give to education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do these experiences shape your decisions to education philanthropy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you target your funding to education? How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How should teachers best educate students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How are venture philanthropists inspired to give to education?

The first theme identified from respondents was the desire to make a difference. This theme was a personal one, that of subjects wanting to touch and experience the lives
of the individuals they were trying to help. Subject 1 (S1) stated, “I am inspired to give when I have a chance to meet the students.” S1 goes on to say, “I want to give to people, not big organizations.” S1 is the only subject that did not contribute through his own family or corporate foundation. S1 did, however, contribute through a giving fund that was managed by another source.

Subject 7 (S7) reported “I am inspired when I see the light at the end of the tunnel, for creating a whole new system of education.” S7 contributed over 28M to education over the study timeframe. S7 hoped to change the outcomes of education by “seeing first hand the difference my money makes.” Behaviors of this culture-sharing group appeared to be important when subjects could visit and experience the result of their giving.

Subject 5 (S5) reported he was inspired to give more, “when I see kids in restaurants working their way through college and making something of themselves.” Once again, the personal experience of seeing how one’s contributions were working in the lives of others served as the foundation of this theme. S1, S5, and S7 all contributed to programs within schools, not the entire school. This type of giving indicated subjects were interested in directing their funding, and what directed their funding was the individual. S1 wanted to “see the return on investment in the individual.” “I love to get into the classroom and see what young people are doing to learn” stated Subject 21 (S21).

Subjects that commented on what inspires them to give to education also appeared to collectively focus on a theme of commitment. Subjects were committed to a variety of focus areas. Subject 23 (S23), subject 9 (S9), and subject 16 (S16) specifically reported
The Giving Pledge (“The Giving Pledge,” 2012) as the basis of their commitment. Warren Buffett, and Bill and Melinda Gates founded the Giving Pledge. The Giving Pledge was promoted as a massive effort to address important society issues (“The Giving Pledge,” 2012). Members of The Giving Pledge are individuals who have committed to giving more than half of their wealth away in their lifetime, or after death.

Subjects who were members of The Giving Pledge also supported this theme of commitment through statements such as that of S23, “I have a moral commitment to be active in my philanthropic activity, and I am inspired by those who have committed before me. ” S16 reported, “I am a member of a group of women who share successful funding ventures and leverage resources to make a bigger impact ... we are committed to working together and committed to making a difference. ” Subject 11 (S11) cited his commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (“United Nations Millennium Goals,” 2010), “My experiences with the Millennium Development Goals has reinforced my commitment to venture philanthropy. ”

*Family* was the third theme identified as a source of inspiration for giving to education. Over nine subjects specifically referred to family. Both subject 9 (S9) and subject 8 (S8) said the exact same phrase, “My father inspired me to give beyond the norm. ” This is the only time in the subject responses that two were exactly alike. Subject 20 (S20) ”My parents inspired me by teaching me at a young age the importance of public service and by giving back to those less fortunate. ” S20 was the top donor among the subjects during the study period, with over $1 billion gifted to education.
Subject 25 (S25) responded, “My parents raised me to give back, and my sister died of cancer. I contribute to cancer research and higher education.” S25 contributed $250,000 to education over the past three years, and went to a private university. Family was also a theme when subjects responded to other questions. “I may be one of the wealthiest guys around, but without family it doesn’t matter what I am committed to,” (S11). Several respondents said they wanted to create new leaders through a better education system so that “we would have stronger families” (S25).

**What informed your decisions to give to education?**

Three primary themes were identified from the data. The first theme was the philanthropist network. The network theme appeared to build on the commitment theme associated with what inspired giving. Having a network of like-minded peers was important to over half of the subjects. Network was also affiliated with responses such as member of, part of a group, a group of, and private group.

“I am part of a small group of leaders that meet and talk quarterly, sometimes we fund together and sometimes not,” reported S5. “I receive a confidential briefing from a venture group I belong to that follows media to find success stories,” stated subject 6 (S6). “I am part of a group of venture philanthropists that meet quarterly, we discuss trends in education and share information,” stated subject 12 (S12). S12 donated 8 million to education over the study period. S12 went on later in the interview to say “I know what the problem is, but my giving group advises me in ways I could not determine myself, I trust them.” “My mentor asked me to join a group of philanthropists that were intent on generating a solution to affordable, excellent education,” reported subject 14 (S14).
Clearly group membership served as the network for giving information for the group. In addition, this network also provided a social component that supported the network. Even the wealthiest philanthropist wanted to affiliate with one another.

The second theme that informed philanthropists was reporting. Reporting was referred to as return on investment reports, graduation rates, due diligence, teacher effectiveness, performance based funding, and measurement. S20’s statement “When I see the results from previous grants, the return on investment reports that outline the margins of success, the student test scores, and finally effective hiring and termination procedures,” reflected the theme of reporting. “We need measurements, benchmarks, return on investment report, and a business plan that includes mergers and acquisitions of other schools that are not performing,” stated S14.

Reports served as artifacts (Creswell, 2013) valued by the culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists. Having industry knowledge about the latest reports on student achievement was important to the group. “We must give our grantees the rubric for reporting before we fund them, it must be part of our decision for grants,” (S16). S16 gave over 60 million to education over the last three years. S16 was also a member of The Giving Pledge. Finally, reports, and the publishing of reports, informed several subjects as to the credibility of the grant. Overall, networking and reporting served as themes and culture-sharing behaviors of venture philanthropists.

The third theme was developed from a comparison analysis. This theme was labeled affiliation. Affiliation included the subjects asked to join others in funding, as well as those who requested others to join them. A total of five subjects appeared to have
direct influence over monetary funding. These five subjects invited others to join them and “collaborate” (S11) on funding. This collaboration, while referred to as a partnership or a group, in reality appeared to be a funding pool. This theme was important to the final analysis of the research questions. “Together we are able to invest in our visions, to invest in a vision of the whole and create a new model of philanthropy,” (S17).

Subjects valued affiliation through the benefit of belonging (Patton, 2002). “I joined a giving group, and now I have important friends,” snickered S1. “When we meet to discuss our giving, I don’t contribute much but I sure have stories to tell when I get home,” reported subject 19 (S19). “I know a little, but others know a whole lot and that is what I rely on,” responded subject 2 (S2). “I want my money to make a difference with kids, and my funding group knows more than I do,” (S1).

**How are you influenced to give to education?**

Three themes identified through the subject responses were outcomes, economics, and humanitarian outreach. These three themes were woven throughout the interview responses. These labels became obvious as the other research question themes were developed and explained.

*Outcomes* were a theme that influenced giving to education. Specifically, outcomes were often referred to as terms affiliated with education reform. “I want to change the outcome of attendance,” replied subject 3 (S3). S3 appeared to want to change the entire experience of a child attending school. Reform, to S3, meant building better and more centrally located schools.
“I see the short term projects with specific outcomes that challenge teachers to be more effective and mandate students be responsive” (S5). S7 stated, “We cannot just change the outcomes but the entire system must be transformed.” “I want to change the outcomes of education so they are seamless ... the outcomes of how we teach, the competency of our teachers, producing highly trained students in STEM, and thus empowering these students to be leaders in the areas of my foundation’s interest” (S16).

Teacher effectiveness was also attached to outcomes. “I direct my funding to athletics, disability support, and teacher effectiveness” (S25). When asked to elaborate on what teacher effectiveness means, S25 stated that he relied on their funding group to know the industry language and evaluation of teacher effectiveness. “We joined forces with a few other significantly larger foundations to fund teacher effectiveness and assessment” (S5). S5 stated teacher effectiveness outcomes not only influenced his giving, but also served to inform his giving. S5 concluded his comments with a statement that said the giving group he belongs to also informs his giving. “They know more than I do,” said S5.

Student achievement was defined as an outcome, although it is not clear if subjects understood what student achievement meant to their funding. “I hope to change outcomes by partnering with public schools and states to implement sustainable research based improvements that lead to measurable improvements in student achievement,” (S21). S21 contributed over 89 million to education. When pressed for more clarity, the S21 replied “I am influenced by the results of my goals,” and the results are from a
“thorough and complete return on investment” report. Return on investment reporting transitioned into the next theme of this research question, economics.

Economics emerged as a theme that influenced giving. Several subjects referred to the need to build future leaders for the country. “I see how my gifts are making a difference in their education and our country’s future,” (S1). “Educate and prepare a future for children and our economy,” influenced the giving of S2. The importance of technology in education supported the economics theme.

“We have to teach teachers how to teach technology, and if we can’t then we need to get teachers into the classroom that are capable,” reported subject 17 (S17). “Without technology, we will never be a country that can compete, and recover financially,” stated subject 4 (S4). “Technology is the only way we will reform education. We need technology to evaluate, to make virtual classrooms, to take the classroom to the students and not vice versa,” stated S21. Comparison checking painted a different picture.

“Technology is our greatest asset and our greatest enemy if we rely on it to fix our teachers and fix our students,” stated S9. “Teachers also need to teach with technology and teach virtually, thus lowering the cost of per student seat” (S8). Technology appeared to be both a function and a solution to the problem of education reform.

Humanitarian outreach was the third theme that influenced giving to education. Funding access to education for all individuals was important to subjects. “Doing the right thing, and trying to make a difference, I try to give back to the place I was raised” (S2). “I want to cut through all the shit and give my money to where it will make a difference” (S3). “I am a member of The Giving Pledge because it is the right thing to do
to reach out and help other people” (S17). Subjects, while many commented on the importance of changing the current education system, *all* made some sort of statement about giving back to the community.

One subject summarized all of the themes that supported the research questions, and challenged the researcher’s reflexivity (Creswell, 2013). “There is too much for me to understand, but I understand what it is like for a woman to have a job and support a family” (S1). Contained within this quote was the subject’s inspiration of the human experience, what really informed her decisions, and the experiences that influenced her giving. Given extended time, more subjects might have had the opportunity to be as poignant.

**Saltman’s Gift of Education Conceptual Framework**

The inspiration for this study was Saltman’s thesis that venture philanthropists wanted to change education, at the expense of the students (2000, 2009, 2010, 2011). While there has been significant research into the impact of venture philanthropy on education, this study addressed a gap in research because it focused on venture philanthropists in education as a group. Was there a shared common understanding within this culture-sharing group on how to change education? Did the group share common assumptions, common strategies, and a common language that depicted them as education venture philanthropists? The first step was to engage in conversation with this group. What common themes emerged within this culture of venture philanthropists giving to education (Patton, 2002)?
Very little was known about this sub-culture of individuals. This study served as the first step toward confirming if this culture-sharing group was compatible to Saltman’s (2010) Gift to Education conceptual framework. The data was analyzed per each component, and sub-components, of the conceptual framework. Data analysis was restricted to the specific phrases of the framework (Carpenter, 2005, Neuendorf, 2002). The three components were Overview and Assumptions (Figure 1), Language Taxonomy (Figure 2), and Funding Structures (Figure 3).

**Gift of Education: overview and assumptions**

Using NVivo software, the percentage of framework terms covered by the subject (Carpenter, 2005) served as the frame of reference for compatibility analysis. The subject responses for all the questions were combined, and deductively coded (see Appendix E for codebook) per first component of the conceptual framework. Initial analysis dissected the components into their subcomponents – overview and assumptions.

**Gift of education: overview coverage**

According to Saltman (2010), the overview functioned as the corporatization lens by which venture philanthropists viewed education. The overview served to capture how venture philanthropists reframed “all aspects of educational reform, policy, and practice” (Saltman, 2011, p. 3).

Figure 7 demonstrated subjects’ knowledge of the issues related to venture philanthropy and education regarding Saltman’s (2010) conceptual framework. It is interesting to note that S19 ranked the highest of any subject, by over 5% coverage of the conceptual framework overview. This was interpreted as 12% of S19’s interview
responses coded to the overview section of Figure 1. Conversely, S24 has 0% coverage.

The overview codebook (Appendix E) included 130 reference points; S19 reported 15 words that directly reflected the overview of the conceptual framework.

S19 reported at one point in the interview, “We don’t want to change education, just reframe the issues and fund the practices that work.” A seasoned venture philanthropist (16 years), and relatively new to venture philanthropy in education (6 years), she appeared to understand the big picture of venture philanthropy and education.

Figure 7. Gift of Education Overview Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
**Gift of education: assumptions coverage**

Figure 8 demonstrated subject assumptions of the issues related to venture philanthropy and education. According to Saltman’s Gift of Education conceptual framework (2010), assumptions are rooted in the corporatization of venture philanthropy. This component coded over 105 terms, all related to corporatization.

Twenty-five subjects, all self-identified as venture philanthropists in education, were ranked on their percentage of coverage to the assumption component. Subject 4 (S4) ranked the highest with on the spectrum with 16.98% assumption coverage. S4 said, “Philanthropy is giving back to what you believe in. Philanthropy is a business and has to be run well.” S4 appeared to be influenced in giving based upon their corporate language and statements.

Falling within the middle ground of overview coverage was S5. “I see what Bill Gates has done and I want to join him across party lines to change the way we educate America.” S5 scored 6% coverage of the assumptions, yet clearly made a statement that endorsed venture philanthropic activities simpatico with Saltman’s framework. S5 appeared to be both influenced and informed in giving by affiliating with others in a network.
Gift of Education: element comparison coverage

Figure 9 combined the overview and assumption components, and conveyed the subjects overall understanding of Saltman’s Gift to Education framework. The research questions were designed to explore the culture-sharing patterns of venture philanthropists. This component of the framework reflected the highest percentages of framework coverage by subject responses. The element comparison figure explored the subjects’ responses and the relationship between assumptions and overview. It also compiled the data into a trend analysis, which depicted a proportional relationship of subject responses.

Figure 8. Gift of Education Assumption Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
Gift of Education: Ranked assumption and overview coverage

Figure 10 combined individual subject responses, and ranked them according to overall compatibility to the first component of the Gift to Education (Saltman, 2010) framework. S8 scored the highest compatibility to this component. “Politically, I am committed to changing education policy. This means I am about investing in education reform and improving student achievement.” S8 contributed over 2.5 million to education over the study time period. S8’s responses were proportional over both sub-components (Figure 9).

Subject 24 (S24) and S4 were the next highest ranked in compatibility to this portion of the framework, however their responses were not proportional. Therefore,
these subject’s responses were outside the norm developed within the subculture. This norm appeared to be proportional in responses to both the big picture of venture philanthropy in education, and the influence of corporatization on giving.

Aside from the top ranking subjects with the highest compatibility to the conceptual framework, two plateaus and one climb emerged from the data analysis. The first plateau began at 8% and continued to 10% of subject compatibility. Five subjects were grouped in this category. All subjects primarily reflected the theme of family as what inspired their giving. The next plateau transitioned between 10% and 12%, with eight subjects. These subjects reflected the themes of commitment as what inspired them to give. Additionally, this group of eight subjects was coded to the theme of network as what informed their giving. The sharp climb of S24, S4, and S8 were included together in the highest compatibility grouping. When these three subjects were queried as a set within NVivo, the researcher discovered what influenced their giving to education was principally driven by outcomes.
Gift of Education: language taxonomy

The second main component of Saltman’s (2010) Gift to Education conceptual framework was the language taxonomy as outlined in Figure 2. The language taxonomy was comprised of four sub-components: teacher, student, school, and knowledge. The language taxonomy demonstrated within the framework how venture philanthropists utilized market language as opposed to the education vernacular.

Gift of Education: teacher coverage

Figure 11 demonstrated a rank order of subject compatibility to the teacher sub-component of the language taxonomy. The coverage of subject responses appeared to be an either/or scenario. Eight subjects reported 0% compatibility to the teacher sub-
component. Specifically, this meant that eight subjects responded without specific reference to teachers. When the eight subjects were queried as a set, results did not demonstrate a concurrent theme between them. Subject 13 (S13) stated “Building buildings drives the value of schools and neighborhoods where kids don’t have homes. I want a school to be the center of the community for food, even shelter, a full service place. ” The theme of economics as influencing giving was present, as well as the humanitarian theme.

For example, S1 stated “When I target my funds, I have a sense of responsibility and accountability that is greater than a report back from the institution. ” The humanitarian theme of responsibility and accountability to the greater good was obvious. S1 then commented, “What is important is to educate and prepare a future for children, and for our economy. ” S1 related to the need for better education of kids in school, yet comments were not directly related to teachers.
Gift of Education: student coverage

The student sub-component of the language taxonomy (Figure 2) described students from a market perspective. Terms included describing students as consumers, trained to take a stake in the economy, clients, productive, needing incentives, and the concept of achievement. Figure 12 demonstrated a rank order of subject compatibility to the student sub-component of the language taxonomy.

Only one subject reported 0% coverage. The remaining 24 subjects coded to the student framework. “I am inspired to give when I have a chance to meet the students. I see how my gifts are making a difference in their education and in their future” responded S1. While S1 made several similar statements about students, it was interesting
to note the subject had 0% coverage on the teacher sub-component of the framework.

Further analysis of S1 demonstrated the theme of making a difference as inspiration for giving.

S4 was an outlier as the highest ranked on student coverage; with over 2.5% between S4 and the next subject S9. S4 gave $200,000 to education philanthropy during the study period, and self-reported two years of experience in both philanthropy and venture philanthropy to education. When an attribute query was conducted based on years of philanthropic giving and giving to education, it was found that those with less experience demonstrated higher student coverage.

Figure 12. Language Taxonomy Student Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
Gift of Education: School coverage

The school sub-component of the language taxonomy (Figure 2) described schools from a market perspective. For example, schools are referred to as market models, commercialized, franchises, and privatized. Figure 13 demonstrated a rank order of subject coverage to the school sub-component of the language taxonomy.

The overall trend line of school coverage mirrored the student coverage trend line. While the trend lines appeared to be similar, the subject ranking was not mirrored. S24 ranked was highest ranked on school coverage, and was the second to lowest ranked on student coverage. S24 reported just eight years of experience in both philanthropy and giving to philanthropy. At this point in the analysis, the researcher began to notice that subjects with high coverage on the assumptions and overview of the framework began to decline in coverage as the smaller components of the framework were coded.
Gift of Education: knowledge process coverage

The knowledge process sub-component of the language taxonomy (Figure 2) described the methods of instruction. For instance, knowledge was described as currency for jobs, business ideologies, efficient delivery of instruction, and high stakes testing. Figure 14 demonstrated a rank order of subject coverage to the knowledge process sub-component of the language taxonomy. There were no subjects that coded when queried to the knowledge process sub-component. These queries used Boolean operators to combine keywords in the search to insure the specific coding of the knowledge process component (Richards, 2006).
The absence of subject responses coded specifically to the knowledge process required a review of the coding process. The knowledge process framework was not summarized with a single word, or easily described with a short phrase. The terminology associated with this sub-component was education centric. To capture the subjects’ understanding of the knowledge process, the entire phrases within the component were coded as a single unit of analysis. A manual search, conducted independent of NVivo, produced the same results.

![Figure 14. Language Taxonomy Knowledge Process Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.](image)

**Gift of Education: language taxonomy element comparison**

Figure 15 graphically compared the language taxonomy elements of each subject. As in Figure 9, Gift of Education: overview and assumptions element comparison, Figure
15 also demonstrated proportionality of subject responses per the sub-elements. For example, S2, S16, S17, S20, S21, S23, and S25 all reported a proportional pattern. As a result of this analysis, a pattern of language emerged. The culture-sharing group described their philanthropy with a focus on big picture overall effects, rather than individual student impact. “I also concentrate my giving to education reform,” stated S17. S17 stated, “Unfortunately, the public education system in the United States is contaminated, ethically compromised, and technologically clumsy.” “First, supporting the education of teachers at the higher education levels, in all levels of competence, including science, technology, engineering, and math,” responded S20.

These statements from S17 and S20 also informed the research question regarding how the venture philanthropists are influenced in their giving. The outcome theme aligned closely to the language used by these subjects.
Gift of Education: overall ranked compatibility to language taxonomy

Figure 16 combined individual subject responses, and ranked them according to overall compatibility to the second component of the Gift to Education (Saltman, 2010), language taxonomy framework. The subject ranked highest in compatibility was S4. S4 was the second highest rank of overall compatibility for overview and assumptions. Saltman’s (2010) conceptual framework was built on the knowledge that venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group use market language to describe their philanthropy.

This group of venture philanthropists demonstrated market language with a compatibility to the language taxonomy. “If we fund our program, we also see the results.
This provides our foundation a direct return on investment,” responded S4. “I evaluate successful funding through matrix, ROI analysis, and expanded funding opportunities.” stated S5. The subject group, as a whole, was influenced by outcomes as described in their market language.

**Gift of Education: funding structures**

The third component of the Gift of Education (Saltman, 2010) conceptual framework was funding structures. Structures related to venture philanthropic structured methods designed to meet specific agendas. These agendas ranged from recruitment of business professionals into the teaching profession, funding alternative certifications, implementation of databases, and the funding of turnarounds. Saltman (2010) segmented these structures into three categories named economic, political, and cultural.

Initially, this study intended to only focus on the economic funding structure.

After initial analysis, it appeared a clear picture of the venture philanthropist funding
structures mandated the coding of this component’s outcomes and all three sub-components. Initial sub-component data analysis was inconclusive (Appendices F, G, H, and I).

Figure 17 graphically compared the funding structure elements of each subject. Unlike previous element comparisons, there is no proportionality of subject responses to elements. As a group, subject responses did not form a pattern specific to any one structure. The lack of cohesive responses about funding structures, inherently important to philanthropists, was the first challenge to the compatibility of the group to the conceptual framework.

Further inquiry into the group led to some possible explanations for the lack of standardized responses. All subjects were queried on funding methods. Nine of the subjects identified themselves as a member of a giving group of some variety – giving circle, The Giving Pledge, another foundation, and venture group. This led the researcher to investigate the subject overall compatibility to Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education conceptual framework.
Gift of Education: Overall Compatibility.

Figure 18 represented subject compatibility to the overall conceptual framework. In Figure 18, the three components of the conceptual framework (Gift of Education, language taxonomy, funding structures) served as elements. Figure 18 demonstrated that for venture philanthropists as a group, there was significant compatibility with the Gift of Education, followed by a significant decrease in compatibility across the group with the language taxonomy. Finally, there was minimal compatibility with funding structures.
Gift of Education: Overall Ranked Subject Compatibility.

Figure 19 combined individual subject responses, and ranked them according to overall compatibility to all components of the Gift to Education (Saltman, 2010), conceptual framework. Compatibility to the overall conceptual framework provided insight into the culture-sharing group of the venture philanthropists.

This insight was the relationship between the top three ranked subjects. All three subjects had the highest Gift to Education compatibility and language taxonomy rankings. It demonstrated that group members who initially had a high compatibility to the overall Gift of Education also employed market language in their philanthropy. These members
were informed in their giving by affiliation and networks, inspired by commitment, and influence by outcomes.

Figure 19 Overall Subject Compatibility to Conceptual Framework. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
Chapter 5

Conclusion, Discussion, and Implications for Future Research

Conclusion

This study found that the conceptual framework served as a diagnostic technique, for the identification of venture philanthropists in education. Through NVivo analysis, the structure of the conceptual framework, and the research questions, this study identified membership criteria of the culture-sharing group called venture philanthropists. Beyond the membership, these three strategies supported the inquiry into the research questions.

How are these venture philanthropists inspired and influenced to give to education, and what informs their decision? Venture philanthropists are inspired to give by making a difference, commitment, and family. Outcomes, economics, and humanitarian outreach influenced the giving of venture philanthropists. Networks and affiliations informed the decisions of venture philanthropists.

The Gift of Education (Saltman, 2010) served as the conceptual framework, as well as the analytic tool (Carpenter, 2002), for exploring the affinity of the subjects to venture philanthropy as a group. Venture philanthropists, as a culture-sharing group, coded similarly on the conceptual framework overview and assumption elements. As a group, there was a significant decrease in compatibility with the second component of the conceptual framework, language taxonomy. The trend continued with minimal compatibility to the component funding structures.

There was insufficient evidence to endorse Saltman’s (2010) Gift of Education as a valid conceptual framework. While the framework served as a tool for analysis,
findings were insufficient to support Saltman’s thesis (2000, 2010, 2011) that venture philanthropists are out to destroy public education. In fact, the thematic analysis of the data suggested the contrary; that venture philanthropists are out to change public education for the better.

The function of the group, in terms of patterns of behavior, (Fetterman, 2010), demonstrated a broad-spectrum of corporatization to education philanthropy. As the researcher became immersed in the data, one pattern that emerged was the group’s decreased compatibility with specific details of the conceptual framework, specifically the knowledge process and teachers. For Saltman’s thesis to be fully supported by the data, subjects needed to have demonstrated compatibility throughout all components of the framework.

Discussion

The results of this study were both expected and surprising to the researcher. As a member of the culture-sharing group, findings lend themselves to a unique interpretation based on the familiarity of the researcher to the subjects (Wolcott, 1994).

Expected findings regarding the conceptual framework focused on the subject compatibility to the framework. One might have forecasted the compatibility of venture philanthropist groups to the big picture overview and assumptions of the conceptual framework. After all, the subjects self-reported as venture philanthropists. Subjects contributed an average of 52 million to education during the study time frame. One subject outlier reported gifting $1 billion. If the calculations are done minus the outlier, the average was 12.67 million per venture philanthropist to education. Inferences about
the financial success of the subjects correlated to the level of contributions from the group.

Unexpected findings related to the zero compatibility of subjects to the knowledge components of the framework. How is it that none of the subjects coded to the knowledge process of the Gift of Education (Saltman, 2010) framework? Subjects were specifically asked how teachers should best educate students. One explanation was found in the coding itself. To gauge the subjects understanding of the knowledge process, Boolean operators were employed to precisely mirror the conceptual framework. Terms such as high stakes standardized testing, methods-based instruction, performance based assessment, and the framing of education through market based idealization of competition and choice. These industry centric phrases possibly were at a level of detail that subjects do not engage in on a daily basis. Almost all subjects were leaders in their companies, with the exception of professional athletes. Even these individuals reported to own another company or run a philanthropic foundation.

The study design might also offer understanding into why subjects demonstrated zero compatibility to the knowledge component of the language taxonomy. Subjects were interviewed over the phone, with the average interview lasting 30 minutes. Time might have prevented a deeper discussion of these issues. Given more time, would subjects have demonstrated compatibility?

The third, and most plausible, explanation is that the subjects did not demonstrate affinity and compatibility to the knowledge element of the language taxonomy component, because they did not have it. Throughout this study, the more detailed the
analysis, the fewer subjects demonstrated affinity. The knowledge element included language of implementation and assessment – not within the subject’s professional experience. Saltman’s premise that venture philanthropists were hurting education might possibly be linked to this knowledge gap demonstrated by the subjects. This gap appeared to be rooted in what the subjects did not say. Venture philanthropists may be ignorant to the impact of their giving if only big picture issues have their attention.

Subjects were not conversant on foundations of education. An assessment of interview responses found zero references to the logistics of assessment, implementation of teacher effectiveness policies and procedures, and transition strategies from standard education practices to corporatization practices. The subjects’ responses lacked references to change strategies that might impact institutions, employees, students, and communities. The scope and design of this study did not support framework coding of the subject responses not included in their comments.

Expected findings included the themes identified with the research questions. The two research questions that explored how venture philanthropists are inspired and influenced in their giving resulted in theme analysis that was not surprising to the researcher. Unexpected results by the researcher entailed themes that related to what informed the venture philanthropists in their giving. Closely aligned with the themes that informed subjects on their gifting was the emergence of funding groups as pivotal to information sharing and collaborative funding.

Subjects that participated in this study, in general reported a long history of philanthropic giving. The average age was 59 years old. Themes of making a difference,
family, and inspired by commitment are identified in the literature as motivations for giving (Frumkin, 2006). What was unexpected was the theme identification of networking, reporting, and affiliation related to what informed the venture philanthropist.

The collaboration of funding, comingling of philanthropic donations, and private counsel groups challenged an assumption held by the researcher. It was expected the study would demonstrate the pooling of philanthropic funds. It never occurred to the researcher that subjects pooled funds but also forfeited their decision making to another colleague. All 25 subjects identified themselves as venture philanthropists in education, yet, how many of these participants really make their own funding decisions? One possible explanation was discovered in the theme analysis process.

Themes of networking, reporting, and affiliation were identified as methods by which subjects were informed in their gifting to education. A review of these themes drew attention to the combination of networking and affiliation. Subjects valued their relationships with one another. “I am a big dog, but I get to hang out with the bigger dogs,” was voiced by S21. S21 was the largest donor that participated in the study. “I love being invited to my funding group, I learn so much and I get to hang out with influential people,” stated S21.

The subjects represented some of the wealthiest individuals in America, yet affiliation and networking surfaced as important information sources. Upon deeper inquiry, subjects specifically mentioned membership to a total of four giving groups. Because these entities were not specific to the research questions or interview protocol,
the researcher conducted member checking with six subjects to determine the accuracy of these groups.

The first entity identified was The Giving Pledge membership. The website of The Giving Pledge (Giving Pledge) clearly stated that the members do not pool funds. However, over seven participants stated that as a member of The Giving Pledge, they have access to data and the ability to work together to solve problems. The second entity identified was the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Three members stated they contributed to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and a special fund that is designated toward teacher effectiveness. The third giving group identified was the Walton Foundation. Three members stated they gave “in conjunction with” the Walton Foundation. It appeared that the Walton Foundation distributed information, influenced giving, but did not actually receive funds. Finally, the fourth giving group was not identified.

Entrusting a network to inform one’s funding decisions raised new concerns outside of this study’s parameters. To what degree is the individual aware of the impact of their philanthropic giving on education? For that matter, to what degree is the culture-sharing group aware of the impact of their venture philanthropic giving on students?

Ethnography study design supported the researcher’s past experience working with venture philanthropists. As a member of this culture-sharing group, the researcher expected to discover humanitarian themes of making a difference, contributing to the community, and caring about the future of the country. The themes of networking and affiliation addressed what might be the essence of the group – that of belonging.
Relationships to one another appeared to be as important as the impact of giving. Without exception, all subjects commented on the importance of knowing other venture philanthropists.

Historically, wealth has both empowered and isolated philanthropists from society (Frumkin, 2006). The culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists reflected this dichotomy. The group demonstrated commitment to making a philanthropic difference in education. At the same time, the group identified relationships with one another as critical to their activities (affiliation, networking). A sense of belonging -- to one’s group or cause – was insight into this culture. Could it be that this sense of belonging is the same in the cultures of both the venture philanthropists as well as members of public education? It spurred the researcher to consider Saltman’s (2000) thesis was motivated by a threat to the sub-culture of public education educators.

**Implications for Future Research**

This ethnography into the culture-sharing group of venture philanthropists provided insight into the subjects gifting to education. The Gift of Education (Saltman, 2010) served as a hearty analytical tool. Based on the findings of this study, a foundation was established for future qualitative and quantitative studies. Studies could potentially replicate this study by employing the Gift of Education as both the framework and the tool for data analysis.

The role of funding groups emerged as a finding of the study. Due to focus of the ethnography on venture philanthropists as a culture-sharing group, deep exploration was limited into the nature of the funding groups. The next step to understanding what
Influences, inspires, and informs the venture philanthropists will be to explore their relationship to the funding groups. How do the funding groups influence the venture philanthropist to give to them? What rewards do the venture philanthropists participating in these funding groups reap? To what degree are there interlocking boards among all the subjects engaged in venture philanthropy?

Finally, future research should address the impact on students and families resulting from venture philanthropists’ focus on education reform. It appeared from the results of this study that venture philanthropists might not be aware of the degree of their influence on the very people they are trying to help.

“Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary” (King, 1981, p. 34).
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board

University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects

Date: 2/1/2013

IRB Review

IRB PROTOCOL NO.: 13-107
Protocol Title: Venture Philanthropists and Education: Friend or Foe?
Principal Investigator: Colleen Stiles
Application: New Application
Type of Review: Expedited 6
Risk Level: No more than Minimal Risk
This Protocol involves a Vulnerable Population: N/A (No Vulnerable Population)
Expires: January 31, 2014
*Note, if exempt: If there are no major changes in the research, protocol does not require review on a continuing basis by the IRB. In addition, the protocol may match more than one review category not listed.
Externally funded: ☐ No ☐ Yes
OSP #: Sponsor:

Thank you for submitting your Request for IRB Review. The protocol identified above has been reviewed according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations. The review category is noted above, along with the expiration date, if applicable.

Once human participant research has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator’s (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the project:
- The PI must provide the IRB with all protocol and consent form amendments and revisions.
  - The IRB must approve these changes prior to implementation.
- All advertisements recruiting study subjects must also receive prior approval by the IRB.
- The PI must promptly inform the IRB of all unanticipated serious adverse (within 24 hours). All unanticipated adverse events must be reported to the IRB within 1 week (see 45CFR46.103(h)(5)). Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the project.
- Renew study with the IRB prior to expiration.
- Notify the IRB when the study is complete

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Sanderson in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 719-255-3903 or irb@uccs.edu

Thank you for your concern about human subject protection issues, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely yours,

Jenenne P. Nelson
Jenenne P. Nelson, PhD
IRB Chair

www.uccs.edu/~osp/compliance/
Version 11/13/12
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway, Colorado Springs, CO 80918 719-255-3211 phone  719-255-3766 fax
APPENDIX B

List of sources that provided verification of subject philanthropic activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Validation</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropic News Digest</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronicle of Philanthropy</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
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<td>FORBES</td>
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<td>Chronicle of Higher Education</td>
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<td>Dallas Morning News</td>
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<td>Bloomberg Markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Giving Pledge</td>
<td><a href="http://givingpledge.org">http://givingpledge.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minneapolis Star and Tribune</td>
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<td>New York Times</td>
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<td>Education Week</td>
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<td>School and University websites</td>
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<td>Tax records</td>
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<td>Institutional news releases</td>
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<td>Business Week magazine</td>
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<td>Foundation annual reports</td>
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<td>Charter 100</td>
<td><a href="http://charter100-dc.org">http://charter100-dc.org</a></td>
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<td>Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame</td>
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<td>Akron Public Schools Annual Report</td>
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<td>Hollins University Annual Report on Giving</td>
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<td>Cleveland Jewish News</td>
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<td>Washington Business Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venture Philanthropy Partners website</td>
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<tr>
<td>faqs.org tax-exempt organizations</td>
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<td>guidestar.org</td>
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<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
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<td>PR Newswire</td>
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<td>Tax returns</td>
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<td>DSST Public Schools (Denver School of Science and Technology)</td>
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<td>Social venture partners International</td>
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<td>Social venture partners Seattle</td>
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<td>Social venture partners Minnesota</td>
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<td>Social venture partners Boulder</td>
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<td>Social Venture Partners Miami</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Venture Capital Association</td>
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<td>Harvard University</td>
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<td>Wake Forest University</td>
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<td>Yale University</td>
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<td>Boston College</td>
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<td>John Hopkins University</td>
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APPENDIX C

Individual Interview Protocol

Standardized Open-Ended Interview

Title: Venture Philanthropists: An Exploration of Gifting to Education

Interview Process

- Location: Private setting determined by subject, which also may include phone or video interviews
- Recording: Request will be made to audio record interview
- Disclosures: Disclosure of IRB approval
- Length: Approximately 30 minutes
- Follow-up: A thank you email

Review Confidentiality Agreement

Consent Form Review and Sign

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to contribute to professional knowledge and the practice of philanthropy in education by examining what inspires and influences venture philanthropists giving to education and what informs their decisions.

Demographic Data Collection

Gender

Age

Years of post-high school education

Higher Education Institutions attended

Professional Position

Do you give through a family foundation?
APPENDIX C Continued

Do you give through a corporate foundation?
Do you give anonymously?
Years of philanthropic giving
Years of philanthropic giving to education
Educational philanthropic activities 2009 – 2012
Industry Affiliation

Introduction
The introduction includes general questions that focus on the subject’s experience in philanthropy, venture philanthropy, and education. Questions regarding philanthropy address the subject’s thoughts on how they are to give to education, how they are influenced to give to education, and what informs their decision. These questions specifically address the research questions. The research questions are the following. How are venture philanthropists inspired to give to education? How are venture philanthropists influenced to give to education? What informs venture philanthropists giving to education? The introduction provides the opportunity to self identify as a venture philanthropist. The introduction communicates the purpose of this study.

Initial introductory questions:

“How would you define philanthropy and your philanthropic activities?”
“Are you familiar with venture philanthropy, and if so what is your perception?”
“How would you describe your venture philanthropic activities in education?”

Main Body of Interview:
To allow for a vibrant process of data collection, the subject’s responses will feed the iterative process.
APPENDIX C Continued

“What organizations have you funded, and what is your role within them?”

“What is the greatest impact of your giving to education?”

“How are you inspired to give to education?”

“What informs your decisions to give to education?”

Conclusion

• Thank subject for participating

• Answer follow-up questions

• Double check consent form is signed.
APPENDIX D
Subject Interview & Validity Form

Subject Validity Form

* Required
Subject Code

First Name

Last Name

Signed Consent Form *
☑ Yes
☑ No
☐ Other: _____________________________

Age

Gender
☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Other: _____________________________

Venture Philanthropist Self Identified
☑ Yes
☑ No
☐ Other: _____________________________

Years of post-high school education
☐

Higher Education Institutions Attended


Professional Position

Industry Affiliation

Do you give through a family foundation?
☑ Yes
☑ No
☐ Other: _____________________________

Do you give through a corporate foundation?
☐ Yes
☑ No
☐ Other: _____________________________

Do you give anonymously?
☐ Yes
☑ No
☐ Sometimes
☐ Other: _____________________________

Educational philanthropic activities 2009-2012


APPENDIX D Continued

Years of Philanthropic Giving
☐

Years of Philanthropic Giving to Education
☐

Validation
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other: ______________________

Validation #1

Validation #2

Validation #3

How you you define philanthropy and your philanthropic activities?

How would you describe your venture philanthropic activities in education?
APPENDIX D Continued

How are you inspired to give to education?

How are you influenced to give to education?

How do these experiences shape your decisions to education philanthropy?

What informs your decisions to give to education?

How would you describe public education?

How would you describe the role of public education?

What concerns do you have about education today?
APPENDIX D Continued

How should teachers best educate students?

How do you hope to change the outcomes of education?

Do you target your funding to education? How?

How do you assess or evaluate successful philanthropic funding?

Amount Given

To where
APPENDIX E

NVivo codebook

Gift To Education
Overview
- Lens
- Venture Philanthropists
- Reworking
- Public Education
- Corporatization
- Business Language
- Influencing
- Funding Structures
- Education Domains
- Reframing
- Issues
- Practices
- Policies

Assumptions
- Corporatization
- Business Metaphors
- Business Logic
- Business Language
- Schools As For Profit Business
- Profit
- Knowledge Instruments
- Disconnecting Knowledge Political, Ethical, And Cultural Struggles
- Emphasize The Ideology Of Corporate Culture
- Meaning And Identifications Compatible With Business
- Measurable
- Student Achievement
- Teacher Practice

Language Taxonomy
Market Language
- Teachers
  - Incentives
  - Accountability
  - Performance
  - Assessment
APPENDIX E Continued

Knowledge Process

  Technological Modifications
  Instruction
  Efficient
  Standardization Of Curriculum
  High Stakes Standardize Testing
  Standardized Testing
  Methods Based Instruction
  Scripted Lessons
  Efficient Delivery
  Business Ideology
  Performance Based Assessment
  Assessment
  Turnaround
  Knowledge Units
  Knowledge As Product
  Currency For Jobs
  Competition In Market
  Choice
  Commodity
  Knowledge Produced By Experts
  Knowledge Delivered By Teachers
  Knowledge Consumed By Students

Students

  Incentives
  Consumers
  Clients
  Trained
  Achievement

Schools

  Equality
  Access
  Citizenship
  Formation
  Democratic Educational Practice
  Monopoly
  Failure
  Competition
APPENDIX E Continued

Accountability
Choice
Commercialized
Stake
Site
Replicate
Franchise
Scale Up
Brand
Market Model
Achievement As An Entity
Excellence
Corporate Culture In All Aspects Of Schooling
Performance Based Assessment
Privatized Schools Financed By Vouchers And Tax Credits
Franchises

Funding Structures
Outcomes
Facilitating Entry Of Business Professionals Into Teacher Work Force
Alternative Teacher Certification
Database Outcomes
Database Systems For Teacher Recruitment
Database Systems For Teach Performance
Turnarounds

Economic
School Privatization
Deregulation,
Schools For Profit
Real Estate Deals Related To Charter Schools
Eliminate Unions

Political
Lobby Efforts
Charter School
Franchises
Expand Charter
Schools
Implement Vouchers,
Voucher Tax Credits
Remaking Teacher Education That Removes Critical And Intellectual Content.

Cultural
APPENDIX E Continued

Largely Rightist Form Of Educational Policy And Practice
Test Based Accountability
School Commercialism
Corporate Forms Of School Administration
Conservative School Models
APPENDIX F

Funding Structures Cultural Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
APPENDIX G

Funding Structures Economic Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
Funding Structures Political Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.
APPENDIX I

Funding Structures Outcome Coverage. Derived through NVivo coding and analysis. See Appendix E for coding references.