

Environmental Advocacy within Non-Governmental Organizations

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this capstone is to understand how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) assess global climate change in their advocacy at the local level. NGOs were identified as participants in political arenas and often close gaps in environmental initiatives. This case study aims to analyze collaborative networks developed by the Puget Sound Sage. This particular NGO is a Seattle-based organization whose mission is to “build communities where all families thrive.” They identify their process as working towards more equitable and sustainable objectives through research, policy initiatives, and community engagement. Further, this case study provides analytical observations as to how NGOs’ strategic interactions influence their efforts to combine climate change solutions with equity concerns. In addition, Got Green is a partner NGO, which was studied in relation to its collaboration with the Puget Sound Sage. Among a variety of other issues, there are numerous responses to climate change, and varying levels of intervention at the local, national, and global level.

INTRODUCTION

With the global proliferation of NGOs, many of these organizations have become important advocates for environmental policy change. Between 1909 - 1988, international non-governmental advocacy organizations grew from thirty-seven to three-hundred and nine; non-governmental organizations grew from 176 to 4,518 (Princen & Finger, 1994, p.1). Following the Cold War, Western societies experienced social movements being formalized into these types of organizations with increasing frequency. This emergence rejuvenated scholarship on NGOs, and expanded theories on social movements. However, case studies are often focused on the national or international level organizations. The focus of social theories is also predominantly applied to actors engaged at the national or international level. Resource mobilization theory relates to collective action (Saunders, 2013). Moreover, the theory can be developed to evaluate organizational behavior, such as selection of allies.

The study of organizational behavior in non-governmental organizations provides insight into network building. Within civil society, there are many venues for policy change. Social movements can organize into an NGO to work in an institutional setting. In this way, NGOs can act as intergovernmental organizations. The environmental movement represents broad interests around the world, in part, because of their varying responses to climate change. Therefore, it is important for NGOs to build coalitions to build political power, and for their organization to survive. Resource mobilization theory falls within the scope of social movement theory, described as a “broad range of literature” (Saunders, 2013, p. 8). Saunders stated that resource mobilization theory applies to specific cases where organizations use “strategic actions to secure favorable resource balance” (Saunders, 2013, p 77). This theory suggests that an organization’s

interaction with others is integral to their choice of campaigns or initiatives. Further, Saunders (2013) stated that resource mobilization theory focuses on the micro-level, compared to general social movement theories. Until recently, the resource mobilization theory applied to political participation at the national level (Princen & Finger, 1994, p. 54). Recent perspectives account for part of the transformation of local environmental NGOs. These theories are valuable for studying a local environmental NGO, like the Puget Sound Sage. This research used these theories to study how the Puget Sound Sage and Got Green overcome challenges of funding, and develop advocacy together. Further, these theories can be applied to a local environmental NGOs, such as the Puget Sound Sage. Finally, this capstone seeks to better understand how the process for linking climate change with justice is accomplished when building coalitions.

One school of thought in NGO scholarship describes the organization's overall objective as accomplishing their stated goals while maintaining sustainability as an organization (Prakash & Gugerty, 2010). The "firm analogy" has been used to convey how NGOs network, internally organize, and strategize (Prakash & Gugerty, 2010). The firm analogy brings insight into how competition causes some NGOs to form alliances. These alliances may ultimately shape the campaign objectives for organizations like the Puget Sound Sage and Got Green. This capstone also augments the firm analogy by examining how and why NGOs broaden their scope. Further, the NGO selected for the case study seeks to address issues most pressing to the community in which it is based. The stated mission of the organization claims that "people should have access to good jobs and dignity at work, as well as a clean environment and safe, affordable housing" ("Puget Sound Sage: About Us", n.d.). This mission statement relates to the rights-based approach advocated by scholars such as James Ron and David Crow. Moreover, the rights-based approach is recommended for future research on NGOs. The micro level analysis from the Puget

Sound Sage's work provides insight into the roles that NGOs fill. This organizational perspective builds on theories that internal structures can impact external activities. Young Demko, and Ramakrishna (1991) claimed that environmental issues require "both appropriate conceptualizations on the problems" while "addressing equity issues embedded in them" (as cited Princen & Finger, 1994). This relates to the work of the Puget Sound Sage, which seeks to identifying the underlying sources of inequality. The Puget Sound Sage uses environmental justice, which involves a concerted approach to alleviating issues.

Although the mission objective of an NGO may be clearly stated, its classification as an organization may be harder to define. NGO scholarship demonstrates the broad spectrum of NGOs, and includes advocacy organizations, cultural movements, and organized campaigns. The term "non-governmental organization" is globally salient, while also incorporating the following basic characteristics used to describe the NGO sector (Lang, 2014). They are "(1) are not related to government, (2) are not for profit, (3) are voluntary, and (4) pursue activities for the common good instead of just for their members" (Lang, 2014, p. 12). The first characteristic essentially describes an organization that was not created as a function of the government; although, this does not necessarily exclude governmental funding. This definition is sufficient for the purposes of this study. Willets (2011) proposed closer inspection of the networks of relations between non-governmental actors and institutions. This would further show how NGOs are integrated into society, thereby bridging many aspects of society that are considered separate.

Foremost, institutional and public advocacy are needed for a healthy democracy. As such, Lang claimed that "NGOization" (2014) can normalize the relations between civil society actors and government. These key relationships can also demonstrate the power dynamics between government and civil society actors, including NGOs. Civil society is described as having two

public dimensions (Lang, 2014). The first is a beacon of public voice, and the second is the formation of public action. The least desirable implications for civil society are a dense network of associations without public advocacy, or NGOs becoming proxy publics. Using the NGOization perspective analysis, Lang (2014) advocates for reform in public engagement practices in order for NGOs to recapture and utilize the public voice. The Puget Sound Sage worked to represent its community members through multi-faceted approach to justice. The practices of Puget Sound Sage reflect this combined approach outlined by David Schlosberg. Schlosberg (2007) advocated a cohesive understanding of justice, through promoting participation, recognition, and just distribution practices. Further, Schlosberg (2007) detailed environmental justice as a guiding principle, which will be discussed in detail later. The Puget Sound Sage promotes participation and recognition through community-based participatory research (CBPR). Through CBPR, the Puget Sound Sage partnered with individuals and organizations to study issues affecting local communities. Through these practices, the Puget Sound Sage provided supporting data and recognition to these issues facing the communities. An example of the Puget Sound Sage's community-based participatory research will be discussed in detail later.

Ultimately, interdisciplinary analysis of tactics is required to understand the impact of NGOs. This research studied the strategic practices of one organization in particular, the Puget Sound Sage. Originally, the Puget Sound Sage was known as the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for Everyone (SAGE). At the time of its conception, in 2001, it was founded as a coalition of labor, faith, and community organizations ("Puget Sound Sage: About Us", n.d.). The scope of their operations is focused on Rainier Valley in Seattle, Washington. In 2008, the organization gained independent 501(c) 3 non-profit standing. Over the years, projects emerged

with goals of targeting chronic underemployment, creating green jobs, and monitoring air quality. In particular, the air quality monitoring study is an example of the growing interest in environmental justice. The air quality monitoring study is also an example of community-based participatory research by the Puget Sound Sage. This example will be discussed later in detail.

The ways in which the Puget Sound Sage developed its collaborative network is clarified through studying their methods to address environmental justice. In a letter regarding her transition to Executive Director, Rebecca Saldaña noted the goals of the organization as learned through her experience in the organization. Saldaña (2015) claims that campaigns are based in “racial, economic, and environmental justice.” The letter also outlined partnerships with the organization Got Green, and the Puget Sound Sage’s coalition, South Communities Organized for Racial/Regional Equity (CORE). Over time, the Puget Sound Sage increased work related to climate change. Additionally, the Puget Sound Sage works within a broad coalition on environmental justice. These issues involve a diverse array of constituents, from those concerned about the environment, labor standards, fair housing, and equity. In 1981, Dr. Benjamin Chavis coined the term “environmental racism,” which interrelates racial injustice and environmental degradation (Schlosberg, 2007, p. 50). It addressed systemic degradation of environments near ethnic and minority communities, and the underrepresentation of these individuals in environmental policy decisions (Schlosberg, 2007). Bryant (1995) claimed that environmental justice holds a broader scope than environmental justice (as cited in Schlosberg, 2007, p. 50-51). Saunders also studied how decisions for collaboration tended to depend on “[the] strategic, identity, and resource differences” of organizations (Saunders, 2013, p.2). Through this expansive, but interrelated, term of environmental justice, the Puget Sound Sage built coalitions of broad constituents.

At the time of publication, there were five staff members at Got Green, in comparison to eight staff members at Puget Sound Sage (“Got Green: Contact”, n.d.; “Puget Sound Sage: About Us”, n.d.) Formed in 2008, Got Green is a grassroots organization with the purpose of organizing on environmental and economic equity issues. These organizations also share similar concerns for survival. The challenges that NGOs face begin with funding. However, when campaign objectives are introduced, these organizations face additional challenges related to collective action. Finally, if there is to be a significant response to climate change, NGOs will likely emerge as mediators between the public and lawmakers.

In 2015, Washington state will have faced a “climate change stress test” (“Summer 2015: The Northwest’s Global Warming Stress Test”, 2015). The article discussed regional climate simulations conducted by the University of Washington, and compared an analysis by the UW Climate Impacts Group. These sources suggested that the current weather projections for this year will closely reflect those for 2070, when effects of climate change are expected to reach noticeable levels. The article cited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate Forecast System, which predicted averages which range 1-2°C (2-4°F) above normal. Although these conditions are not expected to endure past summer, it led to proactive measures in the Yakima Basin. In this part of the state, the reservoir depends on snow melt to replenish itself. According to the article, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation added to the reservoirs earlier than normal. Although the reservoirs were then filled, the Yakima Basin is still expected to undergo water shortages. The Puget Sound Sage stressed the impact of climate change on the communities in which they work, and these weather projection demonstrates Washington state’s vulnerabilities from future climate-related events. The air monitoring study conducted, in part,

by the Puget Sound Sage further explains concern over climate change by communities in Rainier Valley. This air-monitoring study will be discussed in further detail herein.

LITERATURE REVIEW

While admitting that NGOs are vital actors, the previous authors have expressed concerns for greater accountability and representation within these organizations. Additional viewpoints argues that NGO legitimacy should be measured by their public engagement practices (Lang, 2014). Lang (2014) argued that NGOs offer important local “on the ground” knowledge, and are therefore important to civil society. In addition, NGOs face challenges when advocating for initiatives that aim to affect climate change, while also addressing the present needs of their local communities. While NGOs have dominated human rights efforts, including the establishment of the International Criminal Court (Willetts, 2011), other domains have more closely represented the position of their government. This claim follows from an understanding that normalized relations between NGOs and policy-makers yield behavioral norms that affect all actors (Smith & Grønberg, 2006). In particular, environmental NGOs play an important role in supporting regulatory and community-based approaches to climate change. NGOs can pursue a variety of venues to accomplish their mission objectives. NGOs with valuable expertise are able to work for beneficial environmental legislation.

Expertise can serve to improve participatory justice through a community-based approach to climate change. Further, NGOs can function in an institutional setting to focus on accomplishing significant environmental objectives. A comparative case study of the Atlantic States Legal Foundation (ASLF) and the Partnership for Onondaga Creek demonstrate the differences in strategies over time and in responses to different stimuli (Pralle, 2009). The ASLF evolved from

the need for inexpensive legal aid and technical assistance in local environmental groups. Its primary objectives included litigation through coalitions with citizens to gain standing in citizen suits. In this role, the organization also provided expertise. Through using the consultative approach, instead of direct litigation, the organization could pursue an alternate venue, and arguably, was guided by internal actors. In comparison, the Partnership for Onondaga Creek was formed with one dominant goal in mind, to stop the construction of a treatment facility. The partnership found success in this venue, and the plant was successfully opposed. However, relations with the city council deteriorated and the organization moved to another venue. This example of “one-shot” issue-oriented advocacy organizations are more likely to engage policy arenas and decision venues for brief periods of time (Pralle, 2009). Pralle also contributed two proposed models for advocacy group strategy. The static model emphasizes expertise, organizational identity, and ideological orientation as factors. Studies on nonprofit organizations also showed that the legal structures, funding opportunities, and access to political institutions influence the size and type of organization (Berry, 1999; Skocpol, 1999; Walker 1991). Pralle (2009) developed the second model, the dynamic model, defined in relation to the punctuated equilibrium model of policy change proposed by Baumgartner and Jones (1993). Organizations within the static model require a greater external shock; at which point, their actions begin to resemble the dynamic model.

While the legitimacy of NGOs is normally tied to their performance or success, civil society scholars, such as Lang (2014), have stressed that they should be measured by their public engagement practices. Lang seeks to define NGOs, not as a residual third category following government and public, but rather, as an intermediary between government and public. As Lang (2014) argued, there are three facets of understanding how NGOs are helped or harmed while

engaging in the public sphere: (1) “NGOization” of civil society, (2) institutionalization of advocacy, and (3) NGOs as proxy publics. This capstone relates briefly to the institutionalization of advocacy. In this mode, institutionalized NGOs can influence the decision-making processes by advocating for underrepresented groups.

Analysis of official aid from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed steady funding growth during in the 1980s-1990s (Reimann, 2006). Following the end of the Cold War and a new wave of democratization, a number of OECD states, including the U.S., spent between 10 and 25 percent of their total annual foreign assistance through NGOs (Smillie, 1999). In response, critics argue that the proliferation of NGOs creates a need to formalize accountability and participation strategies for NGOs. Criticism stems from the argument that NGOs perpetuate the dominant ideology respective of their society, including reinforcing the neoliberal economic order (Duffy, 2006).

Concerns also arise from institutionalized arenas where decisions are made on behalf of the public (Steffek & Ferretti, 2009). Some viewpoints advocate using participatory procedures for a stronger civil society (Steffek & Hahn, 2010). Further, these authors (Steffek & Ferretti, 2009; Steffek & Hahn, 2009) focused on national organizations. The current literature lacks emphasis on local, community-based organizations. One explanation is that theories either focused on individual choices (such as, principal-agent problems in collective action) or focused on macro-level phenomena (such as, punctuated equilibrium).

In response, NGOs can turn to coalitions to overcome some of these challenges of legitimacy and accountability. These coalitions represent broad constituencies; some of which face pressures from issues differently. As representatives of these constituencies, an NGO must weigh different issues and work within its budget.

NGO scholarship has turned to decision-making analysis to better understand how these organizations strategize. In one study, the author incorporates research from the National Center for Environmental Decision-making Research (English, 1999). The model proved useful, because it provide a context-based approach. English emphasizes the importance of “the substantive issue at hand and the social setting in which the decision is made.” (English, 58). This is especially relevant to environmental issues addressed through an environmental justice approach. Environmental justice incorporates multiple forms of justice to address racial injustice and environmental degradation. English’s context-based approach (1999) corresponds to this embedded decision-making process, which weighs the importance of multiple goals with the resource limitations of an NGO. Therefore, this model proved useful in visualizing how the Puget Sound Sage developed advocacy that incorporated climate change with equity goals. Finally, the current literature on NGOs has evolved scholarship on environmental justice, but has overlooked that challenges of combining different advocacy goals.

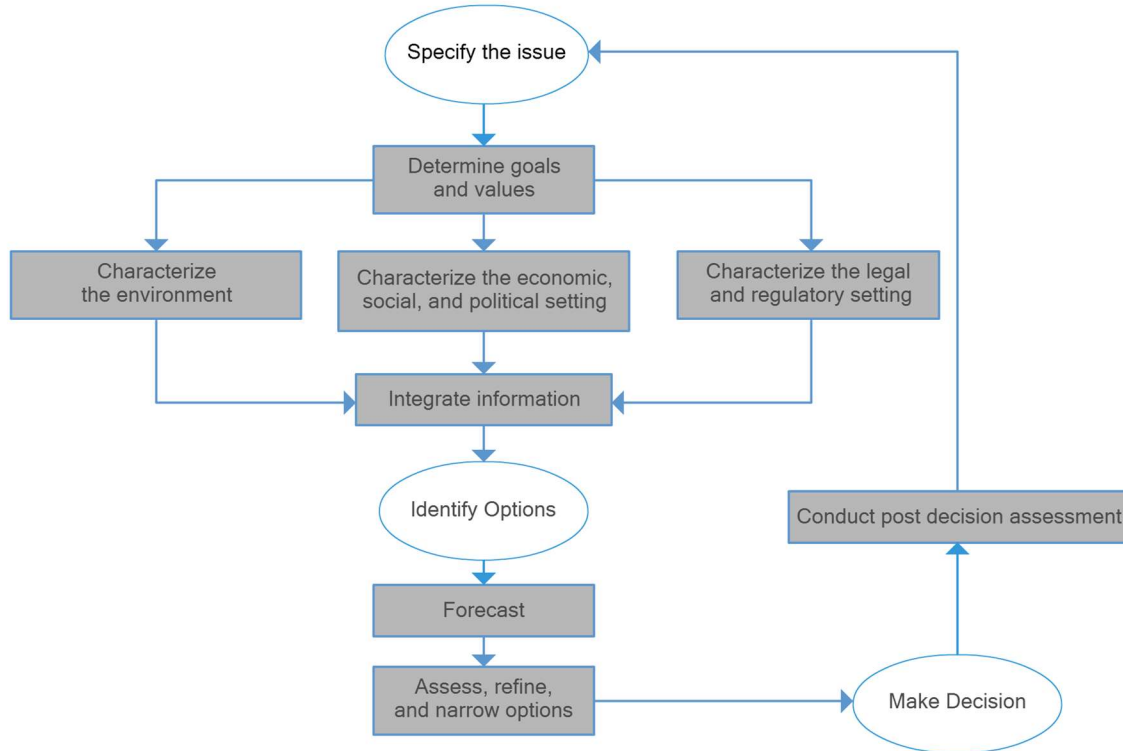


Figure 1. M.K English (1999). “Steps in an Environmental Decision-Making Process”. p. 59

It is important to understand how NGOs select their strategies. Coalitions represent shared interests. Since NGOs claim to provide public goods, the ways in which they organize should provide insight into decision-making. The growing field of environmental philosophy demonstrates this intersection between individual thinking and collective action. Further, using coalitions strategically presents new opportunities for achieving climate change regulation.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Research Question

How do non-governmental organizations, such as the Puget Sound Sage, link climate change to justice? How have their objectives developed as the organization evolved?

Research Design

A case study design methodology by Robert K. Yin (2013) serves as the foundation for the study of how the Puget Sound Sage makes decisions to adopt climate change strategies. Case studies are often criticized for lacking rigor, but by applying aspects of Yin's method for case studies, this will hopefully increase the rigor of my analysis. Consequently, a major criticism of case studies is that they lack rigor. The case study method often uses multiple sources of information in order to provide an encompassing net of data. Similarly, criticism of case studies state that they too closely resemble empirical studies, and thereby, lack clear conclusions. Finally, case studies characteristically lack generalizability. Still, the lack of generalizability does not mar the connection of theories to the findings.

Further, case studies are often used when the research question involves the "decisions" made (Yin, 2013, p.11). The case study method serves social research, wherein the phenomena being studied is tied closely to conditions being examined (Yin, 2013). Specifically, case studies do not exist in a controlled environment. Therefore, the term case study is sometimes interchanged for an ethnography, in which the researcher details observations. This is reasonable, because a case study examines a contemporary phenomenon in its existing context. (Yin, 2013, p. 13). Further, this method prepares for a complex environment where there are a multitude of variables of interests. As a result, the case study method is considered integral to expanding social research (Yin, 2003). The case selection is also useful when there are exemplary conditions, similar to a micro-cosm (Yin, 2003, p.10). Yin (2003) used this characteristic to preempt selection of convenient cases. Further, the case study design benefits from previously developed theoretical propositions. These theoretical propositions helped narrow the focus within the broad literature of civil society organizations. There are many relevant questions

within this field, but through focusing on strategic coalition-building, the purpose of the case study became clear. This study follows the inquisitive nature of the case study method where “fieldwork and data collection are undertaken prior to the final definition of the study question or hypotheses” (Yin, 2003, p. 6).

Formed in 2001, the Puget Sound Sage demonstrated a history of campaigns focused on a variety of environmental issues and equity issues. At the same time, the organization is actively placing “climate in an equity lens” (personal interview, March 11, 2015). Even as its objectives evolved, the Puget Sound Sage continued to use the coalition strategy. Yin (2003) stated that fewer studies focus on interorganizational arrangements. Therefore, this case study incorporated data from Got Green, because it served as a strategic partner. However, the unit of analysis remained focused on the Puget Sound Sage through evaluating its work in environmental justice. Therefore, the scope of the case study was determined by the area addressed by the Puget Sound Sage’s initiatives, namely, Rainier Valley in Seattle, Washington. The case study encompassed Puget Sound Sage’s work between 2001-2015. However, the Green Jobs campaign (2009-2012), served as the best elaboration of the phenomena being studied. Consequently, the issue boundaries for the case study remained focused on work surrounding environmental justice campaigns; especially regarding the Green Jobs campaign.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

From August 30, 2015 through September 1, 2015, Mansfield College will host the first global meeting for the Non-Governmental Organisations Project. The conferences’ guide to project development presented an overview of the questions for NGO scholarship (“Call for Presentations”, 2015). This guide helped to create my questionnaire, in order to best answer the

research question. As such, the guide outlines the major challenges for an NGO, while underpinning the interorganizational activities. The guide also presents the diversity among NGO structures and activities.

Mansfield College Conference Guide for “Non-Governmental Organisations Project”

1) Scope:

- Types and activities of NGOs: the rise of *INGOS* (international NGOs), *BINGOS* (big international NGOs/business-friendly international NGOs) and *RINGOS* (research and independent NGOs) as a response to the issues of isolated groups working alongside each other and the challenges they face
- Sector-wide trends
- Case studies of successful or flawed NGO initiatives
- Profiles of NGOs and their involvement in particular causes and issues

2) Funding:

- Factors that encourage or discourage grant-making and donations
- Best practice models for fundraising and using monies effectively
- Historical and comparative analyses of funding patterns
- Scams and misappropriation of funds

3) Networking, Sharing Information and Expertise:

- Strategies for sharing information, resources and expertise
- Obstacles to networking and strategies for overcoming those obstacles
- Benefits of sharing
- Negotiating the big NGO vs. small NGO divide

4) Clientelism:

- Relationship between NGOs and governments
- Relationships between NGOs and for-profit businesses
- NGOs and service delivery
- NGOs as catalysts for social accountability
- NGOs and advocacy

5) Legitimacy and Sustainability:

- Threats to legitimacy and sustainability
- Public perceptions
- Relationship between NGOs and causes
- Relationships with grassroots movements and elites
- Methods and metrics for assessing success, effectiveness and value of NGOs
- Challenges to sustainability

6) Political Environment:

- Impact of political regimes on NGO activities
- NGOs as catalysts for political change
- NGOs and lobbying
- Assessments of NGO 'power': origins, limitations and uses

7) Regulatory Environments in which NGOs Operate:

- Challenges created by legal requirements around conditions of incorporation
- Red tape and administrative management
- Probity and compliance issues

- Mechanisms and practices for changing the regulatory environment

8) NGOs and Cross Culture Relations:

- NGO's and the North/South divide
- NGOs and nationalism
- NGOs and the country vs. corporation divide

9) NGOs and (Inter)National Economies:

- Impacts of NGOs on national economies
- Impacts of national economic issues on NGOs
- Impacts of global economic and institutional issues

The study used secondary data supplemented with interviews to determine how the NGO evaluates its objectives and purpose. The Puget Sound Sage has been a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for approximately seven years (“History”, n.d.). The mission statement and interests of the NGO are presented foremost on the website. News reports and website publications provided additional data on initiatives. Analysis of documentation on projects, networking activities, and conferences provide examples of their wide range of interests. As outlined by Creswell (2014), the subjects remained anonymous, and any identifiable data has been removed from this paper. These documents were evaluated in order to create a holistic view of how the organization balances its goals for environmental principles, continue its activities and missions, and expand its influence.

Second, the study looked for insights into how the NGO participates in collective action and

prioritizes issues. The study used the data collected to evaluate how the NGO meets challenges from global issues that are concurrent with issues important to its community, primarily Rainier Valley, in Seattle, Washington. The conference guide, detailed previously, served to highlight the importance of balancing objectives. The Puget Sound Sage seeks a multi-faceted approach to achieving their mission objectives. As an NGO, the Puget Sound Sage, seeks to evolve by expanding the impact of its advocacy. Therefore, their advocacy must continually evolve, and they must develop successful strategies for collaboration. In addition, the conference guide served to highlight the two most important aspects for my research question. These aspects were (1) establishing ties and sustainability, and (2) networking, sharing information, and expertise. The following questionnaire was used during the interviews.

1) Establishing Ties and Sustainability

1. How does Puget Sound Sage balance different objectives?
2. What are the methods and metrics for assessing success?
3. Relations between Puget Sound Sage and community organizations
 - a. challenges for maintaining relations
4. Relations between NGOs and government
 - a. challenges for maintaining relations

2) Networking, Sharing Information, and Expertise

5. What are the strategies for sharing information, resources and expertise?
6. What are the obstacles to networking?
7. What are the strategies for overcoming those obstacles?

Data Analysis

The first interview was conducted at Puget Sound Sage. This interview provided insight into networking and communications for their coalitions. This led to an interview with a staff member at Got Green. For this interview, some of the questions above were modified. Both organizations work in the area of Seattle, and share similar concerns for environmental justice. Their recent collaboration for the “Green Jobs” campaign led to the Priority Hire Ordinance (CB 118282) being adopted by the Seattle City Council in January 2015. The Puget Sound Sage was a member of the Targeted Local Hire Coalition. The final interview involved a former employee at Puget Sound Sage. This individual worked at the Puget Sound Sage during the formative years leading up to its 501(c)3 designation, and during the Green Jobs campaign. These individuals were selected because of their insights into the strategic picking of coalition members. These staff members provided unequivocal information about strategic implementation, as well as background information about the objectives for the organization.

Results

During the first interview, the subject identified funding as the primary challenge for NGOs (personal interview, March 11, 2015). Before conducting interviews, it was assumed that funding played a larger role in an NGO's strategies, however, the importance of sharing expertise was explained in a later interview. According to the subject, the NGO focused on a core center of programs to deal with this challenge. They collaborated heavily, which resulted in a "strategic pickings of campaigns". In addition, the NGO used partners to deal with its primary challenge of funding and accomplish many of its goals. Got Green and Puget Sound Sage both view their advocacy objectives as addressing climate change and equity issues. During the interview, the subject described the Puget Sound Sage as moving towards placing "climate in an equity lens." The Puget Sound Sage distinguished itself by using "equitable and sustainable solutions" through "a combination of research, policy, leadership development, and civic engagement" ("Puget Sound Sage: About Us", n.d). The subject further elaborated that while "Got Green [did] a lot of the organizing work, [we] do a lot of the policy" research (personal interview, March 11, 2015). A significant contributor is Howard Greenwich, the Research Director for the Puget Sound Sage.

Recent efforts were spent on building support for the Priority Hire Ordinance (CB 118282), which requires city construction contractors to hire a quota of their workers from local economically disadvantaged areas. In 2009, the Puget Sound Sage proposed a plan to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to support low-income workers in green jobs (Blumgart, 2009). As cited in the article (2009), communities of color were disproportionately affected by unemployment. According to their brief on a U.S. Census Bureau report, poverty rates were highest among "Latinos (19 percent) and African Americans (23 percent)" in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area (Blumgart, 2009). Howard Greenwich, as

research director, stated that “there need to be reserve jobs for people coming out of the training program” (Blumgart, 2009).

While the Puget Sound Sage served as the research arm, Got Green acted as the development arm of the partnership. Got Green coordinated the training program through a partnership with the Emerald City Bible Fellowship Church and Rainier Valley (Campbell, 2011). Ultimately, the Targeted Hire included Laborers International Union (LiUNA), Green for All, Climate Solutions, the Sierra Club, and King County Building Trades (“Puget Sound Sage: Green Jobs”, n.d.). The campaign established the goals of Green Economy Equity and Environmental Stewardship. Under Green Economy Equity, the campaign aimed to create “good jobs and lifetime construction careers” through producing enterprises based in their community to reduce poverty and underemployment. The second goal, Environmental Stewardship, sought to create more jobs through LiUNA’s weatherization training program. The training program would help fill the gap in weatherization trained employees to make energy efficiency retrofits to buildings in the area (“Puget Sound Sage: Green Jobs”, n.d.). The Green Jobs campaign achieved these goals with the inaugural class of the Laborer’s Union weatherization training program, and with the City of Seattle’s adopted contractor standards, which ensured jobs for the weatherization trainees. Got Green organized the Targeted Local Hire Coalition as part of the effort to pass the law in the Seattle City Council.

In addition, the first interview subject mentioned that the organization sees its additional role as “conducting climate based participatory research.” NGOs are often initiated in response to a persistent issue, and can serve as monitors and contribute expertise (Betsill, 2014). In 2013, the Puget Sound Sage conducted a group study with the University of Washington’s School of Public Health. The study compared measurements of diesel contamination in residential

neighborhoods of Beacon Hill and Queen Anne with areas in higher industrial activity and traffic, South Park and Georgetown (Schulte et al., 2013). The results showed higher pollution levels in South Park and Georgetown. The findings included insight into sources of pollution and neighborhood locations of concern.

The interview from Got Green provided insight into how they complete multiple objectives. In the interview, the subject stated that “[e]nvironmental justice is so encompassing” (phone interview, May 1, 2015). The subject was asked whether Got Green viewed environmental issues in a justice frame, or as two issues that are dealt with together. They replied that these two issues are dealt with “together, [and] again, the environment is broader.” The subject described environmental justice as addressing “racial justice, economic justice, and [the] environment at an intersection.” Through including “the definition of environment as our built environment,” Got Green had viewed conservation efforts of an insufficient way to address their multiple goals. The subject from Got Green adds that “the environment is broader, it is different from conservation.” In relation, English (1999) claimed that environmental decisions involve spatial dimensions, which vary across scale. English stated that “persistence, reversibility, and cumulative effects” can influence stakeholder action (English, 1999, p. 63). This is particularly pertinent to environmental issues, whose cumulative effects can become hazardous, while other cases may lead to considerations of short-term versus more permanent solutions. The subject noted that environmental justice movements work through “tak[ing] the lead from those who will be most vulnerable.” Foremost, the subject reiterated that “we’re pretty up-front with saying local green jobs is a climate solution.” Additionally, the subject conveyed how certain terms are used to mobilize support; in saying that, “environmental racism, and climate change” has been “traumatizing [in a way] that people get stuck in the problems.”

In the final interview, (personal interview, May 28, 2015), the subject provided background for the organization. This interview also provided insight on the strategic picking of coalition members and campaign needs. During their time, the organization existed as the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Affordable Housing. The role of this individual was to “expand the organization” through expanding its issues, identifying additional funding, and the hiring of additional staff. At that point, the Puget Sound Sage had worked as a coalition, but “expanded into a bigger coalition in 2007.” When asked how coalition members were selected, the subject responded that the organization instead selected issues that would “bring organizations around a common agenda.” The subject stated that the Puget Sound Sage tried to “identify issues that cut across different constituency organizations.” The subject explained that this created a broader set of constituencies to work with, and helped to “develop more political power,” because it can mobilize a broader constituency. In addition, the subject described a cumulative effect of political power in a coalition as the “biggest advantage.” In particular, the Puget Sound Sage worked on “comprehensive campaign[s],” which valued “challenges [to] these existing relations of power.”

Moreover, the subject concluded with the first interview on funding; stating that “funding is always an issues [as] it determines your scope.” However, the final subject added that funding does not influence the selection of issues, but influences “how hard or what kind of resources” are spent on a particular issue. In addition, the Puget Sound Sage would find a “strategic partner,” whose mission is tied to the selected issue. In this way, this partner would willingly “commit their own resources such as staff time, or leadership, or money, [or] some other resource needed.” In addition, the Puget Sound Sage could work with the same partner on multiple issues.

Further, the subject indicated that a strategic partner was essential, even when funding was available. After the Green Jobs campaign, LiUNA and Got Green shifted towards other campaigns. The subject stated that although funding might have been available to continue working on green jobs, they lacked a key partner. The subject emphasized that the Puget Sound Sage has made an impact through organizing constituents. Through coalitions, the subject remarked that a union, whose focus was not housing, had now engaged on campaigns related to housing.

Since NGOs have objectives in distinct areas, this may create a need for tradeoffs down the line. For example, through promoting job creation and pollution reduction within a large city, some conflicts may arise. Similarly, the NGO works with other organizations who may not prioritize objectives in the same way. In addition, further analysis of issues and coalitions which provide insight into how the NGO has tradeoffs between different objectives. With the assumption that organizations are ultimately shaped by concerns for survival, this ties to the resource mobilization theory, which applies a cost-benefit approach to the choice of allies.

On February 19, 2015, Rebecca Saldaña addressed the organization and supporters in a welcome letter on their webpage as Executive Director. Both the Puget Sound Sage and Got Green announced collaboration on a new climate justice program (Mangaliman, 2015; Saldaña, 2015). The program will address low-income and minority communities that are “disproportionately impacted by climate change in developing and advocating for climate mitigation, adaptation policies and strategies that will benefit people of color” (Saldaña, 2015). The strategies for campaigns seem invariably stable, which reflects the static model for advocacy organizations (Pralle, 2009). They rely on coalitions and share information over the length of the project. This aligns with the understanding of how NGOs operate to achieve their goals.

These findings demonstrated how NGOs overcome challenges through combining environmental issues within justice concerns. Further, through identifying a strategic partner, the NGO accommodated for issue selection before committing resources. Through analysis of previous programs and interview data, the NGO demonstrated a preference for projects that incorporate environmental issues within justice concerns. For example, the Targeted Local Hire Coalition, provided training through the weatherization training program, thereby increasing job opportunities through the weatherization program. The weatherization training program indirectly helped the environment through increasing the supply of workers who could improve energy efficiency in homes. In addition, this initiative directly alleviated impoverished areas, through the passage of the Priority Hire Ordinance (CB 118282). With the lens of environmental justice, these two NGOs sought to address multiple issues and a broad coalition with each initiative; thereby, expanding the resources available.

Coalition-building additionally helped the Puget Sound Sage address concerns for distributive justice, an aspect of environmental justice. This participatory approach incorporated different interests under a common agenda. As a community organization, this approach also reinforced their role as a public representative. Similarly, Lang (2014) emphasized that NGO legitimacy becomes connected to public engagement practices.

The static model proposed by Pralle (2009) emphasizes expertise, organizational identity, and ideological orientation as determinants of NGO strategies. Since its formation, the Puget Sound Sage integrated coalition-building into their identity, as a viable strategic and as a model for environmental justice. Environmental justice relates to distributive justice through equality in decision-making processes (Schlosberg, 2007, p. 12). The firm analogy (Prakash & Gugerty, 2010) claimed that advocacy organizations represent sources of collaboration and competition. In

this case study, the collective action perspective of each organization motivated them to share resources. The Green Jobs campaign, which culminated in the Priority Hire Ordinance, demonstrated the collaborative efforts of these two organizations. The Puget Sound Sage links climate change with justice through the environmental justice framework. Within the broad coalition of environmental justice, the organization can mobilize multiple groups of varying political clout. Thereby, campaigns include issues such as the environment, labor standards, fair housing, and equity.

Further, neither organization managed large-scale operations. To reiterate, both the Puget Sound Sage and Got Green had less than 10 employees (“Got Green: Contact”, n.d.; “Puget Sound Sage: About Us”, n.d.) In addition, the scope of their work includes nearly 318,000 people living below the Federal poverty level in the Puget Sound area, of which many are disproportionately communities of color (“Earnings, Poverty & Income Inequality”, 2008). Therefore, these organizations determined that they work best as collaborators, rather than competitors. In these instances, the Puget Sound Sage acted as the research arm, Got Green acted as the development arm. Both Puget Sound Sage interviews conclude that funding remained the primary concern. However, the selection of issues was subject to their partners, while funding influences the type of resources used (personal interview, May 28, 2015). This concurred with the resource mobilization theory, which stated that interorganizational practices affect campaign choices.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation for future researchers is to plan interviews with special consideration for NGOs. Arranging the interviews took considerably more time than expected. Either one or both of the NGOs was involved in fundraising efforts at a given time. Future

research could improve upon this study by using different ways to measure the preferences of the organization through its key players. Further, it would be helpful to understand how the organization uses its collective action mobilization capacity. With this information, they could develop a clear classification of the environmental approaches preferred by NGOs. Finally, NGO scholarship almost inherently fosters discussion on improving civil society. This capstone hopefully provided some thoughts on how NGOs can improve civil society through addressing multiple objectives in a collaborative approach.

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