

Capstone Project White Paper

Legacy in Transition: Enhancing Intergenerational Engagement at a Heritage Philanthropy
During Times of Change: A Mixed Method Study on Progressive Membership Recruitment
Amidst Societal Shifts

By: R. Lizzie Wahab

Vanderbilt University

Organization of Study = Israel-Focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP)

March 2024

Executive Summary

Organizational Context

The focus of this study is an established heritage philanthropy in the United States, deeply rooted in the concept of Zionism, cultural preservation, and healthcare advocacy. Henceforth, it will be referred to as an Israeli-focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP). The organization has a strong tradition of community service and engagement, primarily propelled by members over 65. Despite its successful history, there is a pressing need to forge connections with younger generations to ensure longevity and relevance amidst shifting demographic landscapes.

Problem of Practice

The challenge at hand is to identify effective strategies to enhance intergenerational membership and volunteerism by inclusion of a new demographic (working aged women 24-65 years old) at a time of societal change within American Jewish Communities. The organization faces an aging membership base (skewing 70 + years old), necessitating the cultivation of younger volunteers and members to sustain its mission and relevancy long term. This study deploys participatory action research to address the intersecting motivations and dynamics that influence individuals' participation across different age groups within philanthropy.

Investigative Aims

Guided by a framework of reflective collaboration, the study seeks to:

- Discern current patterns of intergenerational membership and volunteerism.
- Uncover the factors influencing generational cohorts to join and volunteer.

- Understand how intergenerational value and relevance are perceived within the organization.
- Recommend strategic initiatives to bolster cross-generational engagement.

Data Collection Methodology

Spanning from July 2023 to April 2024, this study analyzes membership trends, surveys various generational cohorts, and facilitates focus groups and workshops to inform strategic development of tailored initiatives through employing an array of data collection techniques including:

- Analysis of membership records for trend identification. Surveys among various generational cohorts to capture motivations and participation barriers.
- Focus groups for depth insights into member experiences and expectations.
- Evaluation of intergenerational workshop reports and internal data for feedback on strategic initiatives.

Core Insights and Mitigation Strategies from Analysis and Findings

Findings revealed a pronounced generational gap in volunteerism, with a discernible inclination among younger members towards modern and flexible participation methods that align with contemporary lifestyles and digital fluency. The philanthropy's value is perceived differently across generations, influencing commitment levels and prompting a need for tailored engagement strategies which are inclusive of the diverse perspectives within the Jewish American communities.

The study also identified a generational divide in engagement, with older members displaying more consistent involvement than their younger counterparts, as well as a chasm in perspectives between those who represent a more orthodox view of the concept of Zionism and those who seek modernized and flexible participation avenues with a more nuanced view of the meaning of Zionism. The results suggest that IF-AP must broaden its narrative towards acceptance of more fully represented Jewish identity, adopt a stance of unifying ideas and nuanced language in the face of contemporary political connotations of Zionism, and demonstrate empathy to connect genuinely with younger demographics. To address these gaps, and effectively respond to these insights, I recommend the following strategies:

- Consider expanding IF-AP's narrative to inclusively reflect the diversity of Jewish identities.
- Consider developing inclusive communication strategies that respect various viewpoints, particularly among younger members.
- Consider integrating educational initiatives addressing pivotal issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to foster informed empathy.
- Consider developing proposals for grants to initiate a variety of volunteer experiences, catering to diverse interests and levels of commitment, to ensure sustained appeal for future generations.
- Consider embracing strategic changes informed by participation theory, affinity theory, and an understanding of similarity bias to deepen community engagement.
- Design spaces and meeting venues that encourage a forward-looking and culturally-rich approach to membership acquisition and retention, aligning with evolving societal dynamics.

- Consider implementing professionally designed strategic marketing outreach and engagement plans that incorporate the study's findings, ensuring continuous relevance and growth.

Conclusion

In recognition of the critical need for intergenerational harmony, this study presents a robust framework to rejuvenate the relevance of a heritage philanthropy. The proposed recommendations offer a roadmap to navigate the demographic challenges, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future that honors its historical roots while embracing the pulse of the modern world. By fostering intergenerational collaboration, the philanthropy has been presented with a strategic framework of initiatives to consider, as it inspires to create a legacy that is both time-honored and forward-thinking, effectively bridging the generational divide.

This study employs Participatory Action Research, informed by Affinity Group theory, Place Attachment Theory, and Similarity Bias, to explore the nuances of intergenerational membership and volunteerism within the Jewish American Community. It critically examines how demographic shifts affect the propensity of working-age Jewish women and affiliates in the United States to join and contribute to IF-AP, and how the organization's mission and communication strategies can be recalibrated to resonate with younger, multifaceted perspectives on Zionism.

I. Introduction

As I commenced my scholarly journey at Vanderbilt University, it was with a yearning to construct bridges of peace, foster relational bonds through deepened understanding, and reinforce a fabric of faith across my analytical journey. It began with an invitation to join a group of Zionist leaders at a multicultural conference in Baku Azerbaijan to promote peace building through discourse and education among Azeri multiethnic, multicultural students and diaspora. It later evolved into an accidental venture into the world of Jewish philanthropic sustainability in the form of an experimental, analytical improvement study on positioning a faith-based heritage philanthropy in a market sector that is ostensibly in the present times being driven by the perception and voices of a younger more politically and secularly engaged demographics. The journey advanced as a delicately balanced dance of facilitation of engagement within the realms of an Israel-focused American-based Organization, hereafter IF-AP, where the echoes of heritage and the clarion call of the organization's mission resonated differently across the age spectrum of a shifting demography.

This analytical journey began in July of 2023 and by the second week of October 2023, my area of inquiry was suddenly set against the backdrop of a world in the throes of crisis that tested the mettle of unity and shared human values of the Jewish American community during the time of the Hamas/Israel war. And yet amidst the chaos we discovered, there could not have been a more appropriate time to conduct a study that could ignite a sense of unity, acceptance, and similarity of belonging amongst women and affiliates of the groups in the face of a clear and present danger of division and segregation. Thus, the study was approved and forged in the crucible of such dichotomy. Anchored in Participation Theory as delineated by Cornwall (2008) and the precepts of Identity-Based Motivation (IBM) Theory as conceived by Osseryman (2015), I

ventured to study the motivational and historical sentiments that either drew individuals to faith-based philanthropic participation or impelled their retreat.

The tragic events of October 7th, 2023, in Israel served as a stark inflection point, necessitating not just a reimagining but an urgent reengineering of my partner organization IF-AP's outreach strategies. This pivotal moment underscored the urgency to engage in a proactive set of strategies that could result in nuanced approaches towards the dichotomy of views on Israel and Palestine, particularly within the younger cohorts. In the face of IF-AP's steadfast commitment to nonsectarian healthcare and youth welfare, the mission to embrace and uplift inclusivity became an imperative of heightened significance.

We designed a mixed method study for IF-AP's strategic market segmentation and stakeholder engagement, incorporating an acute alignment with the mosaic of religious heritage and demographic diversity that characterizes our society. Confronting the burgeoning arena of competition, it became essential for non-profit entities like IF-AP to refine member satisfaction metrics through outreach initiatives that resonated authentically with emerging generations. This study utilized a combination of research methods to develop marketing strategies that would connect with younger people. The goal was to create an environment that fosters appreciation for heritage and promotes growth through strategic networking based on shared interests. The mandate from IF-AP leadership was to craft an inclusive strategic palette, which would quantitatively and qualitatively show the need for urgency to thereby expanding its membership base and engaging those younger individuals who had thus far remained just beyond the organizational periphery.

In pursuit of these objectives, this thesis advocates for a vision that champions growth through inclusivity. By delving into the depths of theoretical frameworks like IBM (Ossyerman, 2015), the study aspired to orchestrate inclusion, foster a sense of belonging, and catalyze support

for IF-AP's mission. My narrative, marked by a precipitous departure from my birthplace to evade the binds of an arranged marriage, introduced a profoundly personal dimension to this academic endeavor. I grappled with the "*Picchu Taann*," a Bengali articulation of a visceral yearning for one's roots whilst navigating the path forward—a sentiment that resonated with the themes of heritage and belonging that emerged throughout my research.

This capstone project was thus imbued with a dual quest: to elucidate the interplay of heritage and identity within philanthropic action and to mirror my intimate grasp of the indelible connections that bind us to our origins, cultural ethos, and worldviews. As I navigated this research, I aimed to illuminate the intricate layers of heritage and identity, and their profound influence on philanthropic involvement. I hoped to intertwine the rigor of academic scrutiny with the authenticity of personal experience, striving to broaden IF-AP's resonance at a juncture where its presence is most crucial—a time marked by Middle Eastern tumult impacting many of us in the here and now.

The Organizational and Situational Context: was addressed against a backdrop of Israel in Crisis, the consequences of which was felt acutely as the project unfolded—the tragic events of October 7th, 2023, which have indelibly marked the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. This period has not only reshaped regional dynamics but has also deeply affected the sentiments and perceptions within the organization (its staff, volunteers, and leadership) and the broader community it serves. As I embarked on this endeavor to enhance the market positioning of an IF-AP, I am acutely mindful of the enhanced responsibilities it entails, especially during these precarious times. My approach is firmly rooted in inclusivity, echoing the calls from our participants for a space that respects and embraces diversity. I recognize the need for delicate

handling of the conversations and narratives that emerged from our dialogues during data collection, and thus, have proceeded with the utmost care to maintain confidentiality and protect the sensitivities of our members, the organizational chapters, and the team engaged in this work. The insights gleaned from this project are a testament to the considered and thoughtful contributions of all involved. In navigating such deeply personal and potentially polarizing topics, my commitment has been to empower every voice and perspective. With the understanding that discussions around Zionism and Jewish identity can quickly become points of contention, I have striven to create a framework that allows for respectful, open engagement while avoiding the diminishment of any individual's experience or viewpoint.

This work, while notable for its ambition to bridge divides and foster connections, is presented with a conscious acknowledgment of the potential for differing opinions and the need for ongoing dialogue. It remains my hope that this project, conducted during a period of significant strife, will serve as a bridge to more inclusive and empathetic future initiatives the organization would consider.

The Organization

Reflecting upon my engagement with Israel-Focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP), I became aware of its foundational narrative and the subsequent trajectory that necessitated a scholarly inquiry. IF-AP's inception as a Zionist entity instrumental in the establishment of the State of Israel marked a historical touchstone, embodying a dual legacy of activism and the development of healthcare infrastructure. As a volunteer organization within the United States, it became a conduit for those advocating for the future state, culminating in Israel's inception in 1948. The early endeavors of IF-AP, notably in healthcare and education through nursing programs and hospital

creation, established its enduring mission: to elevate the healthcare standards in Israel to an international level for the benefit of all its residents.

My understanding of the inherent challenges IF-AP faces in attracting support among younger, working-age American Jews was enhanced as I delved into the organizational background. This journey began with articulating the organization's legacy within the volatile socio-political sphere in which it operates. Historically, IF-AP's establishment of healthcare foundations in what was British Palestine enabled contemporary connections for younger Jews to their heritage, illustrating the enduring impact of their ancestors' commitments.

In American life, IF-AP serves as a philanthropic bridge, engaging American Jews in active support of Israel. Conversely, within Israeli society, IF-AP's nonsectarian programs champion cross-community dialogue, reflecting coexistence and mutual respect. These pillars are central to my dialogue with the younger demographic, whose values are often aligned with peace and equality. IF-AP's origins as a Zionist organization that played a pivotal role in the establishment of the State of Israel reflect a heritage steeped in activism and healthcare provision.

Understanding IF-AP's role requires acknowledging the multifaceted nature of the organization:

1. **Historical Significance:** IF-AP's contributions to the healthcare infrastructure in what was then British Palestine laid foundations for the future state. Knowing this history can help younger Jews connect with the tangible achievements of their forebears and understand that their contributions can have lasting impacts.
2. **Current Mission:** The organization's mission has evolved, focusing on healthcare provision, youth welfare, and medical research. These areas offer numerous engagement points for young volunteers and donors passionate about social welfare and innovation.

3. **Socio-political Sensitivity:** The tragic events of October 7th, 2023, serve as a reminder of the volatile context within which IF-AP operates. An understanding of these dynamics is crucial for engaging volunteers who are conscious of the complexities of Israeli and Palestinian relations.
4. **Role in American Life:** In the U.S., IF-AP represents a bridge between American Jews and Israel. It provides a conduit for philanthropy and activism, giving American Jews a tangible way to support Israel.
5. **Role in Israeli Life:** In Israel, IF-AP's nonsectarian clinics and programs foster cross-community interaction, symbolizing coexistence, and mutual respect. These values are important to communicate, as they may resonate with the younger demographic's ideals of peace and equality.
6. **Socio-Historical-Political Context:** A nuanced understanding of the socio-historical-political landscape is vital. This context includes the origins of Zionism, the history of Israel and Palestine, and the evolution of Jewish American identity, which can inform strategic engagement efforts without overcomplicating the organization's narrative.
7. **Unity and Understanding:** In a time of division, IF-AP's commitment to unity and understanding becomes even more critical. It is essential to convey how the organization seeks to be a healing force, advocating for coexistence and mutual respect.

With this backdrop, IF-AP is aware of their need to develop bespoke strategies to communicate its legacy, values, and vision in ways that resonate with the next generation's desires to effect positive change, while honoring the legacy volunteers and donors. For me then it became about painting a data-informed picture of how their efforts contribute to a broader goal of healing and development, in US and Israel. Their narrative must be shaped in a way that acknowledges the

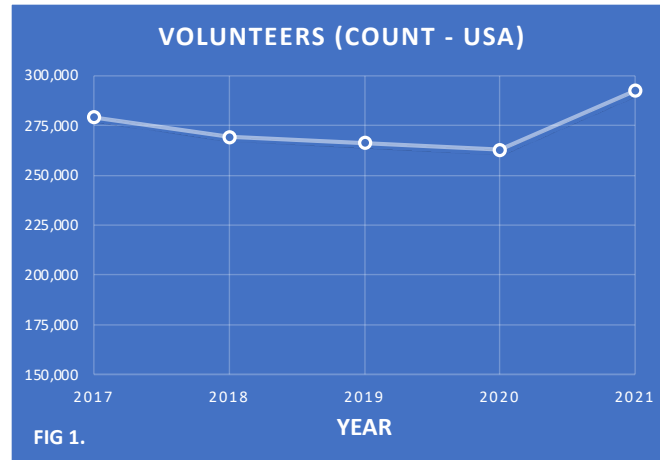
past, responds to the present, and is designed to be forward looking and thinking – encouraging a path of ongoing dialogue, learning, and engagement.

II. Problem of Practice and Environmental Scan

Problem of Practice. IF-AP is, as of the most recent annual report, a nonprofit with typical annual revenues of \$50M, and net assets of \$551M (IF-AP annual report, 2023b). Fundraising has been sufficient to maintain the organization’s mission for the near term (next ten years), particularly through bequests. Funding is also available indirectly through private foundation grants, and the government of Israel subsidizes (in part) the operations of the two hospitals via standardized healthcare reimbursements. Membership overall has also been stable, showing minor y-to-y fluctuations, with the most recent years being positive (based on the latest annual reports). See Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Long-term, the organization faces a demographic cliff, with dire long-term consequences for fundraising. Volunteers/membership skew heavily older (70 years and above), which means the next generation of volunteers in the 25 – 45-year-



old demographic is in precipitous decline, which portends poorly both in terms of the financials of the organization in the future as well as mission fulfillment, which relies heavily on unpaid volunteers rather than paid staff (“Personal Communication” 01/05/2024).

Problem Statement: IF-AP is failing to attract the upcoming generation of potential members which, if unaddressed, threatens the long-term existence of the organization. Fundraising has been sufficient to maintain the organization's mission for the near term (next ten years), particularly through bequests. Funding is also available indirectly through private foundation grants, and the

government of Israel subsidizes (in part) the operations of the two hospitals via standardized healthcare reimbursements. Membership overall has also been stable, showing minor y-to-y fluctuations, with the most recent years being positive (based on the latest annual reports). Reflecting on the confidential interviews with the organization, I came to realize that despite its stable financial footing and consistent membership in recent years, the undercurrent of the organizational positioning in the current market situation was more complex. The most recent annual report laid it out clearly: As a nonprofit, IF-AP was fortified for now, with robust annual revenues and significant net assets. Fundraising, especially through bequests, and the support from private foundation grants in the US, along with partial subsidies from the Israeli government, had kept it afloat. The steady membership numbers were a testament to their enduring appeal, yet there was an unsettling trend hidden within the figures.

While extrapolating out numbers (memberships), I developed Figure 1 from internal data and reports, noticing how the volunteers—their lifeblood—were aging. Conversations with the organization had confirmed my concerns: Those vital 25 to 45-year-olds were not walking through our doors. The implications were clear, and concerning, which leaned so heavily on the spirit and dedication of unpaid volunteers. It was this pressing issue, the precipitous decline of young volunteers and the potential financial and operational fallout, that I set out to address as the core Problem of Practice. The vitality and longevity of the organizational Mission & Operations depended on it (See Figure 1).

The demographic crisis has been tied internally, in part, to a branding crisis based on internal studies of surveys of members and nonmembers (the latter centering on the larger Jewish community). From a 01/05/2024 interview with IF-AP administrators, they conveyed that this is not simply an organization with a socially relevant mission (“Personal Communication”

07/08/2023) - It is an explicitly Zionist organization that played a critical role in the founding of the state in 1948 and will not be redefining that component of its mission. Increasingly, donors and volunteers (Jewish and non-Jewish) are not learning or identifying as Zionist, even as they evince support for residents of the state of Israel. (Department Administrator and JCC member “Personal Communication” 11/07/2023,). Moreover, the IF-AP recognizes that the geopolitical climate is worsening for an organization that will remain branded as explicitly Zionist: Policy decisions by the Israeli government, particularly the growing populist, religious, settler-centered parties allied with Likud, are widening the cultural gap between traditional IF-AP volunteers and the leadership of Israel (Advancement Department & JCC “Personal Communication “6/19/ 2023).

These issues are contextualized in Table 1, a SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) analysis conducted by the author(me) based on reviews of annual reports, internal data, and discussions with the organization's leadership. The SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) analysis was designed at the IF-AP's request, and it aims to give a clear, balanced overview of where the organization stands and to inform decision-making for future strategic direction. A SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) analysis is typically derived through a methodical process that involves both introspective examination and external observation of an organization about its environment.

This SWOT analysis presented to the organization at their request, was aimed to provide a clear, balanced overview of where an organization stands and to inform decision-making for future strategic direction with recruitment and retention sustainability plans. These steps gave me a foundational understanding of the organization's mechanics and its interests in the strategic planning trajectory. The analysis further entailed identifying the organization's inherent strengths and core competencies alongside recognizing its weaknesses and areas necessitating enhancement.

Internal Strengths	Internal Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100+ year brand of effective philanthropy • Women-led • Supports all communities in Israel • Strong financial base • Capable American national and USA regional leadership • Use of the historic network to elevate Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing identification with Zionist label, even among American Jews • Aging volunteer base, with younger generations less community-centered, less likely to be volunteers • Excessively complex organizational structure, with limited control over the Israeli side of the operation
External Opportunities	External Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No explicit membership drives with any substantive investment or strategic creativity have been attempted, implying there may be a large base of untapped volunteers, particularly in younger generations • Deepening partnership with 1) Other Jewish organization and 2) other supporters of Israel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing dissonance in USA-Israel relationship • Polarization within Israel’s Jewish community • Ongoing intra-Israel and regional conflicts with religious variables (e.g. Iran, Hezbollah, Gaza Strip, Syria)

TABLE 1. A Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT)

Analysis conducted for IF-AP

This evaluation was grounded in my appraisal of the IF-AP's structural, cultural, and operational elements. After collating the insights, the process advanced to a consolidation, synthesis, and prioritization stage, distinguishing the factors most influential and consequential to the IF-AP's objectives. This phase was instrumental in the consideration of concentrating strategic focus where it could yield the greatest impact for IF-AP.

All along I was mindful of the opportunities and agency afforded to me by the Advancement officers, as I considered the internal and external market positioning and potential threats, including geo-political fluctuations, competitive demographic landscape shifts, and broader socio-political and technological implications.

The SWOT analysis, inherently dynamic, is subject to continuous reviews and adaptations, reflecting the evolving internal and external landscapes and emergent data. The analysis presented to IF-AP aimed to consolidate insights so that when needed they would be translated into actionable strategic frameworks, to leverage strengths, seize opportunities, remedy weaknesses, and mitigate threats. Thus, these strategic conceptualizations were intended to augment the IF-

AP's operational efficacy and market position if they were supported and evidenced by insights from the study.

III. Conceptual Frame

To understand and reflect on the intricate dynamics within IF-AP, I found myself parsing through the complexities of shared heritage and the personal connections that draw us to a collective mission. The realization dawned upon me that the central locus of our engagement is not merely in the act of giving but in the rich social experiences that form the bedrock of our initial encounters with potential members. It is within these spaces of warmth and shared values that individuals find an 'Escape'—a step away from the impersonal expanse into the intimacy of an affinity group.

This is how social capital takes formation, with relationships becoming the social currency. When young people first get involved with IF-AP, they start to feel a deep connection with the organization's work in Israel. This feeling, known as 'Place Attachment,' is about more than just a location. It is about feeling a strong bond with our traditions and, indirectly, with Israel itself. This connection is both emotional and based on shared beliefs. Over time, this bond grows stronger and encourages these young members to become increasingly active in our charity work. The idea of 'Place Attachment' has been widely discussed by authors like David Hummon (1992) in his work "Community Attachment," and Lynn Lewicki and Edward G. Goode (2005) in their discussions on place and identity. These concepts help us understand why people feel they belong to certain places and how it becomes part of who they are. Similarly, the term 'Zionism' has its roots in the writings of Theodor Herzl and others, who articulated the idea of Jewish nationalism and the longing for a return to a homeland in Israel (Wikipedia). Understanding these terms gives us insight into how we can build strong, dedicated groups of new members, especially among younger people, by tapping into these feelings of belonging and cultural heritage.

As I studied and reflected deeper, I observed that this early engagement could fruition into a lasting 'Place Attachment', a term I use to describe the evolving connection that members develop

with IF-AP, due to its mission in Israel. This attachment transcends the physical—it is an emotional and ideological connection to our heritage and, by extension, for them to the land of Israel. This sense of identity and place attachment nurtures a commitment that gradually steers volunteers towards greater involvement, and in time, to become the cornerstone of our philanthropic endeavors. Yet, this journey of attachment and involvement is shaped by two critical forces. Each interaction, each event, and each milestone influences whether our members deepen their involvement or retract. Secondly, I recognize the pivotal influence of the world around us. The contextual boundaries of political climates, social movements, and global shifts either bolster our bond with IF-AP or challenge us to re-evaluate our strategies. These external forces are beyond our control, yet they are as integral to our planning as any internal policy.

Through these reflective exercises, I found that development of a conceptual framework in my study would include a lens to focus not just on what brings us together, but also on what shapes and sustains our collective journey. This framework would work as a guide, so we can readily acknowledge where we stand, where we aim to be, and the ever-changing landscapes we navigate in our mission to keep IF-AP a thriving beacon of heritage and hope.

The IF-AP in the United States is faced with the pressing need to redefine its strategies for gauging interest and attracting a fresh demographic of Jewish women and affiliates and affiliates, specifically those between the ages of 25 and 45, who are in the prime of their working years. The organization is resolute in its commitment to volunteerism and philanthropy, and thus, it is imperative to seek innovative approaches to engage and entice this new cohort. In support of this goal, this study will examine strategies to attract younger Jewish Americans whose attitudes towards Israel are characterized by increasing complexity, as noted by the IF-AP observations. The study will analyze the factors that influence these potential members' perception of Zionism

and elucidate factors that influence their willingness to participate in the organization, in order to develop targeted approaches for sustainable, long-term engagement and fundraising.

The synthesis of my framework was significantly enhanced by the integration of seminal works from the realms of social psychology, focusing on participation theory (Cromwall, 2008), Identity Motivation theory (Oysserman, 2015) and similarity bias (Brewer, 1979) and Shookhoff's Affinity Groups theory (Shookhoff, 2006) to find commonality in diversity lent key insights to posit my thesis. Moreover, the foundational contributions of Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner on social identity and participation theory, Robert D. Putnam's analysis of social capital, Mark Granovetter's (1973) exploration of social affiliation through weak ties, Donald T. Campbell's (1958) discourse on group affinity, Marilynn B. Brewer's (1979) insights into in-group bias, and Thomas F. Pettigrew's (1998) examination of intergroup contact, collectively enriched my framework with a multi-dimensional perspective on community engagement and participation.

The objective of the framework is to overcome engagement barriers, foster a more inclusive and diverse membership, and steer IF-AP towards a future characterized by dynamic engagement strategies and a robust membership base. I also emphasize the importance of understanding the barriers that deter participation and establishing sustainable practices to ensure the continuity and vitality of the group's mission. The proposed conceptual framework explores the multi-dimensional aspects of individuals' interactions with heritage organizations, their sense of connection to these entities, and the resulting sustainable behaviors. It suggests that these experiences, which include cognitive and emotional dimensions, significantly impact individuals' connections to an organization and, consequently, their sustainable actions. The framework is designed to guide heritage management strategies by emphasizing the relational dynamics between individuals and heritage organizations, rather than centering solely on tourism-centric objectives.

It advocates for a comprehensive view of heritage organization management, where the preservation of cultural values and the enhancement of individual experiences are regarded as interconnected objectives. The approach highlights the importance of understanding and fostering the deeper connections that people form with heritage organizations, leading to more responsible and sustainable engagement with cultural resources.

Participation theory, when applied as a conceptual framework for understanding affinity groups and volunteerism, involves several key concepts that help elucidate the dynamics of engagement and involvement within such groups, including:

1. **Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation:** Participation theory distinguishes between intrinsic motivation, where individuals engage in volunteerism for the inherent satisfaction it brings, and extrinsic motivation, which involves external rewards or recognition. Understanding which type of motivation predominates can help tailor engagement strategies.
2. **Reciprocity:** The concept of reciprocity suggests that individuals are more likely to volunteer and engage in activities when they perceive a mutual exchange of benefits. This can involve both tangible benefits (e.g., skill development) and intangible ones (e.g., a sense of belonging).
3. **Social Capital:** Participation in affinity groups can help individuals build social capital, which refers to the networks, relationships, and social resources they acquire through their involvement. This social capital can be leveraged for further engagement and volunteer opportunities.
4. **Barriers to Participation:** Recognizing and addressing barriers to participation is crucial. These barriers can include time constraints, lack of awareness, access issues, or feelings of exclusion. Identifying and mitigating these barriers can boost volunteerism.

5. **Sustainability and Longevity:** Sustainable participation involves creating structures and practices that ensure ongoing engagement within the affinity group. This includes succession planning, mentorship, and strategies for retaining members over time.

Finally, the conceptual framework I developed emerged as an evaluative framework, steering IF-AP towards a future characterized by dynamic engagement strategies and a robust membership base. This framework, while, theoretical in form yet pragmatic in application, might be considered as a guide to propel IF-AP not just towards the preservation of cultural narratives but towards their vibrant enactment in ways that resonate with contemporary audiences. Transitioning from passive observers to active participants within IF-AP's community was the next pivotal step to advancing my research which was anticipatory as the way forward. The notion of reciprocity also plays a vital role, underlining the human tendency to engage more willingly when there is a perceived bilateral benefit. This exchange encompasses both the concrete, such as skill enhancement, and the intangible, like the profound sense of community and importance, I was entering.

An appreciation and understanding of the barriers that deter participation was equally important. Addressing issues like time limitations, lack of information, accessibility, or feelings of alienation could catalyze greater participation and immersive discussions. Lastly, the durability of such engagement was contingent upon establishing sustainable practices—such as mentoring, iteration, and succession planning—that play a key role in ensuring the continuity and vitality of the group's mission.

The synthesis of theoretical insights guided the structure of my research. Drawing from the scholarship of Morrison and Misener (2021), the framework recognized the value of targeted

outreach and demographic strategies for membership growth in nonprofit entities. Similarly, the research of Johnson (2007) on diaspora, affirmed the positive impact of demographic targeting on membership retention and acquisition, while highlighting the importance of strategic outreach in engaging younger members for organizational sustainability. Furthermore, Johnson et al (2007) elucidated the significance of survey methodology in gauging the effectiveness of such outreach efforts.

With the development of this model, I forayed into a rich array of social psychological theories that addressed the complexities of participation, affinity, and the need to overcome similarity bias. This was to engage a crucial demographic—working-age Jewish women and affiliates—whose potential for volunteerism and philanthropy is immense. The works of Buonincontri et al. (2017), Jiang et al. (2017), and Timothy and Boyd (2006) were instrumental in this process, as they emphasized the need to preserve cultural values while enhancing individual experiences within heritage organizations. This mission, as described by IF-AP, is firmly rooted in the foundational writings of Theodor Herzl and his contemporaries, who articulated Jewish nationalism and a yearning to reestablish a Jewish homeland in Israel. Ultimately, the framework I synthesized offers an integrative approach to fostering meaningful and long-lasting connections between individuals and their heritage organization (Tajfel, H., & Turner, 1979). It presents a multi-dimensional perspective on member engagement, promoting the development of a strategic plan that transcends traditional methods, resonating instead with contemporary needs and the diverse sensibilities of a modern membership base. Thus, the framework, depicted in Figure 2, serves not just as an academic exploration but as a strategic tool poised to guide IF-AP through the evaluation process as they resolve to mitigate the challenges of an evolving landscape of participation and philanthropy. It aims to harness the long-term connections individuals forged

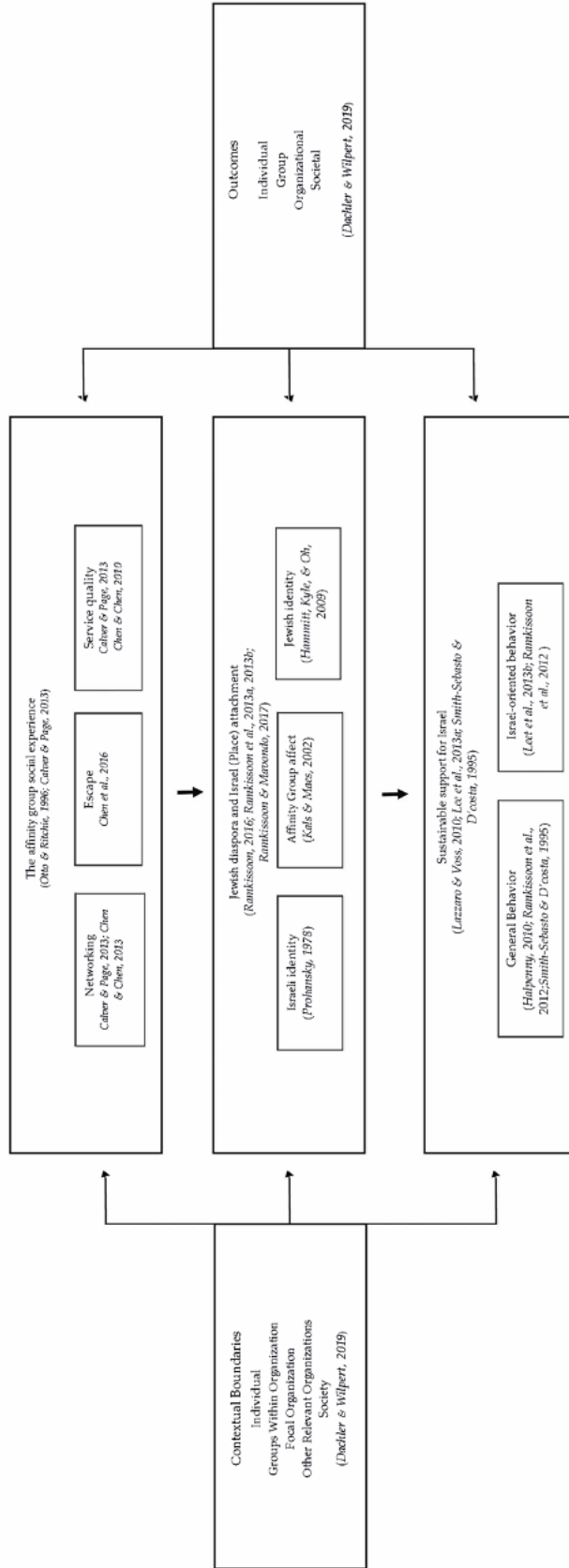


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework that will inform the eventual Strategic Recruitment Plan for IF-AP.

with this heritage organization, ensuring engagement strategies for working-age Jewish American women are both meaningful and sustainable. My reflection on this process affirms the conviction that such a framework will refresh IF-AP's engagement tactics, ensuring its continued relevance and vibrancy in the cultural and philanthropic tapestry of the Jewish American community.

Area of Inquiry

From these frameworks and theories, the Area of Inquiry (AOI) took shape in the form of three guiding research questions. The Research Questions were as follows: The research questions for this quality improvement project emerged from the pressing need to understand and mitigate the problem of generational decline in volunteers at IF-AP. We were facing a troubling trend: a dwindling number of young volunteers, which was raising concerns about the organization's future vitality and sustainability. In response, we posed targeted questions to dissect the underlying issues.

[Research Question 1 \(RQ1\)](#) was developed to explore the connection between IF-AP's age demographics and its outreach strategies. Recognizing a gap in engagement among the 25-45 age group, we questioned whether the decline in younger members could be attributed to the absence of an effective strategic outreach. A survey utilizing a 5-point Likert Scale was designed to assess the effectiveness of the organization's mission and outreach efforts among potential younger members, specifically those who showed initial interest via social media and affiliate networks.

[Research Question 2 \(RQ2\)](#) aimed to delve deeper into the perceptions of IF-AP's mission and operations between different age cohorts. By conducting focus groups, we intended to capture any shifts in opinion among potential members, whether positive or negative, thus shedding light on generational differences that could inform future strategic adjustments.

[Research Question 3 \(RQ3\)](#) arose from the need to contextualize IF-AP's challenges within the broader cultural and social perceptions of Zionism. By analyzing national polling data and comparing it to IF-AP-specific metrics, we aimed to understand how wider cultural trends might be influencing the engagement and donation patterns of the 25-45 age cohort.

Together, these research questions were thoughtfully crafted not only to diagnose the root causes of the declining volunteer engagement but also to identify actionable insights that could help IF-AP revitalize its connection with younger generations, thereby ensuring its mission continues to thrive in a changing cultural and demographic landscape.

IV. Research Methodology

Project Design

In the design of this project, we embarked on an exploratory journey, guided by carefully framed research questions aimed at dissecting public attitudes towards the state of Israel and Zionism. Our approach was methodically structured to incorporate a blend of prospective and retrospective data sources, each chosen for its potential to illuminate different facets of the subject matter.

Methodological Framework

The methodological core of the project was bifurcated into prospective and retrospective analyses, a strategy that allowed us to capture a broad spectrum of insights.

Survey Execution

The survey process began by crafting a survey through Qualtrics XM (an online experience management company that provided the infrastructure necessary for forming, distributing, and collecting data), motivated by the desire to tap into contemporary perceptions and attitudes. The selection of our target demographic was informed by a commitment to inclusivity and representativeness, adopting a stratified sampling approach to enrich our data pool. The survey itself was a careful construction of questions designed to elicit both qualitative and quantitative responses, distributed across various social media platforms to maximize participation.

Follow Up- with Focus Groups

The rationale behind convening follow-on focus groups stemmed from a need to delve deeper into specific insights surfaced by the survey. We were meticulous in selecting a diverse group of participants, ensuring a wide array of perspectives were represented. The focus group discussions were structured to foster an environment conducive to open and meaningful dialogue, with a facilitator guiding the conversation and data collection methodologies firmly in place.

Retrospective Data Analysis - Analysis of Past Polling Data

Our retrospective gaze led us to curate a selection of past polling data on the public's stance toward Israel and Zionism. The criteria for source selection were rigorously defined, prioritizing reliability and relevance to our research questions.

Examination of Past Membership Data

We sought out past membership data from the organizations to gauge public engagement with Zionist causes. The process was underpinned by ethical considerations, with a focus on data privacy and organizational use of the data with their audited process for consent. This data was then analyzed to complement the understanding of public attitudes, enriching our findings with a historical perspective.

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

In synthesizing our findings, we adopted a comprehensive approach to data analysis, employing both statistical and qualitative techniques. Ethical considerations were paramount, guiding our treatment of sensitive topics and ensuring the integrity of our research process.

Reflections on Project Execution

The project's timeline was adhered to with diligence, marking milestones that spanned from data collection to the analytical phase. As I reflect on the outcomes of our study, it is apparent that our exploratory endeavor has yielded significant insights into public attitudes toward Israel and Zionism. The implications of our findings promise to contribute valuable perspectives to ongoing discourse and potentially informing future policy and research directions.

In narrating the project design, I reiterate the foundational aims that guided the inquiry. The exploration of public attitudes towards the state of Israel and Zionism has been both challenging and enlightening, offering a nuanced understanding that I hope will enrich the academic and societal conversation about this subject among the organization and its communities.

Survey Design & Sampling

To design the study, I developed three core competencies to assess the IF-AP's current market positioning: the first one being a survey. I found that a well-designed survey may help understand the organization's first-level challenge of engaging more inclusive Jewish demographics in its largest and most diverse markets New York City (NYC) and Atlanta GA. For this survey to be utilized for the information collected and needed, I took a multifaceted approach rooted in prospective analysis. I utilized the Qualtrics XM platform to craft a 20-question survey that would be distributed to a sample drawn from Jewish and Jewish-affiliated social networks within key recruitment regions for IF-AP: New York City and Atlanta. The design of the survey was intentional, aiming to extract insights into the organization's outreach, mission, and operational effectiveness.

Through iterative feedback sessions with the organization, I refined an initial set of 35 questions down to 20. Our process involved vetting potential survey participants using a snowball sampling method. After updating and validating these contacts, I narrowed the list to 293 individuals, who then received the survey invitations.

The feedback mechanism was robust. We used the survey responses to delve into the tensions between mission-related and operational issues. This was essential because studying external polls I noticed an indication that the market was highlighting a generational gap within the American Jewish community's "*perception of Zionism and Israeli policies,*" akin to *perspectives the organization has that Zionism=As attitudes toward Israel.*" I was told that the organization saw that as a reality and reflection of their mission. This conversation was pivotal as I proceeded with developing and interpreting the organizational position, current market position and social climate. I acutely understood the urgency to be nuanced. The survey was segmented into distinct sections:

- *Outreach Efforts of IF-AP: Questions here were aimed at assessing the organization's engagement strategies and whether its recruitment efforts were perceived as relevant and effective.*
- *Attitudes towards the Mission of IF-AP: This section measured resonance with the organization's goals.*
- *Attitudes towards the Operational Effectiveness of IF-AP: Questions here were designed to evaluate the participants' views on the organization's resource allocation, transparency, and project execution.*
- *General Questions: This broader section sought to gauge the likelihood of participation, recommendation, and trust in the organization based on its mission and operations.*

The survey, which was succinct with an estimated completion time of 5-10 minutes, ensured the confidentiality of the respondents. The participation rate and the quality of the data collected reflected careful consideration of our potential members' backgrounds and the current socio-political climate. The aim was to use this data to inform strategic changes that could revitalize IF-AP's appeal to a younger, more diverse demographic.

Survey: Participant Recruitment & Data Collection

I obtained the first set of quantitative data through an anonymous online survey of potential members sampled from the Jewish and Jewish-affiliated social networks in two recruitment regions for IF-AP: the New York City Metropolitan Area and the Atlanta, Georgia metropolitan area. The survey administered used the online Experience Management software “Qualtrics XM,” accessed through me at Vanderbilt University and sent by the organization. Below I describe the survey. An accessible link was provided to all the invited participants from the two regions chosen as they represent the largest and most active membership region for the organization on the East Coast. The survey link was accessible by laptop, desktop, and any compatible internet-accessible device.

Data Instruments

The initial data collection for RQ1 involved a 20-question online survey administered through Qualtrics XM. Participants used a 5-point Likert scale to respond to questions regarding the organization's outreach, mission, and operational effectiveness, along with one question assessing self-reported age. The survey questions were categorized into specific themes for analysis as part of a joint effort by the IF-AP leadership and the researcher to engage in the specific tension

between mission-related issues versus operational issues, including perceptions of IF-AP's outreach efforts to prospective members. I investigated mission-related issues primarily due to external polling indicating a generation gap emerging in the American Jewish community between more committed, passionate Zionists of an older generation and more skeptical, questioning American Jews of a younger generation who are perceived to be less likely to accept Israeli foreign and domestic policies without criticism.

Outreach Efforts of IF-AP

1. I am aware of the organization's efforts to engage potential members around my age.
2. The organization's recruitment programs are relevant to my interests and values.
3. The communication channels the organization uses for outreach are effective in reaching me.
4. The organization's membership recruitment events are well-organized and informative.
5. I feel personally invited to and welcomed by the organization's membership recruitment events.

Attitudes towards the Mission of IF-AP/as Attitudes toward Israel

6. I believe that overseeing hospitals in Israel is an essential mission for the organization.
7. The mission of managing two youth camps in Israel resonates with me.
8. The organization's commitment to healthcare and youth services in Israel is making a significant impact on the welfare of the residents of Israel.

9. The mission of the organization aligns with my personal philanthropic goals.

Attitudes Towards the Operational Effectiveness of IF-AP

10. The organization efficiently uses its resources for the betterment of its hospitals and youth camps.

11. The leadership of the organization is transparent in its decision-making processes.

12. The organization's initiatives and projects are well executed.

13. The organization demonstrates consistent progress toward its mission-related goals.

14. I trust the organization to use donations effectively for its mission in Israel.

General Questions:

15. I would consider actively participating in the organization based on its current recruitment methods.

16. The mission of the organization in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel would motivate me to become a more engaged member.

17. I believe the organization's operational effectiveness in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel sets it apart from other similar U.S.-based organizations that support Israel.

18. The current level of transparency in the organization's operations increases my trust in the organization.

19. I am likely to recommend the organization to peers based on its mission.

20. I am likely to recommend the organization to peers based on its operational effectiveness

(https://qualtricsxms5qltqcsd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0c7iaY8tGv487t)

Survey Data Collection

The organization provided email and social media connections of potential recruits or volunteers. The original list had 303 contacts. Since these names were from a prior year's recruitment event in NYC and Atlanta, the emails were checked against the most current information the organization had on file. This action created a new list of 293 valid emails and social media email connections, all of whom received survey invitations. After cutting out bounce backs, or emails that went to spam, 248 contacts were used for the study. Ultimately, 70 potential members engaged with the survey, of which 58 completed it, yielding a final response rate of 23%. We considered all participants as potential members, namely, they were culturally Jewish or Jewish affiliates and were women or affiliates of the female gender. All invitees were informed of the estimated completion time (5 – 10 minutes) and confidentiality of responses from the sample group. Upon closure, Qualtrics XM generated only anonymous aggregate data for analysis: the only personal information conveyed was self-reported age along with an alphanumeric code to replace the participant's identity.

V. Survey Data Analysis

The study included 58 completed questionnaires (questions 1 – 20), which excluded partial responses from the analysis. Of these, three opted not to enter their age and were thus excluded from further analysis. I generated a profile of respondents for age, which is shown in Figure 3. The age range revealed that an adequate number of participants in the target age demographic (24 – 45) were sampled by this survey, with the median value falling close to the upper limit of the targeted age range (which IF-AP considers the middle age range of the younger demographic i.e., 45 years old). This observation was particularly important as IF-AP is intentionally considering the perception of working-aged women, who have access to the power of the purse.

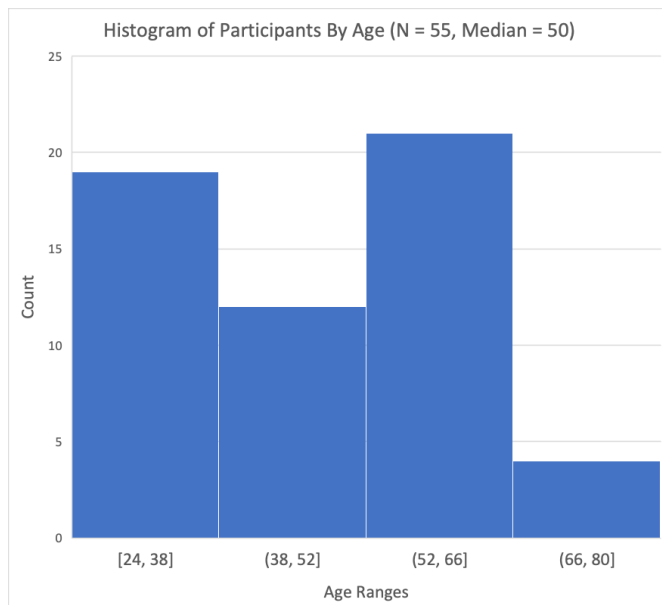


Figure 3. Histogram of ages of all participants who qualified for analysis.

Table 2 illustrates a snapshot of the survey results. I have included to highlight an example of the survey results.

QUESTIONS	YOUNGER	OLDER
<i>RECRUITMENT</i>		
The organization's recruitment programs are relevant to people around my age.	-0.40	-0.18
The organization's recruitment programs are relevant to my interests and values.	-0.58	-0.26
The communication channels the organization uses for outreach are effective in reaching me.	-0.51	-0.86
The organization's membership recruitment events are well-organized and informative.	-0.07	-0.62
I feel personally invited and welcomed by the organization's membership recruitment events.	-0.23	-0.88
<i>OPERATIONS</i>		
I believe that operating its two hospitals in Israel is an essential mission for the organization.	0.68	1.38
The organization's mission of managing two youth camps in Israel resonates with me.	0.41	1.37
The organization's commitment to healthcare and youth services in Israel is making a significant impact on the welfare of the residents of Israel.	0.54	0.67
The mission of the organization aligns with my personal philanthropic goals.	0.30	0.19
The organization efficiently uses its resources for the betterment of its hospitals and youth camps.	0.32	0.35
The leadership of the organization is transparent in its decision-making processes.	-0.29	-0.23
The organization's initiatives and projects are well-executed.	-0.05	-0.18
The organization demonstrates consistent progress towards its mission-related goals.	-0.12	0.01
I trust the organization to use donations effectively for its mission in Israel.	0.21	0.28
<i>GENERAL</i>		
I would consider actively participating in the organization based on its current recruitment methods.	-0.70	-0.65
The mission of the organization in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel would motivate me to become a more engaged member.	0.13	-0.07
I believe the organization's operational effectiveness in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel sets it apart from other similar U.S.-based organizations that support Israel.	0.37	0.20
The current level of transparency in the organization's operations increases my trust in the organization.	0.08	-0.10
I am likely to recommend the organization to peers based on its mission.	0.19	-0.16
I am likely to recommend the organization to peers based on its effectiveness in meeting its goals.	-0.28	-0.26

TABLE 2. Averaged z-scores for each question, organized by a split-plot design of younger participants (ages 24 – 49) and Older (ages 50 – 80). Significant differences by age group ($p < 0.05$) based on two-tailed t-tests are highlighted in green.

The values in Table 2 were calculated as follows. First, the raw Likert scale ratings for each participant were converted to z-scores to normalize the ranges of the 1 – 5 scales to permit averaging across participants. With z-scores, values near 0 approximate the mean of the range. Z-scores may be positive or negative, with a positive value indicating the score is above the mean and a negative score indicating it is below the mean. The values above the mean in this survey correspond to the “Strongly Agree” end of the scale. Thus, positive z-scores are associated with positive responses to the questions, and negative z-scores are associated with disagreement with the premise of the question. Finally, a split-plot design was used to look at the Age variable, in which half of the participants (aged 24 – 49) were classified in a “Younger” category, and half of the participants (aged 50 – 80) were classified in an “Older” category.

Looking across age groups, clear trends emerged in the survey data. Typical respondents responded positively to all questions associated with the mission and organizational effectiveness of the IF-P, while both age groups negatively rated the recruitment activities of the IF-P along several dimensions. Among mission and operations questions, the most negative responses were elicited by the question concerning leadership and transparency. The most positive responses were associated with the impact of the provision of health and youth services on Israeli society. The role IF-P is currently playing in the welfare of all residents of Israel is perceived very positively by respondents in this survey.

When I delved into the age-based data, I was first surprised to find that the older participants—those who I had initially thought would be staunch advocates for the mission—were the most critical when it came to recruitment and marketing. Upon reflection, this began to make sense: Their deeper knowledge of the organization made them more discerning judges of its

effectiveness. Indeed, as Table 2 laid out clearly: Older participants held significantly more negative views on the recruitment events, as evidenced by the two-tailed t-tests for questions 4 and 5, where the green highlights indicated notable discrepancies.

My theory is that this could be attributed to a familiarity effect; these individuals, with their extensive experience throughout the years, with organizational events, could pinpoint shortcomings more sharply. Meanwhile, the younger group, perhaps less acquainted with organizational initiatives, tended to hover closer to neutrality in their responses. This insight allowed the prompting of a closer examination of how familiarity influences perception across different age groups, and I was able to include this consideration in the focus group discussions. There was also an age effect emerging in the first two operations questions, which were particularly mission-focused: “Older” respondents tended to be even more supportive of IF-P’s mission than “Younger” respondents (as designated by organization).

The survey directly addressed Research Question 1 (RQ1) by examining IF-AP's strategic outreach and its relationship to the organization's age demographics. Responses from the survey indicated that while participants viewed IF-AP's mission and the effectiveness of the organization positively, there was a notable dissatisfaction with recruitment activities across age groups. This was particularly evident in the lower ratings given to questions about the organization's leadership transparency and recruitment events.

The age-based analysis revealed that older respondents were significantly more critical of IF-AP's recruitment events than their younger counterparts. Additionally, older respondents showed stronger support for IF-AP’s mission in comparison to the younger group. These insights

point to the need for a more tailored engagement strategy to address the distinct perceptions and experiences of the different age demographics within IF-AP.

VI. Data Instruments: Focus Groups

The focus group's role in this study was indispensable in the sense that they afforded a multifaceted view into the collective reasoning and group dynamics that underpin decision-making processes in this community heritage-based, philanthropic organization. The spontaneous nature of the verbal discussions within these groups often prompted deeper, more sincere, and charged responses compared to those elicited via written surveys. From the foundational feedback from survey queries, I developed five focus group questions. These inquiries were thoughtfully developed with the intent to delve into the expectations and ideations of prospective members. The design of these questions was strategically purposed to ignite discussion among the participants, fostering a milieu where valuable insights could be collected and studied. We had anticipated these discussions to be rich in content, offering perspectives, attitudes, and recommendations from potential members that could guide the strategic direction of IF-AP's outreach and operational endeavors. I marked this process with confidentiality and anonymity that would serve the participants and the organization with the needed safety during a time of geopolitical challenge. Through this process, we sought not just answers, but understanding and direction that could be used to amplify engagement and membership resonance.

Question 1 delved into the alignment—or lack thereof—between personal values, societal discourse, and willingness to engage with IF-AP, especially about its stance on Zionism. It was critical to understand how these layers intersect and either facilitate or impede engagement with the organization.

Question 2 prompted participants to assess IF-AP's mission and outreach efforts against their expectations of a heritage organization in the contemporary world. We were keen to uncover

elements that resonated well and identify opportunities where the organization could amplify its impact or pivot its approaches.

Question 3 focused on IF-AP's current outreach initiatives, probing into how these were perceived by individuals in the 25-45 age demographic. The aim was to evaluate the appeal of these activities and solicit suggestions for improvement, ensuring they aligned with generational interests and values.

Question 4 explored observed trends that might influence a young adult's decision to deepen their involvement with IF-AP. It was essential to gauge whether these trends were in harmony with the experiences and expectations of the participants.

Question 5 sought concrete recommendations from participants on how IF-AP could refine its outreach and operational strategies to not just attract but also resonate deeply with younger, culturally Jewish members.

In curating these questions, I was seeking to initiate conversations that would not only yield insights into the current state but also inspire ideas for the evolution of the organization's engagement strategies. Through the focus groups, I endeavored to listen earnestly to the voices of those whose involvement was crucial to IF-AP's future, ensuring that the path forward was shaped by those it aimed to serve.

Focus Group Design:

Participant Recruitment & Sample. To convene these vital conversations, I reached out to the 70 individuals who had interacted with our initial survey, inviting them to partake in a series of focus

group sessions facilitated via Zoom. Out of these participants, 23 expressed their interest, culminating in the participation of 18 individuals spread across four Zoom sessions. Conducted in the evenings over several weeks, these virtual gatherings provided rich, qualitative data that helped in understanding the perspectives, attitudes, and recommendations of potential members, especially in bridging generational gaps in mindset and mission. The methodology employed was dual-faceted, integrating both deductive and inductive analytical techniques. By interacting directly with prospective members through surveys and focus groups, a grounded and nuanced understanding was ensured. The focus group findings led to the distillation of a set of recommendations that can steer the organization toward greater inclusivity and relevance in these evolving times.

While I mixed up the questions to reduce any similarity bias, our opening questions were designed to probe the impact of participants' values and the surrounding social discourse on their willingness to engage with IF-AP, especially concerning its stance on Zionism. I explored how this alignment—or the lack thereof—shaped their engagement decisions. Subsequently, I was able to synthesize the participants' perceptions of IF-AP's mission and outreach initiatives. The objective here was to discern whether these efforts struck a chord with their expectations of what a heritage organization should represent in contemporary society, pinpointing areas where IF-AP excelled and where it could enhance its approach.

The third line of inquiry delved into the efficacy of IF-AP's outreach efforts, specifically gauging their appeal to individuals aged 25-45 and seeking insights on how these initiatives could be modified to captivate the interests of this demographic more effectively. Several broader trends in membership engagement and public perception were considered while attempting to correlate

these trends with the experiences of young adults and their propensity to participate more actively in IF-AP. The closing questions solicited direct recommendations from participants on how IF-AP could polish its outreach and operational strategies to resonate with a younger audience and become more inclusive, particularly to those who considered themselves culturally Jewish.

VII. Focus Group Data Analysis

I have observed that the interactions between age-based demographic profiles and broader cultural trends regarding Zionism and attitudes toward the state of Israel appear to be a complex issue, influenced by a multitude of factors including, but not limited to, socio-cultural dynamics, historical context, and individual experiences. For a more comprehensive understanding, I consulted the following sources: "Cross-cultural ageism: ageism and attitudes toward aging among Jews and Arabs in Israel" found on Cambridge Core.

The discussions I led in focus groups helped me in the practice of Iterative Learning: and helped refine the research questions themselves, contributing to writing out the recommendations through the iterative learning process for the organization. I found that during the focus group discussions as participants expressed their views, they highlighted aspects of the organizational mission or outreach that I as the researcher had not considered. For example: 5 of the 18 participants were in the field of student advising and student health counseling, they expressed visible and commentary discomfort with the word "Zionism". The other 8 participants said they preferred the descriptive "Attitudes toward Israel" as a better fit than "Zionism". Three of the 18 participants believed Zionism was a better description of how people should view Israel, and how they view Israel.

VIII. Focus Group Findings

The methodology I employed was dual-faceted, integrating survey and focus group data to ensure a grounded and nuanced understanding. This approach was instrumental in unearthing central themes from the discussions, which were subsequently coded and analyzed. After a detailed analysis of focus group data, including audio, transcripts, and non-verbal cues, I identified patterns that inform a strategic framework to re-engage younger Jewish demographics with IF-AP. Here are the rephrased claims and substantiations:

1. Involvement of Working-Aged Jewish American Women

Revised Claim: It is critical to actively involve working-aged Jewish American women to fully grasp their unique perspectives on heritage and Zionism.

Revised Substantiation: They desire a forum to shape the dialogue, underlining the importance of a responsive and participative approach.

Finding: Foster forums and programs that directly address the interests and concerns of this group to bolster involvement.

2. Nuanced Zionism Discourse

Revised Claim: A nuanced conversation that embraces multiple viewpoints is necessary to navigate Zionism's complex discussions.

Revised Substantiation: The negative reaction to divisive debates calls for a balanced and inclusive communication strategy.

Finding: Initiate and support platforms that facilitate respectful exchanges about Zionism, catering to diverse opinions.

3. Recognition of Diversity within Jewish Identity

Revised Claim: Acknowledging the diverse cultural and religious facets of Jewish identity is crucial for effective community outreach.

Revised Substantiation: The distinct expressions of Jewish identity among individuals call for diverse and respectful outreach.

Finding: Develop outreach initiatives that celebrate and incorporate the breadth of Jewish cultural and religious expressions.

4. Historical Education on Zionism

Revised Claim: Educating about Zionism's history and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fundamental to the organization's balanced viewpoint.

Revised Substantiation: The prevailing knowledge gap among members about these topics underscores the need for comprehensive educational materials.

Finding: Create and disseminate educational materials that provide a well-rounded historical view of Zionism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

5. Mission Relevance to Younger Demographics

Revised Claim: For the organization to resonate with younger Jewish Americans, it must reflect a broad spectrum of contemporary values and interests.

Revised Substantiation: The shift in younger demographics' priorities and values signifies the necessity for the organization to modernize its mission.

Finding: Realign the organization's mission statement and activities to mirror the evolving values and social concerns of younger members.

These rephrased claims and substantiations suggest a comprehensive strategy where active engagement, inclusive dialogue, recognition of diversity, educational initiatives, and mission relevance become cornerstones of the organization's approach to attracting and retaining younger Jewish Americans. These claims and their subsequent substantiation from the focus groups have laid the groundwork for action, steering us toward a future where the organization's outreach efforts reflect the dynamic diversity of the communities it aims to engage. From these conversations, a robust set of recommendations emerged, designed to align IF-AP's outreach with the evolving needs of its constituents. These recommendations, which are informed by the multifaceted aspects of Jewish identity and the diverse opinions within its ranks, are crucial for fostering a truly inclusive environment.

The upcoming section will explore these recommendations, born from the collective wisdom of the focus group participants:

1. Inclusive Engagement Initiatives that acknowledge and celebrate both cultural and religious facets of Jewish identity.
2. Educational Opportunities that delve into the layered history and present-day aspects of Zionism, aiming for a comprehensive perspective.
3. Open Dialogue Facilitation to cultivate a space where a spectrum of views is exchanged with respect and understanding.
4. Organizational Stance Clarification to communicate IF-AP's position on Zionism with clarity, sidestepping polarizing language.
5. Societal Change Adaptation to ensure IF-AP remains responsive and relevant amid the dynamic shifts within the Jewish community.
6. Generational Gap Bridging to harmonize the mission with the aspirations and concerns of younger members.

Moving beyond the analysis of focus group data, I immersed myself in the narratives provided by participants. I engaged deeply with the data collected from the focus groups, initiating the process by attentively listening to recorded sessions and reading the transcriptions. The narratives were then thematically coded, a process which allowed for the distillation of key and salient themes and insights, paving the way for the strategic recommendations that followed. The comprehensive analysis of the focus group dialogues shed light on the shifting demographic landscape that presents both obstacles and prospects for IF-AP. This transition phase, bridging the qualitative insights with the upcoming quantitative assessment, is critical. It reflects a keen focus

on understanding how the “Younger” Jewish community perceives and interacts with the concept of Zionism—a pivotal element of IF-AP's mission. These focus group discussions underscored the unique position of the younger demographics as catalysts for innovation and as key contributors to the organization's mind-set evolution for future sustainability and growth.

The synthesis of these qualitative findings informs the final stage of this study: a quantitative investigation into the relationship between IF-AP’s demographic profile and broader cultural trends, including perceptions of Zionism and attitudes toward the State of Israel. This phase signifies a methodological shift, anchoring the study in the empirical realm to discern patterns that may influence the engagement strategies of IF-AP. Utilizing public data, notably from The Pew Research Center, the ensuing analysis will explore potential correlations that can illuminate the intricate web of influences shaping the perspectives within IF-AP's community. This examination aims not only to deepen our understanding of these critical demographic influences but also to inform IF-AP's strategic approach in forging meaningful, resonant connections with its diverse and dynamic constituency.

IX. Quantitative Polling Results and Analysis

Retrospective Analysis of Research Question 3 (RQ 3): What is the relationship (if any) between IF-AP’s age-based demographic profile and broader cultural trends regarding the perception of Zionism which was also considered as “Attitudes towards the State of Israel” by IF-AP as shown through a correlation with publicly available data from The Pew Research Center, provided in Figure 4.

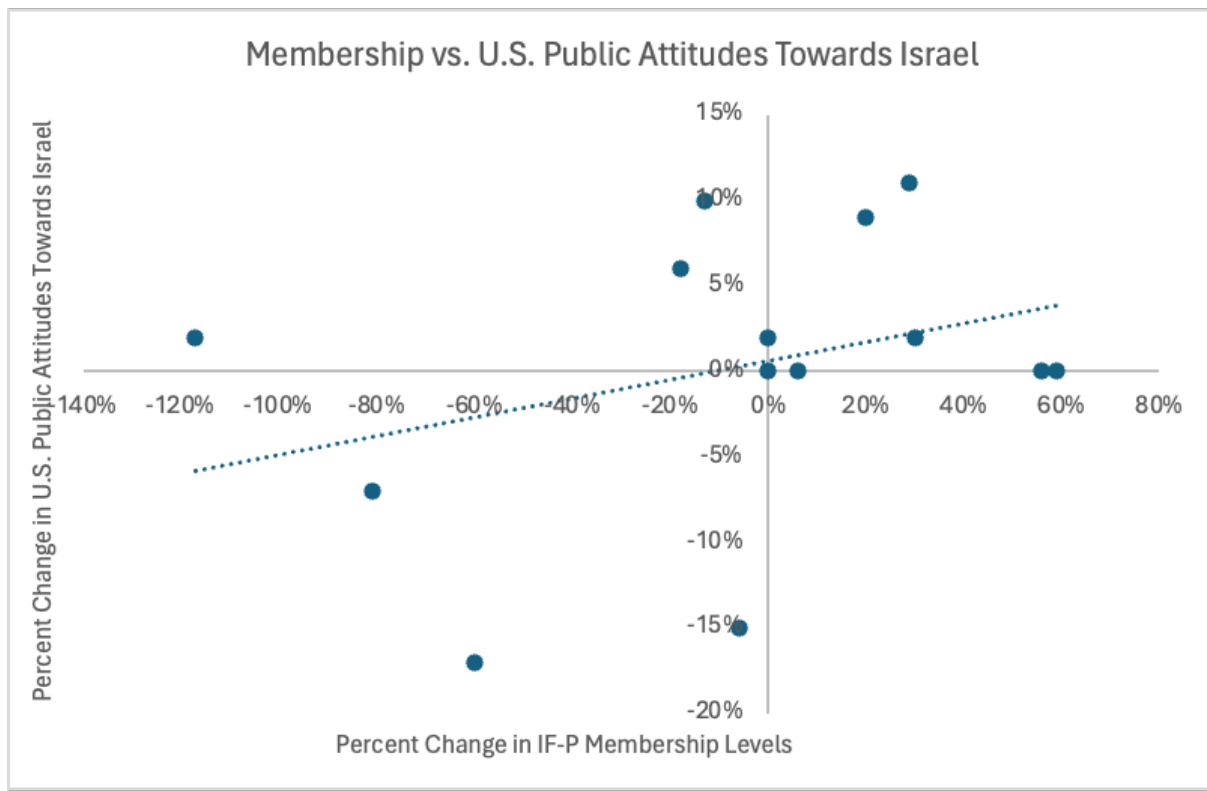


Figure 4. Scatterplot of percent changes in U.S. Public Attitudes towards the state of Israel by the Pew Research Group (2001 – 2018) vs. percent changes in membership dues totals for IF-AP.

Data Analysis: This analysis utilized annual Pew Research Center polling data from 2001 to 2018 ($n = 14$) alongside corresponding membership levels (derived from annual dues revenue) for the same period from IF-AP. All raw values were transformed into percent year-over-year changes. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a nonsignificant positive correlation between IF-AP membership levels and U.S. public attitudes toward Israel ($r = 0.33$). Please refer to Figure 4 for the corresponding scatterplot. The lack of significance in this correlation is perhaps explained by the narrow range of public attitudes towards Israel during the studied period, between 2001 - 2018, the highest approval rating that Israel received was 54% and the lowest value was 41%. Attitudes towards Israel remained relatively stable during this period, while IF-AP membership strength fluctuated substantially, and showed a recent, downward trend. However, a critical caveat to consider is that this analysis does not encompass the events post-2018, notably excluding the impacts of the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7th, 2023. Given that this event could represent a significant inflection point in public sentiment, there is a compelling reason to replicate this study to understand shifts in public perception pre- and post-October 2023. This holds particular importance as most of the IF-AP's funding is U.S.-based, sourced from American Jewish communities.

The previous period studied showed stable attitudes towards Israel, with approval ratings fluctuating modestly between 41% and 54%. Conversely, IF-AP's membership levels experienced more substantial variations, with a notable downward trend in recent years. This disparity suggests that while public opinion on Israel has remained stable, membership engagement may be influenced by other factors not explored in this study. Additionally, this study underlines the importance of continuously monitoring the pulse of cultural and political events that could influence the perception of Zionism and support for Israel-focused philanthropy. It also

underscores the necessity for IF-AP to adapt and respond to these changing dynamics, particularly considering the demographic shifts and the evolving perspectives of younger Jewish communities.

As I look back on this comprehensive analysis, I am reminded of the urgency for IF-AP to align its strategies with both the longstanding and emerging attitudes towards Zionism, ensuring its mission remains pertinent and resonant with its supporters, particularly in these pivotal times. These findings—proverbial 'green arrows'—pointed unmistakably towards the imperative consideration for IF-AP to rejuvenate its engagement strategies. The organization's future vibrancy, as evidenced by the findings, would hinge on its ability to resonate with a generation that holds a *nuanced* perception of Zionism and seeks a philanthropic relationship that reflects their values and the current socio-cultural milieu. The recommendation this analysis elucidated was also evidenced by participants, the organization must find ways to reach the “Younger” demographics with a nuanced approach to Zionism.

X. Discussion on Recommendations

As the PI in this qualitative inquiry, I have had the opportunity to delve into data collection and analysis through surveys, focus groups, and review of public polling data, keeping in mind the complex dynamics when assisting an Israel-Focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP) during a time of crisis. As I delved deeper into the rich discussions of the participants captured in the transcripts, I began to see the delicate balance that heritage organizations like IF-AP are hoping to incorporate effectively as the demography around them shifts. From my decades in higher education and student mobility, I have learned to deeply appreciate the phrase, 'Demography is Destiny' a phrase attributed to Auguste Comte, a French nineteenth-century philosopher, who argued that the size and structure of a population will influence its future. The analysis of thematic conversations is not merely an academic exercise but a step towards actionable strategies.

However, such analysis uncovers a nuanced understanding that while the torch of tradition may be a beacon for membership for some, it does not ignite the passions of only the younger generation, who are marching to a different beat. Yet, from the same conversations, the need for inclusivity emerges as a bright thread, weaving through the conversations. It becomes amply clear that developing plans that accelerate creating environments where everyone, especially individuals of shared heritage, can feel safe and included is not just a nice-to-have, it is imperative. This thread extends outwards into strategic partnerships and outreach programs that embrace educational institutions, broadening the circle, and extending a hand to those who may have once stood on the periphery. These exchanges and claims led to the synthesis of combined recommendations from both Quantitative and Qualitative aspect of the study: The are noted as follows-

" Community Engagement: Highlighting the importance of active community engagement and soliciting diverse perspectives to inform organizational strategies.

Claim: Their active engagement is vital for deeper understanding of their heritage connection and views on Zionism (reported a JCC member in interview and focus group meetings)

Cultural and Generational Polarization: Recognizing cultural polarization, particularly around Zionism, and the challenge of bridging generational divides in understanding and interpretation.

Claim: Nuanced and resonating communication campaigns are necessary for accommodating and accepting diverse perspectives to address the complex discourse surrounding Zionism pointed out an "Older member during focus group discussions"

Identity Distinctions: Acknowledging the diversity in cultural and religious identity within the Jewish community and the complex interplay with political sentiments.

Claim: Acknowledging the inherent diversity within the Jewish American cultural and religious identities to ensure the sustainability of effectiveness of organizational outreach is important to "Potential Members" was underscored by participants in discussion groups.

Historical and Political Context: Emphasizing the importance of historical education and the complexity of political terms in shaping perspectives and organizational positioning.

Gender Dynamics in Conflict Resolution: The potential of female leadership to forge consensus in peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts.

Clear Communication of Mission and Vision: The necessity for organizations to clearly communicate their mission and how their actions align with their values.

Inclusive and Safe Recruitment Practices: The strategies for inclusive recruitment and creating safe spaces that resonate with the younger generation.

Legacy and Heritage Continuity: The importance of family legacy and the continuation of heritage involvement across generations.

Engagement and Outreach Strategies: The effectiveness of targeted engagement strategies such as personalized outreach, scholarships, and social events in attracting and retaining younger members.

Organizational Adaptation and Inclusivity: The need for organizations to adapt and become more inclusive to meet the expectations of younger generations and broader societal shifts.

Data-Informed Decision Making: Utilizing a data-driven approach to inform strategies and improve transparency in recruitment and engagement practices.

Personal Values and Historical Connections: Reflecting on personal histories and values as central to the defense and promotion of organizational identity.

Claim: Promoting Education on Zionism and the History of Israel-Palestine conflict is essential to assist potential members for fair and data informed viewpoints argued new potential members for the Jewish American communities.

Program Development for Youth Engagement: Developing targeted programs to engage younger audiences, with a focus on aligning incentives and values.

Global Diversity and Inclusive Leadership: Promoting global diversity and fostering inclusive leadership within the organization to appeal to a wider demographic.

Operational Resilience and Consistency: Maintaining operational ethos and consistency amidst changing mindsets and societal events, emphasizing stability and mission dedication.

Claims: For relevancy to a new demographic and for sustainability IF-AP would be wise to consider an evolving Feedback Driven Marketing platform. This will allow alignments of Mission with the evolution of nuanced values and prioritize the interests of a new demographic of young Jewish American constituency observed several survey participants.

These themes serve as a foundational guide for heritage-based organizations to navigate the intricate landscape of community engagement, generational differences, and the evolving expectations of younger demographics, ensuring they stay relevant and impactful in their mission.

In synthesizing the findings from our study, I offer a strategic plan for Israel-Focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP) that is attuned to the aspirations and motivations of working-age Jewish women and affiliates, who indeed command significant influence in philanthropic endeavors. In their voices they expect their Philanthropic Heritage Organizations to boldly ascribe to new adjustments and principles and solidify sustainability with awareness and inclusion. The following is their united recommendations that I collated and synthesized to present to IF-AP on principles they would do well to consider the sustainability of the organization in a modern humanitarian world:

Awareness and Outreach: In response to the need for broader engagement, I recommend IF-AP adopt a multi-faceted marketing strategy that not only raises awareness but also speaks to the interests of younger demographics. The strategy should leverage social media and community platforms, tapping into the networks where potential volunteers and donors already spend their time. Building relationships with influential figures who resonate with our target audience will be crucial in amplifying our message.

Warm Initial Engagement: To facilitate a welcoming and effective entry point, I propose the implementation of orientation sessions tailored to integrate volunteers' skills with IF-AP's missions and a mentorship program, which will serve as a bridge, connecting new members to the heart of our operations and ethos.

Uplifting Continuous Engagement: The establishment of regular communication channels is essential. Newsletters and social updates should be complemented by active feedback mechanisms, ensuring that the voices of our members drive our decision-making process and that their contributions are shaping the future of IF-AP.

Increased Retention and Growth as a Priority: Recognizing the importance of member loyalty, strategies like milestone recognitions and renewal incentives should be employed to honor their commitment. A referral program can harness the networks of current members, turning them into ambassadors for IF-AP.

Motivation and Incentives: Understanding what motivates our demographic is key. Tailored incentives that align with their professional and personal growth objectives can catalyze

continued engagement. Recognition programs should celebrate both small wins and major contributions, fostering a culture of appreciation and achievement.

Clear Communication: Messaging should articulate IF-AP's mission and the tangible impact of contributions in a manner that aligns with the values and interests of younger Jewish demographics. Stories and testimonials will serve as powerful tools to illustrate the personal and communal impact of their involvement.

Inclusive Involvement Opportunities: A varied suite of volunteer opportunities, from short-term tasks to leadership roles, will cater to diverse availability and commitment levels, ensuring that every member can find a fulfilling role within IF-AP.

Sustained Community Building Opportunities: Networking events and social gatherings should be at the heart of community building, creating spaces that foster connection and a shared sense of purpose. Embracing diversity within Jewish cultural and religious practices will enhance the inclusivity and richness of our community as well as move it away from the perception of "This is my mother's and grandmother's garden club!"

Consistent Recognition and Appreciation: The implementation of a recognition program will ensure that every contribution, no matter the size, is celebrated, reinforcing the value of each member's involvement.

Continuous Evaluation and Improvement: To keep our strategy responsive and relevant, tools for data collection and analysis will monitor engagement and satisfaction, with the organization poised to iterate and adapt based on this feedback.

By grounding our strategic framework in the principles of participation theory and affinity theory, and by being cognizant of similarity bias we can extend this recommendation for IF-AP's philanthropic reach (see Figure 5), creating a forward-thinking and inclusive organization that resonates with younger demographics and harnesses the 'power of the purse' to shape a dynamic future.

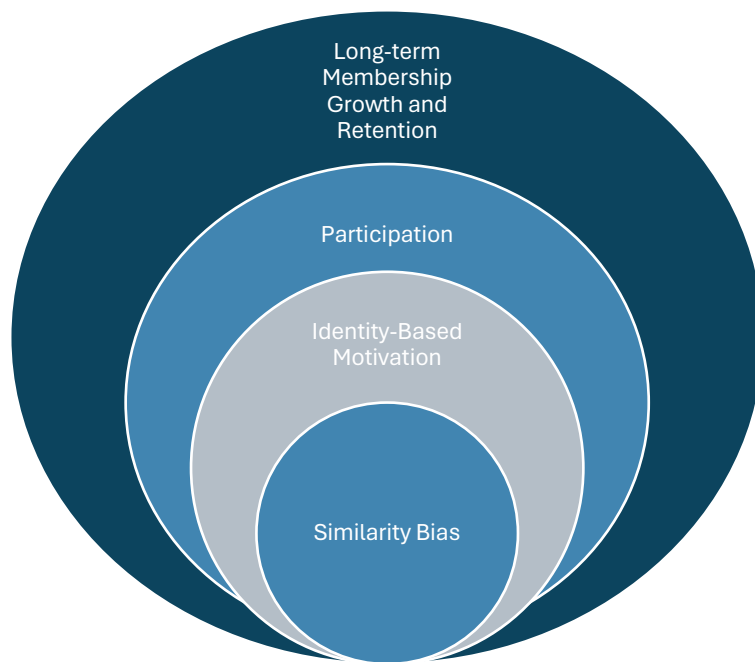


Figure 5. An additive model of IF-AP membership growth, providing equal weighting to contributions from Participatory Theory (Cornwall, 2008) with identity-based motivation IBM (Oyserman, 2015), Affinity theory (Brewer, 1979), and considerations of Similarity bias (Granovetter, 1973)

The research has uncovered a significant generational divide when it comes to volunteering. Younger members are clearly gravitating toward new and adaptable ways of

participating that suit their modern, active lives and digital savvy. They prefer volunteer opportunities that are not only impactful but also fit seamlessly into their schedules and can be engaged with via digital platforms, reflecting their comfort with technology and preference for on-demand involvement.

In contrast, older members demonstrate steadier and more predictable patterns of engagement. This group tends to commit to traditional forms of volunteerism with a physical presence and direct, often face-to-face, community interaction. Their commitment is marked by regularity and a dedication to established routines and practices. This dichotomy suggests that IF-AP must reevaluate its outreach and engagement strategies to bridge the gap between these two distinct sets of behaviors. For younger volunteers, there is a need to develop more dynamic, tech-integrated engagement options that capitalize on their preferences for digital interaction and flexible schedules. For the older demographic, sustaining and refining the current engagement models would be beneficial to maintain their consistent participation.

The insights gleaned from participant discussions have been pivotal in crafting actionable strategies. While tradition remains a cornerstone for many, a new, inclusive approach is required to engage the younger generation, who are attuned to a distinct rhythm. This balance—honoring the wisdom and stewardship of longstanding members while forging inclusivity and safety for all individuals—is imperative for IF-AP’s vitality with new demographics: for its preeminence and sustainability.

The consideration of alignment with modern sensibilities and inclusive practices is key to thriving in today's dynamic social landscape. Imagine a community garden where volunteers come together to plant, nurture, and harvest. Some come because the scent of fresh earth and the joy of watching things grow fulfills them deeply – this is their intrinsic motivation. Others might be

drawn by the community recognition they receive for their green thumbs, representing extrinsic motivation. This garden is more than just a place for plants; it is a web of relationships, where every exchange, be it seeds or smiles, strengthens the bonds between the gardeners. This reciprocity creates a rhythm to their work; each knows that their contribution today might return as a helping hand or a much-needed tool tomorrow. As seasons pass, the network of these dedicated volunteers becomes rich with social capital. Newcomers are welcomed and quickly woven into the fabric of the community. The shared knowledge and resources, from secret composting tips to spare watering cans, become treasures that fuel the garden's growth.

However, not all who wish to join can easily do so. Some find the gate locked when they can visit, while others are not even aware that this green haven exists amidst the concrete. Addressing these barriers to participation – by extending hours, increasing outreach, and ensuring a welcoming environment for all – is key to the garden's diversity and vibrancy. For the garden to thrive, not just this season but for many more to come, there must be a plan. The experienced must mentor the novice, and there should always be someone ready to step in when the current steward's time ends. This cycle of renewal is what will keep the community garden flourishing.

For the sake of this discussion, in this story, the garden is a microcosm of an affinity group underpinned by participation theory. It shows how intrinsic and extrinsic motivations bring people together, the importance of reciprocal benefits, the power of social capital, the need to overcome barriers, and the essential strategies for sustainability. Understanding these elements can shape a strategic recruitment and retention plan that ensures the garden – or an affinity group – not only survives but also thrives, blooming with the collective effort and passion of its members.

The objective from the beginning was to offer a sample perspective of the “Younger” demographics potential interests to join the organization given its shared heritage and utilize the

perceptions and voices of its most promising demographic to suggest ways to revitalize IF-AP's impact through structured outreach, retention, motivation, and community-building strategies while leveraging continuous evaluation for improvement. This report outlines actionable recommendations to expand IF-AP's philanthropic reach. Finally, the journey through this study has not been only about examining data or scrutinizing trends; it has been about a nuanced and optimistic way of weaving a rich tapestry of past legacy with the vibrant threads of future potential.

XI. Conclusion

In my capacity as a principal investigator for this quality improvement study, I presented to the organization a set of strategic recommendations for Israel-focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP), informed by the candid insights garnered through this study. The voices of this demographic have been clear: There is an imperative need for IF-AP to cultivate inclusivity, neutrality, and empathy within its operational ethos to ensure that its mission evolves in tandem with demographic shifts. The strategic initiative for IF-AP targets the enhancement of recruitment and engagement processes with an acute focus on the demographic of working-age Jewish women and affiliates within the United States.

Reflecting on the initial objectives of my study, I was able to discern that the importance to a revitalization of IF-AP organizational effectiveness hinges upon a strategic orchestration of outreach, retention, motivation, and community-building, augmented by long-term evaluative measures to foster refinement. In retrospect, my investigation yielded several Key Touchstone Strategies; rather than merely enumerating these, I would like to describe the nuanced application of participation theory, affinity theory, and an appreciation of similarity bias balanced with the strategies to illuminate IF-AP Leadership on ways to amplify IF-AP's philanthropic influence and command a new market share. A salient and yet conclusive theme emerged from dialogues with younger participants: the importance of representation within IF-AP's narrative. In response, I advocated for the extension of IF-AP's narrative to represent the mosaic of Jewish identity more fully. The contemporary political connotation of Zionism necessitates a recalibration of IF-AP's posture to one of unifying and responding to a Call to Action by the "Younger" demographics. Here, I recommended the formulation of communication strategies attuned to the diverse

viewpoints prevalent within the Jewish community, especially those held by younger individuals with multifaceted stances on Zionism.

This study began with the intention of revitalizing IF-AP, focusing on recalibrating the organization's approach to outreach, retention, motivation, and community-building. The journey has revealed key touchstone strategies that blend theoretical insights with practical applications. These include leveraging participation theory and affinity theory, alongside an awareness of similarity bias, to guide IF-AP's leadership towards broadening its philanthropic influence and claiming a new market share.

A recurring theme highlighted by the younger participants was the imperative of reflective representation within IF-AP's narrative, calling for a rewording of Zionism to resonate with a broader spectrum of Jewish identity. This led to my recommendation for communication strategies that are sensitive to the varied viewpoints within the community, especially those of younger members who hold complex positions on Zionism. Moreover, it became apparent that genuine engagement with the younger demographic necessitates empathy and an openness to address their core concerns. I suggested that IF-AP integrate educational initiatives that present multifaceted perspectives on key issues, fostering a well-informed and empathetic membership base. To maintain relevance, I recognized the need for IF-AP to refresh its engagement model, offering a range of volunteer experiences to accommodate distinct levels of commitment and interests. This dynamic approach ensures that IF-AP's mission remains appealing and pertinent to successive generations. The distilled framework five overarching initiatives for an adaptive framework that synthesizes the themes provided are as follows and has been presented to the organization. Here is an outline of recommendations drawn from the previous claims, findings, and the added details:

I. Inclusive Engagement

- A. Recognition of Diverse Jewish Identities
- B. Implementation of Celebratory and Acknowledgement Initiatives

II. Educational Opportunities

- A. Exploration of Zionism's Complex History
- B. Development of Comprehensive Educational Materials

III. Open Dialogue Facilitation

- A. Establishment of Spaces for Respectful Discussion
- B. Strategies for Encouraging a Broad Exchange of Views

IV. Organizational Stance Clarification

- A. Clear Communication of IF-AP's Position on Zionism
- B. Avoidance of Polarizing Language

V. Societal Change Adaptation

- A. Responsiveness to Jewish Community Dynamics
- B. Strategy Update in Response to Cultural Trends

VI. Generational Gap Bridging

- A. Aligning Mission with Younger Members' Aspirations
- B. Strategies for Integrating Younger Voices into Leadership

VII. Qualitative to Quantitative Transition

- A. Utilization of Public Data for Empirical Assessment
- B. Examination of IF-AP's Demographic Profile and Cultural Trends

VIII. Quantitative Investigation

- A. Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Perceptions of Zionism
- B. Use of Pew Research Data to Explore Influences within IF-AP's Community

IX. Strategic Approach and Recommendations

- A. Synthesis of Findings for Organizational Strategy
- B. Development of Engagement Strategies Informed by Empirical Data

X. Implementation of Strategies and Insights

- A. Call to Action for IF-AP to Implement Recommendations

The outline emphasizes a strategic framework for IF-AP to adopt, ensuring its mission and activities are aligned with the current and future needs of its community. It moves from a deep understanding of qualitative insights to a robust empirical approach that leverages public data to inform actionable recommendations. The study's investigative trajectory is shaped by collaborative reflection, aiming to: Chart existing patterns in intergenerational engagement. Expose generational factors impacting membership and volunteerism. Decode perceptions of value and relevance across ages within the organization. Finally, I proposed strategic interventions to foster cross-

generational participation. The research with scholarship and literature review delineates several pathways for IF-AP to align with evolving community needs, transitioning from qualitative insights to empirical strategies to enact actionable recommendations from this alignment of claims, findings: Strategic Community and Identity Engagement: This strategy is about bringing people together, recognizing the cultural shifts, and understanding that identity goes beyond just being part of a group; it's about individual experiences and the bigger historical picture. Inclusive Growth and Organizational Evolution: The organization is evolving by opening its doors wider, ensuring that the legacy continues, adapting to include everyone, and creating programs that attract younger people. Communication and Educational Empowerment: We are focusing on talking clearly about our goals, helping people understand the complex history and politics around Zionism, and connecting personal stories with our shared history. Data-Driven Leadership and Operational Transparency: Decisions are based on solid data, embracing a leadership style that reflects the diverse world we live in, and making sure we are consistent and resilient in our operations. Gender Perspectives and Conflict Resolution: Addressing how men and women might see things differently, especially when it comes to solving problems, is part of making sure everyone feels part of the community and shaping the organization for the better.

By following some or all the recommendations, IF-AP may generate plans to stay true to its mission while keeping up with what is important to the community now and in the future. We are mixing what we have learned from talking to people with hard data to make sure we make the right moves.

XII. Limitations and Further Research Opportunity for IF-AP

Limitations

The study presented here, while extensive in its engagement with the younger Jewish demographic, was conducted with certain inherent limitations. A primary limitation was the reliance on a cross-sectional research design, which offers a snapshot of insights but does not allow for the observation of changes over time or the establishment of causality between the variables. Future studies would benefit from a longitudinal approach to track shifts in demographic engagement and philanthropic trends within IF-AP over extended periods.

Also, the study's specificity to IF-AP means the findings may not be generalizable to other philanthropic organizations without further validation. There is also the potential for measurement overlap, particularly between the variables of engagement, organizational trust, and diversity and inclusion initiatives, which may have influenced the significant relationships observed.

Future Research Opportunities

For future research, it would be beneficial to employ longitudinal cross-lagged designs to understand the relationships between strategic outreach, membership retention, and the impact of recruitment initiatives over time. Such studies could help ascertain the long-term effects of the recommended strategies on IF-AP's membership and philanthropic success. In simpler terms, for future research, it would be helpful to conduct studies over time to really understand how well IF-AP's efforts to reach out to people, keep members involved, and include a diverse range of individuals are working. Such research could show how these strategies affect the number of members and their charitable contributions eventually.

Expanding the scope of research to compare IF-AP with similar organizations could provide a broader understanding of the efficacy of different outreach and engagement models. Furthermore, analyzing the specific impact of communication strategies on various age cohorts within the Jewish community could yield insights into how to tailor IF-AP's initiatives to resonate with different demographic segments.

It would also be advantageous to investigate the relationship between strategic intake practices using social media and actual philanthropic outcomes. Another promising avenue for future research is the exploration of how digital engagement platforms can be optimized to foster a sense of belonging and active participation among younger members. Including assessments of how shifts in the perception of Zionism and the broader cultural and social landscape influence philanthropic behaviors could offer critical insights into adapting IF-AP's positioning. In a similar vein, examining the intersection of technology with traditional philanthropic practices might reveal new pathways for innovation within IF-AP.

XIII. Timeline

My capstone journey began in July 2023 when IF-AP extended an invitation that intertwined my professional acumen with a pro-bono heart. With the intent to bolster their market presence, I embarked on this endeavor, nurturing a collection of data and analytical insights as autumn leaves began to fall in September. As the year waned and winter approached, I delved into the fabric of IF-AP, aligning with their rhythm through recruitment events and intimate observances of their daily weave.

In a twist of fate, the echoes of October 7th rippled through our world, and the ground beneath IF-AP shifted. The once bold strides of partnership and dialogue took on a more cautious gait; the language softened, and openness retreated in the shadow of a divided world. The urgency and sensitivity that ensued became the new compass for our work, reminding us that the very spaces created for openness can, in a heartbeat, become constricted with apprehension.

January of 2024 ushered in with a poignant focus on recruitment, where two weeks were dedicated to kindling the potential within new members. This led to a six-week choreography with surveys and the careful gathering of focus groups, all within the newly framed context of a world—and an organization—holding its breath.

The project's closing arc, another eight weeks long, was a testament to resilience and commitment of all involved. It was in this crucible of changed realities that data was gathered, sifted, and woven into the fabric of analysis and narrative, each thread a bearer of both weight and light, contributing to the capstone's final form. In the reflection of this work, the interplay of urgency and circumspection stands as a solemn reminder of the fragility and strength within our shared human endeavors.

	July-Oct 2023				Nov-Feb 2024				March-May 2024			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	
Development Recruitment												
Surveys												
Focus Groups												
Data analysis												
Writeup, Review & Deliver												

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Appendix

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter for Survey

You are receiving this email because you indicated you would be interested in discussing your perspectives on potential engagement with the Jewish Philanthropy IF-AP. If you would like to know more about how you can help, please keep reading.

Greetings, I am a Vanderbilt University Ed.D. candidate, working with the institutional grant manager at IF-AP. I have been approved by Vanderbilt University and IRB (Institutional Review Board) to pursue my Capstone Project a quality improvement study with a partner organization a heritage Jewish women and affiliate's Philanthropy in New York City and Atlanta. I am looking to collect feedback from Jewish working age women and their affiliates to inform a plan that would help the organization improve the quality of their outreach as they increased awareness of IF-AP's mission and vision. If you are interested in helping to shape the future of how IF-AP by including the Jewish Community to participate in improving their outreach methods and manner, please respond to this email and I will work with you to fit your preference in joining a Survey and or Focus groups find a time to meet up virtually at your convenience. The members and affiliates of the Jewish community can share their perspectives via a Survey and/ or participation on one of four Focus groups via Zoom:

A: Completing a 20-question survey through an online tool called Qualtrics.

B: The interview with me facilitating the discussions that would last about 30 minutes with 5-9 other participants and would be focused on your perceptions of the effectiveness of the recruitment system and the extent to which you believe it is beneficial (or not) for your cohort to increase engagement with IF-AP as part of a Quality Improvement Process.

A few things to keep in mind as you consider completing the survey online and or joining Focus groups.

- Neither your name nor identifying information will be shared with anyone.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you can opt-out at any time.
- Your participation is confidential, and your answers will have no detrimental effect on your present or future relationship with the organization.

The survey is being administered by Qualtrics XM and focus Groups will utilize Zoom platform.

Procedures

You will be asked to complete an online survey and or join a 45 -60 minutes of discussion via. Your participation is anonymous in the survey and to anyone not a part of the Zoom session you are logged on to per your choice. Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. You may skip questions. The survey will take between 10 and 25 minutes to complete and must be completed in one sitting. If you close your browser, you will lose any responses, you previously entered. If you use the “back” button to change previous answers, you may have to answer questions again. The survey results will be submitted directly to a secure off-campus server hosted by and accessible only to IF-AP. Any computer identification that might identify participants will be deleted from the submissions.

Sensitive Content

Many of the questions are personal and may bring up different reactions. Know that you may skip questions or stop responding to the survey at any time.

Statement of Anonymity for Participation

In the event of any publication or presentation resulting from the survey, no personally identifiable information will be shared. Your anonymity in participating will be kept to the degree permitted by the technology used (for example, IP addresses and longitudinal/latitudinal data are never recorded by IF-AP systems).

Statement of Anonymity for Comments

Upon submission, all comments from participants that include potentially identifying information will be de-identified to make those comments anonymous. Thus, participant comments will not be attributable to their author. In instances where certain comments might be attributable to an individual through the participant's inclusion of identifying information in the comment, Qualtrics XM is an experience management software developed to make every effort to de-identify those comments or will remove the comments from the analyses. The comments will be analyzed using content analysis. To give “voice” to the quantitative data, some comments may be quoted in reports related to this survey or the Focus Groups.

You may ask questions about this assessment in confidence. Questions concerning this project should be directed to: rehnuma.lizzie.wahab@vanderbilt.edu

Thank you for your participation and perspective to bring our community closer.

Regards,

Lizzie

rehnuma.lizzie.wahab@vanderbilt.edu

Appendix B

Survey Questions. These survey questions were formed to help gather information relevant to the research questions and project design.

Outreach Efforts of IF-AP, IF-AP(IF-AP):

1. I am aware of IF-AP's efforts to engage potential members around my age.
2. IF-AP's recruitment programs are relevant to my interests and values.
3. The communication channels IF-AP uses for outreach are effective in reaching me.
4. IF-AP's membership recruitment events are well-organized and informative.
5. I feel personally invited to and welcomed by IF-AP's potential membership recruitment events.

Attitudes towards the Mission of the organization, IF-AP(IF-AP):

6. I believe that overseeing IF-AP's hospitals in Israel is an essential mission for IF-AP.
7. The mission of managing two youth camps in Israel resonates positively with me.
8. IF-AP's commitment to healthcare and youth services in Israel is making a significant impact on the welfare of the residents of Israel.
9. The mission of IF-AP aligns with my personal philanthropic goals.

Attitudes towards the Operational Effectiveness of IF-AP:

10. IF-AP efficiently uses its resources for the betterment of its hospitals and youth camps.

11. The leadership of IF-AP is transparent in its decision-making processes.
12. IF-AP's initiatives and projects are well-executed in terms of timeliness
13. IF-AP demonstrates consistent progress towards its mission-related goals.
14. I trust IF-AP to use donations effectively for its mission in Israel (Beyond overhead, all expenditures are made for the benefit of residents of Israel in a nonsectarian manner)

General Questions:

15. I would consider actively participating in IF-AP based on its current recruitment current methods.
16. The mission of IF-AP in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel would motivate me to become a potential member.
17. I believe IF-AP's operational effectiveness in providing healthcare and youth services in Israel sets it apart from other similar U.S.-based organizations that support Israel.
18. The current level of transparency in IF-AP's operations increases my trust in the organization.
19. I am likely to recommend membership sign up to IF-AP to peers based on its mission of Zionism.
20. I am likely to recommend IF-AP for membership to peers based on its operational effectiveness.

Appendix C:

Focus Group Questions. These questions may facilitate productive discussions during the focus group interviews and provide valuable insights into the research questions and project objectives.

Focus Group Questions:

1. What aspects of the organization's recruitment and outreach efforts do you find particularly effective, and are there any areas you think could be improved?
2. Have you had any involvement in previous IF-AP recruitment initiatives? If so, what was your experience like, and how do you think it could be enhanced?
3. From your perspective, how well does IF-AP connect with individuals in your age group? Are there any specific approaches you believe could better engage your demographic?
4. How do you perceive the concept of Zionism in today's context, especially as it relates to your identity as a Jewish individual? How do you feel Zionism aligns with your personal values and beliefs as a modern Jewish woman?
5. What are your thoughts on IF-AP's mission, which centers on operating hospitals and youth camps in Israel to provide comprehensive medical and mental health services?

6. In your opinion, what outreach methods do you believe organizations like IF-AP should employ to effectively promote Zionism and support Jewish communities in both the US and Israel? How can these methods be inclusive and engaging for individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives?

In an effort to deepen our understanding of engagement within IF-AP among Jewish women and affiliates of diverse ages and to foster a constructive dialogue, the focus group questions have been thoughtfully designed to explore various facets of organizational interaction. The aim is to uncover how personal values, social dynamics, and cultural relevance inform one's decision to participate in a heritage organization committed to Zionist values.

Rephrased questions for clarity for our diverse group of focus group participants:

1. **Values and Social Context in Engagement:** When you think about the values that are most important to you and the conversations happening in society today, how do these shape your choice to be involved with an organization like IF-AP, particularly in light of its Zionist orientation?
2. **Resonance with Mission and Outreach:** Reflecting on what you know about IF-AP's goals and its efforts to reach out to people like yourself, how does this fit with

what you would expect from a heritage organization in the modern world? Are there certain aspects that you find especially relevant or any areas where you believe IF-AP could improve?

3. **Outreach and the Younger Demographic:** Considering the initiatives that IF-AP has put forward to engage younger people, which of these efforts speak to you or your peers the most? Are there any changes or innovative approaches you would recommend that could make these efforts more appealing to those in your age range?
4. **Perceptions and Membership Dynamics:** Have you noticed any patterns or shifts in how IF-AP is perceived by the public, or in who is getting involved with the organization, that you think might influence a young adult's decision to join and participate? How do these perceptions align with what you have personally seen or expected?
5. **Strategies for Inclusivity:** From your own experiences or what you have observed, what advice would you give to IF-AP to refine its engagement approach to be more inclusive and to resonate with younger Jewish individuals who may not be as culturally engaged?

The structure of these questions is intentional, providing a space for participants to reflect on their experiences and propose forward-thinking strategies that can inform IF-AP's

path towards greater inclusivity and relevance. This conversation will not only look at the present circumstances but will also consider potential growth and adaptation for the organization, always with an eye on inclusivity and bridging the generational divides.

Appendix D

IRB Authorization

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:fa563e99-c11e-4d85-b951-0d6d3e2c0a7a>

Appendix E: Visual theme map highlighting the five overarching initiatives for an adaptive framework used for PowerPoint presentation. Each initiative is represented with relevant imagery and icons to illustrate the strategic approach for engaging a nonprofit community effectively. Power point included.

**Legacy in Transition: Enhancing Intergenerational Engagement at
a Heritage Philanthropy during Times of Change**

**A Mixed Method Study on Developing Progressive Membership Recruitment &
Retention Strategies amidst Demographic Shifts**

**R. Lizzie Wahab
Vanderbilt University**





Organizational Context

IF-AP is a heritage-based U.S.-based volunteer organization focused on the provision of healthcare and youth services in a heritage territory abroad. Since the 1960s, IF-AP has operated two hospitals and several youth camps focused on children with behavioral challenges. All programs are nonsectarian and encourage interaction across all communities present.

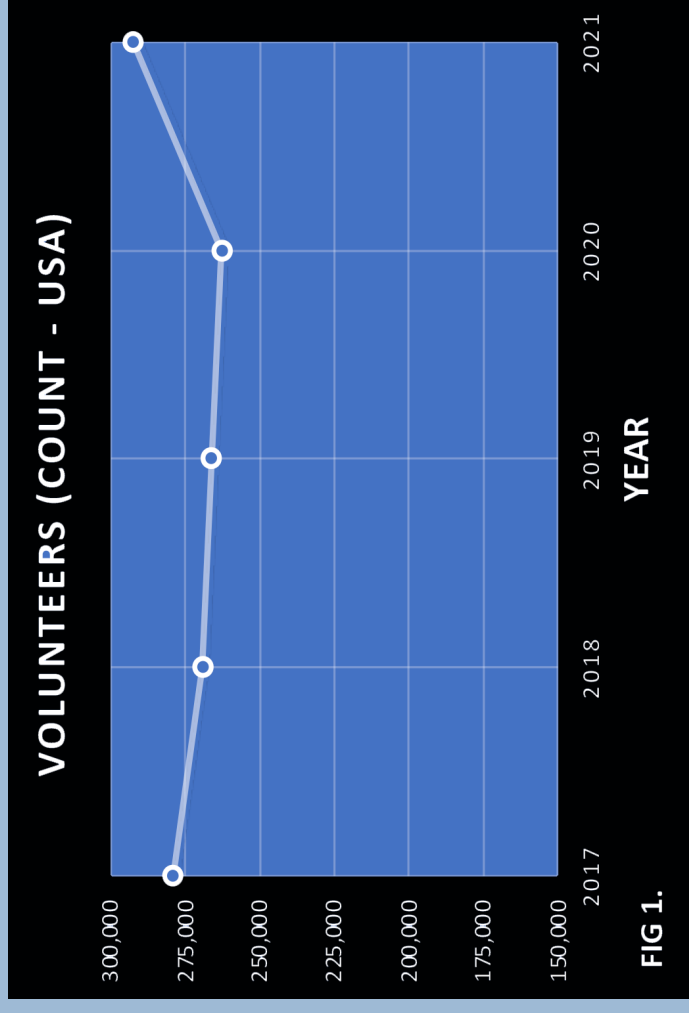


FIG 1.

Background. An Israel-Focused American Philanthropy (IF-AP) is, as of the most recent annual report, a nonprofit with typical annual revenues of \$50M, and net assets of \$551M.

Membership overall has also been stable, showing on minor y-to-y fluctuations, with the most recent years being relatively positive (based on the latest annual reports). See Figure 1.

Fundraising has been sufficient to maintain the organization's mission for the near-term (next ten years).

Problem of Practice

- IF-AP with Zionism in their mission, **states that they face a demographic cliff**, with dire long-term consequences for fundraising. Volunteers/membership skew heavily older (70+ years).
- Specifically, this study will examine strategies to attract younger Jewish Americans whose attitudes towards Israel are characterized by increasing complexity, as noted by the IF-AP observations.
- Based on a literature review, I will be applying Affinity Group, Identity, Place Attachment and Participatory Theory to develop the Conceptual Frame for the study.

1

AFFINITY, IDENTITY, ATTACHMENT

Affinity theory (Kals & Maes, 2002; Brewer, M. B. 1979)
IBM theory (Oyserman, D. 2015)
(Hummon, D. M. (1992)

2

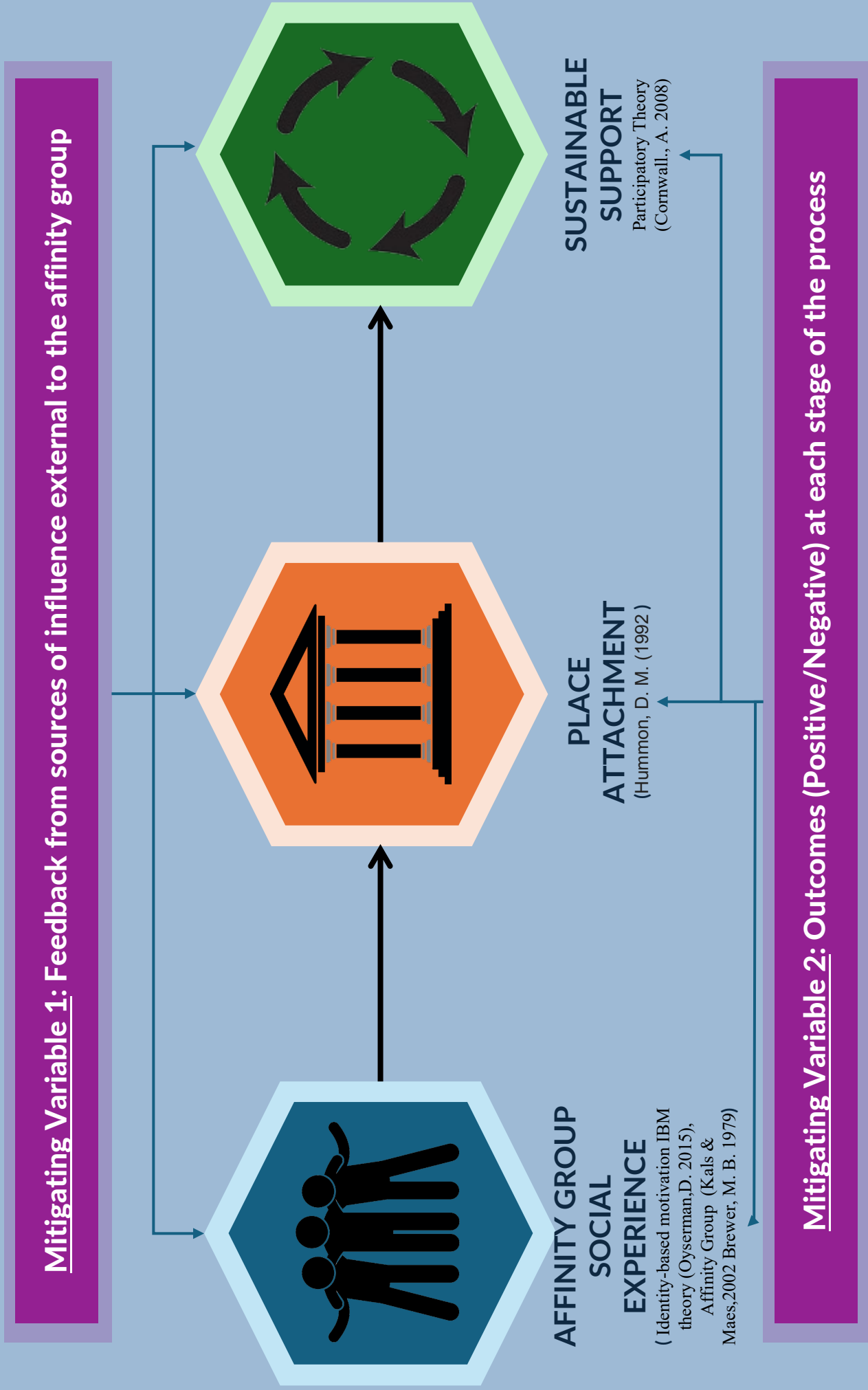
PARTICIPATORY THEORY

(Cornwall, A. 2008)

3

CONCEPTUAL FRAME

Conceptual Frame



Research Questions



**Mixed
(Survey & Focus Group)**

What is the relationship (if any) between IF-AP's aged-based demographic profile and its lack of a strategic outreach plan?



**Mixed
(Survey & Focus Group)**

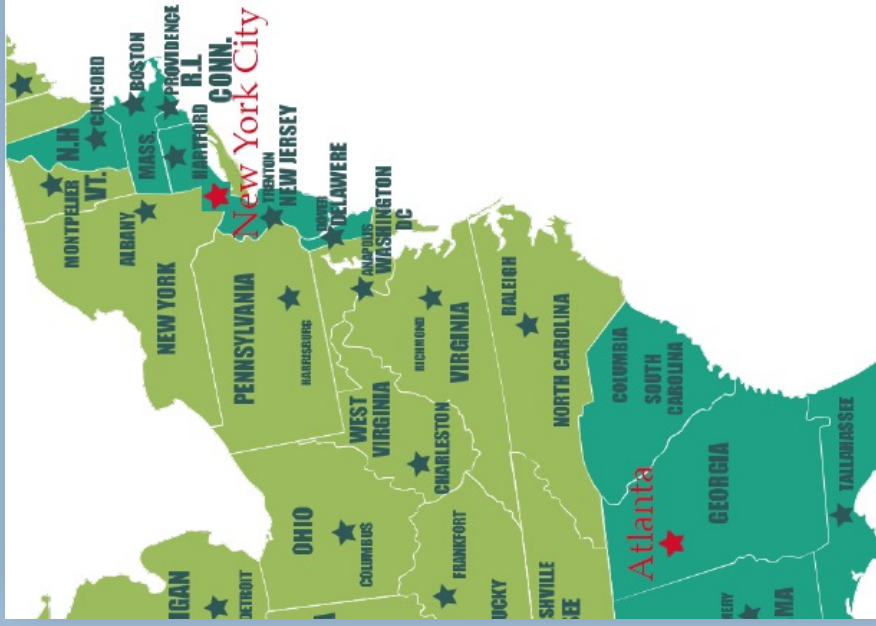
What is the relationship (if any) between IF-AP's aged-based demographic profile and perceptions of either IF-AP's current mission or operational effectiveness in achieving mission objectives?



Quantitative

What is the relationship (if any) between IF-AP's aged-based demographic profile and wider cultural trends on the perception of Zionism/attitudes toward Israel?

Methodology



RQ 1

RQ 2

RQ 3

N = 58 (20%
Response Rate)

- NYC & Atlanta Markets

- 20 Questions in Qualtrics

- 5-pt Likert Scale

N = 18 (26%
Response Rate)

- NYC & Atlanta Markets

- 4 Focus Groups (Up to 60 min.)

- Audio Recordings & Transcripts

National polling data on attitudes towards Heritage Mission

Vs.

IF-AP-specific membership levels over a 10-year period.

- Linear regression

Data Analysis

The study included 58 completed questionnaires (questions 1 – 20), which excluded partial responses from the analysis. Of these, three opted not to enter their age, and were thus excluded from analysis. We generated an age profile of respondents for age, which is shown in Figure 2.

The age range revealed that a sufficient number of participants in the target age demographic (24 – 45) were sampled by this survey, with the median value falling very close to the upper limit of the targeted age range of the younger demographic (i.e., 45 yrs.).

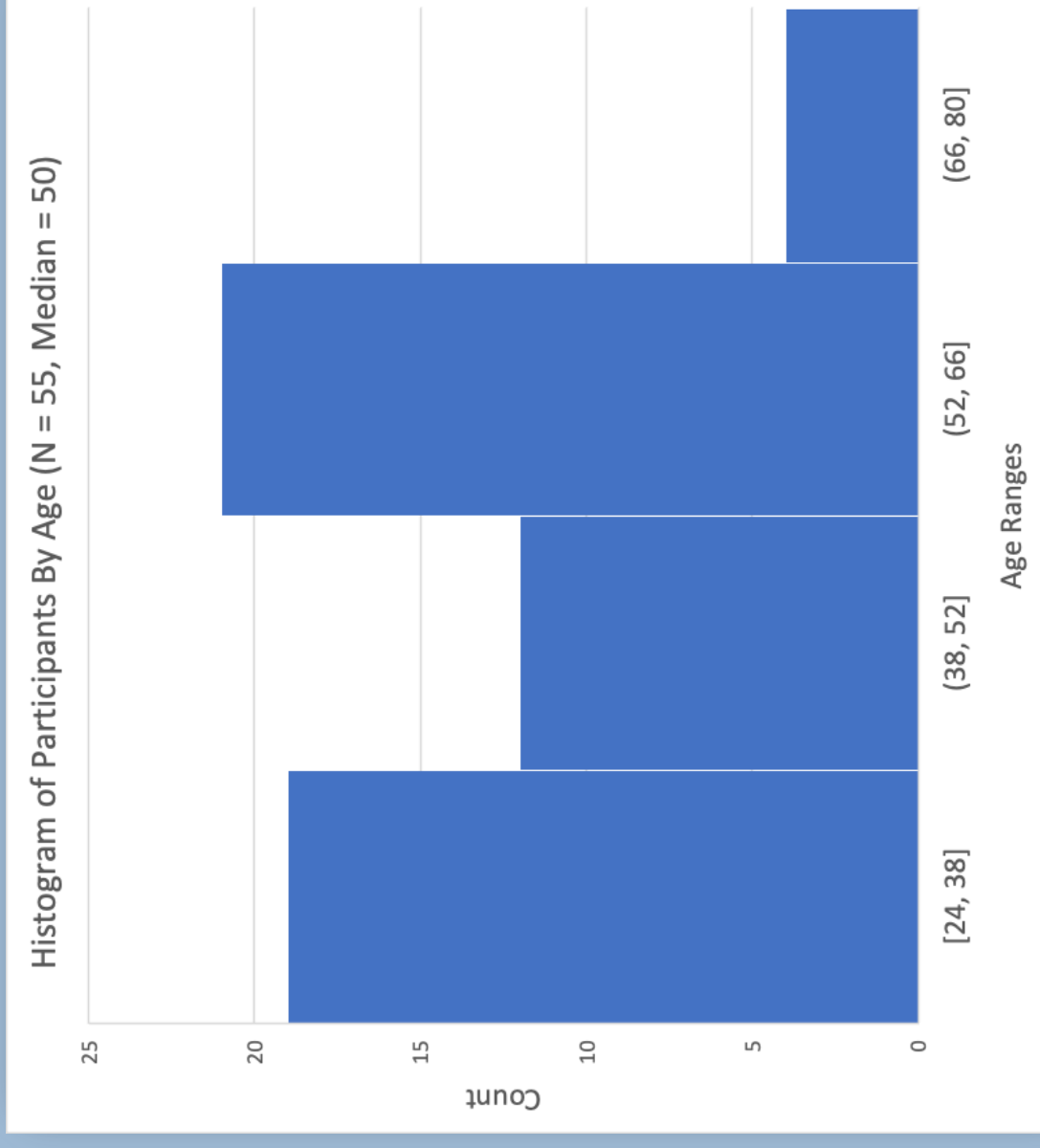
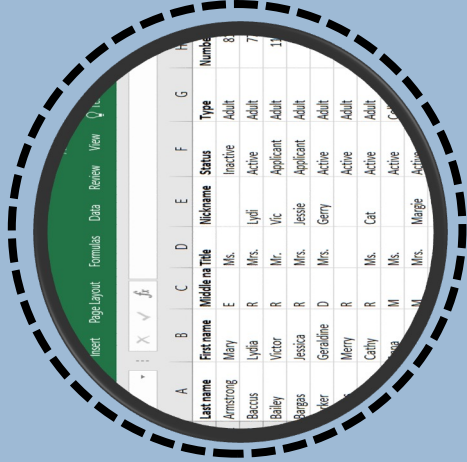


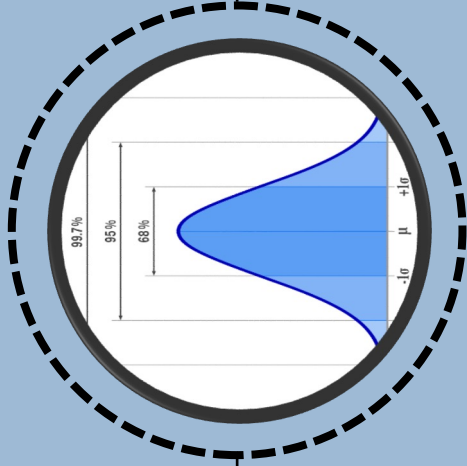
Figure 2. Histogram of ages of all participants who qualified for analysis.

Data Analysis: Conversion of Raw Data and Testing

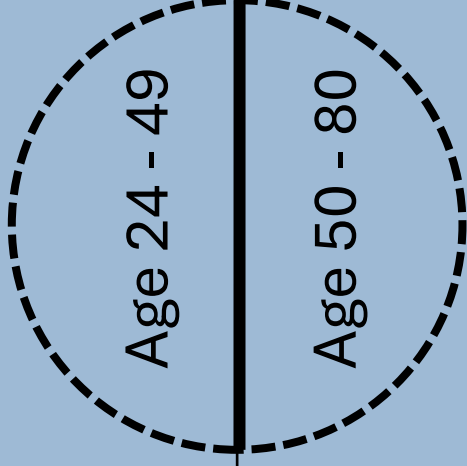


Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Nickname	Status	Type
Armstrong	Mary	E	Mrs.	Inactive	Adult
Baccus	Lydia	R	Mrs.	Active	Adult
Bailey	Victor	R	Mr.	Vic Applicant	Adult
Bergas	Jessica	R	Mrs.	Jessie Applicant	Adult
Biever	Geraldine	D	Mrs.	Gerry	Active Adult
Merry	R	Mrs.	Cat	Active	Adult
Cathy	R	Mrs.	Marge	Active	Adult
Mrs.	M	Mrs.	Marge	Active	Adult
Mrs.	M	Mrs.	Marge	Active	Adult

Raw Likert Scores
(individual scales)



Z-Scores
(mean = 0, $+/-1 = a$ standard deviation)



Split Plot Design
comparing Young vs. Old

Two-tailed t-tests (Age Group) on Z-scores, for each survey question

Data Analysis: Survey

The breakdown by age yielded surprising results, and the significant differences are highlighted in green in Table 1. Older participants held significantly more negative views on the recruitment events, as evidenced by the two-tailed t-tests for questions 4 and 5. My theory is that this could be attributed to a familiarity effect; these individuals, with their extensive experience throughout the years, with organizational events, could pinpoint shortcomings more sharply.

There was also an age effect emerging in the first two operations questions, which were particularly mission-focused: Older respondents tended to be even more supportive of IF-P's mission than Younger respondents, as predicted prior to the study.

QUESTIONS	YOUNGER	OLDER
<i>RECRUITMENT</i>		
The organization's recruitment programs are relevant to people around my age.	-0.40	-0.18
The organization's recruitment programs are relevant to my interests and values.	-0.58	-0.26
The communication channels the organization uses for outreach are effective in reaching me.	-0.51	-0.86
The organization's membership recruitment events are well-organized and informative.	-0.07	-0.62
I feel personally invited and welcomed by the organization's membership recruitment events.	-0.23	-0.88
<i>OPERATIONS</i>		
I believe that operating its two hospitals in Israel is an essential mission for the organization.	0.68	1.38
The organization's mission of managing two youth camps in Israel resonates with me.	0.41	1.37
The organization's commitment to healthcare and youth services in Israel is making a significant impact on the welfare of the residents of Israel.	0.54	0.67

Data Analysis: Focus Group

Design: 70 individuals recruited, 23 expressed their interest, culminating in the participation of 18 individuals spread across four Zoom sessions.

Findings

5/18 participants expressed visible and commentary discomfort with the word “Zionism”. 8 participants said they preferred the descriptive “Attitudes toward Israel” a better fit than “Zionism”. Three of the 18 participants believed Zionism as a better descriptive of how people should view Israel, and how they view Israel.

Emergent Themes

I. Active engagement with working-aged Jewish women is critical for understanding their connection to heritage and place attachment and views on Zionism.

II. Addressing the complex climate surrounding Zionism with nuanced communication that embraces diverse perspectives is beneficial.

III. A clear distinction exists between cultural and religious Jewish identities, which is crucial for the organization's outreach.

IV. Educational initiatives providing historical context on Zionism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are essential for a balanced perspective.

V. Communicating the organization's mission with clarity and inclusivity is imperative to welcome the diversity within the Jewish community.

VI. To effectively engage younger Jewish demographics, the organization must align its mission with contemporary values and interests.

Data Analysis: Polling Data

RQ3# What is the relationship (if any) between IF-AP's age-based demographic profile and broader cultural trends regarding the perception of Zionism which is also considered as "Attitudes towards the State of Israel" by IF-AP.

Data: This analysis utilized annual Pew Research Center polling data from 2001 to 2018 (n = 14) alongside corresponding membership levels (derived from annual dues revenue) for the same period from IF-AP. All raw values were transformed into percent year-over-year changes.

Pearson correlation analysis (see Figure 3) revealed a nonsignificant positive correlation between IF-AP membership levels and U.S. public attitudes towards Israel ($r = 0.33$).

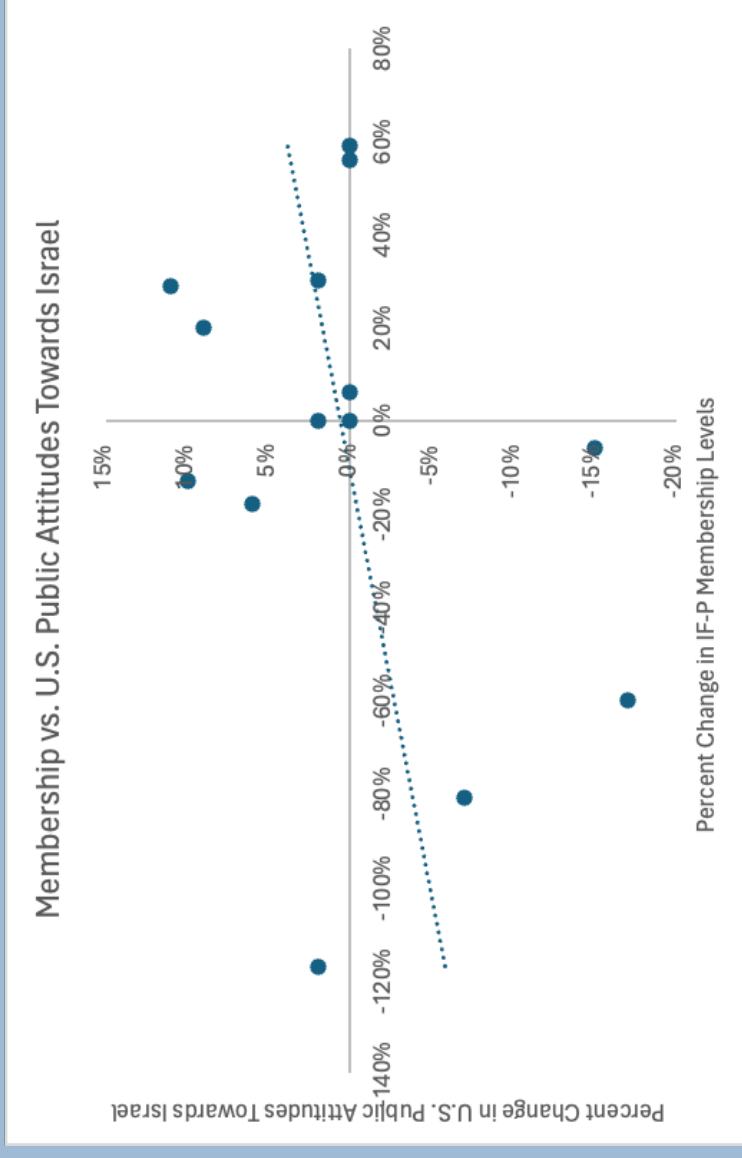


Figure 3. Scatterplot of percent changes in U.S. Public Attitudes towards the state of Israel by the Pew Research Group (2001 – 2018) vs. percent changes in membership dues totals for IF-AP.

Investigative Aims

*The study's
investigative
trajectory was
shaped by
collaborative
reflection,
aiming to.....*

- 1. Chart existing patterns in intergenerational engagement***
- 2. Reveal generational factors impacting membership and volunteerism***
- 3. Decode perceptions of value and relevance across ages within the organization***
- 4. Propose strategic interventions to foster cross-generational participation***

The claims and findings, guided with scholarship and literature review delineates several pathways for IF-AP to align with its evolving community needs, transitioning from qualitative insights to empirical strategies to enact Adaptive Actionable Recommendations.



The Claims

The org Must actively and deliberately increase engagement with a new demographic

Vital for understanding the heritage connection and views on Zionism

“JCC member, FG interviewee “

Nuanced approaches to communication on Zionism

Accepting diverse perspectives to effectively address the complex discourse surrounding Zionism

“Older retired member of the Organization”

Acknowledging the diversity within Jewish American cultural and religious identities for effectiveness of the outreach

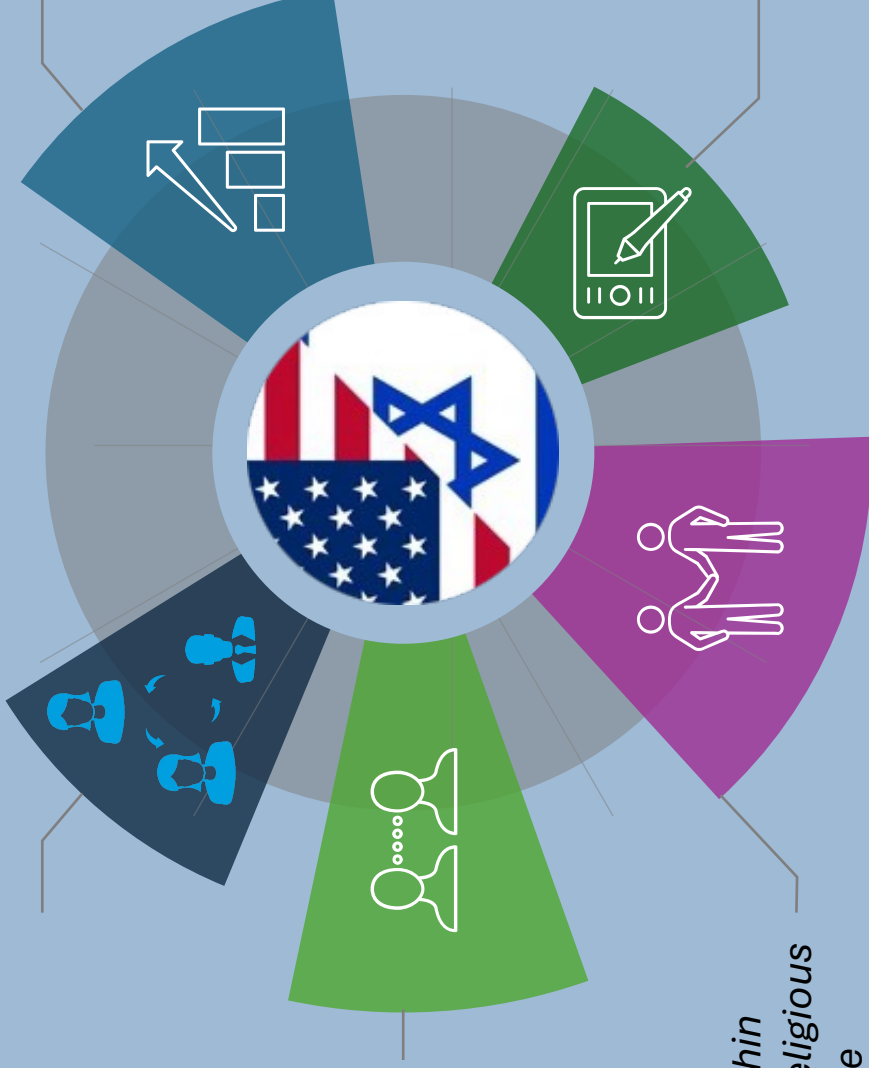
“potential member from culturally diverse Jewish American community”

Education on Zionism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict crucial to help potential members form fair and data informed viewpoints.

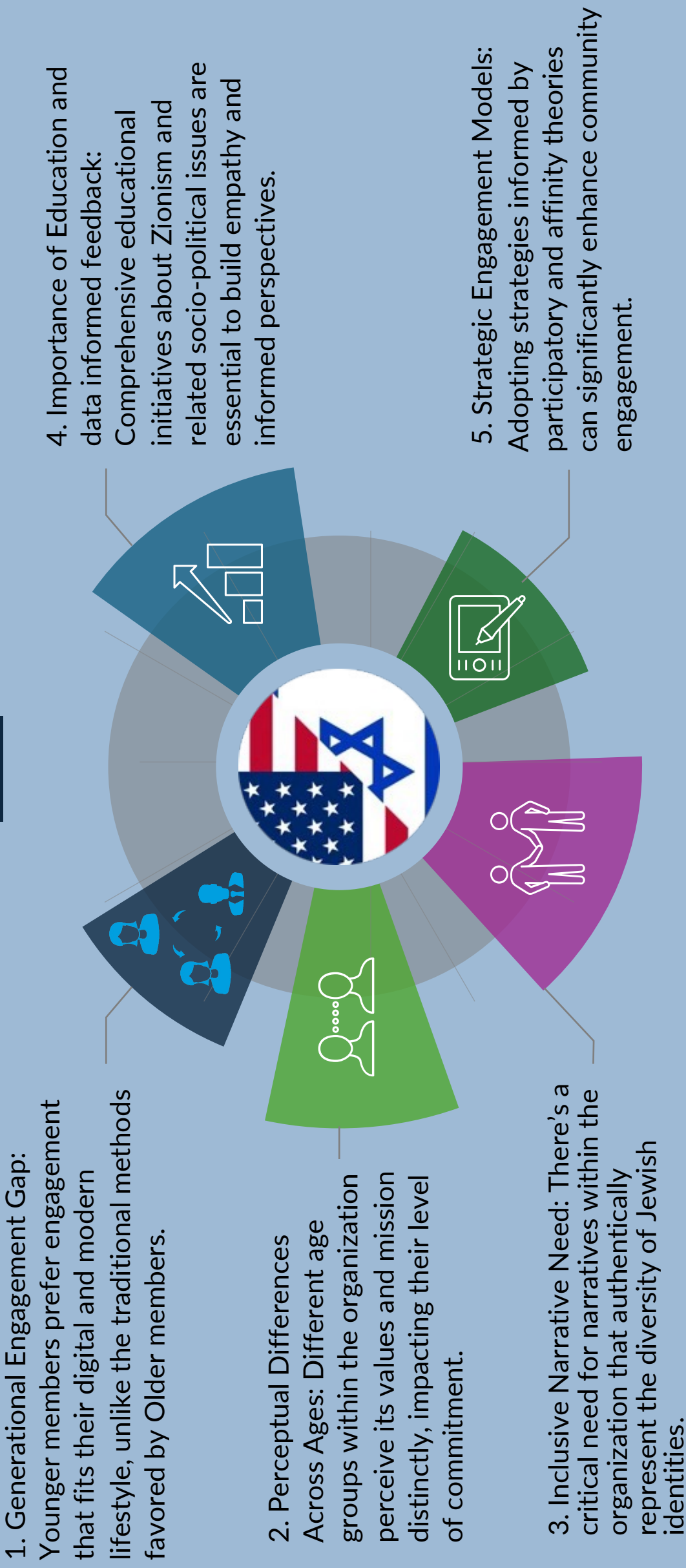
“New potential member from religious Jewish American Community”

For relevancy & sustainability the org. should consider a form of Feedback-Driven Evolution

Align its mission with the evolving values and interests of young Jewish Americans
“Survey & FG participant”



Findings



Recommendations

- **Strategic Community and Identity Engagement:**

This strategy is about bringing people together, recognizing the cultural shifts, and understanding that identity goes beyond just being part of a group; it's about individual experiences and the bigger historical picture.

- **Inclusive Growth and Organizational Evolution:**

The organization is evolving by opening its doors wider, ensuring that the legacy continues, adapting to include everyone, and creating programs that attract younger people.

- **Communication and Educational Empowerment:**

Focusing on talking clearly about our goals, helping people understand the complex history and politics around Zionism, and connecting personal stories with our shared history.

- **Data-Driven Leadership and Operational Transparency:**

Decisions are based on solid data, embracing a leadership style that reflects the diverse world we live in, and making sure we're consistent and resilient in our operations.

- **Gender Perspectives and Conflict Resolution:**

Addressing how men and women and others might see things differently, especially when it comes to solving problems, is part of making sure everyone feels part of the community and shaping the organization for the better.



Demography
is Destiny
Key take-
aways

Intergenerational
Solidarity

Celebrate the adopting of new strategies for IF-AP to navigate the evolving landscape of demographics.

Diverse Voices

Adaptive recommendations to ensure heritage is honored while the organization is infused with new vigor.

Place Attachment

Enhanced Heritage & Place Attachment presents a crucial to forge inclusive, plans with tailored future initiatives engendering diversity and demography to Mission.

Commitment

I hope the project inspired this enduring philanthropy to consider a pledge.... to ignite a commitment to unity, innovation, acceptance and develop a respectful, resonant communication framework that would connect us all, across time.

...With sincere gratitude to Abba for his patience towards a promise, my gentle family, Rin, Aid, Add, Doc, those in Dhaka, Melbourne & Sydney, to the kind greater NYC & Atlanta Jewish American communities, my associates in Bangladesh, Azerbaijan, the Middle East & D.C.

Dr. Michael Neel, my eminent advisor along with the LLO Program Directors, Professors & my colleagues at Vanderbilt University, I truly remain in your debt!

Rehnuma Lizzie Wahab

