

INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION AMONG SCHOOLS
AND OTHER HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDER AGENCIES
IN THREE NON-URBAN MIDWESTERN
COMMUNITIES

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Interorganizational coordination research, begun in the 1950's and early 1960's (Rogers & Whetten, 1982), has continued to grow (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Gray, 1985; Hall, Clark, Giordano, Johnson & Van Roekel, 1977; Kirst, 1991; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Skaff, 1988; Thompson, 1993; Van de Ven, Walker & Liston, 1979). The general argument for interorganizational coordination is that coordination among service organizations can result in greater productivity within the coordinating organizations, causing improved delivery of services when compared to the independent operation of the same organizations (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kirst, 1991; Gray, 1985; Mulford, Rogers, Benson & Whetten, 1979; Skaff, 1988; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Much of the study of interorganizational coordination has been done within the area of human service organizations, with less research being focused on organizations within the areas of natural resources, agriculture, health, and education (Rogers, & Whetten 1982).

Policy literature and research studies of organizations participating in the coordination process have tended to be focused upon agencies that are located in larger urban or suburban settings (Hall, et al., 1977; Jehl & Kirst, 1992; Kirst, 1992; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Koppich & Kirst, 1993; Oliver, 1991; Townsend, 1980; Van de Ven & Walker, 1984; Van de Ven, Walker & Liston, 1979; Whelage, Smith &

Lipman, 1992). Coordinated-service undertakings that included schools have generally been considered as localized endeavors, that is, the service agencies concentrated on the boundaries of a single school or a group of schools (Crowson & Boyd, 1993). "A sense of national crisis" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993, p. 171) in the magnitude of problems that exist for children and families in urban America and the decrease in the availability of support services to inner-city families have driven recent interest in interorganizational coordination.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was: What factors facilitated or inhibited interorganizational coordination among schools and other human service provider agencies in three non-urban Midwestern communities?

Rationale for the Study

The bulk of policy literature and research studies of organizations participating in the coordination process focus upon agencies that are located in larger urban or suburban settings rather than non-urban communities. However, many other settings exist besides urban and suburban areas. Therefore, Benson's (1982) view that research on coordination should be considered within the context of the social environment adds impetus to research studies beyond the urban and suburban societal context.

The findings of this study will add information to the limited base of knowledge regarding attitudes and conditions concerning interorganizational coordination that exist in non-urban communities. This information will aid in gaining a more precise understanding of the agency coordination process in non-urban communities. Further, the

findings will identify similarities or differences between the known aspects of coordination dynamics among urban and suburban agencies and that of non-urban agencies.

It is anticipated that schools and other human service providers agencies in non-urban communities will be able to use this additional information in their decision making process regarding collaborative efforts. Agencies currently engaging in collaborative efforts may also find this additional information useful toward the success of their programs and services.

Significance of the Study

Primarily, the findings may provide foundational information for further studies involving coordination in non-urban communities. Secondly, given the perceived importance of coordination by various organizations involved in human services, knowledge about conditions and attitudes that exist in smaller, non-urban communities concerning coordination by schools and others associated with the delivery of needed services to children and families may facilitate achieving better services.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made for the purpose of this study:

1. The individuals interviewed were the decision makers in their organizations.
2. The responses of those interviewed were accurate and sincere.
3. The data gathering instrument used adequately measured the responses concerning the study.

Scope of the Study

Three non-urban Midwestern communities were selected for this study. The basis for the selection of these communities was their relative isolation from metropolitan communities, the size of their population, and their geographic proximity to the researcher.

Definition of Interorganization Coordination

The definition of interorganizational coordination used for this study is as follows: "the process whereby two or more organizations create decision rules and/or use existing decision rules that have been established to deal collectively with their shared task environment" (Rogers & Whetten, 1982, p. 12). Formalized collaborative arrangements may range from the simplest verbal arrangement for sharing of information to complex written agreements that outline responsibilities and resource use. Interorganizational collaboration may either be on a voluntary basis between or among organizations or mandated by outside agencies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Although literature describing research of interorganizational coordination was initially published in the 1950's and early 1960's (Rogers & Whetten, 1982). There has been a continual increase in the body of knowledge concerning interorganizational coordination since this beginning research (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Gray, 1985; Hall, Clark, Giordano, Johnson & Van Roekel, 1977; Kirst, 1991; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Skaff, 1988; Thompson, 1993; Van de Ven, Walker & Liston, 1979). The general consensus of the literature has been that coordination among service organizations resulted in greater organizational productivity in the delivery of services than the separate or independent operation of the same organizations (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Gray, 1985; Kirst, 1991; Mulford, Rogers, Benson & Whetten, 1979; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Skaff, 1988).

Much of the focus for studies dealing with interorganizational coordination has been in the area of human service organizations with fewer studies conducted within the areas of natural resources, agriculture, health, and education (Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Policy literature and research studies of organizations participating in the coordination process have been primarily focused upon agencies that are located in larger urban or suburban settings (Hall, et al., 1977; Jehl &

Kirst, 1992; Kirst, 1992; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Koppich & Kirst, 1993; Oliver, 1991; Townsend, 1980; Van de Ven & Walker, 1984; Van de Ven, et al., 1979; Whelage, Smith & Lipman, 1992). Additionally, those studies that included schools described only localized endeavors, that is, the agencies involved concentrated their services within the boundaries of a single school or a group of schools (Crowson & Boyd, 1993). "A sense of national crisis" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993, p. 171) in the magnitude of complex socio-economic problems that exist for children and families in urban America coupled with the decrease in the availability of support services to inner-city families have been the motivating forces for the interorganizational coordination movement.

Upon reviewing the research and policy literature, sixteen predominant factors were identified as influencing whether or not interorganizational coordination occurred. These sixteen factors provided the basis for the analytical questions in this study. The factors were initially organized into two general types: 1) those factors identified in both policy and research literature, and 2) those factors found exclusively in policy literature. These two general factor types were further organized into three categories. The first category contained those factors whose origins were from sources external to, or outside of single organizations. The second category contained those factors whose origins were from sources that were internal to, or within single organizations. The third category contained factors whose origins were from both internal and external sources brought about by the relationship between two or more organizations.

Table I outlines ten factors among the three categories that were identified in both research and policy literature. Table II outlines

TABLE I

PREDOMINANT FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN RESEARCH AND POLICY LITERATURE
THAT INFLUENCE INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION

ORIGIN OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION		
FACTORS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES	FACTORS FROM INTERNAL SOURCES	FACTORS FROM BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SOURCES
Mandated coordination Organizational reputation	Autonomy Organizational viability	Goals clarity Formal agreement Perceptions of mutual benefits Perceptions of enhanced power and prestige Voluntary coordination Resource dependency

six factors identified among two categories that were identified in the policy literature alone. There were no factors identified in the policy literature in the category of external factors influencing interorganizational coordination.

Factors Influencing Interorganizational Coordination Identified in Both
Research and Policy Literature

External Factors

There were two factors originating from external sources that influenced whether interorganizational coordination occurred that were identified in both the research and policy literature: mandated

TABLE II

PREDOMINANT FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN POLICY LITERATURE
THAT INFLUENCE INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION

ORIGIN OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION		
FACTORS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES	FACTORS FROM INTERNAL SOURCES	FACTORS FROM BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SOURCES
	Territorialism Contradictory mandates Differing degrees of bureaucratization Professional isolation	Geographic proximity Coordination viewed as disruptive

coordination and organizational reputation.

Mandated coordination. Mandated coordination generated by external forces was found to cause organizations to form professional associations (Hall, et al., 1977; Gray, 1985; Kirst, 1991; Mulford, et al., 1979; Richardson, West, Day, Stuart, & Cahn, 1989; Wood & Gray, 1991). Agencies involved in mandated coordination were also found to be involved in voluntary interaction as well (Hall, et al., 1977). Although mandates caused coordination activities or agencies to cooperate in some fashion, it did not insure an effective and productive interorganizational relationship (Gray, 1985; Richardson, et al., 1989).

Organizational reputation. Organizational reputation was found to be an important influence in the decision regarding whether or not collaboration of one agency with another agency (Hall, et al., 1977; Fertman, 1993; Gardner, 1992; Gray, 1985; Mulford, et al., 1979; Rogers

& Molnar, 1976; Sharfman, Gray & Yin, 1991). An agency's positive reputation and performance record improved the possibility of coordination efforts while poor reputations and performance records inhibited the possibility of coordination (Gray, 1985; Hall, et al., 1977; Mulford, et al., 1979; Rogers & Molnar, 1975; Sharfman, et al., 1991).

Internal Factors

There were two factors originating from within organizations that influenced the occurrence of interorganizational coordination identified in both the research and policy literature: autonomy and organizational viability.

Autonomy. Upon consideration of forming associations with other agencies, organizations were found to assess the impact of collaboration upon their autonomy (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Decker & Romney, 1992; Gray & Hay, 1986; Kirst, 1991; Koppich & Kirst, 1993; Lawless & Moore, 1989; Oliver, 1991; Rogers & Molnar, 1975; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). The fear of losing organizational autonomy was found to influence negatively the possibility for forming collaborative associations with other agencies (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Decker & Romney, 1992; Gray & Hay, 1986). In voluntary coordination arrangements, however, issues concerning the loss of autonomy was less likely to influence organizations' decisions to form alliances, as each organization was able to enter or leave the association as they chose (Rogers & Whetten, 1982).

Organizational viability. The survival of entire organizations or their programs acted as powerful incentives for agencies to form

interorganizational alliances (Braum & Oliver, 1991; Cunningham, 1990; Hickey, Stapleton, Payzant & Wenrich, 1990; Miner, Amburgey & Sterns, 1990; Mulford, et al., 1979; Nathan & Mitroff, 1991; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Organizations that participate in coordinated efforts tend to have greater viability than those which operate independently (Braum & Oliver, 1991; Miner, et al., 1990; Mulford, et al., 1979).

Internal and External Factors

The third category contained factors originating from both internal and external sources that brought about an interrelationship between two or more organizations. Six factors of this kind were identified in both the research and policy literature: Goals clarification, formal agreements, perceptions of mutual benefits, perceptions of enhanced power and prestige, voluntary coordination, and resource dependency.

Goals clarification. Organizations which had defined goals to share and use during the planning of interorganizational coordination were more likely to collaborate than organizations which had not performed this task and were more likely to have higher levels of interaction with others (Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gray, 1985; Kahne & Kelley, 1993; Lawless & Moore, 1989; Rogers & Molnar 1976; Soler & Shauffer; 1990). Goals clarification appeared to be a key tool in the facilitation of closer, long-term relationships among organizations (Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Rogers & Molnar, 1975).

Formal agreements. Organizations were more likely to enter into formal agreements with other organizations under three conditions, when:

1) each organization had a high degree of specialization, 2) power issues were resolved, and 3) organizations retain their autonomy (Gardner, 1992; Gray, 1985; Hall, et al., 1977; Kirst, 1991; Richardson, et al., 1989; Thompson, 1993). However, in the case where formal agreements were used, decision makers questioned whether the agency benefits of using formal agreements were offset by increased costs of managing the agreements (Richardson, et. al, 1989).

Perceptions of mutual benefits. Organizations were more likely to form and maintain alliances if the potential results of collaborating were perceived to be mutually beneficial to the agencies involved (Beder, 1984; Gray, 1985; Maurice, 1982; Rogers & Molnar, 1976; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Sharfman, 1991; Van de Ven, et al., 1979; Wood & Gray, 1991). When mutual benefits were realized by a cooperative alliance, the relationship was reportedly healthier and more constructive (Beder, 1984).

Perceptions of enhanced power and prestige. The perception that collaboration with another agency would enhance the power and prestige was positively linked with collaboration (Beder, 1984; Kahne & Kelley, 1979; Mulford, et al., 1979; Rogers & Molnar, 1975; Sharfman, et al., 1991). Coordination was one method agencies used to gain power and improve their image (Beder, 1984; Kahne & Kelley, 1993).

Voluntary coordination. The research literature revealed that the greatest percentage of interorganizational coordination efforts were voluntary (Hall, et al., 1977). Voluntary associations of organizations were generally found to avoid the use of complicated formal agreements. As a result, delivery of services was more effective than services

controlled by mandated coordination because these agreements were not as cumbersome or restrictive (Gray, 1985; Hall, et al., 1977; Rogers & Whetten, 1982).

Resource dependency. The factor that was identified as the most compelling reason for organizations to engage in collaborative efforts was the availability of resources (Beder, 1984; Gray, 1985; Mulford, et al., 1979; Ringers, 1977; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Sharfman, et al., 1991; Soler & Shauffer, 1990; Van de Ven & Walker, 1984; Van de Ven, et al., 1979; Whelage, et al., 1992; Wood & Gray, 1991). Through interagency collaboration, agencies could potentially gain access to a greater and more consistent supply of necessary resources on which to operate (Beder, 1984; Mulford, et al., 1979; Van de Ven & Walker, 1984; Whelage, et al., 1992; Wood & Gray, 1991).

Factors Influencing Interorganizational Organizational Coordination Identified in Policy Literature Alone

Internal Factors

Four factors having origins within organizations that influenced interorganizational coordination found in the policy literature alone include: territorialism, contradictory mandates, differing degrees of bureaucratization, and professional isolation.

Territorialism. Territorialism, turfism, or turf protection was an element that acted as an obstacle to organizations pursuing the formation of cooperative alliances (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Ringers, 1977; Townsend, 1980). The historic separation of schools from other governmental agencies and the territorialism it created was identified as a barrier between any

cooperative ventures between the schools and other agencies.

Territorialism issues needed to be overcome if the schools were to be involved in successful interorganizational coordination activities (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990).

Contradictory mandates. When organizations that have differing goals and missions are mandated to enter into interorganizational coordination, these organizations did not recognize each other as allies and had little common ground upon which to build solid collaborative agreements (Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Mulford, et al., 1979; Thompson, 1993). Lacking similarities in organizational and personnel orientations, agencies under contradictory mandates did not explore readily complimentary opportunities existing in relationships among other organizations in the community (Thompson, 1993).

Differing degrees of bureaucratization. Organizations with differing degrees of bureaucratization found it difficult to associate with one another and were less likely to form collaborative associations than those agencies having similar organizational and operational structures (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Mulford, et al., 1979; Richardson, et al., 1989; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Specifically, policy literature revealed that coordinating organizations with vastly different operational and governance procedures found it difficult to communicate and coordinate their activities (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Richardson, et al., 1989; Rogers & Whetten, 1982).

Professional isolation. Professional isolation is created when the difference in the educational backgrounds and professional

activities of individuals does not provide an opportunity for agency personnel to attend similar functions or be aware of another's professional orientation. Policy literature revealed that professional isolation of personnel served as an inhibitor to interorganizational coordination (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kahne & Kelley, 1993; Kirst, 1991; Kirst & McLaughlin, 1990; Rogers & Whetten, 1982; Thompson, 1993). Further, the cooperation between school personnel and all other professionals in children's services traditionally was hampered by both different educational backgrounds and a long history of professional autonomy by educators (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Kahne & Kelley, 1993, Lortie, 1975).

Internal and External Factors

There were two factors originating from both internal and external sources brought about by the interrelationship between organizations found in the policy literature alone: Geographic proximity and coordination viewed as disruptive.

Geographic proximity. Geographic proximity afforded organizations greater opportunity for contact and communication which acted as a facilitator to interorganizational coordination (Gray, 1985; Mulford, et al., 1979; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Geographic dispersion inhibited coordination between organizations due to increased costs of personal interaction by personnel involved (Gray, 1985; Mulford, et al., 1979).

Coordination viewed as disruptive. Organizations that viewed coordination with another agency as being disruptive to their own operations were less likely to enter into collaborative agreements than organizations who did not perceive any potential disruption (Beder,

1984; Gray & Van de Ven, 1991; Rogers & Whetten, 1982). Any changes or activities occurring in one organization that resulted in the disruption in the operation of another was found likely to inhibit or even terminate existing cooperative efforts (Beder, 1984; Rogers & Whetten, 1982).

Summary

Interorganizational coordination research has primarily been conducted in urban and metropolitan settings with little emphasis being placed upon the areas of education or health care services. Organizations participated in coordinated efforts due to mandates from outside forces or as a result of voluntary agreements. The driving force behind the coordination was the perception that coordinated arrangements among agencies was more cost effective and more efficient in the delivery of services than singular efforts. Sixteen factors were identified as influences facilitating or inhibiting the occurrence of interorganizational coordination in the urban environment. Of these factors, the dependency for resources was reported as the most predominant influence.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine which factors facilitated or inhibited interorganizational coordination among schools and other human service provider agencies in three non-urban Midwestern communities. To achieve this purpose, the researcher employed a case study approach that focused upon personal interviews of key officials in schools and other human service provider agencies regarding aspects of interorganizational coordination in the three city case study sites.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Statement

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy requires review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before investigators can begin their research. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the Institutional Review Board conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the aforementioned policy, this study received the proper surveillance and was granted permission to proceed, IRB#: ED-94-081.

Population

Three non-urban Midwestern communities were selected for this study. The communities were selected because of their relative isolation from metropolitan communities, their population size, and their geographic proximity to the researcher. Demographic characteristics of the three Midwestern non-urban cities studied are presented in Table III.

To clarify the difference between the urban communities studied in the literature and the non-urban communities for this study, the general characteristics of the citizens and composition of the population center within the communities' geographic boundaries, in terms of service availability, are described for urban, non-urban, and rural communities.

The population of urban or metropolitan cities generally exceeds 500,000. Examples of the typical group of urban or metropolitan cities selected and studied as cited in one of the research literature articles were Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Dallas, Denver, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Oakland, St. Paul, San Diego, and Seattle (Hall, Clark, Giordano, Johnson & Van Roekel, 1977). In comparison, the population of the non-urban community is many times smaller than the urban centers, typically ranging from around fifteen thousand to one hundred thousand citizens. The communities selected for the study had populations between 26,000 to 45,000. A minimum population within this range generally allowed for a full range of human service agencies to be present within the confines of the community. The population base of rural communities, on the other hand, is usually too small to justify the full complement of agencies found in both the urban and non-urban communities.

TABLE III
COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics	City A	City B	City C
Population	26,359	36,676	45,309
Percent homes where English is not the primary language	3.6%	8.9%	3.5%
Percent high school grad or higher	80.0%	89.5%	75.8%
Percent baccalaureate degree or higher	21.9%	44.3%	17.8%
Percent ages 16-19 not in school and not high school grad	11.7%	2.6%	9.8%
Percent poverty all ages	10.7%	26.4%	14.3%
Median household income	\$26,405	\$18,501	\$22,746
Percent Caucasian	91%	87.6%	91%
Percent African American	2.9%	3.7%	4.4%
Percent Native American	5.5%	3.4%	2.3%
Percent Hispanic	1.8%	1.8%	2.1%
School enrollment	5,727	5,077	6,943
Dropout rate	3.8%	0.7%	4.0%
Percent free lunches	32.5%	28.3%	35.6%
Minorities in school	17.3%	16.0%	15.6%
Percent school population special education	9.9%	11.2%	13.7%

From: United States Department of Commerce. (1990). 1990 Census of Population: General population characteristics (Bureau of the Census Publication No. CP 1-38). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

State Secretary of Education. (1992). Educational indicators. Office of Accountability.

The urban community has been found to be composed of many smaller communities made up of their own discrete neighborhoods. These separate communities are combined, often spanning many square miles, to make up the larger complex of the urban community. All services provided for the citizens of the entire urban community are not necessarily located within the confines of any one of the singular component communities. Rather, service organization sites tend to be scattered miles apart throughout the larger geographic expanse of the urban community. Unlike urban communities, the non-urban community is composed of neighborhoods within only a single community spanning a few square miles. The physical distance separating service provider agencies is significantly reduced, and all services provided for citizens are located within the confines of that single community. Although the rural community is a smaller scale version of the non-urban single community, it differs in that the economic base and population usually do not support the existence of all human service agencies within the community.

The three Midwestern non-urban communities were chosen for their differences as well as their similarities. Although being located within the relatively close geographic proximity of a single state rather than nation-wide dispersment provided a certain consistency of qualities determined by elements such as state laws and general culture, the communities differed markedly in their topography, population demographics, and economic base. Each of the three communities possessed an identity readily observed by the informal observer.

Interview Respondents

The key officials in the public schools and other human service provider agencies in each city were interviewed concerning specific

perceptions and issues involving interorganizational coordination. The Superintendent of Schools, Director of the Alternative School, and the School Board President were chosen to represent the public schools. The City Manager, and the Director of Parks and Recreation represented the city government. The Director of Youth Services, Director of Health Services, and Director of Human Services represented government human service providers. When selecting respondents for research, "The principal objective is to select the most informed respondent" (Rogers & Whetten, 1982, p. 115). The identified respondents were selected because they were the primary decision-makers in each agency. As the primary decision-makers, they were the persons representing their agencies possessing the greatest awareness of interorganizational coordination in the community as a whole and were directly responsible for setting the course of actions concerning interorganizational coordination for own their agency.

Research Methods

The research objective of this study was to determine the factors that influence interorganizational coordination in three non-urban Midwestern communities. The study employed the case study method to focus upon aspects of interorganizational coordination.

The case study method was used because it has the capability of "dealing with a full variety of evidence - documents, interviews, and observations" (Yin, 1989, p 20). Although sample data generated by quantitative research survey techniques efficiently provides information that may be generalized to the larger population, it does not provide much depth of insight into the phenomena being studied (Oliver, 1991; Rogers, & Whetten, 1982). According to Rogers and Whetten (1982),

qualitative research techniques to study interorganizational relations have been seldom used, yet there has been a "... distinctive need for case studies" arising out of "... the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 1989, p. 14).

A specific case study approach, the explanatory case study, as described by Yin (1989), guided the formation of the framework of the research. The explanatory case study model was selected because the literature provided categories used initially to describe and analyze the cases. According to Yin:

A case study is an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. (p. 23)

The most extensive component method used to collect data in the case study was the long interview. Described by McCracken (1988), the long interview is "... one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory. For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing" (p. 9). The questions asked in the long interview "... gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves" (McCracken, 1988, p. 9).

Throughout the study, data were collected from multiple sources, and these various sources of information were triangulated to enhance the validity of the study (Fielding, & Fielding, 1986; Guba, 1981; Janesick, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1984). However, triangulation is not simply compiling a combination of kinds of data, but also establishment of the relationship between data as a means to counteract threats to validity. Data triangulation, therefore, allows the investigator to

regard material critically, identify weaknesses, and discern where to test further. Multiple triangulation can be the equivalent for methods of correlation in data analysis (Fielding & Fielding, 1986).

The data collection process of the researcher included: conducting a long interview with each agency decision-maker using an audio cassette recorder to gather responses, transcribing audio cassette responses into data matrices for comparison, collecting artifact data from respondents, collecting archival data from the Chamber of Commerce, state agencies, and federal census documents, reviewing policy and research studies in the field of interorganizational coordination, visiting each site several times and logging personal observations about each community in a journal. Further, information was gathered from some respondents after the long interview by the researcher by means of informal conversation without notes or audio recordings to verify respondents' candor and researcher interpretation of findings and emerging themes. Artifact data obtained from respondents were primarily copies of formal written agreements and contracts with other agencies. This artifact data were compared with the respondents' descriptions of formal interorganizational agreements and interagency relationships. Researcher notes and impressions of each study site were compared to archival data to enhance the accuracy and richness of each community's description.

Interviews with a select population of individuals constituted the major bulk of data gathered. The interview questions were designed to identify existing factors, influences and attitudes that facilitated or inhibited the planning and occurrence of interorganizational coordination in the communities, and to gain an understanding of the level of past and existing interorganizational coordination (McCracken, 1988; Spradley, 1979).

Interview Questionnaire

Twenty-two interview questions were developed by the researcher to identify the basic awareness of interorganizational coordination activities by the key officials of each community, and then to further reveal what role specific factors identified in the research and policy literature played in their decisions to enter into interorganizational arrangements (Questions are listed in Appendix B)

Review of the research and policy literature revealed there were sixteen predominant factors identified that influenced whether or not interorganizational coordination occurred or continued among agencies. As previously outlined in Chapter II, the factors were initially organized as to occurrence in the literature: 1) those factors identified in both policy and research literature, and 2) those factors found exclusively in policy literature. These two general factor types were further divided into three categories according to the locus of control of forces affecting interorganizational coordination as interpreted by the researcher. The first category contained factors identified as having origins outside of individual agencies in a community. These external factors caused involuntary organizational action wherein the agency had no control in the decision to coordinate. The second contained factors identified as having origins that were internal to, or within individual organizations. That is, decisions to coordinate was generated within the individual agency. An interwoven perception of the locus of control by two or more interacting agencies, the third category contained factors interpreted by agencies as either being external or internal due to the actual interrelationship between organizations. That is, these are situations where certain aspects of control of the

coordination process may rest with any one of the agencies, yet impact all agencies involved.

The interview questionnaire was comprised of two sections of questions. The first section contained a set of five questions designed to establish foundational information regarding interorganizational coordination knowledge and perceptions. Specifically, these five supportive questions covered the following: 1) prior or current cooperative activities or programs with other agencies or organizations, 2) feelings regarding the success or effectiveness of the organization's cooperation with other agencies, 3) factors regarded as being desirable or facilitative in bringing organizations together, 4) factors regarded as being undesirable or an obstacle in bringing organizations together, and 5) details of coordination efforts between agencies that have failed or been unsuccessful.

The second section of the interview concerned concerning factors specifically identified with interorganizational coordination. Sixteen questions were developed to identify: 1) the role of external factors influencing interorganizational coordination, 2) the role of internal factors influencing interorganizational coordination, 3) the role of factors whose origins were from both internal and external sources brought about by the interrelationship between two or more organizations influencing interorganizational coordination, and 4) other factors influencing interorganizational coordination that the respondent felt may be significant that had not been discussed in the interview.

Collection of Data

To provide a data pool pertaining to triangulation issues, data were collected from several sources. State and federal census data were

obtained to provide statistical demographic characteristics of the communities and schools. Artifact data were solicited from respondents and each community's Chamber of Commerce to provide depth and breadth to the researcher's understanding of each community and its interorganizational dynamics. The researcher visited each site on several occasions and spoke with residents and professionals associated with each community to strengthen impressions of each city. Interviews with the identified key officials were conducted by the researcher in person, with the responses gathered by cassette recording and researcher's notes. Further, the researcher transcribed and arranged all responses into matrixes in preparation for further analysis.

Analysis of data

The responses of the key officials in the public school and other human service provider agencies were compiled for each city, and the answers were grouped to form matrixes as to similarities and differences. Data collected representing the three cities was compared and contrasted in a cross-site analysis using methods described by Miles & Huberman (1984) and cross-case analysis techniques described by Yin (1989).

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

City Profiles

Chapter IV will profile the three case study cities. Narrative descriptions of aspects of population, historical information, geographic settings, industry, recreation and area amenities, are given to provide the reader a sense of each community. An overview of the interorganizational coordination process that characterizes each community will also be included. Case study site demographics describing statistical characteristics of the community and school in the three cities were previously given in Table III.

As a means for the researcher to gain an understanding of interorganizational coordination in non-urban environments, all individuals interviewed in each of the three case study communities were asked a series of questions to ascertain their involvement and perceptions regarding coordination with other organizations. Specifically, respondents were asked about successful and unsuccessful, past and present interorganizational coordination efforts, and factors that were perceived to be facilitative or inhibitive to those efforts. Additionally, they were asked to discuss the influence that factors identified in the policy and research literature played in their decisions to interact collaboratively with other agencies.

City A

Community Impressions

City A was centrally located between three major metropolitan areas of two states and has a population of slightly over 26,000. The city was situated on a gently rolling, open grassland dotted with sparse populations of deciduous trees growing mostly along waterways and fence rows.

As one approached City A from any direction, there was an overwhelming visible awareness of the sprawling petroleum refinery that dominated the southwestern perimeter of the community. Between the city and refinery, there were modern high-rise buildings housing corporate offices of the major petroleum corporation owning the refinery. These modern structures stood out in stark contrast to the turn-of-the-century frontier architecture of the nearby downtown section.

City A was arranged like many smaller communities in that there was an older, central downtown business region along a main street and a more modern shopping center located near the city's outskirts. Unlike many communities that have a polarization of business centers where the older business section is floundering or dying, the old, downtown business region was busy, well-kept and appeared to be prospering. Likewise, the majority of homes, grounds and other structures throughout the community were well maintained.

The older homes of the city were located in neighborhoods nearer to the old main street portion of the city. Although older, most of these homes appeared to be kept in good repair with neat, uncluttered

lawns. Some of the older homes were large and stately in appearance and still maintained some of the aura of the one-time elegance of their post-frontier past. The newer homes were situated in neighborhood tracts out from the central region of the city. There was also some new housing construction in progress. These newer homes had superbly landscaped grounds providing further evidence of the financial stability and relative prosperity of the community.

The city possessed a variety of recreational facilities and activities such as: an art museum, pioneer museum, Native American museum, performing arts center, memorial gardens, and an oil refinery visitor center. There were also several attractive parks scattered throughout the community for outdoor recreation. Three golf courses were located around the community. One of the largest flood control projects in the region, which is located on a major river near the city, provided an abundance of water and outdoor recreational opportunities for its citizens and the surrounding area.

The political dynamics of the city was strongly influenced by the petroleum corporation. However, regardless of the influence of the modern petroleum industry, the attitude and personality of the community were deeply rooted in its pre-industrial origins. Its location was central to a primary area of Native American relocation and pioneer expansion to the West during post-civil war America. Several Native American tribes still maintain their tribal headquarters nearby, and the community has a observable Native American population.

Interorganizational Coordination in Community A

All of the human service provider agencies in the city were involved in some type of mandated or voluntary interorganizational coordination activities with other organizations both inside and outside of the community. Coordination mandated by outside sources was viewed negatively as mandates were considered to be a source of problems and increased costs. Agencies in City A, therefore, preferred to engage in coordination on a voluntary and informal basis rather than be directed to do so by an outside entity. In spite of the expressed desire for informal relations, most agencies used some variety of formal agreement to delineate responsibilities and costs in their cooperative programs.

Interagency coordination enjoyed a strong success rate in the community once members of the organizations decided to work together. Interorganizational coordination was embraced as a primary means of gaining needed resources to carry out missions of providing various services to the community. Although resource dependency sometimes placed pressure on organizations to work together, a poor organizational reputation, disagreeable personalities within an agency, or perceptions of coordination that created operational disruption were often enough to persuade an agency not to coordinate activities with another. Conversely, a good organizational reputation, agreeable attitudes of agency personnel, available resources, and perceptions of mutual benefits from coordination were regarded as facilitative factors in interorganizational coordination in City A.

Social and professional interaction of agency personnel and close geographic proximity of organizations created an environment where human

service provider agency personnel became very familiar with each other and with the missions of their organizations. This personal and professional familiarity of agency personnel served to buffer or overcome problems associated with interorganizational coordination and acted as a strong facilitator to interagency coordination. The relative physical closeness of agencies in the small community was also seen as a significant facilitator to coordination.

All cooperative interagency arrangements were not without distressing incidents. Some of the agencies reported having occasional problems when working collaboratively with the public schools. However, failed coordination efforts were few, with only a couple of incidents being recalled by respondents.

City B

Community Impressions

City B was located in the north central part of the state, approximately 65 miles east of a large metropolitan region and 65 miles north of another major urban center. Having a population of slightly over 36,000, the community was nestled in a valley surrounded by rolling hills covered with an assortment of deciduous trees interspersed with occasional singular or small groves of evergreen cedar. The town proper was built along the banks of a stream that traverses the valley. The community was the home of a sizeable state university, therefore, the continuous mingling among public facilities and private businesses by a large number of younger adults and a variety of ethnic groups did not seem unnatural.

As the city was the site of a state university, the skyline was dominated by the accompanying multiple story dormitories, stately buildings, athletic complexes, and manicured campus, all situated in the central sector of the city. Aside from university facilities, the downtown section was a mixture of older storefronts, an unusually large number of prominent bank buildings, and the county courthouse.

The community appeared to be a viable, growing, healthy and economically stable city. This viability was reflected in the quality public school system, an impressive new public library, steady growth in construction of new houses, new commercial construction sites, well-kept neighborhoods and homes, and the older but refurbished downtown shopping district that sported few vacant store fronts. The city also supported a more recent business strip of grocery and discount stores. Due to the influence of the university population, there were a greater number of convenience stores and "fast-food" restaurants in City B than the average community.

The political power brokers were the university and business sector. Neither group dominated the other, but instead worked together for the welfare of the community as a whole. The community was proud of its educational heritage, accomplishments, and offerings throughout the public schools and higher education. The Chamber of Commerce even referred to the community as the "Education Community."

The city made available an assortment of outdoor activities to its residents in a multitude of parks and recreational areas. There were twenty-four parks in the community that contained over 5,000 acres for citizens' outdoor enjoyment. There was an ongoing playground equipment

project that was systematically installing rather extensive modular playground apparatus units in many of the smaller parks. A flood control reservoir provided a sizeable lake on a section of the town's meandering stream, and was the setting for a beautiful park where residents enjoyed picnicking, "frisbee" golf, fishing, and other water recreation. Further, two small recreational lakes with picnic facilities, campsites and fishing opportunities were located within minutes outside of the city. There was a strong agricultural sector on the outskirts of the city which supported a heavily used fairgrounds including exceptionally clean, well-maintained livestock facilities. Golfing was also popular, as the community boasts of three eighteen-hole courses providing diversity and ample access for golfers' outings.

Most visitors would be unexpectedly surprised to find a large industrial district within a university town. Located on the northern perimeter of the city, there was a spacious industrial zone comprised of several major "clean industry" corporations manufacturing products for nation-wide distribution.

Interorganizational Coordination in Community B

All of the human service provider agencies in the community participated in some kind of interorganizational coordination with other agencies located within the confines of the community. Most organizations had been involved in some type of interagency collaboration for a number of years and all perceived interorganizational coordination to be good for their agencies and for the community.

Historically, failure of coordination efforts between agencies were rare in the city once the coordination commitments were made. Of the two failed coordination efforts noted; one was due to personality clashes of key personnel in the interacting agencies and the other was the victim of turf disputes.

For a few agencies, coordination was mandated by outside entities while the majority of coordination efforts among agencies took place on a voluntary basis. Mandated coordination was perceived to be costly and was believed to be responsible for creating conflicts. Although many collaborative relationships were voluntary in the city, several agencies used formal, written agreements to meet organizational and legal requirements and to delineate each agency's responsibility.

Resource dependency was viewed as one of the primary motivators to engage in interorganizational coordination. Organizational or program viability also played a role in decisions to coordinate. Agencies were willing to work with another agency to save a program or the agency itself if the arrangement would benefit their agency's mission.

Poor organizational reputations, perceptions of coordination being disruptive to organizational operations, uncooperative attitudes of agency personnel, additional costs associated with coordination, contradictory mandates, and differing degrees of bureaucratization were perceived to be the major barriers to interorganizational coordination. On the other hand, positive agency reputation, dependence for resources, common agency goals, perceptions of mutual benefits from coordination, and agreeable personalities of personnel were viewed as important facilitative factors to interorganizational coordination in the city.

Several key people in the various human service provider agencies met together formally on a regular basis to discuss the service needs and status of coordination in the community. Many of those individuals socialized together and were involved in the same community civic and social activities. The close geographic proximity of agencies, the high degree of business and social interaction of agency personnel, and the open and trusting environment of the small community compared to the more political and less personal urban environment were cited as playing key roles in the success of interorganizational coordination in this non-urban community.

City C

Community Impressions

City C was located in the northern central region of its state, and had a population of slightly over 45,000. The nearest major urban centers were situated about 90 miles to the south and 120 miles to the north of City C.

The city was settled on the flat, open prairie that was punctuated by the occasional lone deciduous tree or lightly tree-lined waterways. The origin of the area was distinctly rooted in agriculture, and the city had the feel of an old "cow town." Although, the oil industry had also long influenced the area, unlike other oil areas, City C had not recovered after the last sharp decline in domestic oil prices in the early 1980's. Agricultural enterprise had remained, continuing to serve the grain and livestock producers in the surrounding rural countryside. The community was the site of livestock exchange stockyards, and a large

processed meat plant. A prominent commercial complex of grain silos on the south eastern edge of the city was visible for several miles from any of the highways that lead to the city.

Several parks and recreation areas were found in and around the city. There were at least ten parks of various sizes scattered throughout the city, of which two of the larger contained small fishing lakes. There were four nice eighteen-hole golf courses in the community and an eighty acre (80) county fairground.

The city was adjacent to a United States Air Force base that resides southwest of the community. The airbase had made a steady contribution to the economic base of the community with its constant rotation of military personnel who shopped and lived in the community, and educated their children in the city's public schools. The military establishment also contributed to the economy of the community through employment opportunities for civilian personnel at the base. Further, over 1,200 community residents were employed by a national aircraft corporation providing maintenance service for military aircraft.

The city boasted of the availability of a local, high quality health care system. There were two full-service health care facilities and another smaller hospital located in City C. Additionally, there was a state resource center for institutional care that employed over 900 local citizens.

Bordering the southeast edge of the city was a small, private four-year liberal arts university. The university provided easy access to higher educational opportunities for the citizens of the community.

The downtown section of the city was built before the turn of the

century on a square around the county courthouse. Although City C had the described diversity of industry described above, there were prominent signs of a long term economic decline. There were several thriving businesses in operation around the downtown square, but there were also a number of poorly maintained buildings and several empty store fronts that appeared to have been vacant for a considerable length of time. Small businesses such as grocery stores, an automobile dealership, some light industry, a small shopping center, and fast food restaurants had moved away from the square to a newer business strip located along the main highway on the north western outskirts of the city; yet, even in this newer business strip, there were some closed business establishments. There were several newer housing additions around the community, but no new housing construction was observed. In the housing tracts, modern homes and yards were attractively landscaped and manicured. However, the bulk of the individual housing in the community was older and not as well kept as the newer sections. The exterior condition of the majority of the homes and yards reflected the age and lack of maintenance. The empty storefronts on the square in the heart of city were not the only signs of building abandonment. There was a noticeable number of vacant buildings and houses scattered throughout many sectors of the community as well.

In general, streets were in only fair condition and public facilities such as parks were merely maintained and lacking a manicured look. Although the public school buildings and grounds in the community were generally in good condition and appeared to be well-maintained with the exception of the alternative school. The grounds were not well-kept

and the building, although clean inside, was a small, older two-story brick building that appeared to be among the first public school facilities constructed in the community around the turn of the century. The school campus was not maintained and had the appearance of a pasture, rather than a playground. This division of the school was located in one of the oldest, most economically deprived neighborhoods in the community. The school facility was surrounded by deteriorating, unkept houses with littered yards and streets which did not contradict the feeling of a sluggish rather than growing economic base.

Interorganizational Coordination in Community C

All of the human service provider agencies in the community were involved in some type of interorganizational coordination with other agencies in the city. All agencies perceived coordination to be a positive element in the accomplishment of their goals as well as being beneficial to the community. Once interorganizational coordination agreements were reached, there was a high success rate. Although agencies were in favor of coordination, the process did not always work smoothly. Two agencies expressed concerns about territorialism with some of the community agencies and some difficulties in working with the public school. However, few coordination effort failures were reported.

About half of the communities agencies were involved in mandated coordination activities with other agencies. Reduction in the duplication of services provided by organizations as a result of mandated coordination was reported as a positive outcome. However, negative aspects of mandated coordination cited were cost

ineffectiveness and problems between agencies that were forced to work together.

Almost all of the organizations preferred interagency coordination arrangements that were voluntary and informal. In spite of this preference, voluntary associations almost always involved some type of formal written agreement to outline responsibilities and financial obligations.

Interorganizational coordination was seen as a primary means of gaining needed resources to carry out missions of providing various services to the community. Although resource dependency made it important and very desirable for organizations to work together, a poor organizational reputation, differing goals, highly bureaucratic structures of another agency, and negative personnel attitudes in another agency were frequently viewed as insurmountable barriers to coordination. Conversely, a good organizational reputation, agreeable attitudes of agency personnel, available resources, close geographic proximity, common goals, and perceptions of mutual benefits from coordination were regarded as facilitative factors to interorganizational coordination in City C. The personality of agency personnel was seen as the most important determinant in bringing agencies together in interorganizational coordination efforts or in keeping agencies apart.

City C organized and utilized a central agency for planning and coordinating human services in the community. The central agency served as a clearing house to help ensure that no services areas were unattended and the agency constantly endeavored to find ways to reduce

the duplication of services. The central coordination agency organized and held regularly scheduled meetings that included all of the directors of the human service provider agencies in the community. These meetings aided in reducing professional isolationism and fostered the building of personal associations among agency heads, which tended to facilitate collaborative efforts among the directors respective agencies.

CHAPTER V

CROSS-SITE ANALYSIS

Introduction

Data collected were compared and contrasted using a framework based on cross-site analysis methods described by Miles & Huberman (1984) and cross-case analysis techniques described by Yin (1989). This chapter presents the analysis of interorganizational coordination in the three non-urban Midwestern communities of the study.

In matrix form, Table IV presents the interview questions and a summary of responses by representatives of schools and other human service provider agencies in each community. The remainder of the chapter will be discussed in the context of the factor categories as identified in Tables I and II presented in Chapter II: 1) supportive questions, 2) external factors influencing interorganizational coordination identified in both research and policy literature, 3) internal factors influencing interorganizational coordination identified in both research and policy literature, 4) both external and internal factors influencing interorganizational coordination identified in both research and policy literature, 5) Internal factors influencing interorganizational coordination identified in policy literature alone, 6) Internal and external factors influencing interorganizational coordination identified in policy literature alone. In conclusion, other information from respondents elicited by the researcher concerning

TABLE IV

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION
BY RESPONDENTS IN THREE NON-URBAN CITIES

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	CITY A
Tell me about any current cooperative activities or programs with other agencies that have taken place over the past three years.	All organizations were involved in interorganizational coordination both inside and outside of the community.
What are your feelings regarding the success or effectiveness of your organization's cooperation with other agencies?	All respondents supported interorganizational coordination. They felt that sharing resources with other agencies was positive and assisted meeting their goals of providing services to the community.
In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors did you strongly regard as being desirable or facilitative in bringing your organization together with another organization?	Respondents felt that smaller agencies, personnel having pleasant personalities, and dependence for resources were factors that facilitated interorganizational coordination.
In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors did you strongly regard as being either undesirable or an obstacle in bringing your organization together with another organization?	Respondents felt that territorialism, large bureaucracy, poor reputation, outside mandates, and uncooperative personalities can be inhibitors to interorganizational coordination.
Please discuss details of coordination efforts between your agency and other agencies that have failed or been unsuccessful.	Most respondents could not think of any interorganizational coordination efforts that had been unsuccessful. However, one failed effort cited was due to loss of funding, and another was due to the failure of an agency to honor a formal agreement.
If you have coordinated with another agency(s), were those coordination activities mandated by outside forces? Describe how the mandate impacted you and your agency. Discuss the nature of your mandated arrangement.	Yes, currently all but two agencies participated in mandated interorganizational coordination. Most felt that mandated participation caused problems and lead to increased costs.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the reputation(s) of the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate?	A good reputation was facilitative, a poor reputation was inhibitive.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the autonomy of your organization play in the decision to coordinate? How would coordination with another agency impact your organization's autonomy?	One-half of the respondents indicated that organizational autonomy played an important role in decisions to coordinate, while the other half indicated it would not play a role.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the consideration of the idea that coordination with another agency would enhance the viability of your agency or programs or viability of the other agency or programs play in the decision?	Organizational or program viability perceived as a facilitator or an inhibitor depending on whether coordination viewed as being beneficial or harmful to respondent's agency.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the clarification of goals between the organization(s) involved play in the decision to coordinate?	Clarification of goals was perceived as very important.
Do you have formal agreements with the agencies you coordinate with? Tell me how they work and how they impact your agency's operation.	Formal agreements were used to outline responsibilities and costs.

TABLE IV (Continued)

CITY B	CITY C
All agencies were involved in interorganizational coordination, but only within the community. All agencies had a long history of coordination.	All agencies were involved in interorganizational coordination within the community, and most had been involved in coordination for several years.
All respondents supported interorganizational coordination. They felt interorganizational coordination was important to their agency and their community.	All respondents indicated that they felt interorganizational coordination was positive for the accomplishment of their goals. Two concerns expressed about involved difficulties with the school district and territorialism.
Respondents felt that a positive reputation of an agency, dependence for resources, cooperative attitudes, and common goals were factors that facilitated interorganizational coordination.	Positive reputation of an agency, resource dependency, personalities of personnel, common goals, and a perception of a mutual benefit to those involved as being factors that facilitated interorganizational coordination.
A poor reputation, organizational culture resisting coordination, and additional costs associated with coordination were identified as barriers to interorganizational coordination.	Poor agency reputation, differing goals, highly bureaucratic structure, and negative personnel attitudes were cited as factors being most inhibitive to the interorganizational coordination process.
Most respondents could not recall any failed interorganizational coordination efforts. Two failures that were cited were due to personality clashes between key personnel and territorial disputes.	Most respondents stated that they had not been involved in any interorganizational coordination failures. Financial problems and personnel attitudes were given as the causes for two failed interorganizational coordination efforts.
Yes, current participation in mandated interorganizational coordination by four respondents. They found mandates to be cost ineffective, and created conflicts.	Yes, one-half were participating in mandated interorganizational coordination. Mandates were cost ineffective, and caused problems. However, they may serve to reduce duplication of services
A good reputation was perceived as facilitative, a poor reputation was perceived as inhibitive.	A good reputation was perceived as facilitative, a poor reputation perceived as inhibitive.
One-half of respondents indicated that organizational autonomy played a minor role in decisions to coordinate, while other half indicated it would not play a role.	One-half of respondents indicated that organizational autonomy played a minor role in decisions to coordinate, while other half indicated it would not play a role.
Organizational or program viability played a role in decisions to coordinate. All were willing to coordinate to save a program or agency only if it would benefit the mission of their agency.	Organizational or program viability played a role in decisions to coordinate. Most were willing to coordinate to save a program or agency only if it would benefit the mission of their agency.
Clarification of goals by all parties was perceived as very important.	Clarification of goals by all parties was perceived as very important.
Used formal agreements to meet organizational and legal requirements and delineate responsibilities	All used written agreements to clarify and define financial, resource, and decision-making responsibilities.

TABLE IV (Continued)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	CITY A
When actually planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role does the perception of mutual benefits arising out of the collaboration play in the decision to coordinate?	A perception of mutual benefits played a key role and was facilitative to coordination.
When actually planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role does the perception of enhanced power and prestige for your agency arising out of the collaboration play in the decision to coordinate?	Perceptions of enhanced power and prestige played a positive role in coordination. It was viewed as important factor for some and a minor factor for others.
In your coordination with another agency or agencies, were those coordination activities brought about on a voluntary basis? Discuss the nature of your voluntary arrangement.	Most coordination arrangements were voluntary and on an informal basis.
When actually planning coordination with another agency, what role does the dependence for resources play in your agency's decision to coordinate with another agency?	Resource dependency was a major factor in deciding whether to coordinate.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the possibility of other organization(s) sharing what was once exclusively your space or your activity play in your decision to coordinate?	Some of the respondents saw territorialism as a threat to services offered. The Superintendent of Schools and Director of Human Services felt that turfism was not an issue.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does contradictory mandates between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate?	All felt that contradictory mandates were inhibitive to coordination.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the differing degrees of bureaucratization between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate?	Differing degrees of bureaucratization played a role in decision to coordinate. It could serve as a deciding factor for some.
When actually planning coordination with another agency(s), what role does the factor of professional isolation (having little association with or knowledge of the other agency's expertise, terminology, duties, or professional responsibilities) play in the decision to coordinate?	Professional isolation played a minor negative role in most decisions to coordinate. It played no role for the Director of Parks and Recreation and Director of Human Services.
When actually planning coordination with another agency, what role does geographic proximity play in your agency's decision?	Close geographic proximity was a major facilitative factor for most respondents.
If coordination with another agency was viewed as being disruptive to the operation of your agency, what role would that play in your decision regarding coordination?	If coordination was perceived as disruptive, it was viewed as a formidable barrier to cooperation.
If there is anything that you feel was not covered in the interview, please comment on any additional factor(s) that you feel facilitate or inhibit interorganizational coordination in the non-urban environment.	Whether the personalities of agency personnel were negative or uncooperative, or positive and cooperative, was identified as the major factor by respondents as being facilitative or inhibitive to interorganizational coordination.

TABLE IV (Continued)

CITY B	CITY C
A perception of mutual benefits was a facilitative factor in coordination decisions.	A perception of mutual benefits by all was a facilitative to coordination.
Perceptions of enhanced power and prestige viewed only as a minor factor by most, and the Director of Alternative School perceived this not to be a factor.	Perceptions of enhanced power and prestige viewed only as a minor factor by most, and the Director of Alternative School And director of Youth Services perceived this not to be a factor.
Most arrangements were voluntary, some were mandated, and as many as possible were informal.	Many coordination efforts were voluntary, however used formal written agreements.
Resource dependency was a major factor in deciding whether to coordinate.	Resource dependency was the primary factor in deciding whether to coordinate.
Most perceived territorialism as a minor inhibitive factor. The Director of Parks and Recreation was very concerned about territorialism with certain agencies.	Territorialism played a deciding inhibitive role in coordination for half of the respondents and was not an issue for the remainder.
Most felt that contradictory mandates were inhibitive to coordination, but some felt this situation was one that could be overcome.	Contradictory mandates were perceived as a negative factor, and completely prohibiting cooperation in some situations.
Differing degrees of bureaucratization was a barrier to coordination for most and perceived as no problem to the others.	Three respondents did not feel that differing degrees of bureaucratization would be a barrier to coordination, while the remainder viewed it as a definite barrier.
The existence of professional isolation played only a minor role in decisions. Most felt that social structures and personal contacts found in smaller cities naturally minimized this isolation.	Professional isolation was not perceived as being a barrier to coordination by most. The remainder felt that it lead to unnecessary competition and lack of cooperation.
Close geographic proximity was a facilitative factor. Most felt that smaller communities lend themselves to coordination.	Close geographic proximity was a facilitative factor to interorganizational coordination.
If coordination was perceived as disruptive, it was viewed by most as a formidable barrier to cooperation.	If coordination was perceived as disruptive, it became a formidable barrier to interagency cooperation.
Personality was the key factor cited as either facilitating or inhibiting interorganizational coordination efforts. The non-urban environment was cited as being more open and trusting than the more political and less personal urban environmen.	The personality of agency personnel was cited as the most important determinant in bringing agencies together in interorganizational coordination efforts or in keeping their agencies apart.

important perceptions of factors influencing interorganizational coordination that were not previously discussed in the formal interview process was revealed.

Cross-Site Analysis of Interorganizational Coordination In Three Non-Urban Midwestern Communities

Supportive Questions

Schools and human service provider agencies in all three of the communities were involved in some type of interorganizational coordination activities with other service organizations. Overall, the majority of the agencies had a long history of interorganizational coordination in their community. City A was somewhat different in that it was the only site having cooperative relationships with agencies outside of it's own community.

Respondents in each of the communities mentioned various factors as facilitators or inhibitors to coordination. Factors viewed as primary facilitators to the coordination process common to all three communities were the dependency on resources from a cooperating agency and positive, agreeable personalities of the personnel in other agencies. Conversely, negative perceptions of agency reputations or disagreeable attitudes of agency personnel were viewed by most agencies as formidable barriers to coordination.

Historically, few interorganizational coordination efforts had failed in any of the three communities. Specifically, coordination among the agencies had experiences a high degree of success once some form of coordination agreement was made. When reflecting back over a several year period of time, respondents noted only a couple of failed coordination efforts in each community. Financial problems and

personality clashes between agencies' personnel were common causes of coordination failure across the sites.

Factors Influencing Interorganizational Coordination Identified in Both Research and Policy Literature

External Factors

At least half of the agencies in each of the communities were mandated by outside political forces to be associated in some way with another organization or organizations. Whether involved in mandated coordination or not, almost every agency director in each community possessed an overtly negative attitude about being told what to do, and with whom, by an outside force. Most felt that mandated coordination was not as effective as it potentially could be under voluntary conditions and tended to lead to various problems between the affected agencies. Also, a generally held opinion was that mandated coordination was cost ineffective compared to voluntary coordination.

One of the factors that appeared to be a major concern to many agency directors in each of the communities was the reputation of agencies with which they were associated, or those with whom they were considering entering into collaborative agreements. If an agency possessed a reputation for cooperation, honesty, and excellent service, it was viewed as an excellent partner or candidate for voluntary partnership by others. If, however, an agency possessed a questionable performance history or unreliable past, collaboration with such an agency was seen as a liability rather than an asset.

Internal Factors

The preservation of organizational autonomy was an important issue

to the directors of about one-half of the agencies in each community. For these organizations, if a relationship with another agency was perceived to potentially interfere with their organizational autonomy, this interference factor was viewed as a barrier to coordination. However, the other agencies in each community did not perceive the threat of another agency impacting their autonomy as a major factor when considering interorganizational coordination. In their opinion, these directors were willing to forego some of their organization's autonomy in a collaborative arrangement if it resulted in the providing of superior service to the community.

The organizations in the three communities were either funded by governments or well-established private agencies. Although the organizations themselves were not particularly vulnerable to extinction, upon occasion they believed that some of their programs were. Most representatives of agencies in the study stated that their organizations would be willing to coordinate with a failing agency, or to save another agency's failing program, if it would somehow benefit the mission or goals of their agency.

Internal and External Factors

All of the agencies in the three communities were involved in voluntary interorganizational coordination efforts. Most respondents indicated that they preferred voluntary and informal relationships with other agencies because they perceived them to be the most productive and least restrictive. In spite of the declared preference for informal arrangements, most agencies in all three communities used some kind of formal written agreement to manage the terms and responsibilities of the relationship. In fact, unlike Cities A and B, representatives of all

agencies in City C indicated that they always used formal agreements in all interorganizational coordination arrangements.

In all three communities, the need for scarce resources that were available to other agencies was identified as the most important factor enticing organizations to associate collaboratively. Generally, there was also some perception of mutual benefits potentially arising out of a cooperative arrangement that further aided in compelling agencies to work together. When coordination with another agency was considered and there was no direct agency benefit perceived to be derived from that association, respondents in all three communities expressed a pronounced resistance to interorganizational coordination under such circumstances.

It was generally held by agency representatives in all three communities that cooperative relationships formed with the "right" agency could enhance the power and prestige of their organization. Although the perception of gaining power and prestige by associating with another agency was only a minor consideration influencing the decisions of respondents to coordinate, it nevertheless was a factor in the decisions in most of the service organizations. One respondent stated that, although positive outcomes directly attributed to the collaboration was the primary goal, enhanced power and prestige resulting from the arrangement was, "... icing on the cake."

Before they entered into collaborative arrangements, another important issue considered by agencies in the three study sites was the clarification of goals between the agencies. If agency goals could be determined to be similar or complimentary, the potential for the formation of an associative relationship was greatly increased. Agencies were found to study the goals of a potential partner very carefully and, if the goals did not partially harmonize with their own,

or if it was determined that there were hidden agendas within the other agency's goals, the contradiction became a major barrier to coordination. The mutual clarification of goals was used ultimately by coordinating agencies to guide their collaborative activities. Most respondents felt that by having each entity clearly understand their partner's goals and mission overall enhanced the collaborative relationship.

Factors Influencing Interorganizational Coordination Identified Only in Policy Literature

Internal Factors

When considering the possibility of coordination with another organization, agency directors expressed mixed reactions to the impact territorialism or turfism had on the decision to coordinate. In Cities A and B, most respondents perceived another agency becoming involved in what was once considered exclusively their territory as only a minor threat to their organizational operations, and this perceived inclusion served only as a minimal barrier to interorganizational coordination. In contrast, one-half of the directors in City C perceived territorialism not only to be an important issue but a considerable barrier to coordination. The other agencies, however did not perceive territorialism to be a threat to their agency and indicated that it did not influence their coordination decisions.

When agencies perceived there to be contradictory mandates between their organization and another agency, it served to some degree as an inhibitor to making a commitment to coordinate with that agency. Contradictory mandates between organizations were perceived as a negative factor when considering coordination by respondents in Cities A

and C while such mandates were considered as less negative by respondents in City B. Some of the representatives of agencies in City B felt that negative aspects of contradictory mandates could be overcome and differences resolved as a matter of challenge, while those in the other two cities were not so optimistic.

Professional isolation was only an insignificant factor inhibiting coordination in the three study sites while differing degrees of bureaucratization was viewed somewhat more negatively by all. The majority of agency representatives in all three cities perceived the presence of differing degrees of bureaucratization between agencies as a difficult obstacle to interorganizational coordination, but this problem did not always influence decisions to coordinate. In City C, however, the presence of differing degrees of bureaucratization was viewed by a majority of respondents as being a significant deterrent to coordination, and this difference was considered with intolerance.

Internal and External Factors

Close geographic proximity to other agencies was perceived by agencies in all three communities as being an important facilitative factor to interorganizational coordination. Many of the agency representatives indicated that the smaller communities lend themselves to coordination more so than the larger urban communities because the relative closeness of agencies makes it easier for personnel to interact and utilize available resources.

One of the most significant inhibitive factors to interorganizational coordination was the perception that coordination would be disruptive to agency operations. There was little disagreement among respondents across the three study sites on this issue. Most were

unwilling to make any effort toward coordination or would not cope with disruptive situations regardless of the potential gains by associating with another agency if the relationship created a disruption to the operation of their organization.

Other Factors Not Identified in Policy of Research Literature
Found to Impact Interorganizational Coordination

Personalities of Agency Personnel

In conclusion, respondents were solicited for any information concerning interorganizational coordination not previously covered in the interview. Interestingly, respondents took this opportunity to discuss what it was like to be involved in human service delivery in a small community. Across the three sites there was a great deal of agreement about the "personality factor," that is, how the actual personality style and attitude of personnel influence interorganizational relationships. In smaller communities, agency directors and personnel work together and socialize together. Rather than conceptualizing another organization as merely an entity, their perception of the organization contained a strong sense of identification with each individual with whom they would interact. The personality of the individuals in positions of power was among the most frequently identified factor facilitating or inhibiting interorganizational coordination in the non-urban environment. The personality of key decision-makers was generally felt as being the one factor that would ultimately "make or break" an interorganizational relationship.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Past studies concerning interorganizational coordination have mainly been focused upon human service agencies located within larger urban or metropolitan settings with an intention to support the argument that coordination resulted in greater productivity or cost effectiveness. Most of these studies, however, did not include all human service organizations, with less attention being given to those in the areas of natural resources, agriculture, health, and the public schools. To examine the dynamics of how interorganizational coordination differed in other settings, this study focused upon interorganizational coordination in the non-urban community, and included representation of human service organizations in the less studied areas of health and public schools.

A review of the research and policy literature identified sixteen predominant factors as influencing the occurrence of interorganizational coordination in urban settings. These factors were organized into two general types: 1) those factors identified in both policy and research literature, and 2) those factors found exclusively in policy literature. These two general factor types were further divided into three categories: 1) those factors whose origins were from sources external

to, or outside of single organizations, 2) those factors whose origins were from sources that were internal to, or within single organizations, and 3) those factors whose origins were from both internal and external sources brought about by the interrelationship between two or more organizations. There was a lack of studies concerning interorganizational coordination in settings outside of urban areas, and only limited examination of coordination among human service providers in areas of natural resources, agriculture, health, and public schools.

The purpose of this study was to determine which factors were identified as facilitating or inhibiting to interorganizational coordination among schools and other human service provider agencies in three non-urban Midwestern communities. To achieve this purpose, the researcher employed a case study approach that focused upon personal interviews of key decision-makers in schools and other human service provider agencies regarding aspects of interorganizational coordination in the three non-urban Midwestern city case study sites.

The objective of this of this study was to expand the base of knowledge regarding the dynamics, attitudes, and conditions concerning interorganizational coordination that existed in non-urban communities. The research findings will provide individuals specific information that will aid in gaining a more precise understanding of the agency coordination processes in non-urban communities. Further, the findings will identify similarities or differences between the known aspects of coordination dynamics among urban and suburban agencies and that of the previously unknown coordination dynamics of non-urban agencies.

The problem of this study was: What factors facilitated or inhibited interorganizational coordination among the school and other human service provider agencies in three non-urban Midwestern

communities?

The three non-urban Midwestern communities were selected for this study because of their relative isolation from metropolitan communities, their population size, and their geographic proximity to the researcher. A multiple case study was conducted that emphasized personal interviews of key decision-makers in schools and other human service provider agencies regarding aspects of interorganizational coordination in the three study sites. In addition to the interview data, documentation and artifact data were collected from interview respondents, the cities' Chambers of Commerce, from state government and federal census publications.

The researcher visited each site on several occasions to speak with residents and professionals associated with each community, and to strengthen impressions of each city. Researcher observations were kept in a journal. Interviews with the identified key officials were conducted by the researcher in person, with the responses gathered by cassette recording and researcher's notes. Additionally, the researcher transcribed and arranged all responses into matrixes in preparation for further analysis. These various sources of information were then triangulated to evaluate data carefully, recognize weaknesses, and determine where to test further. Data collected representing the three cities was compared and contrasted in a cross-site analysis.

Although the three non-urban communities of the study were located in the same state, had relatively similar populations, and included all of the selected human service agencies within their boundaries, each was distinguished by unique characteristics, underlying culture, and differing economic base.

While each community was of similar population size, each was

composed of a different cultural mix. Influences unique to City A were the cultures associated with the oil industry and with the Native American population; City B was strongly influenced by a typical university population; and City C was impacted by military personnel and a long established agricultural community. Physical attributes such as topography, architecture, and appearances and locations of features varied greatly among the three study sites.

Although each of the three communities studied possessed distinguishing characteristics, the information gathered concerning perceptions of interorganizational coordination by all respondents representing the human service agencies was found to be very similar. All of the organizations were involved in some kind of interorganizational coordination arrangements, many of which were voluntary but were managed under formal agreements. Interorganizational coordination was generally perceived positively, and was considered important to the success of the agency and the community. There were few failures remembered in coordination efforts. The gaining or sharing of scarce resources was consistently cited as a primary motive for coordination. Finally, it was revealed that the personalities of those in decision-making positions was literally the "glue" binding agencies together.

Comparisons Among Communities

Upon conducting the cross-site analysis, there was no discernable difference in the perceptions of respondents in the three communities studied concerning the influences of the sixteen identified factors upon the facilitation or inhibition of coordination efforts. Perceptions of respondents across the three sites regarding the different identified

factors were consistently in accord, with very few divergent opinions.

Coordination was viewed as a positive experience important to the delivery of services, and the organizations continually sought ways to come together in collaboration to benefit their communities. Agencies were looked upon favorably if they possessed a solid reputation for performance and integrity. Harmony was consciously pursued, and all the factors impacting coordination were carefully analyzed and weighed before entering into any agreement. If an agency's reputation was tarnished, it generally signaled the "death knell" for that potential relationship. Even more importantly, personality issues were critical to interorganizational relations, and those decision-makers whose personalities were abrasive and uncooperative were avoided.

All three communities had a formal system that provided opportunities for agency decision-makers to periodically meet specifically for the enhancement of current and the planning of future coordination. Voluntary coordination was the most preferred kind of interorganizational relationship in the non-urban environment. However, in spite of the declared preference for informal relationships with other agencies, virtually all of the agencies across the study used some type of formal written agreement to manage the terms and responsibilities of collaborative efforts.

In addition, the respondents of each community appeared to have a deep sense of belongingness in the community and a keen sense of responsibility toward the delivery of services. Respondents not only freely expressed pride in their own competencies, but also in the contributions of their agencies to the community. The respondents spoke of the delivery of services not as a chore, but almost as if it was a privilege.

Comparison of the Communities to the Literature

All sixteen factors that were identified in the research and policy literature were identified as being present in all three communities by the respondents. Surprisingly, the dynamics of interorganizational coordination described in the literature were extremely similar to what was revealed in the three non-urban study sites. As examples, agencies in the urban settings also used formal agreements when involved in either voluntary or mandated efforts, the sharing of resources was a major source of motivation to collaborate, and agency reputation was an important factor when considering coordination. Also supported in the literature, schools in the study sites were either found to be or perceived to be more difficult to work with compared to other agencies. However, there were two salient exceptions between the perceptions of the urban and non-urban settings: issues of territory and of personalities.

In the urban setting, the maintenance of territorial integrity was reported as a major issue when considering interorganizational coordination, but was reported as either of no consequence or only as a minor obstacle by approximately one-half of the non-urban respondents.

Whereas the influence of personalities of the decision-makers was voluntarily revealed by a high percentage of all the respondents in the three non-urban communities, this issue was either not addressed or only vaguely alluded to in the research and policy literature.

Conclusions

A true service orientation was held by the majority of the respondents, who wanted resources to go to the community rather than to

monetarily profit any one organization. In support of the literature, the sharing of resources was a primary motivator for coordination efforts. However, any profit motive revealed by an organization was looked upon with disdain, and decreased the likelihood of any relationship being formed or continued.

Viability was not an important issue to the organizations in the non-urban communities, as respondents perceived their organizations as economically stable. Because coordination was not seen as vital to the minimum survival of the organization, agreements were not entered into unless collaboration enhanced the level of quality or increased the availability of necessary services to the community. This was not to say, however, that funding of the organizations was so sufficient that sharing of resources was not considered highly desirable.

The close geographic proximity of agencies literally enabled agency personnel to have frequent contact in both formal and informal social activities. Tighter community boundaries increased the likelihood of personnel crossing paths in normal daily routines, having children attending the same schools or playing on the same athletic teams, or participating in the same civic or professional activities. Many organizational personnel typically were well-acquainted with each other, as they worked together, played together, and worshiped together.

The interaction of agency personalities was a critical factor to interorganizational coordination in the non-urban communities because an uncooperative or abrasive attitude cannot be concealed by distance or layers of bureaucracy in that kind of environment. It was speculated that one reason for the degree of success of coordination and the lasting relationships between non-urban agencies was due to this personal familiarity. Decision-makers routinely interacted primarily

with those who shared similar intentions for the community and were flexible and cooperative but shunned dealings with those who did not fit that persona.

One might have anticipated that differences would have been uncovered amongst the study sites or between the non-urban and urban settings described by the literature. However, the findings revealed that the intentions, drives, and behaviors of agencies and decision-makers looked remarkably similar regardless of the setting. The majority of the decision-makers appeared to be, in effect, functioning as typical administrators or bureaucrats rather than specialized professionals trained in a variety of fields. Although this study focused upon structural factors that influenced interorganizational coordination among agencies, the findings suggest that structural factors may be secondary in comparison to the influence of administrative socialization of agency decision-makers.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Inquiry

As past studies have mostly been focused on the metropolitan or urban setting, future studies should include further investigation of non-urban cities in other regions for the purpose of establishing generalizability.

There was found to be a scarcity of documented studies concerning interorganizational coordination in rural areas. The literature described urban agencies as being located within widely dispersed, discrete neighborhoods separated by considerable distances. A similar dispersement of agencies in terms of residence within discrete

communities and separation by distance is also found in rural communities. A hypothesis could be examined that posits influences affecting interorganizational dynamics found within this pattern of dispersement in urban settings as analogous to the interorganizational dynamics within the similar pattern of dispersement of the rural areas.

This study and the information reviewed in research and policy literature primarily focused upon structural factors influencing interorganizational coordination. A different line of inquiry should explore the training and socialization of decision-makers, as individual practices appear to be strongly influenced by the product of these aspects.

Up until this point, research has centered on identification of influential factors, applications of existing theory to interorganizational situations, and establishment of foundational information, mostly using a positivistic approach. Therefore, future study of interorganizational coordination should advance with the purpose of generating theory. Further use of qualitative methods and hybrid frameworks of the combination of quantitative and qualitative strategies may be necessary in the accomplishment of this task.

Recommendations for Practice

The results of the study indicated that familiarity with decision-makers as individuals was important to interorganizational coordination in the non-urban community. It is important for a newly appointed agency official to realize the importance of making personal contacts with other agency personnel on a routine basis. The close proximity and social interactions common to smaller communities does not provide for anonymity of organizational officials. An attitude of cooperation and

consideration must be authentically expressed in both word and in deed by any decision-maker if interagency coordination is to occur.

Organizations desiring coordination must strive to maintain a reputation of integrity as well as for the delivery of quality of services, as other established agencies have little desire or tolerance to interact with agencies perceived as inferior. A dedication to and pride in the delivery of services to the community is the standard by which service agencies are measured, so that any official seeking cooperative relationships, but whose motives include profit above service, will have few opportunities to interact among other agencies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 03-24-94

IRB#: ED-94-081

Proposal Title: INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION AMONG SCHOOLS
AND OTHER HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDER AGENCIES IN THREE NON-URBAN
MIDWESTERN COMMUNITIES

Principal Investigator(s): Martin Burlingame, Don R. Hotalling

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

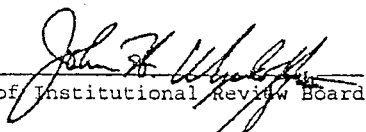
APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT
MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR
RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL. ANY MODIFICATIONS
TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Provisions received and approved.

Signature:


Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: March 31, 1994

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

DEFINITION OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION

The definition of interorganizational coordination used for this study is as follows: "When two or more organizations create rules or use existing rules to deal collectively with their shared environment" (Rogers & Whetten, 1982, p. 12). Formalized collaborative arrangements may range from a simple verbal agreement to share information to complex written agreements that outline responsibilities and resource use. Interorganizational collaboration may either be on a voluntary basis between or among organizations or mandated by outside agencies.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Supportive Questions

1. Tell me about any cooperative activities or programs with other agencies or organizations that are currently going on or have taken place over the past three years.
2. What are your feelings regarding the success or effectiveness of your organization's cooperation with other agencies? (Prompt: Please elaborate)
3. If Coordinated: In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors did you strongly regard as being **desirable** or **facilitative** in bringing your organization together with another organization? (Prompt: Please discuss)

If not Coordinated: In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors would you strongly regard as being **desirable** or **facilitative** in bringing your organization together with another organization?

4. If Coordinated: In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors did you strongly regard as being **either undesirable** or **an obstacle** in bringing your organization together with another organization?

If not Coordinated: In your consideration of coordinating with another agency, what factors would you strongly regard as being **undesirable** or **an obstacle** in bringing your organization together with another organization?

5. Please discuss details of coordination efforts between your agency and other agencies that have failed or been unsuccessful?

6. If there is anything that you feel was not covered in the interview, please comment on any additional factor(s) that you feel facilitate or inhibit interorganizational coordination in the non-urban environment.

External

MANDATED COORDINATION

7. **If Coordinated:** In your coordination with another agency or agencies, were those coordination activities mandated by outside forces? Describe how the mandate impacted you and your agency. Discuss the nature of your mandated arrangement. How strong is the cooperation between agencies? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: How do you feel about mandated coordination among agencies? Do you think it aids or impedes agency performance? (Prompt: Please explain)

ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION

8. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did the reputation(s) of the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If reputation was considered: How did you react to the agency's reputation in terms of how you felt about the possibility of coordination with the agency?

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role would the reputation(s) of the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate or maintain an existing association? (Prompt: Please explain)

Internal and External

GOALS CLARIFICATION

9. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did the clarification of goals between the organization(s) involved play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Clarified: Has the clarification of goals between the organization(s) involved influenced the organizational performance and their relationship? If yes, please explain how.

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role would the clarification of goals between the organization(s) involved play in the decision to coordinate?

FORMAL AGREEMENTS

10. Do you have formal agreements with the agencies you coordinate with?

If Coordinated: Yes: Tell me how they work and how they impact your agency's operation. Elaborate How do you feel about formal agreements? (Prompt: Please elaborate) Could I see a copy of the agreement or perhaps have a copy?

No: How do you feel about formal agreements? How do you think they might impact your agency's operation?

If Not Coordinated: How do you feel about formal agreements? How do you think they might impact the operation of coordinated agencies?

PERCEPTIONS OF MUTUAL BENEFITS

11. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did the perception of mutual benefits arising out of the collaboration play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), do you think your agency would consider the idea that coordination with another agency would be mutually beneficial? Would you discuss that possibility with the other agency(s)? Would that factor play a role in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

PERCEPTIONS OF ENHANCED POWER AND PRESTIGE

12. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did the perception of enhanced power and prestige for your agency arising out of the collaboration play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), do you think your agency would consider the idea that coordination with another agency would enhance the power and prestige of your agency and or the coordinating agency(s)? Would you discuss that possibility with the other agency(s)? Would that factor play a role in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

VOLUNTARY COORDINATION

13. **If Coordinated:** In your coordination with another agency or agencies, were those coordination activities brought about on a voluntary basis? Discuss the nature of your voluntary arrangement.

If Not Coordinated: How do you feel about mandated coordination among agencies? Do you think it aids or impedes agency performance? (Prompt: Please explain)

RESOURCE DEPENDENCY

14. **If Coordinated:** What role did the dependence for resources play in your agency's decision to coordinate with another agency? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Dependent: How does the resource dependency impact your agency? The relationship with the other agency(s)?

If Not Coordinated: Were you to consider coordinating with another agency, what role would resource dependency play in the decision? (Prompt: Please discuss)

GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY

15. **If Coordinated:** What role did geographic proximity play in your agency's decision to coordinate with another agency? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: Were you to consider coordinating with another agency, what role would geographic proximity play in the decision? (Prompt: Please discuss)

COORDINATION VIEWED AS DISRUPTIVE

16. **If Coordinated:** If coordination with another agency was viewed as being disruptive to the operation of your agency, what role would that play in your decision regarding coordination? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), do you think your agency would consider the idea that coordination with another agency may be disruptive to the operation of one or more organizations? Would you discuss that possibility with the other agency(s)? Do you feel that factor may play a role in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

Internal

AUTONOMY

17. **If Coordinated:** What role did the autonomy of your organization play in your decision to coordinate with another agency or agencies? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were to consider coordinating with another agency(s), what role would the consideration of your organization's autonomy play in your agency's decision to coordinate with another agency? (Prompt: Please explain)

How would coordination with another agency impact your organization's autonomy? (Prompt: Please explain)

ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

18. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), did your agency consider the idea that coordination with another agency would enhance the viability of your agency or programs or viability of the other agency or programs? What role did that factor play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), do you think your agency would consider the idea that coordination with another agency would possibly enhance the viability of your agency? What role would the possibility of enhancement of viability of your agency play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

TERRITORIALISM

19. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role does the possibility of other organization(s) sharing what was once exclusively your space or your activity play in your decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If territory was considered: How did/do you and your organization react or cope with sharing territory with a partner agency(s)?

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), how do you think your organization would feel about the possibility of other organization(s) sharing what was once exclusively your space or your activity? How do you think that you and your organization would react to or cope with sharing territory?

CONTRADICTORY MANDATES

20. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did contradictory mandates between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If mandates were considered: How did you react to the other agency's contradictory mandates in terms of how you and your organization felt about coordination with the agency?

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role would contradictory mandates between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate? Explain... How would you react to an agency's contradictory mandates in terms of how you would feel about coordination with the agency?

DIFFERING DEGREES OF BUREAUCRATIZATION

21. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role did the differing degrees of bureaucratization between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If mandates were considered: How did you react to the other agency's differing degrees of bureaucratization in terms of how you and your organization felt about coordination with the agency?

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), what role would differing degrees of bureaucratization between your agency and the other organization(s) play in the decision to coordinate? Explain... How would you react to an agency's differing degrees of bureaucratization in terms of how you would feel about coordination with the agency? (Prompt: Please explain)

PROFESSIONAL ISOLATION

22. **If Coordinated:** When you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), did the factor of professional isolation (having little association with or knowledge of the other agency's expertise, terminology, duties, or professional responsibilities) play a role in the decision to coordinate? (Prompt: Please explain)

If Not Coordinated: If you were planning to coordinate with another agency(s), do you think your lack of understanding or awareness about another agency's field of expertise would influence your decision regarding coordination with the other agency(s)? (Prompt: Please explain)

APPENDIX C

IDENTIFICATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKERS INTERVIEWED

IDENTIFICATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKERS INTERVIEWED

1. Superintendent
2. School Board President
3. Director/Coordinator: Community Education, Education Service Center,
Adult Basic Education (of the divisions that exist within the school
system)
4. City Manager
5. Director City Parks and Recreation
6. Director Community or County Health Clinic
7. Director County/State Department of Human Services
8. Director County Youth Services

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW ETHICS PROTOCOL

INTERVIEW ETHICS PROTOCOL

My name is Don Hotalling. I am a doctoral student in educational administration at Oklahoma State University. I am the researcher on a project entitled: Interorganizational Coordination Among Schools and Other Human Service Provider Agencies in Three Non-Urban Midwestern Communities. This project is the research portion of my doctoral degree program at Oklahoma State University.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project. Your participation is very much appreciated. Before we start the interview, I would like to reassure you that as a participant in this research project you have several very definite rights:

First, your participation is entirely voluntary.
You are free to refuse to answer any question at any time.
You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time.
The interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to members of the research team.

Excerpts of this interview will be part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will the subject's identity or community be revealed. The interview will be recorded. The interview recordings will be made in such a way that the the subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. The interview will not cover topics that could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability or deal with sensitive aspects of the subject's behavior.

I am the principal researcher on this project and may be contacted at (405) 744-6411 or at (405) 372-1417 should you have any questions. You may also contact my research advisor, Dr. Martin Burlingame, at his office at Oklahoma State University at (405) 744-7244.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: _____ Time: _____ (A.M./P.M.)

Signed: _____
(Signature of Subject)

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting a signature of the subject. I have provided a copy of this for to the subject.

Date: _____ Time: _____ (A.M./P.M.)

Signed: _____
(Signature of Researcher)

VITA ²

Donal Ray Hotalling

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION AMONG SCHOOLS AND OTHER
HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDER AGENCIES IN THREE NON-URBAN
MIDWESTERN COMMUNITIES

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Berryville, Arkansas, December 29, 1944,
the son of Raymond and Myrl Hotalling.

Education: Graduated from the Flippin High School, Flippin,
Arkansas, in May, 1962; received Bachelor of Science in
Biology Education from Southwest Missouri State University
in May, 1980; received Master of Science in Biology from
Southwest Missouri State University at Springfield in
December, 1984; received Specialist of Education from
Southwest Missouri State University at Springfield in July,
1986; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education
degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1995.

Professional Experience: Superintendent of Schools, Maries County
R-II Schools, Belle, Missouri, July, 1994, to present;
Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant, Oklahoma
State University, August, 1992, to May, 1994; Superintendent
of Schools, Wheatland R-II Schools, Wheatland, Missouri,
1986 to 1992; K-12 Principal, Wheatland R-II Schools, 1984
to 1986; Biology, Chemistry, Physical Science Teacher,
Wheatland R-II Schools, 1984; Biology, Chemistry, Physical
Science Teacher, Osceola High School, Osceola, Missouri,
1980 to 1982; Student Teacher, Bolivar High School, Bolivar,
Missouri, Spring of 1980.

Professional Organizations: Association for Supervision and
Curriculum Development, Missouri School Boards' Association,
Missouri Association of School Business Officials, Missouri
Association of School Administrators, South Central Missouri
School Administrator's Association.